

## CONCEPT NOTE: PARVAT MANTHAN REGIONAL CONCLAVE

### A Dialogue for Enhanced Service Delivery in Water, Used Water and Waste Management for Hill Cities

3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Venue: India Habitat Centre (IHC), New Delhi

#### BACKGROUND

With the launch of Parvat Manthan: Manifestation of clean and sustainable hill states by the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), the forum continues to work extensively to bring together the states of the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) and other mountain countries to act and achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs especially 6, 11 and 13). The forum aims to build a collaborative and responsive platform that provides handholding support and knowledge exchange among the hill towns and cities through active engagement with each other and the provincial and central governments to make the mountain settlements inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient.

NIUA conducted a series of consultation meetings earlier to understand the dynamic issues, challenges, and opportunities posed by the hill cities in the Indian Himalayan region, largely concerning water and sanitation. The first consultation meeting was held on 14th-15th July 2022 in Leh, Ladakh. The meeting's takeaways were i) the realisation of the absence of an urban forum in hilly regions that was collectively echoed; ii) a network created including around 25 participating organisations working in the Hills, iii) emphasis on identifying lighthouse cities, and iv) generate evidence and amplify the learnings to other hill cities.

The second consultation was organised in collaboration with the Urban Development Department, Government of Sikkim on 2nd December 2022 in Gangtok, Sikkim to initiate a conversation between key decision makers from the Urban Development Departments of 10 States and 2 Union Territories from the Himalayan and North-East region of India. In this consultation meeting, state officials' voices were collated to better understand the ground realities, problems, and opportunities of the Hilly states.

Further, a workshop conducted on “Improving WASH Service Delivery in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR)” in December 2023 was attended by elected representatives from 10 states of IHR which highlighted a need for tailored financial architecture and legislative framework for hilly states in India to support sustainable policies. It emphasised decentralising governance to empower local bodies and build capacity for WASH functions. Given the diverse and challenging context in the mountains, a unified urban-rural WASH vision is crucial. The workshop highlighted issues of scattered settlements, inadequate infrastructure planning, lack of accountability and awareness over mere asset creation, the need for effective monitoring, and financial resource allocation.

Building on the previous learnings and ensuring sustainable development for the mountain regions, the Parvat Manthan forum leverages these past takeaways to advance a regional dialogue on clean and sustainable mountain settlements through the upcoming conclave.

## ABOUT THE CONCLAVE

Set against the breathtaking backdrop of the Himalayas, the Parvat Manthan regional conclave serves as a vital platform for addressing the urgent challenges faced by hill cities. This conclave focuses on critical themes including water and climate, sustainable municipal finance, integrated water resource management, equitable sanitation, decentralised waste management, and climate-sensitive waste strategies. These themes reflect the pressing realities of water, waste and climate change all of which significantly impact the delicate ecosystems of the Indian Himalayan Region.

The conclave will delve into key issues such as the growing concerns around water scarcity and climate resilience, exploring how integrated water resource management can be tailored to the unique needs of hilly regions. Discussions on strengthening municipal finance will reflect the challenges of fund utilisation by these states and thus aiming to enhance sustainable service delivery, ensuring that local governments can effectively address the diverse needs of their communities.

With a special emphasis on youth engagement, the conclave will provide an opportunity for students to showcase their research and projects related to the themes of the conference through poster presentations. This initiative aims to foster a new generation of leaders dedicated to sustainable development in the hill regions.

Additionally, the conclave will introduce a technology-driven element by bringing together private sector participants. These organisations will have the opportunity to present their innovative technological solutions in the realms of water and waste management, emphasising climate-resilient designs. Stall spaces will be available for these participants, facilitating direct interaction and collaboration with attendees.

The sessions will focus on enabling equitable sanitation services and implementing decentralised liquid waste management technologies, which are critical for promoting health and well-being in these often-remote and ecologically sensitive areas. The conference will also present solid and legacy waste management from a climate perspective, offering innovative solutions that respect the fragile Indian Himalayan Region environment.

The goal of the conclave is to strengthen networks, share knowledge, and empower communities to safeguard the socio-ecological resilience of the Himalayas. The conclave will also provide an opportunity for like minded institutions to promote their initiatives on various subjects and act as a launching pad for the release of knowledge products developed by the various institutions. By elevating these critical conversations, the Parvat Manthan Forum aims to illuminate pathways toward an inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient future for Himalayan communities and beyond, ensuring the well-being of both present and future generations.

## OBJECTIVES

- **Facilitate Knowledge Exchange:** Establish a platform for experts and stakeholders to share insights on water management, waste reduction, and climate resilience in hill cities.
- **Advocate for Sustainable Policies:** Collaborate with stakeholders to continue the dialogue on targeted policies addressing water scarcity, sanitation, and waste management for local government in the hill cities.
- **Promote Youth Engagement:** Support students and young professionals involvement by providing opportunities to present innovative research and projects, fostering future leaders in sustainability.
- **Showcase Technological Innovations:** Connect private sector participants with local decision-makers to present climate-resilient solutions in water and waste management, encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- **Ideation for New Research and Capacity Building Streams:** Participating organisations will identify key areas for research and capacity building, focusing on sustainable water and waste management

## TARGET AUDIENCES

A diverse group of individuals from various cities and towns of the Himalayan region and beyond:

- Government Officials and Policy Makers
- Urban Planners and Engineers
- Researchers and Academicians
- Think tanks, NGOs and Community organisations
- Students and Youth Leaders

## GALLERY-WALK

- **Poster presentation - Student Category (Post-graduate and PhD students)**
- **Technology exhibition-** Private players from the sector will be allowed to display their products/technologies/innovations.  
Dedicated space for stalls will be provided by NIUA at the venue.

# AGENDA

3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024

## DAY 1: VISION FOR A WATER-WISE HIMALAYA

9:00-9:30

Registration

9:30-10:00

Gallery walk: Exhibition and posters

10:00-10:30

Inaugural and keynote addresses  
Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)

10:30-10:45

Context-setting and introduction

10:45-11:00

Launch of knowledge products

11:00-11:30

TEA BREAK

### SESSIONS

11:30-13:00

Session 1: Water and climate: The growing concern in mountain settlements

13:00-14:00

LUNCH BREAK

14:00-15:30

Session 2: Integrated water resource management in hilly region

15:30-16:00

TEA BREAK

16:00-17:30

Session 3: Enabling, developing and sustaining an environment for equitable sanitation services

17:30-17:45

Closing and reflection of Day 1

19:30 onwards

NETWORKING DINNER

## DAY 2: UNDERSTANDING SOLID AND LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT FOR THE HILL CONTEXT

10:00-10:15 Context-setting and introduction

10:15-10:30 Launch of knowledge products

10:30-11:00 TEA BREAK

### SESSIONS

11:00-12:30 Session 4: Solid and legacy waste management in the hilly regions with a climate lens

12:30-13:00 Gallery walk: Exhibition and posters

13:00-14:00 LUNCH BREAK

14:00-15:30 Session 5: Strengthening finance for sustainable service delivery in hilly regions

15:30-16:00 TEA BREAK

16:00-17:30 Session 6: Decentralised liquid waste management technologies in the Himalayas

17:30-18:00 Reflections and closing remarks

19:30 onwards NETWORKING DINNER

In Partnership with:

