

Consultation Workshop Report

Proceedings of the 2nd Regional Consultation
Workshop on
Kangchenjunga Landscape
Conservation and Development
Initiative

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Organised by

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THREE DECADES
FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE



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Background

The Kangchenjunga Landscape (KL), situated in the southern slope of Mount Kangchenjunga, encompasses parts of eastern Nepal, Indian state of Sikkim and parts of North Bengal, and extends to Bhutan's Toorsa Strict Nature Reserve connecting to the Jigme Dorji National Park and the Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary. The landscape includes as many as 20 protected areas (PAs) endowed with rich biodiversity making it one of the priority areas for biodiversity conservation in the Himalayan region. Given its conservation and development importance, the Governments of India, Nepal and Bhutan have agreed to a long term transboundary collaboration to promote conservation and development of the landscape with the facilitation and support from the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal.

The collaborating partner institutions are the Wildlife Conservation Division of the Department of Forest and Park Services in Bhutan; GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development (GBPIHED) and Forest Departments of West Bengal and Sikkim in India; the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MFSC) and Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology (RECAST) of the Tribhuvan University in Nepal.

The Kangchenjunga Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KLCDI) was conceived and launched with the collaborating partner institutions in the three countries. The Initiative was launched in 2012 when the three countries met at the First Regional Consultation Meeting at Gangtok, Sikkim and agreed to collaborate and set the following targets:

1. Prepare countrywise and regional Feasibility Assessment Reports (FARs), Conservation and Development Strategies (CDSs), and Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Plans (CEMPs) for long term conservation and development and for monitoring changes in the KL
2. Prepare a Regional Cooperation Framework (RCF) for conservation and management of rich biological diversity, cultural heritage, and vital ecosystem services through transboundary ecosystem management and participatory approaches fostering human wellbeing in the landscape, and
3. Enhance cooperation among the participating countries with a common goal of conservation and sustainable development within the landscape.

Workshop Objective

In keeping with the roadmap agreed by the three countries in the Gangtok Consultation Meeting, the Royal Government of Bhutan in collaboration with ICIMOD hosted the Second Regional Consultation Workshop in Bhutan. The objective of the workshop was to review the findings of the feasibility assessments of the three countries; share experiences related to feasibility assessments; deliberate on conservation and development opportunities and constraints in the landscape; and review and agree on a revised work plan for the activities that remain to be implemented. Specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- Share, review, deliberate and suggest a timeframe to revise and finalize the boundaries of the target landscape in each country
- Share, review, deliberate and suggest a timeframe to improve and finalize the feasibility assessment reports of each country
- Revisit and revise the draft guidelines for preparation of Conservation and Development Strategies and Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Plans of the three countries
- Revisit the workplan and revise the timelines for the completion of Conservation and Development Strategies and Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Plans of the countries.

Workshop Agenda

The workshop was inaugurated on 16 April 2014 with the Marchang ceremony – a traditional offering of locally brewed alcohol to deities to seek their blessings for a successful workshop. Ms Namgay Bidha of Wildlife Conservation Division was the Master of Ceremonies for the opening session. Program detail is attached as Annex 1.

The first day of the workshop focused on presenting the area delineation of the Kangchenjunga Landscape and sharing highlights of the Feasibility Assessment Reports at the national level. The second day of the workshop set the stage for developing the Conservation and Development Strategies and Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Plans at the country level. The third day of the workshop involved a field trip to either Taktsang – a corridor area connecting Jigme Dorji National Park and Toorsa Strict Nature Reserve, or the Lamperi Botanical Garden.

Workshop Outputs

The workshop outputs summarize the results of presentations and discussions covering (i) delineation of Kangchenjunga landscape; (ii) feasibility assessments; (iii) governance challenges in transboundary landscapes; (iv) gender perspectives; (v) process and content of country and regional Feasibility Assessment Reports (FARs), CDSs and CEMPs; and (vi) timeframe of country and regional FARs, CDSs, CEMPs, RCF and programme document.

4.1 Inaugural session

In his inaugural address, the Chief Guest, Dasho Sherub Gyaltshen, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Bhutan, reminded the workshop participants of the Gross National Happiness (GNH) development philosophy of the Royal Government of Bhutan. He stated that transboundary landscape approach to conservation and development aligns with one of the pillars of GNH – conservation and sustainable utilization and management of

the environment. He expressed that the Royal Government of Bhutan is committed to bring the preparatory phase of the Kangchenjunga Landscape Initiative to a successful completion; he also expressed enthusiasm to start its implementation phase. He appreciated the good cooperation existing among the collaborating partners of the Initiative.

Dr Eklabya Sharma, Director Programme Operations, ICIMOD, underlined the role of mountains in meeting global obligations related to climate change and biological diversity conventions. In addition, he highlighted the importance of mountains in providing sustainable ecosystem services to both mountain, as well as downstream populations. He also said that endemism, biodiversity and hydrological endowments of the Hindu Kush Himalayas (HKH) formed the basis of ICIMOD's seven landscape initiations. However, he also pointed out that while the HKH region is endowed with rich natural resources, its inhabitants suffer from high incidence of poverty. He suggested that the feasibility assessments of the countries give due recognition to this paradox and design interventions to use natural resources to alleviate poverty.

Dr Sharma also pointed out the need to close the knowledge gap in the HKH region as the Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) noted HKH as a data deficit area. As for the Kangchenjunga Landscape, he said that it has a global significance because of its biodiversity endowments and ecosystem services; it is also the most studied landscape in the HKH. He urged the countries to use the information generated by the past studies to prepare their feasibility assessment reports and other documents. He also said that conservation and development plans of the countries must accord due recognition to the aspirations of the local communities in order to alleviate poverty in the landscape. He was of the view that feasibility assessments of Nepal and India need to give due recognition to the high population that exists in their landscapes. He underscored the need for the feasibility assessments to establish baselines for assessing the impacts of conservation and development interventions in the Kangchenjunga Landscape in the future.

In his presentation, Dr Nakul Chettri, Programme Coordinator, KLCDI, explained the rationale used for identifying the seven landscapes in HKH where ICIMOD is implementing its transboundary landscape programmes. He also explained the need to improve the habitat continuity in the Kangchenjunga Landscape for mega faunal species including snow leopard, red panda, elephant and gaur. His presentation also identified some gaps that need to be addressed in promoting regional cooperation for the Kangchenjunga Landscape. The need to balance conservation and development in the landscape was pointed out. His presentation also explained matrix management as a new approach to landscape conservation and development. Finally, he gave a brief outline of the workshop agenda.

In his inaugural remark, Mr Krishna Prasad Acharya, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, Government of Nepal, stated the delay in implementing the action plan agreed in the Gangtok Meeting and suggested that the implementation be expedited. He mentioned that Nepal has experience of implementing landscape programme in three landscapes – Kangchenjunga Conservation Area, Sacred Himalayan Landscape, and Kailash Sacred Landscape. He also shared the results of a snow leopard movement research conducted in the Kangchenjunga area of Nepal. The research confirmed that the species moves across political boundaries between Nepal and Sikkim-India, hence the landscape approach to conservation and development is not a choice but a necessity. He emphasized that sharing of feasibility assessment reports among the countries is necessary and suggested that ICIMOD facilitate the sharing of these reports.

Dr PP Dhayani, Director, GBPIHED, explained the process followed by the Indian partners in the implementation of activities related to the preparatory phase of the Kangchenjunga Landscape Initiative upon signing of the Letter of Agreement with ICIMOD. He also highlighted India's involvement in other two landscape programmes with ICIMOD - Kailash Sacred Landscape and Brahmaputra-Salween Landscape. In conclusion, he emphasized the Government of India's commitment to the Kangchenjunga Landscape Initiative.

Mr Chencho Norbu, Director General, Department of Forest and Park Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Forest, Royal Government of Bhutan, said that Bhutan, engaging for the first time in the transboundary landscape programme, looks forward to a fruitful cooperation. He shared some of his observations about transboundary problems related to natural resource management and the associated problems such as flash floods and landslides between India and Bhutan. He recognized transboundary landscape approach as important in addressing such transboundary problems. He also viewed that inclusion of stakeholders and marginalized groups, good governance

and cross-scale (local, national and regional levels) and multi-stakeholder institutional arrangements are critical for a successful transboundary landscape conservation and development programme.

Mr Manfred Wilhelm Seebaur, Chief Technical Advisor, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), highlighted the interest of GIZ and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in supporting the work under the Kangchenjunga Landscape Initiative. He articulated a conservation and development dualism of the transboundary landscape programme and offered some ideas, such as multiple uses of natural resources in the landscape as opposed to strict protection, to overcome the dualism.

While introducing a new book to be launched, Dr Lam Dorji, Executive Director of the Royal Society for Protection of Nature, explained the process and content of the research report titled *An Integrated Assessment of the Effects of Natural and Human Disturbances on a Wetland Ecosystem: A Retrospective from Phobjikha Conservation Area, Bhutan*. Dr Dorji mentioned that the publication is an interdisciplinary work between RSPN and ICIMOD and was possible as a result of financial support from ICIMOD. The Chief Guest launched the book.

Professor Wu Ning, from ICIMOD, on behalf of the organizing committee of the workshop, presented the vote of thanks. He thanked the Royal Government of Bhutan and Ministry of Agriculture and Forests for hosting the workshop in Bhutan. He also expressed gratitude to the Department of Forests and Park Services and the Wildlife Conservation Division for management and logistic support given in organizing the workshop. He thanked the donors (the Austrian Coordination Bureau (ACB), BMZ and GIZ) for their financial support to the Kangchenjunga Landscape Initiative. Besides, he thanked all who contributed to organizing the workshop.

4.2 Technical Session 1: Area delineation for the Kangchenjunga Landscape

Chaired by Professor Wu Ning, Theme Leader, Ecosystem Services, ICIMOD

Nepal: Presentation on area delineation

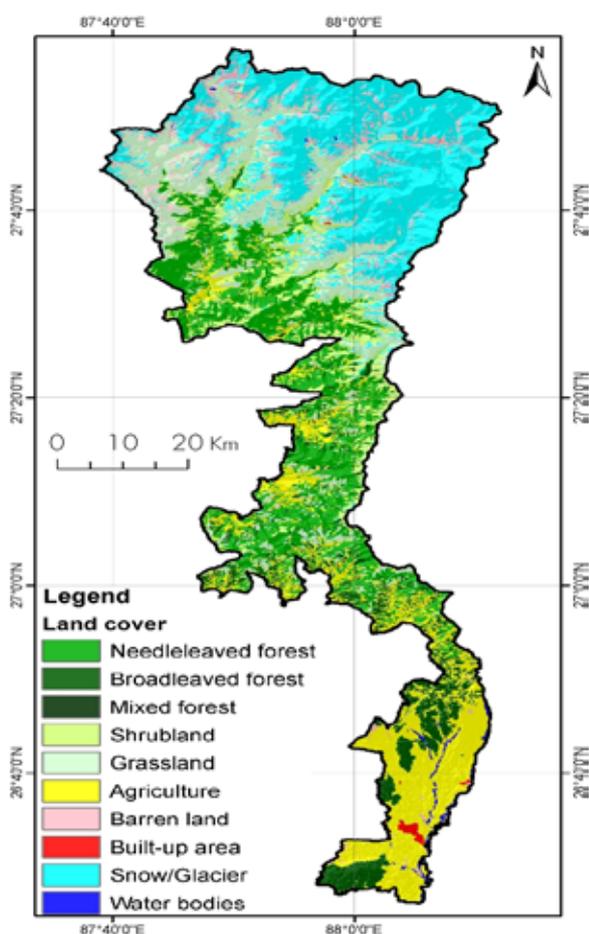


Figure 1: Proposed boundary of KL-Nepal

Mr Krishna Prasad Acharya presented the results of boundary delineation work for KL-Nepal. He said that a National Coordination Committee (NCC) was constituted to direct the delineation work. A participatory process was followed in delineating the landscape boundary. Stakeholder consultation meetings were organized in four districts. Technically, the landscape boundary was assessed based on ecological, cultural, socio-economic, bio-physical, and planning and management criteria. He presented three options that were explored in proposing the landscape boundary of which option 2 was considered as it met the technical criteria better. The area of the proposed landscape amounted to 3,472 km² (refer to Figure 1 for proposed boundary and area of the landscape).

India: Presentation on area delineation

Dr Hemant Badola presented the results of boundary delineation work for KL-India. He informed that the boundary delineation work was done through expert consultation in the field, followed by a consultation in Gangtok among stakeholders from Sikkim, Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri, and finally a high level meeting in the Ministry of Environment and Forest in Delhi. Technical criteria used for determining the landscape boundary included bio-physical, socio-economic and cultural

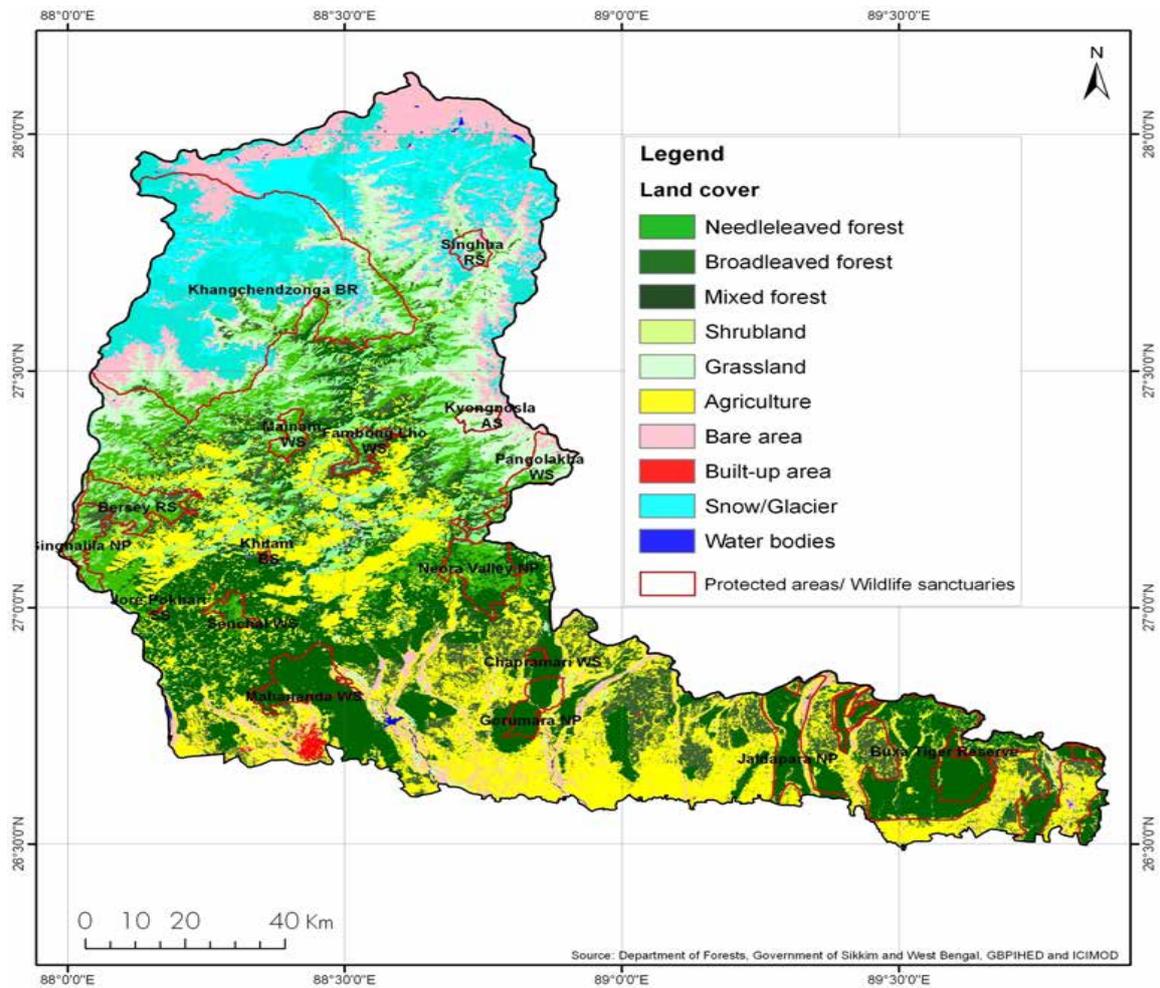


Figure 2: Proposed boundary of KL-India

characteristics, as well as management feasibility. The proposed landscape area includes parts of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling districts of West Bengal State and the entire Sikkim State measuring 14,126.36 km² (refer to Figure 2 for the proposed boundary and area of the landscape).

Bhutan: Presentation on area delineation

Mr Sonam Wangchuck presented that the areas of biological corridors for the Bhutan Biological Corridor Complex (B2C2) were delineated in the late 1990s using suitability criteria such as vegetation cover, wildlife abundance, levels of human disturbance, elevation and topography including the biological corridor in the landscape connecting the Toorsa Strict Nature Reserve (TSNR) to Jigme Dorji National Park. Similarly, the TSNR was delineated based on the biological, physical and socio-economic characteristics. A review of the B2C2, according to him, revealed that many potential habitats fell outside of it. To address this shortcoming, a new biological corridor to connect TSNR to the Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary was proposed.

He explained that alignment of the new corridor was first proposed through a desktop assessment. Field visits were then made to two of the three districts through which the proposed corridor occurred. The field visits resulted in proposing a modification to the alignment proposed through the desktop assessment. Then a detailed geospatial analysis was carried out along the most optimal alignment considering the elevation, topography, forest types, forest cover, distance from road, and distance from human settlements (refer to Figure 3 for the initial and final alignments of the corridor).

The field works were carried out by interdisciplinary teams to determine the biological, social, economic and cultural characteristics of the corridor determined by the detailed geospatial analysis. The total area of the newly proposed corridor is 219 km². For the corridor connecting TSNR and JDNP, which has an area of 149 km², the results of assessments carried out to develop its management plan were used. Similarly, for TSNR, which has an area of

609.51 km², the results of studies carried out for the preparation of its management plan were used. The combined area of the TSNR and the two corridors amounts to 977.51 km². However, the areas outside the TSNR and the two corridors that join the Indian proposed area will increase the total area to 5,833.8 km². This may be considered as the total area for overall proposed landscape level complex from Bhutan (Figure 3).

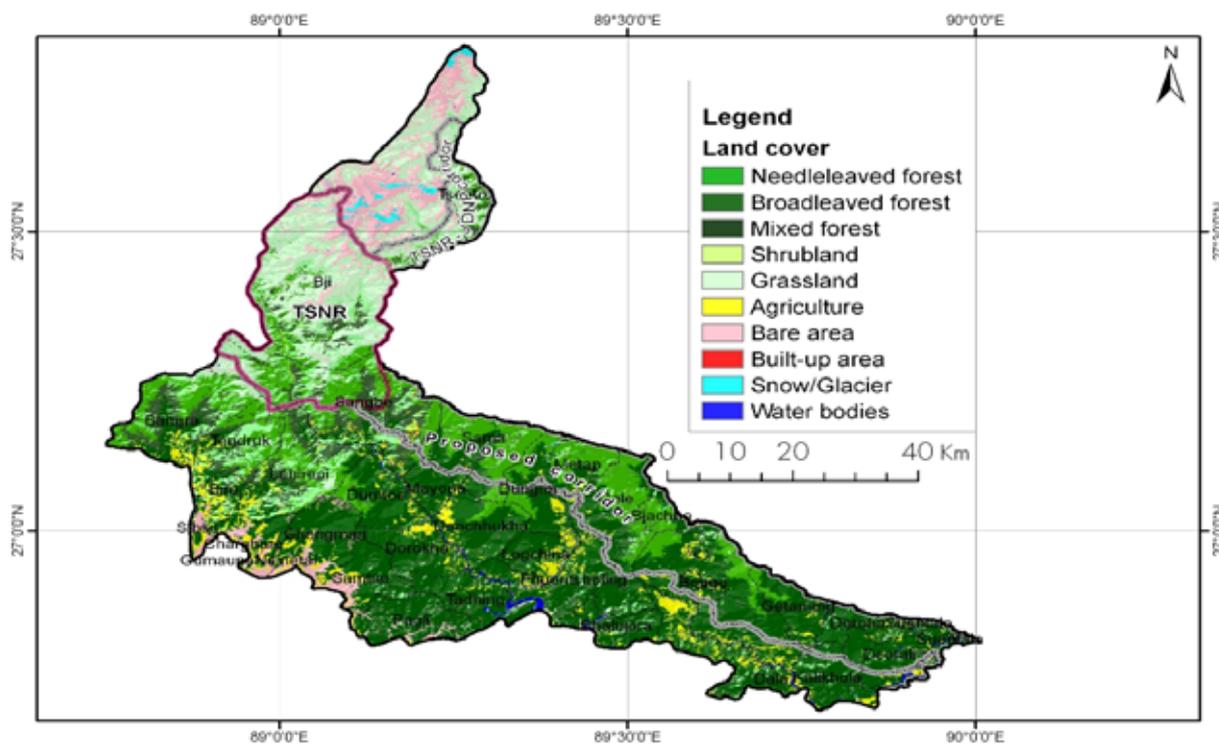


Figure: 3 Proposed boundary of KL-Bhutan

Consolidated Kangchenjunga Landscape area

Mr Kabir Uddin, ICIMOD, presented the process and criteria used in preparing a map for the Kanchenjunga Landscape by combining the areas of the three countries. He explained that the habitat suitability was analyzed for the biological corridors and the protected areas in the landscape based on digital elevation model (DEM), distance from road, distance from human settlement, forest cover, and forest types. The criteria used for mapping the areas outside the biological corridors and the protected areas included landuse – forest, agriculture, urbanization, water bodies, snow and glaciers, barren land, infrastructure, etc (refer to Figure 4 for the proposed KL landscape map).

Key discussions and decisions

- It was observed that the three countries used different criteria for the assessment and delineation of landscape boundaries. The forum suggested for the need to apply innovative criteria and adopt standard methodology for transboundary landscape conservation and development. This standardization requirement was agreed by the three participating countries.
- For Nepal, the scope for extending the boundary westwards was observed and a suggestion was made to explore the possibility. The Nepal delegates agreed to look into this. Bhutan took a positive note of the suggestion to include the areas contiguous to the corridors and the protected area as part of the landscape complex. This was raised as only the proposed biological corridor connecting TSNR & JDNP was presented. However, it was shared by the Session Chair and some delegates on the need to look at a landscape level. A suggestion was made to decide on a common spelling of Kangchenjunga across the three countries and the agreed spelling for this was 'Kangchenjunga'.
- Within their proposed landscapes, each country needs to identify priority areas for piloting integrated conservation and development activities as supporting large scale conservation and development activities may

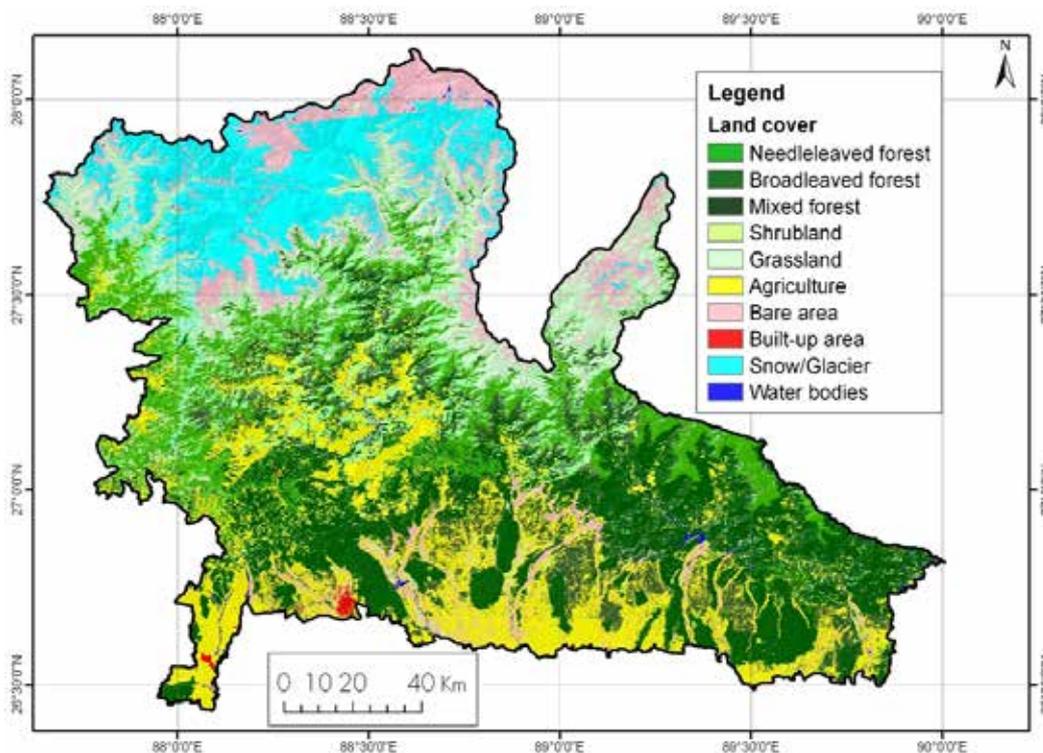


Figure 4: Proposed Kangchenjunga Transboundary Landscape

not be possible. Hence, the need to adopt standard criteria/guidelines for planning and implementing realistic and achievable targets relative to possible financial resources and capacity of the countries was recognized.

- Socio-economic criteria (livelihood, market linkages, tourism, etc.), though vital for balancing conservation and development, have not received enough consideration in the assessment and delineation of the landscape boundaries. This was a criteria excluded even during the 1st regional consultation meeting, but later recognizing its due importance, this element was regarded by ICIMOD. However, this was not intimated to the member countries until this meeting. It was therefore proposed and agreed upon to consider future developments taking communities and resource management into account, as well as socio-economic criteria.
- The discussion concluded that the countries and ICIMOD will finalize their landscape boundaries through bilateral discussion and include the revised area in their feasibility assessment reports.

4.3 Technical Session 2: Sharing highlights of Feasibility Assessment Reports

Chaired by Mr Krishna Acharya, MFSC, GoN.

Nepal: FAR presentation

Professor Ram Prasad Chaudhary presented the draft FAR of Nepal. He indicated that the draft FAR was prepared with eleven key chapters considering state of knowledge on ecology, socio-economy, resource governance, policy and identification of gaps, and priority actions to be considered in the Conservation and Development Strategy. The presentation confirmed that to prepare the FAR, information about landuse, biology (biodiversity, endemism, flora and fauna), physical characteristics (temperature, precipitation, soil, geology, river systems, natural drivers of change), sociology (gender, social inclusion, formal and customary institutions, policies, anthropogenic drivers of change, natural resource management system), and economy (livelihood sources, natural resource use, value chain, market change) was collected from secondary and primary sources. The information was analyzed to assess gaps, issues and opportunities at local and transboundary levels. Potential intervention areas were determined and proposed to address the gaps and issues. The methodology used for feasibility assessment comprised of field survey, local level consultations, experts consultations and analysis of secondary information.

India: FAR presentation

Dr Hemant Badola presented the draft FAR of India. It was explained that secondary information on biology, physical attributes, sociology and economy were analyzed. The presentation covered issues, gaps and opportunities of local and transboundary nature related to bio-physical and socio-economic characteristics of the landscape. Local level issues presented included forest fire, overgrazing, mining, and human-wildlife conflict, whereas transboundary issues included elephant migration between Nepal and India, shared habitat of red panda between Nepal-India and India-Bhutan, and issues related to mining in Bhutan and its effect on north Bengal. He also presented some policies, such as tourism policy of Sikkim, which are relevant to the management of the landscape and also proposed to explore transboundary tourism potentials with promotion of the Great Himalayan Trail and old trade routes between the countries sharing this landscape. The methodology applied for the feasibility assessment included largely gathering and analyzing secondary data, and a number of expert consultations and first hand research experiences.

Bhutan: FAR presentation

Ms Namgay Bidha presented the first part of the draft FAR of Bhutan, and Mr Ngawang Gyeltshen presented the second part. The first part included the process involved in developing the FAR and highlights of the corridors between TSNR and JDNP supported earlier by ICIMOD. Ms Bidha indicated that a management plan of the corridor between TSNR and JDNP and the TSNR have been prepared and are being implemented. The presentation covered biophysical and socio-economic characteristics of TSNR and its corridor, as well as socio-economic and bio-physical gaps and issues affecting conservation and development in the landscape. The second part of the presentation covered an analysis on bio-physical and socio-economic description and the associated knowledge gaps, issues and opportunities of the new corridor connecting TSNR and Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary. It was highlighted that this new corridor has been proposed as an addition to the present corridor network in Bhutan as part of the Bhutan Biological Conservation Complex. The presentation provided a virtual tour of the new corridor with photographs taken during field observations. The methodology used for the feasibility assessment included field data and secondary information analysis.

Key discussions and decisions

- High value products, such as ginger, cardamom, etc., from Nepal were mentioned as options for addressing poverty. Further analysis of these high value products was suggested and it was hence agreed to generate more information on the secondary and tertiary markets and the associated prices of such products.
- Socio-economic information on India FAR needs further strengthening and the baselines information would require stronger analysis/synthesis considering diversity and large extent of area. It was observed that for India, the existing landuse data - agriculture, tea gardens, forest, etc. - needs disaggregation. Indian team explained that the land area identified in Indian part is too big and compilation of information, analysis and synthesis, therefore, requires relatively more time and resources.
- In general, feasibility assessments of the countries need to make realistic analysis of the gaps, issues and opportunities based on both conservation and development challenges while designing the programme, including allocation of resources, for implementation in the future.
- Information and issues related to institutions/customary institutions need elaboration for all the FARs. Suggestion also came to consider private sector and include the hydropower sector as one of the options for both revenue generation and community development through catchment area treatment based on the good practice followed in Nepal.
- The feasibility assessments need to emphasize equally, if not more, the issue of 'development' as donor funding for transboundary landscapes programme demands that local communities benefit from the programme. However, it was also suggested to define what 'development' means at the transboundary landscape as it may have different connotations in economic development arena. It was also suggested that landscape approach should focus on matrix management of a mosaic of ecosystems and not limited to protected areas alone.
- A view was expressed as to how the programme under the Kangchenjunga Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KLCDI) can be made to converge with other on-going projects/programmes at national

levels, similar to co-management and restoration of rangelands in China. A suggestion for data and information sharing platform was also suggested to facilitate cross-learning and information sharing among the countries.

- The landscape and matrix approach is to be considered for KLCDI, and to assist the countries, ICIMOD agreed to facilitate sharing data and assessment reports with member countries.

4.4 Technical Session 3: Setting the stage for Conservation and Development Strategies and Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Plan

Chaired by Mr BMS Rathore, Joint Secretary, Government of India

Recap of Day 1

On the second day of the consultation workshop, Mr Karma Phuntsho from ICIMOD provided a rundown of the sessions and outputs of Day 1 of the workshop. The recap presented a summary of the key points covered by presentations and discussions, observations and suggestions made by participants, and decisions of the sessions.

Highlights of Regional Feasibility Assessment Report, Conservation and Development Strategy, and Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Plan

Dr Rajan Kotru from ICIMOD presented key highlights of regional feasibility report with special reference to Conservation and Development Strategy (CDS) and Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Plan (CEMP). He mentioned that the feasibility of all countries were at various stages; some in advance (Nepal), and some needed more consultations before final submission. Some key elements from the country feasibility assessment reports (FARs) were presented during this session. He reflected that it was necessary to re-visit FARs and then plan CDS. The outcomes of the Gangtok Consultation and agreed criteria were shared again to remind the delegates of what was agreed before. Furthermore, it was clarified that country FARs need to focus on knowledge gaps in terms of climate change impacts, livelihoods and market linkages, governance and gender inclusion, conservation and bio-corridors, and enabling policy environment for KL in view of CDS and CEMP. It was suggested that while various policies exist, FARs should identify the gaps. The FAR must also look into entry points on tourism, human wildlife conflict, and cross-cutting areas such as institutions, private sector engagement, cooperatives and local level mechanism. He further mentioned that the regional FAR should capture key elements of the value of the entire landscape, where this could be referred during the implementation phase. Lastly, he mentioned that the CDS and CEMP should bridge science and local knowledge.

Key discussions and decisions

- There were suggestions for combining the CDS and CEMP as one document instead of preparing two separate documents.
- Emphasis was also given to consider the private sector engagement.
- Cross-border illegal trade could be addressed by using existing platforms, such as SAWEN, where all KL participating countries were signatories.
- Elephant migration between Nepal-India and India-Bhutan was highlighted as one key transboundary issue where there is need of cooperation and collaboration between the countries. The proposed landscape could be instrumental in addressing this issue with a suitable mechanism.
- India felt that it has a considerably larger share in terms of total geographical area which has definite implications for timelines. The partner countries may consider revisiting and making the area compatible. The forum suggested the boundary and delineated areas to be re-visited by all countries. It was argued that having a bigger area does not reflect working in all areas; pilot areas will have to be considered. Bhutan presented only about the new corridor which is their key pilot area and not entire landscape and since the corridor between TSNR and JDNP and the TSNR itself is already part of the landscape, this will increase the total area. Looking at a landscape level, the landscape stretches to about 5,833.8 sq km.
- The session Chair, Mr BMS Rathore, concluded the session with suggestions to look into two aspects while preparing the FARs: i) the Landscape Approach, and ii) multi-use classification which involves a mosaic of uses and overarching issues.

Transboundary governance challenges: presentation

Dr Rucha Ghate from ICIMOD presented the principles of good governance and challenges relevant to regional transboundary landscape cooperation. She stressed that while designing such conservation and development initiatives there is a need to address local people's needs and aspirations at all levels of governance (regional, national and local). She highlighted that feasibility assessment should look at appropriate institutions to take KL forward during the implementation phase. She said that good governance is very important while planning transboundary landscape; governance at local, national and regional level should have clear plans. Lastly she suggested that for transboundary cooperation the regional coordination body and its working groups should form a task force and have clear roles on who will coordinate, monitor and be accountable for KL.

Key discussions

- There is a need to empower informal institutions, which will encourage people on the ground to combat issues like illegal trade. It is very important to connect with informal institutions in the landscape to have local level impacts.
- KL should capture benefits it gives to national and political manifesto which is driven by the environment; there is further research needed on institutions and governance in this landscape.
- Multi-level governance and actors are important and need to be recognized while designing landscape approaches and management of transboundary landscapes.

Gender perspectives: presentation

Dr Manohara Khadka from ICIMOD highlighted the role of gender in conservation and development planning. She briefed the forum on ICIMOD's mandate of gender integration and policy and highlighted some key gaps in country FARs regarding gender roles in conservation and resource use activities. She highlighted the need to build institutional capacity regarding role of gender within the landscape. She further mentioned that CDS and CEMP need to include gender to ensure that strategies focus on gender and social inclusion issues even at landscape level. Lastly, she mentioned that there is a gap in gender and social inclusion case studies in the region, some focus case studies can be conducted during the implementation phase, as the national data of Bhutan, India and Nepal do not give a clear picture of the landscape; thus generation of gender equity data is a must for KL.

Key discussions

- There is a need to look into gender roles related to agriculture since subsistence farming prevails in the landscape.
- The opportunity to integrate tourism and agriculture in KLCDI was noted.

Process, content and timeframe of regional CDS, CEMP and RCF

Dr Nakul Chettri from ICIMOD shared the content of the Gangtok Meeting, CDS and CEMP. He proposed the forum to revisit the content with reference to FAR, CDS and CEMP and the timeframes agreed in Gangtok in 2012. He also informed the forum, that initially KLCDI did not have 'development' perspective in the programme explicitly; it was only proposed later by ICIMOD and agreed by national partners that conservation without including development in the landscape approach would not fulfill the essence of the programme. Similarly, the Conservation Strategy now included 'development' (i.e. Conservation and Development Strategy), and CEMP now includes 'social' (i.e. CESMP). He also highlighted that the principles of conservation and development were highlighted in the CDS agreed to in Gangtok, and he stressed that further discussions were required and opened the floor for discussions.

Key Discussions and decisions

- The forum suggested that the nodal agencies consider 'development' perspectives through rigorous field consultations while preparing the CDS. The suggestion was also made to consider major landuse types such as tea garden which is predominant in the proposed landscape and to consider matrix management rather than focusing only on protected areas and corridors.

- The discussions also highlighted prioritizing areas of work and looking into scales of piloting; for example in India under the Green India Mission piloting activities at watershed and micro-watersheds is the approach taken by various stakeholders. Suggestions to take this approach was discussed; further identifying stakeholders who can work on participatory natural resource management is also important.
- Indian partners requested for extension of time period to finalize their FAR as well as to prepare their CDS and CESMP, considering the need of extensive multi-stakeholder consultations required for additional areas proposed in Jalpaiguri. It was proposed to combine the process of ground level stakeholders' consultations for CDS and Implementation Plan to save time. Further, it was mentioned to consider CESMP actions in all three partner countries based on the Framework to be discussed in Chengdu, China in May 2014. The forum agreed to follow a new timeline with a target of completion of the preparatory phase by December 2014 (see Annex 4). The forum also agreed for ICIMOD to take initiatives to prepare the draft of Regional Cooperation Framework and Programme Documents in parallel and conclude the process by December 2014.
- The Chair and ICIMOD agreed to put in place extra task force (engagement of partners in North Bengal) and reinforcements in case of India for achieving desired targets for 2014.
- ICIMOD also shared some practical difficulties in its planning and budget cycle, i.e in September it plans its activities and funding for the following year (2015), so partners may consider reporting and indicating implementation phase and funding earlier than December 2014. All the participating countries agreed to this proposal.

Closing Session

Chaired by Mr Chencho Norbu, Director General, MoAF

Dr Rajan Kotru from ICIMOD summarized the two day's consultations with a presentation. He emphasized on the emerging understanding of the significance of the HKH region at the regional and global levels. He also highlighted the transboundary landscape approach as a suitable means to address prevailing challenges, but emphasized the need to look at regional issues such as floods, illegal trade, tourism, etc. A common ground for execution of the programme elements considering the transboundary nature, conservation and development challenges, operational realities and community values was suggested. Similarly, taking opportunities from common potentials such as tourism, cross-border value chain, strengthening connectivity conservation, implementing human-wildlife conflict, and community engagement in monitoring were suggested. As agreed, the emphasis was made on the following action points for the way forward:

1. FARs should be complete by June 2014 based on Bhutan discussions and agreements
2. Timeframes agreed to be addressed and abided by country partners as per Annex 4
3. Suggestions for starting very low key activities this year
4. ICIMOD to start exploring funds for next year implementation with donors.

The head of the Nepal delegation, Mr Krishna Acharya congratulated the RGoB and the Department of Forests and Park Services for successfully organizing the regional consultation process. He requested all partner countries to review and reflect on the discussions and timelines set forward during the workshop. He assured the forum that on behalf of the Government of Nepal, agreed timelines and documents will be prepared by end of the year. He especially thanked the donors and also ICIMOD for supporting this consultation.

The head of the Indian delegation, Mr BMS Rathore complimented the Nepal delegations remarks and thanked all participants and especially the RGoB. On behalf of the Indian delegation, he assured that India too would deliver all necessary documents based on agreements and timelines for 2014. He further stressed the challenges for implementing landscape programmes and approaches, and he congratulated the entire team and the three KL countries for a successful partnership.

On behalf of the Bhutan delegation, Dr Sangay Wangchuk, thanked all participants and countries for the joint effort on KLCDI. ICIMOD's experience in implementing other landscapes would help reach objectives of KLCDI. He also concurred with the Indian delegate's concerns on timelines particularly regarding consultations and people's aspirations to be incorporated during the preparatory phase, which takes time and effort.

Mr Manfred Seebauer from GIZ gave the concluding remarks with a philosophical angle, reminding the forum with a picture of the Tiger's Nest in Bhutan and a similar picture of another monastery in Greece. He concluded with 'a food for thought' for participating countries to explore and go beyond one's inner boundaries referring to the spiritual leaders who built such monasteries in difficult terrains and landscape. The need for KL team and partners to develop a TBL programme with similar exploratory approach will take this initiative much further. He also assured the country partners that GIZ will look forward to the process and whole heartedly support such transboundary initiatives.

Field Trip: Taktshang and Lamperi

Paro Taktsang Monastery, popularly known as Tiger's Nest, is a prominent Himalayan Buddhist sacred site located within the corridor between TSNR and JDNP. Guru Padmasambhava, who is credited with introducing Buddhism to Bhutan, is said to have meditated in the Taktsang Senge Samdup cave for three years, three months, three weeks, three days and three hours in the 8th century. The monastery, first built in 1692 by Gyalse Tenzin Rabgye around the cave, holds profound spiritual significance locally and globally. One group of participants travelled to the monastery and had the opportunity to visit some of the villages situated in the corridor around the monastery. Another group visited the Lamperi Botanical Garden which is situated at about 30 kilometers from Thimphu. Refer Annex 4 for group composition.

Annex 1: Workshop Agenda

Day 1: 16 April 2014

Venue: Tarayana Foundation Auditorium, Thimphu

Opening Session: Emcee: Ms Namgay Bidha, Wildlife Conservation Division, DoFPS, MoAF, RGoB

Time: 08:45–10:20

08:45–09:00	Registration of participants	
09:00–09:15	Marching ceremony	RGoB
09:15–09:20	Welcome address	Ms Dechen Lham, Sr. Biodiversity Officer, WCD DoFPS, MoAF, RGoB
09:20–09:30	Inaugural address by the Chief Guest	Dasho Sherub Gyaltsen, MoAF, Bhutan
09:30–09:45	ICIMOD's transboundary initiatives in the Hindu Kush Himalayas: An overview	Dr Eklabya Sharma, DPO, ICIMOD
09:45–09:55	Workshop background, objectives and programme	Dr Nakul Chettri, ICIMOD
09:55–10:00	Opening remarks (Bhutan)	Mr Chenchu Norbu, Director General, DoFPS, Bhutan
10:00–10:05	Opening remarks (India)	Dr PP Dhyani, Director, GBPIHED, India
10:05–10:10	Opening remarks (Nepal)	Mr Krishna Acharya, Joint Secretary, MFSC, GoN
10:10–10:15	Remarks (GIZ)	Mr Manfred Wilhelm Seebauer
10:15–10:20	Book launching – Phobjikha Conservation Area	Brief introduction – Dr Lam Dorji, RSPN and Launch by the Chief Guest Dasho Sherub Gyaltsen, MoAF, Bhutan
10:20–10:25	Vote of Thanks	Prof Wu Ning, ICIMOD
10:25–10:45	Photo session and refreshment	
10:45–11:00	Registration of participants	Ms Rekha Rasaily, ICIMOD

Technical Session 1: Area delineation for the Kangchenjunga Landscape (criteria used and area proposed): Chair: Professor Wu Ning, Theme Leader, Ecosystem Services, ICIMOD

Time: 11:00–12:20

11:00–11:05	Introduction of participants	
11:05–11:20	Presentation from Nepal	Mr Krishna Acharya, MFSC
11:20–11:35	Presentation from India	Dr H Badola, GBPIHED
11:35–11:55	Presentation from Bhutan	Mr Sonam Wangchuck, WCD
11:55–12:10	Presentation from ICIMOD	Mr Kabir Uddin, ICIMOD
12:10–12:20	Discussion and remarks by the Chair	
12:20–13:00	Lunch Break	

Technical Session 2: Sharing highlights of Feasibility Assessment Report (national as well as regional issues and gap): Chair: Mr Krishna Acharya, MFSC, GoN

Time: 13:00–17:00

13:00–14:00	Presentation from Bhutan	Ms Namgay Bidha and Ngawang Gyeltshen, WCD
14:00–15:00	Presentation from India	Dr H Badola, GBPIHED
15:00–15:30	Tea break	
15:30–16:30	Presentation from Nepal	Prof Ram P Chaudhary, RECAST
16:30–17:00	Discussion	

Reception dinner hosted by Royal Government of Bhutan and ICIMOD

Venue: Terma Linca, Thimphu, Bhutan

Time: 18:30–20:30

Day 2: 17 April 2014

Venue: Tarayana Foundation Auditorium

Technical Session 3: Setting the stage for Conservation and Development Strategies and Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring Plan: Chair: Mr BMS Rathore, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India

Time: 09:00–10:30

09:00–09:10	Review of the previous day	Mr Karma Phuntsho, ICIMOD
09:10–09:40	Highlights of the Regional Feasibility Report with special reference to CDS and CEMP	Dr Rajan Kotru and Nawraj Pradhan, ICIMOD
09:40–10:00	Discussion	
10:00–10:30	Governance challenges in transboundary context and principles of good governance	Dr Rucha Ghate, ICIMOD
10:30–11:00	<i>Teak break</i>	
11:00–11:15	Gender perspectives in KLCDI	Dr Manohara Khadka, ICIMOD
11:15–11:30	Discussion	
11:30–13:00	Revisiting CDS and CEMP frameworks content, work plan and time line (group work) agreed in Gangtok.	Dr Nakul Chettri, ICIMOD
13:00–14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>	

Closing Session : Chair: Mr Chenchu Norbu, Director General, DoFPS, MoAF

Time: 14:00–15:00

14:00–14:30	Summary outputs and way forward	Dr Rajan Kotru, ICIMOD
14:30–14:35	Remarks: MFSC, Nepal	Mr Krishna Acharya, MFSC, GoN
14:35–14:40	Remarks: MoEF, India	Mr BMS Rathore, Joint Secretary to the Government of India, MoEF
14:40–14:45	Remarks: MoAF, Bhutan	Dr Sangay Wangchuk, Biodiversity Specialist, WCD
14:45–14:50	Remarks GIZ	Mr Manfred Wilhelm Seebauer
14:50–14:55	Field trip briefing	Ms Tshering Zam, WCD
14:55–15:00	Vote of thanks	Mr Sonam Wangchu, WCD
15:00–15:30	<i>Tea break</i>	
15:30 onwards	Local sightseeing	

Day 3: 18 April 2014

Field trip to Taktshang (corridor connecting Jigme Dorji National Park and Toorsa Strict Nature Reserve) or Lamperi Botanical Garden

Day 4: 19 April 2014

Return back to respective destinations

Annex 2: List of Participants

BHUTAN

Dasho Sherub Gyaltsen
Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture
Thimpu, Bhutan
Tel: +975 2 326735, 322379
Email: sherub@moa.gov.bt

Dr Sangay Wangchuck
Director
SAARC Forestry Centre
Taba, Thimpu, Bhutan
Email: sangaywangchuck33@yahoo.com

Ms Dechen Lham
Sr. Biodiversity Officer
Wildlife Conservation Division
Department of Forest and Park Services
Ministry of Agriculture and Forest
Thimphu-11002, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17909373
Email: dechen.lham@gmail.com

Mr Rinzin Dorji
Sr. Planning Officer
Policy and Planning Division
Ministry of Agriculture and Forests
Email: rnz_n_dorji@yahoo.com

Ms Tshering Zam
Forestry Officer
Wildlife Conservation Division
Department of Forest and Park Services
Ministry of Agriculture and Forest
Thimphu-11002, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17273669
Email: tsezan87wcd@gmail.com

Ms Namgay Bidha
Forestry Officer
Wildlife Conservation Division
Department of Forest and Park Services
Ministry of Agriculture and Forest
Thimphu, Bhutan
Cell: +975 77441210
Email: bidhanamgay@gmail.com

Mr Dechen Dorji
Country Director
WWF – Bhutan Program
Kawajangsa, Post Box No. 210
Thimphu, Bhutan
Tel: +975 2 323528 / 321407

Mr Padam Bahadur Gurung
District Livestock Officer
District Livestock Sector, Chukha District
Cell: +975 17649855
Email: gurungpd1965@gmail.com

Mr Nima Tshering
Dzongkhas Forestry Officer
Chukha District, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17606471
Email: tsheringwater@gmail.com

Mr Namgay Wangchuk
Chief Forestry Officer
Toorsa Strict Nature Reserve
Cell: +975 17627920
Email: namwang10@gmail.com

Mr Peljor Wangdi
Dzongkhas Agriculture Officer
Chukha District, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17256236
Email: penjormw@yahoo.com

Mr Rixzin Wangchuk,
Dzongkhag Forestry Officer,
Dagana
Cell: +975 17295446
Email: rixzinwangchu@gmail.com

Mr Chenchu Norbu,
Director General,
Department of Forest and Park Services
Ministry of Agriculture
Thimpu, Bhutan

Mr Sonam Wangchuk
Chief of Wildlife Conservation Division
& CITES Management Authority, DoFPS
Wildlife Conservation Division
Department of Forest and Park Services
Ministry of Agriculture and Forest
Thimphu-11002, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17117495
Email: sonamwangchuck@gmail.com

Mr Ratu Wangchuk
Deputy Chief Forestry Officer
Wildlife Conservation Division
Department of Forest and Park Services
Ministry of Agriculture and Forest
Thimphu-11002, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17623874
Email: ratunp@gmail.com

Mr Ngawang Gyeltshen
Forestry Officer
Wildlife Conservation Division
Department of Forest and Park Services
Ministry of Agriculture and Forest
Thimphu-11002, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17620368
Email: ngagdbhang@gmail.com

Mr Sangay Dorji
Forestry Officer
Wildlife Conservation Division
Department of Forest and Park Services
Ministry of Agriculture and Forest
Thimphu-11002, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17620886
Email: shabsangay@gmail.com

Ms Christine A. Jantscher
Counsellor, Head of Office
Austrian Coordination Office - Bhutan
PO Box 307, Thongsel Lam, Lower Motithang
Thimphu-11001, Bhutan
Tel: +975 (0)2 32 44 95, 32 42 87, 32 30 53
Cell: +975 171 101 28
Fax: +975 (0)2 32 44 96
Email: christine.jantscher@ada.gov.at

Dr Lam Dorji
Executive Director
Royal Society for the Protection of Nature
PO Box No. 325, Lhadu Lam
Thimphu-11001, Bhutan
Tel: +975 2 322056
Email: ldorji@rspnbhutan.org

Mr Pema Wangchuk
District Livestock Officer
Dagana District
Cell: +975 17684400
Email: pema_wang73@yahoo.com

Mr Gem Tshering
District Forestry Officer
Haa District, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17497882
Email: gemtshering.40@gmail.com

Mr Tashi Tobgyal
Chief Forestry Officer
Gedu
Cell: +975 17710863
Email: tstobgyel@yahoo.com

Mr Mitra Lal Bhattarai
Dzongkhas Agriculture Officer
Haa, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17684636
Email: dhattaraimitralal59@gmail.com

Mr Kuenley Gyeltshen
Forestry Officer
Phipsoo Wildlife Sanctuary, Sarpang, Bhutan
Cell: +975 17678827
Email: kuenleygyeltshen@gmail.com

INDIA

Mr BMS Rathore
Joint Secretary
Ministry of Environment and Forest
Government of India
Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road New
Delhi-110003, India
Tel: +91 11 24361774
Email: bms.rathore@nic.in

Dr Ranbeer Singh Rawal
Scientist 'F', GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and
Development
Kosi Katarmal, Almora-263643, India
Tel: +91 5962 241041
Cell: +91 9410392114
Email: ranbeerrawal4@gmail.com

Dr Sunita Pradhan
Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment
17/B Cooch Behar Road,
Above Himalayan Nursery School
Darjeeling-734101, West Bengal, India
Tel: +91 354 2252177
Email: sunita.pradhan@atree.org

Dr Pitamber P. Dhyani
Director, GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and
Development
Kosi Katarmal, Almora-263643, India
Tel: +91 5962 241015
Cell: +91 942092189
Email: psdir@gbpihed.nic.in

Dr Hemant Kumar Badola
Scientist 'F' & In-charge
GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and
Development
Sikkim Unit, Pangthang, P. Box No. 24, Gangtok
East Sikkim-737101, India
Tel: +91 3592 237328 / 237189
Cell: +91 9609308881 / 9609740419
Email: hkbadola@gmail.com; hkbadola@rediffmail.com

Mr Rajendra P. Gurung
 Chief Executive Officer
 Ecotourism & Conservation Society of Sikkim
 J-155, Tayakhim Daradaon, Tadong
 Gangtok, Sikkim-737102
 Tel: +91 3592 232798
 Cell: +91 9733088003
 Email: rpgecoss@gmail.com

NEPAL

Mr Krishna P. Acharya
 Joint Secretary
 Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation
 Singhadurbar, Kathmandu, Nepal
 Tel: +977 1 4211567/4211936
 Fax: +977 1 4211868
 Cell: +977 9851131831
 Email: kpacharya1@hotmail.com

Mr Rajendra Kafle
 District Forest Officer
 District Forest Office – Ilam
 Tel: +977 27 520027
 Cell: +977 9849639049
 Email: rajkafle2016@gmail.com

Mr Hem Raj Acharya
 Conservation Officer
 Kangchenjunga Conservation Area
 Lelep-3, Taplejung
 Cell: +977 9845348575
 Email: hracharya@mfc.gov.np hemraaz_69@yahoo.com

Dr Gobinda Bahadur Basnet
 Core Team Member – KLCDI (Consultant)
 Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology
 (RECAST)
 Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur
 Tel: +977 9751003810
 Cell: +977 984146672
 Email: gbasnet@gmail.com

Dr Yadav Uprety
 Programme Officer
 Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology
 (RECAST)
 Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur
 Tel: +977 4335615
 Cell: +977 9843772554
 Email: yuprety@yahoo.com

Dr Rajan Kumar Pokharel
 Regional Director
 Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation
 Eastern Forestry Directorate
 Biratnagar, Nepal
 Tel: +977 21 460446
 Cell: +977 9851059784
 Email: rajan_p@hotmail.com

Mr Dharendra Prasad Singh
 District Forest Officer
 District Forest Office – Taplejung
 Tel: +977 24 460117
 Cell: +977 9849285300
 Email: dhirendraprasad2000@yahoo.com

Prof Ram Chaudhary
 Executive Director and Collaborator of KLCDI
 Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology (RECAST)
 Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur
 Tel: +977 9841283652
 Email: ram@cdbtu.wlink.com.np

Dr Krishna Raj Shrestha
 Professor and Core Team Member – KLCDI
 Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology (RECAST)
 Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur
 Cell: +977 9841298694
 Email: shresthkr@hotmail.com

ICIMOD

GPO Box 3226, Kathmandu, Nepal
 Tel: +977 1 5003222; Fax: +977 1 5003277, 5003299

Dr Eklabya Sharma
 Director Programme Operation
 Email: Eklabya.Sharma@icimod.org

Prof Wu Ning
 Theme Leader – Ecosystem Services
 Email: Wu.Ning@icimod.org

Dr Nakul Chettri
 Programme Coordinator – KLCDI
 Email: Nakul.Chettri@icimod.org

Dr Rucha Ghate
 Senior NRM Governance Specialist
 Email: Rucha.Ghate@icimod.org

Mr Nawraj Pradhan
 Ecosystem Management Analyst
 Email: Nawraj.Pradhan@icimod.org

Mr Manfred W. Seebauer
GIZ NP (ICIMOD Complex)
Email: manfred.seebauer@giz.de

Dr Rajan Kotru
RPM – Transboundary Landscapes
Email: Rajan.Kotru@icimod.org

Mr Karma Phuntsho
Sr. NRM Specialist
Email: Karma.Phuntsho@icimod.org

Dr Manohara Khadka
Gender Specialist
Email: Manohara.Khadka@icimod.org

Mr Kabir Uddin
GIS and Remote Sensing Analyst
Email: Kabir.Uddin@icimod.org

Ms Rekha Rasaily
Programme Associate
Email: Rekha.Rasaily@icimod.org

Annex 3: Participants of Field Visits

Lamperi Botanical Garden

Mr Krishna Prasad Acharya
Dr Rajan Kumar Pokhrel
Mr Dharendra Prasad Singh
Mr Rajendra Kafle
Dr Ram Prasad Choudhary
Mr Krishna Raj Shrestha
Mr Hem Raj Acharya
Mr Yadav Uprety
Ms Rucha Ghate
Mr Kabir Uddin
Mr Nawraj Pradhan
Ms Tshering Zem
Ms Dechen Lham
Ms Namgay Bidha
Ms Tenzin Dema

Tiger's Nest

Mr BMS Rathore
Dr Sunita Pradhan
Mr Rajendra P Gurung
Dr Pitamber P. Dhyani
Dr Ranbeer S. Rawal
Dr Hemant K. Badola
Dr Manohara Khadka
Dr Gobinda B. Basnet
Ms Rekha Rasaily
Mr Karma Phuntsho
Mr Sonam Wangchuk
Prof Wu Ning
Ms Min Tian
Mr Sonam Wangchuk
Mr Nima Tshering
Mr Gem Tshering
Mr Padam Bahadur Gurung

Annex 4: Milestones and timeline agreed by the participating countries

S.No.	Action Milestones	Responsible Institutions	Timeline
1	Draft Framework for CEMP (LTESM)	ICIMOD	May 2014
2	Finalise the Feasibility Assessment Report	Countries	June 2014
3	Final Regional Feasibility Report for KL (at landscape level)	ICIMOD	June 2014
4	Discussion on elements of KL Programme Document and RCF	ICIMOD and countries	August 2014
5	Draft country CDS and Implementation Plan	ICIMOD and countries	1 December 2014
6	Regional CDS & Implementation Plan for KL (at landscape level)	ICIMOD	15 December 2014
7	Conduct 3rd Regional Workshop for finalization of CDS and Implementation Plan, Programme Document and RCF	ICIMOD and countries	21 December 2014
8	Government consultation on RCF and endorsement	ICIMOD and countries	Complete by December 2014

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International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
GPO Box 3226, Kathmandu, Khumaltar, Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel +977-1-5003222 **Fax** +977-1-5003299
Email info@icimod.org **Web** www.icimod.org

Further information contact

Dr Nakul Chettri
Programme Coordinator
Kangchenjunga Landscape Conservation and Development
Initiative (KLCDI)
nakul.chettri@icimod.org