Managing Knowledge and Communicating

ICIMOD has set ambitious goals to build institutional capacity and an environment that supports and encourages knowledge sharing and exchange among its staff, partners, and external networks as a basis for all its programmatic work. ICIMOD acts as a provider of knowledge and information on the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region and its people, in support of integrated mountain development and furthering the Mountain Agenda.

Knowledge management helps the strategic programmes

- to communicate the impact of their programmes more effectively;
- to develop and synthesise new or existing international knowledge and experiences;
- to customise new knowledge for the region;
- to identify, capture and discuss relevant mountain issues with stakeholders in the region; and
- to ensure that the concerns of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan countries in relation with mountains are included in international debates.

Communicating with stakeholders and the public

One example of these activities was the diversity of support and materials prepared for the COP15 conference in Copenhagen in December 2009. These aimed to build awareness of ICIMOD's work on climate change issues and promote events. They included formal papers, books and booklets, flyers, posters, video documentaries, press releases, and e-information.

The Himalaya – *Changing Landscapes* exhibition was also shown in small format in Copenhagen. The exhibition continued to introduce a wide public to the effects of climate and other changes on the Himalayan region. The full format exhibition attracted a large audience in Bonn, Germany, and Bern, Switzerland. A mobile form of the exhibition was prepared for use by ICIMOD in the region. A second set was prepared for the GB Pant Institute, Almora, India, and displayed at a number of venues in India.

To share outside knowledge and spur innovation, ICIMOD invited external speakers and visiting scientists to share their insights and lessons at 'brown bag' lunchtime presentations and discussions. It is exploring approaches to communication and training using new technologies and media for knowledge sharing. The library started the process of converting the collection of grey literature into a digital collection including multimedia formats.

Providing technology for communication and collaboration

The ICIMOD branding strategy begun in 2008 was mainstreamed further in 2009, providing a common identity for the institution with standard formats to package information in presentations, flyers, the website, and others. The technical platform of ICIMOD's website was rebuilt with an improved user interface that enables users to navigate more easily to information. These improvements have led to increased use of the site and a doubling of downloads of publications from our Books-Online service. An unexpected consequence was how the branding improved the internal identity of ICIMOD staff.

A new communication and collaborative workspace platform based upon Microsoft SharePoint was introduced that provides the basis for joint work on documents, a common repository, and internal knowledge sharing.

Gathering knowledge to share among partners

Templates to capture best practices and lessons learned have been developed to help in mainstreaming knowledge management tools in ICIMOD programmes and with partners. Processes for capturing knowledge have been supported by writeshops, documenting partners' initiatives, and providing training to partners to improve their knowledge sharing skills.

groups interested in sustainable mountain development. The APMN network now has more than 2,000 users involved in discussion and debate through the Internet. We have explored social networks to engage young people in our communication and knowledge exchange efforts.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) recognised ICIMOD as the regional knowledge hub on water, and ICIMOD is providing support to a regional e-centre initiative for relevant and applicable content on sustainable mountain development.

The importance of geodata and remote sensing

The GEO portal, which integrates various data repositories into useful datasets on the HKH region, is now linked to ICIMOD's website. Regional and national training/workshops on mountain-focused geographic information systems (GIS) and remote sensing applications helped to build the capacity of national partners for potential scaling up of activities. ICIMOD's GIS and RS team (MENRIS) has developed mountain-specific applications and decision support systems, and acted as a clearing-house mechanism for geo-information.

Knowledge management focal persons were nominated by all programmes and units to help integrate knowledge management across the Centre. Subject matter experts were nominated for six cross-cutting topics to take the lead in creating communities to strengthen knowledge development in these areas.

Facilitating external networks

Work with the Asia-Pacific Mountain Network (APMN) and the regional node of Mountain Partnership has contributed to disseminating messages to a range of user

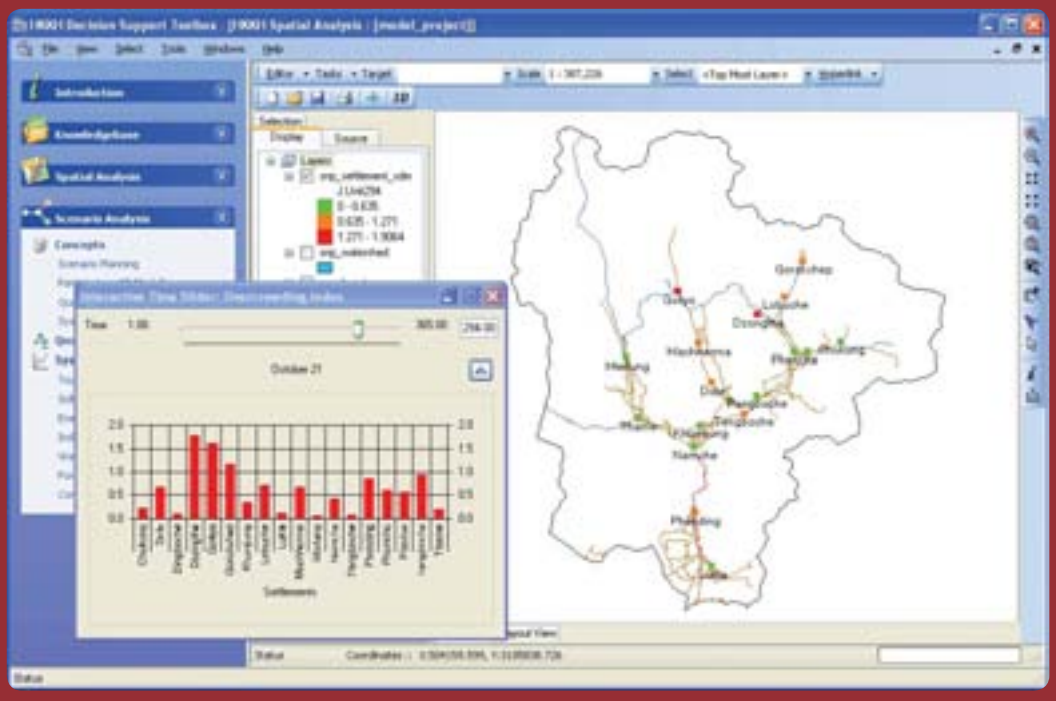
A special effort was made to mainstream geo-based applications in the ongoing programmes. The use of these applications supported interdisciplinary approaches in a range of programmatic activities. In 2009, ICIMOD formally became a participating organisation in the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) and the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF).

Decision support toolbox

In 2009, the Decision Support Toolbox (DST) software was released under the HKKH Partnership Project to assist natural resource managers in systematic planning and management of mountain protected areas. The DST provides a framework for data and information integration and for modelling socio-ecological processes using a system dynamics approach. The software provides basic GIS (geographic information system) functions for viewing and analysing spatial data, and running the system dynamics models linked to GIS layers. Ecosystem models on tourism, solid waste, energy, water quality, indoor air pollution, and forestry have been developed in the context of Sagarmatha National Park and Buffer Zone management. Over 1500 records of bibliography, maps, and geospatial data are included in the system with tools to browse and search the metadata. These functions are presented in the form of three application modules: Knowledgebase, Spatial Analysis, and Scenario Analysis. A number of training workshops have been conducted to disseminate the tools and approaches and encourage stakeholders in other regional countries to replicate them in their own context.

Ramesh Krishnamurthy, Scientist, Wildlife Institute of India

"I had a useful training course on the DST at ICIMOD and we have proposed to organise a workshop here along with my colleague. I understand the potential of DST, but we have not been able take this forward because it will require modification to suit local conditions since the management situations vary for different protected areas. There may be a need for further deliberation to put the DST in practice, but certainly there is potential in the Indian context."



Tibetan woman, Songpan, Sichuan, China