

Mountain Protected Areas

UPDATE



March 2025 # 125



In spite of nearly 200 years of mountaineering history throughout the world, strategies to effectively manage human waste at high altitudes continue to elude the mountaineer and development practitioner alike...in spite of much progress, work remains to ensure a thorough collaboration between the local mountain people and visiting supporters toward sustainable mountain development.

Jack Ives (1931 - 2024) founder of Mountain Research & Development

The rising number of climbers means there has been a significant increase in waste on Everest

Photo: News.com 2023

A note from the editor

Welcome to the 125th Mountain UPDATE. Some mountain issues just never go away—in fact one is so serious UNESCO has declared 2025 the year of glaciers' preservation. Of course it all circles back to the climate crisis and the urgency around taking action now—for mountain community welfare/safety, and biodiversity.

Last week I attended a 'snow gum summit'. Our snow gum woodlands are an ecosystem at risk of collapse, due to climate driven fire and ecological imbalance. But there are always some encouraging stories like the reduction in feral horses in the Australian Alps.

And finally thank you to all the decisive women taking mountain conservation action, especially on International Women's Day this Saturday March 8th!

March 2025

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Mountain Update is a quarterly newsletter distributed to members of the Mountain Protected Areas Network.

The Mountain Specialist Group acknowledges the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and waters where we live and work and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual connection and the relationship they have to Country.

The views expressed in this UPDATE are not necessarily those of the IUCN WCPA.

IUCN WCPA Mountain UPDATE # 125 Editor: Gillian Anderson peopleinnature@bigpond.com

Global

International Year of Glaciers' Preservation



UNESCO and WMO launch the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation 2025

From MRI News

The preservation of glaciers stands as one of humanity's most urgent challenges.

UNESCO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) have officially launched the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation, marking a crucial milestone in global efforts to protect the vital ice that provides freshwater to over 2 billion people.

These ancient ice formations are not just frozen water – they are the guardians of our planet's climate history, the source of life for billions, and sacred places for many cultures. Their rapid disappearance is a stark reminder that we must act now," said Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO.

"WMO recently confirmed that 2024 was the warmest year on record and has sounded repeated Red Alerts about the state of our climate, including the retreat of glaciers. Melting ice and glaciers threaten long-term water security for many millions of people. This international year must be a wake-up call to the world," said Celeste Saulo, Secretary-General of WMO.

The International Year of Glacier Preservation will focus on several critical areas:

- Expanding global glacier monitoring systems to enhance data collection and analysis
- Developing early warning systems for glacier-related hazards
- Promoting sustainable water resource management in glacier-dependent regions
- Preserving cultural heritage and traditional knowledge related to glacial environments
- Engaging youth in glacier preservation efforts and climate action

In 2023, glaciers suffered the largest mass loss in the five decades of record-keeping. It was the second consecutive year in which all regions in the world with glaciers reported ice loss.

Eiger Glacier below Monch, Switzerland 2015—what does it look like today?

Photo: *peopleinnature*



Celebration of the 1st World Day for Glaciers and World Water Day 20-21 March

High-level events in New York & Paris will address the growing challenges arising by glacier melt and its impacts on global water security, ecosystems, and communities.

This will include the launch of the 2025 World Water Development Report, titled "High Mountains and Glaciers," which highlights the critical role glaciers play in sustaining water supplies and maintaining ecosystem stability.

It will also mark the beginning of the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences. (2025–2034)

From Mountain Partnerships (FAO)



Snow Gum Declaration Urges Action

February 20, 2025

From Friends of the Earth (FoE)—Forest Collective Media Release February 2025

Tackling small fires before they become uncontrollable bushfires, excluding fire from recovering forests, and sabotaging beetle mating rituals – these are just some of the strategies proposed to save Australia’s iconic snow gum.

Snow gum woodlands are the iconic vegetation community of mountain environments in south eastern Australia and are facing the prospect of ecological collapse, due to more frequent and intense bushfires which are driven by climate change and the changing behaviour of native wood-boring beetles.

Long-unburnt snow gum forests are important for ecosystem services, have socio-cultural benefits, and conservation values, but they are now exceedingly rare, comprising less than 1% of snow gum forests in the Victorian Alps. The [Snow Gum Declaration 2025](#) urges governments to immediately fund solutions to combat this dual threat to snow gum survival.

The statement was crafted by a gathering of leading ecologists and academics, land managers, First Peoples, outdoor groups and concerned citizens at [The Snow Gum Summit](#), a conference that took place at Dinner Plain in Australian Alps in February.



Snow gum (old & healthy), Alpine National Park. Due to repeated fire and Longicorn beetle there are less and less healthy snow gum woodlands. Photo: *peopleinnature*

A section from: *The Snow Gum Declaration 2025*

We call on governments and other funding institutions to mitigate the risk of snow gum woodland collapse, by immediately funding:

- An analysis of snow gum woodlands across the landscape to determine their condition and to prioritise actions and areas to protect, such as fire refugia.
- A fire response procedure that aims to negate or minimize the impact of bushfire on snow gum woodlands. Alpine Peatlands Fire Mitigation Planning may act as a helpful case study.
- The emerging options for treating beetle-induced dieback, recovery options in areas already affected by dieback and prevention in areas less affected by dieback.
- Robustly fund all research and tools available to mitigate ecosystem collapse. Interventions should be urgent and courageous, as well as holistic, evidence-based, and well-designed across the landscape to avoid unintended outcomes. Inaction is not an option.

ED Note: Thank you FoE for organizing this important summit, with contributions from leading alpine ecologists, over 90 participants, increased community awareness and a declaration to government hopefully some positive outcomes for snow gum woodlands will eventuate.

South Asia

Expanded Protections for Forests & Mountains: Sri Lanka



Photo: Wilderness and Wildlife Conservation Trust

From Mongabay & Wilderness & Wildlife Trust

A 2020 government decree that transferred administrative control of nonprotected forests in Sri Lanka to local governments has been formally revoked by the country's new government. Protected forests are managed by Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) and Department of Forest Conservation (FD) shown on the map.

The move follows its overturning by the country's Supreme Court, where environmental activists argued it could allow the release of these forests for development projects without proper environmental assessments.

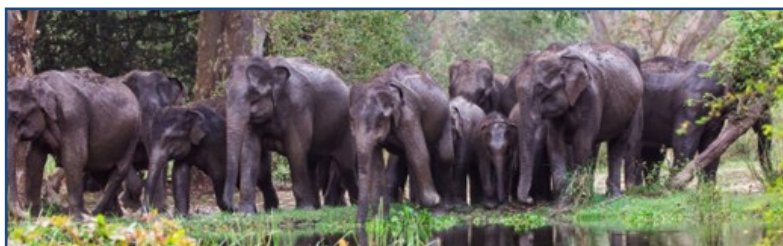
Known as "other state forests" (OSFs) or "residual forests," they harbor high levels of biodiversity and serve as crucial connectivity or buffer zones that help reduce human-wildlife conflict.

The camera-trap image above shows a leopard roaming in the Agra forest, classified as "other state forest" and therefore not considered a formally protected area.

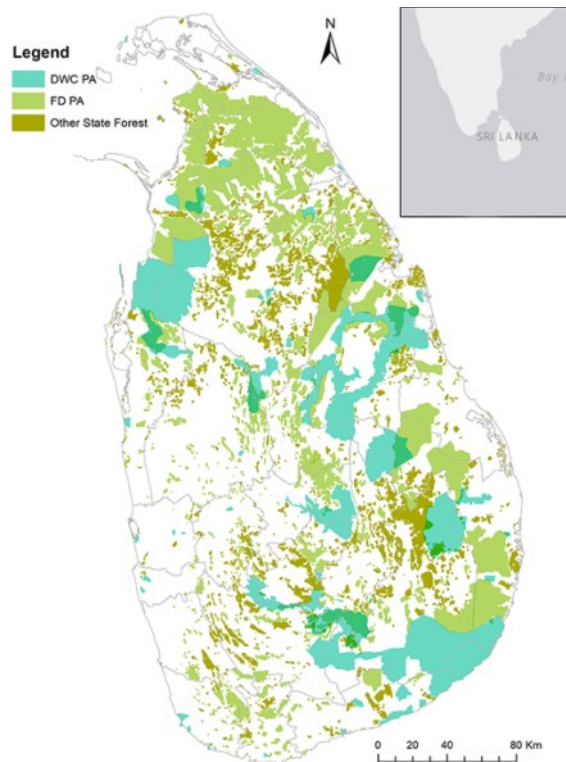
Other State Forests could also play a key role in the government's commitment to the 30x30 initiative of protecting 30% of land and sea area by 2030.

Chair of the Centre for Conservation and Research said OSFs are also important for Sri Lanka's wild elephants, 70% of which live outside protected areas, including in OSFs. The destruction of these habitats would likely exacerbate Sri Lanka's already severe human-elephant conflict, which claims the lives of around 400 elephants and 150 humans annually.

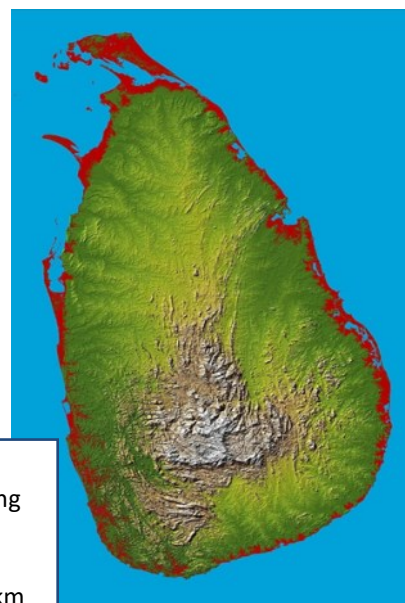
Protecting these forests is, therefore, essential for conserving biodiversity and for upholding Sri Lanka's commitments to global environmental goals, environmentalists say.



The south-central part of Sri Lanka—the rugged Central Highlands—is the mountainous heart of the country. The core of this area is a high plateau, running north-south for approximately 65 km. This area includes Sri Lanka's highest mountains. (Pidurutalagala highest at 2,524 m) At the plateau's southern end, mountain ranges stretch 50 km west toward Adam's Peak (2,243 meters) & 50 km east toward Namunukula (2,036 m).



OSFs, which are forests outside the network of protected areas, amount to 5% of the total land area of Sri Lanka. Image : Dinal Samarasinghe et al. (2021)



America—south

Guardians of the Andes: Peru

Andean Bear (*Tremarctos ornatus*)
in Parque Nacional del Rio Abiseo, Peru.
Photo: *Pedro Peloso*, National Geographic



From Mongabay December 2024

In the mountains of Peru, where ancient cloud forests meet the Amazon Rainforest, an Andean bear made scientific history. For four months, a camera collar captured the wild male's daily life, revealing behaviors never before documented in the Southern Hemisphere's only bear species, from treetop mating rituals to unexpected acts of cannibalism.

The study, published in [Ecology and Evolution](#), provides a bear's-eye view of life in one of South America's steepest and wettest terrains and marks the first time this technology has been used on the species.

To better understand these mountain guardians, the team deployed camera collars on three wild Andean bears in Peru's Kosñipata Valley in 2023. The first two collars were pilot studies that used National Geographic's CritterCam. However, the recently published study is based on just one longer-term collar worn by a male bear for four months, revealing many behaviors scientists have never seen before. The footage challenged long-held assumptions about Andean bears being solitary vegetarians. Instead, it showed them as social creatures, having both peaceful and aggressive interactions with other bears.

The study also emphasizes the bears' ecological importance. By dispersing seeds across the cloud forest, these animals contribute to the health of one of Earth's most biodiverse ecosystems. However, climate change and habitat loss continue to threaten their survival.

Andean bears hold profound cultural significance in Andean communities. "In Andean Quechua culture, Andean bears are known as Ukuku or Ukumary.

The Ukukus are mythical beings, half-human and half-bear," Pillco Huarcaya (R) told Mongabay "I wish people knew that Andean bears are the guardians of the mountains and vital ambassadors for the conservation of cloud forests, their primary habitat."



National Geographic Explorer, Ruthmery Pillco Huarcaya, attaches a trail camera to the branch of a tall tree in the buffer Zone of Manu National Park. Photo: National Geographic

The Andean bear faces pressures from multiple directions. As the climate becomes hotter and drier, their habitat is pushed upward. At the same time, human activities like farming are moving in from above, leaving the bears less room to roam.

This squeeze on their habitat forces bears to adapt their movements and behavior. They rarely stay within a national park, instead passing through multiple protected areas and community lands—sometimes raiding crops or in very rare cases preying on livestock. This can lead to retaliatory killings by local people. Camera footage paired with GPS tracking can help researchers and communities understand why bears are going to community lands, what risks they take, and perhaps how to avoid conflicts.

In response to these challenges, Pillco Huarcaya's team is also working to expand their community engagement efforts.

"My work with children has had a significant impact on how the community views Andean bears," Pillco Huarcaya said. "Through our 'Conservation Ambassadors' program, children visit the Wayqecha Biological Station to learn about the bears and the cloud forest. Many of them didn't know about Andean bears before, and now they see them as friends that need to be protected."

America—north

A slow moving storm hits US National Parks



The Trump administration backtracked on eliminating thousands of seasonal workers at Yosemite and other national parks after **public outcry** over how the job cuts would affect visitors. But 1000 permanent NPS staff have lost their jobs. LA Times

From Sierra Club Magazine February 2025—Alexander Nazaryan

Overflowing toilets. Injured hikers stranded in the backcountry. Closed visitor centers. Those are just a few of the nightmare scenarios that are likely looming for the nation’s 433 national parks and sites, said Kurt Repanshek, the founder and editor of [National Parks Traveler](#).

“It’s a slow-moving storm,” he said of the devastating cuts the National Park Service has suffered under the new Trump administration. Elon Musk and his Department of Government Efficiency have taken a chainsaw (literally, in the case of Musk’s recent appearance at a conservative conference) to the federal bureaucracy, and the men and women who toil on the nation’s public lands—scientists, rangers, educators—have not been immune from the measures. The cuts are supposed to be saving American taxpayers billions of dollars but seem so far to have produced little more than a deepening sense of outrage.

“The way they’re going about it is crazy,” Repanshek said, describing a haphazard approach low on communication, specifics, and clarity. Such reports have been consistent across the sprawling federal bureaucracy, from the now-shuttered United States Agency for International Development to the National Institutes of Health.

Musk’s DOGE—which has been operating in a constitutional gray zone, seemingly answerable to no one but Trump himself—has ordered 1,000 jobs cut across the NPS, which employs about 20,000 people overall. The NPS will be allowed to hire 5,000 seasonal employees, but that can’t compensate for the experience of the full-time workers who were dismissed with a short, unceremonious, and impersonal email that called their performance into question.



According to the Associated Press, “at least a dozen” other employees at Yosemite were dismissed. In a show of solidarity, their colleagues climbed El Capitan—a sheer cliff that is one of the world’s most renowned climbing destinations—and hung an upside-down American flag from its precipice.

Photo:KNTV

Park advocates say the permanent staff cuts will leave hundreds of national parks — including some of the most well-known and most heavily visited sites — understaffed and facing tough decisions about operating hours, public safety and resource protection.

Photo: Zion National Park, one of USA’s most popular national parks





Europe

Pindos Mountains: the lungs & spine of Greece

From **Makis Logiotatidis** Mountain Guide, Eco-Tourism Operator & Conservationist December 2024

The **North Pindos National Park**, situated in northwest Greece, spans approximately 2500 km², making it the largest park in mainland Greece. The Pindos mountains, Greece's longest range, stretch 200km from northwest to west; they connect with the Dinaric Alps, which span Slovenia, Bosnia, Montenegro, and Albania.

The northern part of Pindos boasts numerous natural and geological features.

It includes some of Greece's highest mountains, such as Mt. Smolikas (2637m) and Timfi Massive (2497m). The area is characterized by deep gorges and significant elevation changes (400m to 2600m). It has over 2500 plant species and diverse wildlife, including brown bears, mountain goats, wolves, otters, wild boars, and roe deer.

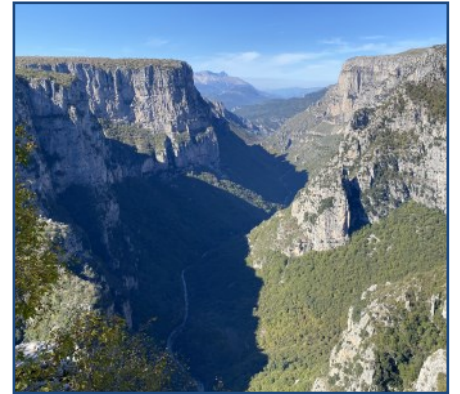
The park includes many mountain villages, notably the Zagori area with 46 small villages founded around the 12th century. During the 17th-18th centuries, this community prospered under Ottoman rule, building a strong economy.

In the following years, the region experienced significant war and poverty, leading to the abandonment of almost all villages. Most houses are now empty, with some being occupied only for a few weeks during the Summer.

The Zagori area is protected under Greek law as protected traditional settlements, with a part recently designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. Efforts are ongoing to revive forgotten villages through tourism. The area is ideal for hikers, nature lovers, and those seeking solitude.

The park was established in 2005 to connect the wilderness areas of Valia Calda and Vikos–Aoos. The park contains different protection zones due to human activities and numerous small villages. Therefore, certain areas permit forestry or farming, provided that activities are conducted with respect for nature.

The economic crisis hindered the park's development. With little or no funds regionally, central Athens now manages it directly, unfortunately often leaving the area open and poorly guarded.



The highlights of the area are the Vikos gorge (above), the Aoos gorge, and Valia Calda protected area with endless pine forests.

Photos: *peopleinnature*



Pindos mountains is one of the last strongholds of pure nature in Europe.

We are trying to bring the area back to life by creating a sustainable model of development which will revive the old traditional way of mountain living in conjunction with tourism.

This is one of the last virgin areas of Europe, a unique place of resistance, work and a culture that is slowly fading under the influence of modern living.

Makis Logiotatidis



Himalayas—Central Asia

High Mountain Waste: Nepal (& worldwide)



From BBC World News 2024

Many mountaineers use open spaces as toilets on the higher camps of Everest but now authorities have said people climbing Everest will now have to clear up their own poo and bring it back to base camp to be disposed of correctly.

"Our mountains have begun to stink," Mingma Sherpa, chairman of Pasang Lhamu rural municipality, told the BBC.

The municipality, which covers most of the Everest region, has introduced the new rule as part of wider measures being implemented. Due to extreme temperatures, excrement left on Everest does not fully degrade. Climbers attempting Mount Everest, and nearby Mount Lhotse, will be ordered to buy so-called poo bags at base camp, which will be "checked upon their return".

During climbing season mountaineers spend most of their time at base camp acclimatising to the altitude, where separate tents are erected as toilets, with barrels underneath collecting the excrement.

But once they begin their treacherous journey things get more difficult.

Most climbers and support staff tend to dig a hole but the higher you go up the mountain, some locations have less snow, so you have to go to the toilet out in the open. Very few people bring their excrement back in biodegradable bags when climbing Mount Everest's summit, which can take weeks.

Rubbish remains a huge issue on Everest and other mountains in the region, although there has been an increasing number of clean-up campaigns, including an annual one led by the Nepali Army.

Poo Bag Solution?

Poo bags contain chemicals and powders that solidify human excrement and make it largely odourless.

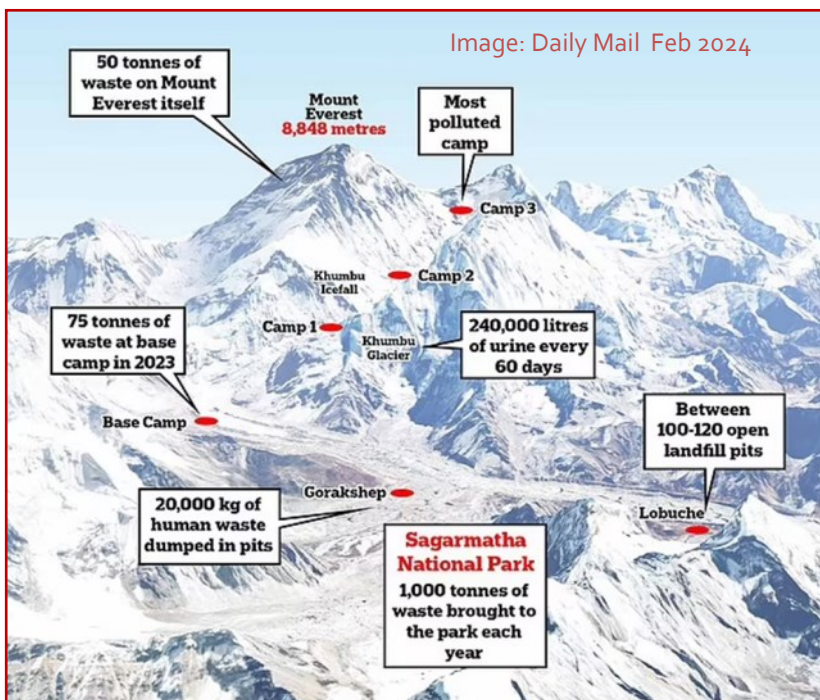
"...we plan to give them two bags, each of which they can use five to six times," says Chhiring Sherpa, Chief Executive Officer of the non-government organisation Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC).

"It certainly is a positive thing, and we will be happy to play our part to make this successful," says Dambar Parajuli, president of the Expedition Operators Association of Nepal.

He said his organisation had suggested that this should first be brought in as a pilot project on Everest and then replicated on other mountains too.

Mingma Sherpa, the first Nepali to have climbed all 14 mountains above 8,000 metres, said use of such bags to manage human waste has been tried and tested on other mountains.

"Mountaineers have been using such bags on Mount Denali (the highest peak in North America) and in the Antarctic as well, that is why we have been advocating for it," says Mr Mingma, who is also an advisor to the Nepal Mountaineering Association.



Poo Pots & Tubes Solution?

Wilderness Poo Pots ABC News

"You poo into a corn starch bag, then you squash all the air out of the bag and put it into the poo pot," Tasmanian (Australia) Wilderness Ranger

..."[In there] it can't get squashed and you can't smell it, and then you can carry it."

And in other places around the world poo pots are the norm.

"There's parks in the States that issues poo tubes to walkers, and [the US National Park Service] weighs them when they come back in, and people get fined if they're not carrying poo."



Himalayas—Central Asia

The not-so-permanent frost

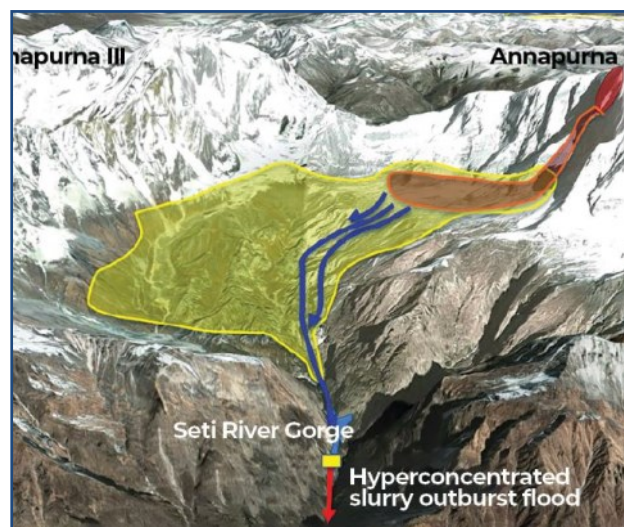
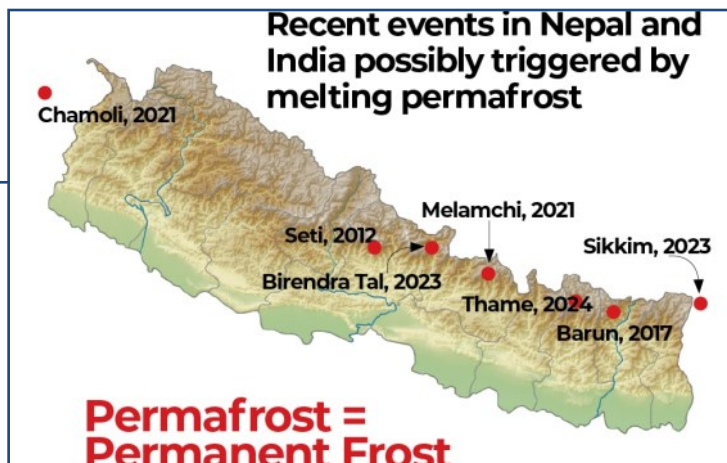
From *Alton Byers* (article in *Nepali Times* September 2024 by *Wilfried Haerberli & Alton C Byers*)

A warming atmosphere also warms perennially frozen mountains. The stability of frozen rocks decreases with increasing temperature similar to how butter just taken out of a fridge becomes softer and less resistant to the cutting force of the knife.

Thawing frozen mountains means softening them, making them less resistant against gravity, leading to breakage of small to large sections, resulting in rock falls, rock avalanches, and landslides. As permafrost continues to destabilise at the highest altitudes in the Nepal Himalaya, more and more devastating events can be expected to occur.

The question is, what can we do about it? Based on collective experience in the European Alps, Peruvian Andes, and Nepal Himalaya over the past several decades, we offer the following suggestions:

1. Encourage more permafrost and hazard research.
2. Standardise glacial lake risk assessment methods.
3. Update and revise the current list of potentially dangerous glacial lakes in Nepal. The inventory should incorporate the changing permafrost factor.
4. Develop new feasibility study protocols for large hydropower projects. These guidelines must incorporate the changing permafrost factor as well as the heightened threat of glacier floods.
5. Develop zoning policies. These should discourage the location of farms and infrastructure (homes, tourist lodges) within known and active floodplains.
6. Simple is beautiful. Rock-filled wire cages (gabions) can be engineered to effectively divert floods and should continue to be promoted in high mountain regions.
7. Build higher bridges.
8. Increase awareness. Nepal's mountains will continue to destabilise and become even more dangerous in future. Construction beneath a small and seemingly harmless glacial lake should be discouraged.
9. Promote simple and effective early warning systems. EWS are typically installed by a remote and distant government agency, with little training in their use by local villagers. **Thus far the most effective and proven EWS tool has been the cell phone.** Hundreds of lives were saved during the Seti River flood of 2012 when upstream witnesses phoned warnings to their downstream family and friends.
10. Improve mechanisms that allow scientists to communicate.
11. Encouraging transboundary permafrost research.
12. Develop and implement adaptation planning. Local Adaptation Plans for Action (LAPA) have proven to be an effective tool for increasing local awareness of climate impacts as well as planning for mitigation measures.



Rock failure from Annapurna IV led to a series of cascading events that resulted in the Seti River flood of 2012 that killed 72 people. Map: KARGEL / REGMI
Photo: *Shristi Karki*



Photo: *Alton Byers*

ED Note: This article has been significantly abbreviated —please read complete article outlining the research by **Wilfried Haerberli & Alton C Byers**

[The not-so-permanent frost | Nepali Times](#)

Scree and Talus

[Why is Mt Everest growing twice as quickly as expected?](#) From ABC Science News

The Himalayan peak is currently undergoing a growth spurt — about 2 millimetres per year, according to GPS measurements. This is double the 1mm that historic rock data suggests the mountain should be growing each year. A study published in [Nature Geoscience](#) suggested a reason for part of this accelerated growth: that when two rivers below joined up around 90,000 years ago, they set in motion large-scale geological changes that raised Mt Everest an extra 15–50 metres.

"This research highlights the complex interplay between different Earth processes," said Jingen Dai, one of the study's authors and researcher at the China University of Geoscientists.



[Sports for Nature](#) www.sportsfornature.org

There is another opportunity for IUCN **Sports for Nature** to conduct work on mountain ecosystems, this time in collaboration with the International Olympic Committee. They are looking for an expert to help us write a guide for sports organisations that practice their sports in the mountains. Please contact Emanuel Boscardin, Programme Officer, Sports for Nature, IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Emanuel.Boscardin@iucn.org

[Dream Birds](#) From Mongabay Nov 2024

The mountainous forests of the eastern DRC are home to a strikingly beautiful bird: the yellow-crested helmetsrike.

The species was considered lost to science until late last year, when an expedition of U.S. and DRC scientists spotted flocks of the birds gliding through the forests of the [Itombwe mountains](#) and snapped the first photo. Their observations will help to fill in some key knowledge gaps on this little-known species, which faces threats from habitat destruction and climate change.

Read whole article: [‘Dream birds’ in the mist: First photo of ‘lost’ bird in DRC mountains](#)



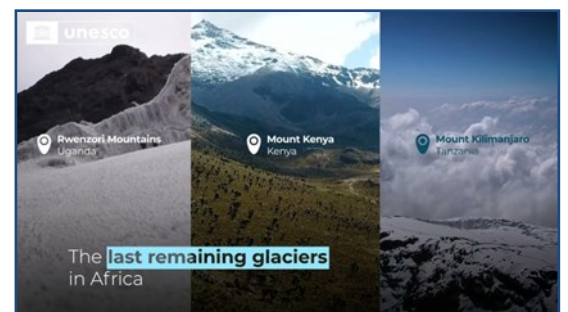
Photo: first ever of a yellow-crested helmetsrike. *Matt Brady*

[Climate Change in African Mountains: Perceived Impacts and Adaptation Responses](#) From MRI News

Mountain regions across Africa are facing the intensifying impacts of climate change, but little has been understood about how the communities that live in them are coping—until now. A new MRI-funded study, published in *Nature Climate Change*, sheds light on the ways smallholder farmers in African mountain regions are navigating the challenges of a rapidly changing climate.

[International Mountain Day 2025](#) will be an opportunity to showcase the importance of preserving glaciers and high mountain areas for maintaining biodiversity, mitigating climate impacts, supporting mountain livelihoods, and ensuring water security.

Stay tuned to the [IMD website](#), where we will share communication materials such as Zoom backgrounds, social media cards and key messages to raise awareness about this year’s important theme. From **Mountain Partnership**



UNESCO video [Watch Here](#)

[Project 2025](#)—which Trump renounced during the presidential campaign, only to seemingly embrace it now that he is back in the Oval Office—calls for the Department of the Interior, which runs both the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management, to pivot from conservation to energy extraction. From **Sierra Magazine**

Scree and Talus cont.

[Restoring names that honour American Greatness](#)

Extract from *The White House January 2025*

Section 1. ... The naming of our national treasures, including breathtaking natural wonders and historic works of art, should honor the contributions of visionary and patriotic Americans in our Nation's rich past.

...This order honors President McKinley for giving his life for our great Nation and dutifully recognizes his historic legacy of protecting America's interests and generating enormous wealth for all Americans.

... The Secretary shall subsequently update the Geographic Names Information System to reflect the renaming and reinstatement of Mount McKinley. The national park area surrounding Mount McKinley shall retain the name Denali National Park and Preserve.



The declaration of renaming has proved to be highly controversial. The Koyukon, an Alaska Indigenous Athabaskan group, referred to the mountain as Denali (above) for centuries before McKinley took office or Alaska became a US state.

photo: *peopleinnature*

[Fossils show that insect damage has remained the same for millions of years](#) From Science News February 2025

Eucalyptus trees dominate wet forests in Australia and provide food for up to 20,000 species of insects. Insect herbivores, including those of *Eucalyptus*, employ myriad feeding strategies, including leaf mining, galling, and piercing and sucking. All 28 of the leaf damage types found in the *Eucalyptus* fossils from Argentinian Patagonia were also present in modern Australasian *Eucalyptus* samples, showing consistent plant-insect interactions across 52 million years.

Wood boring beetles are xylophagous, meaning they eat wood as both larvae and adults. These are different to insect herbivores in Science News story which eat plant material—leaves and stems.

Wood boring Longicorn beetle is causing dieback in high altitude *Eucalyptus* species / sub species of Snow gum in Australia Alps at present.

[Feral Horse Numbers reduced significantly](#) From Invasives Species Council March 2025

Recent successful control programs have seen feral horse numbers in Kosciuszko National Park reduced to around 3000 to 4000. This is a dramatic reduction from the around 17,000 horses trampling the high country a couple of years ago. For the first time in 2 decades, we are finally seeing our sensitive Australian Alps national parks healing from the destruction of feral horses. The recent successful control programs.

[Antarctica—land of ice and fire](#) From Science News Nov 2024

More than 100 volcanoes hide beneath the ice sheet or poke through it. One, 3800-meter-high Mount Erebus (R), seethes menacingly just 40 km from McMurdo Station, Antarctica's biggest research base. Another, Mount Waesche, has yielded unsettling hints that ice loss triggered its ancient eruptions. Now, researchers are targeting both peaks to learn about immediate and long-term threats.

Sensors being installed along the rim of Erebus could help researchers understand the threat the wildly active volcano poses to McMurdo and New Zealand's Scott Base next door.

And a field campaign to Waesche will explore the possibility that climate change could reawaken ice-bound volcanoes, whose hot, eruptive bursts could in turn accelerate ice loss in a new, dangerous feedback.



Its unclear how fast volcanoes would respond to shrinking ice, if at all. And one volcano erupting under the ice wouldn't cause much extra melting. But if many erupted, a feedback loop could take hold, with ice loss leading to more volcanism, and more eruptions to more ice loss and consequent sea-level rise. Photo: Josh Landis/National Science Foundation

Tools, Publications & other media

From IUCN WCPA Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group/Centre for Large Landscape Conservation

As summarized by the Landscape Conservation Bulletin, published by the [Network for Landscape Conservation](#):

The U.S. Department of the Interior released its [first-ever Department-wide guidance on implementing landscape-level approaches](#) to managing our natural and cultural resources. Following up on the 2023 revision and reissue of the Departmental Manual chapter on implementing landscape-level approaches to resource management, this guide explains key provisions and provides recommendations for Interior Department staff on effectively implementing that policy.

COP 29 December 2024

Although a single year above 1.5C does not itself spell climate doom or break the 2015 Paris agreement, in which countries agreed to strive to keep the long-term temperature rise below this point, scientists have warned this aspiration has in effect been snuffed out despite the exhortations of leaders gathered at a United Nations climate summit in Azerbaijan.

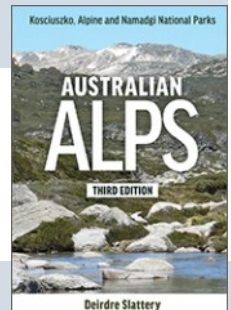
[IUCN at UNCCD COP16, 2-13th December 2024: View Program and Catch up on events](#)

Mountain Research and Development Vol 44, No 4 available online and open access

Articles present a framework for assessing benefits and costs of spring revival in Nepal, analyze livelihood strategy choices of herders in Iran, examine the prospects of sustainable tourism in southeastern Serbia's protected areas, and present the origins, structure, objectives, and strategies of the Andean Social–Ecological Observatory Network. Three obituaries and the editorial pay tribute to the journal's founding editor, **Jack D. Ives**. <https://www.mrd-journal.org/>

[Australian Alps—Kosciuszko, Alpine and Namadgi National Parks](#) Third Edition By: Deirdre Slattery

An illustrated guide to the remarkable ecology and history of the Australian Alps National Parks. *Australian Alps* is a fascinating guide to Australia's highest mountains and the extraordinary diversity, rich heritage and precious resource of the Australian Alps National Parks. Paperback - April 2025 - AU \$54.99 Published by CSIRO



[Tune into Nature: A dreamy soundscape collected from the peaks of the Dolomites](#). From The Guardian March 2025

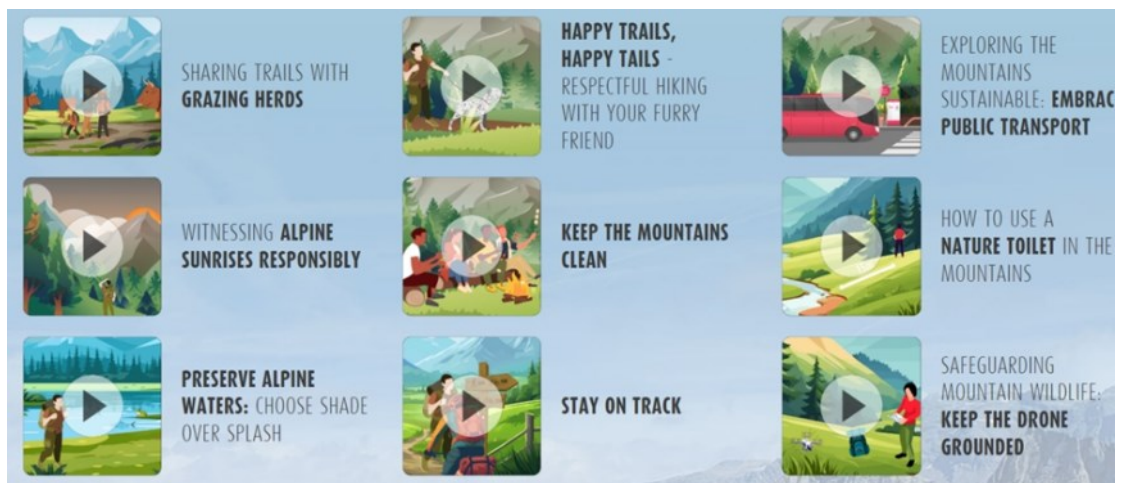
These tunes have won the inaugural **Tune into Nature** music prize, a contest that seeks to showcase new music by upcoming artists that is inspired by the natural world. [Dawn](#), by [Josephine Illingworth](#), was created from sounds that the 23-year-old musician and artist from London recorded during several weeks sleeping alone in mountain huts in northern Italy, with lyrics taken from the entries left by hikers in the hut guestbooks.

[Call for applications: IPROMO 2025 – Glaciers' preservation and climate change in mountain ecosystems](#) February 2025

The Mountain Partnership Secretariat is pleased to announce that applications have opened for the 18th edition of the IPROMO 2025 Summer School.

[ALPARC Launches Video Series on Responsible Mountain Behavior](#)

Available in all Alpine languages as well as English, the videos can be used for social media, websites, or educational activities and are accessible to all members of the initiative. Click here to [watch all videos \(Section 3 - Good Practices\)](#).



Looking for Mountain Research and many other excellent tools and publications? The Mountain Update has only a very tiny selection! Try [Mountain Research and Development](#), [Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment \(GMBA\)](#), [Mountain Research Initiative](#), [ICIMOD](#), and [Mountain Partnership](#)—to mention a just few great sources of mountain information!

Important links

IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas for an outline of the role of Mountain Specialist Group [WCPA Mountain Specialist Group](#)

Please go to [https://youtu.be/ NuY89TWscl](https://youtu.be/NuY89TWscl) a short video of Protecting Mountains IUCN WCC presentation by Peter Jacobs (Chair Mountain Specialist Group).

Some events of interest

[Events - MRI - Mountain Research Initiative](#)

Mountain Partnerships Events [Here](#)

WCPA Mountain Specialist Group Committee		
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While Mountain Network members can choose not to be WCPA members and still be involved and receive the Mountain UPDATE, the WCPA Chair, and Mountain Specialist Group Executive and would like to encourage all to become WCPA members. This helps to secure good governance and management of the WCPA and the Mountains Group and enlightens all members to the wider activities of the WCPA.

To learn more about WCPA membership go to: [WCPA Get Involved](#)

For any relevant mountain protected area news, please email me (Gill) on peopleinnature@bigpond.com

I look forward to hearing from you soon!