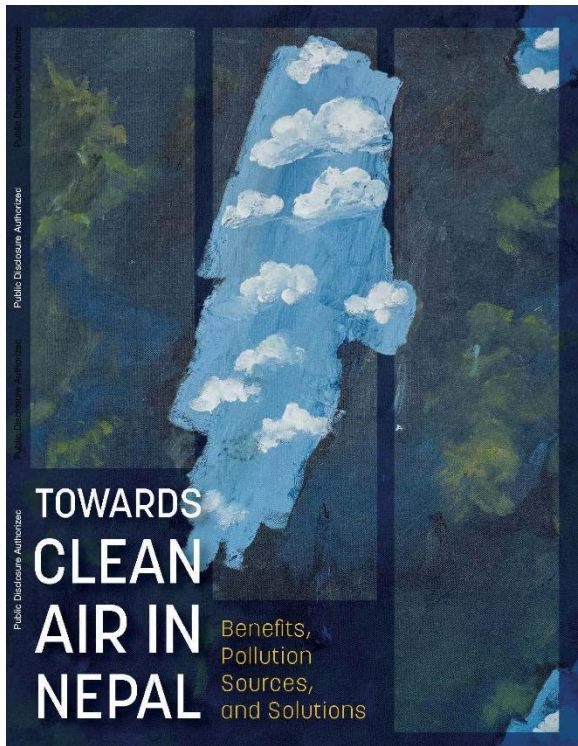
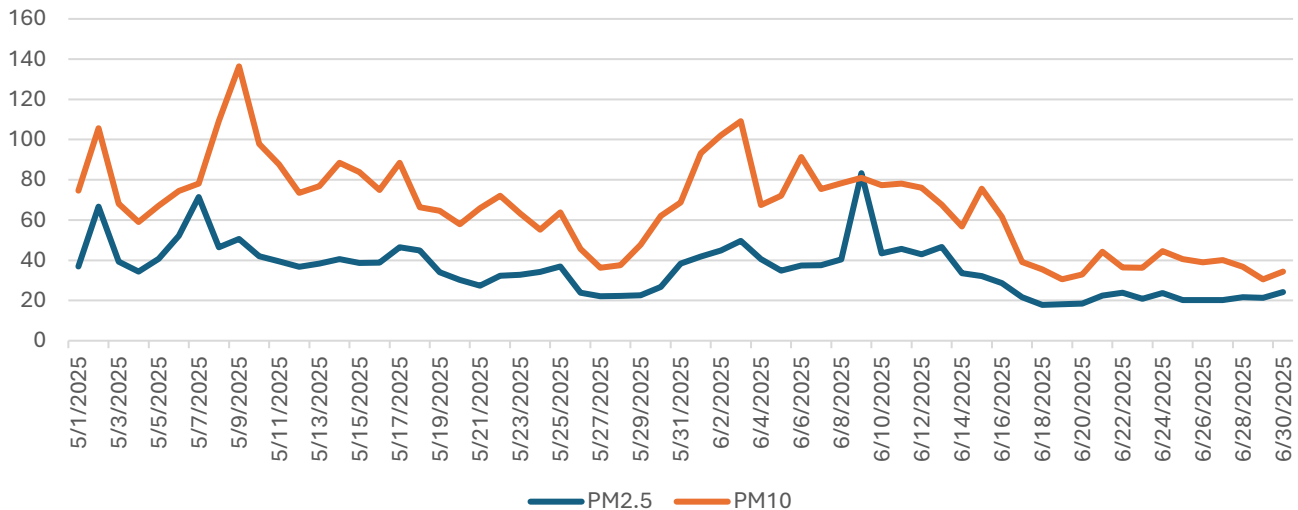


Our Climate Concerns



CEN Newsletter May - June 2025

Air Quality Monitoring of May and June, Ratnapark



Filthy air cuts life expectancy by 3.4 years, causes around 26,000 premature deaths annually

Nepal faces a severe air pollution crisis, with 90% of the population exposed to hazardous air quality, leading to 26,000 premature deaths annually and reducing life expectancy by 3.4 years. Health costs from pollution consume 6% of GDP each year, while PM2.5 levels remain 7-8 times higher than WHO guidelines. Alarming, 63% of the Kathmandu Valley's pollution is locally generated. If business-as-usual practices continue, PM2.5 averages could reach $51 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ by 2035, far exceeding safe limits. Urgent action is needed to curb emissions, protect public health, and secure a cleaner future.

Heatwave Relief in Tarai, But Kathmandu Struggles with Early Rains

Residents in Nepal's Tarai region finally found relief from scorching temperatures as pre-monsoon rains



brought down the mercury after weeks of extreme heat. Areas like Nepalgunj and Butwal, where temperatures had soared past 41°C, saw a drop to around 35°C, easing pressure on hospitals overwhelmed by heat-related illnesses. However, Kathmandu Valley faced the opposite problem—moderate rainfall triggered severe flooding in low-lying areas like Bishnumati and Kalopul, exposing the city's poor drainage infrastructure. Urban planners warn that without immediate improvements, the upcoming monsoon could bring even greater disruptions.

Above-Average Monsoon Predicted, Raising Flood Risks

The Department of Hydrology and Meteorology has forecast a wetter-than-normal monsoon season, with rainfall expected to be 110–120% of the average. While this could benefit agriculture, authorities are concerned about heightened risks of floods and landslides, particularly in eastern and central Nepal. Last year's monsoon caused over 300 deaths and widespread damage, highlighting the urgent need for better early warning systems and infrastructure resilience.



Sagarmatha Sambaad 2025: A Call to Protect the Himalayas



Nepal's first Sagarmatha Sambaad concluded with a strong declaration urging global action to combat climate change in mountain regions. The 25-point "Sagarmatha Call for Action" emphasized limiting global warming to 1.5°C, accelerating emission cuts, and securing climate finance for vulnerable nations. However, experts noted a missed opportunity to address high-altitude plastic pollution, with microplastics now detected even on Mount Everest. They called for stricter regulations on mountaineering waste and inclusion in global environmental treaties.

Glacier Melt and Extreme Heat: Global Warnings Hit Home

A new study published in *Science* warns that glaciers could lose up to 75% of their volume by 2100 if current warming trends continue, posing severe risks to water security and increasing the threat of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) in Nepal. Separately, research shows that half the world's population—including Nepal—endured an extra month of extreme heat over the past year due to climate change, worsening health and economic strains.



Landslides and floods had obstructed roads in different locations nationwide, severely affecting transportation. The Araniko Highway was blocked at three points in Bhotekoshi Rural Municipality, while the Mahendra Highway was submerged in Nawalparasi, leaving passengers stranded. The Beni-Jomsom and Bheri Corridor roads were also closed due to landslides and flooding.



Experts Demand Stronger Action on Air Pollution: Despite budget promises to update air quality standards, environmentalists argue that Nepal lacks a concrete plan to tackle pollution. Kathmandu's PM2.5 levels remain dangerously high, far exceeding WHO guidelines. Experts are calling for a **Clean Air Act** with strict enforcement mechanisms, warning that technological fixes alone won't solve the crisis without addressing vehicle emissions, open burning, and weak urban planning.

The Way Forward

As Nepal braces for a challenging monsoon and escalating climate threats, the need for urgent policy action, infrastructure upgrades, and global cooperation has never been clearer. From flood preparedness to glacier conservation and pollution control, the country faces a critical test in turning declarations into real-world solutions.

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