

SCALING UP MOUNTAIN EbA

Using nature-based solutions to adapt to climate change



Healthy mountain ecosystems help buffer the impacts of climate change for local communities, wildlife and downstream populations worldwide. Locally, mountain people rely on their surrounding environment for water, food, pasture and the raw materials that serve as the foundation of their livelihoods. Further downstream, towns and cities depend on mountain water for drinking, agriculture and industry.

Efforts to manage, conserve or restore natural environments can help people adapt to climate change by taking advantage of a healthy ecosystem's natural resilience. For example, programs that enable mountain farmers to sustainably cultivate, harvest and market valuable native crops provide a dependable source of income, promote biodiversity conservation and help maintain healthy soil. Similarly, by carefully managing a mountain watershed, erosion and pollution are reduced and native plant species and wildlife can rebound. This also helps ensure sufficient water supply for local communities and for populations further downstream. **These nature-based solutions are examples of Ecosystem-based Adaptation, or EbA.**

The Ecosystem-based Adaptation approach is widely recognized as an important strategy for adapting to the impacts of climate change. It is cost-effective, yields multiple benefits, and can be implemented by communities themselves. But in mountain areas, on-the-ground EbA measures have not been widely implemented. To help build support for EbA approaches in mountains, both on the ground and in national and international policy, **The Mountain Institute (TMI) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) have joined forces to work on EbA projects in key mountain regions.** The formal title of this three-year initiative is "Scaling Up Mountain Ecosystem-based Adaptation: Building Evidence, Replicating Success, and Informing Policy." It is funded by a grant from the German government.

Our goal is to expand EbA work started during the "Mountain EbA Flagship Programme" in the **Himalayas (Nepal), Mount Elgon (Uganda) and the Andes (Peru)** and to support the EbA approach being adopted in neighboring **Bhutan, Kenya and Colombia**. Our Mountain EbA Program seeks to benefit local people directly, as well as the millions downstream who depend on the water and other benefits that come from mountains. We will also identify and assist conservation and development projects already underway that could benefit from Mountain EbA practices. The EbA experience and data we develop through this program will be instrumental in building wider support and generating financing for EbA within national governments and at international forums.

For more about Scaling Up Mountain EbA, please visit our websites:
[Mountain.org](https://mountain.org) and [IUCN.org](https://iucn.org).

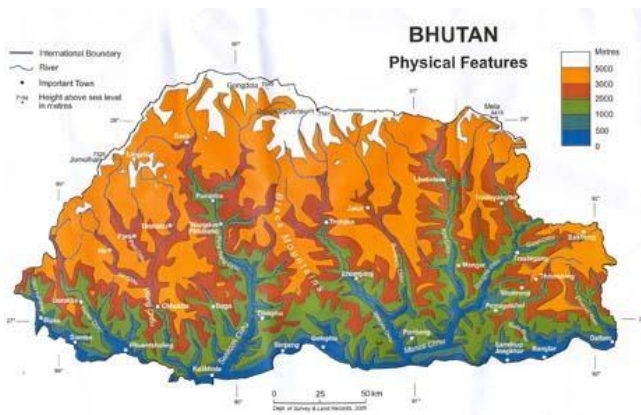


based on a decision of the German Bundestag



Strengthening EbA in Bhutan

The Scaling Up Mountain EbA Program will expand its programme to Bhutan from January 2018 to June 2020, with a specific focus on supporting the strengthening existing policies and plans at national level, so they better integrate EbA approaches. This policy level component will build on a demonstrative field component supporting ongoing efforts on Ecosystem-based Adaptation in selected sites (e.g. in a Ramsar site and/or in a Watershed with PES mechanisms in place). The programme will work closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests and other relevant authorities in the Royal Government of Bhutan as well as with NGOs and academics in Bhutan.



The programme will offer and facilitate national dialogues on natural resources policies to review policies and plans, identify gaps and possible entry points for strengthening EbA approaches. This will be done through a series of national level policy dialogues and through an in depth review of the existing policy and governance framework. This component will lead to the development of a national guidance document for integration of EbA into policies in Bhutan, including a set of specific recommendations (e.g. on mainstreaming EbA in the revised NDCs).

This could include support to a range of activities to restore and protect local water sources, forests and pasturelands, helping stabilize landslide prone areas and improving local livelihoods.

We will also help build the capacity of government and non-government groups to better understand Ecosystem-based Adaptation. This will serve as a more solid foundation for planning and for implementing activities that improve livelihoods and the environment at the same time. Our EbA projects will offer evidence and feedback so that government policies related to environmental protection and livelihoods support can be strengthened and implemented at all levels.

The Programme component in Bhutan will also focus in supporting the RGoB in identifying and securing opportunities for long term funding on EbA in the country.

At the same time the project will assist local authorities and groups in a selected site in strengthening plans for specific EbA activities that address some of their key vulnerabilities. A series of site level trainings and support will be organised leading to the identification of specific EbA activities complementing ongoing measures.



High altitude agricultural field in Bhutan

For more about the Mountain EbA projects in Bhutan, please contact:

Raphaël Glémet
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - Asia Regional Office
63 Sukhumvit Road Soi 39 (Soi Prompong)
Klongton-Nua, Wattana
Bangkok, 10110, Thailand
E: raphael.Glemet@iucn.org
www.iucn.org