

# Also at ICIMOD...

## Mountain Forum Secretariat

The Mountain Forum Secretariat (MFS), which is hosted by ICIMOD, is responsible for the global activities of the Mountain Forum network, aimed at information sharing and communication for sustainable mountain development (SMD). MFS supports the regional networks in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, North America, and Latin America, and promotes sustainable mountain development at the international level.

In 2008, a new Strategy and Work Plan 2008-2011 was prepared at the Annual MF Board and Network Managers meeting in Chambéry, France and approved by the MF Board of Directors. Regular tasks continued while implementation of the new Strategy and Work Plan started. Highlights of the regular tasks included the following:

- The number of individuals and organisations who participated in the Mountain Forum increased (to over 4,700 individuals and 500 organisations).
- The usage of Mountain Forum's online documents, contacts, and other resources greatly increased, indicating the clear need for Mountain Forum services.

- There was a marked increase in the availability of information including online full text documents (nearly 2000) and profiles of over 800 organisations in the who=who system. In addition, two bulletins on climate change were produced.

The following activities were conducted under the new Strategy and Work Plan:

### Information sharing and communication

- An online user survey and technical assessment was conducted to review the information systems and tools and arrive at a shared platform for the Mountain Forum Secretariat, regional networks, and partner organisations and networks.
- Two e-conferences on the use of GIS and Disaster Risk Reduction conducted in cooperation with ICIMOD attracted 450 and 700 participants, respectively. See also [www.mtnforum.org/rs/ec/index.cfm?econfid=15](http://www.mtnforum.org/rs/ec/index.cfm?econfid=15) and [http://books.icimod.org/uploads/tmp/icimod-culture\\_and\\_risk:\\_understanding\\_the\\_sociocultural\\_settings\\_that\\_influence\\_risk\\_from\\_natural\\_hazards.pdf](http://books.icimod.org/uploads/tmp/icimod-culture_and_risk:_understanding_the_sociocultural_settings_that_influence_risk_from_natural_hazards.pdf).





- A 'Mountains and People' Global Digital Photo Contest organised with ICIMOD and APMN received over 1,100 entries from over 50 countries. (see [www.icimod.org/photocontest2008](http://www.icimod.org/photocontest2008))
- A video interview was held with Professor Bruno Messerli on the development of the Mountain Agenda, transboundary collaboration, and capacity building on SMD.

### **Policy and advocacy support**

- The MF Board of Directors identified mountain biodiversity as a priority area for advocacy and policy support. Together with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat and key partners at the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment (GMBA) and Mountain Research Initiative (MRI), MFS is developing a programme to support the CBD-COP 10 process. The idea for a joint Bulletin in 2009 with MRI and GMBA was conceived and an outline developed.

### **Mutual support and partnerships**

- New partnerships were explored with ILEIA for sharing and disseminating information on mountain agriculture, and with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) on community access. In addition, interaction with the High Himalaya Forum was explored with APMN and an MOU prepared with InfoBridge for system and tools development support.

- Mountain Forum's support of the Mountain Partnership for the period 2006 to 2008 came to an end. It encompassed APMN's support for the Biodiversity Conservation Initiative and the Central Asia Communications Needs Assessment. Other components included stocktaking of SMD stakeholders in Africa, an inventory of SMD research in Europe, support to the Bow Valley Mountain Forum, Tourism, and Amenity Migration in North America, and the Andes Initiative for building the SMD network in Latin America.
- An outline was prepared for effective and strategic support to the Mountain Partnership in 2009 at the global and regional level.

### **Network development and management**

- The participants of the regional networks in APMN and Latin America elected Mr Prabhu Budhathoki, former Country Representative at IUCN-Nepal, and Mr Robert Hofstede, Regional Director for South America, IUCN, to the Mountain Forum Board of Directors. The online election was supported by the Mountain Forum Secretariat.

#### Contact

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# Asia-Pacific Mountain Network (APMN)

## The Asia-Pacific regional node of MF

Established in 1994, the Asia-Pacific Mountain Network (APMN) is a knowledge-sharing platform connecting mountain regions and members through dialogue and networking. The network, which is managed by ICIMOD, captures, enriches, and disseminates information on mountain development issues in and for the Asia-Pacific region. APMN acts as the Asia-Pacific node of Mountain Forum (MF), a role it has played since 1996. The network has been generously supported by a small grant from the Swiss Agency for Development and

Cooperation (SDC). In addition to moderating two MF discussion lists (mf-asiapacific and mf-centralasia) and contributing to Mountain Forum's other activities, APMN has its own programme and webpage <<http://apmn.icimod.org>>. ICIMOD also uses the APMN platform to disseminate information and updates on ICIMOD's activities to a broader public. As of December 2008, the APMN network had 209 organisational members from 23 countries and over 1500 individual members from 38 countries.

Between May 2008 and April 2009, APMN collaborated with the Mountain Forum Secretariat and ICIMOD in the organisation of e-conferences on 'Mountain GIS' (in January) and 'Culture and Risk' (in September-October), a digital photo contest on 'Mountains and People', Mountain Forum's Asia-Pacific Mountain Network (APMN) Board Member Election, and the south Asia regional meeting of the Global Knowledge Partnership. During the same period, APMN implemented three communication projects with the Mountain Partnership Secretariat and supported e-discussions on 'Healthy wetlands, healthy people', 'Building resilience of mountain communities to climate change', 'Slashing mountaineering charges for climbers', and 'How disasters can help to improve a country's economy'.

The recent focus has been on developing a new strategic direction. A set of 'Recommendations for a Strategic Direction 2008-2012' were prepared to help guide APMN in its future development, together with a joint action plan with the Asia-Pacific Decentralised Hub (APDH) of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS). The network participated in outreach activities such as a seminar and a talk programme on climate change at ICIMOD; a climate talk programme organised by Nepal Youth for Climate Action; a presentation on APMN for youth groups at Tribhuvan University; the World Environment Day, World Wetlands Day, and World Water Day events, all in Kathmandu; the first meeting of the High Himalayan Forum; the 3rd International Conference on e-Content and Sustainability (ICONECS); the Manthan Award South Asia; and InfoVision – the Knowledge Summit, all in India; and an International Programme for Education and Training on Sustainable Management of Mountain Areas (IPROMO) in Italy. Two issues of the APMN Bulletin and two e-discussion synthesis reports were also prepared.



# Mountain Partnership Secretariat Asia-Pacific Decentralized Hub

The Mountain Partnership is a voluntary alliance of partners dedicated to improving the lives of mountain people and protecting mountain environments around the world. The Mountain Partnership members comprise organisations and institutions including government and inter-governmental bodies, civil society organisations, NGOs, and the private sector. The Partnership provides a mechanism for networking, communication and information sharing, and functions as a clearing house for members. The aim is to link organisations for mutual benefit and joint actions in promoting the mountain agenda.

The Asia-Pacific Decentralized Hub of the Secretariat (MPS-APDH) is located at ICIMOD and is one of four hubs that together form the Secretariat, the others being the Central Hub hosted by FAO, Rome; the North American Hub hosted by the Banff Centre, Canada; and the Latin American Hub hosted by the Consortium for the Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion (CONDESAN/Peru). The hubs are supported by the Environmental Reference Centre located at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Vienna, Austria.

The MPS-APDH is mandated to support members and partners at regional level, address member needs, and align the MPS regional activities with the member initiatives and regional priorities, thus adding value to the global sustainable mountain development agenda. The main tasks include support in developing appropriate linkages and associations; close, regular contacts and relations with key partners active in the region; and linking up to existing or ongoing initiatives by fostering collaboration and synergy, along with provision of assistance to members in their effort to mobilise resources and prepare new projects.

The Asia-Pacific Decentralized Hub brings together more than 80 per cent of the Mountain Partnership's institutional members, from nine different countries, and representing a geographically vast and culturally diverse region. The activities combine the strategic directions of both ICIMOD and the Mountain Partnership. The MPS-APDH was established in early 2008, and activities focused on further identification and prioritisation of members' needs and region-specific thematic focus areas. Outreach and communication with members was intensified and



an e-survey carried out using the platform and technical support of Asia Pacific Mountain Network and the Mountain Forum Secretariat. MPS-APDH collaborates closely with APMN in developing communication and information exchange platforms and tools. The Hub provided members with regular updates on funding and financial opportunities, supported initial approaches linking members to country-based donor programmes, and identified major players at country and regional levels. Four new members joined in response to the action-oriented nature of the network: CAMP Kuhiston from Tajikistan, ECOFORUM from Uzbekistan, MACDS from Pakistan, and NDRI from Nepal.

One of the major areas of the Hub's work is support to strengthen member's capacity. As part of the integration process with ICIMOD's programmatic activities, MPS-APDH uses ICIMOD's extensive in-house expertise of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region. Among others, an advocacy training held in ICIMOD's eight regional member countries was adapted into a modular e-learning course in preparation for an on-line training planned for 2009.