

Message from the Director General

Dear Readers, Friends and Supporters of ICIMOD,

I have the pleasure of presenting the Annual Report of ICIMOD for 2008. This year's report features a number of innovations and changes, reflecting the changes and innovations that have been taking place at ICIMOD itself.

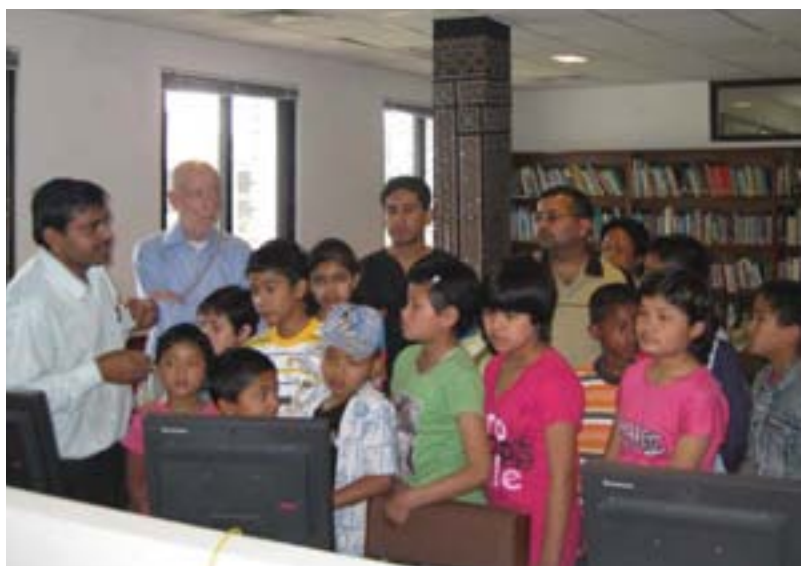
First, you will certainly have seen our new logo. This, together with the changed layout and new graphic presentation correspond with the internal process we have developed to help us meet the challenges posed by globalisation and climate change in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas. We think that globalisation and climate change will have such far-reaching consequences in the region that we need to reach out not only to specialists but also to all concerned stakeholders in government, academia, and civil society. We start from the viewpoint that the Hindu Kush-Himalayan mountain system plays such a major role in the region and the large area that surrounds it, that it is also important for the global community. After 25 years of successful work, we have now developed a new visual identity which is in line with this new approach and aims to be attractive for this wider public.

As you read, you will realise that we have also changed the way in which we present our work, our programmes, and our interactions with our partners. We are trying to highlight particular challenges and successes, rather than provide a complete outline of our activities. Concrete examples are used as an illustration to provide a better understanding of our work and make the report more readable. We hope to achieve two things. The first is to show that we produce tangible results, despite being primarily a knowledge organisation, working with and through strategic partners rather than directly implementing projects at the grassroots. The second is to whet your appetite to know more about ICIMOD and its work.

For those of you who are looking for more comprehensive and technical information, we encourage you to read some of our more detailed analyses and studies, or to refer to the Annual Progress Report, which contains details of all outputs and outcomes. This is also an invitation to visit our website, which has been completely reviewed and rebuilt and is being developed as an information platform to keep you regularly informed about our programme and institutional life. We hope gradually to convert it into an instrument of active communication with you and all stakeholders.



The highlights of the present report include some information on the activities surrounding the celebration of ICIMOD's 25 years of working for mountains and people; major international events like the conference and workshops on biodiversity and climate change and the 'Himalaya – *Changing Landscapes*' photo exhibition, which helped place the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region as a hotspot of climate change on the international agenda; and an account of the start of the new Medium-Term Action Plan and the focus on internal capacity development and change. Brief descriptions of the major successes of our three Strategic Programmes are complemented by comments from our partners and accounts of particularly interesting activities; this is



followed by a brief look at Knowledge Management and Capacity Development and the role and activities of the three country offices and national committees. You can also read about the newly established decentralised hub of the Mountain Partnership for Asia-Pacific, the Asia-Pacific Mountain Network node of the Mountain Forum, and the Mountain Forum Secretariat, all of which are located at ICIMOD. In future, we hope to use these to develop a better outreach to the whole mountain community, and create improved awareness about mountain issues and the ecosystem services that mountains offer, among mountain communities and beneficiaries. Finally we present some of our institutional details, the staff, Board Members, publications, financial status, and our major sponsors.

You will see that 2008 was a full and very ambitious year for the Centre. We will be using 2009 as a year of consolidation, while working on the new activities that we will present in our next report.

Andreas Schild
Director General