

The Himalayas are world famous for walking, hiking, climbing, wildlife and bird watching, photography, and similar leisure pursuits. The mountain areas in Nepal are among the world's richest regions in terms of biodiversity and pristine landscapes. As such they hold huge potential for nature-based tourism. The on-going loss of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems and the practice of unhealthy undercutting prices pose serious threats to the tourism in these regions.

The Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal (TAAN) has taken the initiative to develop a Code of Conduct for Responsible trekking Operations in Nepal. The Code of Conduct should be followed by its member agencies. It has been issued and implemented to embrace globally accepted, responsible business.

Some of the provisions included in the Code are: better facilities for employees, trekking and mountaineering staffers; conservation of nature and local culture; abiding by the government's financial regulations and accountability to the state; the fixation of minimum price rates; compulsory provision for permits and TIMS cards; discouragement of price undercutting.

The new Code recognizes the link between environmental protection and the need to bring benefits to the local population through the promotion of responsible tourism, which protects landscapes and benefits local communities as an example of a win-win approach for the environment and economy. This action recognizes the potential and the importance of sustainably managing the area's natural and cultural assets.