
Conclusions and Key Achievements

Conclusions

The realisation and concern that, in addition to extreme floods, annually occurring floods in almost all parts of the HKH region continue to be a major impediment for the economic development in many river basins by causing loss of lives and property, damage to infrastructure, and loss of productive capacity mainly in agriculture and industry, provided impetus and background to the meeting. The improved management of floods is therefore a high priority within the context of integrated water resource management and basin development in the region.

The consultative meeting was attended by high-level country representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, technical experts, and observers, including representatives from donor agencies. The meeting created a unique opportunity to exchange knowledge and know-how in flood forecasting in the HKH region. The participants agreed that further initiatives are required to improve flood forecasting in the entire region, in particular in improving hydro-meteorological networks, telecommunication and dissemination of real-time data and information, forecasting techniques and reliability, access to data and information, and capacity building.

It became clear during the deliberations that the existing and successfully-implemented bilateral agreements between countries could be the basis for the development of a regional framework for collaboration which would allow

for exchange of data and information beyond the limitations of bilateral agreements in the context of regional and even global interests. Technically, the participants agreed to focus on the development of a regional flood information system, including the areas for improvement mentioned above. Regional and global frameworks for cooperation for weather forecasting and the detection of climate variability and change are successfully operated within the World Weather Watch Programme of WMO. In the field of hydrology and water resources' management, the WHYCOS of WMO is presently developing into a similar system, promoting regional and global cooperation along specific interests that are identified by the regional partners. If implemented in the HKH region, the system could also be scientifically complemented by the HKH-FRIEND, which is being implemented under the auspices of UNESCO.

The participants agreed on the aims and objectives for the development of a regional flood information system based on the WHYCOS concept. The aims and objectives of a regional flood information system would be implemented through an HKH-HYCOS. The participants also agreed on an 'Action Plan' for the development of regional cooperation and the development of a draft project proposal to be discussed during the Second High-level Consultative Meeting on the Establishment of a HKH - Flood Information System planned for July 2002. To support these activities, the participants also agreed that a Consultative Panel should be established to assist ICIMOD and WMO in further developing the regional framework for cooperation and to promote the concept of an HKH-HYCOS project at the decision-making level in all participating countries in the region.

Key Achievements

The following mark the key achievements of the meeting.

- Exchange of knowledge and know-how in flood forecasting in the region and examples from outside the region
- Information on existing concepts for regional cooperation in hydrology
- Identification of the aims and objectives of a regional flood information system
- Agreement on the implementation of a regional flood information system using the WHYCOS concept of WMO and scientific support through the HKH-FRIEND project under the auspices of UNESCO
- Adoption of an action plan and the establishment of a consultative panel
- General commitment by participants to further support and assist in the development of this important regional initiative