

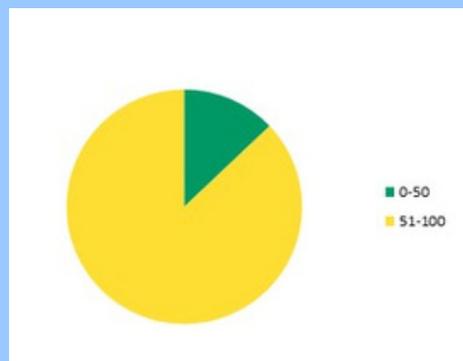
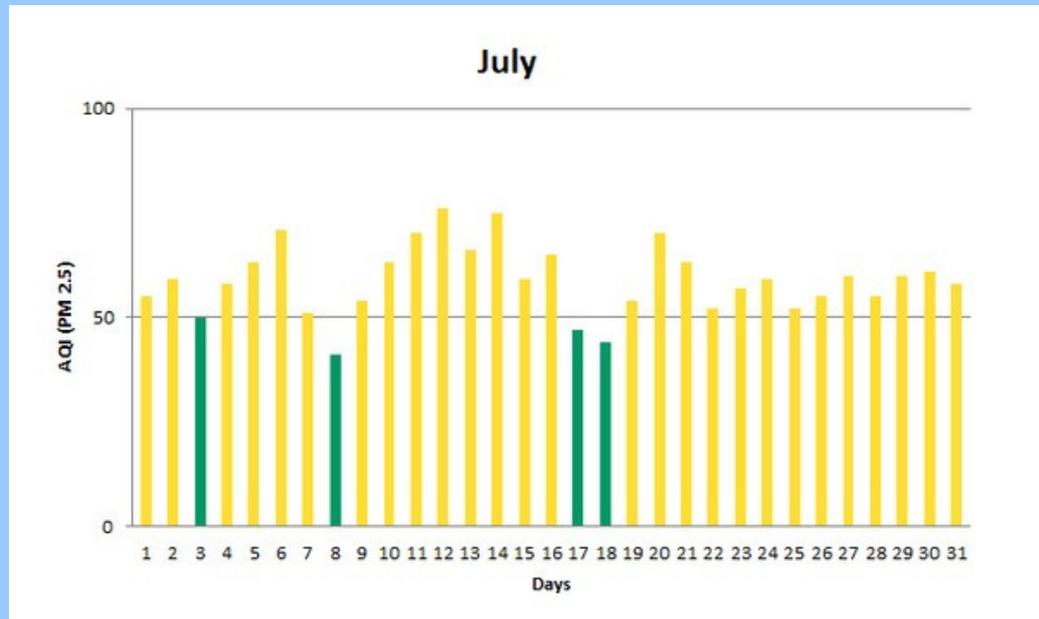


E-Newsletter July 2023

Our Concern, a monthly e-newsletter, is a compilation of news and views from local, and international, media coverage as an attempt to keep our readers abreast on the recent happenings on clean air, energy, and urban mobility and climate change issues.

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- Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
- Moderate
- Unhealthy
- Good

- There were 4 days when the AQI value was below 50 and the air quality posed little to no risk.
- The remaining 27 days were with moderate air quality with AQI values between 51-100, which is acceptable but can cause moderate health issues for a very small number of people.

Air quality in Nepal deteriorating way beyond WHO standard

Despite the fundamental right to clean environment in the constitution major cities of Nepal, including Kathmandu, have continuously witnessed deteriorating air quality. Nepal is ranked in the world's top ten most vulnerable countries in terms of air quality in the world. According to the State of Global Air on Air Quality and Health of Cities 2022 report, 42,100 deaths were recorded in Nepal, including 5,000 in Kathmandu in the year 2019.

Air pollution remains largely unaddressed due to challenges in networking among government stakeholders, inadequate research-based policies, and insufficient attention to the issue. Limited budget and lack of research and development also hinder effective implementation. Most funds generated through the polluter-pay principle have remained unused, except for minor activities.

| Reduction in premature deaths from air pollution if measures are taken to reach 35 µg/m ³ | |
|--|-------------|
| Location | In %(2030) |
| Bangladesh | -50% |
| India (IGP) | -49% |
| India (non-IGP) | -14% |
| Nepal | -67% |
| Pakistan | -53% |
| Srilanka | -1% |
| Total deaths avoided annually | 752000 |

Source | July 8th

Prohibition to use plastic in Kathmandu metropolitan

Kathmandu Metropolitan City has banned the use of plastic. The production, sale, distribution and import of plastic flower bouquets as well as the use of plastic bags thinner than 40 microns have been banned in the metropolitan area from the 1st of today.

An amount of Rs. 27 million has been allocated for the addition of vehicles and equipment used in cleaning work. A separate budget has also been allocated for various studies and research related to the environmental sector including air pollution, noise pollution.



Source | July 17th

How India's trash mountains are contributing to climate change



A fire broke out at Delhi's Ghazipur landfill on June. It is one of the national capital's three trash mountains, and a dumpsite for wet, dry, biomedical, sanitary and even electronic waste. The landfill exceeded its capacity in 2002, but continues to receive new trash every day.

Periodically, it catches fire, causing dangerous heat and toxic fumes. Landfills also release gases. Methane is the biggest component of landfill gas, and it is adding to India's growing climate challenges.

[Source](#)

July 2nd

Climate change adds risk to investments in hydropower

At least three persons died and 18 others went missing in a June 17 flood in Panchkhan Municipality of Sankhuwasabha district. Apart from widespread damage to roads, bridges, and public properties, hydel projects (both in operation and under construction) in the flood and landslide hit districts of Koshi Province; Sankhuwasabha, Panchthar, Bhojpur and Taplejung. Hydropower is not only the main source of energy in the country but also has huge export potential.



But the erratic weather patterns, extreme rainfall in a short span of time, lack of rains for months, continued rain for several days and other unusual weather events caused by climate change have become frequent in Nepal, affecting thousands of people and threatening the country's hydropower potential. Climate scientists say building hydel projects on the basis of 100 years' water data doesn't ensure their safety, as weather extremes have been escalating due to the effects of climate change. They say erratic weather patterns have become frequent in Nepal. At least 30 hydropower projects in eastern Nepal suffered damage estimated at around Rs8.5 billion due to floods and landslides during the first spell of the monsoon.

[Source](#)

July 5th

10 items imported at the highest prices in Nepal



South Asian youths took the lead and demanded unity amongst South Asian states at a recent conference for climate resilience in Kathmandu. The SHAPE conference or “Shaping Climate Resiliency towards a Great Himalayan Future for All” boasted 100 youth participants from 14 different countries. The conference brought to light the need for intergovernmental collaboration in the face of the climate crisis. At the conference, inspiration was drawn from regional organizations of the world, including the European Union, which demonstrate the potential for regional integration and economic development, as well as climate policy collaboration. Attention was brought to the failures of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) which has not been able to effectively implement regional climate policy.

Source

July 24th

Banchare Danda suffering the fate of Sisdol

Kathmandu Metropolitan City Mayor Balendra Shah visited Banchare Danda and expressed commitment to address the problem of the landfill site one year ago. However, the situation remains unchanged and the issue is worsening. Banchare Danda, which is said capable of disposing of the waste of the valley for 50 years, is half full in less than a year. Garbage is scattered everywhere, its leachate mixed with the river has made the environment more polluted. For the residents of Dhunibensi-1 and Kakani-3 of Nuwakot, the guarantee of the right to live in a healthy environment made by the constitution for all citizens seems like a dream. Around 180 to 200 tippers have been dumping waste here every day. About 1500 tons of waste is being dumped here daily. Local residents have been protesting since July 17th after not completing the procedures to be followed for waste management.



Source

July 23rd

July 2023 is set to be the hottest month on record



July has already seen the hottest three week period ever recorded; the three hottest days on record and the highest ever ocean temperatures for this time of year. For vast parts of North America, Asia, Africa and Europe it is a cruel summer. For the entire planet, it is a disaster. And for scientists, it is unequivocal and humans are to blame. All this is entirely consistent with predictions and repeated warnings. On July 6, the daily average global mean surface air temperature surpassed the record set in August 2016, making it the hottest day on record, with July 5 and July 7 shortly behind. It is extremely likely that July 2023 will be the hottest July and also the hottest month on record, following on from the hottest June on record. According to ERA5 data the previous hottest July and month on record was July 2019.

Source | July 31st

Earth needs a world climate crisis organization

Countries should band together and form a world climate crisis organization akin to the World Health Organisation (WHO), to steer humanity through the unfolding disasters associated with the heating planet, one of the UK's leading climate scientists has said.

At 1.2°C global warming, severe heat waves, wildfires, storms, sea-level rise, and species decline are already occurring. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warns that we've moved from global warming to "global boiling" due to fossil fuel burning and greenhouse gas buildup. Climate change poses a significant threat to human health with extreme heat, flooding, wildfires, disease spread, and food loss. Sir David Attenborough calls for a united global effort to address this urgent challenge.



Source | July 28th

Good Reads

Some supplemental readings if you are interested in diving deeper into contemporary environmental issues in Nepal and beyond. Take a peek for a broader array of topics.

[Air pollution: The invisible health threat](#)

[Creating a dust-free Kathmandu](#)

[The bumpy sidewalks of Kathmandu](#)

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