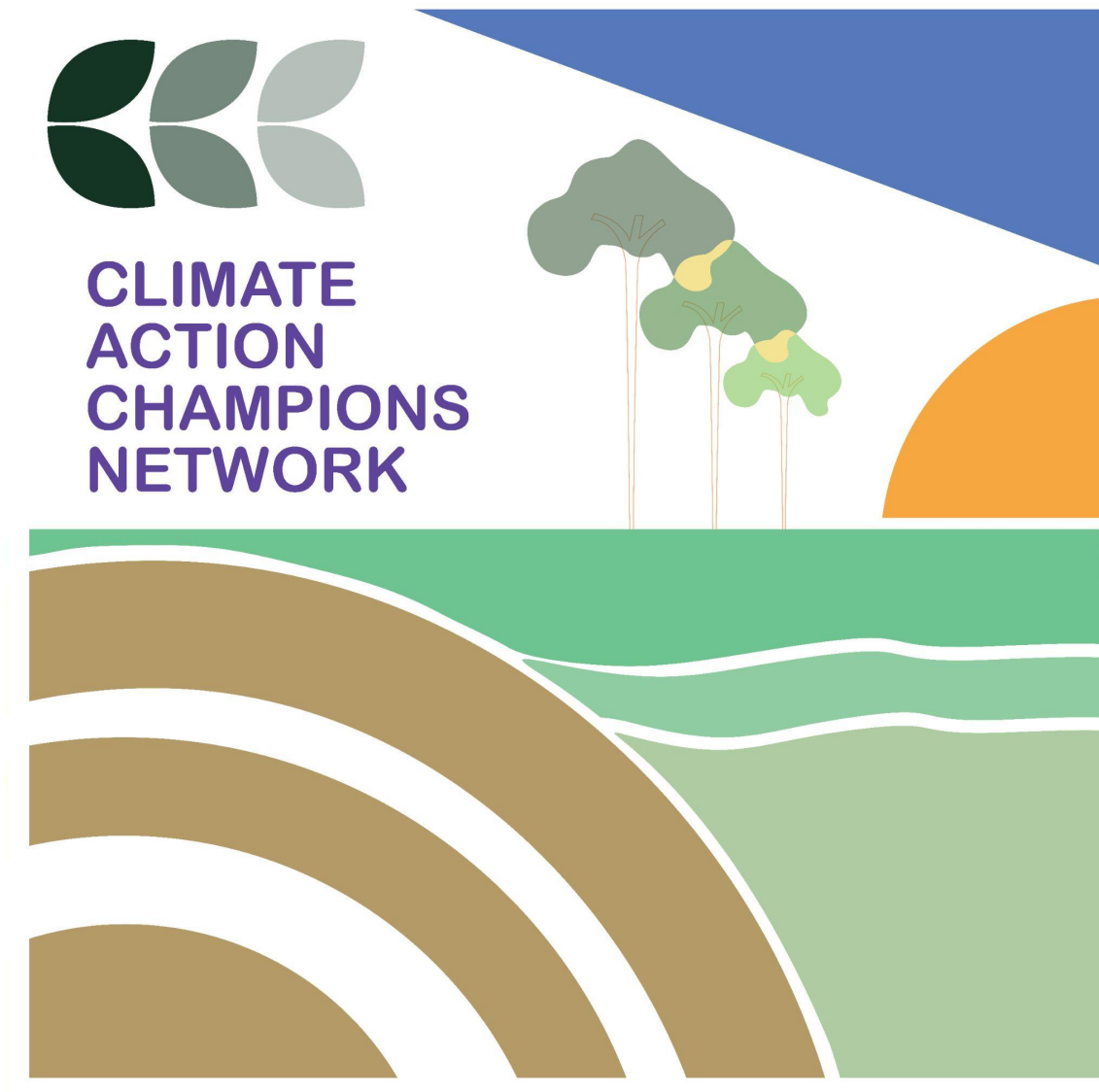


Climate Action Champions Network

Program Booklet | First Convening



Kathmandu, Nepal | September 6-7, 2022

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Climate change stands as the most critical transnational threat facing the modern world. South Asia, one of the worst impacted regions due to climate change, understands this intimately. Rising sea levels, increasingly destructive weather events affect India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh equally, just as flooding in the Himalayan foothills is a problem both for Nepal and for India. Bhutan is experiencing significant loss of biodiversity. Climate-based challenges in South Asia thus cut across borders and require a joint approach by governments, academia and civil society in the region. All these countries are faced with three drastic transitions simultaneously: the climate transition; the urbanisation transition; and the demographic transition. In this context, it is essential to build pathways for the countries of the region that combine strategic autonomy, sustainable urbanisation, growth and livelihoods, and low-carbon transformations. As one of the world's youngest regions, future success or failure in combating the multi-dimensional challenges caused by climate change will rest on the shoulders of South Asia's numerous aspirational youth, who must take the lead in shaping public debate and policy on climate change.

CACN takes one step forward in the inclusion of young leaders, by giving a central role to their voices, ideas and creativity to respond to the multi-faceted risks posed by climate change. An international team of young leaders will therefore join forces at Kathmandu, Nepal to share their knowledge and ideas through expert discussions, workshops and other activities. The main objective of the event is to find recommendations, solutions and ideas in the effort of mitigating climate change as well as building climate resilience within systems and communities in the region.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

The Climate Action Champions Network initiative has engaged 100 Cohorts from five countries - India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, for their potential to lead climate action policies and initiatives in their respective countries and in the wider South Asian and Indo-Pacific Region. The 100 individuals have been selected through a competitive application-based process, comprising young leaders from diverse backgrounds including government, business, academia, civil society, and media, between the ages of 18-35.

The program is being organised by the lead implementer, Observer Research Foundation from India, in conjunction with the the co-implementers Genlab from Bangladesh, Institute for Strategic and Socio-Economic Research (ISSR) from Nepal, and Sri Lanka Development Journalists Forum (SDJF) from Sri Lanka. The program is being hosted in partnership with the State Department of the United States Government.

The program aims to explore a multitude of global issues with local resonance, covering green technology industry, impact of climate change on biodiversity, climate-smart agriculture, climate finance, and climate change policy-making. The cohort will also delve into the wider climate change and development agenda, by looking at the intersection of climate change with developmental indicators such as gender, global health, and urbanisation.

In addition to this core group of 100 cohorts, the program will also engage with a wider set of 100 individuals who applied for this program but were not selected in the top 100. This wider group will comprise another 20 individuals in each of the five countries – India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan.

TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT

The expected outcomes of the Climate Action Champions Program include:

- **Leadership and Innovation:** Capacity to undertake climate action initiatives in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Knowledge Creation:** Proficiency in important topics pertaining to climate change and sustainable development.
- **Networks and Communities:** A diverse community and network of experts, practitioners and policy influencers.
- **Capacity Building:** Learning new skills and capacities.
- **Climate policy recommendations:** Deliberations conducted over the course of three conferences are expected to deliver actionable policy recommendations (related to the specific aspects of climate action taken up by the cohort).

The goal of the program is an ambitious climate action proposition for South Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific region designed and voiced by its young leaders. These objectives are complementary to the goals of the program:

- To inspire South Asian leaders to champion an ambitious climate action agenda in their respective countries and in the wider Indo-Pacific region.
- To provide the South Asian community with in-depth thematic understanding of climate change mitigation and adaptation, with an intersectional perspective of climate action.
- To build a network of individuals/organisations within and across South Asia that work towards climate change mitigation and adaptation to prepare a cohesive vision on climate action.
- To create a collaborative framework where climate champions can partner in shaping national and regional policies and in bringing about innovative solutions.
- To explore and facilitate change on key issues that are relevant to South Asia including conserving and restoring forests, water and wastewater management, carbon emissions and adaptation, and air pollution

Agenda

TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE
Day 0: September 5, 2022		
	Arrival of Network Members	Hotel
19:00 - 22:00	Welcome Dinner and Networking (Not a sit-down dinner. Attendees will be able to move around and interact with each other.)	Hotel
Day 1: September 6, 2022		
08:30 -10:00	Breakfast	The Fun Cafe, Radisson Hotel
10:30 - 11:00	Inaugural Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcome Remarks by Nilanjan Ghosh, Director Centre for New Economic Diplomacy and Kolkata centre, Observer Research Foundation, India ● Inaugural Address by Rt. Hon'ble Minister of Forest and Environment, Pradeep Yadav 	Ballroom Cluster style seating

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vote of Thanks by Govind Nepal, Director, Institute for Strategic and Socio-Economic Research, ISSR, Nepal 	
11:00 - 11:15	Special Address by Elizabeth Horst , Deputy Assistant Secretary for Pakistan Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs	Ballroom
11:15–11:30	Group photograph	Ballroom
11:30 - 12:45	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions of the co-implementers & their welcome address to the cohorts (by one representative of the organisation) • Introduction of the GO's and GOR's • Introduction of the cohorts (Elevator Pitch format) 	Ballroom
12:45 - 13:30	Interactive Discussion Green Transitions: GHGs, Climate Change and Adaptive Responses [*]	Ballroom
	Our climate is rapidly changing. It is imperative to arrest rising atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases (GHGs), particularly carbon dioxide - the largest driver of global warming. Innovations for efficient carbon capture, utilisation & storage, transition to clean carbon technologies,	

etc. can all help achievement of net-zero emissions targets. At the same time, adoption of green transition pathways should factor in the socio-economic realities of the people, especially for the Global South population. For example, South Asian countries are some of the most vulnerable regions to climate change-induced risks. There is, therefore, a need for these countries to strike a good balance between mitigation efforts and adaptation strategies as a part of their climate action. The panel proposes to explore - which options would prove to be the most rewarding for the South Asian countries for effectively transitioning into low carbon economies? What are the future challenges that need to be addressed to ensure that climate action policies emerge as win-win scenarios?

Moderator/Chair:

Nilanjan Ghosh, Director, Centre for New Economic Diplomacy and Kolkata Centre, Observer Research Foundation

Speakers:

- **Radha Wagle**, Joint Secretary, Chief of Climate Change, Ministry of Forest and Environment, Government of Nepal
- **Nazneen I. Khan**, Researcher and Senior Officer, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), Bangladesh

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fareena Ruzaik, Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka (Hybrid) ● Kartiki Naik, Program Manager, Urban Development, World Resource Institute, India ● Ugyen Dorji, Associate Professor, Faculty of Forestry, College of Natural Resources, Royal University of Bhutan, Bhutan 	
13:30 - 14:30	Lunch	Waterfall Garden
14:30- 15:00	<p>Spotlight Conversation Nahim Razzaq, Member of Parliament, Convenor of Climate Parliament, Bangladesh</p> <p>Moderator/Chair: Aparna Roy, Fellow & Lead, Climate Change and Energy Programme, Observer Research Foundation, India</p> <p>The conversation shall highlight the significance of creating a dedicated Climate Parliament, especially in the developing countries in South Asia, given their vulnerabilities in the face of intensifying climate risk. The interaction would map out the potential of strong political will in accelerating progress towards climate action.</p>	Ballroom
15:00 -16:00	Capacity Building Workshop Creating program design and funding proposal for climate positive activism and change	Ballroom

	<p>Conducted by:</p> <p>Sara Diamond, Technical Lead, Natural Climate Change Solutions, USAID; AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow; Senior Consultant, Fem Collab</p> <p>Randall Quinn, Senior Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Specialist, Office of Press and Public Diplomacy, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, U.S. Department of State</p> <p>Sara Diamond and Randall Quinn will facilitate a conversation on how to create a program design and funding proposal for climate positive activism and change. Great ideas need funding, but sometimes the best ideas are not selected due to incomplete applications or overly generalized concepts. Randall reviews hundreds of grant applications annually for the US Department of State, and Sara has reviewed proposals for local government environmental competitions, academic awards, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, among others. They will share their most important tips for success in program design and grant writing, and expect to attract lots of questions, ideas, and examples to the workshop.</p>	
<p>16:00 -16:15</p>	<p>Tea/Coffee Break</p>	<p>Pre-Function area</p>

<p>16:15 -16:30</p>	<p>Expert Speak: Financing Climate Action for a Green and Inclusive Future</p> <p>Bindu Nath Lohani, Distinguished Fellow, Emerging Market Forum, DC, USA and formerly Vice-President of the Asian Development Bank for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development.</p>	<p>Ballroom</p>
<p>16:30 -17:30</p>	<p>Youth Townhall Climate Resilience Greening Lands: Water Management and Forest Restoration</p> <p>Speaker: Manvendra Singh Shekhawat, MD, MRS Group of Hotels</p> <p>Moderator/ Chair: Kartiki Naik, Program Manager, Urban Development, World Resource Institute, India</p> <p>Climate resilience, forests and water resources are intrinsically linked. About 83 million people are being added to the global population annually, with most rapid concentration in South Asia, generating further pressure on its forests and agriculture sector. At the same time, the world is not far from a global water crisis with an estimated 40 percent shortfall in freshwater resources by 2030. Therefore, there is an urgent need to sustainably manage these resilience-building resources. Moreover, climate regulating forest cover and water bodies also help in mitigating climate change and drive sustainable development.</p>	<p>Ballroom</p>

	<p>In this scenario, we need to urgently rethink how we can effectively manage our water and forest resources.</p> <p>Manvendra Singh Shekhawat, a businessman and hotelier from Rajasthan, has executed a climate resilient plan of action, inspired by local communities residing around the suburban Jaipur. He changed the fortunes of 500 acres of barren, arid land by successfully implementing projects focused on water and food security. Using the regeneration methods, he turned this region into a sanctuary for native trees and species. Shekhawat will bring the story of his biggest sustainable built project 'Dhun.' https://dhun.life/</p> <p>This youth town hall is designed to be:</p> <p>a) Deep thinking exercise: Designing living environments on first principles steered by Shekhawat</p> <p>b) A moderated interactive session where the speaker will share his success stories and answer critical questions such as how to keep more forest landscapes intact, manage them more sustainably, and restore the landscapes which we have already lost. How can safe wastewater management allow us to harness energy and nutrients and ultimately help further restoration efforts? How can we redefine living spaces in a climate constrained world?</p>	
<p>19:30 -21:30</p>	<p>Dinner</p>	<p>Waterfall Garden</p>

Day 2: September 7, 2022		
08:00 -10:00	Breakfast	The Fun Cafe, Radisson Hotel
10:00 - 13:00	Simulation Exercise Policy Hackathon Air Pollution Breathing Spaces: Air Quality and Adaptive Responses Hosted by GenLabs, Bangladesh	Waterfall Garden Cluster seating for group
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch	Waterfall
14:00 -15:00	Simulation Exercise / Hackathon Contd.	Ballroom
14:00 -14:30	Debrief of the pitches	
14:30 -15:00	Address by Sunita Dangol, Deputy Mayor, Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) Followed by Announcement of Results & Prize Distribution	
15:00 -16:00	Interactive Discussion Blue and Beyond: Protecting our Oceans and Ending Plastic Pollution	Ballroom

Ocean ecosystems in the Bay of Bengal (BoB) region (and the Indo-Pacific) have been a source of various provisioning, regulating and cultural services, providing livelihood support to the large South Asian population. In the post-COVID-19 world, investment in these resources can very well aid post-pandemic recovery processes enabling a blue economy driven growth for these countries. However, over-exploitation and anthropogenic disruptions have also necessitated efforts to be made towards protecting these vulnerable systems. Microplastics pollution has emerged as one of the major threats to marine ecosystems, often generating spill over effects on related ecosystem services. There's a need to track flow-in of micro plastics from the marine environment to the riverine or estuarine systems as well. In this context it becomes important to discuss, what policies and practices must be conceptualised to affect marine waste solutions and sustainable compost streams? How can the accrual of blue benefits incorporate sustainable consumption?

Moderator/ Chair:

Nilanjan Ghosh, Director Centre for New Economic Diplomacy and Kolkata centre, Observer Research Foundation, India

Speakers:

- **Madhav Karki**, Advisor on Climate Change to the Prime Minister of Nepal; Member, Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP) at

	<p>IPBES/UN & Deputy Chair, IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dilanthi Koralagama, Senior lecturer, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka and Country Advisor, Young Professionals for Agriculture Research and Development (YPARD), Sri Lanka ● Mahua Saha, Ph.D, Principal Scientist, Chemical Oceanography Division (COD), National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), India. ● Isha Das, Ph.D, Research Associate, Ecosystem Modeling and Sustainable Fishery Management, Jadavpur University 	
<p>16:00 -17:00</p>	<p>Interactive Discussion Nutrition Chains: Sustainable Agriculture and Resilient Food Systems</p> <p>Since the inception of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation in 1945, thinking about the future of our food systems has become even more critical than before. Impacts of climate change - shifts in soil quality, precipitation, pest regimes, seasonal growth patterns, land degradation, and reduction in biodiversity have significantly impacted agricultural systems in the region. However, the causal links between climate change and food security is manifesting more clearly, particularly in</p>	

the region, considering their shared contexts of nutrition deficiency and rainfed and farm-centred agricultural systems. The panel will aim to radically reimagine the future of food and resilient agriculture systems and how the countries can create an enhanced multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder partnership to promote sustainable agriculture in a post-pandemic world?

Moderator:

Shoba Suri, Nutrition Expert, Senior Fellow- Health Programme, Observer Research Foundation, India

Speakers:

- **Dilanthi Koralagama**, Senior lecturer, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka and Country Advisor, Young Professionals for Agriculture Research and Development (YPARD), Sri Lanka
- **Nazneen I. Khan**, Researcher and Senior Officer, International Center for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), Bangladesh
- **Kewal Prasad Bhandari**, Secretary, Planning Commission, Govt of Nepal
- **Kartiki Naik**, Program Manager, Urban Development, WRI India

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ugyen Dorji, Associate Professor, Faculty of Forestry, College of Natural Resources, Royal University of Bhutan, Bhutan • Isha Das, Ph.D, Research Associate, Ecosystem Modeling and Sustainable Fishery Management, Jadavpur University Ballroom 	
17:00 - 17:15	Tea/Coffee Break	Ballroom
17:15 -18:00	<p>Announcement of Small Grant Program and Group Projects by Margaret MacLeod, First Secretary, Public Diplomacy section at U.S. Embassy India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research projects backed by primary research and surveys • Short films/documentaries • Conference with leading experts in the subject • Business Idea/Industry partnerships • Media campaign to raise awareness 	Ballroom
18:00 -18:30	<p>Concluding Remarks & Way Forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Templer, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S Embassy, Kathmandu, Nepal • Aparna Roy, Fellow & Lead, Climate Change and Energy, ORF 	Ballroom

19:30 -21:30	Farewell Dinner (Not a sit-down dinner. Attendees will be able to move around and interact with each other)	Restaurant at Hotel
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[*] The first half of the interactive sessions will be led by the panellists where they set the context, and the rest will be interactive or cohort led, where the cohorts will ask direct questions to the panellists. The sessions will be moderated.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Name	Country	Name	Country
A.K. Poorna Kumari Perera	Sri Lanka	Nidup Dorji	Bhutan
A.M.A. Saja	Sri Lanka	Nikesh Balami	Nepal
Aditya Singh	India	Oshani Dilini Priyamali Silva	Sri Lanka
Afreen Hussain	India	Pema Choden	Bhutan
Ahallya David	Sri Lanka	Piushani Ellegala	Sri Lanka
Akila Shanmugaraj	India	Prekshya Khanal	Nepal
Amandeep Srivastava	India	Purnima Mondal	Bangladesh
Amit Agrawal	Nepal	Rabita Rejwana	Bangladesh
Anita Thapa	Nepal	Rajesh Poudel	Nepal
Anson Sando	India	Rajesh Shanmugan	India
Anu Anna Jo	India	Ramanuj Mitra	India
Aparnaa Murugavel	India	Ramu Sapkota	Nepal
Arun Kanti Howlader	Bangladesh	Ranjit Kumar	India
Aryan Andaleeb Azim	Bangladesh	Ranju Magar	Nepal
Bellanthudawage Kushan Aravinda Bellanthudawa	Sri Lanka	Rassu Manandhar	Nepal
Bhawana Pradhan	Bhutan	Riffat Ara Zannat Tama	Bangladesh
Biraj Gautam	Nepal	Rijve Arefin	Bangladesh
Deependra Pourel	Bhutan	Rikesh Gurung	Bhutan
Deepsha Dhal	India	Rohit Parakh	India
Dorji Dema	Bhutan	Roshna Subedi Mishra	Nepal
Dulanga Witharanage	Sri Lanka	Rupali Handa	India
Erandika Ediriweera	Sri Lanka	Saajid Malhardeen	Sri Lanka
Faisal Mahmood	Bangladesh	Sahaana Sankar	India
Geethika Mannaperuma	Sri Lanka	Sandeep Sada	Nepal
Gobishankar Sathiyamohan	Sri Lanka	Sanjay Maurya	India
Gopal Kumar Mohoto	Bangladesh	Sarah Jabeen Kristy	Bangladesh
Hafsah Muheed	Sri Lanka	Senura Fonseka	Sri Lanka
Hamdhan Munawwar	Sri Lanka	Shahla	Bangladesh
Hasanka Padukka	Sri Lanka	Shweta Dhouhadel	Nepal
Hasin Tabassum	Bangladesh	Sijal Pokharel	Nepal
Henry Mitchel	Sri Lanka	Sonam Jurme	Bhutan

Name	Country	Name	Country
Jambay	Bhutan	Sonam Palden	Bhutan
Jayprakash Nayak	India	Sonam Tshogyel	Bhutan
Joe John George	India	Sonia Awale	Nepal
Jony	Nepal	Soumya Ranjan Biswal	India
Kanika Prajapat	India	Subash Sapkota	Nepal
Karma Uden	Bhutan	Sudesh Pokhrel	Bhutan
Kavindu Ediriweera	Sri Lanka	Suyam Baidya	Nepal
M Arifur Rahman	Bangladesh	Taslima Akter Rima	Bangladesh
Mahmuda Yasmin Kona	Bangladesh	Tasnia Khandaker Prova	Bangladesh
Malsha Sandeepani Gunasinghe	Sri Lanka	Tika Ram Poudel (Santosh)	Nepal
Manish Regmi	Nepal	Tshering Denkar	Bhutan
Mathew Jose	India	Tshering Dorji	Bhutan
Md. Ilias Miah	Bangladesh	Tshering Lhamo	Bhutan
Melisha Chowdhury	Bangladesh	Tshering Tobgay	Bhutan
Minuri Perera	Sri Lanka	Udit Chandra Aryal	Nepal
Mohammad Shahadat Hossain	Bangladesh	Ugyen Tshomo	Bhutan
Mst Arifa Yeasmin	Bangladesh	Vandana Muralidharan	India
Nafia Islam Faria	Bangladesh	Yam Kumar Poudel	Bhutan
Neshat Unzum	Bangladesh	Zaineb Akbarally	Sri Lanka

CHARTER OF PARTICIPATION

The Climate Action Champions Network (CACN) is an inclusive and diverse forum. We are committed to ensuring that the conference is an open and safe venue for every attendee, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, religion, or ability.

Everyone associated with CACN including participants, organisers, and hotel staff are required to adhere to the Charter of Participation and understand the repercussions of any violations. We will also announce house rules and updates throughout the conference, which we request all to follow as well.

VIOLATIONS OF THE CHARTER OF PARTICIPATION

We expect all participants to abide by our expected conduct guidelines and respect our anti-harassment policy during the conference. This includes conference-related social events and online social media engagement.

If asked by conference organisers to cease prohibited behaviour, you are expected to comply immediately. If inappropriate behaviour persists, the conference organisers may take any action they deem appropriate, including immediate expulsion from the conference and/or reporting to appropriate authorities.

Reporting Inappropriate Conduct

If you are subjected to harassment or other unacceptable behaviour, please notify a conference organiser. Event organisers will be accessible and present throughout the conference.

If an emergency situation arises, please contact **Naresh Shrestha**- our local Co-Implementer (+977 9801024648) or **Suyash Das** (+91 9830141111) or **Vijay Seth** (+91 9910028657).

EXPECTED CONDUCT

We expect all those involved to display the highest level of professionalism throughout the conference. This conduct includes, but is not limited to:

Conference Participation

Please be respectful, understanding, and mindful of fellow participants. Conversations should be framed in an open and inclusive manner. Profanity or slurs are strictly prohibited.

When you attend a panel discussion, we request you to stay seated for the entire duration of the event.

Attendance and Dress Code

We restrict access of the CACN convening to selected cohorts and participants from the wider pool of Nepal only with valid confirmation cards. All participants must attend the conference in formal attire (business formal / traditional clothing).

Covid-19 Protocols

Please note that as an invitee to the CACN, you are required to be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19 and are expected to fully cover your nose and mouth with a mask in all indoor public areas at the conference venue.

Drugs and Alcohol

We abide by and enforce all local, state, and central laws and regulations surrounding possession and/or use of illegal substances. In addition, please limit tobacco use to permitted areas and consume alcohol in moderation.

Safety

We hope that our participants accept a shared responsibility of conference safety and notify conference organisers of any danger or misconduct they may witness. The possession of weapons or violence in any form is not permitted. In an effort to ensure order throughout the conference, we do not permit organised demonstrations or disruptions of any kind.

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

- We do not tolerate any form of harassment at the Kigali Global Dialogue. Our zero-tolerance policy prohibits all forms of harassment including, but not limited to:
- Offensive or derogatory comments related to gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, religion, or ability.
- Aggressive or derogatory comments towards other participants, opinions, or personal expressions;
- Sexual comments or unwanted physical contact;
- The display of inappropriate images or memorabilia;
- Violence, intimidation, threats; or stalking;
- Inappropriate or unwanted social contact with other participants; and
- Excessive or unwanted photography of conference participants or organisers.

CLIMATE
ACTION
CHAMPIONS
NETWORK

CORE ORGANISING TEAM OF THE CONVENING



APARNA ROY, Fellow and Lead, Climate Change and Energy, at the Centre for New Economic Diplomacy, Observer Research Foundation



NARESH SHRESTHA, Member, Board of Directors of Institute for Strategic and Socio-Economic Research and Special Life Member-Confederation of Asia Pacific Chamber of Commerce and Industry



SUYASH DAS, Project Coordinator, Observer Research Foundation



SANJU DHAKAL, Project Officer, Institute for Strategic and Socio-Economic Research (ISSR, Nepal)



SOHINI NAYAK, Junior Fellow, Observer Research Foundation, India



VIJAY SETH, Manager, Outreach and Programs, Observer Research Foundation, India