

Dialogue on Mountains and Climate Change

Date: 12 June, 2026 (10-13, 15-18 CET), Chamber hall

Concept note

1. Mandate

COP 30 requested the Chairs of SBSTA and SBI to convene a dialogue on mountains and climate change at SB 64, inter alia on the need to hold an annual dialogue on this topic. The dialogue will be facilitated by two co-facilitators appointed by the Chairs, with the support from the secretariat. The co-facilitators will prepare a summary report, including on the outcomes of the discussions on the need to hold an annual dialogue. The Chairs will present the summary report orally in their reports to COP 31.¹

2. Context

Mountains are increasingly recognized as critical ecosystems for climate resilience, water security, biodiversity and sustainable development, with impacts of climate change extending far beyond mountain regions. Climate change impacts in mountain areas are driving rapid changes in glaciers, snow cover, permafrost, ecosystems and hydrological systems. These changes are contributing to growing risks, including glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), landslides, changing precipitation patterns and river flows. These impacts are already affecting mountain communities, livelihoods, infrastructure, cultural heritage and ecosystems, with challenges for countries and communities with limited capacities to monitor, anticipate and respond to rapidly evolving risks.

The IPCC assessment report indicates that mountain regions are warming faster than global average and warn that exceeding 1.5°C could lead to irreversible impacts on certain mountain ecosystems.² As upstream systems, mountains play a central role in water availability, food production, energy generation, biodiversity and disaster risk reduction. The accelerating loss of glaciers and snowpack is already altering hydrological cycles on which billions of people depend, with impacts extending far beyond mountain regions and across national borders.

The importance of mountains has gained increasing recognition under the UNFCCC process. Mountains were explicitly recognized as ecosystems of concern in the outcome of the first global stocktake adopted at COP 28. The UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience related to ecosystems explicitly refers to management, enhancement, restoration conservation and

¹ See [FCCC/CP/2025/12](#), paragraphs 40-44.

² IPCC. 2022. Cross-Chapter Paper 5: Mountains. In: H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, M. Tignor, et al. (eds.). *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press. pp. 2273–2318. Available at <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/chapter/ccp5/>.

protection of mountain ecosystems.³ The Nairobi Work Programme, the UNFCCC knowledge-to-action hub for adaptation and resilience, includes a dedicated thematic area on mountains.⁴

Global attention to mountains and the cryosphere has also expanded through several recent initiatives and processes outside the UNFCCC. These developments provide an important broader context for the SB 64 dialogue, while underscoring the need to consider how mountain-related risks, solutions and support needs can be addressed within the mandates and workstreams of the UNFCCC. Relevant developments include the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation⁵ (2025), the Decade for Action on Cryospheric Sciences⁶ (2025–2034), the UNEA 7 resolution on the preservation of glaciers and the cryosphere in mountains,⁷ ongoing work under the Convention on Biological Diversity to revitalize the Programme of Work on Mountain Biological Diversity⁸ in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions⁹ (2023–2027).

The 2024 UNFCCC expert dialogue on mountains and climate change provided space for scientists, policymakers and frontline communities to share knowledge, experience and insights on strengthening the resilience of mountain ecosystems, and the informal summary report was published in November 2024.¹⁰ Building on the technical and knowledge-sharing focus of the 2024 expert dialogue, the SB 64 dialogue will place greater emphasis on exploring options to better address mountain related risks, solutions and support needs within the UNFCCC process. It will provide space to exchange key learnings from practical experiences, identify support needs, including national instruments and discuss relevant entry points within existing UNFCCC workstreams, including by exploring how these could be used to address mountain issues with a view to strengthening coherence and implementation within current mandates. The dialogue will also consider options for continued engagement on mountains and climate change under the UNFCCC, including the potential goals, opportunities and limitations of an annual dialogue to advancing mountain climate action.

³ See decision 2/CMA.5 para 9 (d).

⁴ The Nairobi work programme also includes a thematic area on adaptation in high-latitude areas and the cryosphere.

⁵ <https://www.un-glaciers.org/en>

⁶ <https://www.un-cryosphere.org/en>

⁷ <https://docs.un.org/en/UNEP/EA.7/Res.10>

⁸ <https://www.cbd.int/mountain>

⁹ <https://www.fao.org/mountain-partnership/events/five-years-of-action/en>

¹⁰ See the event page [here](#) and informal summary report [here](#)

3. Objectives and expected outcomes of the dialogue

The dialogue will:

1. Share key learnings from practical experiences and identify support needs related to advancing climate action in mountains, including through National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs), across different regional and national contexts;
2. Identify and discuss entry points within relevant UNFCCC workstreams to address mountain-related risks, solutions and support needs, including possibilities for action and opportunities to strengthen coherence and implementation within current mandates;
3. Consider options for continued engagement on mountains and climate change under the UNFCCC, including the potential goals, opportunities and limitations of an annual dialogue.

The dialogue is expected to contribute to:

1. Increased understanding of lessons learned from practical experiences and identification of support needs related to advancing climate action in mountains across different regional and national contexts, including through national instruments such as NDCs, NAPs and BTRs;
2. Clearer identification of entry points within relevant UNFCCC workstreams and how these can address mountain-related risks, solutions and support needs, including opportunities to strengthen coherence and implementation within current mandates; and
3. Improved understanding of options for continued engagement on mountains and climate change under the UNFCCC process, including the potential goals, opportunities and limitations of an annual dialogue.

4. Preliminary agenda

Session 1 (10–10:30 CET): Opening and strategic framing
(Plenary)

Guiding question: Why do climate-related risks and solutions that advance climate action in mountains matter for the implementation of the Convention and the Paris Agreement, and why is this discussion timely within the international climate change space?

- Opening by SB Chairs
- Overview and expectation of the dialogue by co-facilitators
- A high-level keynote setting the overall framing of the dialogue

Session 2 (10:30–11:30 CET): Key learnings from practical experiences and support needs related to advancing climate action in mountains, including through NAPs, NDCs and BTRs across different regions and contexts.

(Inputs from countries and experts, and plenary discussion)

Guiding questions:

What key learning and support needs have emerged from practical experiences in advancing climate action in mountains across different regions and contexts?

- *How are mountain-related issues being reflected in national instruments, including NDCs, NAPs and BTRs?*
- *What key learnings have emerged on challenges, enabling conditions and success factors for advancing climate action in mountains?*
- *How can mountain climate action contribute to wider adaptation, resilience and sustainable development outcomes, including beyond mountain regions?*
- *What lessons have emerged regarding the identification of support needs and access to finance?*

Session 3 (11:30–13:00 CET): Entry points within relevant UNFCCC workstreams to address mountain-related risks, solutions and support needs, including possible need for action and opportunities to strengthen coherence and implementation within current mandates

(Overview presentation on the entry points within relevant UNFCCC mandates, break-out groups organized around topics/clusters and reporting back)

Guiding questions:

- *Which existing UNFCCC workstreams provide relevant entry points and how can these be used more effectively to address mountain-related risks, solutions and support needs?*
- *What practical follow-up could help make better use of the entry points while avoiding duplication?*
- *What are the opportunities and possible need for action to strengthen coherence, visibility and implementation within current mandates?*

Lunch break (13:00–15:00 CET)

Reporting back from break-out groups from Session 3
(15:00–15:45 CET)

Session 4 (15:45–17:30 CET): Options for continued engagement on mountains and climate change under the UNFCCC, including the potential goals, opportunities and limitations of an annual dialogue.

(Break-out groups and reporting back)

Guiding questions:

- *What forms of continued engagement on mountains and climate change could best support implementation, coherence and knowledge exchange under the UNFCCC process?*
- *What goals or functions could an annual dialogue on mountains and climate change serve within the UNFCCC process?*
- *What are the opportunities and limitations of an annual dialogue on mountains and climate change, and what practical considerations should be taken into account, including how to avoid duplication?*
- *What alternative scenarios or iterations may be considered?*

Reporting back from break-out groups from Session 4

Session 5 (17:30–18:00 CET): Synthesis of key messages and closing (Plenary)

Guiding questions: What key messages and recommendations have emerged from the discussion? What considerations have emerged from the dialogue that could inform continued engagement on mountains and climate change under the UNFCCC process?