



1145 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036
January 2, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to introduce Katie Conlon (United States of America Passport #548612519) as a grant recipient of the National Geographic Society (the "Society"). She will be leading a project, *What goes up must come down: Himalayan Upstream plastic waste solutions that minimize downstream marine inputs*, funded by a grant from the National Geographic Society. Ms. Conlon will be leading this project from March 2020 through June 2021.

This is a dynamic research project in the Ganges, Indus, and Brahmaputra River Basins. The team's decades of experience living and working in this region indicates that there are both social and environmental challenges for plastic waste management. Support from the Society will allow the team to do in-depth field research that will highlight existing best practices in the Himalayan upstream communities, and connect these to the bigger picture of downstream river waste and marine plastic pollution; craft engaging videos to share plastics minimization solutions with a broader regional and global audience; publish reports from findings; share ongoing research online; and present this work to policymakers and stakeholders in the region. Using a qualitative case study approach, the team will examine 4 key areas comprised of 23 existing, yet undocumented cases on plastics minimization across the Himalayan basin. The team will document social and structural environmental behavioral shifts; analyze the scope and impacts of plastic waste minimization projects; and bring awareness to community-led solutions and factors for environmental behavior change that will bridge the 'upstream' and 'downstream' plastic waste challenges. The approach combines research, outreach, and education, with an aim to contribute to positive environmental behavioral change. This research is in the spirit of exploring our world for solutions, out of awe for our natural world and benefit for humankind.

To complete this project, Ms. Conlon will be working with the **Core Team**:

- Ashutosh Mohanty (Co-PI and Coordinator), Director of Disaster Management and Climate Change Shoolini University PP# Z4456623
- Mahesh Nakarmi (Co-PI) Health Care Foundation Nepal (Kathmandu) PP# 11732571
- Rajendra P Gurung (Co-PI) founding member of Zero Waste Himalaya Sikkim-Darjeeling (Gangtok): Indian ID #: 687779707119
- Jonathan 'Alex' Jensen (Co-PI) Local Futures (USA) PP# 513566196
- Morup Namgail (India) Film maker PP# T2384269

NGS believes Ms. Conlon to be of good character and professionalism. Ms. Conlon will obey the laws and regulations in your country and will not concern herself with any subjects of a military or political nature. If you have any additional questions about this grant from the National Geographic Society, please contact Julia Luthringer, Program Officer at National Geographic Society at jluthringer@ngs.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julia", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Julia Luthringer
Program Officer, Grants Program
National Geographic Society