

## **The Shared Watercourses Summit Declaration**

(Herein after the ‘Kathmandu Declaration, dated 19.11.2017’)

- ❖ We, the members present in the Shared Watercourses Summit, recognize the people to people social, cultural and ecological interdependence and the formal water cooperation instruments between Nepal and India as the basis of our common ground, defining our responsibilities for managing our shared waters and its resources equitably, down through the generations.
- ❖ We acknowledge and reaffirm that shared rivers to the people of Nepal and India are not merely a community or resource encompassing all economic and water based developmental dimensions but a dynamic and creative element embedded in our culture and existence defining all aspects of our lives. It’s a positive force. Water flows down from the mountains, moves and flows through our deep aquifers, rivers, springs, wetlands and lakes throughout our territories to be drawn up into the clouds and fall as rain, returning to our lands that provide us food and sustenance.
- ❖ We together assert that shared water in our shared river systems is limited and is fast depleting. It needs to be protected, conserved and shared on an equitable basis so as to ensure human right to water to all.
- ❖ The Members of this Summit are committed to restoring balance to our relationship with water, thereby striving to create pathways, develop strategies and forge alliances to influence and inform reviewing of treaty responsibilities of governments of Nepal and India in constructive ways in the interest of our shared waters and ecological interdependence by further engaging with and evolving the (Draft) ‘Participatory Water Diplomacy Framework’, as a management tool that can be used to ensure inclusivity – representation and concerns of all stakeholders in the shared basins, appended as **Annex-A** to this Declaration; and by contributing to the development of (Draft) India-Nepal Shared Watercourses Treaty, a collaborative effort of communities and civil society in Nepal and India, that proposes to establish common principles and improved institutional mechanism for the cooperative management of all Shared Watercourses between India and Nepal and further proposes to create a mandate for undertaking the modernization of all existing formal water cooperation instruments, appended as **Annex-B** to this Declaration.
- ❖ We, therefore call on our Governments to consider necessary and appropriate amendments in the formal water cooperation instruments between India and Nepal to accommodate principles of international water law as provided in the United Nations Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, 1997 and as proposed under the (Draft) Water Courses Treaty developed through Civil Society Initiatives. The aforesaid amendments must take into account the inalienable water rights of river communities inhabiting shared river basins between India and Nepal, including among other their rights to be stakeholders in the planned economic development that affects their waters and their lands.
- ❖ We the Members of the Summit invite all concerned to forge an alliance or consortia to take forward the agenda of improving the governance of our shared river basins and shared watercourses
- ❖ This Declaration is declared in the spirit of mutual trust and collaborative initiatives, On 19<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at Kathmandu.

Members of the Shared Watercourses Summit  
SIGNATORIES