

Harmonizing Conservation and Development along the Silk Road

Facilitating a Network of Protected Areas in the Hindu Kush, Karakoram, and Pamir



兰州大学



About ICIMOD

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is a regional knowledge development and learning centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan – based in Kathmandu, Nepal. Globalization and climate change have an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities, while addressing upstream and downstream issues. ICIMOD supports regional transboundary programmes through partnerships with regional partner institutions, facilitates the exchange of experiences, and serves as a regional knowledge hub. We strengthen networking among regional and global centres of excellence. Overall, we are working to develop economically and environmentally-sound mountain ecosystems to improve the living standards of mountain populations and to sustain vital ecosystem services for the billions of people living downstream – now and in the future.



ICIMOD gratefully acknowledges the support of its core donors:

The governments of Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden, and Switzerland.

ICIMOD Proceeding 2019/1

Harmonizing Conservation and Development along the Silk Road

Facilitating a Network of Protected Areas in the
Hindu Kush, Karakoram, and Pamir

13–17 September 2018, Lanzhou, China

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Published by

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
GPO Box 3226, Kathmandu, Nepal

ISBN 978 92 9115 649 8 (electronic)

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This publication is available in electronic form at www.icimod.org/himaldoc

Citation: ICIMOD (2019) *Harmonizing Conservation and Development along the Silk Road. Facilitating a Network of Protected Areas in the Hindu Kush, Karakoram, and Pamir*. ICIMOD Proceedings 2019/1. Kathmandu: ICIMOD

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Acronyms

BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BNP	Broghil National Park
CPEC	China–Pakistan Economic Corridor
DIPA	Dauria International Protected Area
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
GBPWD	Gilgit-Baltistan Park and Wildlife Department
GLF	Global Landscapes Forum
HKH	Hindu Kush Himalaya
HKP	Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir
HKPL	Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KNP	Khunjerab National Park
LU	Lanzhou University
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NP	National Park
OBOR	One Belt, One Road
PA	Protected Area
QMNP	Qilian Mountain National Park
QNP	Qurumbar National Park
QSWCDO	Qurumbar Social Welfare, Conservation and Development Organization
RwB	Rivers without Boundaries
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SR	Silk Road
TNR	Taxkorgan Nature Reserve
UCA	University of Central Asia
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
WNP	Wakhan National Park
WUR	Wageningen University and Research
XIEG	Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography
ZNR	Zorkul Nature Reserve

Summary

The Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape (HKPL) is one of the transboundary landscape initiatives being carried out by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). The HKPL covers Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and Tajikistan, as well as six physically interconnected protected areas (PAs): Wakhan National Park (WNP) in Afghanistan; Taxkorgan Nature Reserve (TNR) in China; Broghil National Park (BNP), Qurumbar National Park (QNP) and Khunjerab National Park (KNP) in Pakistan; and Zorkul Nature Reserve (ZNR) in Tajikistan.

With the objective of strengthening regional cooperation and sustaining the transboundary management of ecosystem services for human well'-being as well as biodiversity conservation in the HKPL region, ICIMOD and Lanzhou University (LU) jointly organized a regional workshop titled "Harmonizing Conservation & Development along the Silk Road" in Lanzhou, China, from 13 to 17 September 2018. Over 56 participants attended the workshop—they included representatives of the HKPL member countries and international experts from the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Russia, and Uzbekistan. There was representation from several government departments, universities and international organizations like the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN, Pakistan), the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), the Global Landscape Forum (GLF), University of Central Asia (UCA), Wageningen University and Research (WUR), Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography (XIEG), Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Kashi University (KU), and Rivers without Boundaries (RwB).

The goal of the workshop was to bring together park officials from six protected areas – in Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, and Tajikistan – and other endorsing partners in order to lead to a commitment to work together and sign a joint declaration on the long-term conservation and sustainable development of the HKPL. The newly formed group of six PAs is to be called Bam-e-Dunya Network, which shall work towards "connecting landscapes along the Silk Route".

The workshop participants emphasized the importance of such a network to share learning experiences. They stated that this collaborative platform would provide them the opportunity to promote conservation and development of a kind that shall be socio-economically and ecologically resilient. The focus, they said, would be on harmonizing policies and management approaches, facilitating the sharing of scientific data, adopting good practices, and learning from each other – all to improve the connectivity among the biological corridors.

Harmonizing Conservation & Development along the Silk Road

13-17/09/2018



Background

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development and Lanzhou University—the former in its capacity as a regional intergovernmental organization and the latter as a major research university—collaborated in organizing a regional workshop titled “Harmonizing Conservation & Development along the Silk Road” in Lanzhou from 13 to 17 September 2018.

This collaboration holds a significant value for both the organizations. ICIMOD, based in Kathmandu, Nepal, serves as a learning and knowledge centre to eight countries of the Hindu Kush Himalaya: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan; while Lanzhou University, located in Lanzhou City, Gansu province, China, has a key strategic association with Silk Road (SR). For both organizations, regional exchange and promotion of knowledge and experience, especially on ecosystem services, as well as conservation and development efforts in the national parks (NPs) and the protected areas along the Silk Road, hold significance in terms of contributing to conditions that can foster the well-being of the region in these times of rapid change. Furthermore, Lanzhou University is celebrating its 110th anniversary and would like to share its achievements in spreading knowledge with its worldwide partners and students—for the university, this is a “time to celebrate and rejoice”.

The twin factors of globalization and climate change have had an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of the mountain people. With its focus on mega infrastructure and investments projects, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has raised expectations and hopes in our region of better connectivity and economic development, and thereby improving the living standards of the people living along the belt and the road. The broader concept and framework of the BRI builds on a narrative of the old silk trading route that connected the East and the West—passing through diverse histories, cultures, peoples, and environments. There’s now a new hope of regional cooperation that would see countries working with each other to implement infrastructure and economic development projects. However, large-scale infrastructure projects in a mountainous geography can trigger adverse impacts.

ICIMOD aims to assist the mountain people and institutions to understand and adapt to changes through resilience-building and other relevant measures. ICIMOD’s mandate is ideally suited to support regional transboundary programmes through partnerships with partner institutions, which helps in the exchange of knowledge and experience. The institution serves as a regional knowledge hub that strengthens networks among regional and global centres of excellence in order to develop an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem; this, in turn, works towards the benefit of millions of people living downstream. It also seeks to address emerging upstream and downstream issues and opportunities.

As for Lanzhou University, it is dedicated to foster, increase and leverage knowledge, as well as human and institutional learning and capacities with due focus on the mountain context—in terms of ecology, conservation, agriculture, community, livelihood, and environment.

The Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape is one among the many transboundary landscape initiatives being carried out by ICIMOD. The HKPL covers Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, and Tajikistan, as well as six physically interconnected protected areas: Wakhan National Park in Afghanistan; Taxkorgan Nature Reserve in China; Broghil National Park, Qurumbar National Park and Khunjerab National Park in Pakistan; and Zorkul Nature Reserve in Tajikistan.

The aim of the workshop was to strengthen long-term regional cooperation in order to sustain the transboundary management of ecosystem services for improving human well-being and biodiversity conservation in the HKPL region.

Main Objective

Establish and promote a learning network or forum for the PAs to share meaningful knowledge, experience, and practices among the stakeholders so as to improve long-term conservation and development along the Silk Road.

Specific Objectives

- Brainstorm on opportunities for conservation and development at the regional level, with a particular focus on biodiversity, culture, and tourism
- Support the formation of a network among the six PAs in the HKPL, with a focus on sharing data, knowledge, best practices, and experiences, as well as information on capacity development
- Outline the key common action areas and provide a road map for future collaboration amongst the six PAs of the HKPL region



Day 1

Inaugural Session

The participants of the five-day workshop arrived on 13 September 2018 in Lanzhou. On 14 September, the workshop was officially inaugurated at Lanzhou University. Professor Ruijun Long, Theme Leader-Ecosystems at ICIMOD, chaired the function, while Baotian Pan, Vice President of Lanzhou University (LU), welcomed the gathering. In his statement, Baotian Pan described “One Belt- One Road” as a road of peace, friendship and future understanding, and assured of LU’s commitment to work with all kinds of partners in order to conserve and develop the Silk Road.

In his remarks, Ouyang Chunguang, Vice Director, Science and Technology, LU notified that an annual funding of 10 million US dollars has been provided by the cooperation between Gansu province and its partners for research, and technology transfer. He also said that the “harmonizing” theme of the workshop went well with the UN’s sustainable development goals (SDGs) and had great potential.

Mohammad Rafi Qazizada, Director General, Natural Resource Management, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MAIL), Afghanistan, urged the countries to work together to enhance national and regional cooperation. He mentioned that though environmental policies had been effectively incorporated in the last decade, much more needed to be done in terms of action. He stressed on the need for sustainable park management. He emphasized that ICIMOD should be used as a platform to share knowledge and experiences of all the member countries to convert challenges into opportunities.

Rajan Kotru, Regional Programme Manager of the transboundary landscape programme at ICIMOD, described the ancient Silk Road as a means to exchange culture and wisdom. He stated that it was the responsibility of each nation to bring in innovation for the conservation and development of the Silk Road in order to meet the global targets. He urged the audience to create a network in order to work together in the future.

The inaugural session also witnessed remarks from park officials and representatives. Abdul Manan Azizi, who represented the Wakhan NP of Afghanistan, spoke about the unique biodiversity and fragile ecosystem which were shared by all four countries – Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, and Tajikistan – and mentioned that sharing experiences would be beneficial to the ecosystem and the people of all the member countries. Azizi also stressed on the need for technology transfer.

Wang Muyang, who represented Taxkorgan NR, stated that the workshop hoped to achieve the larger goal of conservation and development of the PAs along the Silk Road.

Muhammad Arif, Director of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife Department, emphasized the need to lay a foundation of sustainable development in some of the neglected but high-value areas along the SR in order to conserve the fragile ecosystem and improve the livelihoods of the people residing in the region.

After the opening remarks of the representatives of the respective countries, Ghulam Ali, Programme Coordinator-HKPL, ICIMOD, delivered the closing speech and he briefly explained the agenda of the workshop.



Day 2

Technical Session I: **Setting the Tone – Harmonizing Conservation and Development**

There were three presentations in the first technical session which was chaired by Mohammad Rafi Qazizada.

Landscape governance

– *Cora van Oosten*, Wageningen University and Research

Cora van Oosten started her presentation by calling the Silk Road as Silk Route. Oosten said that the Silk Route was not just a road of trade, but it had always been a route of cultural exchange between the East and the West. She stated that until the fifteenth century when the world turned Europe-centric, the Silk Route was looked upon as the heart of the world. "It is important to develop a route that addresses cultural and environmental aspects and not just economic corridors, to win people's heart," said Oosten. In order to achieve that, she suggested three major pathways: conducting environmental and social impact assessment in all countries along the SR; undertaking sufficient mitigation measures by creating opportunities and reducing damages; and strengthening civil society networks and the people's ability to cope with change.

Oosten stressed on finding a common ground and highlighted the role of ICIMOD as an institution which could create that space. She also talked about the need for building "centripetal power" at the borders, strengthening transboundary citizen networks, creating and nurturing "borderless-ness", and addressing shared problems and opportunities to create strong landscapes that would be ready for change.



Harmonizing conservation and development for the success of the B&R initiative in the Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape – *Yi Shaoliang*, ICIMOD

"Environment and development are interconnected; therefore, harmonizing is the key to the HKPL initiative." That was the opening remark of Yi Shaoliang. He stated that ecological security and social stability had become a topic of concern for the Chinese government and that China was concentrating on the security and stability along the Belt and Road countries for the smooth implementation of the project. He also informed the participants about the special guidelines being formulated by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the same. The HKPL had always been a migration route for culture, trade, and people, he said. He added that the initiative could act as a platform of cooperation among government and non-government organizations, as well as scientists, to conserve, develop and broaden the content of the Belt and Road Initiative.



Management of ecosystem services

– Philip Bubb, UNEP-WCMC

Philip Bubb explained thoroughly the importance of ecosystem functioning and services, and linked them with the well-being of the people along the SR. According to Bubb, the PAs were not just helping in the conservation of species but also provided benefit to the entire society. So, he said, the management of the PAs was crucial and could be strengthened through proper ecosystem functioning. He added that the understanding of ecosystem functioning could give an indication about the impact of climate change on the mountains and could be useful in developing climate-resilient tools. He listed out four pressing questions that needed to be addressed while working with ecosystem functioning:

- How is water cycling?
- How are minerals cycling?
- How is the capture of the flow of the sun's energy?
- How is the biological growth?

In conclusion, he underlined that ecosystem management planning was not an isolated activity but involved the strengthening of the existing management through “ecosystem thinking”.

Highlights/Discussions

- Since the focus of the government is road and not route, there are chances that the government may not take environmental or cultural aspects into consideration. In such a scenario, it will be advisable for ICIMOD and its partners to form a committee and work on hardware and software, indicating road and route respectively.
- As there is a lot of potential for prosperity along the SR, building a strong connection should be the major focus while developing routes.

Summary and conclusions from the Chair

Both opportunities and bottlenecks defined the SR. It was imperative to value the cultural and socio-economic aspects of the route and to move forward with a proper understanding of ecosystem functioning for the well-being of the people.

Technical Session II: Transboundary Collaboration and Landscape Governance in Practice

There were six presenters in the second technical session, chaired by Cora van Oosten.

Transboundary collaboration for conservation and development: ICIMOD transboundary landscape experiences

– Rajan Kotru, ICIMOD

Rajan Kotru started his presentation with some facts and figures that highlighted the rich biodiversity of the HKH region. He advocated the idea of “transboundary-ness” and described transboundary cooperation as an important means to understand the complexity of current local and global problems. He said that transboundary cooperation was a long-



term process and needed at least a twenty-year vision. To support his contentions, he shared some key points and learnings from the transboundary programmes at ICIMOD:

- Transboundary-ness should take place on the ground
- Science should be used for solution
- There is a need for gender and social inclusion
- Upscaling research into practice is required to influence policies
- Integrated landscape management is possible
- Transboundary cooperation fosters trust in nations

He also mentioned that government ownership was crucial in transboundary programmes, saying that governance, market, and finances were the three pillars of such projects.

Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape – *Muhammad Ismail*, ICIMOD

Muhammad Ismail presented a clear picture of the HKPL, along with the key findings of the initiative. He briefed the participants about the many regional and bilateral workshops, meetings and exposure visits that were initiated by the programme for strengthening transboundary cooperation in the region. Among them were: training on the management of ecosystem services in Nepal; introduction and dissemination of the beehive bio-briquetting technology in the HKPL; and capacity building for implementing community forestry in Afghanistan. He concluded his presentation by stressing on long-term connectivity as a crucial requirement for sustaining harmonious development in the region.

CPEC and energy overview – *Danish Rashdi*, IUCN

Danish Rashdi described the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a game changer for Pakistan. He clearly stated that the CPEC would have an impact on the six PAs in the future. He informed that while a discussion had been initiated by the IUCN with both China and Pakistan governments regarding the impact of the CPEC, it was yet to be formalized. He said that after three years of initiation of the CPEC, the Pakistan government had still not implemented any environmental safeguards. He also voiced the need for a strategic environment assessment (SEA) to be jointly conducted by China and Pakistan. He concluded by suggesting that countries should go out of their way to find a game changer that could be owned both by the civil society as well as by the government in order to sustain conservation and development.

Highlights/Discussions

- The focus of work should be on the northern side as the happenings in the north will have an impact on the southern side of the landscape.
- Government should be an integral part of this network, as civil society or non-governmental organizations alone cannot bring in major change. Regional experts should be able to present their learnings to the decision makers.
- Since the vulnerability assessment initiated in 2017 along the SR was discontinued, there is a need to reactivate the assessment process.
- Environmental resilience is a big challenge. The CPEC is believed to have had some negative impacts on the environment of the region, therefore, measures should be taken to minimize such impacts.

Key findings of the scoping study in the six PAs of the HKPL – *Shang Zhanghuan*, LU

Shang Zhanghuan presented some highlights from the cooperative project of Lanzhou University entitled, “Integrated Scientific Investigation for Natural and Cultural Resource in Nature Reserves of Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir (HKP) region. (He mentioned that improving the relationship of technology between the HKP region and China for the next generation of policymakers was one of the major purposes of the project. Some results and challenges of the Taxkorgan NR, Zorkul NR and Khunjerab NP were presented. He said that some of the major challenges in the PAs involved habitat fragmentation and degradation, and climate-induced diseases.

Community-based trophy-hunting programme in the Hindu Kush Region, Chitral, Pakistan

– *Muhammad Arif*, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife Department

Muhammad Arif focused his presentation on the status of trophy hunting of two species of wild goat, markhor and ibex, in the Chitral region. He said that trophy hunting was used as a conservation tool in Pakistan and there were two specific sites for it: Toshi Shasha Game Reserve and Gehrait Community Game Reserve.

Presenting figures, he said that a total of 57 permits had been issued during the period of 1998 to 2014, when a revenue of USD 3.093 million was generated from trophy-hunting programmes, of which 80 per cent was shared with the local communities. He stated that the communities used the revenue for development work such as providing safe drinking water, promoting education, and managing watershed.



Trophy-hunting programme in Gilgit-Baltistan

– *Muhammad Jaffar*, Gilgit-Baltistan Park and Wildlife Department (GBPWD)

According to Muhammad Jaffar, community-based trophy hunting was introduced in the Bar Valley by the GBPWD in 1990–91 and currently, 38 community-controlled hunting areas have been notified in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB).

Presenting statistics, he informed that a total of 465 hunts had taken place in GB of markhor, ibex, and blue sheep between 1991 and 2017. As in the case of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he said that 80 per cent of the revenue from the hunt went to the local communities, which was then further divided, with the community concerned getting 50 per cent and the adjacent one getting 30 per cent.

Rangeland resources assessment in the Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape

– *Srijana Joshi*, ICIMOD

Srijana Joshi's presentation was based mainly on the assessment of rangeland condition in the HKPL. She stated that as around 60 per cent of the HKH is rangeland, an initiative was taken to develop a rangeland protocol for the region. As per the figure supplied by her, the contribution of rangeland subsidy as an income source in Taxkorgan was around 94 per cent. However, she expressed her concern over the limited availability of data and urged the stakeholders to share compatible data for efficient assessment. She also dwelt on wildlife distribution in the region and on the migration routes/corridors used by some key species like markhor, ibex, blue sheep, and snow leopard. These corridors, she said, ought to be protected.

Highlights/Discussions

- Trophy hunting is a trade-off between eco-conservation and ecotourism, and needs to be promoted.
- Trophy hunting in China should take a different approach. In the past, revenue was distributed among the private sector and the local communities in the ratio of 80–20 respectively, which is believed to be the reason for the failure of the programme.
- ICIMOD, along with its partners, is developing a regional map on wildlife distribution and their corridors which should be a useful reference tool for initiatives like Belt and Road.
- Development of rangeland management plans will further help in the drafting of ecosystem management plans in the future. In Pakistan, only the Khunjerab NP has a management plan till date.
- Data-sharing is required in a compatible form.

Summary and conclusions from the Chair

Information-sharing is important to assess the potential of the rangelands and can be referred to deal with vulnerabilities.

Day 3

Technical Session III: Emerging Challenges and Opportunities for Conservation and Development under OBOR

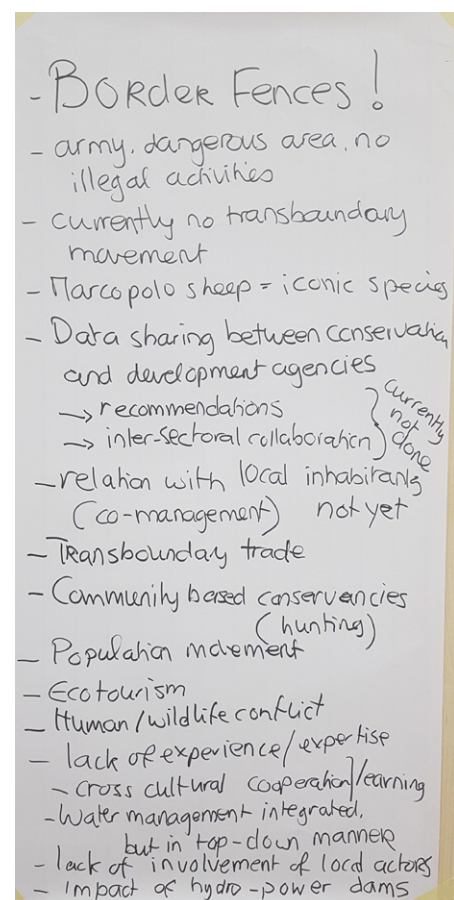
The third technical session mostly consisted of presentations made by the park officials of the six PAs, along with a supporting presentation made on the potential of ecotourism as a tool for regional cooperation in the HKPL. The session was chaired by Philip Bubb.

Experience-sharing: management and cooperation to promote the Khunjerab NP, Pakistan

– *Muhammad Jaffar*, Khunjerab NP

Muhammad Jaffar started with a short introduction of the PAs of GB. He stated that the PAs of GB occupy 39,930 sq. km of land. Among them, there are 5 national parks, 2 wildlife sanctuaries, 6 game reserves, and 38 community-controlled hunting areas. Talking about the KNP, he informed that it was established in 1975 with the primary objective of providing protection to the endangered Marco Polo sheep. The other two objectives involved protecting the fragile ecosystem and providing opportunities for scientific studies. Talking about the park management system, he stated that the KNP is currently managed by the communities of seven villages in Hunza district. He also described the two types of PA governance system – government management and collaborative management. He said that while national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and game reserves were managed by the government, the local communities were consulted and involved in the decisions on the community-controlled hunting areas. On networking, he informed that a cross-border cultural festival was being organized by the Forest, Wildlife Parks and Environment Department of GB in collaboration with ICIMOD and the Taxkorgan administration every year, which was possible after the exposure visit of local communities and the KNP field staff to the Taxkorgan NR in 2014. This visit was facilitated by ICIMOD.

When asked about the opportunities and challenges he foresaw with the CPEC project, he pointed out that ecotourism was an opportunity, while solid waste management was a challenge.



Current status, challenges and opportunities in the Broghil NP, Pakistan

– *Ajaz Ahmad*, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Forest Department, Chitral

In his presentation, Ajaz Ahmad explained the importance of the BNP in terms of the close links that it shares with other PAs in the HKPL, and indicated towards the possibility of strong networking among the PAs in the region. The Broghil NP is connected with Afghanistan via the Broghil and Darwaza Passes in the west and north respectively, and the Qurumbar NP in the east and north-east. It is located close to Little Pamir and Tajikistan, and is also close to the Taxkorgan NP of China. Ahmad pointed out that transboundary wildlife trade was a big challenge in Pakistan. He said that species like the snow leopard when it entered the Wakhan NP were often poisoned and traded back to Pakistan. He cited ecotourism as one of the greatest opportunities that lay in store for the BNP.

Wakhan NP, Afghanistan: current activities and priorities

– *Abdul Manan Azizi*, Kabul Greenbelt Project

Abdul Manan Azizi shared a rather interesting fact about the naming of the Marco Polo sheep. It is believed that the explorer Marco Polo passed through Wakhan in 1283 on his way to “discover” China. He was the first outsider to document the area and made a specific reference to a “huge, wild sheep”, which was later named after him. Azizi described Wakhan as an important habitat for many wild and rare species, including the brown bear, wolf, Marco Polo sheep, snow leopard, urial, lynx, and ibex. He also informed the gathering about an organization called the Wakhan Pamir Association, a community-based outfit seeking to improve the socio-economic conditions in the Wakhan Corridor and the Afghan Pamir through the sustainable use of natural resources. He saw ecotourism both as an opportunity as well as a challenge, and advocated the building of a proper connection between Little and Big Pamir.



Participatory management of the Qurumbar NP, Pakistan

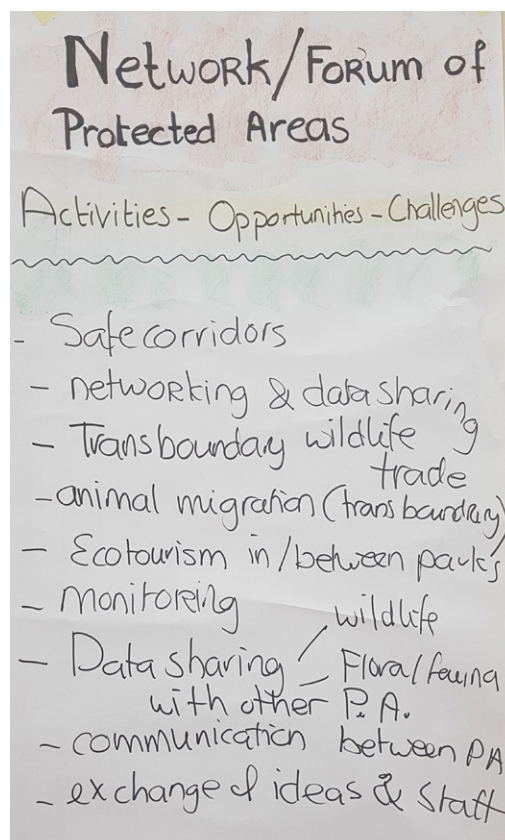
– *Muhammad Essa*, Forest, Wildlife and Parks Department, Gilgit-Baltistan

Muhammad Essa stated that the conservation and protection of wetland flora and fauna was the major objective behind the establishment of the Qurumbar National Park. He elaborated on the strong involvement of the communities in the conservation activities of the QNP. He mentioned that the Qurumbar Social Welfare, Conservation and Development Organization (QSWCDO), under the supervision of the Forest, Wildlife and Parks Department of Gilgit-Baltistan, was responsible for the monitoring of the Qurumbar Valley Community-Managed Hunting Areas. He said that as much as 80 per cent of the trophy revenue went to the QSWCDO, which was utilized in the areas of conservation, education, health, and land development.

When asked about the opportunity that he wished to capture from the network of the PAs, he stressed on the importance of an efficient data-sharing mechanism.

Highlights/Discussions

- Joint plans between countries are required to develop corridors to ensure safe migratory routes for animals. However, such plans should be carried out by the individual countries. It can start from a Pakistan–China corridor or a Pakistan–Afghanistan corridor, and can be extended in the coming years.
- Agriculture in the HKPL is negligible, thus more focus should be on ecotourism which requires collaboration between countries to come up with a master plan that promotes culture.
- National parks lack many things, including markets. There is a need to develop small markets for the economic welfare of the rural communities. Niche products should be identified and value addition must be promoted.
- At the Afghanistan–Tajikistan border, an area has been identified as a platform for cultural exchange as well as for giving and taking commodities to support the value chain.



Overview of key challenges and opportunities in the Taxkorgan NR, China

– *Muyang Wang*, XIEG, CAS

The Taxkorgan Natural Reserve is located at the border of China, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Pakistan, and is mostly inhabited by the Tajiks and Kyrgyz. Muyang Wang's presentation focused on the survey of the Marco Polo sheep that took place in 2017–18. Marco Polo sheep is one of the key species of the TNR. According to the habitat assessment survey conducted by his team, 28 core habitat areas of Marco polo sheep were identified in the TNR. As for the sheep losing their habitat, it was found that human interference accounted for less than 20 per cent of the instances. According to Wang, inefficient collaboration between institutions and countries was a major challenge in carrying out conservation activities in the PAs. He further pointed out that fencing was one of the reasons behind habitat fragmentation, and emphasized the need for exchange programmes of the PA staff, and an efficient data-sharing mechanism for conservation and development activities.

When asked about the evidence of illegal hunting in the TNR, he stated that no such evidence had been found in the reserve over the last few decades. He also clarified that China may not allow trophy hunting in the TNR as it had been declared a failure venture in the past.

Zorkul NR, Tajikistan

– *Marc Foggin*, UCA

Marc Foggin said that while dealing with issues related to national parks, it was important to take into account the number of people moving in and out of the park. Therefore, not only the ZNR, but the whole Pamir area ought to be taken into consideration by the UCA while dealing with conservation and development targets. He suggested that the HKPL countries should identify the area where the network could overlap with the B&R Initiative, and also proposed that the stakeholders should get involved in the committee formed by the IUCN for the PAs. On the possibility of securing ecosystem funds, he listed six to seven major funding agencies, including the World Bank, which were providing initial funds of USD 5–6 million to local or community-based organizations. He put forth the idea that such grants should be sought in the capacity of a consortium or a networking body.

When asked about his opinion on human–wildlife conflict, he clarified that the UCA was not directly engaged in this area.

Current status, challenges and opportunities in the Qilian Mountain NP, China

– *Wenguang Ding*, LU

Wenguang Ding started his presentation with a brief introduction of the national parks of China and narrowed it down to the importance of the Qilian Mountain National Park (QMNP). The QMNP is spread over eight counties

of Gansu province. Qilian Mountain is the source of three inland rivers—Shiyang, Heihe, and Shule. These rivers, along with their tributaries, help to irrigate around 700,000 hectares of farmland, 1.1 million hectares of forestland and 8 million hectares of grassland in the Hexi Corridor and the Ejina Banner of Inner Mongolia. More than 5 million people of the Hexi Corridor depend on these rivers for their livelihood. Qilian Mountain has also been a site of cultural and civilizational exchange between the East and the West through the Hexi Corridor. Ding said that the challenges that the QMNP faced came



in the form of deforestation, overgrazing, exploitation of mineral resources, and the adverse impacts caused by hydropower plants. He also stated that lack of efficiency in park management was another major hurdle, and went on to provide some suggestions to tackle this problem. He said the solutions would entail the following measures in the reserves: integrating all the various sectors involved in management under one umbrella organization; harmonizing conservation by using co-management and effective approaches like the participatory kind; and using ecologically sound means to reduce poverty .

Potential of ecotourism to foster regional cooperation in the HKPL

– *Anu Kumari Lama*, ICIMOD

Anu Kumari Lama provided a different perspective to building networks in the landscape—through the means of eco-tourism. She said that travels are destination led, and currently, the routes are country specific. This would mean that for a tourist if a route ended, he or she was out of the circuit. So, she lay stress on creating international routes. She proposed the building of a tourist circuit among the six PAs, which would enhance collaboration among the region's countries, to the benefit of all. She also said that the SR should be packaged as a brand whereby it would be seen as a connecting bridge between the East and the West. Further, she emphasized the importance of conducting a consumer survey to understand the market and destinations in order to develop ecotourism activities.

Belt and Road Initiative, and conservation in the transboundary Dauria Steppe region

– *Eugene Simonov*, Daursky Strict Nature Reserve

Eugene Simonov from Russia shared his experience while working with the Rivers without Boundaries coalition to protect the Eurasian transboundary rivers, and greening the Belt and Road. The Dauria International Protected Area (DIPA) is shared among China, Mongolia, and Russia. He informed that the DIPA agreement which was signed in 1994 aimed to unite three UNESCO biosphere reserves. He said that collaboration was possible between countries and provided some examples. One such was the joint work on the long-term monitoring of species like waterfowls, seabirds, shorebirds and the Mongolian gazelle through the DIPA. He said that the declining population of the Mongolian gazelle was restored by removing fences which was a collaborative effort between the police forces of China and Mongolia. Similarly, the risk posed to migratory birds was resolved by removing transmission lines. He also cited some successful outcomes of the transboundary agreement: the establishment of the transboundary “Landscapes of Dauria” World Heritage Site in 2017; the completion of a pilot project, “Dauria Going Dry”, on climate adaptation under the auspices of the UNECE Water Convention; and the publication of a climate adaptation strategic assessment report in three languages.

Highlights/Discussions

- There is a need to adopt a bottom-up approach in conservation and development activities which will only be possible by bringing research institutions, local government and people together.
- In Gansu province of China, very little record is kept of indigenous knowledge. Such information is important in conservation and development works, and should be promoted.
- From the DIPA experience, it becomes clear that it is advisable to map resources and institutions in the HKPL, and more importantly, link them with long-term activities, and not just focus on the six PAs.
- For strong networks, there is a need to connect with other drivers and institutions in order to attain the desired impacts.

Summary and conclusions from the Chair

Ecotourism can be a means to strengthen the network between the six PAs and there is a need to conduct more research on the subject.

Technical Session IV: From Opportunities to Actions

The fourth technical session was about consolidating the shared knowledge and information, and moving forward collectively to form a network. The session was jointly facilitated by three ICIMOD representatives – Rajan Kotru, Yi Shaoliang, and Ghulam Ali.

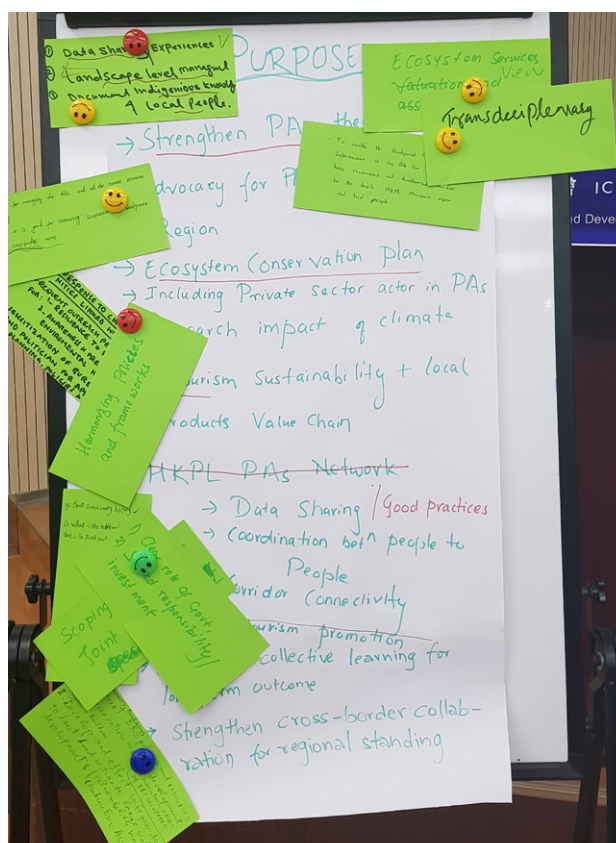
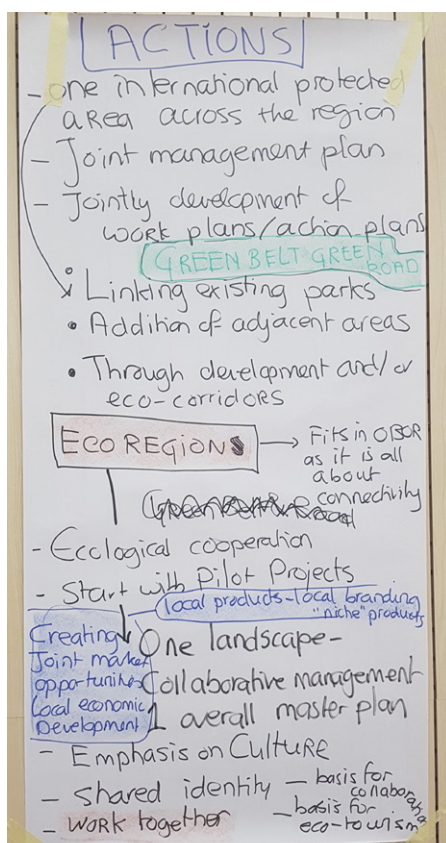
Kotru asked the participants to reflect on the purpose of building a network, to envisage its structure, and contemplate on the ultimate aim of the network of the six PAs. He underlined the role of civil society in increasing the resilience of the landscape and in protecting ecosystem services. Talking of harmonizing policies and frameworks, he also elaborated on transboundary corridors and emphasized the need to involve the local communities in transboundary activities.

The discussion also revolved around whether the network should be a formal or an informal one. The participating countries and endorsing organizations agreed on having a formal network where the role of government would be important in terms of developing plans, policies and other legislative matters. However, it was also concluded that informal networks would be equally important for research activities and at times in conserving areas that are not physically defined. For example, the people living in the border of Tajikistan and Afghanistan have been sharing their cultures and values with each other for thousands of years without a formal network.

In his observations, Yi Shaoliang stated that the six PAs had so much in common that the network should be able to facilitate learning and information-sharing among the parks in the future. He too supported the idea of having a formal network.

In the technical session, issues of governance, markets and financing were identified as the three important factors to be considered while forming networks.

The participating countries were then asked to conduct group work and come up with a proposal on the structure of the network that each country shall endorse; the individual countries were also asked to outline their commitments. The three ICIMOD representatives facilitated the group work to develop content and agreements on the network resolution/declaration.



Day 4

Closing Session

The closing session started with country-wise group presentations on the structures and commitments to be endorsed by each country in the future. It was agreed that a network had to be formed and a joint declaration signed for long-term conservation and sustainable development in the HKPL.

Highlights/Discussions

The presenters received several feedback on developing a strong network in the region. Community-to-community coordination was believed to be an important informal network in the border areas. A top-down approach was highly discouraged as a network should provide space for every part of the society to make decisions. It was also agreed upon that active interaction between the provinces was required across the border areas. The network should be open to all kinds of partners, local and international, for substantial deliverables.

Discussion was also held on whether there was a mechanism that could take the defined activities swiftly to the national platform. In his comments, Asifullah Khan (of Gilgit-Baltistan) said that 90 per cent of the commitments presented by Pakistan could be acted upon without waiting for approval from the central government. He added that once such activities were carried out locally, they could be taken to the national level to make for a strong case. He stated that activities such as stakeholder meetings, workshops, and exchange programmes of park officials didn't require the involvement of national government and could be put in place quickly. In the case of Pakistan, opportunities were also discussed in terms of relating the activities of this network with the work of the CPEC, considering the recent political change in the country.

However, Danish Rashdi of the IUCN advised on involving the government from the very beginning to ensure ownership. He said that a value-adding niche had to be identified in the region through the network and it should not overlap with the activities of other projects.

Structures	Commitments
Afghanistan	
PA Management Department	Liaison Unit Mobilization of Budget and Resources
Wildlife Executive Committee (MAIL-NEPA-Universities)	Scientific/Technical Back Stop
Wakhan – Pamir Association	Local Governance Support, Data Collection and Advocacy
NGO, INGO and Private Sector	Alignment of their Development Plan with Park Management Plan
Local Community to Community	
China	
Taxkorgan Nature Reserve	Experimental Base
Local Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with Local Government; • Organize Field Surveys; • Decision Making
Kashi University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific Papers
Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography, CAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations Making Equipment Available • Data/Knowledge Sharing
Pakistan	
Establishment of “Green Belt Green Roads” Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Sharing and Sharing of Best practices • Policies Revisions and Recommendations • Revamping Legislation and Recommendations • Facilitation to Regional Research Activities • Exchange Experts from Forestry & Wildlife Department
Administrative Body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members from LA/PA of GB and KP • Concerned Department Secretaries/Representatives • Member from Cabinet Committee on Environment and CC 	
Technical Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Concerned Departments • Representatives from Local communities • Representatives from Civil Societies • Representatives of Research Institution/Academia 	
Tajikistan	
Zorkul Nature Reserve	

Summary of network structures and commitments presented by countries

Naming the Network and Signing the Declaration

With the consent of all the participants, the name of the network was finalized as “Bam-e-Dunya Network”, which shall work towards “connecting landscapes along the Silk Route”.

An open discussion was anchored by Asifullah Khan to address all kinds of comments, suggestions and concerns regarding the finalization of the content of the declaration. After the joint approval of the content, the declaration was signed by all four countries—Afghanistan, China Pakistan, and Tajikistan, along with the endorsing partners like LU, IUCN, WUR, UCA, UNEP-WCMC, the Global Landscapes Forum, WCPA, Rivers without Boundaries, and ICIMOD.



Signing of the declaration by the HKPL countries and the endorsing partners

Major Commitments

- **Long Ruijun:** A request can be made to LU and Gansu province to use “Harmonizing Conservation and Development along the Silk Route” as a theme for workshops and related activities in the coming years so that the work becomes regularized. Partnerships can be entered into for conducting a baseline study, and a master plan, based on the format of the CPEC, can be formulated. Some funds can be managed through Gansu province to ensure international cooperation in terms of transferring technology and organizing workshops and other activities.
- **Philip Bubb:** As the six protected areas share extraordinary commonalities by way of ecosystem and biodiversity, there is a lot of opportunity to share lessons and strengthen the network. This network should be a means for the donors and international organizations to offer what they want. It can be a platform to develop joint projects on the development corridors.
- **Asifullah Khan:** If the concept of the network is provided, it can be presented before the CPEC project. “I commit to this that this concept goes to GB for the CPEC project. Since a high-level delegation is meeting in Ürümqi on 26th September 2018, the very next step will be to keep this concept as an agenda in the meeting which will be done.”

Rajan Kotru: It has been agreed that the countries will have their own coordinating structure within itself. After the declaration, an MoU can be circulated within the country partners to formalize the network. ICIMOD will take lead in the facilitation.

Closing Remarks and Vote of Thanks

– *Rajan Kotru*, ICIMOD

In his closing remarks, Rajan Kotru congratulated all the participants for being able to achieve a huge breakthrough in the form of the Bam-e-Dunya Network. He expressed his gratitude towards Lanzhou University for hosting such an important event which would leave its mark on the entire region. He concluded the session by recalling a quote that compared the network to a bird, and stated that it had a long way to go before achieving many milestones in the future.

Day 5

A field visit was organized for the participants to the Qilian Mountain Nature Reserve on 17 September. In the field, a basic training was conducted by Philip Bubb to simplify and bring clarity to the concept of the management of ecosystem services. The participants were then divided into two groups to work on grassland (both degraded and non-degraded sites). They were asked to observe and describe: i) ecosystem processes (i.e., water cycling, mineral cycling, solar energy flow, and biological growth), both current and for the desired functioning of ecosystem services; ii) ecosystem structure (i.e., soil and vegetation structures, and food web), for both current and the desired situation; and iii) key species and ecological interactions for the desired ecosystem structure and processes.

A picture series for the manual “Management for Ecosystem Services” was introduced during the training which supports a participatory approach to improve ecosystem management.



Participants in the field, QMNP



Philip Bubb and Long Ruijun providing instructions on management of ecosystem services

Annex

Annex I: **Declaration**

Lanzhou Resolution/Declaration
Bam-e-Duniya Network (BDN)
Connecting Landscapes along the Silk Route
September 16, 2018

Signatories : Protected Areas authorities from Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, and Tajikistan,
Topic : HKPL Network for Conservation and Development
Place : Lanzhou, China
Endorsers : International Union for Nature Conservation, Pakistan, United Nations Environment Programme –World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Global Landscapes Forum, World Commission on Protected Areas, University of Central Asia, Wageningen University, Lanzhou University, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography, Chinese Academy of Sciences (XIEG, CAS), Kashi University
Rivers without Boundaries

Sponsors : ICIMOD & Lanzhou University

Purposes: to harmonize and strengthen integrated landscape management for long-term conservation and sustainable mountain development along the Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape.

Resolution points:

- **Agreed & Affirmed** to have common platform across HKPL protected areas with the main purpose to foster sharing of data (within national laws), knowledge, best practices, methodologies and frameworks, and common opportunities;
- **Agreed** to encourage a closer exchange on technical Knowledge sharing, in particular, governance and management of protected areas;
- **Stressed** to arrange joint events (seminar, conferences, workshops), exposure visits, cultural exchange, studies and publication of common newsletter, website, documentation of indigenous knowledge and periodical serving as a repository of knowledge and information on Protected Areas;
- **Expand** access to international forums and networks related to regional/transboundary landscapes and ecosystem management promoting

exchange and cooperation for advancing conservation science, policies and practices;

- Continuously **identify and respond** to joint opportunities and challenges related to conservation and
- development by organizing seminars, workshops, conferences and plans on Protected Areas;
- **Coordinate** and facilitate technology transfer and capacity building of Protected Areas professionals, communities and other relevant stakeholders
- Explore resource mobilization with potential development partners and funding agencies.

Participants' Names and Signatures:

Afghanistan:

China: Wang mufang

Pakistan:

Asifullah Khan

Secy Forest WL & Parks

Tajikistan:

^{Tajikistan}
Gozibekov Mehrob
Natural state reserve Zorogol

Endorsers and Participants signatures:

1. Muhammad Jaffar Pakistan ~~only~~ only as a participant
2. Marc Foggin (on behalf of) Tajikistan Marc Foggin
3. Danish Rashdi, Pakistan
4. Rajan Koton, ICIMOD, Rajahmundry
5. ~~Prof. Zhang~~ Lanzhou University
6. Cora van Oosten, Wageningen University / Global Landscapes Forum
7. PHILIP BURB. UNER-WARC, Philip Burb

8. Wang Yu Tao

Kashi University

ICIMOD Transboundary landscape Definition

The Transboundary landscape is basically a landscape approach;

Landscape-level biodiversity conservation is an evolving concept and an important paradigm shift in the global conservation scenario. It includes the physical and biological features of an area together with the institutions and people who influence the area and the cultural and spiritual values of the area. Policy innovations can best balance the objectives of conservation, productivity, and livelihood improvement through the landscape approach.

The criteria for defining the biodiversity management unit at the landscape level are the following:

- Identify candidate transboundary priority landscapes that are critical for biodiversity management. Countries sharing the areas should be committed.
- Apply participatory management of biodiversity in the protected areas of the candidate priority landscapes and their surroundings that will enhance conservation of globally significant, unique biodiversity which is otherwise at risk because of transboundary problems.
- Restore and increase connectivity by establishing biological corridors between the protected areas within and between landscapes that fall in different countries.
- Increase conservation attention and efforts on focal species in areas crossing political boundaries.
- Identify keystone plant species and promote their restoration and conservation in transboundary landscapes.
- Address transboundary issues such as grazing, poaching, unsustainable harvesting of NTFPs, control of forest fires, and control of spread of livestock diseases.
- Promote connectivity within transboundary landscapes so that overall conservation can be achieved by regional and country-to-country cooperation.
- Adopt policies and incentives conducive to participatory biodiversity management and establish complementarities within the landscapes between the participating countries.

Annex II: Agenda

DAY 1 (13 September 2018): Arrival and Check-in		
DAY 2 (14 September 2018)		
8:30–09:00	Registration of Participants	
9:00–10:30	Opening Session	Chair: Ruijun Long
9:00–9:10	Welcome remark – China	Baotian Pan
9:10–9:15	Welcome remark – China	Ouyang Chunguang
9:15–9:25	Opening remark – ICIMOD Board Member/DG, NRM Afghanistan	Mohammad Rafi Qazizada
9:25–9:30	Remarks from ICIMOD	Rajan Kotru
9:30–9:45	Remarks from: Afghanistan China Pakistan Tajikistan	Abdul Manan Azizi Wang Muyang Muhammad Arif Marc Foggin
9:45–9:55	Introduction of participants	All participants
9:55–10:05	Workshop Agenda	Ghulam Ali
10:05–10:30	Tea Break & Group Photo	
Technical session I: Setting the Tone—Harmonizing Conservation and Development		
Chair: Mohammad Rafi Qazizada		
10:30–11:00	Landscape Governance at Scale	Cora van Oosten
11:00–11:30	Harmonizing conservation and development for the success of the B&R initiative in the Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape	Yi Shaoliang
11:30–12:00	Management of ecosystem services	Philip Bubb
12:00–14:00	Lunch	
Technical Session II: Transboundary Collaboration and Landscape Governance in Practice		
Chair: Cora van Oosten		
14:00–14:30	Transboundary Collaboration for Conservation and Development: ICIMOD Transboundary Landscape Experiences	Rajan Kotru
14:30–14:50	Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape	Muhammad Ismail
14:50–15:10	CPEC and Energy Overview	Danish Rashdi
15:10–15:30	Tea/Coffee Break	
15:30–15:50	Presentation of the Key Findings of Scoping Study in the Six PAs of the HKPL	Shang Zhanghuan
15:50–16:10	Community-based trophy-hunting programme in the Hindu Kush Region, Chitral, Pakistan Trophy-hunting programme in Gilgit-Baltistan	Muhammad Arif Muhammad Jaffar
16:30–17:00	Rangeland resources assessment in Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape	Srijana Joshi
Reception dinner hosted by ICIMOD (18:00 onwards)		

DAY3 (15 September, 2018)		
9:00–13:45	Technical Session III: HKPL: Emerging Challenges and Opportunities for Conservation and Development Chair: <i>Philip Bubb</i>	
9:10–9:25	Experience-sharing: management and cooperation to promote the Khunjerab NP, Pakistan	<i>Muhammad Jaffar</i>
9:40–9:55	Current Status, Challenges and Opportunities in Broghil National Park, Pakistan	<i>Ajaz Ahmad</i>
9:55–10:10	Wakhan National Park, Afghanistan: Current Activities and Priorities	<i>Abdul Manan Azizi</i>
10:10–10:25	Participatory management of Qurumbar NP, Pakistan	<i>Muhammad Essa</i>
10:25–10:45	<i>Tea /Coffee Break</i>	
10:45–11:00	Overview of Key challenges and Opportunities in Taxkorgan Nature Reserve, China	<i>Muyang Wang</i>
11:00–11:15	Overview of Key Challenges and Opportunities in Zorkul Nature Reserve, Tajikistan	<i>Marc Foggin</i>
11:15–11:40	Current Status, Challenges and Opportunities in Qilian Mountain National Park, China	<i>Wenguang Ding</i>
11:40–12:00	Potential of Ecotourism to Foster Regional Cooperation in the HKPL	<i>Anu Kumari Lama</i>
12: 00–12:20	Belt and Road Initiative, and conservation in the transboundary Dauria Steppe region’	<i>Eugene Simonov</i>
Technical Session IV: From Opportunities to Actions Chair: <i>Rajan Kotru</i>		
10:00–2:00	Group Work – Network Formation and Development of Action Plan Possible Areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Transboundary protected area management○ Ecotourism○ Value chain and entrepreneurship○ Infrastructure of the PAs○ Climate change○ Others	Moderators: <i>Ghulam Ali/ Muhammad Ismail/ Yi Shaoliang</i>
2:00–4:00	Content and Agreements on Network Resolution/Declaration	Moderators: <i>Ghulam Ali/ Muhammad Ismail/ Yi Shaoliang</i>
Closing of the Day		
DAY 4 (16 September 2018)		
9:00–11:00	Group Work Presentation and Discussion	
11:00–11:30	<i>Tea/Coffee Break</i>	
11:30–13:30	Closing Session	Chair: <i>Asifullah Khan</i>
	Signing of Declaration	
	Way Forward	
	Closing Remark – Countries	
	Closing Remark – Different Organizations	
	Closing Remark – ICIMOD	
	Vote of Thanks – Lanzhou University	
13:30–15:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
DAY 5 (17 September 2018)		
	Field trip to Qilian Mountain Nature Reserve (Training on Management of Ecosystem Services)	Facilitated by LU/ICIMOD/UNEP/
<i>Departure back home on 18 September</i>		

Annex III: List of Participants

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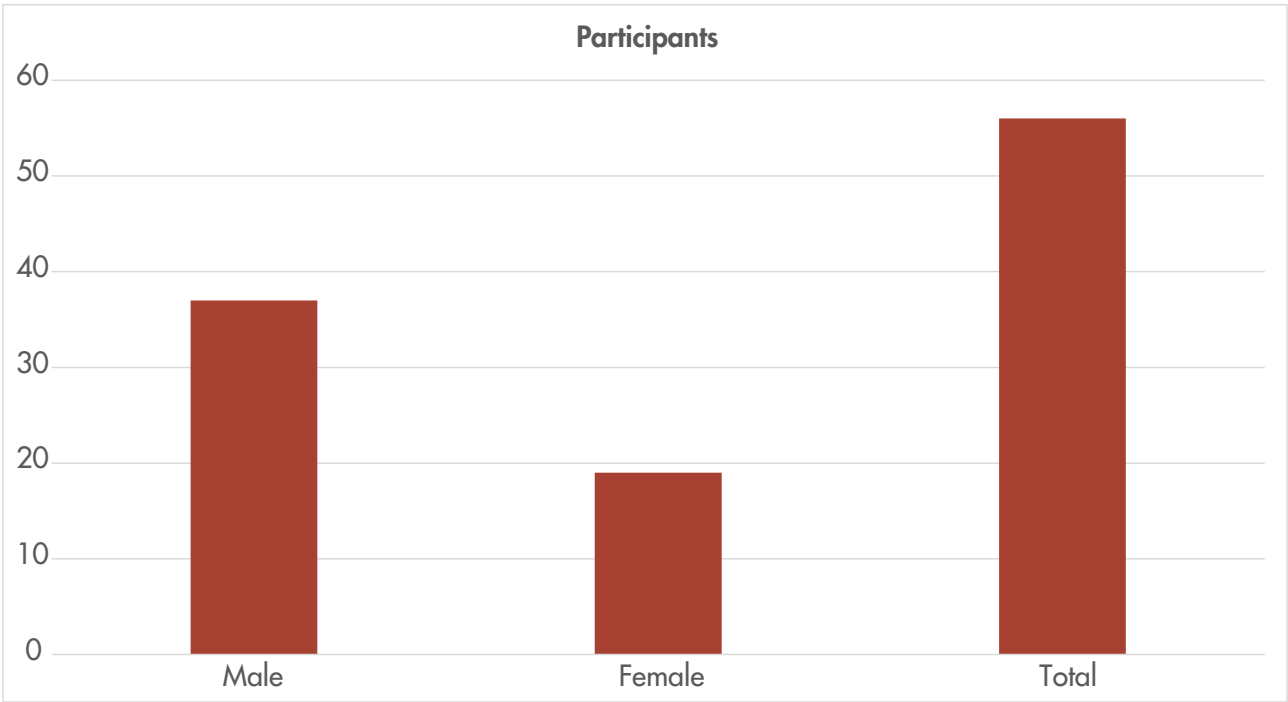
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Annex IV: **Number of male and female participants**





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