



Policy Priorities for Sustainable Mountain Development

PROCEEDINGS AND SELECTED PAPERS FROM THE ICIMOD REGIONAL POLICY WORKSHOP

About ICIMOD

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is an independent 'Mountain Learning and Knowledge Centre' serving the eight countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas – Afghanistan 🇦🇫, Bangladesh 🇬🇧, Bhutan 🇧🇹, China 🇨🇳, India 🇮🇳, Myanmar 🇲🇲, Nepal 🇳🇵, and Pakistan 🇵🇰 – and the global mountain community. Founded in 1983, ICIMOD is based in Kathmandu, Nepal, and brings together a partnership of regional member countries, partner institutions, and donors with a commitment for development action to secure a better future for the people and environment of the extended Himalayan region. ICIMOD's activities are supported by its core programme donors: the governments of Austria, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and its regional member countries, along with over thirty project co-financing donors. The primary objective of the Centre is to promote the development of an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem and to improve the living standards of mountain populations.

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Editors

Golam Rasul and Madhav Karki

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Life in the foothills of Manaslu, Nepal, where people are dependent on fuelwood for a variety of purposes – *Kiran Panday*

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Foreword

ICIMOD was established 25 years ago with the mandate of improving the lives and environment of mountain communities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. With support from its regional and international partners, it has made considerable progress in developing, testing, and demonstrating mountain-specific knowledge, technologies, and organisations. Adoption of these technologies and knowledge remains poor, however. Experience and knowledge generated in the field of development over the years suggests that technical solutions and development options are neither scaled up nor are they sustainable unless supported by suitable policies and institutions.

While policy formulation and decisions are the prerogative and domain of national governments, sound policy formulation and reform require relevant data, information, knowledge, and appropriate perspectives in order to make wise decisions when adopting and implementing policy options. As a mountain knowledge, learning and enabling centre, ICIMOD is in a unique position to contribute to policy development processes through relevant data, information, good practices, knowledge, and understanding.

As part of its broad mission, ICIMOD organised a regional workshop on **'Policy Priorities for Sustainable Mountain Development'** in September 2006. The purpose was to share lessons, experiences and good practices with partners and develop a common understanding and vision of policy issues, options, and priorities for mountain development in the region. The workshop brought together over 70 participants, amongst whom were senior government officials, development practitioners, researchers, and representatives of civil society organisations from eight regional member countries and beyond. Representatives from international research and development and organisations such as FAO and UNDP also participated. The conference papers and discussions raised critical issues such as prevailing poverty, degradation of natural resources, and the impact of climate change on the Himalayan ecosystem – all of which threaten the livelihoods of millions of people living in the South Asian region. It also discussed issues and options relevant and suitable for ICIMOD's regional member countries. The reflections of the workshop testify to the growing demand for ICIMOD's role as a provider of data, analysis, and perspectives in order to facilitate dialogue and discussion and build a common understanding. It highlighted that policy analysis and advocacy should be carried out only through a sound process and

detailed analysis and understanding of social, economic, and environmental aspects to ensure they are relevant for the regional member countries.

This publication documents the contribution of the participants as well as the key messages and recommendations of that workshop. I hope this will help to bring a greater awareness and understanding of the issues and options discussed at the workshop and contribute to enriching the views and perspectives that can lead to improving livelihoods through better management of natural resources in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region.

Dr. Madhav Karki, Deputy Director General of ICIMOD, and Dr. Golam Rasul, Policy Development Specialist, organised this important event and were responsible for consolidating the contents of this document. I would like to take this opportunity to appreciate their efforts and those of our many partners whose contributions made the workshop possible. A significant contribution has been made to fulfilling ICIMOD's commitment to devising mountain-specific and valuable policies for the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region..

Andreas Schild
Director General
ICIMOD

Preface

The workshop, 'Policy Priorities for Sustainable Mountain Development' organised by ICIMOD was designed to bring together experienced policy makers, researchers, development practitioners, and development partners to share lessons, experiences, and good practices on mountain development through analysis of issues, priorities, and options. The workshop provided an opportunity to share knowledge and information on good practices in the areas of policy design and implementation for mountain development; discuss policy issues, gaps, and challenges in natural resource management (NRM); and motivate the regional member countries (RMCs) to develop enabling policy environments and strengthen linkages and networks to address the challenges and opportunities for the livelihoods of the mountain people of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan (HKH) region.

The region is the source of ten large Asian river systems and provides water, ecosystem services, and the basis for livelihoods to around 150 million people in the region and nearly 500 million in downstream areas. The people in the greater Himalayan region belong largely to poor, indigenous and marginalised groups and live in an increasingly fragile environment, making them physically and socioeconomically vulnerable. Management of natural resources in the HKH region is confronted with a number of issues most important of which are growing pressure on its natural resources, persistent poverty, inequality, and deterioration of the resource base and environmental quality. Population growth combined with growing commercialisation, industrialisation, urbanisation, and globalisation has increased the demand for mountain natural resources.

Pressure on natural resources is growing to meet the demands for food, fresh water, timber, and fuel. Globalisation and economic liberalisation have been major factors in converting the economies of India, Pakistan, and China into growth poles of the world economy. The erosion of ethnic identities, culture, and indigenous knowledge has aggravated the impacts of globalisation and has resulted in further marginalisation and disenfranchisement, reducing access to natural resources important for the livelihoods of mountain communities.

Innovative policies and mechanisms are needed to create conditions for more equitable and effective livelihood options as well as environmental security. Increased regional cooperation in the conservation and management of natural resources, fair trade in natural resources, new

mechanisms for payment for environmental services (PES) provided by mountain dwellers, and increased equity of access to mountain resources among mountain people and stakeholders, are among the conditions needed. To manage the complexities, policy makers require not only reliable information, knowledge, and evidence but also alternative options, views, perceptions, and understanding as actors and stakeholders have different stakes and views as well as being affected differently by policy decisions. The current approach to policy support includes identifying policy issues and gaps, exploring options, understanding the policy process and context, enhancing policy dialogues, networking, and advocacy.

The ramifications of many mountain-specific problems, such as deforestation, land degradation, environmental deterioration, biodiversity loss, and watershed degradation, transcend watershed and national boundaries and require broad regional and transboundary collaboration. ICIMOD can play an important role as a knowledge disseminator and facilitator through generation, sharing and analysis of data, information, and good practices aimed at increasing understanding, improving technologies, and promoting best practices. Concerted efforts to mainstream mountain issues and policy solutions at national, regional, and international levels are pivotal in providing a framework for policy and pilots for implementation. The Policy Analysis Group at ICIMOD and a National Policy Working Group in each of the eight regional member countries involving strategic partners that can foster demand-driven policy research and analysis can contribute and feed into national and regional policy processes. Development of dynamic horizontal and vertical linkages by building partnerships with and among national organisations involved in policy research, as well as with global research and development partners to promote mountain-specific policy agendas and solutions would be instrumental. Policy improvements combined with effective and wide-scale implementation are the best methods for translating applied research results produced by ICIMOD and partners into improved mountain incomes and more sustainable management of mountain natural resources.

The participants recognise ICIMOD as a 'think-tank' and a model for integrated mountain development. They also recognise the need to link ICIMOD's knowledge and information to training and education for mountain development. The RMC representatives present believed that ICIMOD could play a better role in developing, influencing, and implementing enabling mountain policies and strengthening the regional and global mountain forum, as many mountain issues transcend geopolitical boundaries and require a coordinated approach from the countries of the region. With the emergence of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and globalisation, with increasing mobility and access to knowledge and information, and with enhanced regional cooperation and networking among the RMCs, the opportunities to address the challenges and harness benefits have increased. Regional initiatives on disaster mitigation, biodiversity conservation, eco-tourism, and the use of energy and water can be instrumental in addressing challenges and harnessing benefits.

The proceedings documented in this publication are organised into seven thematic sections: one from each of the workshop plenary sessions and a group-work session, which covers various dimensions of the events. Recommendations and areas for future intervention are

given to improve policy-making processes, strengthen regional cooperation, reduce the vulnerabilities of mountain communities, and direct ICIMOD's supporting role in promoting an enabling policy environment. The proceedings contain presentations and inputs from the participants about their learning and experiences in the mountains, successful practices, policy issues, gaps and prospects for sustainable management of the natural resources, the environment, and improved livelihoods for mountain communities in the HKH region.

The workshop was attended by over seventy participants including senior policy makers and professionals from the regional member countries, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Myanmar, and Pakistan; donor representatives including the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); and civil society and non-government organisations. Through the workshop, ICIMOD provided an important venue from which to seek contributions in the member countries to address emerging challenges and opportunities for mountain development.

The proceedings give us a rich record of perspectives by distinguished professionals as well as valuable inputs from the workshop participants, and are intended to serve as a useful document for mountain people, researchers, policy makers, donors, and development practitioners in mountain areas. I am grateful to all the participants and my colleagues at ICIMOD who contributed to ensuring the success of the workshop and the publication of its proceedings.

Madhav Karki
Deputy Director General of Programmes
ICIMOD

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A number of ICIMOD colleagues in the various programmes served as rapporteurs for the workshop's different sessions, making the activity not just an inter-country but also an inter-programme collaborative effort. We are grateful to all of them. This workshop is the output of ICIMOD's project, 'Promoting Sustainable Policy Initiatives in the Management of Natural Resources in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas (ICIMOD)' funded by GTZ. We gratefully acknowledge GTZ's support. In addition to providing financial assistance, Mr. Armin Hofman, Principal Advisor and Project Coordinator, GTZ Country Office Nepal, provided support during the organisation of the workshop. Our sincere thanks also to Dr. Ram Pratap Sah, former Executive Director of the Nepal Agricultural Research Council, who reviewed all the technical papers; Ms Greta Rana and Ms Joyce M. Mendez for editing the papers for publication; and Mr Dharma Ratna Maharjan and Ms Punam Pradhan for layout and design.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABS	access and benefit sharing
AKRSP	Aga Khan Rural Support Programme
BGSRDP	Bhutan German Sustainable Renewable (NR) Development Project
CBBC	community-based biodiversity conservation
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CF	community forestry
CFUG	community forest users' group
ChFDP	Churia Forest Development Project
CoP	Conference of Parties
CPR	common property resource
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
DFID	Department for International Development
DoF	Department of Forests
EFA	Education for All
EIA	environmental impact assessment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal
FFC	Federal Flood Commission
GBM	Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna
GEF	Global Environment Fund
GLOF	glacial lake outburst flood
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
GWP	Global Water Partnership
HCRS	Household Contract Responsibility System
HKH	Hindu Kush-Himalayas
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGCEDP	Indo-German Changar Eco- Development Project
IPR	intellectual property rights
IUCN	World Conservation Union
IWRM	integrated water resource management

JFM	joint forest management
LFP	Leasehold Forestry Programme
MAF	million acre feet
MAPIS	Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Information System
MAPPA	Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Programme in Asia
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NEC	North Eastern Council
NERCRMP	North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project
NGO	non-government organisation
NRM	natural resource management
NTFP	non-timber forest product
P3DM	participatory three-dimensional model
PA	protected area
PIC	prior improved consent
PIDA	Provincial Irrigation and Drainage Authority
PRA	participatory rural appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme
RBO	River Basin Organisation
RMC	regional member country
RNR	renewable natural resource
RRCAP	Regional Resource Centre Asia-Pacific
SAWF	South Asian Water Forum
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
START	System for Analysis, Research and Training
TK	traditional knowledge
TRIP	Trade Related Intellectual Property
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UPOV	Union for Protection of New Varieties of Plants
VFDS	Village Forest Development Society
WGI	World Glacier Inventory
WUA	Water Users' Association
WWF	World Wildlife Fund