

# **Britain-Nepal Academic Council**

## **Tenth Annual Lecture**

### **The Protection of Himalayan Biodiversity: Why a Regional Legal Framework?**

**by Dr Ananda Mohan Bhattarai**

**Friday 19 October**

**Reception at 5.30, Lecture at 6.30**

**Room NAB.1.04**

**New Academic Building**

**London School of Economics**

**54 Lincolns Inn Fields, WC2A 3LJ**

**This event has been made possible by a generous donation from the British College in Kathmandu. Please email Dr. Mara Malagodi [[mm112@soas.ac.uk](mailto:mm112@soas.ac.uk)] if you are planning to attend.**

#### **Lecture abstract**

The Himalayan region is home to nearly 100 million people from a huge diversity of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. 80 per cent are subsistence farmers and pastoralists whose lives are heavily dependent upon natural resources. However, the region is facing enormous environmental challenges and the loss of habitats, biodiversity, and traditional knowledge, and these problems are being aggravated by the policies of the governments concerned.

The challenges faced by the Himalayan region seek plural definitions and plural solutions. But there is one issue, closely linked with livelihood rejuvenation, that is already well defined: this is the conservation of biodiversity. Given that the Himalaya is the home of four of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots and two medicinal systems (Ayurveda and Tibetan

medicine) based on local resources and associated knowledge, and that many areas in the Himalaya region are still beyond the reach of modern industrial farming, an early intervention could keep open the promise of a substantial contribution to livelihood rejuvenation.

In the context of existing national practices and emerging regional and international dynamics, biodiversity conservation demands at least three legal and policy responses: the harmonization of national laws and policies; the adoption of a regional framework; and the development of a common approach to unresolved international issues. In his presentation Dr. Bhattarai will argue that a regional legal framework for the conservation of Himalayan biodiversity is imperative, and will present an outline and strategy for negotiation. He will also share his thoughts on how the adoption of a regional treaty might encourage countries to work more closely together in resolving complex issues, thus ushering in sustainable development in the region.

### **Our speaker**

Dr. Ananda Mohan Bhattarai is the author of *Protection of Himalayan Biodiversity: International Environmental Law and a Regional Legal Framework* (Sage Publications, Delhi 2010). His earlier works include *Communities, Forests and Laws of Nepal* (FECOFUN/Pro-Public and CIEL, 2005, co-authored) and *Displacement and Rehabilitation in Nepal* (Anamol, Delhi, 2001). Dr. Bhattarai was a Hubert Humphrey Fellow at MIT, Cambridge, US (2002-03) and Alexander von Humboldt Fellow at the Max Planck Institute of Comparative and Public International Law, Heidelberg (2005-06 & 2008, 2010). He currently works as a judge in the Court of Appeal of Nepal.

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