

Land Policies, Land Management and Land Degradation in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas

China Study Report

**Cai Yunlong
Zhang Jian-ling
Zhu Xia**

**International Centre for Integrated
Mountain Development
Kathmandu, Nepal
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Preface

The Mountain Farming Systems' Division of ICIMOD, with support from the Global Mountain Programme, initiated a comparative study on the effect of land policies on land management and degradation in six regional countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, and Pakistan—sharing the Hindu Kush-Himalayan mountain range. One study was commissioned in each country. The exception to this was India where two studies, one in the north-west and one in the north-east, were conducted to capture the diversity and size of the Indian Himalayas. Each of the country studies was carried out by a team of experts from biological as well as socioeconomic disciplines.

The study was based on a concept paper developed by Professor Piers Blaikie in association with ICIMOD staff. The Team Leaders of the country studies came to ICIMOD in May 1997 to discuss the concept paper and agree on the methodology and operational aspects of the project. Each of the studies was to investigate four sectoral policies, e.g., Agriculture, Forestry, Wildlife and National Parks, and Tenure and Property Rights. In addition, each study looked at the national and or provincial environmental policy and its implementation. The idea was to investigate thoroughly all the sectoral policies and their impact on land management. Each of the studies also chose one particular issue of interest for the country or area that had a significant impact on land management. The study period was between June and October 1997 and final reports were presented in a workshop at ICIMOD in early November. Subsequently, the reports were revised for publication.

We believe that, by publishing these studies, ICIMOD will facilitate an important contribution for a wider audience, in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region and beyond, who will benefit from the detailed information and analysis of this very important topic.

ICIMOD would like to acknowledge the contribution of Professor Piers M. Blaikie, of the University of East Anglia, U.K., in the design and implementation of this study. From within the Centre, Professor Blaikie was assisted by Dr. Syed Zahir Sadeque, Social Scientist, ICIMOD, and Dr. Tej Partap, Head, Mountain Farming Systems and Coordinator of the Global Mountain Programme at ICIMOD. In addition, a multidisciplinary advisory team of ICIMOD professionals, namely, Dr M. Banskota, Dr N.S. Jodha, and Dr T.S. Papola, provided valuable inputs during the study.

Tej Partap

Syed Zahir Sadeque

Abstract

This report is a part result of the research project: Land Policies, Land Management and Land Degradation in the Hindu-Kush-Himalayas. The report is mainly concerned with the land degradation and its relation, through land use and land management, with land relevant policies; these include environmental policy, agricultural policy, land policy, forestry policy, natural reserve policy, and population policy; in the Chinese Himalayas. Luquan Yi and Miao Nationalities' Autonomous County, located in Western Yunnan is selected as a study case. Shangyan village in this county has been studied in particular by using an anthropological approach. As a background and context, the policy process and land degradation status at national and provincial levels are also investigated.

The process of land degradation can be regarded as the comprehensive result of mutual interaction between the physical process and human activities. In developing countries, land degradation and poverty are closely linked. Land degradation is not only an environmental issue, but also a social issue. The most urgent problem in regions in which there are areas of degraded land, is securing resources for basic living. Thus degraded land should be reconstructed (not just rehabilitated) so as to have a high and stable yield and ensure grain supplies and basic needs. Reconstruction is a man-made alteration that accelerated the development of the landscape to bring about balance. The process of reconstruction requires large-scale social investment to bring about rapid change in degraded lands. In order to escape the spiral of impoverishment-degradation, it is necessary for local people and leaders to be innovative and for government to transform institutions and policy.

Acronyms

CEPASC	Chinese Environment Protection Agency of the State Council
CRSLO	Contracted Responsibility System Linked to the Output System
DLSO	Detailed Land Survey Office
EIA	environmental impact assessment
EPCSC	Environmental Protection Committee of the State Council
FMO	forest management organisation
FMS	forest management staff
GDP	gross domestic product
HKH	Hindu Kush-Himalayan
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
LAB	Land Administration Bureau
LABT	Land Administration Bureau of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)
LABY	Land Administration Bureau of Yunnan Province
LEP	Law on Environmental Protection
LEPPRC	Law on Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China
LLA	Law on Land Administration
LLAPRC	Law on Land Administration of the People's Republic of China
LMR	Law on Mineral Resources
LPCAP	Law on Prevention and Control of Air Pollution
LPCWP	Law on Prevention and Control of Water Pollution
NPC	National People's Congress
PPFF	Provision on Protection of Fundamental Farmland
PCFFYP	Provision on Conservation of Fundamental Farmland in Yunnan Province
PRC	The People's Republic of China
SACC	Socialist Agricultural Cooperative Community
SCNPC	Standing Committee of the National People's Congress
SCYPPC	Standing Committee of Yunnan Province People's Congress
SPC	State Planning Commission
SSTC	State Science and Technology Commission
TAR	Tibet Autonomous Region
VTE	village and township enterprises
YPG	Yunnan Provincial Government

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