



Responding to the Challenges of Global Change

Enhancing resilience and supporting adaptation of mountain communities

The impacts of climate change are already becoming evident in the Himalayan region in the form of a higher incidence and intensity of natural disasters. It is increasingly clear that the lives and livelihoods of the people of this region are at risk. Access to water, biodiversity, and environmental services is becoming more and more critical. What is needed, in addition to the mitigation measures being proposed by the international community, are adaptation measures that enhance the resilience of the mountain communities and reduce their vulnerability in the short term.

VISION AND MISSION

ICIMOD's Vision is that the mountain population of the greater Himalayas enjoys improved well-being in a sustainable global environment and its Mission is to enable and facilitate their equitable and sustainable well-being by supporting sustainable mountain development through active regional cooperation.

TAKING ACTION NOW

Intensive consultations between ICIMOD, its regional member countries*, and its stakeholders have identified three key strategic areas that will help translate key concerns into operational priorities and make the most of available financial, human and institutional resources. ICIMOD's strategy in the key areas of water, environmental services, and livelihoods are aimed at benefiting the people of the region, but the long-term benefits of doing so will be enjoyed by the billions of people living downstream, and eventually all of mankind.

* Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Mountain poverty is exacerbated by environmental change. Livelihoods in the mountains are considerably more susceptible to environmental and economic change than those in the plains. They react more immediately to, and tend to be much more strongly linked with, the management and availability of natural resources. ICIMOD contributes to the promotion and management of the ecosystem services that the region provides, and analyses the consequences that land use has for the livelihoods of mountain people and downstream inhabitants. ICIMOD helps to validate the supply of ecosystem services, including water and carbon sequestration, and to work with the people of the region to conserve and manage biodiversity as a natural heritage and a resource for livelihoods and ecological resilience.



60% of the land area in the greater Himalayan region is rangelands – these are threatened by degradation and desertification.

Innovative options aimed at increasing productivity and food security are studied in conjunction with watershed adaptation strategies.



KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

ICIMOD is a knowledge, learning and enabling centre that serves as a multi-disciplinary documentation centre, a focal point for training and applied research, and as a consultative centre in scientific and technical matters for all the countries of the region. ICIMOD facilitates knowledge transfer across the region and customises international knowledge tailoring it to the region's needs. This knowledge management framework supports all of ICIMOD's activities and provides the tools and approaches to exchange information between and among partners.

ICIMOD's knowledge sharing activities are at the core of its role as a regional platform where policymakers, experts, planners, and practitioners can meet and exchange ideas and perspectives. It is a centre where information and knowledge are developed and exchanged, and where innovation, technology transfer, and effective communications are used to empower its regional member countries.



Geo-based solutions provide a common geographic data framework to integrate social, economic, and environmental parameters.

Communications and exchange take many forms including: training courses, meetings, books, manuals, on-line publications, and many others.

ICIMOD's expertise in the areas of honeybees and bee products and medicinal and aromatic plants is highly valued in the region.

Eco-tourism and high value products are proving viable and innovative livelihood options.

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

During recent years, new economic growth, shifting population dynamics, and climate change have taken place so intensely and rapidly that the traditional adaptation mechanisms of the region's people are losing their efficacy. The result has been poverty and marginalisation for mountain populations. The region's people must be enabled and empowered to cope with, adapt to, and benefit from the changes they are experiencing so that they can enjoy enhanced livelihoods along with increased social and environmental security. ICIMOD promotes resilience to help alleviate poverty through provision of sustainable livelihood options. Innovative rural income generation strategies are at the heart of adaptation methods that allay the effects of socioeconomic and environmental change.



WATER AND HAZARDS

The conservation of water, its sustainable management, and negotiated future use are of paramount importance for the Himalayan people and have implications for the prosperity and stability of the entire region and the world. However, water is not only the single most important resource and a source of wealth, but also the source of catastrophic hazards. ICIMOD's integrated approach takes this into consideration. ICIMOD aims to contribute to the management and sustainable use of water as part of the greater mountain ecosystem, and management of water and land resources for livelihoods, disaster risk reduction, human health, and the environment.



Ecosystem services provided by mountain people to the millions who benefit in the downstream need to be adequately recognised.

Monitoring air, water and ice resources provides information and tools for better risk management.



ABOUT ICIMOD

ICIMOD is a non-political intergovernmental organization who since 1983 has encouraged technical cooperation between governments in the region and whose primary objective has been to help promote the development of economically sound mountain ecosystems and to improve the living standards of the mountain populations of the Himalayan region. Over the past 25 years it has acted as a knowledge, learning and enabling centre that works to build awareness and takes action to preserve the unique role that this mountain system plays and must continue to play. ICIMOD's long history of working in the region, its well-honed core competencies, together with its strategic position and comparative advantages put it in a unique position to make a significant contribution to helping the region take on new challenges. Its holistic approach ensures that centre-wide policies on economic analysis, gender and equity mainstreaming, and governance are an integral part of a complete solution.

The Hindu Kush-Himalayan region is known as the 'third pole' of the earth, due to its inaccessibility and the amount of water stored there in the form of ice and snow. It is also known as the 'water tower' of Asia, the source of nine of its largest rivers. The above map shows both the mountain ranges and the main river basins.

OUR PARTNERS

ICIMOD's partners are the different agencies and organisations in its regional member countries who interact with development practitioners, policy makers and advocates. A feedback loop between these groups ensures that as conditions and policies change that inputs are continuously revised. ICIMOD also encourages long-term partnerships with international centres of excellence from outside of the region as a means of acquiring the specific expertise it need in technical areas. ICIMOD's donors are considered its financial partners in recognition of the fact that development in the region benefits both the people of the region and the greater global community.

FUNDING

ICIMOD is funded by long-term sponsors, who provide both core and programme funding. These sponsors are its regional member countries and non-regional financial partners who support ICIMOD's objectives. Scaling up activities, which take the form of well-defined projects in the member countries, are largely financed through the regional member countries themselves. Public and private donors can make contributions through the ICIMOD Foundation (www.icimodfoundation.org).

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