




Securing Sustainable Livelihoods in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas

Directions for Future Research, Development and Cooperation



ICIMOD 21st Anniversary Symposium

About ICIMOD

The **International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development** (ICIMOD) is an independent 'Mountain Learning and Knowledge Centre' serving the eight countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas – Afghanistan , Bangladesh , Bhutan , China , India , Myanmar , Nepal , and Pakistan  – and the global mountain community. Founded in 1983, ICIMOD is based in Kathmandu, Nepal, and brings together a partnership of regional member countries, partner institutions, and donors with a commitment for development action to secure a better future for the people and environment of the extended Himalayan region. ICIMOD's activities are supported by its core programme donors: the Governments of Austria, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and its regional member countries, along with over thirty project co-financing donors. The primary objective of the Centre is to promote the development of an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem and to improve the living standards of mountain populations.

Securing Sustainable Livelihoods in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas: Directions for Future Research, Development and Cooperation

Proceedings of the ICIMOD 21st Anniversary Symposium,
held 5-6 December 2004, in Kathmandu, Nepal

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4. Myanmar mountain children (*Elisabeth Kerkhoff*)
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7. Dairy farmers in Nepal (*Ujol Sherchan*)
8. Selling farm produce in northeast India (*Sanat Chakrabarty*)
9. Beekeeping training in Chitral Pakistan (*Ujol Sherchan*)

Back cover: ICIMOD staff in front of the new headquarters building (*file photo*)

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Foreword

ICIMOD's 21st Anniversary Symposium not only commemorated a major milestone in our evolution, but also a physical move to our new headquarters at Khumaltar, Kathmandu, Nepal. The Symposium was an ideal occasion to reflect on the Centre's achievements over the past two decades and to discuss its future direction. The Symposium was therefore aptly titled 'Securing Sustainable Livelihoods in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas: Directions for Future Research, Development and Cooperation'. Keynote speakers and panel members from around the region and beyond were invited to share their experiences in relation to the Centre's achievements and to provide recommendations for the future. His Majesty the King of Nepal, Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, graced the occasion by inaugurating the new headquarters and opening the Symposium. The inaugural session was attended by dignitaries from His Majesty's Government of Nepal, the diplomatic corps based in Kathmandu, and high-level government representatives, scientists, and academicians from within and outside the Himalayan region.

The participants at the Symposium acknowledged the valuable contribution made by ICIMOD to the development of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region. Not only has ICIMOD helped in sensitising policy makers to the plight of poor communities in mountain areas and flagging their vulnerability to socioeconomic and geopolitical insecurities, it has also played a key role in identifying mountain technologies and community-based natural resource approaches and policies that have helped to significantly improve the livelihoods of mountain peoples. Some of the leading personnel associated with ICIMOD's creation, as well as representatives from its Regional Member Countries, expressed their satisfaction with the active role that ICIMOD has been able to play in facilitating the exchange of information, knowledge, and expertise among the Member Countries, thereby enhancing understanding and cooperation among them in addressing sustainable development and disaster mitigation issues. This was considered a commendable achievement given the sensitive geopolitical relations that continue to pervade the region. The reflections at the Symposium testify to the growing importance of ICIMOD as a regional learning and knowledge centre for mountain development with an increasing global role and recognition.

In discussing ICIMOD's future, participants voiced their concerns for the persistent and emerging challenges facing the greater Himalayan region. Poverty continues to plague many mountain communities, and the degradation of natural resources and the environment continues despite positive reversals in some areas. The impact of climate change on mountain ecosystems, the pressure on the natural resource base, threats to the conservation of biological diversity, continuing social unrest and political tensions within the region, along with increasing discrepancy between the rich and poor, high

and low status groups, upstream and downstream, were some of the key challenges identified for the region.

ICIMOD has a key role to play in addressing these issues as the implications of many of them transcend geopolitical boundaries and require a coordinated approach from the countries in the region. With the adoption of market economy approaches by the Regional Member Countries and increases in mobility and access to information and knowledge, as well as a significant improvement in bilateral relations between the Member Countries, the opportunities for cooperation to address the challenges and harness potential benefits have increased. There was general agreement that the Regional Member Countries could benefit significantly from the adoption of a regional approach to disaster mitigation, biodiversity conservation, eco-tourism, and hydropower development. The participants agreed that ICIMOD could play a key role in facilitating this approach in the coming years.

This report is a record of the Symposium proceedings and is intended to serve as a valuable reference for mountain peoples, researchers, policy makers, and development practitioners in mountain areas. It also documents an important phase in the continuing evolution of ICIMOD as a truly international centre for excellence in sustainable mountain development. I am grateful to all the speakers, participants, and my colleagues at ICIMOD who made the 21st Symposium a great success.

Dr J Gabriel Campbell
Director General
ICIMOD

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AKRSP	Agha Khan Rural Support Programme
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CO	community organisation
CPR	common pool resources
DSS	decision support system
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal
GBM	Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	geographic information system
GPS	global positioning system
HIMAWANTI	Himalayan Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association
HKH	Hindu Kush-Himalayas/n
HP	Himachal Pradesh
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICSU	International Council for Science
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
INGO	international non-government organisation
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
MAB	Man and the Biosphere
MACP	Mountain Areas Conservancy Project
MENRIS	Mountain Environment and Natural Resources Information Systems
NA	Northern Areas
NGO	non-government organisation
NTFP	non-timber forest product
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
RSP	Rural Support Programme
SASMON	South Asia Mobilization Network
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNU	United Nations University
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

Note

The papers in this volume have undergone language editing, in some cases without further review by the authors.

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