

# the closing session

During the closing session Dr. Gabriel Campbell thanked all of the participants for their contributions and congratulated them on their hard work in preparing the recommendations that form the major output of this conference. The hopefulness that is expressed in these recommendations and their advocacy of an ecoregional approach would be heard worldwide during this International Year of Mountains 2002 and especially at the upcoming Bishkek Global Mountain Summit (28 October - 1 November 2002) in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Dr. Campbell went on to praise the work being done by the MASIF Ecoregional team at ICIMOD together with their partners in Tibet, China, and Himachal Pradesh, India. Their work to develop appropriate tools will improve the livelihoods of the mountain people in these two pilot areas and hopefully also elsewhere. Dr. Bouma also thanked the participants from the three major mountain ecoregions and said that the recommendations showed that this conference had been a turning point in the thinking on the part of researchers and development workers. Participants from the three major mountain ecoregions were able to reach a consensus in recognising that researchers and development workers are now ready to move from merely building awareness on mountain issues to identifying actions and interventions. This is a noteworthy shift in emphasis. Dr. Partap, who has been involved with the MASIF Ecoregional Project in different capacities since its inception, told all assembled that he was delighted at the good progress that had been made throughout this workshop and wished all involved a good continuation and good luck at the upcoming conference in Bishkek.

The sentiments of the participants and partners in the ecoregional process are best summed up by the closing address given by Prof. Gu Maozhi, Vice-President of TAAAS. His text is summarised below.

Dear Chairperson, Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

I was very happy to attend this workshop. I appreciated ICIMOD inviting us to this beautiful country of Nepal. During the past four-day workshop, we learned a lot from the participants and during the discussions, although we have not spoken much due to language limitations.

We were excited to hear some good ideas on mountain agricultural development from the presenters and during the discussions. Tibet Autonomous Region of China is a vast land with rich resources and is known as the rooftop of the world. We realise that an ecoregional approach is needed to develop a sustainable agricultural system in such a region, and that in order to adopt such an ecoregional approach, appropriate tools and methods are required. During this workshop, we learned that tools are being developed for the HKH region. We were pleased to know that one of the sites for the initiative was selected in the Tibet Autonomous Region in China. The Tibet Academy of Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Sciences (TAAAS) is a research academy that is working on developing appropriate technologies for the highland in the Tibet Plateau. As a collaborator in ICIMOD's Ecoregional Project, TAAAS is working on developing ecoregional research tools for highland agricultural development. With the better understanding of ecoregional research during this workshop, I foresee that some of the output of the Ecoregional Project and of this workshop will greatly help us in better planning and implementing of agricultural development, and planning using ecoregional and production system approaches, in the vast land of the Tibet Plateau.

We would like to welcome you to Tibet; we invite all of you to visit Lhasa, and be a guest of TAAAS. Hope to see you in Lhasa.

Thank you.