

TENTATIVE CONFERENCE PROGRAM

<u>Nature-based Solutions (NBS) for</u> <u>Enhanced Climate Resilience and Livelihoods in the Himalayas.</u> Monday 3 – Thursday 6 August 2026 Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) Kashmir Theme: Securing and Sustaining Ecosystems and Livelihoods in the Himalayas.	
Day 1, Monday 3rd Aug 2026 09:00-10:00	Arrival and Registration
10:00-11:00	INAUGURAL SESSION
11:00 – 12:00	Tea Break
12:00-13:15	Technical Session 1: Climate Resilient Himalayas. <i>The session focuses on the current and emerging science/technology-enabled NBS opportunities for securing and sustaining climate-resilient ecosystems and livelihoods in the Himalayas.</i> Chair: Prof. N. H. Ravindranath, IISC, Bengaluru 1.1 NBS and Climate Resilience in Asia Pacific: ADB's Perspective. <i>Dr. Rabindra Osti. Principal Water Resources Management Specialist. Asian Development Bank (ADB), Manila, Philippines</i> 1.2 Mainstreaming Nature-Based Solutions into Urban Infrastructure and Development Planning: Concepts and Practices. <i>Mr. Umar Khan. Green Climate Fund/KfW.</i> Q&A
13:15-14:15	Poster/Industry Exhibition Inauguration. Session Coordinator: Dr. Irfan Bashir/Dr. Yasir Altaf

14:15-15:30	Technical Session 2: NBS Opportunities in the Jhelum River Basin (JRB) <i>The session focuses on the current and emerging NBS opportunities and technologies for securing and sustaining climate-resilient JRB ecosystems and livelihoods.</i> Chair: Prof. V. K. Gaur, CSIR Fourth Paradigm Institute, Bengaluru 2.1 Wetland Network-enabled Flood Risk Management: Prevention, Mitigation and Adaptation in JRB <i>Professor Humayun Rashid; Dr. Irfan Maqbool, IUST.</i> 2.2 NBS for Climate Resilient Watershed Conservation and Drought Risk Management: A Practitioner's Perspective. <i>Professor Javed Hussain Mir and Dr. Sumaira Zaz, IUST</i> 2.3 Nature-Nanotechnology coupling for sustainable agrifood production in JRB: Concept and Practice. <i>Professor Ahsan Ul Haq Qurashi, Khalifa University, UAE.</i> Q&A.
15:30-15:45	Tea Break
15:45 – 17:00	Technical Session 3: Climate Resilient River Basin Management: International and Regional Experience. Chair: Dr. Rajan Kotru, GIZ, Delhi, India 3.1 Wetlands and ecosystem-based flood risk management. <i>Mr. Ritesh Kumar. Director, Wetlands International, South Asia.</i> 3.2 Water and Disaster Risk Reduction in the Himalayas: ICIMOD's Perspectives <i>Dr. Neera Shrestha Pradhan, ICIMOD, TBC (TBC)</i> Q&A.
18:00-	Networking Dinner Venue: (TBC)

Day 2 Tuesday 4th Aug 2026.	NATURAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS (NCS) <i>Focus on science, technology and practice of nature-based climate change solutions (mitigation and adaptation).</i>
09:45 – 10:00	Recap of Day 1
10:00 – 11:15	Technical Session 4: Nature-Based Mitigation and Adaptation <i>The session focuses on the current and emerging NCS opportunities for securing and sustaining climate-resilient ecosystems and livelihoods in the Himalayas.</i> Session Coordinator: Dr. Sumira Nazir Zaz, Coordinator, ESCC, IUST Venue: Rumi Library Conference Room Chair: Prof. P. S. Roy. Indian Institute of Remote Sensing 4.3 Private Public Partnerships (PPPs) as tools for Climate action: ADBs experience' Mr. Shuaib M. Kamili, PPP Market Development Advisory Specialist, ADB. Q&A.
11:15 – 12:00	Technical Session 5: NCS opportunities in Jhelum River Basin (JRB). <i>The session highlights forest carbon storage and trading potential; and NCS-enabled green business and job creation opportunities in JRB.</i> Chair: Prof. Shamim Ahmad Shah, Registrar, IUST 5.1 NBS for improved agriculture and forest productivity and incomes in the Jhelum River Basin <i>Professor Javed Hussain Mir and Dr. Rayees Shah, IUST.</i> 5.2 Converting Apple Orchard Pruning “Waste” into Climate-Smart Rural Enterprise. Dr. Tariq Abdullah and Dr. Mehak Majeed, IUST. Q&A.
12:00 – 12:15	Tea Break

12:15-13:15	Technical Session 6. Digital Technologies and Natural Climate Solutions: <i>The session focuses on Geo-AI enabled NCS in forestry; rural economic development and diversification, and agrifood sector.</i> Chair: Prof. Mohammad Sultan Bhat Keynote: Forest Carbon Mapping <i>Prof. P. S. Roy. Indian Institute of Remote Sensing.</i> 6.1 Digital and Community-Driven Natural Climate Solutions: ACORN Project in Kyrgyzstan. <i>Ms. Aidai Zhumasheva, Program Officer, Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO), Seoul, Republic of Korea.</i> 6.2 GeoAI-enabled Paddy Rice Carbon Assessment in JRB: Concept, Preliminary Findings, and Future Plans. <i>Dr. Jasia Bashir and Dr. Asif Banka, IUST.</i> Q&A
13:15 -14:15	Lunch
14:15 -15:30	Technical Session 7 NBS/NCS: International, National and Local Perspectives and Experience. <i>The session focuses on innovative NBS financing and technologies for climate resilient ecosystems and livelihoods.</i> Chair: Dr. I. D. Bhatt Keynote: Innovative NBS/NCS financing approaches and instruments in Asia Pacific. <i>Mr. Alvin Lopez, Asian Development Bank (ADB)</i> 7.1 Financing Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Resilience and Sustainable Livelihoods in Fragile Ecosystems. <i>Mr. Unnikrishnan Divakaran Nair, Senior Climate Change Specialist South Asia Department, ADB</i> Q&A
15:30 – 15:45	Tea Break
15:45 – 17:00	Technical Session:8 NBS/NCS Research and Practice Presentations. Venue: <i>Rumi Conference Library</i> Session Coordinator: <i>Dr. Aabid Bhat, MCSS</i> Chair: Dr. Ruheela Hassan, Dean Outreach, IUST Research Scholars (IUST/External); Practitioner; Industry Presentations.

Day 3 5th Aug 2026.	NBS/NCS Policy and Practice: <i>Focus on science, technology and practice of nature-based climate change solutions (mitigation and adaptation).</i>
09:45 – 10:00	Recap of Day 2
10:00 – 12:00	Technical Session 9: NBS/NCS Policy, Planning, Investment Priorities; and Business Opportunities. <i>The session will involve a multistakeholder (government departments including forest, tourism, flood control and irrigation, urban development; and disaster risk reduction; NBS/NCS researchers/ practitioners; private sector, and civil society) dialogue on identifying NBS/NCS enabling policy, investment and financing priorities for JRB and the Himalayas.</i> Chair: Dr. G. N. Itoo, Director, Center for Good Governance and Policy, IUST.
12:00-12:15	Tea Break
12:15 – 13:15	Technical Session 10: NBS, Livelihoods and Human Well-Being. Chair: Dean, School of Sciences 1. NBS and Climate Resilient Livelihoods in the Himalayas. <i>Mr. Sumit Pokhrel, Senior Natural Resources Specialist, ADB</i> 2. NBS, Ageing Population, and Care Taker Mental Well-Being: Concept and Research Opportunities. <i>Dr. Irfan Bashir, IUST</i> 3. Digitally-enabled NBS: A Practitioner's Perspective. <i>Mr. Lothar Linde, Integrated Spatial Planning specialist (Consultant), ADB.</i> Q&A
13:15 - 14:15	Lunch
14:15 – 15:30	Technical Session:11 NBS/NCS Research and Practice Presentations. Chair: Dean, Outreach Rapporteur: Dr. Sumira Nazir Zaz Research Scholars (IUST/External); Practitioner; Industry Presentations. Q&A.
15:30 – 16:00	Tea Break Venue: Faculty Lounge.
16:00 – 17:00	Technical Session:12 NBS/NCS: IDEA, EXPERIENCE EXCHANGE. <i>This session is focused on bilateral/trilateral interaction to foster post-conference researcher-policy maker-practitioner-business collaboration and partnerships.</i> • Researcher-Researcher interactions. • Researcher-Expert interactions. • Researcher-Practitioner interactions. • Government-Researcher interactions. • Government-Industry interactions. • Government-Practitioner interactions.

DAY 4 Wednesday 6th Aug 2026	Identifying NBS/NCS policy, planning and investment priorities for JRB and the Himalayas. <i>Venue: Amarsingh Club, Srinagar, Kashmir, India.</i>
10:00-12:30	PLENARY SESSION: <i>This session involves government policymakers and planners, academia, NBS/NCS practitioners, business sector and civil society for generating NBS Policy and Investment priorities for the Himalayas and JRB.</i>
10:00 – 11:00	Welcome Remarks. Presentation: Geohistorical Journey of Jhelum River in Kashmir. <i>Professor Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, Vice Chancellor, IUST</i> RECAP: DAY 1, 2 and 3 <i>Javed Hussain Mir, Convener.</i>
11:00 – 11:30	Tea Break
11:30-13:00	OPEN SESSION: NBS Policy and Action Priorities for the Himalayas. <i>Session will involve high level government officials, scientists, practitioners, business sector, and relevant civil society actors in identifying NBS enabling policy, planning and investment priorities for the JRB and the Himalayas.</i>
13:00 -14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	The Way Forward: Strategic NBS/NCS Research, Policy, Planning, and Financing Priorities for the Himalayas. Chair: Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, HVC, IUST. Panelists: Special Invitees and Partners. <i>Led by the Chair and drawing on conference deliberations and the high-level policy dialogue; the panelists/participants will identify (i) NBS/NCS science, technology, policy, and financing priorities for unlocking NBS/NCS potential in the Himalayas; and (ii) an enabling NBS/NCS collaborative research and development platform for securing climate resilient ecosystems and livelihoods in the Himalayas.</i>
15:30 -16:00	Conference Closing; and Vote of Thanks