



## From Risk to Resilience: Scaling Regional Investment through the HKH DRR Hub

5 May 2026 • 2:00–3:30 p.m. (Manila) • 11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m. (Kathmandu) • Virtual via MS Teams



The seminar highlighted how the Koshi Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Knowledge Hub from 2018–2023 and the successful launch of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) DRR Hub in 2024 served as a regional platform to strengthen the science–policy–practice interface on DRR in the HKH region. It was explained how the HKH DRR Hub supports multi-hazard risk assessments, multi-hazard early warning systems, and risk-informed investment to advance integrated, gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)–responsive climate resilience. The session also highlighted achievements of the HKH DRR Hub, experiences from the national and subnational context of Bhutan and Nepal through the HKH DRR Hub, and regional synergies and priorities for the future.

“It is encouraging to see how countries build on each other’s strengths and come together to recognize the need for concerted efforts and integrated approaches.”

**SONOMI TANAKA**  
Country Director Bhutan, ADB

## SPEAKERS



### OPENING REMARKS

#### NEERA SHRESTHA PRADHAN

Cryosphere and Water Lead, Senior Water and Adaptation Specialist, ICIMOD



#### EKLABYA SHARMA

President of the International Society of Tropical Ecology and Strategic Advisor of the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment



#### NOELLE O'BRIEN

Director, Strategy and Engagement Division, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department, ADB



### CLOSING REMARKS

#### SONOMI TANAKA

Country Director, Bhutan Resident Mission, ADB



### TECHNICAL KEYNOTE

#### SASWATA SANYAL

Disaster Risk Reduction Specialist and Intervention Manager



#### SHANTI MAHAT

Under Secretary, GoN, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority Nepal



#### BILL HO

Program Lead for Risk Governance and Financing at the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center



### MODERATOR

#### SILAS MARKERT

Climate Resilience Specialist, ADB

## KEY MESSAGES

- **The HKH DRR Hub has evolved over the past decade.** It grew from the Koshi Basin Initiative (2017), formally launched as a regional hub in 2024. Its architecture reflects accumulated lessons on transboundary cooperation, and the 2025 Declaration introduced six pillars covering risk assessment institutionalization, early warning systems, loss and damage, gender and social inclusion, risk-informed finance, and activation of thematic working groups.
- **Mountain-specific multi-hazard risk is qualitatively different from standard DRR frameworks.** ICIMOD's framework identifies three unique interaction scenarios — cascading, compounding, and amplifying — that reflect the HKH's distinctive geography and the ways climate change exacerbates disaster chains. Global frameworks (e.g., Sendai) provide guidance but are insufficiently granular for this region.
- **Regional cooperation is opportunity-driven and depends on apolitical, practitioner-level engagement.** The hub focuses on technical collaboration and avoids high-level bureaucracy. It convenes practitioners, disaster management officials, and academics. The challenge of making thematic working groups more than voluntary bodies - by attaching resources and joint research - remains a critical unresolved issue.
- **The science-to-policy translation gap is persisting and multi-layered at the national level.** Nepal's experience illustrates that even where scientific capacity and political recognition exist, data ownership conflicts across ministries, weak subnational institutional capacities, not aligned budget cycles, and the gap between policy drafting and implementation continue to delay risk-informed governance.
- **Digital infrastructure for risk data management is evolving but capacity-constrained.** Both Nepal (BPAT/ DRR portals) and Bhutan (DRM Portal) are building centralized risk information systems, but both face similar constraints: fragmented data sources, outsourced technical development, and insufficient in-house human capacity to operate and scale these platforms effectively.
- **Legal mandates are a prerequisite for translating science into investment decisions.** The absence of explicit legal provisions for multi-hazard risk assessment is a critical policy gap across the Asia-Pacific region. Without formal mandates, DRR science remains advisory rather than binding on investment planning, limiting its real-world impact on development decisions.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

- <https://www.icimod.org/event/cryosphere-and-water/hkh-drr-hub-2025/>
- <https://lib.icimod.org/records/gcxqx-75896>