

Submitted Abstract

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First Author First Name Last Name	Graham (1) Mcdowell
Submitting Author First Name Last Name	Graham Mcdowell
Correspondence	grahammcdowell@gmail.com
Co-Authors >> E-Mails will be not listed	Stevens, Madison (2)
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Abstract

Climate-related changes are exacerbating socioeconomic difficulties faced by many mountain communities and are intensifying vulnerabilities across mountain areas globally. The situation is indicative of pervasive and consequential deficits in adaptation, and calls attention to the need for a better understanding of existing adaptation efforts, as well as the prospects for increasing the quantity and quality of adaptation action in mountain regions. In response, presentation introduces a conceptual framework for adaptation gaps. It then discusses data from 2 major global-scale adaptation review efforts that help to characterize the nature and true magnitude of adaptation gaps in mountains. The talk reveals shortcomings in available adaptation options, deficits in the uptake of existing adaptation support, and a general lack of coherence between existing adaptations and keystone global agreements relevant to climate change adaptation. These shortcomings are largely related to soft limits to adaptation that constrain responses across mountain areas. We provide recommendations for closing adaptation gaps in mountains and suggest that this will require deeply collaborative efforts that are rooted in local needs, aspirations, and ways of knowing, but that are also supported by external capacity building and implementation resources. In many instances, this will resemble a transformative approach to adaptation.