

Reports from the Country Offices and Committees

CNICIMOD Secretariat

The Chinese Committee on ICIMOD (CNICIMOD) held a workshop for the project Geo-Surface Processes and Regional Adaptation to Climate Change in the Himalaya Region initiated by CAS in Chengdu in January 2010. The main objective was to discuss how to enhance collaboration with international partners in the implementation of the project to keep it running smoothly. Over 25 scientists and experts from Nepal, ICIMOD, and CAS institutions gave presentations.

The second international workshop on the Koshi River Basin Transboundary Project was held in Kathmandu in April. Experts from China and Nepal described progress, reached a consensus on sharing data and research, and proposed a blueprint for future cooperation. Over 20 experts from Nepal, ICIMOD, and China participated in the first field expedition to the Koshi river basin in late April. A second joint expedition to the Koshi river basin was held in early July. During the field trip, ten experts from China, Nepal, and ICIMOD travelled from the subtropical climate zone at an altitude of 1,700m to the cold mountains of the northern Himalayas at 5,300m to accomplish the expedition mission. CNICIMOD organised the third international workshop on the Koshi Project in Sichuan province in China in late August.

After two transboundary investigations and three workshops, the experts have obtained preliminary knowledge and statistics for the ecosystems in the Koshi river basin, which lay the foundation for future research. We have built a mechanism of cooperation and research among institutions between Nepal and China. ICIMOD has developed a proposal based on this collaboration. CNICIMOD coordinated the process for finalising and submitting the Koshi proposal to a United Kingdom sponsored programme on Environmental Services for Poverty Alleviation (ESPA).

More than 50 regional and international scientists and experts attended the second workshop on the Third Pole Environment at ICIMOD. This workshop presented the progress of research in 2010 and highlighted thematic areas, such as a regional framework for monitoring and water modelling in the Third Pole Environment Programme.

The second regional workshop on the Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation Initiative (KSLCI) was held in early September in Sichuan, China. The workshop was supported by UNEP, organised by ICIMOD, and hosted by CNICIMOD and the Institute of Mountain Hazards and Environment (IMHE), CAS.

CNICIMOD received visiting experts from ICIMOD several times and made the arrangements for the ICIMOD evaluation expert Dr Othmar Schwant to visit China in April.

In 2010, CNICIMOD published two newsletters giving updates on the activities of ICIMOD and CNICIMOD and reporting topical information on mountain research and mountain development. On December 11, International Mountain Day 2010, CNICIMOD organised several promotional activities.



Band e Amir, Afghanistan

Afghanistan Office

Our work in 2010 proved to be instrumental in building the capacity of our Afghan partners, mainly in relevant ministries and universities; linking Afghanistan to other regional member countries; and improving our strategic programming approach in the country.

The five-year (2010-14) collaborative programme on Enhancing the Capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock for Improved Management of Natural Resources in Afghanistan (ECINR) was endorsed by the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) and circulated among relevant development partners in the country. While we explore funding for this country-focused programme, some of its components have been incorporated into the regional programmes managed from headquarters.

A strategic mission in April identified an urgent need for and scope of a three-year country intervention strategy comprising integrated water resource management, sustainable land use, and continued capacity building. In August, a cryosphere mission recommended developing a five-year cryosphere monitoring programme in Afghanistan.

In September, an Afghan professional assumed leadership of the country programme with backstopping from headquarters. Now, efforts to develop a broader programme are being pursued intensively and are resulting in productive country partnerships. Consultations continued with development partners, such as the EC, DFID, Dutch Embassy, SDC, and USAID; and with ICIMOD's collaborators, including MAIL, MRRD, Kabul University, Helvetas, and the Aga Khan Foundation.

ICIMOD continued to participate in country stakeholder forums and high-level workshops on natural resource management topics. We shared our experience from China, India, and Pakistan at the first International Workshop for Dryland Farming in Afghanistan in December. ICIMOD is conducting a national poverty analysis with linkages with the Central Statistics

Organisation of Afghanistan. The regional scope of the analysis could help the country compare its statistics with those in other regional countries.

ICIMOD's country office continued providing support to two regional programmes: Human Capacity Development of Afghan Universities; and the Indus Basin Project on Capacity Building for Improved Monitoring of Snow, Ice, and Water Resources. Under the first, the country office has undertaken coordination, facilitation, and local supervisory roles as needed especially for the Kabul University/Environment Protection and Disaster Management Mission. It also selected five masters' scholars for 2010-12; sent 26 professionals to Bangalore, India for a training in medicinal plants value chains; and conducted three separate in-country training/workshops on GIS applications, social science research, and strengthening environmental science faculty.

Support under the Indus Basin project, included coordinating with local partners for their timely inputs; facilitating the nomination of participants for snow and glacier melt runoff modelling training in Islamabad, Pakistan in March; and organising the cryosphere mission in August. The country office facilitated the participation of 26 Afghans from nine partner agencies in 14 international and regional training and workshops outside the country.



Pakistan Office

The Country Office was instrumental in effective implementation of several regional programme activities including the value chain of honeybees, an FAO-funded watershed management project, a conference on shisham dieback disease, and an inception and needs assessment workshop for SERVIR-Himalaya. ICIMOD also organised a regional sharing workshop on the experiences of the policy development processes as an input to the development of rangeland policy in Pakistan, and a mission to Attabad Hunza to collect first-hand information for developing an evidence-based preparedness plan for potential disasters in upstream areas of the Indus basin.

In collaboration with the Space and Upper Atmospheric Commission (SUPARCO) of Pakistan, ICIMOD was instrumental in processing the earth observation and flood damage assessment data received from satellites during the floods in Pakistan in 2010. On a daily basis, emergency response and humanitarian assistance providers had access to online views of near-real time flood inundation to assess floodwater direction and movement.

In 2010, implementation continued of the project Capacity Building for Improved Monitoring of Snow, Ice, and Water Resources in the Indus Basin funded by the German Embassy/GIZ. The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology and ICIMOD staff organised two training workshops to build the capacity of the partner institutions for monitoring. The participants from Pakistan and Afghanistan have organised online groups to share information and data and solve hydrological modelling problems. A follow up workshop in September 2010 reviewed the progress; participants are now fully capable of running the TOPKAPI model to make water availability simulations for the future. The participants were also trained in measuring water flows in turbulent mountain streams using tracer technology.

Experts from the Pakistan Meteorological Department and Water and Power Development Authority installed an automated weather and hydro station procured from Germany on the Passu glacier. The data from the Passu glacier about weather and water flow is being monitored regularly and will be used to improve understanding of and model the glacial melt-rate and water availability based on weather parameters.

The review of the ADB-funded project Promoting Climate Change Impact and Adaptation in Asia and the Pacific was completed and the results presented at provincial, national, regional, and international workshops. The study concluded that there is a lack of climate change policy, strategies, programmes, monitoring networks, detailed knowledge, financial resources, trained human resources, equipment and instruments, computational capacity, and interdepartmental and transboundary collaboration and coordination. The project compiled published information in a web-based databank, which should help in sharing the available information among stakeholders. A mountain risk screening and management guide was prepared to screen hydro-energy projects for the effects of climate change.

Based on these findings, a second phase of the project was prepared to focus on modelling rainfall and water availability patterns, strengthening the network of automated weather stations in glaciated areas, providing support to a network to raise awareness about climate change, and promoting data and information sharing.