

EVOLUTION PROCESS OF ICIMOD – VISIBILITY, CREDIBILITY AND CONTRIBUTION ^{a)}

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1. Introduction:

Twenty five years ago, guided by concerns of International Community and agreement of HKH countries ICIMOD was established as a first International Centre to facilitate integrated development of mountain areas in the HKH region. The founding fathers of the Centre broadly stated the mandate of ICIMOD i.e. integrated mountain development in HK-H without clear and concrete steps of strategies to address the same. Besides, ICIMOD had no role model (unlike CGIAR Centres such as ICRISAT, IRRI with focus on crops and their productivity promotion etc.) to follow, and effectively address its mandate. Hence, with frequent trials and errors, responding to emerging challenges and opportunities, ICIMOD evolved itself, and tried to measure upto the expectations of its founding fathers and others who put a mix of high hopes and periodical dismays on the role and relevance as well as strength and weaknesses of the Centre. This paper sketches the process of self evolution of ICIMOD during different phases/stages of its growth, before it reached the present stage, exhibiting a reasonable degree of credibility and visibility as an important international centre, facilitating mountain development by acting as an interphase between research and development in HKH and outside.

Bypassing the preparatory phase prior to 1983 (when ideas and opinions on having a organization like ICIMOD and its potential support possibilities were mobilized and shaped following an international workshop at Munich in 1974), we look at its evolution since 1983, when ICIMOD was formally established and its mandate was formally outlined and accepted. Two inter related central components of ICIMOD's mandate, that put biggest challenges to the Centre and greatly shaped its evolution process, are commented upon first. The first component related to its goal and objective (or technical and functional component of mandate) namely, promotion of "Integrated Mountain Development". The second (quite linked to the first) related to primary geographical coverage by ICIMOD, i.e. countries belonging to Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) region. We elaborate on their implications involved, challenges and the way ICIMOD's responded to them, shaping its evolution over time.

2. ICIMOD Mandate: The Crucial Challenge

A. *The Functional Mandate – Integrated Mountain Development: What and How?*

Though right from its inception and during the subsequent growth phases, the focal concerns and identity of ICIMOD have been broadly spelled out as a multidisciplinary documentation centre, a focal point for mobilization, conduct and coordination of problem solving research activities representing an inter phase between research and development, a focal point for providing training and advisory service for mountain development etc., the overall projected/professed goal or mandate of the Centre has been to facilitate integrated mountain development in the HKH countries, as also manifested by its very title.

It may be mentioned that by the time of establishment of ICIMOD, "Integrated Development", both as a slogan and indicative approach, had become quite popular and attractive term, both in the policy-planning groups and donor circles. However, its operational aspects, including in the mountain context, were still missing. This was more so while addressing the issues of "how it should be designed and attempted".

a) This paper draws upon the contents and inferences from different ICIMOD documents listed at the end of the paper

Consequently, during the deliberations right from the ICIMOD's inaugural International Symposium in December 1983, to the subsequent workshops, panel discussions and consultancy reports, the term "integrated mountain development" was frequently used, but the involved discourses rarely went beyond focusing the individual sectoral thrusts, covering forest, water, energy, resource conservation etc., as it used to happen conventionally. Hence, without belittling these sectorally focused rich contributions, it should be pointed out that, these discourses could not effectively guide the new Institution in understanding and operationalising the "integrated mountain development". The challenge was still greater as ICIMOD had no role models to follow, notwithstanding the prolonged emphasis on integrated rural development programmes in some HKH countries during 1970s onward.

BOX 1

In response to an informal question, during a conference dinner in 1987, on "what and how of integrated mountain development and the way ICIMOD should approach it?" one European participant (reflecting the dream of 1974 Munich Workshop), responded as follows;

"With the help of ICIMOD, Himalayas should replicate the history of regeneration of Alps". Received with clapping, this dream however missed the key contexts differentiating Alps then and Himalayan now. Unlike high population pressure in Himalayas, in Alps case, diseases like Plague and World Wars took care of excess population pressure; the regeneration period of Alps broadly coincided with increased access to electricity in the region, significantly reducing the dependence on forest for energy, unlike Himalayas where wood fuel continues to be important source of energy. Besides, highly exploitative unequal high land – low land links, particularly during the colonial rule in undivided India contributed to severe depletion of natural resources (e.g forests) in Himalayas unlike Alps.

In the absence of conceptual clarity and operational guidance, ICIMOD had to pursue its own search efforts and understanding of what "integrated mountain development" implied in practical context, to guide its work. This again was not an easy path. The existing mountain related formal knowledge and information to be assembled and disseminated (as one of its initial tasks since 1983), was largely individual discipline driven and sectorally focused e.g. on forest, water, tourism, energy etc., not withstanding the frequent usage of the term "integrated development".

Furthermore, in several cases of assembled publications and other material, "mountain" appeared to be an adjective attached to sectoral listing and description of issues. This can be attributed to the sectorally driven conventional approaches of research, assessments etc., that was clearly reflected in the writings and recommendations. Furthermore, even in the mountain contexts, the mainstream, plain oriented (more familiar and deeply imbibed by both scholars and decision makers) seemed to dominate the discourses and "mountain" as a context rarely got understood and perceived. Somewhat poetic statement under Box 2 broadly conveys the essence of our argument focusing on the missing mountain perspective, by policy makers, planners and researchers.

BOX 2

To see the greatness of mountain, one must keep one's distance; to understand its form, one must move around it; to experience its moods, one must see it at sunrise and sunset, at noon, and at midnight, in sun and in rain, in snow and in storm, in summer and in winter and in all other seasons.

He who can see the mountain like this comes near to the life of the mountain, a life that is as intense and varied as that of a human being.

Mountains grow and decay, they breath and pulsate with life. They attract and collect invisible energies from their surrounding; the forces of the air, of the water, of electricity and magnetism. They create winds, clouds, thunderstorms, rains, waterfalls, and rivers.

They fill their surroundings with active life and give shelter and food to innumerable beings; such is the greatness of mighty mountains.

*Lama Anarika Govinda
The Way of The White Clouds*

In the general absence of new and different work, findings or reinterpretations of available past information to specifically focus on "integrated mountain development", the conventional approaches to knowledge gathering, its assessment and dissemination through workshops and other discourses (as the key activities during the very early phase of ICIMOD's existence), generally amounted to recycling the already available, largely sectorally oriented information, though covering different mountain tracts.

An important dimension of the above situation also extended to ICIMOD's efforts to build own professional (technical) capacity to implement the mandate assigned to it. Accordingly, it engaged relatively senior (at times retired) professionals, invariably having sectoral specialization (e.g. tourism, forestry, horticulture, soil conservation etc.) in RMCs. All the above activities perpetuated the dominance of sectoral approach to mountain issues in the Centre, which was created to focus on the integrated development options.

Besides the dominance of sectoral focus, another striking feature of the received information through available literature and discourses on mountains (HKH) was projection of two contradictory messages or scenarios indicated by writers and reporters on HKH. Accordingly, one scenario projected Himalayas as a heaven, with rich natural beauty and resources, rich and diverse cultures and societies etc. Another scenario depicted mountains as spots of poverty, over population, rapidly depleting natural resources base and a victim of policy maker's indifference, except for extracting niche resources for the downstream economies.

BOX 3

"Mountains as heaven or a pool of Poverty and Misery"

In the context of the two conflicting perceptions by outsiders the following story would be appropriate. During early 1990, when ICIMOD's Farming System's professionals were looking at indicators of sustainability/unsustainability in Himachal Pradesh (India), an Anthropologist, who was admirer of mountain beauty and pleasant environment, accompanied them. On reaching a village, he told the villagers, "Oh, your mountain village is a Swarg (heaven)". One villager responded, "Yes it is Swarg and we are Swargwasi (i.e. those who reach Swarg after the death)". Another villager, asked the foreign visitor, if he would like to have a close glance at the Swarg (heaven). Visitor

responded, "Yes". Then the villager raised his right arm, and indicated towards the big hole around the armpit in the sleeve of his shirt and said "this is heaven we live in".

However, a closer understanding, supported by quick assessments based on field observations as well as a fresh relook at the available studies (by ICIMOD and other likeminded national agencies) in the RMCs revealed a mixture of the two situations projected by the past literature or assessments. This induced some of the ICIMOD professionals to have a serious re-look at the sectorally focused and other available information to identify some elements and their potential linkages to serve as a foundation for initiating thinking on integrated approaches, even to address the sectoral and other inter-linked development problems of HKH region.

Lead in this process was taken by newly established Mountain Farming System (MFS) Division. The MFS comprising of a small group of professionals with very little links with conventional development research in mountain areas but considerable work experience in diverse rural situations in plain areas of Asia and Africa. Their starting focus at ICIMOD was on understanding "how mountains differ from other ecosystems and what are the implications thereof"? MFS looked at mountain situation and its distinguishing features through the lens of mountain agriculture, defined in a comprehensive sense. Mountain agriculture broadly composed of all land, bio-diversity, water based, inter-linked activities and how they are influenced by specific mountain conditions, called mountain specificities (e.g. inaccessibility, fragility, marginality, diversity, niche opportunities and human adaptation mechanisms against the above). Accordingly, the scope of MFS work extended far beyond the conventional approach confined to cropping systems etc. to overall natural resource management as well as development policies and public interventions as affected by the diverse and interlinked mountain specificities. Based on the review and re-interpretations of the available literature and field studies in China, India, Nepal and Pakistan, in partnership with the national institutes, the above initiative led to development of what we call "Mountain Perspective Framework".

Mountain Perspective Framework (MPF)

As a conceptual and operational framework, MPF defines the uniqueness of mountain situations as a basis for designing and implementing integrated mountain development solutions for sustainable livelihoods and environment. Put in simple terms, MPF, indicates recognition and consideration of the unique conditions of mountain landscapes i.e. mountain specificities, that broadly differentiate them from plains.

The already mentioned mountain specificities (with significant intra-mountain variations), not only shape the pace and pattern of change but determine the degree of relevance and effectiveness of development/welfare interventions in mountain areas. Most of the above characteristics (mountain specificities) have biophysical and socio-economic or political dimensions as well as interlinkages which call for integrated approach to planning and execution of interventions in mountain areas. The implications and impacts of MPF can be viewed as different parts of a process directed towards a paradigm shift in the approaches to mountain development – from sectoral to an inter-sectoral approach; from addressing technical to addressing social issues and from macro to micro – level issues, as ICIMOD demonstrated in its subsequent work under different projects.

BOX 4

"That is why name of our institute is International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development!!"

During the ICIMOD Board Meeting in Bhutan during 1989, Mountain Farming Systems Division (MFS), while presenting its work elaborated on mountain perspective framework. After listing the mountain specificities (e.g. in accessibility, fragility marginality, diversity etc. it was indicated that imperatives of these features, bio-physically (and socially as well) are interlinked. It is not appropriate to address one feature by ignoring the other linked features. Example of promoting access without incorporating the imperatives of fragility (and slope) may prove ineffective as illustrated by road construction on fragile slopes leading to disappearance of road as well as its foundation land during next rains. So the interventions need to be based on integrated assessment of situation. At this moment the Chairman Dr. Hogger, jumped out of his chair and loudly shouted, "that is why name of our Institute is "International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development". This was followed by speech after speech by other Board Members highlighting the importance of integrated approach, and appreciation of MFS Divisions work clearly indicating this.

For initial validation of the MPF as an conceptual and operational framework, ICIMOD looked at the contrasting situations of the successful and not-successful development initiatives (Policy, Programmes) and respectively linking the same to their (at least sub-conscious) adherence or non-adherence to imperatives of mountain specificities. This way the Centre managed to establish the validity and utility of integrated approach to mountain development. This sort of cutting edge approach also helped in understanding the issues of sustainability/unsustainability of mountain agriculture and natural resource base, discussed at the international fora. This helped ICIMOD to be as an important participant in global discourse and initiatives such as designing of Mountain Agenda during Rio Conference, Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, IYM and Mountain Partnership, Initiatives on Global Change in Mountain Areas, Economic Globalisation and its repercussions for mountain areas and communities etc.

The key components of the Mountain Perspective Framework were translated in Chinese, Nepali, Hindi and Spanish (by collaborating researchers in Andes) for usage by decision makers at different levels. MPF components were also used in a few major initiatives such as APP (Agricultural Perspective Plan) Nepal, Himalayan Action Plan (India), UNDP supported development initiative in Tibet (China), and deliberations on Environmental Strategy (Bhutan). A number of NGOs, with ICIMOD guidance used the relevant components of MPF in their field level work.

Within ICIMOD, the MPF was used for training programmes of MENRIS, Study of market towns and settlement patterns, globalization and implications for mountains, poverty and livelihoods issues and a number of other initiatives by ICIMOD.

The development policies in mountain areas of RMC were also reviewed using the MPF and shared with policy programme groups in RMCs. MPF is described as major conceptual contribution by the external reviewers of ICIMOD work (Walter Cowards & Sharma). However, this should also be noted that application and operationalisation of MPF concept has not been sufficiently wide spread, largely because the ICIMOD partners at field level have not been effectively trained and involved in the process. Even, at ICIMOD level, despite awareness of its relevance and usability specially after 1994 MPF has been used only selectively and insufficiently at project/ programme level. However, under the strategic framework for ICIMOD (2008-2012) the "integrated approach" with elements of MPF is used at programme planning level not only in country contexts but in regional and global contexts.

Finally, to conclude the present section, the above, account has summarized ICIMOD's efforts and achievements in operationalising the key component of the Centre's mandate i.e. "Integrated Mountain Development".

3. The Geographical Mandate : The Second Mandate-Driven Challenge

As already mentioned the second component of mandate that posed strong challenge to ICIMOD was the geo-political boundaries of ICIMOD's work area. The latter included 8 countries of Hindu Kush Himalayas. Including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan. Though these countries shared the commonalities of mountain specificities and their imperatives indicated earlier, some of them also had serious differences in their geo-political perspectives. The consequent differences, rooted in the history and geography of the region, in a variety of ways, constrained the cooperative planning and implementation of ICIMOD programmes in the region.

Before, elaborating on the challenges posed by geographical mandate and inter-country differences, it will be useful to digress in to the initial circumstances that also contributed to these challenges. They are rooted in the very idea or dream of setting up a government approved or participating organization in HKH (at Munich, 1974). Accordingly, an important aspect of outlining the key mandate (i.e. geographical coverage by ICIMOD) was a part of the circumstances and visions associated with the origin of very idea of setting up ICIMOD. The idea and initial thinking on the subject was proposed by mountain thinkers, and lovers largely from Europe, (led by Germany, Switzerland at the Munich International Workshop (1974). Later on complemented by views and supports of MAB, UNESCO. As in most of the internationally conceived ideas and visions, the usual next step was to sell the idea to RMC governments, irrespective of the limited degree of their interest, enthusiasm and seriousness about the potential actions on the subject as compared to the views of those endorsing Munich dream. In contrast to interest of initial sponsors of the ICIMOD idea, the RMC governments specially the larger ones hardly had proactive concerns for their mountains except for extracting the niche resources for the downstream, some subsidy-based interventions and using Himalayan areas as a component in their security strategies. People centred initiatives in these area were low priority tasks, because of marginality of mountain people and their voice-lessness.

This attribute of the situation, became all the more significant in generating RMC's indifference towards ICIMOD, because, again due to the differences in the perceptions of initial sponsors of the Centre and the HKH Policy makers. It was conceived as an inter-governmental agency, with top down approach. The mountain people, their institutions or representative had little awareness and involvement in the initiative, as the people centred participatory approach to development was almost unknown those days. Hence, as shown by the experience of many other international initiatives and agreements, operationalisation of ICIMOD idea took long time and prolonged convincing. As discussed below ICIMOD situation was further complicated by already mentioned factors rooted in the history and political geography of the HKH.

Initially the geopolitical differences did affect the smooth working of a non-political organization like ICIMOD. Yet to be positive, the very establishment of ICIMOD could be viewed as a big achievement. Through ICIMOD, the RMCs despite their differences of perspectives and geopolitical concerns etc. agreed to stand on a common platform to think and act on addressing the problems of their mountain areas.

Viewed in a specific way, efforts and contributions towards smoothening of inter-RMC differences, collaborative exchange and working amongst themselves for over two and a half decades, should be

seen as an important part of the growth process of ICIMOD or rather its working approaches. Thus gradually (though as yet not fully) addressing of constraints rooted in geopolitical and historical processes in HKH, can be viewed as an important dimension of ICIMOD's evolution or adjustment process. To appreciate this point it will be useful to indicate a few initial problems linked to the inter country differences. Accordingly, apart from the routine problems relating to issue of visa for ICIMOD professionals belonging to specific RMCs, hurdles and unwillingness to share specific experiences as well as national data on particular subjects etc., there was little possibility of collective thinking and collaborative projects, despite availability of ICIMOD support for the same. Even within the same country several mountain areas, were out of bond for ICIMOD to work there.

Apart from the above geo-politically rooted factors, some features of administrative culture and procedures in RMCs also constrained the quick and effective links and interactions between RMC decision makers and ICIMOD. They could be briefly stated.

In most countries, administrative procedures and practices, as well as authorization levels of decision makers and seniorities etc. significantly counted in RMCs agreeing to ICIMOD approaches, tasks and collaborations etc. They also blocked the genuine sharing and enhancing effective partnerships and in effect separated ICIMOD and country decision makers in their approaches to mountain development.

Furthermore, there are significant difference in the relative status of mountain scientist/researchers vis a vis the purely administrative personnel (e.g. IAS officers in India having higher status). Interactions and joint thinking involving scientific technical personnel in RMCs was relatively easy for ICIMOD, but the same was limited with senior administrative personnel in most cases. Consequently understanding and links developed between RMC technical personnel and ICIMOD was generally discounted by the above mentioned administrative hierarchies. Development and implementation of effective links with the key decision makers i.e. senior administrative personnel in RMCs, was further obstructed by their limited time they could spare for ICIMOD related work complemented by their frequent transfers at crucial decision making stages, pushing for repeating the whole convincing process again.

The illustrative manifestations of the above circumstances are indicated by the following:

- a) In ICIMOD related affairs (e.g. Board decision, meeting etc.), compared to technical/development agencies dealing with national mountain areas greater role was assigned to external affairs establishments of RMCs, who often had very little to do with mountain development.
- b) Handling of ICIMOD work-related issues by Central Government Agencies rather than the regional or provincial agencies operating in or for mountain areas. This was partly linked to the above (a). More importantly this was a result of conventional practices in the RMCs, where mountains, (except for extraction of niche resources for the mainstream economics and their importance in national/defense strategies) rarely got national attention. In other words, mountains suffered from the status of socio-political marginality and overall neglected in the above context. Thus, ICIMOD's interest and advocacy of mountain areas and people did not match well with RMC governments conventional approaches.
- c) In a number of cases direct or indirect insistence on engaging professional staff at ICIMOD suggested by RMC ministries rather than mountain focused scientific and technical agencies.

BOX 5

Recognition and Expectation Process

The process of change or evolution of ICIMOD is partly reflected through the following statements of RMC representatives in different meetings/workshops.

- Earlier we used to ask, "What is ICIMOD"? (1988).
- Now we ask "What can ICIMOD do for us?" (1995).

- Earlier ICIMOD worked as a street vendor, trying to project and sell its products" (1993).
- Now ICIMOD acts as a mall, where people visit for getting better/new knowledge input and advice" (2007).

- Earlier ICIMOD evolved and pushed advice and options on its own (1994) now ICIMOD design and shape the options as its clients demand (2007).

Some additional indicative illustrative manifestations of impacts of above administrative culture affecting ICIMOD-RMC links and partnerships may include:

- a) Very rare availability of senior administrative decision makers for specific crucial ICIMOD meetings (at times due to eleventh hour changes in their programme).
- b) Nomination and hence participation of lower level scientific and other personnel in crucial meetings, with little authority to approve the decisions of meetings. This applied to the meetings requiring RMC approval of specific initiatives/decision of ICIMOD requiring RMC consent.
- c) Not according high priority or seriousness to technical or professional meetings organized jointly by ICIMOD and RMC partners, leading to casual nomination of participant not very suited to the meeting.
- d) Non-approval or extremely delayed approval of collaborative-projects, jointly planned by professional from specific agencies of RMCs and ICIMOD.

The Complementing Gaps on ICIMOD Side

The imperatives of above mentioned features of RMC situations created by geo-political concerns as well as their administrative cultures and processes, are significantly complemented by different gaps on the part of ICIMOD, which according to some RMC officials also contributed to obstructing the ownership and functional involvement of RMCs in the mandated activities of ICIMOD. This is inferred from the RMC responses to an important question namely, "Even when the RMCs were represented on the highest decision making body i.e. Governing Board of ICIMOD; they paid annual contributions to ICIMOD budget, quite senior RMC professionals worked at ICIMOD and yet the countries displayed a lack of their ownership of ICIMOD, – why so?"

Though this question was neither asked nor responded formally. Yet during the informal discussions, it was presented to a number of RMC – representatives, at a number of informal occasions, specially during the Board meetings and other high level meetings as well as during the visits of senior professionals of ICIMOD to the member countries.

During the early period of existence of ICIMOD, the thinking RMC professionals often responded to the question in round about ways, emphasizing the following;

- i) There is some mismatch between the concerns and approaches of ICIMOD and the government agencies/decision makers dealing with the country's mountain regions; this tends to reduce the interaction processes and joint decisions and actions.
- ii) ICIMOD pleads for and plans for several issues and possibilities but it is unable to convincingly demonstrate some thing practicable, which is significantly different from what our national agencies know, propagate and do. What is specific and better in the case of ICIMOD out put and advocacy which could induce RMC decision makers to adhere to what ICIMOD advocates?;
- iii) They further added that the issues comprising the response (i), have historical and cultural or procedural roots and could be gradually resolved over a period of time. But the solutions for issues underlying response (ii) is largely an ICIMOD's responsibility. Accordingly, based on its thinking usable results of work and replicable achievements, first ICIMOD will have to convince the RMCs to positively look at it and follow its approach and advocacy. This should be complemented by collaborative activities between ICIMOD and RMC institutions to help learning by doing. This, in a way pinpoints to a major challenge to ICIMOD i.e. establish and demonstrate its credibility and niche to which the Centre had to respond as a key step in its evolution process. Though most of the concerns and issues stated above have been gradually responded to through ICIMOD's work and output over time, the latter's specifically focused recapitulation will be useful in capturing the process of ICIMOD's evolution. Accordingly,

The history, current status and future strategies covering different initiatives of ICIMOD leading to recognition of its relevance and role in mountain contexts, has been reported in different contributions to this publication. Accordingly, after 25 years of its work comprising preparation of conceptual and operational framework (i.e. mountain perspective framework) defining uniqueness of mountain situation, as a basis for designing and implementing options for sustainable integrated mountain development and emphasizing inter-sectoral approaches and complementarities of bio-physical/technical and social issues etc. have been treated as a step towards paradigm shift to facilitate integrated and sustainable mountain development. ICIMOD is recognized as: a focal point for applied research in number of areas; a multi-disciplinary centre for systematic exchange of knowledge and information related to integrated mountain development in HKH region; a regional focal point for specialized training of partners in different fields including GIS/RS and community initiatives; a centre that fosters networks and partnerships regionally and globally to address mountain issues.

To supplement the above, the following discussion is largely confined to inventorising the different initiatives by ICIMOD, which individually or collectively contributed to the Centre's enhanced visibility, credibility and recognition of its role and relevance regionally and globally. To begin with we can briefly list the salient features of ICIMOD approaches and activities or initiatives which were characterized by at least one or more of the following attributes:

- Centrality of mountain context or imperatives of mountain specificities as outlined by mountain perspective frame work
- Focus on cutting edge issues in applied research and advocacy work
- Linking understanding and outputs at grass-roots level to macro-level policy –programme processes.
- Identification, assessment and replication of best practices/success stories from specific mountain areas to other mountain areas with involving RMC partners

- A variety of partnership arrangements for collaborative work involving RMC government agencies, NGOs, Universities and rural communities
- Capacity building of self and partners through joint working and learning by doing
- Training including on the spot joint working with RMC partners and mind-set changes, affecting decision makers, approach to ICIMOD work
- Promotion and conduct of projects/individual initiatives with inter-sectoral , integrated approaches
- Specific issue-focused training and orientation courses guided by both supply side and demand side thrusts
- Community-centred initiatives, partnerships including those with focus on community resources, indigenous people and knowledge systems.
- Linking livelihood systems to environmental conservation at community level
- Linking mountain-non mountain concerns and their complementarities in the changing global scenarios
- Participation (often leading) the global discourse and work on specific subjects
- Partnership in joint projects with RMC agencies and other international agencies
- Participation in global/RMC advisory work
- Responses to emerging challenging and opportunities (including through economic globalization, climate change etc.)
- Movement/placement of ex-ICIMOD professionals at higher decision making positions within RMC governments as well as international organization such as the World Bank, FAO, UNDP and some donor groups
- Internal restructuring and refocusing of professional capacities as required by new challenges and opportunities

For shortage of space we present the information on the above aspects in the following descriptive tables:

Table 1 ICIMOD activities enhancing its visibility and recognition of its role and relevance for mountain development

Research/training advisory activities	Relevance and role exhibiting features								
	Problem focused work on cutting edge issues with integrate approaches	Promoting regional concerns/focus	Capacity/network building	Regional knowledge hub-learning & sharing	Linking grass roots level to concerns/options to macro-level policies	Focus on environment-livelihood nexus	Community-centred initiatives/mobilization advocacy	Projection of niche/comparative advantage	Input in global discourse and emerging concerns
Development & use of mountain perspective frame work	x			x	x			x	x
Himalayan honeybee: economic and environmental contributions	x	x			x		x	x	
Domestication, promotion of herbal products	x					x		x	x
Gravity ropeway initiative	x				x				
Cultivation and harnessing of seabuckthorn	x	x	x					x	
Mountain tourism with community focus		x	x			x	x		
Innovative dissemination methods/outreach		x		x				x	
Advisory inputs in national/international issues		x	x						x
Repositioning concerns & capacities to respond to emerging scenarios	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Designing/application of integrated approaches to inter-sectoral issues	x	x			x			x	x
Rural energy options and applications	x	x	x						
PARDYP-people and resource centred approaches to watershed development	x		x		x	x		x	
Addressing mountain risk, vulnerability (water-led disasters/mitigation/adaptation	x			x					x
Community mobilization for forest, water, biodiversity management		x	x		x		x		
Indigenous people/practices and advocacy initiatives	x				x				
Increasing role in global fora/initiatives (eg. Globalization, climate change issues etc.	x								
Contributions to capacity building and re-orientation of perspective at different levels in RMCs involving (technical professionals and decision makers)	x		x	x	x	x			x

<p>MENRIS led initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building (trained RMC professionals for over 10 yrs.) • Information (gathering & sharing RS data) • Application to concrete issues (climate change, glacial melting etc.) 	X	X	X								X
				X	X						
Output dissemination approaches as per diverse stakeholder needs											
Transboundary bio-diversity conservation and input in global treaties	X	X							X	X	X
Inter-programme (project-initiatives)											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender mainstreaming and biodiversity conservation • Rangeland management and energy issues • Herbal resource conservation and micro-enterprises • Ecosystem services and livelihood options etc. 	X			X	X				X		

Note: The paper draws upon the relevant contents and inferences from the following documents