

The Challenge Ahead for ICIMOD

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The demand for relevant scientific knowledge to achieve the goal of sustainable mountain development will increase in the years to come. ICIMOD has to accept this challenge, improve its knowledge products, and communicate in a targeted and effective manner.

Knowledge generation, innovation, technology transfer, and effective communications are the key elements of ICIMOD's strategy to become a recognised, relevant, results-oriented, and responsive knowledge organisation in the region. ICIMOD aims to be a centre of excellence in knowledge management and an enabling centre in informing, influencing, and empowering our regional member countries and strategic partners with knowledge that is applicable and accessible.

As a regional knowledge-based organisation, ICIMOD is fully aware that the lack of factual and relevant data and information is hampering holistic development in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region: a region that is considered to be among the most vulnerable in the world from the perspective of climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other agencies have already indicated that there is a serious lack of data for this region. Compared to other parts of the world, the region not only lacks data on critical issues such as environmental change and biodiversity degradation, but also, due to the sectoral

nature of data generation and paucity of policies and protocols for sharing data, there is little new, relevant knowledge to address emerging problems such as local and global climate changes.

Lack of data is not the only problem: because of different standards, time series and scales, data cannot be shared in the region easily. Only by establishing observation stations and research and monitoring sites and fostering regional cooperation will it be possible to collect data systematically over the long term and to acquire the amount needed for analysing and predicting future trends in environmental change. ICIMOD has compatible regional programmes to achieve this



objective, but only partially since the data have to be generated on both national and regional scales.

ICIMOD's strengths lie in developing and implementing regional programmes and fostering regional cooperation to enable better management of transboundary resources. It is also engaged in collating and sharing socioeconomic, environmental, and realtime or near realtime hydrometeorological data for design and development of joint plans and programmes to effectively harness the region's ecosystem resources and address common concerns and challenges.





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Bringing a regional perspective to individual countries and taking national perspectives to the region, as well as facilitating regional dialogue and supporting transfer of knowledge to formulate its application, are the challenging tasks that lie ahead for ICIMOD. We have begun to develop a regional database using the latest Enterprise GIS and Internet platforms to collect, classify, organise, visualise, and share data, information, and knowledge about mountain issues and people's needs. The database will facilitate interpretation, synthesis, and analysis of data before it is repackaged and used by our stakeholders to design, implement, and monitor different development interventions.

ICIMOD will pursue its vision to create an environment conducive to active and useful knowledge exchange, as well as plans to intensify its support to partners by providing the knowledge needed for development. ICIMOD will increase its capacity to facilitate issue or theme-based sharing and exchange between and among regional research institutes, universities, and think tanks to close knowledge gaps. ICIMOD will continue to play an instrumental role as a platform for innovation and ideas to improve the quality of development interventions in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan

region. The Centre has a regional, transboundary vision of sustainable development for which global programmes and strategic partners are needed capable of downscaling or customising global knowledge to address climate change issues in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region. Through our strategic programmes in water, ecosystem services, and livelihoods, we will continue to generate and share data to address the issues of scientific uncertainty and close knowledge gaps in order to deal with climate change. At the same time, we must promote the ownership and active participation of various actors. To achieve this, we will develop pathways and impact chains for knowledge sharing using e-learning and social media tools so that we can engage young people as drivers of change in approaches to adaptation to a changing climate. We will, thus, seek new avenues to bridge the gaps in scientific learning and use through informing and influencing public policies. Our goal will be to move from vision to reality, inviting the participation of all stakeholders concerned. In this manner we believe the distance between certainty and uncertainty can be bridged and the well being of mountain people and the communities of the Himalayan region – upstream and downstream – improved.