annex 6

comments of the representative from india

A Flood Forecasting and Warning System is one of the effective non-structural measures to forewarn and manage flood disasters. This forewarns us as to when the river is going to use its flood plains, to what extent and for how long.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) has been pursuing to develop a new framework for regional cooperation in flood forecasting in the HKH region and to consider options for its implementations using the World Hydrological Cycle Observing System (WHYCOS) concept of WMO as the basis.

The India position with respect to the Regional Flood Information System in the Hindu Kush Himalayan Region was made clear in the 1st High Level Consultative Meeting held in May, 2001 and subsequently in the 1st meeting of the Consultative Panel in May, 2002

The Executive Summary of the Proceedings of the 1st meeting of the Consultative Panel held in May 2002, did mention that the representative from India provided an additional note that documents the official stand of the Government of India with regard to the further development of the project but the same was not included as a part of the proceedings communicated by ICIMOD in their letter of September 27, 2002. The present draft Project Document also does not mention India's stand as brought out in the earlier meeting.

I take this opportunity to reiterate the stand of the Government of India:

1. There are bilateral data exchange regimes existing between India and its neighbouring countries which are working quite satisfactorily on the sharing of real time data on flood forecasting. These arrangements have therefore to be continued bilaterally and certainly not substituted with a regional regime.
2. It is considered that a regional approach would only be of academic interest for countries other than the immediate users of data under the bilateral regime. Sharing of such data with other neighbours is not considered necessary.
3. Sharing meteorological and flood forecasting data sans real time data for the proposed regional web site may be considered as the requirement of real time data is already being well served under our bilateral regimes.

Regarding exchange of real time data it has been mentioned on page 15 of the draft document under Project Justification that "Some exchange of data has occurred through bilateral agreements between Nepal-India, Nepal-Bangladesh, and Bangladesh-India. Such effort has primarily been focused for sharing of historical, not real time hydrological data." This does not reflect the correct position. In fact India has bilateral data exchange regimes with Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Nepal and Pakistan which are working satisfactorily on the sharing of real time data on flood forecasting.