

7 Concluding Session

The reports of the Working Groups were presented in the Plenary Session by the respective chairpersons. The plenary was chaired by *Professor Mian Nazeer*. During the discussions about the reports, while generally endorsing the recommendations made by different groups, participants offered additional suggestions on the further development of the ICIMOD programme on the subject. The initiative taken by the Centre to develop methodologies for integrating environmental considerations with development planning in mountain areas was enthusiastically welcomed. But some participants also cautioned against being too ambitious and advised proceeding on the basis of studies and experimentation in selected sectors and areas. Let the best not become the enemy of good was the general tenor of their advice.

An important idea floated by some participants and endorsed by most others was to build a strong advocacy for a pro-mountain bias in development strategies. The approach would differ from country to country depending on how important the mountain regions were in their geographical areas. But lobbying for mountain development and environment in favour of sustainable development and the livelihoods of mountain people was required in order to conscientise planners and policy-makers on the importance of the mountains. This, however, needed to be backed up by solid technical work on both environmental and socioeconomic aspects of development in mountain regions.

In concluding the meeting, *Mr. Egbert Pelinck*, Director General, ICIMOD, thanked the participants for their contributions and expressed the hope that the Centre would receive full cooperation and help in developing and executing the programme, as discussed in the meeting. He said that the Centre proposed to undertake the following activities under this programme.

- 1) Studies
 - a) Assessment of the extent and methods of incorporating environmental considerations in development planning in the mountain areas of different countries
 - b) Methodologies
 - i) Valuation and accounting of environmentally-sensitive natural resources

- ii) Development-environment and intersectoral integration on the basis of case studies of areas and projects
 - iii) Delimitation of a suitable unit for planning in mountain areas, based on case studies of the actual experiences using different concepts
- 2) Continuing consultations through meetings, workshops, and exchange of information and advisory services to countries in the formulation of plans and programmes.
 - 3) Technical support to the national, regional, and local government agencies and institutions and NGOs for implementing pilot projects on integrated area planning in selected watersheds/areas in different countries.
 - 4) Development of training programmes for planning officials and development workers at different levels using the results of studies under (i) above as well as inputs from national agencies and institutions.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. T.S. Papola to the participants for their contributions and to ICIMOD staff for their support in facilitating the meeting. On behalf of the participants, Mr. V.K. Pandit thanked ICIMOD for providing the opportunity for interaction and exchange and wished the programme on Integrated Planning for Development of Mountain Areas, introduced by the Centre, success.