

Commemorating 25 years









ICIMOD and the Himalayan Region – Responding to Emerging Challenges

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE



About ICIMOD

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, ICIMOD, is a regional knowledge development and learning centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas – Afghanistan , Bangladesh , Bhutan , China , India , Myanmar , Nepal , and Pakistan  – and based in Kathmandu, Nepal. Globalisation and climate change have an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities, while addressing upstream-downstream issues. We support regional transboundary programmes through partnership with regional partner institutions, facilitate the exchange of experience, and serve as a regional knowledge hub. We strengthen networking among regional and global centres of excellence. Overall, we are working to develop an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem to improve the living standards of mountain populations and to sustain vital ecosystem services for the billions of people living downstream – now, and for the future.

**Commemorating 25 years of commitment
for mountains and people**

ICIMOD and the Himalayan Region – Responding to Emerging Challenges

Editor
Dr Golam Rasul

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Foreword

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) was established in 1983 with the dual mandate of reducing poverty and conserving the environment in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan (HKH) region – an area that stretches from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east, and from the Tibetan plateau of China in the north to the Ganges Basin of India in the south. Since its establishment, ICIMOD together with its national and international partners has been working to develop and provide integrated and innovative solutions for a multitude of problems encountered by the people of the region. From a small documentation and training centre, it has grown into a well recognised ‘mountain knowledge and learning centre.’

This year ICIMOD is celebrating its 25th anniversary, providing us with an opportunity both to look back and reflect, and to look forward and redefine the Centre’s role, responsibilities, and orientation. As a part of this, we invited selected scholars, development practitioners, and scientists from the region and beyond – some involved in the Centre’s development, others interested observers – to provide a commentary on different aspects of the Centre from their personal perspective. We are fortunate that most were able to contribute wholeheartedly at short notice; this publication with its diverse views, perspectives, and insights, is the result. The main purpose of this commemorative publication is to view ICIMOD and its work from a regional and global perspective. Twenty-five years is a long time, particularly considering that some of ICIMOD’s member countries are among the most dynamic economies with very quickly changing social, cultural, and economic parameters, and much has changed since ICIMOD was first conceived.

We extend our sincere thanks to all the authors for their valuable contributions, which will help in shaping ICIMOD’s future agenda as well as furthering its vision and mission of bringing well-being to the people of the HKH region and beyond while protecting the environment for the benefit of future generations. I would also like to sincerely thank the regional member countries, particularly the focal ministries; their continuous support and confidence has been the backbone for building up 25 years of experience. A special mention goes to our international sponsors; particularly Germany and Switzerland have been reliable and strong partners since the very beginning. Without their initiative and conviction, ICIMOD would probably never have taken off. With this support, ICIMOD was able to gradually gain the confidence of other core sponsors such as Austria, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden and gather increasing support from bilateral and multilateral agencies. The contributions have not only been financial, advice and technical support from these organisations has helped us to grow and develop our capacity to respond to the growing expectations. Finally let me express my sincere thanks to all the staff of ICIMOD. Their efforts and availability, commitment and perseverance, provide the backbone of the institution. In particular, I would like to thank Golam Rasul and the publishing team, whose dedication was essential in preparing this book.

We look forward to receiving continued support and guidance to the Centre in the days ahead, to help us as we work in the service of the people of the HKH region and beyond.

Andreas Schild
Director General, ICIMOD

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
ECES	Environmental Change and Ecosystem Services
EU	European Union
GLOF	glacial lake outburst flood
GNP	gross national product
HKH	Hindu Kush-Himalayas/Himalayan
ICSU	International Council for Science
ICT	information communication technology
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
IWHM	Integrated Water and Hazard Management
LTER	long-term ecological research
MEA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MPF	Mountain Perspective Framework
MTAP	Medium Term Action Plan
NER	North Eastern Region
NGO	non-government organisation
PAC	Programme Advisory Committee
PAF	Poverty Alleviation Fund
QQR	Quinquennial Review
RMC	regional member country
SLPR	Sustainable Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction