



Enhancing Resilience and Supporting Adaptation of Mountain People

ICIMOD's strategy for delivering impact

In recent years, the Hindu Kush Himalayan region has witnessed rapid change. Population growth, migration, urbanization, and climate change have begun to pose challenges to traditional livelihood strategies and coping mechanisms. The vast ice reserves are shrinking, which, combined with other changes, threatens the role of the region as a water reservoir to over 1.3 billion people. The degradation of forests, wetlands, and rangelands in the region – which is home to four of the 34 global biodiversity hotspots – threatens livelihoods and biodiversity. There is an urgent need to develop adaptation and coping mechanisms to prepare the nations and people of the region to manage these changes and take advantage of emerging opportunities.

Vision and Mission

ICIMOD's Vision is that the men, women, and children of the Hindu Kush Himalayas enjoy improved wellbeing in a healthy mountain environment; its Mission is to enable sustainable and resilient mountain development for improved and equitable livelihoods through knowledge and regional cooperation.

Generating Knowledge to Serve the Region

ICIMOD aims to serve the region through knowledge generation and sharing to find solutions to critical mountain problems. It works to bridge science with policies and practice and provides a regional platform where policy makers, experts, planners, and practitioners can exchange ideas and perspectives towards the achievement of sustainable mountain development. ICIMOD facilitates knowledge exchange across the region, helps tailor international knowledge to the region's needs, and brings regional issues to the global stage. It sees knowledge-sharing initiatives as a source of inspiration, innovation, and questioning, helping to design improved and responsive practices, policies, and strategies for sustainable mountain development. ICIMOD aims to enhance the resilience of mountain ecosystems and people while helping them understand changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities.

Striving for Impact

ICIMOD delivers impact on the ground through six need-driven, transdisciplinary Regional Programmes. These Regional Programmes are supported by knowledge and expertise from the Thematic Areas of Livelihoods, Ecosystem Services, Water and Air, and Geospatial Solutions, which represent core competency areas that ICIMOD has developed in response to the needs of the region. All of ICIMOD's activities are underpinned by a strong Knowledge Management and Communication strategy that supports information gathering and fosters dialogue and exchange among researchers, practitioners, and decision makers in the region as well as the global community. ICIMOD's integrated approach ensures that centre-wide policies on economic analysis, gender, and governance are an integral part of a complete solution. ICIMOD works to ensure that its research and activities are implemented across disciplines and across borders and create linkages between science, policy, and practice in order to create positive change in the lives of mountain women, men, and children.

ICIMOD's Regional Programmes are formulated with a view to the long-term testing, piloting, and monitoring of innovative approaches; demonstrating transboundary cooperation on landscapes and river basins; addressing common issues related to the cryosphere and adaptation; developing regional information and databases; and meeting capacity building needs in the region. They include:

Adaptation to Change

This programme will work to develop tested adaptation strategies for improved livelihoods and to encourage the adoption of changed policies and practices for better adaptation in the region. This programme seeks to capture indigenous knowledge on autonomous adaptation and to contribute to planned adaptation by providing scientific support. By working with partners to promote innovative livelihood options and sustainable natural resource management strategies – including the promotion of high-value niche mountain products, value chain development, and ecotourism – it works to promote adaptation with particular attention to the challenges and role of women in adaptation.

Transboundary Landscapes

The Hindu Kush Himalayan region is extremely heterogeneous, with interlinkages between biomes and habitats as well as strong upstream-downstream linkages related to the provisioning of ecosystem services. The transboundary landscape approach makes it possible to address the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources – including biodiversity, rangelands, farming systems, forests, and wetlands – in landscapes defined by ecosystems rather than administrative boundaries. The approach is people-centred and builds on traditional values, which is an essential first step to conservation and sustainable and equitable development. ICIMOD and its partners have identified seven transboundary landscapes for programmatic cooperation. The programme will facilitate regional cooperation in these landscapes for the conservation of important resources and biodiversity, including the development of connectivity corridors between existing protected areas. REDD+ and other innovative payment for ecosystem services approaches for improved resource management and enhanced livelihoods will also be explored and promoted.



River Basins

Improved water resource management in mountain areas is essential for the sustainable development of the Hindu Kush Himalayan region and downstream countries. ICIMOD has adopted the river basin approach, which strikes a balance between the existing natural functions of the river system and societal expectations for livelihoods, industry, recreation, natural resource management, and agriculture. This programme focuses on multidisciplinary resource management approaches that address climate change and variability; cryosphere dynamics; the hydrological regime and water availability; water-related risk management; and vulnerability and adaptation. It also emphasizes improved understanding of upstream-downstream linkages and the links between natural resources and livelihoods. Key outcomes will include improved estimates of future water availability and its impact as well as adaptive water management strategies at basin and community levels.

Cryosphere and Atmosphere

The impact of climate change on glacial melting and atmospheric processes and its implications for water availability and quality of life are at the core of this programme. This programme will carry out long-term monitoring of the cryosphere and atmosphere on glacial lakes, snow cover, glacier mapping, mass balance, and atmospheric pollution, including short-lived climate pollutants like black carbon. The programme aims to increase understanding of the cryosphere and atmosphere in the region, the changes they are undergoing, and the impact of these changes in the mountains and downstream. It also aims to enhance regional cooperation in dealing with these transboundary issues and to improve the regional capacity to monitor the cryosphere and atmosphere as well as to develop policies and strategies for the uptake of pollution mitigation measures.



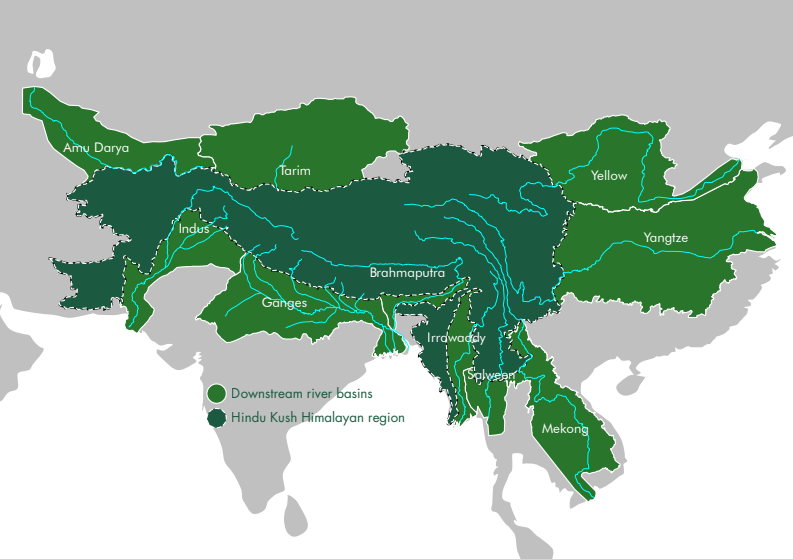
Mountain Environment Regional Information System

This programme encompasses long-term monitoring, database development, and uptake of knowledge for the region to support the effective implementation of policies and programmes related to mountain livelihoods and ecosystems in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region. The system will include information on the cryosphere, meteorological and hydrological parameters, air pollution, ecological and climate change, status and change of land use and land cover, biodiversity, floods and natural disasters, and socioeconomic changes, generated by remote sensing, spatial analysis, and field work. Key outcomes will include the use of information and knowledge from a significantly improved knowledge base by mountain communities, partners in the region, and global communities.

Himalayan University Consortium (Emerging Regional Programme)

The Himalayan University Consortium (HUC) aims to build a dynamic mountain knowledge partnership among universities, ICIMOD, and regional member country partners to promote research and learning. ICIMOD and universities will work together to strengthen capacity by developing joint research and knowledge management programmes on contemporary topics and, in so doing, help ease some of the shortcomings that regional institutions may have in terms of capacity and funding. Key outcomes will include the adoption of new mountain-specific curricula and the development of more students relevantly trained to meet the new mountain challenges of the future.





The Hindu Kush Himalayan region is known as the 'third pole' due to its inaccessibility and the amount of water stored in the form of ice and snow. As the source of ten of Asia's largest rivers, the Hindu Kush Himalayan region is also known as the 'water tower' of Asia and is the source of life and livelihoods for over 1.3 billion people.



About ICIMOD

Founded in 1983, ICIMOD is a regional intergovernmental learning and knowledge sharing centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) region – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan – and the global mountain community. ICIMOD acts as a knowledge development and learning centre to build awareness and take action to preserve the unique role that the Hindu Kush Himalayan mountain system plays. ICIMOD's history of working in the region and its core competencies put it in a unique position to contribute to helping the region take on new challenges. The Centre is working to develop an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem to improve the lives and livelihoods of mountain people – now, and for the future.

Governance and Funding

ICIMOD is governed by a Board comprised of members representing each of the eight regional member countries as well as seven independent board members selected based on their experience and skills. The Board is supported by a Programme Advisory Committee comprised of the seven independent Board members, and a Finance Committee including representatives from the Board.

ICIMOD is funded by its regional member countries and non-regional financial partners who support ICIMOD's objectives through core and long-term programme funding, which act as a strong foundation for long-term operation and sustainability. ICIMOD's financial partners are coordinated through the ICIMOD Support Group, which provides inputs and guidance to ICIMOD and reports to the Board.

Our Partners

Strengthening partnerships at all levels is crucial to realizing ICIMOD's vision and mission. ICIMOD's partners are the different agencies and organizations in its regional member countries that interact with development practitioners, policy makers, and advocates. ICIMOD also encourages long-term partnerships with international centres of excellence from outside the region. ICIMOD's financial sponsors are considered to be financial partners, as development in the region benefits both the people of the region and the global community.

For further information contact

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