
MEERA PEAK CLEAN-UP & AWARENESS EXPEDITION 2025

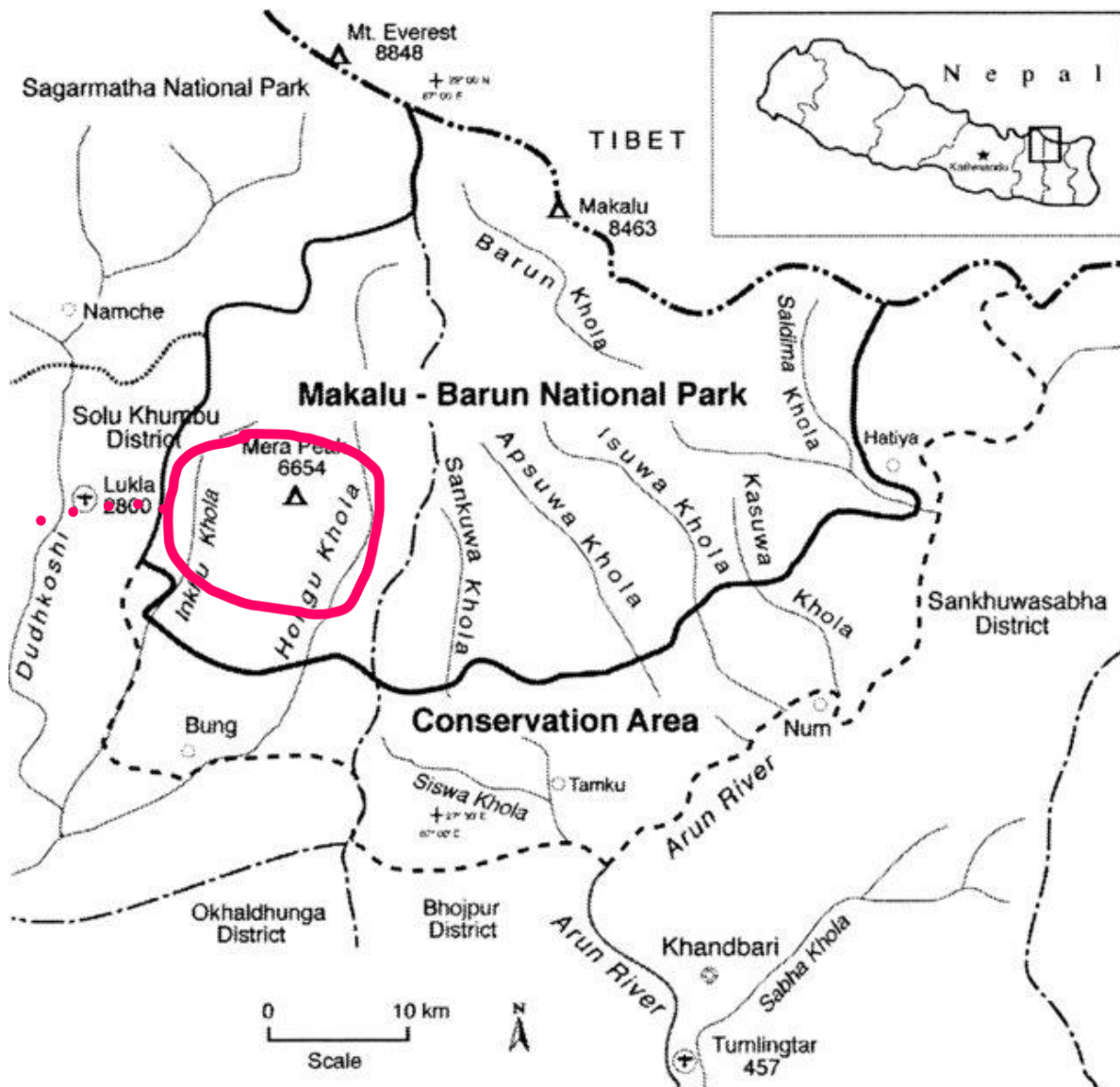


Photo: Saran Subba

Summit of Mera Peak

PILOT PROJECT

Developed by Mountain Synergies and Hi on Life Expeditions



SUMMARY

The Mera Peak Clean-Up and Awareness Expedition aims to address the growing environmental concerns at one of Nepal's most popular classic trekking and climbing destinations. The expedition is organised as a pilot project by [Hi On Life Adventures](#), a Nepali-based tourism operator, in collaboration with the Swiss-based association [Mountain Synergies](#) (MS). Hi On Life (HOL) was founded by Saran Subba and Christina Sandstrom from Sweden. The company has organised more than 200 tours and trips across 4 countries, making over 2,000 customers happy. Mountain Synergies aims to foster positive interactions between local communities in mountain regions, their natural environment, and mountaineering stakeholders, with the goal of aligning ethical and environmental values with tourism practices. In 2024, the association published a Waste Management Manual for Sustainable Mountaineering Expeditions (WMM), focusing on the impact reduction of high-altitude tourism.

This expedition project will focus on waste removal, environmental footprint reduction, and raising awareness about the impact of tourism on high-altitude ecosystems. Additionally, it will also test an updated model for organizing commercial mountaineering expeditions that emphasize sustainable



practices and ethical principles. The long-term aim is to incorporate the results and “lessons learned” and replicate this in the future.

OBJECTIVES

A. Propose a tourism activity based on sustainable and ethical practices and evaluate its environmental footprint

Based on the Waste Management Manual for Sustainable Mountaineering Expeditions, organise an expedition that proposes a new business model, aiming to reduce as much as possible its environmental footprint. The expedition will be a practical implementation of the WM Manual recommendations, evaluating their applicability and feasibility in the Mera Peak context.

B. Preserve biodiversity and restore polluted areas through waste management:

1. **Remove waste:** Collect and safely dispose of and treat the accumulated waste on trails towards Mera Peak;
2. **Install several trash bins on the route towards Mera Peak in the most critical spots:** resting spots for porters and major route intersections.
3. **Waste recycling:** In cooperation with the AVNI Centre for Sustainability, an organisation based in Kathmandu, process and recycle the waste collected.

C. Raise awareness of expedition stakeholders about climate change and the impact of the use of resources:

4. **Promote sustainable tourism and mountaineering practices:** inform expedition participants and local staff about environmental issues in high-altitude areas and recommend sustainable practices to reduce their impact and conserve resources. Inform also, through social media, the mountaineering community about these issues.
5. **Build knowledge among stakeholders** (expedition members, HOL staff and locals): This will be done through a workshop organised in Kathmandu in collaboration with the Avni Centre for Sustainability. Mountain synergies will mediate the workshop and adapt its knowledge from the Climate Fresk (staff is certified) to add the waste component and climate change adaptation in Nepal.

D. Citizen-science/fact-based component:

6. **Collect data for the WMM revised edition and future article:** gather additional data about mountaineers and local communities, about their concerns, habits and infrastructure related to waste management in the Mera Peak area, test solutions advocated in the WMM and collect feedback. If funding is sufficient, data about waste sites, quantities and types in the area will also be gathered.

Conclusion

The Mera Peak Clean-Up and Awareness Expedition is a vital initiative to protect and preserve one of Nepal's treasured natural landscapes. By combining direct action with education, awareness and citizen science, Hi on Life Adventures and Mountain Synergies aim to create a lasting positive impact on the Khumbu environment and the local communities and develop an innovative model of planning and conducting mountaineering expeditions in Nepal.



BACKGROUND

The Mera Peak (6,476 meters) is a prominent trekking peak in the Himalayas, attracting numerous climbers and trekkers annually. The high altitude and low technical difficulty, combined with rapid access via Lukla airport, make this summit very popular. Moreover, it offers an incredible panorama of the Khumbu, with five peaks over 8,000m: the Cho Oyu, Everest, Lhotse, Makalu, Kangchenjunga, as well as other mythical peaks such as Ama Dablam, Nuptse, Pumori and Chamlang. It is estimated that around 1,800 people climbed Mera Peak in 2022 with a success rate of around 80%¹. The Makalu-Barun National Park, where Mera Peak is located, was established in 1992 and encompasses both a core national park area and an adjoining conservation zone inhabited by approximately 32,000 residents. The park also attracts between 1,000 and 1,500 trekkers annually, with projections indicating a 30–50% annual increase in tourist numbers.

However, this influx, together with a lack of proper infrastructure and weak compliance with the rules led to increased waste amounts and environmental issues such as land degradation. Furthermore, specific statistics on solid waste within Makalu-Barun National Park are limited, and there is a need for updated data on the amounts, location and types of waste in this area. Addressing these issues is crucial to preserving the natural beauty and ecological integrity of the region.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Mera Peak Expedition Clean-Up and Awareness project (MPECA) aims to reshape the current general way of organizing and conducting mountaineering expeditions to trekking peaks in Nepal. It follows a more “sustainably engaged” approach, focusing on low environmental impact tourism and waste minimization. The Project contains **3 main characteristics**: an awareness component through a workshop on climate change and human impacts for the expedition participants, a slow approach to avoiding high-polluting flights and the overall environmental impact of the expedition, and a mountain clean-up phase after the ascension.

Mountain Synergies will assist with planning the expedition following the Waste Management Manual for Mountaineering (WMM) published in 2024 by the organization. The association will help with the clean-up, collect waste data from the field for future research and test various solutions proposed in the WMM. After the expedition, there will be a dissemination phase where the results will be published.

Approach, summiting and departure itinerary

The trek begins from Bung after transport by vehicles from Kathmandu, passing by picturesque farming villages towards Kothe and Khare, crossing several passes along the way, and getting well acclimatized before reaching Base Camp which will be set up at the Mera la (5200 m). An Advanced Base Camp will be set up at 5760 m from where the summit attempt will begin. After the summit, the team will retrace the way down to Khiraule from where they will be transported in vehicles back to Kathmandu.

¹ <https://www.muchbetteradventures.com/magazine/mera-peak-climbing-guide/>



What makes this expedition special:

- One of the easiest 6000 m+ mountains and one of the best panoramas from the summit of any other trekking peaks in Nepal
- **No flights**, but use of local transport and trekking.
- **Minimizing** waste and overall **environmental footprint** associated with the expedition
- Bring down from the mountain all the waste from the expedition, the camps and the path.
- Support and advice from Mountain Synergies for organizing a sustainable expedition
- Pre-expedition online meeting to introduce the team to the rules for the expedition
- **Clean-up campaign** – collect trash from trails and install garbage drums on the route to Mera Peak and other areas; organize transport off the mountain and processing in Kathmandu.
- Collaboration with local authorities and other stakeholders with regard to waste management and sustainable mountain tourism.

Itinerary:

Day 1. Arrive in Kathmandu (1330 m), **climate change and sustainable mountaineering workshop** & welcome dinner

Day 2. Drive to Salleri (2300 m)

Day 3. Drive to Bung (1780 m), meeting with local community about waste management

Day 4. Trek to Khiraule (2400 m)

Day 5. Trek to Cholem Kharka (3600 m)

Day 6. Rest and acclimatisation (workshop with locals)

Day 7. Trek to Khola Kharka 4300m via Hurhure pass (4550 m)

Day 8. Trek to Kothe (3600 m)

Day 9. Rest day at Kothe. (workshop/meeting with locals about waste management system)

Day 10. Trek to Thangna (4400 m)

Day 11. Trek to Khare (5000 m)

Day 12. Climbing training and safety briefing at Khare

Day 13. Trek to Mera Base Camp (5300m)

Day 14. Set up Advance Base Camp (5780 m)

Day 15. Summit Mera Peak (6476 m) back to Khare

Day 16. Trek to Kothe (3600 m) (install a garbage drum after Khola Kharka)

Day 17. Trek to Cholem Kharka (3600m)

Day 18. Trek to Khiraule and drive to Patale (install a garbage drum after Cholem Kharka)

Day 19. Drive to Kathmandu

Day 20. Reserve day/Debriefing

Day 21. Departure



Mountain Clean-Up Phase:

- **Collection along tracks:** on the way up, evaluate the situation on the tracks and elaborate a plan for trash collection on the way back; garbage can also be collected from Khare to Base Camp; in total, estimate to collect around 200-250 kg of trash.
- **Logistics:** long tongs to pick up trash, gloves, and bags. 1 - 2 porters will collect and take the trash back to Bung. From Bung, it will be transported in vehicles used for departure. In case the amount collected is higher, **mules** and a **truck to Kathmandu** will be used.
- **Installation of trash bins:** trash bins (metal drums) are to be installed along the trail, at least in two resting spots for porters; discuss with the local village how to manage the trash bins.
- **Processing** of waste in Kathmandu: in collaboration with Avni Center for Sustainability.

TIMELINE

- **Preparation Phase (January to September)**

Time will be allocated for developing the project, fundraising activities, the recruitment of the participants, the logistics and education/awareness events preparation actions, including several online sessions with the participants introducing the expedition concept, principles applied, sustainability focus and the clean-up phase and communicating about the project.

An important aspect will be to establish partnerships with local organizations (Makalu Barun, KEEP, AVNI, SPCC, etc).

- **Execution Phase (October)**

This includes travelling to Nepal, trekking and the ascension of Mera Peak, the waste collection and disposal operation, as well as the awareness and communication activities organized around the environmental impact of the expedition. MS staff will also focus on collecting data.

- **Post-Expedition Phase (November to December)**

Analysis, reporting and documentation from the data collected, follow up with the communication and awareness activities, update of the WMM, general dissemination of the results and outcome (publication or article).

TEAM COMPOSITION

- **Expedition Leader:** Saran Subba, from Hi On Life Adventures (bio in Appendix).
- **Project Coordinators:** Lucian Negrut (on the field), Valérie Thöni, Mountain Synergies (bio in Appendix)
- **Support Team:** local staff and porters, and logistics personnel; other MS staff
- **Expedition Participants:** mountaineers willing to make a difference, taking part in the clean-up.



DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

- **Waste Collection:**
 - Collection of waste from the trekking route and base camp to Khare
 - Check out dumping sites and record their location
 - Sort and categorize waste for correct disposal (as per WMM and local regulations)
- **Waste transport**
 - Establish a budget, logistics and resources needed for the transport of waste collected to Kathmandu for processing
 - Porters (transport on the mountain, to Bung)
 - Mules (transport on the mountain, to Bung)
 - Vehicle (transport to Kathmandu)
- **Waste Processing**
 - Establish a partnership with Blue Waste to Value or Avni Ltd in Kathmandu for the processing of waste transported to Kathmandu.
- **Installation of trash bins along the trekking route**
 - At minimum, there is a possibility to install plastic/metal drums on the resting spots deemed as critical when it comes to trash on the trails (at least two)
 - Communication and engagement of locals are needed.
- **Awareness/Knowledge sharing:**
 - Conduct an online workshop or informal meeting before the expedition for the expedition participants, and also one for the local staff involved in the expedition on sustainable practices and the issue of waste management.
 - Organise a workshop in Kathmandu before the beginning of the expedition, based on the Climate Fresk, adapted for the expedition participants. This will be done in collaboration with a local organization most likely KEEP.
 - Create short videos during the expedition, to be posted on social media (as per WMM).
- **Community Engagement:**
 - Collaborate with local institutions/associations/personalities to evaluate the situation and support the management of the waste (eventual recycling) or provide an information workshop for the local associations or institutions.
- **Data collection:**
 - Update the questionnaire prepared for the exploratory field mission in 2022 and organize its use on the ground.
 - Record info regarding the waste (types, accumulation points) on trails and the waste collected, use of GPS and other web applications.



- **Activities related to the organization of the expedition:**

The expedition will consider several recommendations of the Waste Management Manual:

- Appoint an Environmental Manager >> Develop a Waste Management Protocol (WMP) for the Expedition (can be adjusted and reused for others later) *
- Calculate the carbon footprint of the expedition
- Inform expedition participants and local staff about WMP and guidelines**
- Develop an Environmental Management Plan for the expedition (environmental impacts & mitigation actions)**
- Set up a waste management budget, part of the overall project budget
- Check the Waste Management Procedures from the Manual, secure equipment and tools (poo bags, labels and containers for selective waste collection, tools for clean-up, barrels, etc)
- Develop a Strategy for Media and Call for Action >> promote more sustainable mountaineering expeditions
- Accommodation – hotel in Kathmandu, use of lodges on the trail to Mera Peak and back; at Base Camp and High Camp, accommodation will be in tents.
- Use of organic and plastic-free shower and hygiene products by expedition participants, (create a document with recommendations and share with participants as part of the info kit)
- BC/ABC and High Camps – include in the WMP, check toilet system, waste management – separation, collection, wastewater. From Base Camp and High Camp, everything will be taken down. On the trek, the non-degradable waste will be carried out (extra porter to assist).
- Travel – in country – avoid flying, manage waste during transport, etc
- “Green behaviour bonus” for participants/drivers/porters/local staff
- Equipment recommendations for guests
- Equipment transportation – no flying - vehicles and porters/mules
- Energy systems, Fuel and Cooking equipment/cleaning and kitchen hygiene
- Food – We will use a minimum packet of food. Food will be more or less all locally grown organic food; Avoid pet bottles, any food that comes in plastic packaging/pet (porridge and noodles come in plastic packages but we can minimize it or carry the packages back, use only boiled water, and carry a water purifier (tabs or pump filters) no pet bottled water).
- Human Waste system – toilets in lodges, hygiene products associated (wet wipes, toa paper, etc)/wild poo kits. Human waste management in camps - a toilet tent with self-degrading poo bags will be used by the expedition in Base Camp and High Camp and human waste transported off the mountain.
- ALL trash generated by the expedition will be brought down the mountain.

** Can be used later as tools available for the community through Mountain Synergies channels



EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Immediate Impact:**
 - Removal of significant amounts of waste, around 250 kg, from the Mera Peak area and safe storage for future treatment (amount collected and transported off the mountain will be measured)
 - Availability of trash bins at critical spots on the trekking route
 - Increased awareness, knowledge and engagement among the expedition participants, local staff and local communities.
- **Long-Term Impact:**
 - Encouraging the establishment of sustainable practices in the area.
 - Continued advocacy and clean-up efforts through partnerships and local initiatives.

PROJECT LOGFRAME

MEERA PEAK CLEAN-UP & AWARENESS EXPEDITION PROJECT STRATEGY JAN. 2025 – DECEMBER 2025

REDUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT OF MOUNTAINEERING EXPEDITIONS

LONG-TERM IMPACT	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	RESULTS		ACTIVITIES
The mountain ecosystems are protected and the economic-social conditions of mountain populations are improved, thanks to responsible and low-impact mountaineering and climbing knowledge and practice	Better knowledge about waste management and environmental impact is known AND good practices are put in place among the mountaineering community and tourism agencies (international and local).	Tourism expeditions agencies, mountaineering community and sponsors	1.1 A mountaineering expedition following the guidance of the Waste Management Manual is organised to clean up the Mera Peak area near the Sagarmatha national Park in Nepal.	1.1 .1 Organise and implement the expedition 1.1.2 Apply and test the Manual on the field 1.1.3 Communicate on the results
			1.2 Waste is collected (300 kgs) along the approach, in camps near the Mera Peak summit and in villages with the agreement of local communities	1.2.1 Evaluate the waste sites, type and amount 1.2.2 Organise the waste management 1.2.3 Collect and segregate the waste 1.2.4 Analyse data collected and report 1.2.5 Transportation (from camps to Kathmandu) and treatment
			1.3 Knowledge and capacity about climate change and waste impacts are built among the expedition participants (including agency staff and local porters).	1.3.1 Become certified with Climate Fresk 1.3.2 Prepare and conduct workshops 1.3.3 Follow-up training 1.3.4 Communicate on the results



LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

The Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC) is a community-based NGO established by the local Sherpa people of Khumbu in 1991. It is the lead organization working to manage waste in the Khumbu Region, which forms the Sagarmatha National Park and its Buffer Zone and also encompasses the core Everest trekking area. <https://spcc.org.np/>. SPCC is the authorized local institution responsible for controlling illegal climbers and monitoring garbage in the peaks of Khumbu Region registered under the Nepal Mountaineering Association: Imja Tse (Island peak), Khongma Tse, Kusum Kangru, Kwangde, Lobuje, Mera Peak, Mt. ABI, Mt. Cholatse, Mt. Kyazo Ri, Mt. Lobuje West, Mt. Nirekha, Mt. Ombigaichen, Mt. Phari Lapcha, Pharchamo and Ramdung².

Mountain Synergies will inform SPCC about the project and ask for advice. After the implementation of this pilot project, a closer collaboration could be established with SPCC.

Local mountain communities, like Bung, Kothe and Khare, where we will meet local leaders, and discuss their waste management system and the overall impact of mountain tourism. According to recent local info, the villagers in Bung manage to keep the area fairly clean, we would meet them and try to learn the factors that ensure a successful approach to waste management locally. At the lodges where we will be based during the trek, we will also discuss with the owners to inform better our strategy and future projects.

Avni Ltd/Avni Center for Sustainability

Avni Ventures and Centre for Sustainability is a recycling company and association based on a social model in Kathmandu, striving to promote a circular economy in Nepal. Avni focuses on PET collection and recycling, research and development of green technologies, sustainability education & incubation, operations support and consultancy services to businesses. As a pioneer in transforming the waste sector of Nepal into a formal supply chain, Avni has created the largest responsible, legal plastic waste collection and recycling network in Nepal.

Mountain Synergies will work with Avni Ventures for the processing of the waste collected.

KEEP

Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (KEEP) has the mission of ensuring the future ecological and cultural prosperity of Nepal and its people by maximizing the benefits and reducing the negative impacts associated with tourism. KEEP's vision is to become more sustainable so as to support the trekking professionals and to ensure the future ecological and cultural prosperity of Nepal and its people by educating trekking professionals and maximizing the benefits while reducing the negative impacts associated with tourism.

Mountain Synergies will organise the workshop ([Climate Fresk](#)) in collaboration with KEEP and Avni. Lucian, certified with the Climate Fresh, will adapt it to the participant's knowledge.

² <https://spcc.org.np/uploads/2024/07//spcc-annual-report-202223.pdf>



ANNEXES

Annex 1. BUDGET

The budget is divided into two parts: one related to the expedition itself, which will be covered by the participants, and the second related to waste collection, recycling, and awareness and capacity-building activities to be sponsored by external donors.

The Expedition program offered by Hi On Life Adventures includes:

- *Transportation:*
 - All airport transfers and internal transportation in private vehicles (Khiruale to Kathmandu by Jeep and Kathmandu to Bung by Jeep).
- Expedition professionals, equipment provided and administration:
 - Online meetings and on-site workshops organized together with Mountain Synergies
 - All climbing permits and National Park fees
 - Staff insurance, tourist service fee and all taxes applicable as per state law
 - English speaking experienced expedition guide
 - Climbing Sherpa 1:3 (Sherpa to member ratio)
 - Porters
 - Personal trek pack = a duffle bag, high altitude down jacket and sleeping bag with a liner (recommended personal equipment is presented in the Equipment List sent to participants)
 - Climbing equipment: ropes, carabineers, pitons, jumars, ice axe, harness, and descender
 - Emergency use Pressure bag (Gamow bag) and oxygen cylinders
 - Equipment & logistics for mountain clean-up activity.
- *Accommodation and meals:*
 - 2 nights at a tourist class hotel accommodation on a bed and breakfast plan
 - Accommodation at lodges and camping
 - Welcome dinner
 - All meals (Breakfast, lunch and dinner) during the expedition
 - Afternoon tea/coffee service on arrival at camp
 - Boiled and treated water as needed.

The cost for this program is USD 2,425 per participant, covering all the above.

In addition, the project budget includes all expenses of Mountain Synergies connected with the planning, organisation and execution of all the awareness workshops and the waste collection, transport and treatment of the expedition, mountain clean-up, material development, data collection and post-expedition dissemination. The total amount for the development and implementation of the clean up, transport, processing, communication and staff work is 9'101.70 CHF.

Budget details

NERA PEAK CLEAN UP AND AWARENESS EXPEDITION PROJECT 2025



TOTAL BUDGET		
Item	Cost CHF	Observations
Expedition program by Hi On Life Adventure	2 400,00 CHF	this will be paid by the participants to the expedition
Included in the program for the participants:		
all internal transport		
airport transfers		
welcome dinner		
accommodation Kathmandu w breakfast		
expedition guide		
climbing sherpa 1:3		
cook & kitchen helpers		
porters		
climbing equipment		
duffle bag		
expedition down jacket		
expedition sleeping bag		
Emergency eqpt: Gamov bag and O2		
Communication eqpt emergency		
Accommodation during expedition in lodges and tents		
Camping and kitchen eqpt and facilities		
All meals (Breakfast, lunch and dinner) during the expedition		
Afternoon tea/coffee service on arrival at camp		
Boiled and treated water		
All Climbing permits and National Park fees		
Staff insurance, tourist service fee and all taxes applicable		
Not included in the program:		
International transport Sweden - Kathmandu 1 pax	2 000,00 CHF	Flight tickets + transfer
Extra stay in Kathmandu	160,00 CHF	4 nights * 40 eur
Food and drinks other than what is included	120,00 CHF	(4 days * 30 eur/day)
Accident and rescue insurance	1 100,00 CHF	Global Rescue, 1 year membership (max 45 day trips); incl security package
Vaccinations	150,00 CHF	
Visa Nepal 30 days	47,00 CHF	50 USD according to Nepal authorities
TOTAL EXPEDITION COSTS FOR PARTICIPANTS	5 977,00 CHF	
Development and management Clean Up and Awareness parts of the project		
Waste management system for expedition	100,00 CHF	set up system for own expedition waste: biodegradable dishwashing, labels, poo bags, toilets, filters, etc
Clean Up materials	400,00 CHF	(bags, 20 cut protection gloves*10 eur/pair, 15 pick up tongs*10 eur/tong,bins etc)
Waste transport and disposal - on the mountain and to Kathmandu	1 000,00 CHF	transport of collected waste with porters, mules and truck (250 kg)
Development of materials in Nepali	150,00 CHF	printed instructions for staff, translation, etc
Dissemination of project results	100,00 CHF	communication content
Field Communication	50,00 CHF	local sim card NCell + receipts
Workshops	700,00 CHF	workshop Kathmandu + 1 with local communities (location to be confirmed)
Contingencies 10%	777,70 CHF	
Sub-total expenses	3 277,70 CHF	
Contributions from MS in-kind to project		
working hours pre-expedition planning based on WMM	1 040,00 CHF	40 hrs @ 26 eur/hr
working hours during Fieldwork in Nepal	4 784,00 CHF	23 days * 8 hrs/day @ 26 eur/hr
Contribution MS cash 10% of expedition + clean up cost	327,77 CHF	
Total MS contribution to project	6 151,77 CHF	
Total funding support needed for the project	9 101,70 CHF	
Assumptions: labour value - minimum wage Geneva 2025 is 24.48 CHF/hr		
https://www.eda.admin.ch/missions/mission-onu-geneve/en/home/manual-regime-privileges-and-immunities/introduction/manual-labour-law/Salaire-minimum-dans-le-canton-de-Geneve.html		
https://karpeo.ch/en/swiss-salaries-wage-switzerland/		
www.globalrescue.com		

Annex 2. EXPEDITION ORGANIZERS

Saran Subba - Founder/ Managing Director/
Expedition leader/ Guide at Hi On Life Adventures

Born in the beautiful and mesmerizing hills of Darjeeling, Saran, already from childhood, had curiosity and love for the mountains and nature. This vividly grew into a deep passion for the Himalayas, which led him to take active participation in courses relating to eco-tourism, Environmental studies and Mountaineering.



After completing the educational essentials at a university in India, he entered the tourism business as a freelance guide. He worked for some of the world's premier trekking companies at the beginning of his career and has been operating Hi On Life Adventures since 2004.

Saran has guided and organized treks and expeditions in the Himalayas for 26 years. He has travelled extensively throughout Nepal, India, Tibet and Bhutan. His passion and knowledge of the mountains, nature, local traditions and culture, medicine and language have been appreciated by all the people who have trekked with him. In addition, married a Swede, he has also travelled to Sweden and Norway and loves trekking and kayaking with his friends and family whenever he is there on holidays.

He is still actively leading treks and expeditions, as he proudly says "This is my dream, my passion and my life!".

Mountain Synergies

<https://www.mountainsynergies.org/>

Mountain Synergies is a Swiss-based nonprofit association that is active in the field of sustainable mountain tourism, with a focus on mountaineering, trekking and climbing. Its mission is to facilitate positive interactions between mountain communities, natural environment and mountain sports, outdoor companies, expedition agencies, mountain researchers and practitioners.

Mountain Synergies supports alpinists and expedition agencies in reducing their environmental impact and helping regenerate local economies.

In 2024, Mountain Synergies published the Waste Management Manual for Sustainable Mountaineering Expeditions, which aims to reduce the impact of mountaineering expeditions and prevent as much waste as possible, to promote responsibility and ownership among the various stakeholders and to build knowledge and capacity of participants about sustainable and ethical expeditions.

In connection with the Manual and following the fieldwork in Nepal in 2022, Mountain Synergies is partnering with *Hi On Life Adventures* to promote a mountaineering expedition model that has low impact and is focusing on actively limiting the waste on the mountains. In parallel, Mountain Synergies aims to engage on a long-term basis with local communities, to evaluate the waste management systems implemented, collect data on the waste types, sites and amount and support local partners to recycle or treat appropriately the waste accumulated.

Lucian Negrut – one of the founders of Mountain Synergies and co-author of the Waste Management Manual, Lucian has been involved in various projects in the area of sustainable mountain tourism for almost a decade.

Working as a guide in the high arctic since 2018 and spending a lot of time in the nature, he believes in a more responsible tourism, with a low environmental impact and positive benefits to local mountain communities.

With regards to the Mera Peak Awareness & Clean Up Expedition, Lucian will represent Mountain Synergies in the field and act as the Environmental Manager for the expedition and focus on aspects related to sustainability.

Having been twice to Nepal, Lucian is looking forward to interacting with the local stakeholders and working together for bringing a positive change on the mountain.



Valérie Thöni – Valérie has spent several years working for the Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme (UIAA), where she developed and implemented various environmental projects, including the Mountain Protection Award.



Over time, she has specialized in solid waste management and currently focuses on nature-based solutions for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Additionally, Valérie is a founder of Mountain Synergies and a co-author of the Waste Management Manual.

Passionate about outdoor activities, particularly trekking, she is greatly concerned about the human impact on nature and the need to protect ecosystems while reconnecting people to the natural world.