

Proceedings

# Leveraging the World Heritage Convention for transboundary conservation in the Hindu Kush Himalaya



# 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.

Proceedings

# **Leveraging the World Heritage Convention for transboundary conservation in the Hindu Kush Himalaya**

30–31 May 2019, Kathmandu, Nepal

Organized by

Wild Heritage

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

and

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Supported by

National Geographic Society (NGS)

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Kathmandu, Nepal

August 2019

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**Published by**

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

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Rajendra Shakya – pp 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 21

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This publication is available in electronic form at [www.icimod.org/himaldoc](http://www.icimod.org/himaldoc)

**Citation:** ICIMOD (2019) *Leveraging the World Heritage Convention for Transboundary Conservation in the Hindu Kush Himalaya*. ICIMOD Proceedings 2019. Kathmandu: ICIMOD

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# Acronyms

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
DDG	Deputy Director General
DDG	Deputy Director General
DG	Director General
DG	Director General
GBPNIHESD	G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development
HI-LIFE	Landscape Initiative for Far Eastern Himalayas
HKH	Hindu Kush Himalaya
HKPL	Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape
IBA	Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IFL	Intact Forest Landscape
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KCA	Kanchenjunga Conservation Area
KL	Kangchenjunga Landscape
KSL	Kailash Sacred Landscape
KSLCDI	Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NGS	National Geographic Society
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats
TAR	Tibetan Autonomous Region of China
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHC	World Heritage Convention
WHS	World Heritage Sites

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

The World Heritage Convention (WHC), signed by 191 member countries, serves to identify and conserve sites of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), i.e., places of exceptional natural and/or cultural value that are of global significance. The WHC has long served to protect some of the planet's most extraordinary wilderness areas. From Yellowstone to the Serengeti to Khangchendzonga National Park, many of the most iconic places on Earth have been protected – or at least better protected – as a result of the added accountability, resources, prestige and visibility that the WHC confers. In addition to guarding many sites of global significance from the negative impacts of pressures such as climate change and unplanned development, World Heritage Sites (WHS) have also served to protect wilderness areas that are important for conservation of biodiversity and ensured that cultural and natural assets are preserved. The WHC has been an essential and effective mechanism for wilderness and large landscape conservation globally.

A number of publications, including a recent thematic study published by IUCN in 2017, have addressed the topics of world heritage, wilderness areas, and large landscapes and seascapes in a transboundary context<sup>1</sup>. These publications outline why wilderness is of central importance to the WHC and articulate how the Convention can be more proactively leveraged for wilderness conservation going forward. The value of promoting wilderness conservation through the WHC has been widely recognized in numerous global initiatives including the annual World Heritage Committee meeting, the IUCN World Conservation Congress, the IUCN World Parks Congress and the World Wilderness Congress. Thus, this approach has been widely endorsed and now enjoys a strong mandate.

<sup>1</sup> <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2017-028.pdf>



However, there have been limited systematic efforts to leverage the Convention for wilderness and large landscape and seascape conservation around the world in the transboundary context. Increased attention by the Convention to wilderness conservation based on regional and ecological representation brings new opportunities to strengthen the WHC mandate. In this regard, ICIMOD, in collaboration with Wild Heritage and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has taken the initiative to assess the status of current and potential WHS in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH), especially in the transboundary landscapes. The transboundary landscapes are subsets of larger trans-Himalayan transects, where ICIMOD and its partners gather scientific information and strengthen interventions to promote conservation and management of landscapes with ecological and socio-cultural significance. ICIMOD has identified six transboundary landscapes (Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir, Kailash, Everest, Kangchenjunga, Far Eastern Himalaya and Cherrapunjee-Chittagong), with the aim to enhance socio-ecological resilience to environmental change. A workshop was organized to better understand the status of WHS in the HKH with special reference to the transboundary landscapes, identify the gaps and discuss the way forward for nominating potential WHS in the region. The specific objectives of the workshop were as follows:

## **1.2. Objectives**

- i. Develop a better understanding of the WHS nomination process;
- ii. Identify gaps on the current status of WHS in the HKH;
- iii. Explore potential WHS with global significance and outstanding universal values in the HKH region with special reference to existing landscape initiatives: Landscape Initiative for Far Eastern Himalaya (HI-LIFE), Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape (HKPL), Kailash Sacred Landscape (KSL), and Kangchenjunga Landscape (KL); and
- iv. Prepare a roadmap for nominating potential WHS in the HKH.

## **1.3. Expected outcomes**

- i. A draft status report on WHS in the HKH with inputs from key stakeholders;
- ii. Gaps and potential WHS in the HKH with special reference to existing landscape initiatives identified; and
- iii. A roadmap with action points to take the process forward.

## 2. Technical Session 1: Introduction to transboundary landscapes and WHS

The main objective of the session was to welcome participants, provide details of the workshop, and introduce key terms including the Transboundary Landscapes Programme of ICIMOD. ICIMOD and Wild Heritage presented on the transboundary landscapes, WHS, wilderness areas in large land and seascapes. This introductory session set the stage for the discussions that took place during the remainder of the workshop.

### 2.1. Welcome remarks and introduction to transboundary landscapes

**Rajan Kotru**, Regional Programme Manager of Transboundary Landscapes, ICIMOD

Rajan Kotru welcomed all the participants and briefed them about the workshop, its objectives, and the expected outcomes. Kotru introduced the Transboundary Landscapes Programme of ICIMOD, and shared his experience on heritage from the Kailash Sacred Landscape (KSL).

The HKH is one of the most diverse regions in terms of natural resources including biodiversity and rivers, cultural identities, and ethnicities. The ecosystem services provided by the region are supporting 240 million people in the HKH and 1.65 billion people downstream. However, the looming challenges are impacting the rich cultural and natural heritage of the region. Land use and land cover change, resource degradation, and fragmentation of wilderness areas across the region are some of the direct drivers impacting the natural heritage, whereas conceptual dichotomies (i.e., biosphere vs world heritage sites), state priorities (conservation vs development; mega investment vs preservation), inadequate governance systems and climate change are indirectly impacting the natural and cultural heritage. The cultural legacy of the silk/spice route, cross-border festivals, transboundary corridors, and shared culture across the countries provide opportunities for regional cooperation on WHS on a transboundary scale.

Kotru highlighted the need to conserve the landscape's unique assets and develop the region sustainably, and the WHC's role in doing so. He briefly discussed how a concept can lead to customized outcomes and thus contribute to global conservation and development agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). After explaining the need and opportunity for WHS, he shared his experience from the Kailash Sacred Landscape (KSL). In the KSL, bottom-up dialogue with stakeholders and early engagement of rights institutions at the national, transboundary and global level were key factors behind the nomination of WHS with a transboundary vision. In addition, the valuation and incentive-based schemes along with stakeholders' dialogue for country nominations of WHS with a transboundary vision in the KSL were extremely important.



## 2.2. Leveraging the World Heritage Convention for wilderness and large landscape conservation

**Cyril Kormos**, IUCN-WCPA Vice-Chair for World Heritage, and Executive Director, Wild Heritage

Kormos expressed his gratitude to ICIMOD and the participants for organizing the workshop. He talked about wilderness and its importance in ecosystems conservation, and contemporary threats including climate change. Focusing on the links between the WHC and wilderness, he highlighted the need and importance of the Convention for the HKH.

Kormos defined 'wilderness' as "intact wild natural areas without industrial infrastructure," which include people and communities. Wilderness is therefore a wild place where people, including indigenous people, are linked to nature in various ways (e.g., home, spiritual, religious, recreational, livelihood). The role of indigenous people is critical for the management and governance of wild areas, as is evident in the Kayapo territory of Brazil and Mount Kailash in Asia.

Conservation of wilderness is important for delivering and maximizing ecosystem services, conserving sacred landscapes of cultural significance, and halting the fragmentation of natural habitats. Wilderness also helps us deal with climate change and halt the decline of biodiversity. In spite of their significance, wilderness areas across the globe are in steep decline. Roads and forests fragmentation were discussed as indicators of wilderness decline. Though 80% of the earth's terrestrial surface is roadless, this area is broken up into 600,000 patches, with more than half of the patches less than 1 km<sup>2</sup>, and only 7% of the patches larger than 100 km<sup>2</sup>. Similarly, forest loss and forest fragmentation is accelerating. There was a 7.2% reduction in the Intact Forest Landscape (IFL) between 2000 and 2013.

Kormos then discussed the need to protect wilderness under the WHC. He noted that the WHC has always focused on wilderness conservation and that wilderness remains a priority for WHS inscriptions, especially as wilderness areas continue to decline globally, making them an increasingly scarce resource. However, he noted that there should be a more systematic approach to wilderness and large landscape conservation under the WHC, both to capture natural values and to recognize profound nature-culture relationships, while recognizing the rights of indigenous people. Kormos noted that the wilderness value of the HKH is very significant given that it includes four Biodiversity Hotspots, many Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), extremely high plant diversity, and many places that are of deep spiritual and religious significance to hundreds of millions of people. There are likely many areas with Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). The WHC approach can help protect these areas and catalyze transboundary landscape conservation in the HKH. Leveraging the WHC for wilderness and large landscape conservation can protect globally important natural and cultural heritage, and can also contribute to Aichi Targets, post-2020 framework of the CBD and climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives under the UNFCCC.



# 3. Transboundary landscapes and World Heritage Sites in the HKH

The representatives of four landscapes presented on transboundary landscape initiatives, their history, development and the current status of World Heritage Sites in these landscapes.

## 3.1 Kangchenjunga Landscape: A potential World Heritage Site in the Eastern Himalaya

**Emeritus Professor Ram Prasad Chaudhary, Nepal**

Chaudhary's presentation focused on the Kangchenjunga Landscape (KL), its assets with OUV, issues and priorities of the landscape, and the potential sites for WHS nomination. The Kangchenjunga Landscape (KL) is a transboundary landscape covering an area of 25,080.8 km<sup>2</sup> across parts of eastern Nepal (21%), Sikkim and West Bengal of India (56%), and the western and south-western parts of Bhutan (23%). Home to more than seven million people of diverse ethnicities and cultures, the landscape is rich in both natural and cultural heritage, with strong socio-cultural interdependencies among the communities living within and beyond the landscape. The landscape, with Mount Kangchenjunga (8,586 m) – the third highest peak in the world – is a source of many vital Himalayan rivers and watersheds. The diverse habitat types, which include tropical, subtropical, warm temperate, cool temperate, subalpine, and alpine, are part of the Himalayan biodiversity hotspot. It has 19 protected areas and hosts more than 5000 species of plants, 160 species of mammals, 618 species of birds, and 600 butterfly species. These important attributes of Outstanding Universal Value provide valuable ecosystem services that sustain the livelihoods and wellbeing of millions of people in the landscape and beyond.



The concept of KL emerged in early 1997 during the first regional consultation that aimed to promote the conservation of Kangchenjunga's unique assets and develop the region sustainably. Several milestones have been achieved over the span of 20 years (1997–2017). The stakeholder consultation at the local and regional level in each country, boundary delineation of the landscape, development of a regional cooperation framework and the conservation and development strategy, and transboundary policy dialogue for sustainable tourism in the KL in 2017 were the major milestones of the Initiative. This Initiative is important for protecting the unique assets of the landscape from the effects of unsustainable resource extraction, wildlife poaching, human-wildlife conflict, unplanned development trends including road building, and ineffective governance.

The World Heritage Convention was discussed as a way to protect the natural and cultural features with OUV of the landscape. In Nepal, the nomination of the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area (KCA) for Man and Biosphere Reserve is already under discussion. Meanwhile, the Khangchendzonga National Park in India was declared a Mixed WHS in 2016, and a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 2018. As such, the Kangchenjunga Transboundary Landscape in Bhutan, India and Nepal has high potential to be nominated as a transboundary WHS. The natural and cultural assets could be further protected if the area is declared a WHS, and this would help in achieving the twin goals of conservation and development.

### 3.2. Landscape Initiative for Far-Eastern Himalaya (HI-LIFE): Potential for World Heritage Site

**Wishfully Mylliemngap**, G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development (GBPNIHESD), North-East Regional Centre, Arunachal Pradesh, India

Mylliemngap presented on HI-LIFE, its key assets (both cultural and natural), the current status of WHS, issues in the landscape and the way forward for nominating it as a World Heritage Site. The landscape is located between the Brahmaputra (Yarlung Tsangpo in China) and Salween (Nujiang in China, and Thanlwin in Myanmar) river systems, along the easternmost extension of the Himalaya and the westernmost extent of the Hengduan Mountains. The landscape covers an area of 71,452 km<sup>2</sup> across China (22%), India (12%), and Myanmar (66%). The Far-Eastern Himalaya is exceptionally rich in biodiversity with high endemism. It is at the confluence of three Global Biodiversity Hotspots, namely the Himalaya, Indo-Burma, and Mountains of Southwest China. The region is therefore regarded as the 'epicenter of evolution', 'centre of plant diversity' and 'Eastern Asiatic regional centre for endemism'. The landscape is equally rich in cultural and linguistic diversity. It is home to over 20 ethnic and linguistic groups including Rawang, Jingphaw and Lisu. Some ethnic groups distributed across the landscape, such as Nu and Rawang, have a small population.



HI-LIFE was initiated by ICIMOD in collaboration with the governments of China, India and Myanmar. Some of the features of the landscape were described as assets with OUV, such as the Three Parallel Rivers of the Yunnan Protected Area (WHS), Northern Mountain Forest Complex (Myanmar), and Namdapha National Park (India). The latter two sites from Myanmar and India are in the process of being nominated. A large transboundary area connecting these three sites could potentially be nominated as a WHS. WHS nomination would be an important step for the conservation of important assets of the region.

Poverty, tourism, infrastructure development, mining and hydropower were discussed as some of the direct threats for China, whereas traditional use rights, conflicts/insurgency, poverty and high demand of natural resources for China and the consequent promotion of illegal trade were identified as threats for Myanmar. Similarly, forest extraction, hunting and illegal wildlife trade, and poverty were the major issues on the Indian side. Long-term inventory and monitoring, stakeholders' consultation and regional cooperation among the three countries were some of the activities proposed for dealing with the challenges and conserving the wilderness areas of the landscape. Negotiation and collaboration between the governments of China, India and Myanmar were recommended as an important step towards transboundary World Heritage Site nomination.

### 3.3. Transboundary Landscapes with World Heritage Potential: Kailash Sacred Landscape

**G.C. S. Negi**, G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development (GBPNIHESD), Almora, India

Negi talked about the Kailash Sacred Landscape (KSL), its key features, different development phases of the Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KSLCDI), the status of the WHS nomination process, issues and the way forward for the landscape. The KSL, which covers an area of 31,000 km<sup>2</sup>, spans across parts of far-western Nepal, the central Indian Himalaya, and Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) of China. A transboundary collaborative programme was initiated in 2010 in China, India and Nepal to conserve ecosystems and biodiversity in the landscape and encourage sustainable resources management. The landscape is the source of four major rivers in Asia and rich in biodiversity with 22 mammals, 12 birds, and 1 reptile listed on the IUCN Red List; 8 mammals, 7 birds, 22 reptiles, and 8 fish endemic to the region; and 35 species of mammals and 73 species of birds listed by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).



ICIMOD started the KSL Initiative in 2010 in collaboration with the governments of China, India and Nepal. The Initiative focused on feasibility assessment, conservation strategy (preparatory phase: pre 2012), regional cooperation framework (phase 1: 2013–2017), and transboundary cooperation (phase 2: 2018 and after). Resilience, livelihoods and ecosystem management for sustainable flow of ecosystem services are key priorities of the Initiative in phase 2. There are many sites of Outstanding Universal Value including the transboundary pilgrimage route to Mt. Kailash and lake Manasarovar. Some key sites from India, Nepal and China that are being considered for WHS nomination were discussed. For instance, the Sacred Mountain Landscape and Heritage Route was submitted to UNESCO-WHS (mixed category) in India. Similarly, the Limi valley of Humla in Nepal is under discussion for nomination. However, a transboundary-level nomination would provide an opportunity considering the interconnections between the culture, social life and economy of the three countries. Further development of the nomination process and associated groundwork, stakeholder consultation across scales, and policy-practice initiatives were recommended as the way forward.

### 3.4. Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape: Status and potential for World Heritage Site

**Ghulam Ali**, Programme Coordinator, HKPL-ICIMOD

Ali introduced the Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape (HKPL), discussed the key features of the landscape and progress made through the Initiative, and highlighted the status and potentiality of WHS in the landscape. The transboundary landscape spanning over 67,506 km<sup>2</sup> covers parts of Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, and Tajikistan. This area is the confluence of several major mountain lines in Asia such as Hindu Kush, Karakoram, Himalaya, Kunlun Mountain, Tianshan and Pamir, and hence regarded as the roof of the world.

The landscape was described as a highly fragile alpine ecosystem at the junction of three mountain ranges – the Karakoram, the Hindu Kush, and the Himalaya. The landscape is unique and is of high cultural, economic, social, environmental and strategic importance. It was once part of the ancient Silk Route and a corridor connecting China with South and East Asia and Europe. This landscape is a major source of ecosystem services derived from its rich flora, fauna, glaciers (water towers) and other natural endowments. It is also home to diverse indigenous ethnic groups such as Wakhi, Kyrgyz, Sarakuli, Kho, Burusho, Shinaki, Yashkun, Pamiri, and Kazakh and their rich cultural traditions.

The Landscapes Initiative was started in 2016. Since its inception, a number of policy measures and projects have been initiated including the rangeland policy, management plan for six protected areas of the landscape, rangeland resource assessment, and habitat mapping. In the landscape, the central Hunza-Nagar, an area bounded by the Batura and Hisper glaciers, along with the historic forts of Baltit and Altit, and the Ganis settlement, were discussed as a proposed WHS. However, the north-south transport corridor and irresponsible tourism are major challenges in the area. The potential WHS discussed were: Shigar and Khaplu enclaves, Chitral Valley, Trich Mir Chitral. The lack of regional policy mechanisms, trade-offs of conservation and development, and mass tourism were discussed as major issues. Despite the challenges, the potentiality and the way forward were discussed for transboundary WHS.



## 4. Technical session 2: World Heritage Sites and protected area coverage in HKH

The session provided an overview of the WHS in the HKH based on a detailed status report on wilderness and World Heritages Sites.

### 4.1. Leveraging the World Heritage Convention for conservation in the Hindu Kush Himalaya

**Tilman Jaeger**, IUCN Advisor

Jaeger presented on 'Leveraging the World Heritage Convention for Conservation in the Hindu Kush Himalaya'. He emphasized that the status report based on desk review and analysis of the world heritage is in a preliminary stage and requires inputs from the diverse stakeholders. He illustrated the three pillars (meet criteria, integrity, protection and management) of OUV, and the requirement of these three pillars for WHS listing. He talked about many areas suitable for WHS listing, such as the Three Parallel Rivers of Yunnan Protected Areas, and Qinghai Hoh Xil of People's Republic of China, Khangchendzonga National Park, India; Nanda Devi and Valley of Flower National Park, India; Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area. He discussed the tentative lists and ongoing assessment in the HKH.



He highlighted how the World Heritage Convention is underutilized as a conservation instrument considering the vast opportunities in the region. The existing properties (both natural and cultural assets) need to be revisited to assess the potential for (serial) extension, including across national borders on a transboundary scale. There is also a need to explore opportunities to adapt the existing approaches of the Convention to the HKH region (serial, transboundary, large scale, cultural landscapes, mixed). The four operational transboundary landscapes of ICIMOD reflect enormous diversity including the vertical gradient. He emphasized that a report with inputs from the workshop support the development of a meaningful product for future decision making. After the workshop, he promised to share the draft assessment report with the workshop participants and experts for feedback. The final report will be finalized and shared with everyone.

## 4.2. Protected area coverage in the Hindu Kush Himalaya

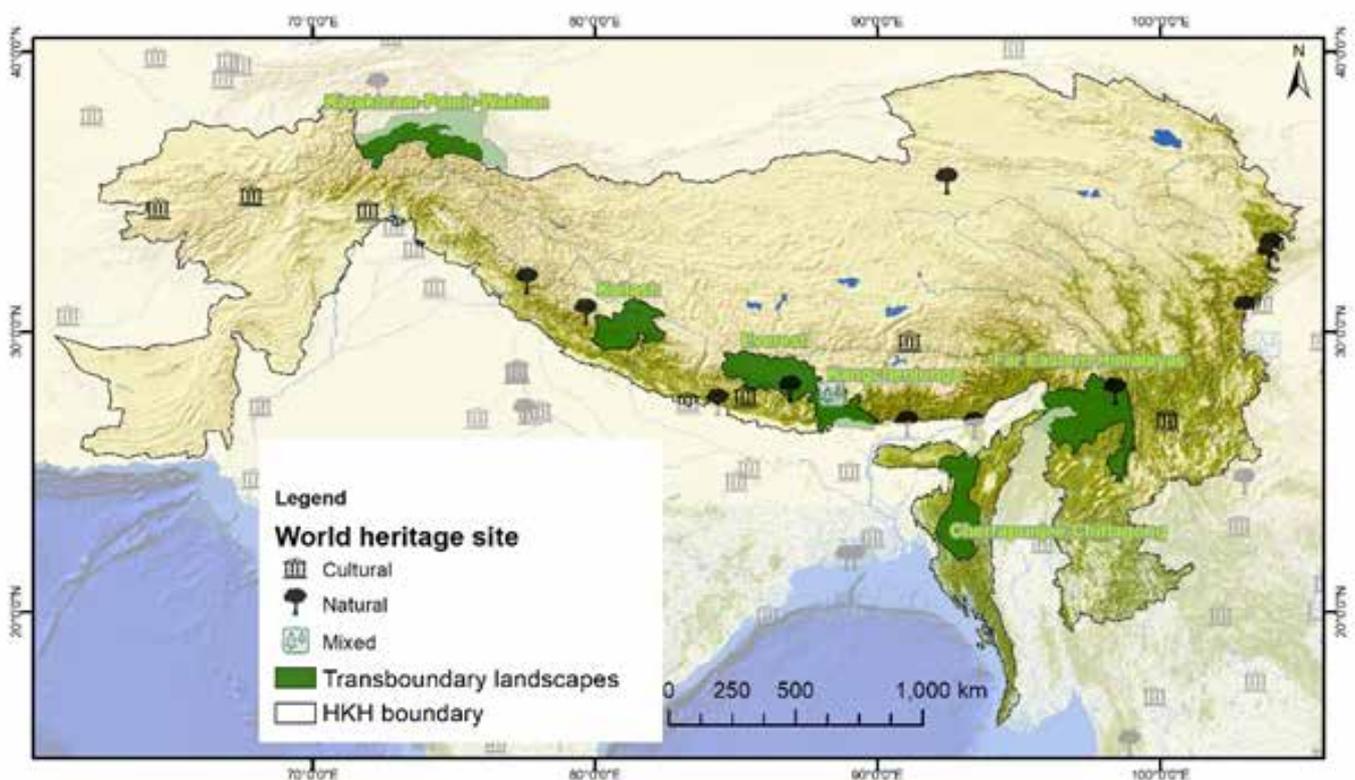
Sunita Chaudhary, Biodiversity Consultant, ICIMOD

Chaudhary presented on 'Revisiting Protected Area Coverage in the HKH'. She provided an overview of the HKH and highlighted the significance of biodiversity in the region. As of 2008, there were 488 protected areas with 26 Ramsar sites, 4 global biodiversity hotspots and 138 Bird Areas in the HKH. The region is very rich in biodiversity with high endemism and culturally diverse with different ethnic groups. However, the region is equally vulnerable to different drivers of change. Some of the major drivers are climate change, rapid and unplanned urbanization, land use change, rapid economic growth, migration and natural disasters.

Protected area coverage 2008 was revisited and protected area coverage from 1918 to 2019 was analysed in detail. A total of 517 protected areas covering an area of about 1.6 million km<sup>2</sup> were identified. Out of the 17 World Heritage Sites in the HKH region, 3 fall in Everest, Kanchenjunga and Far Eastern Himalayan Landscapes (see Figure 1). In spite of being rich in wilderness and biodiversity, the existing World Heritage Sites do not represent the global biodiversity hotspots, and eco-regions. i.e., out of 61 eco-regions, only 11 are represented in these WHS. Areas rich in nature and culture with Outstanding Universal Value need to be considered for WHS nomination for further protection.



Figure 1: World Heritage Sites in four landscapes across the Hindu Kush Himalaya



## 5. Inaugural session and panel discussion

During this session the workshop was formally inaugurated in the presence of distinguished representatives from different countries and organizations. The session started with welcome remarks from the invited guests, followed by a panel discussion.

### 5.1. Remarks

#### **David Molden**, Director General, ICIMOD

Molden introduced the HKH and ICIMOD. ICIMOD was founded in 1983 to address a range of issues in the region. Over time, the Centre's work has become more relevant both within the region and globally. The work focuses on dealing with the unprecedented drivers of change including climate change, disasters, poverty, migration, and rapid urbanization. It is important to sustain the mountain environment and livelihoods of the billions of people in region. One of the key working areas of ICIMOD is conservation and sustainable use of natural resources for the people in the region and beyond. The Transboundary Landscapes Programme seeks to conserve the wilderness areas and sustain ecosystem services.

However, there have been very limited efforts to leverage the WHC for transboundary conservation in the region; this is a missed opportunity as the WHC has a strong mandate to conserve areas of OUV. The workshop provides an opportunity to come together to conserve areas of Outstanding Universal Value through regional cooperation and partnerships at the global, regional and local level.

#### **Chhakka Bahadur Lama**, Member of Parliament, Nepal

Lama mentioned that as we explore how to better conserve our heritage, three spheres of influence must be considered – geosphere, biosphere, and nanosphere. We need development as mountain areas are becoming increasingly integrated with the market economy. This brings opportunities, but it is also changing the fate of our heritage. In this new context, we should not forget the aspects of the barter economy, including systems of conservation and governance, that have sustained this region for centuries. We have much to learn from the global processes, but there is also a lot we can learn from societies at the margins, like those in the mountains. To operate at the global level, we must integrate the local culture with global processes and vice versa.



**Sindhu Dhungana**, Ministry of Forests and Environment, Government of Nepal

Dhungana said that the Ministry of Forests and Environment is committed to sustainable management of ecosystems, natural heritage, and protected areas. Nepal is committed to national conventions, including the WHC, which has been a mechanism for protecting a number of properties and large landscapes. Transboundary landscapes require special collaboration and partnerships between nations. Nepal is happy to work bilaterally or multilaterally to conserve important sites. Protection requires partnerships between people and institutions at the national and global level. Protection and sustainable use of places is a challenge, but challenges can be faced with collective actions.



Nepal has a number of success stories in resources management, including the introduction of community forestry and the blending of national parks with World Heritage Sites. The proceedings of this meeting will be helpful in policy planning in countries in the region. The discussions have opened up new avenues for collaboration in transboundary cooperation through World Heritage Sites.

**Sandra Elvin**, National Geographic Society, USA

Elvin mentioned that although there are gaps in our knowledge, we cannot let uncertainty prohibit us from moving forward. And in this we have to keep climate change at the forefront of our minds. Only together, with representation of different countries, can we create solutions moving forward. National Geographic believes there is great potential for action as a result of this workshop. It will help identify gaps, and collectively participants can try to address major questions.



National Geographic has two operational branches – National Geographic Partners, which include things like the television channel, website, and production, and National Geographic Society, which supports science and exploration. The Extreme Environments programme is looking at the planet in terms of a planet in balance.

**Christian Manhart**, Country Representative, UNESCO-Nepal

Manhart emphasized the need to balance culture, nature, and development. Development is a threat, but it is also a chance for conservation that we have to leverage. Out of more than 1000 heritage sites, only 209 are natural World Heritage Sites and 38 are mixed sites. Only 37 are transboundary sites. Most sites are only cultural, and something must be done to improve this imbalance. With immense biodiversity



and climate change threats in the region, the benefits of protected areas are well recognized and can be upscaled. The WHC has made major contributions to conservation worldwide, including through the enhancement of transboundary cooperation in managing World Heritage Sites.

Through this meeting, participants will identify areas that could become new transboundary World Heritage Sites of relevant Outstanding Universal Value. The World Heritage Committee encouraged this transboundary approach in its last session. Cultural and natural heritage is an irreplaceable source of inspiration. Our task is to ensure it is transferred to future generations.

### **Cyril Kormos, Wild Heritage, USA**

Kormos mentioned that the HKH is an extraordinary region that the rest of the world doesn't know enough about. Culture and nature are critical points in the WHC and there is no other international convention that brings these two values together. The WHC was specifically and explicitly designed to address threats based on concern that the world's great places, both natural and cultural, are disappearing too fast. It is one of the most effective instruments for protecting large land and sea wilderness spaces. The WHC is therefore an instrument uniquely tailored to the HKH, and ICIMOD's approach to landscapes that bring together cultural and natural heritage is uniquely tailored to what the Convention wants to achieve.



One of the biggest problems is a lack of communication between the governments and IUCN when nominations are put forth. Technical and largely avoidable issues make it difficult to promote and recommend sites for inscription. This can also create tensions, conflicts, and make negotiations difficult.

## **5.2. Keynote presentation on biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services in HKH**

### **Eklabya Sharma, Deputy Director General, ICIMOD**

Eklabya Sharma presented the findings of the comprehensive Hindu Kush Himalayan Assessment and provided an overview of the status of WHS in the HKH. There are currently 17 WHS covering 11 eco-regions in the HKH – 6 cultural sites, 10 natural sites, and 1 mixed site. There are more than 400 protected areas. There are prospects for more heritage sites. Together with UNESCO, Myanmar is already exploring a site in the northern part of the country. In the Kailash Landscape, where partners in three countries are working toward a transboundary WHS, the work has begun on national-level sites. The Kailash Landscape in India was included this year to the UNESCO Tentative List. In all landscapes it operates in, ICIMOD is bringing the heritage concept.

Work is going on at the local level to build institutions and support sustainable livelihood options and community participation in conservation. At the national level, work is underway to increase cooperation between national agencies and ability to plan and implement. At the regional level, ICIMOD is creating space for dialogue and making efforts to harmonize consultative processes/work. Globally,



ICIMOD is bringing a mountain focus into conventions and global policy processes. The proportion of threatened endemic species in South Asia is huge, which means this region should receive focus for heritage and biodiversity conservation.

### 5.3. Panel discussion

In view of the need to protect HKH heritage sites, David Molden moderated a panel discussion to outline 'how' to nominate World Heritage Sites and to highlight some success stories.

The panelists were:

1. David Molden, ICIMOD (Moderator)
2. Cyril Kormos, Wild Heritage
3. Wangchuck Bidha, UNESCO National Commission in Bhutan
4. Manoj Nair, Wildlife Institute of India
5. Chakka Bahadur Lama, Member of Parliament, Nepal
6. Thein Htay, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Myanmar
7. Kai Weise, ICOMOS Nepal
8. Anu Kumari Lama, ICIMOD
9. Sandra Elvin, National Geographic Society



## **Cyril Kormos: *What are the technical processes and challenges in the WHS nomination process?***

### **About Wild Heritage:**

Wild Heritage is a new project of the Earth Island Institute focused on world heritage and wilderness, with particular focus on 'primary' or old growth forests. There is a need to scale up conservation efforts given current challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. Wild Heritage focuses its efforts on protecting large wilderness areas, and keeping primary forests in good condition.

### **How to nominate natural World Heritage Sites:**

The official process begins when a country (State Party) decides to nominate a site. First, it must inscribe the site to its Tentative List. Each site must be on the Tentative List for at least a year, after which point it can stay on the Tentative List or be submitted for nomination by the country to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. The UNESCO Committee reviews the nomination, checking a range of criteria, including the completeness of the application. To be considered complete, a nomination must have everything listed in the guidelines as well as clear boundaries. If a nomination is considered complete it is forwarded to IUCN, which is written into the WHC as the technical Advisory Body on natural heritage sites. IUCN confidentially sends the nomination to desk reviewers for comment. UNESCO and IUCN undergo a joint mission to visit the site. Recommendations from the site visit are provided to the IUCN World Heritage Panel, which meets each December. After the Panel meeting in December, IUCN may request more information from the State Party if required. IUCN then makes a final decision on its recommendations regarding the nomination after a second meeting in March. Based on the results of this meeting, IUCN submits its recommendations to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, which then transmits IUCN's recommendations to the World Heritage Committee. The Committee may choose to immediately inscribe the site, refer the nomination back to the country for revisions, defer the nomination in the case that it needs substantial revision, or reject the nomination as not meeting the WHC's standards.

### **Estimated timeline after inscription onto the Tentative List:**

At least one year to prepare and draft the nomination; and 18 months for IUCN and the World Heritage Committee to review, given there are no problems or revisions. If IUCN finds a technical problem with nomination, it cannot recommend inscription. IUCN want to avoid situations where they are forced to delay a nomination because of easily avoidable technical problems. To avoid this, early communication between countries and IUCN is important.

If a nomination involves a site with a complex boundary, or if issues come up during a site visit, these things can be discussed with the state party and solutions can be proposed. There are many things that can be done earlier in the process to strengthen a nomination that can't necessarily be done later. Drafting a nomination can be a long, complicated, technically challenging and expensive process. And if a nomination is rejected or delayed by the Committee it can be devastating, particularly when it is for an avoidable mistake. So early engagement and open communication is important.

IUCN maintains an independent World Heritage Panel – IUCN's Secretariat staff do not vote on nominations. This ensures that State Parties can seek advice about their nominations without causing a conflict of interest within IUCN.

### **Distinction between World Heritage Sites and different IUCN protected area categories**

WHS and IUCN protected area categories are different. The protected area category has no influence on whether a site can be considered for World Heritage Site nomination. IUCN has made a strong commitment to rights-based approaches and respecting the need for communities to be aware, supportive, and understanding of the implications for them. IUCN accepts as a best practice that these things need to be fully respected and community values should be integrated into sites. Having a mixed site can be problematic as it is essentially two nominations, with additional reporting burdens. IUCN has made progress in integrating cultural values into natural sites. There is a landmark nomination from Canada promoted by representatives of the First Nations because it was important that their way of life was recognized. It is a well-written model for how to integrate cultural and natural values.

## Speeding up the process

The nomination process has slowed because nominations are less obvious. However, building consensus early on can help the process move faster. Also, if the OUV is clearly recognized, it is easier to move the process forward. The Okavango Delta was a clear site everyone was eager to have on the list, and there was an interest in it being the thousandth site. Mount Kailash will be a site that has a lot of interest as well.

### **Wangchuck Bidha: *Bhutan is considering designating its first Man and Biosphere Reserve. What are the encouraging factors and how does Bhutan see World Heritage Sites?***

Guided by the unique philosophy of Gross National Happiness, Bhutan has a policy of maintaining 60% forest cover – one of the highest proportions in Asia. With 50% of the country under protected areas and 80% under forest cover, it is clear that Bhutan places strong value on conserving nature and culture. Although Bhutan prioritizes environmental conservation, the country has growing challenges of climate change and development.

To ensure sustainability, the country has been working closely with IUCN to navigate the process of designating the country's first biosphere reserve. Through the Man and Biosphere Programme, the country aims to balance nature conservation and economic development and ecosystem services provision while protecting diversity and indigenous knowledge. Bhutan currently has no inscribed WHS. One was added to the Tentative List in 2012, but it has not moved forward. However, discussions are underway. As it joins the MAB programme there is a willingness to move forward, but they are concerned about commitments and costs.

### **Manoj Nair: *What are India's experiences in the WHS nomination process?***

With 21% forest coverage and 5% protected areas, India has always had a culture of nature conservation and has been an active participant in global conventions. It currently has 29 WHS inscriptions (7 natural, 1 mixed). The nation's trajectory with the WHC started in the mid-80s, and it has shown continuous upward growth and continuous engagement. World heritage nominations have added a layer of accountability and reporting requirements. WHS is not only a means of putting sites on the world map and promoting ecotourism/local livelihoods, it is also a conservation umbrella that draws the world's attention to your site. The experience from Manas is a good learning for India for WHS management.

The Western Ghats are serial World Heritage Sites located in several different states. To agree on the nomination was not an easy task, and diverse stakeholders had to be brought to a single platform. In the context of transboundary work, India has proposed a nomination in the Cherrapunjee-Chittagong landscape. There are nine tentatively listed sites in India, and there is a plan to slowly move them forward one by one. All of the more obvious sites have been nominated, and the lesser-known sites are strictly scrutinized. We must be extremely careful about how the site is projected in the dossier. A lot of politics is involved in the process.



### **Chhakka Bahadur Lama: *How does the local community perceive World Heritage Sites and what is Nepal's experience?***

We have heritage sites but do not recognize them as world heritage. In western Nepal, people have not heard of WHS, and the state has little access to heritage sites. Shamanism is practiced and cultures are mixed, including the culture of polyandry. This indicates the local situations are different and the local voices are not heard. Modernization including the market economy is bringing challenges in preserving the traditional systems – a heritage of great local value.

### **Thein Htay: *How do you reconcile sites of Outstanding Universal Value with large investment programmes?***

Sites endowed with outstanding natural and cultural heritage are very important. They must be protected by law. There is a need to increase recognition of these sites, and to protect these sites by not allowing big investment projects. However, these important areas are facing multiple challenges. Myanmar has taken a number of initiatives and Bagan has been proposed as the second WHS in Myanmar. Myanmar is committed to conservation of its heritage.

### **Kai Weise: *Any good experiences and lessons in listing transboundary WHS sites?***

There are limited initiatives on transboundary WHS. There are some WHS of mixed type in South Africa and Spain and some natural sites between Mongolia and Russia. Efforts have been made to list the Sunderbans in India and Bangladesh as a WHS, but they have not had any results so far. In some cases, e.g., in Gobi Desert, individual buildings have been considered for WHS. One major issue is the separation of cultural and natural sites. Bringing these two together is always a challenge. Partly for this reason, it has not been possible to develop and nominate transboundary sites in the region. There are only five transboundary sites in Asia, and most of them are not single sites that cross borders, they are serial sites. The success of transboundary WHS initiatives depends on communication and the nature of the relationship between countries. One of the biggest challenges is how to manage sites in different countries with different management approaches, as well as how to involve the community in managing transboundary WHS. However, there is growing interest in and discussion on developing transboundary sites in Asia, with four of the five transboundary heritage sites in Asia nominated within the last decade. Whether individual or transboundary, the community's interests and participation are key to WHS nomination and its management. In Nepal, local community has been showing strong interest to nominate the Shey Phoksundo National Park and Upper Dolpo as a World Heritage Site.

### **Anu Kumari Lama: *Human dimensions like tourism are considered key sustainability factors for WHS. What are the prospects in the HKH?***

Heritage encompasses not only nature, it also has a strong human dimension including culture. It is now widely recognized that tourism adds immense value to WHS. It has been reported that 51 million jobs were created in tourism in South Asia in 2018. Tour agencies are increasingly developing 'regional packages', and transboundary tourism carries prospects for bringing more benefits in the future. Domestic and regional tourism are flourishing. In the Kangchenjunga Landscape shared by Bhutan, India, and Nepal, 25% of tourists visit multiple countries. Tourism is a huge force that can bring benefits to communities, and can be an effective tool for reducing poverty. Tourism is also an important tool for promoting sustainable development, but it must be developed consciously because it may also pose a threat to heritage sites. The example from Bangladesh is very relevant for understanding the win-win situation for WHS and tourism.

### **Sandra Elvin: *WHS are facing challenges due to changing global economic priorities. How do you see the future of financing for conservation?***

What makes an NGO fund conservation – their values and some selfish interest? There is a desire to keep the cycle going, and fund merit-based projects. When considering what makes other organizations fund conservation projects, we must consider the intrinsic value of conservation – how much are people willing to pay and what is it actually worth. These numbers can be quite different. Organizations need to fill in that gap. We must outline what we are to pay and fight for. Timing and teamwork are also major factors. There is a need to think about the long-term effect when considering money allocation, and many organizations frame projects as investments.

# 6. Technical session 3: Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats (SWOT) analysis

## Session Facilitator: Tilman Jaegar

The session was dedicated to analysing the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats of existing and potential World Heritage Sites in the HKH. The analysis was focused on four operational transboundary landscapes: the HKPL, KSL, KL, and the Far Eastern Himalayan Landscape. Four groups were created to work on the four landscapes. After the group work, each group presented the results of SWOT analysis. The results are shown in Table 1

**Table 1: Results of SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threats) analysis in four landscapes**

Strengths	Weakness	Opportunity	Threats
<b>Hindu-Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape (HKPL)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of collective thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional government to strengthen the capacity of local institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambitious infrastructure projects threatening the environment and the landscape</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rich tradition and culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of awareness of transboundary issues (wildlife trade, human-wildlife conflict)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research investment in heritage sites and networking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-migration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Silk/Spice Road connectivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way forward is not clear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branding the area as the roof of the world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural disaster</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transboundary PAs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of dialogue among the stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Huge investment potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fragile</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience in heritage nomination</li> <li>• Strong bilateral relationships (signed treaties)</li> <li>• Bam-e-Duniya network</li> <li>• Local community involvement</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites for potential WHS nomination</li> <li>• International eco-tourism cooperation</li> <li>• Establish eco-environment strategies for nature reserves and national parks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid urbanization</li> <li>• Threat to local culture</li> </ul>
<b>Kailash Sacred Landscape (KSL)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High ecological and cultural values.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited boundary delineation;</li> <li>• More cultural links to be traced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obvious site (sacred in all three countries)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive geopolitics affecting traditional practices</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good research-based documentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited awareness and understanding of WHS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Peace Park' to promote spiritual tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes arising from new market forces</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kailash pilgrimage routes – ancient/historic and heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited economic opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boundary delineation to expand noosphere spiritual linkages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in infrastructure affecting cultural integrity and spiritual values</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KSL India on tentative list of WHS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disconnect between tangible and intangible domain (belief systems, traditions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing spiritual space of Kailash</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eroding traditional knowledge of sustainable NRM</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China designated international tourism zone (China-Nepal)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase economic opportunities from tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-economic and demographic changes e.g. outmigration</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belt and Road Initiative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazards: Natural and anthropogenic climate change –GLOF/landslides</li> <li>• Yartsa gunbu (economic and ecological)</li> </ul>
<b>Kangchenjunga Landscape (KL)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enabling factors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Border area restrictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecotourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developmental activities including land use change</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endorsed landscape programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical accessibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yak culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geo-sensitivity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing protected areas and corridors including CCAs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing cultural heritages sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigation of HWC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unregulated tourism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similar belief systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over-exploitation of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change and associated sensitivity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous knowledge systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of long-term data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transboundary research</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transboundary ecosystem services</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rich biodiversity and natural resources</li> </ul>			
<b>Landscape Initiative for Far Eastern Himalaya (HI-LIFE)</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong political will within the HI-LIFE countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It takes a long time to reach political consensus at the transboundary level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism, joint research and studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflicting interests of government and communities</li> <li>• Management and planning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecosystem connectivity (high endemism, rich biodiversity)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor legislation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased recognition of CBD from governments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate tourism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A connected large WHS landscape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient scientific research (data deficiency)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similar culture and traditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsustainable use of natural resources (trade of wildlife and high-value plants)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape linking areas of Outstanding Universal Value (1–10th)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy coordination among the countries is poor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibility of common trade like Sarchi (Paris polyphyla)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TPRs existing WHS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited understanding and awareness among the countries about WHS</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change</li> </ul>

# 7. Closing session

## 7.1. Summary of the workshop

### Cyril Kormos

The WHC is a unique mechanism for protecting wilderness areas of OUV, and in particular for conserving both the natural and cultural values of wild landscapes. World Heritage Sites also attract international funding for conservation and research and open opportunities for tourism. But the Convention's most significant role is in protecting areas of global significance – areas that are so important that they matter to all of us. The HKH region is unique in terms of biodiversity, culture and geography. Protected areas of OUV are connected at the transboundary level across the region. Kormos stressed the need to leverage WHS in the four transboundary landscapes of the region. The workshop represented as an initial step towards leveraging the World Heritage Sites in the region.

### Tilman Jaegar

The workshop was able to meet the high expectations. The workshop provided detailed and meaningful information on the existing and tentative list of World Heritage Sites, and this provided a good basis for moving forward. The analysis of strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of each landscape as well as country-specific assessment of the situation provided a thorough understanding of the existing heritage sites and future tentative list. Next step would be the production of a draft report including the outcomes of the workshop, which will be shared with the participants for inputs. Jaeger expressed his gratitude to ICIMOD for providing a platform for meaningful dialogue, and expressed his interest to collaborate in the future. He welcomed everyone to discuss issues further (if any) and offered support to the WHS nomination process.

## 7.2. Remarks

### Representatives from the participants

Li Maobio, Ram Prasad Chaudhary, Kai Weise, Wangchuk Bidha, and Farhana Yasmin thanked the organizers for the workshop and for bringing the representatives of the regional member countries and UNESCO national focal points to discuss the potential World Heritages Sites in the transboundary landscapes of the region. They highlighted the need to initiate dialogue to move forward with the tentative list of World Heritage Sites.

### Eklabya Sharma, Deputy Director General (DDG), ICIMOD

Sharma said that nature and culture go together in the HKH. However, whether we should focus on nature or culture should be entirely based on the situation and context. ICIMOD regards the HKH as a boundary and believes that political boundaries of countries need to be crossed for conservation. Cooperation, especially in this region, is not easy but it is necessary to break many boundaries/barriers for the benefit of the local people and for the conservation and management of natural and cultural heritage. ICIMOD has very good partnerships at the local, national, regional and global level. The Centre works with the focal institutions at the country level for science, policy and practice. Good data and information gathered through scientific work is complemented by socioeconomic analyses in order to convince policy makers and the scientific community.

ICIMOD's Transboundary Landscapes Programme is a long-term programme, so we can collaborate and forge partnerships with institutions like Wild Heritage and IUCN for this initiative. The process of collaboration has begun and the journey should be continued. ICIMOD will support this process to further promote conservation and sustainable development.

**Nakul Chettri**, Senior Biodiversity Specialist and Programme Coordinator of KL

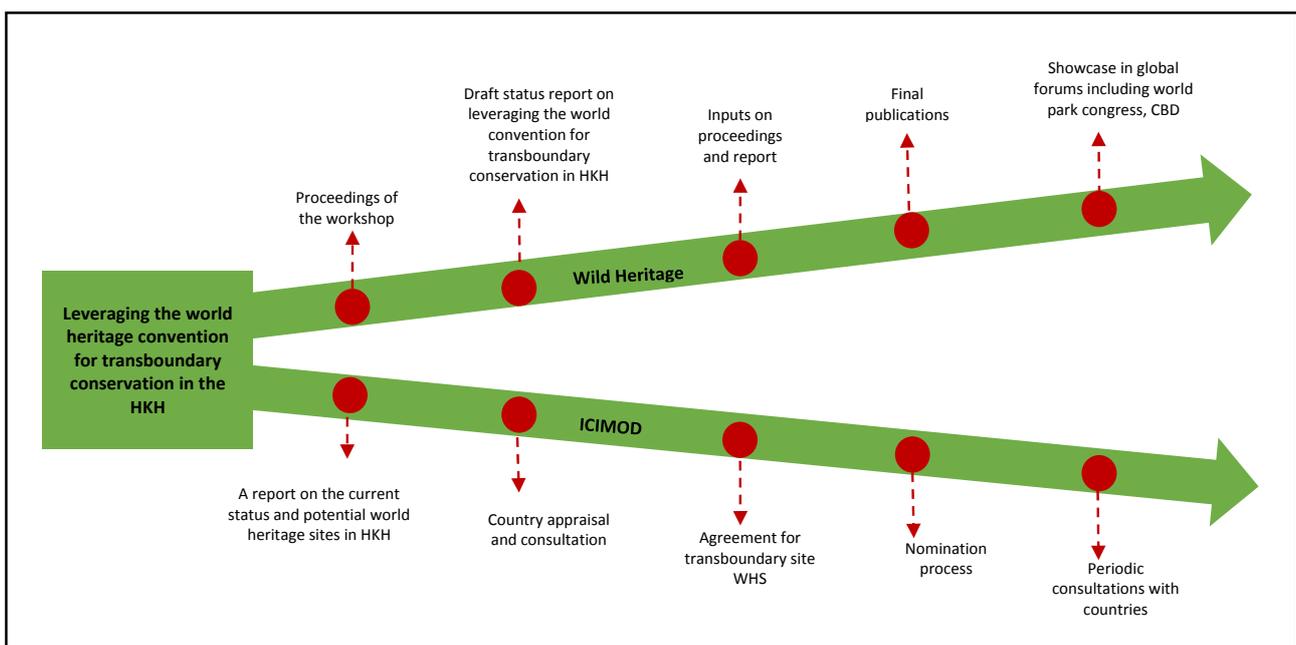
Chettri thanked everyone for successfully organizing the workshop. He expressed his gratitude to the sponsor, co-organizers, participants from the regional member countries, UNESCO focal points, representatives of different organizations, and ICIMOD staff. He explained how the idea of the workshop was initiated and became a reality with the dedication of the right people and institutions. ICIMOD played an instrumental role in conceptualizing, negotiating and operationalizing the idea of the WHS workshop in collaboration with IUCN and Wild Heritage, and with support from the National Geographic Society. The workshop was an example of collaborative work of diverse stakeholders for conservation.



## The way forward

A roadmap with two pathways was developed as the way forward (Figure 3): Wild Heritage pathway and ICIMOD Pathway. Proposed activities for Wild Heritage pathway included the workshop proceedings, draft status and potential World Heritage Sites, and presentation of case studies from the HKH at global forums such as the World Parks Congress and the CBD. A report on the status of current World Heritage Sites, gap analysis, and identification of potential WHS was one of the key outputs in the roadmap. ICIMOD pathway included country consultations and agreement for nomination of transboundary landscapes and nomination process. A report on the current status of WHS, protected area coverage, gap analysis, and identification of potential WHS in transboundary landscapes of the HKH were also identified as important milestones (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Two-pathway roadmap



# 8. Annexes

## Annex 1: Workshop agenda

<b>Day 1, 30 May 2019, Thursday</b>		
Time	Programme	Remarks
8.30–9.00	Arrival and registration	Rekha Rasaily & Himaa Rai
Technical Session 1: 9.00-12.00 Chair – Bangladesh		Rapporteurs: Kamal Aryal & Sunayana Basnet
9.10–9.30	Welcome remarks and presentation on Transboundary Landscapes in HKH region including the World Heritage Sites experience from Kailash Sacred Landscape	Rajan Kotru, ICIMOD
9.30–10.00	World Heritage, Wilderness and Large Land and Seascapes	Cyril Kormos, Executive Director, Wild Heritage
10.00–10.20	Transboundary landscapes with World Heritage potential - Kangchenjunga Landscape (KL)	Ram Chaudhary, Nepal
10.20-10.45	Coffee break	
10:45–11.05	Transboundary landscapes with World Heritage potential - Landscape Initiative in Far Eastern Himalaya	Wishfully Myllemngap, India
11.05–11.25	Transboundary landscapes with World Heritage potential - Kailash Sacred Landscape	G.C.S. Negi, India
11.25–11.45	Transboundary landscapes with World Heritage potential - Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape	Professor Yang Cuibai
11.45–12.00	Q&A	Moderated by Chair
12:00–13.00	Lunch	
Technical Session 2: 13.00 -14.00 Chair – China		Rapporteurs: Dr. Srijana Joshi
13:00–13.30	Overview of a draft report – methodology, results, and discussion	Tilman Jaeger, IUCN
13.30–13.45	Revisiting protected area coverage in the HKH	Sunita Chaudhary and Kabir Uddin – ICIMOD
13.45–14.00	Q&A	Moderated by Chair
14.00–14.15	Coffee break	
Inaugural and panel discussion - 14.15-17:00 Srijana Joshi		Rapporteurs: Nakul Chettri & Amy Sellmyer
14.15–14.20	Remarks – ICIMOD	David Molden, DG, ICIMOD
14.20–14.25	Remarks - Government of Nepal	Chakka Bahadur Lama, Member of Parliament, Nepal
14.25–14.30	Remarks – Government of Nepal	Sindhu Dhungana, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, Nepal
14.30–14.35	Remarks – National Geographic Society	Sandra Elvin, National Geographic Society
14.35–14.40	Remarks – UNESCO Nepal	Christian Manhart, Head, UNESCO Nepal
14.40–14.45	Remarks – IUCN World Heritage Programme	Cyril Kromos, Director, Wild Heritage

14.45–15.00	Keynote presentation - ICIMOD's work on biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services in the HKH	Eklabya Sharma, DDG, ICIMOD
15.00–15.10	Group photo	Outside the building, ICIMOD
15.10–15.30	Coffee break	
15.30–16.30	Panel discussion on existing and potential World Heritage sites (WHS) considering challenges, opportunities, perceptions and potential way forward  Panelists: Representatives and experts from HKH regional member countries	Moderation by DG, ICIMOD
16.30–17:00	Q&A	Moderation by DG, ICIMOD
18.00–19.30	Reception followed by dinner	ICIMOD Garden

<b>Day 2, 31 May, Friday</b>		
Time	Programme	Remarks
Technical Session 3 - 9.00–12.00 Chair – Afghanistan		Rapporteurs: Kamal Aryal & Srijana Joshi
9:00–9:30	Introduction to the group work	Tilman Jaeger
9.30–12.00	Breakout sessions:  Do existing World Heritage Sites need expansion to better protect OUV (to better buffer, capture OUV more effectively, for climate change adaptation, etc.)? Are there opportunities for improved connectivity between existing World Heritage Sites and/or between World Heritage Sites and other protected areas? Where are the opportunities for new World Heritage Sites?	
12.00–13.00	Lunch	
13.00–14.30	Breakout sessions: Continue	
14.30–15.00	Reports from breakout sessions and discussions	
15.00-15.30	Coffee break	
Closing Session - 15.30–17.00 Chair – Pakistan		Rapporteurs: Sunita Chaudhary and Kamal Aryal
15.30–16.00	Summary of the workshop and the way forward	Cyril Kromos, Director, Wild Heritage
16.00–16.15	Closing remarks	Representatives of the workshop participants
16.15–16.25	Closing remarks	Eklabya Sharma, DDG, ICIMOD
16.25–16.30	Vote of thanks	Nakul Chettri, ICIMOD
Departure from ICIMOD		

## Annex 2: List of participants

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