

Transboundary Landscapes



Recognizing the need for regional cooperation to sustain ecosystem goods and services and protect biodiversity in landscapes that cross national borders, ICIMOD has adopted a people-centred approach that makes it possible to address the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in landscapes that are defined by ecosystems rather than administrative boundaries.

Since ICIMOD identified seven transboundary landscapes for possible intergovernmental cooperation in 2007, the Centre has worked to develop strategies for valuing ecosystem services and restoring degraded ecosystems. It has conducted strategic environmental assessments, planning, and analysis to inform policy decisions. ICIMOD completed socioeconomic assessments in the Kailash Sacred landscape and began

“I always consider ICIMOD an important platform for regional collaboration in biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation. ICIMOD organized a series of training workshops for the Kailash project implementation, which provided benefits to project members beyond the project.”

– Professor Yang Yongping, Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Beijing

Above Merchulu, Pakistan



conducting a valuation of economic benefits from the rich biodiversity of the Kangchenjunga landscape.

ICIMOD has been recognized by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice to the CBD as a mountain centre promoting transboundary cooperation for regional biodiversity conservation. Now there is growing

recognition across the region of the need for transboundary cooperation to protect critical ecosystems. The governments of Bhutan, India, and Nepal agreed to enhance cooperation in the Kangchenjunga landscape. A similar agreement between China, India, and Myanmar was secured for conservation efforts in the Brahmaputra-Salween landscape, and between China and Pakistan in the Karokoram-Pamir landscape.

Developing Conservation Corridors to Protect Biodiversity

The landscape surrounding Mount Kangchenjunga in parts of western Bhutan, northeastern India, and eastern Nepal is both culturally and biologically rich. The unique landscape includes 15 protected areas and is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna, including rare and endangered species. In the face of climate change, shifting habitation patterns and landscape degradation outside these protected areas has resulted in 'islands' of natural habitat for important species such as snow leopard and red panda.

In 2012, the three countries committed to the preparatory phase of the Kangchenjunga Landscape Initiative, with efforts already underway to develop protected biodiversity conservation corridors to connect the mosaic of existing protected areas. These corridors will better protect the landscape's biodiversity and help address cross-border problems such as poaching, overgrazing, forest fires, and the spread of livestock disease. Such collaboration can also help remediate unsustainable development activities in the landscape that threaten valuable ecosystem goods and services which sustain the lives and livelihoods of local communities.



Blue sheep, Kangchenjunga, Nepal

“The challenges of biodiversity conservation and management in Kangchenjunga can only be addressed if all three countries cooperate at various levels – from local to bilateral to regional.”

– Bhim Prasad Dhungel,
Minister of Tourism, Forests, Environment, and
Wildlife Management of the Government
of Sikkim, India.

Ladakh, India

A Milestone Year for Rangeland and Biodiversity Policy

ICIMOD has worked over the last two decades to support improved rangeland and biodiversity policy by providing technical and financial support to national partners.

In 2012, the Government of Nepal promulgated the Rangeland Policy 2012 and a draft rangeland policy has been developed in Pakistan. In Afghanistan, ICIMOD contributed to the review of the national rangeland policy by sharing experiences and knowledge from other RMCs. China and India have completed draft synthesis reports on rangeland policies. Partners from regional member countries visited Bhutan on policy study visit to share good practices and learning. ICIMOD has analysed government schemes for payment for ecosystem services in the pastoral areas of China to develop reward schemes for rangelands and a tourism plan for rangeland areas in Bhutan. Livestock valuation studies have been completed in five HKH countries, which will provide a basis of the status of livestock in the region.

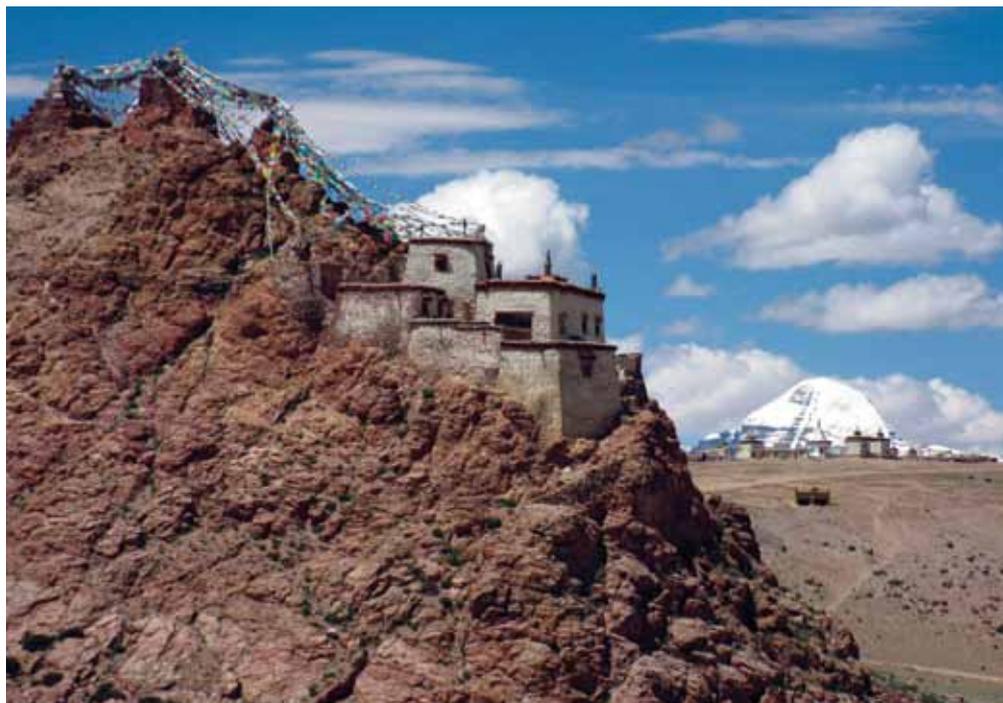
With support from ICIMOD and national partners, the state government of Nagaland in India has promulgated and enforced the Nagaland Biological Diversity Rule 2012.



Integrating Transboundary Efforts for Conservation and Development

The Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KSLCDI), a collaborative effort among China, India, and Nepal, wrapped up its preparatory phase in 2012 and began planning for the implementation of activities to improve natural resource management, livelihood options, and the wellbeing of people living in the landscape. The implementation of the initiative will ensure the integration of local human needs with conservation and development. The initiative is developing a knowledge base on specific local information such as cross border livestock grazing between Nepal and China and the development of high-value commodities.

The KSLCDI has become a model for leveraging national schemes and plans for integrated development, including in border areas of Uttarakhand, India. In the past, agencies made plans for each sector in isolation. Now, through the KSLCDI, plans are more integrated and involve all stakeholders in the region.



Mount Kailash, Tibet Autonomous Region, China

“Your work and your series of publications is quite unbelievable. It is interesting to see your approach to maintain or even improve biodiversity conservation in the HKH region. Moreover, I am especially impressed by ICIMOD’s efforts to facilitate transboundary cooperation. Thanks not only for your initiative, but especially for documenting your knowledge. Please give all my thanks and compliments to your team members.

“I see that biodiversity has become a very strong pillar of ICIMOD’s activities. This is wonderful, because biodiversity will soon become a high priority worldwide. Your work in the Himalayas is on the way to playing a key role in the coming scientific and political debates about biodiversity.”

– Professor Bruno Messerli, Switzerland

Facilitating the process

“The work around Kailash provides substantial scientific information to lead the process of cooperation and collaboration.”

– Dr BMS Rathore, Joint Secretary,
Ministry of Environment and Forests,
Government of India

“We conducted collaborative research with ICIMOD on the KSLCDI to first prepare the feasibility assessment report and then develop the strategy and implementation plan. We involved Tribhuvan University (TU) students in collecting data and experts from TU, the government, and freelancers from a wide range of fields to analyse the data and compose reports, which were published in 2012.

“ICIMOD facilitated the process among the three governments. Because of its regional mandate, ICIMOD is capable of strengthening the network of partners at the official level in a programme like this. We need an official body to coordinate these transboundary initiatives and ICIMOD does well at encouraging regional cooperation and supporting funding.”

– Dr Ram Prasad Chaudhary, Central Department of Botany and Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal