GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Diplomacy for a changing climate: Advancing Nepal's climate priorities through MoFA's diplomatic channels

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

While the implementation of Nepal's climate priorities largely rests with MoFE and other technical ministries, delivering them requires resources, partnerships, and commitments that depend **heavily on external lobbying, negotiation, and diplomatic engagement; areas where MoFA already has the mandate, presence, and institutional capacity to play a proactive, strategic role.**

Climate change is a contested political arena in which legitimacy, responsibility, and survival are continuously negotiated, and this negotiating role at an institutional level remains an emerging space for MoFA.

To date, engagement has been carried forward largely through the commitment of a few individuals rather than through a consistent, dedicated structure or mechanism within the Ministry, leaving room for coordination gaps. Across diplomatic missions, a common language and shared narrative on climate, supported by unified proof points, is still taking shape.

Similarly, engagement is not yet anchored in a long-term climate strategy built on an outcome-based approach, and coalition relationships (formal and informal), negotiating positions, and reciprocal partnerships are not consistently documented, reviewed, and embedded within the Ministry, so climate is not yet established as a standing institutional priority.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This memo reflects on how **MoFA can assume a proactive role in advancing Nepal's climate priorities** and identifies how it can do so using instruments it already possesses.

A thematic analysis of the NDC and NAP, semi-structured interviews with MoFE, MoFA's UN and Specialised Agencies Division and Permanent Mission in New York, UNDP and ICIMOD, and a review of the Foreign Policy 2077 and existing divisional mandates together establish a **clear institutional basis** for proactive climate diplomacy.

The analysis identifies three priorities where diplomacy is decisive:
1) Climate finance
2) Loss and Damage
3) Transboundary disaster risk reduction, particularly GLOFs and early warning systems.

The memo sets out three roles for MoFA.
First, build a consistent climate narrative that pivots Nepal from a "victim" seeking assistance to a global climate custodian, framing cooperation as a shared "duty" and making the case for Nepal's own contribution to climate regulation. Second, build **negotiating power through coalition-building** (formal and informal) anchored institutionally. Third, strategically task diplomatic missions to the priorities each is best placed to advance, beginning with
data-sharing as a first step toward deeper bilateral and regional partnerships.
Therefore, the memo recommends MoFA to institutionalise a standing climate diplomacy coordination mechanism, develop a joint MoFA-MoFE guidance note to standardise international messaging and capacity building, assign missions by climate priority, and pursue a track-two diplomacy alongside Nepal's existing negotiating blocs to build coalitions around mountain and cryosphere priorities.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Climate is no longer just a technical issue, it is foreign policy. We need an unified climate diplomacy strategy and a consistent, strong international climate messaging.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

MoFA should institutionalize a regular coordination mechanism to bring together political, technical, and external expertise and establish clear institutional responsibility for climate diplomacy.

. MoFA and MoFE should develop a common climate diplomacy guidance note to standardize international messaging and provide diplomatic missions with a unified narrative and concrete proof points.

MoFA should promote a track-two strategy that combines Nepal's existing negotiating blocs with a dedicated mountain and cryosphere agenda, supported by institutional memory.

KEY VISUALS



