

A scenic landscape photograph of a mountain valley. In the foreground, there is a green meadow with some purple flowers. A blue tarp and a black tent are set up on the grass. In the middle ground, a calm blue lake is visible. The background features steep, rocky mountains with patches of green vegetation under a blue sky with white clouds.

The Landscape Approach in Biodiversity Conservation

A Regional Cooperation Framework for Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Kangchenjunga Landscape

**Eklabya Sharma
Nakul Chettri
Janita Gurung
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International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development

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Compiled by

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ICIMOD Framework Paper

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)
Kathmandu, Nepal
October 2007

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Published by

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
G.P.O. Box 3226
Kathmandu, Nepal

ISBN 978 92 9115 060 1 (printed)
978 92 9115 061 8 (electronic)

Photos: All photos by Nakul Chettri unless stated otherwise

Front cover: Glacial lake in Jangthang, Jigme Dorji National Park, Bhutan, with a tent made of yak hair used by herders as shelter

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Printed and bound in Nepal by

Quality Printers Pvt. Ltd.
Kathmandu

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The compilers acknowledge the support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation for this ICIMOD based eastern Himalaya transboundary biodiversity management project in the Kangchenjunga landscape. Contributions made by the participants of the 2006 Sikkim workshop, various national and regional workshops organised by ICIMOD, and our colleagues at ICIMOD, and constructive comments from Mohan P. Wagle, P. Senthil, Sandeep Tambe, and other reviewers are highly appreciated.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEGG	Culture, Equity, Gender and Governance
COP	Conference of Parties
GoN	Government of Nepal
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IUCN	World Conservation Union
MoFSC	Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, Nepal
PAs	Protected Areas
SHL	Sacred Himalayan Landscape
TBM	transboundary biodiversity management
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature

Summary

Achieving global conservation goals requires that realisations, agreements, and directives be customised to reach all levels. In the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), this means that approaches to conserving biological diversity must be developed at the local landscape level to support national implementation of the Convention.

In recent years, protected area management has evolved from a species-based conservation approach to a livelihoods-based landscape approach. The shift in the conservation paradigm has been gradual, and has included acceptance of communities as an integral part of national level conservation initiatives, together with integration of many global conventions and directives. Scaling up conservation across larger landscapes, as facilitated by most global conventions, involves cooperation at various levels. This publication presents the output of a long process that started with a pilot initiative on transboundary biodiversity management in the southern part of the Kangchenjunga landscape, of eastern Nepal, Sikkim and Darjeeling in India, and Bhutan, which brought to the fore an approach of regional cooperation for implementation of the CBD. The initiative set the stage for formulation of a 'Regional Cooperation Framework' among the three nations, Bhutan, India, and Nepal. The framework is intended as a guide, with provisions that can be adapted and applied to the individual countries in the Kangchenjunga landscape to achieve cooperation for implementation of the CBD. Based on the principles of the CBD, and taking into account the national biodiversity strategies and action plans of each of the three countries, it gives directives on four constitutive elements of biodiversity conservation: transboundary biodiversity conservation, scientific and technical cooperation, information exchange and sharing, and regional guidelines and soft legal instruments. The framework also touches upon the implementation mechanisms and identification of stakeholders and their key roles at local and national, and regional and international, levels.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first part provides an account of transboundary biodiversity conservation in the eastern Himalayas, including an introduction to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the concept of transboundary landscape management, the historical development of transboundary cooperation in the Kangchenjunga landscape, and the development of the Regional Cooperation Framework. The Framework itself is presented in Section 2. Section 3 provides further details of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its programme of work on mountain biodiversity, and on some other major initiatives supporting transboundary biodiversity cooperation in other mountain areas.

