

3. CONCLUDING SESSION

This was the last session and included a feedback session on the seminar; a presentation by **Narayan Kazi Shrestha** on the future plans and aspirations of the *Nepal Madhyasthata Samuha*; and concluding remarks by **Anupam Bhatia**.

Feedback from Participants

Participants felt that, due to growing conflicts over natural resources, it was important to initiate conflict resolution, and that the *Nepal Madhyasthata Samuha* could play this role. It was important to ensure that the NMS workshops and events in future were held in different parts of Nepal and did not remain centralised. Some participants felt that, despite the presence of people who were involved in conflicts, they could not understand the actual process which led to the conflicts. On the question of NMS's aims and focus, it was suggested that it expand its focus to include other natural resources.

Future Plans

Narayan Kazi Shrestha, on behalf of the members of the *Nepal Madhyasthata Samuha*, said that the seminar and discussions had endorsed the need to enhance understanding of conflicts and their resolution. The *Nepal Madhyasthata Samuha* had, so far, been a small inter-institutional forum, but he hoped that this seminar would change that and invited individuals and institutions to join the ongoing process of dialogue and learning initiated by the *Samuha*. More specifically, he shared the future plans of the NMS with the plenary.

Apart from reviewing the outcome of the seminar, the *Nepal Madhyasthata Samuha* hoped to undertake the following activities.

- Expand the focus of the group from forestry to other natural resources
- Expand the membership of the NMS to reflect its broad-based mandate
- Publish a two-language report of this seminar for wider distribution
- Set up a database of natural resources' related conflicts and analyse them to seek solutions
- Analyse the existing forest policy and its rules and regulations from the perspective of conflicts and their resolution
- Make the skills and resources of its members available to assist in mediating in conflicts
- Explore the possibility of designing and offering training in conflict resolution
- Organise a regional seminar on conflict resolution in forest resource management in October 1995.

Closing Remarks

In his closing remarks, Anupam Bhatia said that the *Nepal Madhyasthata Samuha* had made a modest beginning in understanding the nature of conflicts and in building the capacity to resolve

them. The response to this seminar was a source of inspiration and endorsed the need among NMS members to pursue the issue of conflicts and their resolution in future.

Many individuals and institutions had contributed to the Nepal *Madhyasthata Samuha* process and to the design and organisation of the seminar and Mr Bhatia felt it appropriate to formally express appreciation of their contributions.

First, he thanked **Kailash Nath Pyakurel**, Member, National Planning Commission, HMG/Nepal who had kindly agreed to deliver the keynote address. He then thanked the **participants** for taking time out to participate in the seminar. He specially thanked the participants from the forestry user groups from **Gorkha** and **Kavre**. He hoped that the process had been useful and looked forward to welcoming new members to the NMS. He also thanked **Bill Jackson**, of the Nepal **Australia Community Forestry Project**, and **Nick Roche**, of the **Nepal UK Community Forestry Project**, for supporting the participation of **Sharada Kharel** and **Netra Tumbahangphe** in the NMS, and for the case studies from their project areas.

He also thanked **Jeff Campbell**, of the **Ford Foundation New Delhi**, for his continuing support to the Participatory Natural Resources' Management Programme and for participating in the seminar. **Judith Amtzis** and **Rajiv Singh**, who had been involved with the seminar preparations and would continue to have a role in finalising the proceedings of the seminar, were also thanked.

Finally, he thanked the members of the Nepal *Madhyasthata Samuha* for their time and commitment, for writing the case studies, critiquing them and, most of all, for an open and collective process of sharing and learning.

Mr Bhatia hoped to continue this process of sharing and learning in future. He informed the participants that the NMS would shortly initiate a process of reflection which would focus on institutional issues raised at the seminar, and he hoped that, together, they could contribute to alleviating some conflicts and perhaps also preventing other conflicts over natural resources in Nepal and the South Asian region.