

ICIMOD



PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP ON

Transboundary Landscapes Regional Programme: Outlook and synergy building for 2020 and beyond

26–27 December 2019

Sauraha, Chitwan, Nepal



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SECTION 1

Background

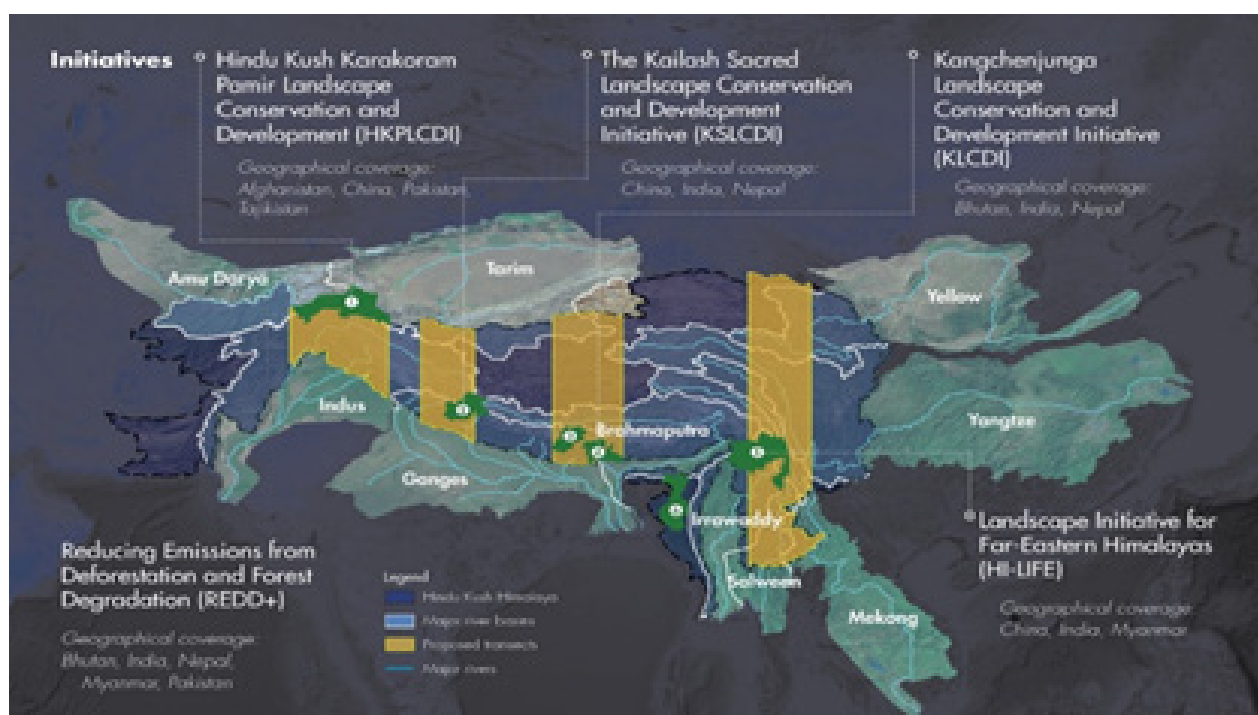
ICIMOD's Transboundary Landscapes (TBL) Regional Programme builds on the principles of an ecosystems approach, which considers social-ecological systems with a focus on conservation and development perspectives. The TBL Regional Programme is currently being implemented with strategic partners in four landscapes: Hindu Kush Karakoram Pamir Landscape (HKPL), Kailash Sacred Landscape (KSL), Kangchenjunga Landscape (KL), and the Far-Eastern Himalaya (Figure 1). Cross-cutting REDD+ initiatives are also carried out as part of the programme. The five initiatives within the TBL Programme are at varying phases of implementation (Table 1). Collectively, these initiatives provide a unique opportunity to promote the transboundary landscape narrative for achieving global targets including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Aichi Targets of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the Paris Agreement, among others. In recognition of the achievements of the TBL, the Renewable Natural Resources Foundation (RNRF), USA, presented ICIMOD with the Outstanding Achievement Award in 2018.

The TBL has been implemented in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) for almost a decade, resulting in many achievements and lessons. Coinciding with ICIMOD's Medium-Term Action Plan (MTAP) IV (2018–2022), the TBL Programme is currently implemented with the objective of achieving improved transboundary cooperation through regional policies and strategic partnerships leading to sustained mountain ecosystem services and equitable livelihood benefits at the landscape level. Till date, initiatives within the programme have generally been carried out in isolation in the respective landscapes with a focus on planning, demonstrating and garnering ownership of the initiatives at the country level. There have been limited opportunities for cross learning and experience sharing across the initiatives. Moreover, the overarching objectives of filling data gaps and achieving effects at scale have been a challenge.

This workshop aimed to bring people involved in the initiatives of TBL together on one platform in order to reflect on past achievements and lessons learned so that inter and intra synergies are identified, partnerships strengthened, and Outlook 2020+ is prepared based on the 'TBL matrix'.

FIGURE 1

TRANS-HIMALAYAN TRANSECTS AND TRANSBOUNDARY LANDSCAPES IN THE HKH



Key strategic and implementing partners of TBL participated in the two-day workshop. The workshop venue was Sauraha, Chitwan, the location of Nepal's first national park with numerous successes in implementing conservation and development programmes. ICIMOD's Regional REDD+ Initiative was also implemented in the buffer zone of Chitwan National Park (CNP). Most importantly, the park is adjacent to India's Valmiki Tiger Reserve, and we therefore had an opportunity to learn about Chitwan's experiences in transboundary conservation initiatives.

SECTION 2

Objectives

The purpose of this workshop was to bring together, for the first time, representatives of all initiatives of the TBL Programme on one platform to share achievements, lessons learned and common challenges. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- Share and finalize the 2020 plan of the TBL Programme and each of the initiatives with partners
- Present the TBL Outlook Matrix 2020+ with regard to programme implementation, and get inputs from partners
- Strengthen partnership with key partners for coordinated programme implementation in 2020 and beyond

Day I

Inaugural session

The session commenced with introductory and welcome remarks by Basant Pant, moderator of the session. This was followed by inaugural remarks by Nakul Chettri, Regional Programme Manager of the TBL Regional Programme. Chettri welcomed the delegates to the event and thanked them for their valuable time. He mentioned that the road travel from Kathmandu to Chitwan provided a good opportunity for participants to get a glimpse of the landscape and altitudinal variations in vegetation. He said the CNP is a globally recognized heritage site known for its successful community-based model and participatory forest management. TBL has run a number of successful activities and gained many lessons over the years thanks to collective efforts; however, there haven't been many opportunities for people involved in the different initiatives within the RP to come together and interact. He added that there is also a need to revive and strengthen the established networks and partnerships, and expressed his belief that the workshop would provide a way forward to interact, strengthen partnership, and bring a new momentum for 2020.

The concluding part of the opening session consisted of a brief overview of the workshop objectives by Janita Gurung, Programme Coordinator, Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KSLCDI). Gurung provided a brief introduction to transboundary landscapes transects and ongoing initiatives. ICIMOD has a decade-long experience working on transboundary landscapes with all initiatives in different phases of implementation. In 2018, TBL received an Outstanding Achievement award from the RNRF, USA.

Gurung further highlighted the objectives of the workshop, and said that the event would provide valuable opportunity for learning from each other and sharing experiences, and for learning from CNP on transboundary conservation efforts. She mentioned that the event would also provide an opportunity to share and finalize the 2020 plan with partners' participation, discuss what we want to do in the future, and strengthen partnerships. Finally, Gurung shared the institutional expectations from

the event and thanked participants for travelling all the way to the World Heritage Site.

The session concluded with a round of introductions of all participants from the eight countries – Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Tajikistan – and ICIMOD team members of TBL.

Special remarks by the former Prime Minister, Nepal

Member of Parliament and former Prime Minister of Nepal, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, offered special remarks at the event. Mentioning that he is also an agricultural expert by training, he said the event was a unique opportunity for Nepal to showcase the progress made in the sector of landscape conservation and development. Dahal said the Government of Nepal would be willing to support the endeavours of the TBL Programme, and wished the event great success.

Technical session 1: The Transboundary Landscapes Regional Programme and its initiatives

The session commenced with a comprehensive presentation on a decade of implementation of TBL in the HKH by Nakul Chettri. TBL is one of the six Regional Programmes at ICIMOD. Chettri highlighted that the transboundary landscape approach builds on principles of integrated social-ecological systems with conservation and development perspectives at the transboundary level. ICIMOD's TBL Programme is currently being implemented with strategic partners in four landscapes: HKPL, KSL, KL, and the Far-Eastern Himalaya, including the cross-cutting REDD+ initiatives.

Chettri provided an overview of the evolution of the TBL Programme at ICIMOD and the rationale for conducting the event. He added that the five initiatives within the TBL are at varying phases of implementation as shown in Table 1:

In his presentation, Chettri mentioned that all TBL initiatives have incorporated a systematic approach with four stages: 1) Diagnose, 2) Design, 3) Take action and 4) Evaluate. Three important perspectives have contributed to each of these

TABLE 1

IMPLEMENTATION PHASES OF TRANSBOUNDARY LANDSCAPES INITIATIVES IN THE HKH

Initiative	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
HI-LIFE				Feasibility phase			Pre-implementation		Implementation phase I		
HKPL				Feasibility phase			Pre-implementation		Implementation phase I		
Kangchenjunga				Feasibility phase			Pre-implementation		Implementation phase I		
Kailash	Feasibility phase			Implementation phase I						Phase II	
REDD+					Readiness phase					Implementation	

stages – science, policy and practice. The process of the TBL includes five major focus area: 1. Human wellbeing, 2. Ecosystem wellbeing, 3. Resources governance, 4. Long-term monitoring, and 5. Regional cooperation. He further mentioned that the TBL Programme is guided by its Theory of Change and Impact Pathways (TOC-IPs). For TBL, the following four pathways have been identified: 1. Transboundary cooperation, 2. Innovation and livelihood diversification, 3. Knowledge generation, and 4. Policy influencing.

Chettri also shared major achievements of the programme, including key challenges and lessons learned. He emphasized the need to revisit the TOC-IPs of the TBL, and to better understand and communicate the meaning of ‘transboundary-ness’. He added that partners need to focus on fund leveraging and co-financing to elevate our work at the regional level.

The session was followed by presentations from each of the five initiatives under the TBL Programme.

LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE FOR THE FAR-EASTERN HIMALAYA

Yi Shaoliang, Programme Coordinator of the Landscape Initiative for the Far-Eastern Himalaya (HI-LIFE), provided a brief introduction to the initiative and talked about its journey so far. He said that HI-LIFE is a regional initiative jointly implemented by ICIMOD and partners in China, India and Myanmar and that it promotes a transboundary landscape approach to achieve the twin objectives of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. He added that this landscape has shared ecological, hydrological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic features that transcend national borders. Currently, this initiative is undergoing the Implementation phase (2018–2022), with its other phases being Inception phase (2008–2011), Preparatory phase (2012–2015); and Pre-implementation phase (2016–2017). While

acknowledging some challenges such as political sensitivity, inaccessibility of the working area, and varied priorities of the partner countries, he also highlighted some opportunities and future focus for this initiative, and said that there has been increased levels of national commitment to regional collaboration, and that this programme should capitalize on existing bilateral/regional and national initiatives like the Bangladesh-China-India Myanmar (BCIM) economic corridor, South East Asia Belt and Road Initiative (SEABRI), Belt and Road Initiative, Act East Policy, etc.

HINDU KUSH KARAKORAM PAMIR LANDSCAPE

Ghulam Ali, Programme Coordinator of the HKPL Initiative began by thanking all the participants at the event and mentioned that their ideas and guidance had made the programme more effective. He said that the unique landscape covers four countries: Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and Tajikistan, and is home to six important protected areas of the region. This is a hotspot for harmonizing the agenda of conversation and development, he added. Sharing the evolution and history of this initiative, he said that HKPL formally started its operation in December 2016, and has gradually built its momentum in identifying and establishing partnership with key agencies in the region. He highlighted the formation of Bam-e-Dunya network through this initiative, with the objective to foster exchange and sharing of knowledge, best practices, experiences and common opportunities for the organization and experts associated with this network. He said that the broader goal of the initiative is to achieve a balance between the three E's (Environment, Ecology and Entrepreneurship) in work, with relevant innovations and effective use of resources. For this, partnerships should help bring about effective and coherent policies for guiding the sustainable development of the landscape.

KANGCHENJUNGA LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Nakul Chettri, Programme Coordinator of the Kangchenjunga Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KLCIDI), gave a brief introduction and overview of this initiative and shared its key achievements. The Initiative is jointly implemented by the governments of Bhutan, India and Nepal, and facilitated by ICIMOD. Conceived in 2012 to collaborate on common objectives towards effective conservation and sustainable use of resources within the landscape, the initiative has progressed through rigorous national and regional consultative processes aimed at developing both country, as well as regional level Feasibility Assessment Reports and Conservation and Development Strategies. He said that the initiative focuses on five main intervention areas: livelihoods and climate change adaptation (socio-economic development), community-based participatory ecosystem management (ecosystem wellbeing), resources governance, long-term monitoring, and regional cooperation. Some of the current challenges for the initiative include ensuring impact at scale, transdisciplinary and partnership diversification.

KAILASH SACRED LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Janita Gurung, Programme Coordinator of KSLCDI, provided a brief introduction to the Kailash Landscape and noted that the initiative is being implemented by ICIMOD across the borders of China, India, and Nepal. The KSLCDI transcends geographical boundaries, and has evolved through a participatory and iterative process into a transboundary initiative. It involves various local and national research and development institutions working in different capacities in various regions of the three countries. The landscape is home to the sacred Mount Kailash and also the source of four major river systems in the region. This region's global and regional significance and its transboundary nature call for cross-border cooperation among countries that share the landscape, she said. Notable key achievements in terms of the governance of the initiative have been the formulation of the Regional Cooperation Framework (RCF) amongst three countries, and formation and regular meetings of the regional Programme Steering Committee (PSC) and the National Coordination Committees (NCCs). She also shared some examples of the contribution of this initiative in the areas of policy and strategy,

science, outreach and global recognition. She also shared that the KSLCDI was named a 'South Asian landmark initiative between China, India, and Nepal for transboundary conservation and development in the Himalayas' by the UN General Assembly's SMD Reports in 2013 and 2016. One of the challenges of this initiative has been scaling up its activities from the local and national levels to transboundary and regional scales. The initiative looks forward to ensuring more strategic partnerships in the region by building on existing cross-border mechanisms and leveraging resources for programme implementation.

REGIONAL REDD+ INITIATIVE

Bhaskar Singh Karky, Programme Coordinator of the regional REDD+ Initiative, began his presentation by providing a context and rationale for the REDD+ programme at ICIMOD. He noted that the recent IPCC report on Climate Change and Land emphasizes the need for sustainable land and forest management, and the need to reduce land degradation and reverse the adverse impacts of climate change. In order to limit warming to 1.5°C or well below 2°C, there is a need for land-based mitigation and land-use change, different combinations of reforestation, afforestation and reduced deforestation. Land is the only resource we have, and action must be land-based, he stressed. ICIMOD has been supporting partners in four HKH countries (Bhutan, India, Myanmar, and Nepal) since 2014 across the three different phases of REDD+, starting with the 'Readiness' phase. The initiative's contributions have mostly been in providing technical support for the development of a national strategy or action plan in India and Nepal; national monitoring system in Bhutan; Forest Reference Emission Level in Bhutan and Nepal, and Safeguard Information System in all four countries. He said that our contributions in the 'Readiness' phase for REDD+ will be important for the countries to move smoothly into 'Implementation' and 'Results' phase. He said that much of the REDD+ discourse has been dominated by tropical countries. Marginalized groups from the countries of our region are more dependent on forest resources, so there is a need to ensure social safeguards. He also highlighted the importance of addressing country needs and building synergies at the regional landscape level. During discussions on REDD+, we often give emphasis to human safeguards, but there is also a need to ensure that we have safeguards for biodiversity.

DISCUSSION

After the presentations on the five initiatives, participants shared their observations, made comments and provided constructive feedback for the successful operation and implementation of TBL at the regional level. Below are key points from the discussion:

In Afghanistan, cooperation from the government for the HKPL is lacking, unlike in the other landscape programmes. The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) can help bring expertise from the three countries together to cross-fertilize ideas, while ICIMOD can play a substantial role in ensuring cooperation at the government level.

In India, the government is already supporting TBL programmes. They are synchronizing programme activities with their national programmes. There is, however, an opportunity to do more work in the area of geo-hydrological assessment.

In Pakistan, not much work has been done from a transboundary angle. The country's work is focused on national parks, which could be developed in a way where community-wildlife conflicts could be minimized. Organizations like ICIMOD and AKDN could provide important inputs to this region on how to carry out transboundary activities with a holistic approach.

Participants suggested developing harmonized vegetation maps for all the HKH transboundary landscapes using geospatial tools. They also mentioned the lack of discussion on geological aspects. The HKH landscapes are controlled by very active tectonic features (thrusts) and it is important to have a thorough understanding of these features for research and development.

The session ended with a summary of the discussions on three concrete points: building synergy across the landscapes, ensuring a holistic approach in interventions from the local to national and regional levels, and continuing more research on springs and geological aspects in the TBL.

Technical session 2: Sharing experiences in transboundary conservation in and around Chitwan National Park and its buffer zone

The session focused on sharing experiences and lessons learned on protected area management and transboundary cooperation for biodiversity management.

THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR NATURE CONSERVATION: AN INTRODUCTION

Ram Kumar Aryal, Chief, National Trust for Nature Conservation – Biodiversity Conservation Centre (NTNC-BCC), described the organization and its activities. After its establishment in 1982 as an autonomous non-governmental organization for nature conservation, NTNC implemented projects relating to six thematic areas and eight focused programmes throughout the country, from the Gangetic plains to the high Himalaya and from the far-western to the eastern regions of the country. NTNC is a pioneering organization in Nepal that implements community-based conservation, and established the Annapurna Conservation Area (ACA). For species conservation, NTNC has translocated various wildlife species (e.g., the greater one-horned rhino, black buck, blue bull and many more) within the country. NTNC has supported protected areas in habitat restoration and management, human-wildlife conflict management, capacity building of protected area staffs, local community and others. Lastly, Aryal highlighted the collaboration between the REDD+ Initiative and NTNC-BCC – e.g., the establishment of Chitwan District REDD Action Plan, Biodiversity Monitoring Protocol for REDD+, conservation camps, and others.

TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION FOR CONSERVATION IN THE CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK AND VALMIKI TIGER RESERVE LANDSCAPE

Bed Bahadur Khadka, Assistant Conservation Officer, CNP, began his presentation with an overview of protected areas in Nepal. He described how conservation in Nepal gradually shifted from conservation at species level to landscape and transboundary levels. He described the features of the CNP, which is a Natural World Heritage Site and borders Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR) in India. Khadka mentioned that the park is home to threatened wildlife such as the Bengal tiger, the greater one-horned rhino, and the Asian elephant. For species conservation, CNP regularly monitors the population of wild animals, translocates threatened animals, and operates captive breeding centres for the gharial and the Indian elephant. Controlling invasive species, grass cutting and burning are some of the activities for wildlife habitat management. With joint efforts of park staff, army personnel and community, the park management achieved the goal of zero poaching of the rhino in 2011.

Khadka talked about transboundary cooperation among officials of the VTR and CNP for

conservation of threatened wildlife species such as the Bengal tiger. He mentioned that park officials from VTR and CNP meet every three months to share knowledge, experiences and information on park management, animal population, poachers and death of animals. They also conduct joint patrols along the border of the two countries.

TRANSBOUNDARY ACTIVITIES OF THE NTNC

Babu Ram Lamichhane from the NTNC presented the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) as an example of the transboundary approach for wildlife conservation. The TAL spreads across ten protected areas in India and six in Nepal, covering an area of about 51,000 km². It includes 5 out of 42 source sites of the Bengal tiger and is home to about 20% of the global wild tiger population (~ 981 individuals). Moreover, the landscape has the second largest population of the greater one-horned rhino in the world. Sharing his learning and experiences, Lamichhane mentioned that transboundary cooperation is a must for conservation of wild animals with a large home range such as the Bengal tiger and the greater one-horned rhino. He added that transboundary cooperation is also essential for managing human-wildlife conflict, and mentioned how officials of the two countries had exchanged information about a problematic tiger and an elephant. To illustrate the existing cooperation between protected area authorities in India and Nepal, Lamichhane showed a video clip in which a rhino from India was rescued and brought to Nepal in 2017. He concluded his presentation by stressing transboundary cooperation, since 15 out of 20 protected areas in Nepal have transboundary linkages with the neighbouring countries.

COMMUNITY-LED ACTIVITIES OF THE NTNC

Doma Paudel, Chairperson of the Community Based Anti-Poaching Unit (CBAPU), shared her experience of anti-poaching and talked about local communities' conservation efforts in Chitwan. She stated that there are 22 sub-committees that directly engage about 1,000 individuals in CBAPUs. CBAPUs in collaboration with partner organizations have implemented programmes to raise awareness of wildlife conservation and to support livelihoods, particularly for victims of human-wildlife conflicts. Also, CBAPUs have involved local people in monitoring wildlife populations, forest patrolling and other conservation activities. She proudly noted that the communities have played a significant role in achieving 'zero poaching' in the last couple

of years. Finally, Paudel shared a personal story, disclosing to the participants that her mother was killed by a wild elephant, but that she does not blame wildlife for such encounters. She concluded by saying that humans need to find measures to coexist with wildlife.

FIELD VISIT AND INTERACTION

A field visit to three sites was organized to observe the conservation successes of the CNP – Baghmara Buffer Zone Community Forest, Elephant Breeding Centre, and Tharu Cultural Museum and Research Centre. The objective of the field visit was for the team to interact with and learn from the experiences of local communities and officials about community-based conservation and local cultural heritage.

BAGHMARA BUFFER ZONE COMMUNITY FOREST

Baghmara Buffer Zone Community Forest (BZCF) offers one of the best models of buffer zone community forest management in Nepal. The forest is situated at the northern border of Chitwan National Park, and is proving to be an appropriate model for sustainable forest conservation. In the 1970s and 1980s, before the establishment of the BZCF, the forest was heavily degraded, mainly due to the impacts of the nationalization of forests and the malaria eradication programme in the southern Terai of Nepal. In the 1990s, local communities became aware of the importance of conserving forests for livelihoods, and the masses came together to protect and conserve forests and biodiversity. They carried out plantation campaigns to green degraded areas. As a result, the responsibility for the conservation and management of this CF was officially handed over to the community in 1995. The total area of the BZCF is 215 hectares, of which 163 hectares has been naturally regenerated through community efforts. The forest user groups consist of over 1,300 households, of which more than half the members are from the Tharu community (one of the area's indigenous groups), and have been involved in conserving and managing the forest since the 1990s.

According to former Chairperson of the BZCF, BP Chaudhary, approximately 600–1,000 tourists visit the forest each day during the peak tourist season. The main source of income for the forest user group is the entrance fee, elephant rides, canoeing, and accommodation at the view-tower rest-house. In 2018/2019, their annual income was USD 250,000, which was invested in sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, community development, and poverty alleviation. As part of

forest management activities the user groups thin, clean, and prune the forest, as well as cut the grass and plant trees. For grassland management, the user groups cut and clear the woody vegetation.

During the interaction, a unique mechanism for compensating for crop depredation by wild animals was shared. While previously this amounted to 60–80% of the total amount of loss, the BZCF now provide 100% compensation for both crop damage as well as for loss of domestic animals to wildlife attacks.

ELEPHANT BREEDING CENTRE

The elephant breeding centre at CNP was established in 1985 for captive breeding of the Asian elephant. More than 20 elephants in the centre were breeding females. The centre has successfully increased the population of these large mammals. The participants, particularly from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan, were highly impressed by the successful breeding of this large mammal in a closed environment; they said it was the first time they had come across such an example.

THARU CULTURAL MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTRE

Established in 2006, the Tharu Cultural Museum and Research Centre has colourful murals and exhibits of artefacts and local attire. It was established through the collective effort of local youth who were keen to preserve their culture. The museum contains photos, paintings, sculptures, tools and utensils that reflect the lifestyle and culture of the Tharu community. The museum also displays oral histories of people who were displaced after the establishment of CNP, describing their struggle. Funds for the museum are raised from entry fees (NPR 50 for foreigners and NPR 30 for Nepalis), sale of souvenirs, and cultural performances. The visit to the museum allowed the participants to understand ways in which cultural preservation efforts can be made whilst promoting tourism and livelihood opportunities.

Day II

Reflections from Day I

The day commenced with a short recap of Day I by Janita Gurung. She noted that the first objective of the workshop, which was to learn from each other and from CNP, was met the previous day. Participants gave positive feedback on the field visits, especially on the joint conservation model where the government, army and community worked hand in hand for conservation of the park. They also appreciated the visit to the elephant breeding centre and the Tharu Museum. Gurung then gave a summary of plans for Day II.

Technical session 3: Revisiting ICIMOD's strategic functions

The session, moderated by Mohammad Ismail, consisted of two presentations that sought to familiarize participants with two of ICIMOD's strategic functions – gender and programme finance.

GENDER IN THE TRANSBOUNDARY LANDSCAPES REGIONAL PROGRAMME

Kamala Gurung and Kosar Banu from ICIMOD's Gender team jointly organized the session. They began with questions to the participants to see if their organizations had integrated gender and social inclusion (GESI), to understand the various challenges and opportunities in integrating GESI, and to explore the role of ICIMOD in facilitating gender integration. Following this activity, Kamala Gurung highlighted the importance of GESI at ICIMOD and how GESI is strongly featured in ICIMOD's Strategic Results to Action Planning (MTAP-IV). She also highlighted the 'four pillars of gender transformative change' – integrating gender into research, gender inclusive policies and partnership, capacity strengthening and women's leadership, and gender positive organizational change. To achieve the strategic result on gender, ICIMOD has implemented a gender action plan (GAP) at the RP level based on which the initiatives design their annual activities. She then provided some examples from each of the TBL initiatives' GAP.

Following Gurung's presentation, Kosar Banu summarized the results of the exercise done by the partners, including the opportunities and lessons learned. Challenges included the willingness of institutions to consider gender as social systems in South Asia usually make it difficult to achieve intended changes. Furthermore, Banu highlighted that South Asian countries rank very low in the gender equality index. There have been some efforts to bring about equity through the 'quota system'; however, quotas are debatable when it comes to increasing participation. In their concluding remarks, speakers emphasized working beyond gender into aspects of social inclusion, need for institutionalization of GESI rather than having it as a one-off activity, and resource allocation which is vital for effective implementation of GESI responsive activities and research.

Gender session

Questions posed to participants:

1. How does your organization integrate gender and social inclusion?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities related to gender and social aspects?
3. How does your organization deal with challenges specific to gender and social perspectives, and how can ICIMOD provide support?

Summary of participants' response:

- Most of the organizations have a gender and social inclusion component in their programmes. They ensure it through organizational policy and practice.
- Women get special hands-on training opportunities.
- At the community level, women are highly encouraged to participate in and benefit from programmes.

Challenges:

- Social, cultural and religious constraints on women's participation.
- Safety and security issues while working in remote areas.
- There are not enough women in leadership and decision making positions.
- Women lack education and capacity in specific subjects.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FOR PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS

Bijay Kumar Shrestha, Senior Programme Finance Officer, commenced the session by highlighting the ‘four building blocks of financial management’ – financial planning, financial monitoring, accounting records, and internal controls. Shrestha explained the importance of the four building blocks with examples and emphasized the need to have supporting documents that justify project expenditure. He said ‘financial monitoring’ is important and should be accurate and reliable. ‘Analyzing spending’ is another important function. If the budget or spending exceeds what has been agreed on, consent has to be obtained from ICIMOD in advance. Forecasting is another function that was emphasized – while planning activities and the budget it is important not to under or over spend. Shrestha stressed the need to have a proper system for procuring equipment so that procurement is reflected in the expenditure in a timely manner.

Shrestha also presented on the topic of ‘identifying and managing risk in day-to-day transactions’. This mainly included understanding what financial risks are, key areas of risk in transactions, identifying the risks, and how they can be transferred or managed. Shrestha concluded the session with a brief introduction to ‘fraud awareness’. This included understanding different types of fraud, warning signs of fraud, its consequences and finally a preview of the ‘fraud risk management’ system in the programme cycle.

Technical Session 4: Planning 2020 plus Outlook 2020+

Bandana Shakya, ICIMOD explained the objectives and format of the session. The objectives of the session were to build synergy and a common understanding among the TBL initiatives and partners for achieving impacts at the regional scale; and to finalize 2020 annual action plans for each initiative.

TBL PROGRAMME PLANNING 2020 AND OUTLOOK MATRIX 2020+

Nakul Chettri reiterated ICIMOD’s commitment to integrating gender into the programme and to follow procedures for financial accountability and transparency. In his presentation, Chettri stressed the collective efforts of the initiatives and their partners to overcome geo-political and geo-physical

challenges in the region. Using an activity matrix (Table 2), he illustrated that commonalities across the TBL initiatives offer an opportunity to achieve strategic impacts at scale. He emphasized the need to build a common understanding and synergy across the initiatives. Outlook 2020+ is a result of lessons and experiences gathered from more than a decade of implementation of TBL. He highlighted major regional issues such as climate change and its impact on agriculture and ecosystems; food and nutrition security; human-wildlife conflict; invasive and alien species; mountain tourism; and transboundary trade. Further, he presented regional activities that have been planned in order to address those issues in 2020 and beyond, following the four guiding pathways of change – transboundary cooperation, innovation and livelihood diversification, knowledge generation and policy influencing. He then requested ICIMOD’s thematic team members to highlight key regional issues and planned activities.

Santosh Nepal stated that climate change is an important driver of change in the HKH region, which will have impact on water availability, food production and so on. He suggested conducting a regional assessment to understand impacts of climate change on ecosystems and ecosystem services.

Tashi Dorji stated that yak is an iconic species of the HKH and has supported the livelihoods of people in the region. The yak population is declining, but there have been no efforts to protect the animal and to support yak herders. Therefore, the Kanchenjunga Landscape Initiative followed a bottom-up approach to establish a network for yak herders in Bhutan and Nepal for strengthening their capacity and sharing knowledge and experiences. He suggested expanding the network in other Himalayan countries and forming an association at a regional scale to further strengthen their capacity to negotiate with concerned agencies at the national and global level.

Srijana Joshi indicated that invasive and alien plant species (IAPS) pose a severe threat to biodiversity and ecosystems in the region. Climate change and other factors are contributing to expansion of IAPS towards higher elevations, further increasing the threat. A study conducted by her team recorded 14 IAPS in KSL-Nepal. She suggested documenting IAPS in other landscapes and developing integrated measures to control their expansion.

Anu Kumari Lama highlighted the potential of tourism in the region to contribute to poverty alleviation and promote mountain livelihoods. According to her, the transboundary nature of these landscapes provides an opportunity for tourism

TABLE 2

TRANSBOUNDARY LANDSCAPES ACTIVITY MATRIX

Activity	HI-LIFE	HKPL	KL	KSL	REDD+
TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION					
Cooperation through transboundary trade (HI-LIFE – trade; KSL – cross-border and regional trade of nature-based products; KL – large cardamom, Yak, HKPL – organic goods exports and border trade & migration.	X	X	X	X	X
Regional connect through network and festivals (HI-LIFE Passa; HKPL – Bam-e-Dunya, KL – rural tourism, yak festivals; KSL – Kailash Confluence, Prakriti Ahwaan)	X	X	X	X	
Thematic Cooperation (KSL – tourism, biodiversity; KL – tourism, HWC, large cardamom; HKPL – Bam-e-Dunya, regional tourism circuit assessment); REDD – Develop river-forest corridor model, NSFC research on regional SOC of grasslands)	X	X	X	X	X
INNOVATION AND LIVELIHOOD DIVERSIFICATION					
Agro-biodiversity and food security (KL, KSL and HI-LIFE: organic agro-biodiversity with MacArthur proposal framework); HKPL – High-altitude food security and resilience markers – migration, livelihoods, and high-value niche markets and ecotourism	X	X	X	X	X
Nature-based solutions and social ecological resilience Capitalize on nature for solutions e.g. mountain tourism (bird, culture/food, nature, rural); mountain farming (organic farming, niche products with regional brands, and value chains); some initiative-wise focuses are: HKPL – ecosystem valuations and developing resilience markers, KL and HI-LIFE – connectivity corridors, KSL – rangeland management, cultural ecosystem services, springshed management, REDD+ – forest restoration for co-benefits and disaster reduction	X	X	X	X	X
Capacity building (HI-LIFE – tourism; KL – tourism; REDD – MRV training, organic farming training; KSL – ESM training; HKPL – trainings on ecosystem valuation and assessment tools, protected area planning and management, ecotourism capacities, and Bam-e-Dunya governance; REDD – horticulture/ agroforestry/restoration capacity building	X	X	X	X	X
LTESM (HI-LIFE – primate conference and Gibbon research; HKPL – migration, trade, urban/cities; KSL – GLORIA; KL – Bhutan)	X	X	X	X	X
Ecosystem services assessment and valuation (HKPL – ES valuation; KL – GMBA research on ES; KSL – cultural services; REDD – SoC grassland, invasive species, MAPs)	X	X	X	X	X
Climate change impact assessment Vulnerability of ecosystems, impacts on cryosphere, vegetation and species including range shifts	X	X	X	X	X
Knowledge products/policy briefs (HKPL – food security, nutrition, high-altitude challenges, migration; REDD – 4 papers; KSL – heritage route documentation; KL – 2 papers)	X	X	X	X	X
Database (bird, plants, animals, etc. GBIF and RDI)	X	X	X	X	X
TBL conference (targeting progress and post 2020 CBD targets)	X	X	X	X	X
Outreach – web content, newsletter (bi-annual), webpage and communication materials	X	X	X	X	X
Geo-spatial inputs (LULCC, habitat suitability, vulnerability, ecosystem services, invasive species, carbon)	X	X	X	X	X
POLICY INFLUENCING					
Rangeland and Yak (ES valuation, resilience, off season fodder, etc.)		X	X		
Human-wildlife interaction and illegal trade	X		X		
Action plan for Biodiversity Monitoring and Sub-National REDD Plan (Sikkim, Himachal)			X		X
Global contributions e.g., GBIF, IPBES, GLF, IUCN, CBD (HI-LIFE – side event; KL – documentation of progress, side events; KSL – GLF, IUCN), COP UNFCCC	X	X	X	X	X

development at scale, which requires partnership at different scales. Lastly, she proposed coming up with a position paper on the prerequisites of transboundary tourism development.

DISCUSSION ON TBL OUTLOOK

Muhammad Ali from the Wildlife Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan mentioned that urbanization is increasing dramatically, and in the future this will harm wildlife and natural resources due to growing demands. So he requested the Government of Nepal to share its plan to cope with and manage growing urbanization and protect wildlife species.

Haider Raza from WWF, Pakistan suggested establishing a network of organizations and stakeholders at the landscape level engaging all four initiatives.

Sargam S. Rasaily from Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board, India suggested reflecting back on past pitfalls and lessons learned to draw a future strategy to integrate conservation and development. He added that water will be a major global problem in the future, and therefore suggested prioritizing actions to conserve water for 2020 and beyond.

Bhupendra Adhikari from the Wildlife Institute of India suggested identifying and studying a few IAPS that are common in the four landscapes, expanding the harmonized vegetation map of the KSL to other landscapes, and establishing long-term ecological monitoring plots across the Himalaya.

Melad ul Karim from AKDN, Afghanistan stressed the need to understand stakeholders' interests and priorities for preparing action plans. He explained that the priority of the Government of Afghanistan is employment generation; therefore, they would be interested in promoting transboundary trade and tourism.

Gajendra Rawat from Uttarakhand Space Application Centre, Dehradun, India shared his concerns about ongoing development activities, mainly tourism, in the alpine areas of the region. He recommended nature protection measures to maintain the carrying capacity of those areas.

Hem Raj Bist from the Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forests and Environment, Sudurpaschim Province, Nepal mentioned key issues in the region – forest fires, illegal trade of non-timber forest products, and cattle population management – and suggested actions to address those issues.

Kezang Dema from the Nature Conservation Division, Bhutan sought a clarification about the timeframe of the Outlook. She suggested a standardized protocol to establish long-term ecological monitoring (LTESM) plots and expressed interest to learn about LTESM in India and Nepal.

Nakul Chettri responded to queries raised during the discussion. He said that the initiatives have implemented activities to recharge springs in the landscape for water conservation. He clarified that the 2020+ Outlook is intended for the fourth mid-term action plan (MTAP IV), which will be until 2022. After presentations and discussions, participants representing different initiatives were separated into groups to finalize annual action plans for 2020. The programme coordinator of each initiative facilitated the group discussion.

Group work discussion and presentation

THE LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE FOR FAR EASTERN HIMALAYA

HI-LIFE representatives discussed three tiers of activities for 2020 with key partners from China, India and Myanmar. Firstly, regional events that will bring participants from all three countries and contribute to the following regional level outputs – crop biodiversity studies in selective pilots in three countries based on a harmonized protocol; policy workshop based on a regional review of policies and laws on biodiversity conservation and management; species distribution and mapping to establish a long-term monitoring framework and collaborative research; and revision of the Theory of Change for the Initiative. Secondly, bilateral efforts would focus on developing cross-border relationships and institutional capacities for conservation and development. The actions will revolve around MOU operationalization between India and Myanmar, sustainable livelihoods intervention and support between Myanmar and China. Lastly, national level actions will be focused on reaching out to beneficiaries at the pilot areas. For Myanmar, Community Information Resource Centre (CIRC) based activities will be continued and support to the government for facilitating community-based conservation in Kachin would be the priority. In India, focus will be on advancing sustainable tourism, especially through providing support to the Arunachal Pradesh government to operationalize homestays and community-based

tourism. In China, focus would be on promoting citizens' awareness of biodiversity conservation and their engagement in conservation linked livelihood opportunities.

HINDU KUSH KARAKORAM PAMIR LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE

Ghulam Ali reflected on the achievements of the HKPLCDI in 2019, and presented activities planned for 2020, including up-scaling from the national to regional scale. National partners provided suggestions on proposed activities and added a few more new activities. Regional partners agreed to continue activities relating to high-altitude food and nutrition security, organic farming and trade, protected area management, ecosystem assessment and valuation research and yak value chain. The partners agreed to strengthen the country chapter of the Bam-e-Dunya Network and initiate bilateral agreement among HKPL country partners. The process for finalizing and signing an MoU between ICIMOD and Pamir Energy, Tajikistan was also discussed. The HKPL-China team suggested that Lanzhou University can provide support to establish a laboratory, organize exchange visits and short-term trainings for young scientists, and sponsor a Belt and Road scholarship for Belt and Road member countries. The partners agreed to further discuss key activities and the timeline during the HKPL workshop, following the RP2 Outlook workshop.

KANGCHENJUNGA LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The Kangchenjunga Landscape team broadly discussed activities planned for 2020, key actions and their timelines. The team agreed that the yak festival, yak germ plasm exchange and bird tourism were of regional importance and could become successful through good collaboration among all partners. Similarly, a human-wildlife conflict status report and a position paper on cardamom are also envisaged at the landscape level. At the global level, the KL will explicitly contribute to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on the basis of knowledge generated from the landscape. In addition, capacity building activities will also continue as key action for 2020. Since funding has been a point of concern for all team members, they agreed to explore ways to leverage funds and co-funding opportunities at the country level.

KAILASH SACRED LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Janita Gurung sought partners' suggestions on key regional activities planned for 2020. For the regional workshop on trade and tourism, new dates were proposed – in April instead of March – in order to accommodate government participants from India. Following up on the work of Phase 1, BS Adhikari proposed starting a joint patrolling programme across the Mahakali by coordinating with relevant authorities of India, Nepal and South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN). The team also agreed to explore opportunities to leverage funds for the landscape through proposal calls at the national level, including the National Natural Science Foundation of China and the National Mission on Himalayan Studies of India. Further possibilities for coordinating with China partners included the opportunity for the KSLCDI to host a Young Professional from the Chinese Academy of Sciences at ICIMOD and jointly plan the proposed 2021 workshop on ecotourism with Chengdu Institute of Biology. In general, regional partners agreed on the 2020 work plan of the KSLCDI.

REGIONAL REDD+ INITIATIVE

Bhaskar Singh Karky facilitated the discussion on four themes: 1) progress on 2020 plan, 2) book chapter on REDD+, 3) a study on regional soil organic carbon, and 4) regional REDD+ assessment. He mentioned that the Indian Council for Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) and Forest Research Institute (FRI), India have started rolling out some activities. The REDD Implementation Centre (RIC) of the Government of Nepal is committed to implementing the activities within the stipulated timeframe. The representative from Bhutan agreed to consult with their department Chief and revert immediately on training for Bhutanese foresters. The team also talked about synthesizing experiences from REDD+. A framework for a special issue of the publication will be developed by the ICFRE and circulated by ICIMOD to all the REDD+ Himalaya partner countries. ICIMOD is also partnering with the UCAS, China on grassland soil organic carbon of the HKH region, which includes sites of REDD+ Himalaya partner countries, with financial support from the NSFC. The team discussed the possibility of adding Pakistan for the 2020 work plan. ICIMOD and partners brainstormed ideas for assessment of REDD+ in the region. ICIMOD through GIZ and BMU has invested in REDD+. Other institutions such as FCPF, UN-REDD, etc. have also made investments in REDD+.

This technical session shed light on the four initiatives under the Transboundary Landscape Regional Programme. Partners from Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan were able to share their experiences and collectively reflect on joint actions planned for 2020 and beyond to advance the dual objective of conservation and development.

SECTION 5

Concluding session

The session, moderated by Udayan Mishra from ICIMOD, started with a brief summary of the workshop and the way forward by Janita Gurung. She said the 2020 work plans would be finalized with inputs from all partners, and requested respective partners to build synergy for leveraging funds for 2020 and beyond.

Delegates from each of the eight partner countries affirmed their commitment to ICIMOD for the implementation of the respective transboundary landscape initiative. They congratulated ICIMOD on hosting an impactful workshop in the scenic landscape of Chitwan and providing a common platform for people from different landscapes and initiatives.

Kezang Dema from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests Bhutan, thanked ICIMOD for providing a platform for cross-learning and said that there is still a lot to learn as the KLCDI at present is in the middle of its implementation phase. She also expressed Bhutan's commitment to continue working with the KLCDI and carrying out activities identified in the workshop in the future.

Dong Qi from the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), China commended the success of the workshop and proposed the idea of conducting the workshop next year in China in collaboration with the CAS.

SS Rasaily from the Uttarakhand Biodiversity Board, India said thanks to the KSLCDI's work, Pithoragarh has become the district in Uttarakhand where transboundary issues are most well documented. Many common transboundary issues could be identified, which provide opportunity for future work and collaboration, including but not limited to tourism, access and benefit sharing, and human-wildlife conflict.

Khin Nyein San from the Forest Department, Myanmar stated that the activities of HI-LIFE ensured important cooperation between ICIMOD and Myanmar and thanked ICIMOD for its constant support and contribution, especially on policy and strategy for ecotourism and ecological guidelines.

Rameshwar Adhikari from the Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology (RECAST), Nepal acknowledged that the eight member countries are connected in one way or another – by geography, culture, soil, water or air. He said that the workshop provided a good platform for sharing knowledge and practices from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Mohammad Ali from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government, Pakistan said that the journey of conservation is not easy and cannot be completed in a few days – it is a journey that spans centuries. He acknowledged ICIMOD's conservation efforts over the years and expressed delight in knowing that the entire group is working towards the common goal of conservation and development.

Mamadsho Ilolov from the Tajikistan Academy of Sciences, Tajikistan said that the workshop provided a platform for exchange of knowledge and for making new friends and networks, which is very important for future partnerships.

Imatbek Nikhmonov from the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in Tajikistan spoke on behalf of the Afghanistan delegation, and expressed his hope for a brighter future through formulation of relevant policies to address cross-border issues in Afghanistan and other HKPL countries.

Nakul Chettri concluded the workshop by emphasizing five sutras (formulas): 1) the workshop had triumphantly broken boundaries by providing an interdisciplinary platform for sharing experiences; 2) significance of partnership, especially as ICIMOD is an inter-governmental organization working with institutions from eight member countries; 3) involvement and participation – in terms of representation on gender, countries and disciplines including some very young professionals; 4) venue – Chitwan National Park being a globally recognized venue for participatory management; and lastly, 5) teamwork – which is essential for conducting any joint activity. At the end of his speech, he reiterated the collective goal of making transboundary landscape activities more effective and vibrant in the coming days.

The session ended with a vote of thanks from Basant Pant, who expressed his gratitude to all the partners and units of ICIMOD for making the event a success through their hard work and dedication.

Annex

Annex 1: Workshop programme schedule

25 DECEMBER, WEDNESDAY

9.00–17.30	Travel to Chitwan from Kathmandu; lunch en route; check into hotels in Chitwan (dinner at respective hotels)	By bus
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26 DECEMBER, THURSDAY

Venue: NTNC-BCC

8.30–9.00	8.15 8.30	Transfer to National Trust for Nature Conservation-Biodiversity Conservation Centre (NTNC-BCC) Participants' registration	Himaa Rai
9.00–10.30		Opening Session Moderated by Basant Pant	Rapporteurs: Pradyumna Rana & Sushmita Kunwar
	9.00	Welcome remarks	Nakul Chettri
	9.15	Workshop objectives and expected outputs	Janita Gurung
	9.30	Participants' self-introduction	
10.30–11.00		Tea break and group photo	
11.00–13.00		Technical Session 1: The TBL Regional Programme and its initiatives Moderated by Srijana Joshi	Rapporteurs: Udayan Mishra & Nabin Bhattarai
	11.00	Transboundary Landscapes Regional Programme: A decade of implementation in the Hindu Kush Himalaya Presentation and discussion	Nakul Chettri
	11.30	TBL Regional Programme initiatives: An overview of achievements and outlook HI-LIFE HKPL KL KSL Regional REDD+ Initiative Presentations and discussion	Yi Shaoliang Ghulam Ali Nakul Chettri Janita Gurung Bhaskar Karky
13.00–14.00		Lunch	
14.00–15.30		Technical Session 2: Sharing experiences in transboundary conservation in and around Chitwan National Park and Buffer Zone Moderated by Nabin Bhattarai	Rapporteurs: Basant Pant & Binaya Pasakhala
	14.00	An introduction to NTNC	Ram Kumar Aryal
	14.20	Transboundary cooperation for conservation in 'Chitwan National Park and Valmiki Tiger Reserve' landscape	DNPWC
	14.45	Transboundary activities of the NTNC	NTNC
	15.10	Community-level transboundary cooperation	CBAPU representative
15.30–17.30		Field visit and interaction Group 1: Baghmara Buffer Zone Community Forest Moderated by Nabin Bhattarai Group 2: Tharu Museum Moderated by Rekha Rasaily Group 3: Elephant Breeding Centre Moderated by Basant Pant	Return to respective hotels after field visit
19.00 onwards		Dinner at respective hotels	

27 DECEMBER, FRIDAY

Venue: Landmark Forest Park

9.00–9.30	Reflections from Day 1	
9:30–11.00	Technical Session 3: Revisiting ICIMOD's strategic functions Moderated by Abid Hussain	Rapporteurs: He Yixin & Pradyumna Rana
9.30	Gender in the TBL Regional Programme	Kamala Gurung & Kosar Banu
10.00	How programme finance works	Bijay Shrestha
11:00–11.30	Tea break	
11:00–12.30	Technical Session 4: Planning 2020 plus Outlook 2020+ Moderated by Bandana Shakya	Rapporteurs: Binaya Pasakhala & Nabin Bhattarai
11.00	TBL Programme Planning 2020 and Outlook Matrix 2020+ Initiatives: Planning 2020 HI-LIFE HKPL KL KSL Regional REDD+ Initiative Presentation of 2020 plans	Nakul Chettri Yi Shaoliang Ghulam Ali Nakul Chettri Janita Gurung Bhaskar Karky
12.00	Separate participants into five groups for Initiative-wise planning and discussion on delivery, synergy and funds leveraging	
13.00–14.00	Lunch	
14.00	Continue with group work on Planning 2020	
15.00	Presentation on Initiative-wise Planning 2020 World Café style	
16.00–16.30	Tea break	
16.30–17.30	Concluding Session Moderated by Udayan Mishra	Rapporteurs: Sushmita Kunwar & Pradyumna Rana
16.30	Workshop summary and way forward	Janita Gurung
16.40	Remarks: Afghanistan	Imatbek Nikhmonov
	Remarks: Bhutan	Kezang Dema
	Remarks: China	Dong Qi
	Remarks: India	SS Rasaily
	Remarks: Myanmar	Khin Nyein San
	Remarks: Nepal	Rameshwar Adhikari
	Remarks: Pakistan	Mohammad Ali
	Remarks: Tajikistan	Mamadsho Ilolov
	Concluding remarks: ICIMOD	Nakul Chettri
17.25	Vote of thanks	Basant Pant
19.00	Reception dinner at Landmark Forest Park	

28 DECEMBER, SATURDAY

	KL & REDD+ participants: Transfer to Bharatpur airport for flight to Kathmandu HI-LIFE, HKPL & KSL participants: Continue with workshop	
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Annex 2: Workshop participants

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