

Building Partnerships in Community Forestry



**Archana S. Karki
Judith Amtzis, and
Anupam Bhatia**

Organised by
International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD),
the Department of Forest Farming and Conservation (DFFC), Himachal Pradesh, and
Dr Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Solan, Himachal Pradesh

June 14-17, 1995
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India

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A Regional Foresters' Forum in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas

Regional Workshop Report on Participatory Forest Management (PFM) - Coping with and Managing Change

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Cover plate: Forested Hill in the Himalayas

Inset: Participants in a group discussion at the Chail Workshop

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Foreword

It is well recognised that forest resources play a vital role in contributing to integrated mountain development in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas. Over the last decade we have been witness to dramatic changes in approaches and strategies for sustaining our forest resources. A successful approach has been the emergence of participatory forest management in almost all the countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas. While the terminologies used may vary from community forestry in Nepal to joint forest management in India to social forestry in Bhutan the issues and challenges for institutions are similar. Most national institutions charged with the responsibility of forest management are facing new paradigms of change.

Our experiences also indicated the existence of inadequate mechanisms for sharing these challenges amongst the countries in the Himalayan region. It was with this objective in mind that ICIMOD's Participatory Natural Resources' Management Programme initiated a process which would encourage peer group learning amongst professional foresters and build partnerships in community forestry. As part of this process a workshop was held in Chail, Himachal Pradesh, with the key objective of exploring the merit of establishing a sustainable institutional mechanism which would be owned and driven by foresters working in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas.

I am happy to see that the workshop was able to come up to our original expectations and to facilitate the emergence of HIFCOM — The Hindu Kush-Himalayan Forum for Forest Protection and Management. HIFCOM is very definitive in its mission statement about its role to promote and strengthen participatory forest management in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas. ICIMOD will continue to support this exciting process and we are confident that HIFCOM will be able to make a significant contribution to ushering in people-oriented forestry management in all our member countries in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas.

Egbert Pelinck
Director General

Contents

Introduction	1
Background and Inaugural Statements	2
Working Sessions	7
Emergence of HIFCOM	34
Concluding Session	43
Annexes	49