



ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

# Partnership with Private Sector

## About ICIMOD

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is a regional intergovernmental learning and knowledge sharing centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalayan region – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan – and based in Kathmandu, Nepal. Globalization and climate change have an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities, while addressing upstream-downstream issues.

We support regional transboundary programmes through partnership with institutions in the region, facilitate the exchange of experience, and serve as a regional knowledge hub. We strengthen networking among regional and global centres of excellence. Overall, we are working to develop an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem to improve the living standards of mountain populations and to sustain vital ecosystem services for the billions of people living downstream, now and for the future.

# Why is Partnership with the Private Sector Important?

To support enabling, sustainable, and resilient mountain development for improved and equitable livelihoods, ICIMOD recognizes the private sector as a fundamental stakeholder. As a major driver of economic growth in the region, the private sector can provide jobs, create stable incomes, and enhance livelihood opportunities for mountain people in the Hindu Kush Himalayas. ICIMOD believes that as users of mountain resources, the private sector also has a critical role in ensuring the long-term green economic growth of the region, as well as the protection of its invaluable resources and biodiversity.

ICIMOD seeks to foster understanding among the private sector that considering social and ecological aspects in business practices has long-term economic payoffs, and is working with the private sector to develop such win-win collaborations. As a development partner, the private sector can complement ICIMOD's work by mobilizing responsible and sustainable investments, including by piloting new innovative approaches that will help deliver development benefits to mountain communities.

## Agri-based Businesses

Nimbus is the one of the largest animal health and nutrition companies in Nepal. Nimbus imports soya beans and is interested in supporting farmers to cultivate soya beans in Nepal with a buy-back guarantee. By growing soybeans for Nimbus with direct market linkages, farmers in remote areas of western Nepal are ensured they will be able to sell their harvest and, hence, increase their income. Discussions and modalities for connecting Nimbus to local organizations and farmers are underway with the help of ICIMOD. Together, Nimbus and ICIMOD, along with other stakeholders, will be providing capacity building activities to farmers on soya bean cultivation. The modalities of the partnership are under discussion.



## Engagement with the Private Sector

### Livelihoods, Value Chain Development, and Market Linkages

Private sector interventions can support micro, small, and medium enterprises, the creation of an enabling environment for these enterprises, and improved access among rural communities to financial services and the seed capital needed to put innovative ideas into practice. Strengthening the interface between local communities and the private sector is also needed to promote niche mountain products and improve market linkages.

Value addition is an essential step in making small and medium enterprises sustainable and competitive. Together with the private sector, ICIMOD can help foster the development of inclusive and pro-poor value chains for high-value mountain products and help vulnerable enterprises better position themselves along local, regional, and global value chains.



## Tourism Companies

Together with ICIMOD, representatives from tour companies in China, India, and Nepal operating in the Kailash Sacred Landscape have agreed to promote responsible tourism and work together to keep the landscape clean. The commitment was made at a workshop attended by tourism agencies from China, India, and Nepal in November 2013.

Recent efforts show that local tourism entrepreneurs are already taking initial responsibility. For example, since July 2013 all lodges in the Kailash region are equipped with garbage bins, and lodge owners are working with tour companies to haul collected waste out of the landscape. Several tour companies have also organized annual cleaning campaigns. Inputs from tourism stakeholders were included in a set of responsible tourism guidelines, which are being shared through tour operators.



## Ecosystem Services

Innovative programmes with the private sector that work to improve biodiversity conservation, promote the sustainable management of natural resources, and resolve human-wildlife conflicts could help ensure the sustainability of businesses that depend on natural resources. The promotion of climate-smart technologies in natural resource management and exploring ways to improve efficiency in wood-based industries are some areas to be explored.



## Herbal and Medicinal Plants and Products

Dabur Nepal and ICIMOD have entered into a five-year partnership to promote herbal medicinal and aromatic plants from the Hindu Kush Himalayan region through the establishment of an herbal garden at the ICIMOD Knowledge Park at Godavari. The garden facilitates research and development and acts as a learning centre with demonstrations, hands-on training, and information sharing. The technologies, approaches, and practices showcased in the garden is helping students, researchers, government line agencies, universities, and industries working with herbal medicinal and aromatic plants.

With over 125 years experience in the production of ayurvedic products, Dabur has pioneered the cultivation of medicinal plants as a regular agricultural practice in Nepal. Dabur Nepal has provided the initial establishment costs, technical assistance, planting materials, and maintenance. ICIMOD brings to the partnership its thirty hectare Knowledge Park, which attracts over 5,000 visitors a year. The Park is a repository for important biodiversity resources and a practical venue for testing sustainable technologies and farming practices and demonstrating them to farmers, researchers, students, and development practitioners.

## Water and Energy

Private sector actors involved in hydropower, irrigation, and agriculture are encouraged to partner with ICIMOD. The development of innovative approaches for improving sustainable water resource management and promoting benefit sharing between upstream and downstream communities is of particular interest. Improving water use efficiency, reducing hazard risks, and ensuring a sustainable supply of water are priorities of many companies. In addition, access to information on water availability and proposed practices for flood risk reduction and hydropower and irrigation development can help businesses make informed decisions.

Insurance and re-insurance companies have an interest in building alliances to enhance the resilience of communities to disasters, especially floods. Working with the private sector in the area of flood resilience can help ICIMOD find innovative ways to increase the impact of disaster risk reduction efforts at community, national, and global levels.



## Software Companies

The Environment System Research Institute, Inc (Esri) – a world leader in Geographic Information System (GIS) software – and ICIMOD have been partners for more than a decade. Esri extends the use of its GIS software to South Asia through ICIMOD.

## Hydropower Companies

ICIMOD has partnered with SN Power, a Norwegian hydropower company, for the assessment of climate change impacts on the hydrological regime of the Hindu Kush Himalayas.

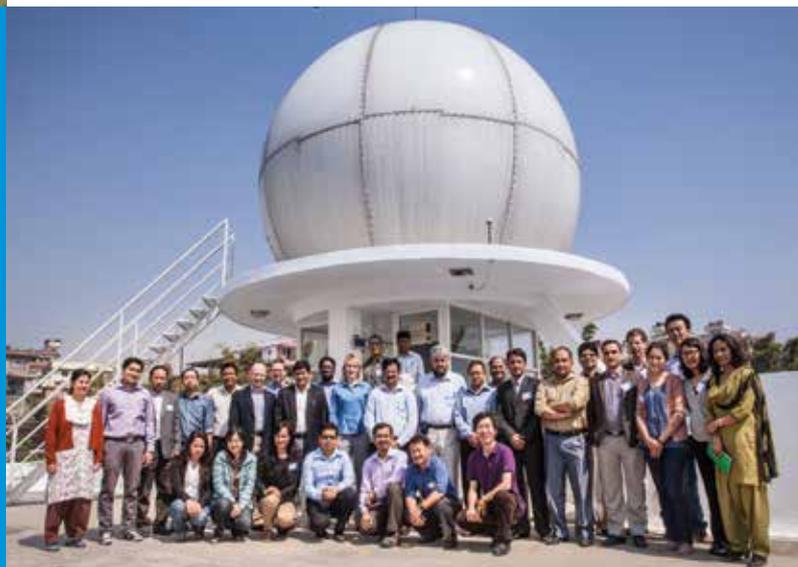
## Telecom Companies

Ten mobile service companies in Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan have expressed an interest to partner with ICIMOD through a project working to develop a regional flood information. Mobile service providers can play an important role in ensuring urgent flood messages are delivered to those in need in time, including by addressing issues pertaining to the dependence on existing telecom structures like SIM cards running out of balance, weak signal and delay in transmission. Mobile service companies can play a vital supporting role and can contribute to the long-term sustainability of the regional flood information system.

## Geospatial Solutions

ICIMOD's regional information systems extend unique operational facilities to provide information services that include data and metadata services, value added information services, and geospatial analysis and modelling.

Satellite-based technologies can enhance understanding of glacier and forest cover changes and can assist in monitoring and detecting forest fires, planning disaster response strategies, and monitoring agriculture and food security.



## Outreach Activities

ICIMOD is increasing dialogue and coordination with the private sector to encourage greater interaction, sharing, and the exchange of knowledge. Through this type of engagement, ICIMOD learns more about the interests of the private sector toward the environment and society, their business plans, and their commitments for cooperation. Engaging with the federations of chambers of commerce and industry in the countries of the Hindu Kush Himalayan region is an effective way to generate interest and gain invaluable commitments from the private sector. Participating in regional and international workshops and conferences contributes to creating a platform for networking and raising awareness.

### Capacity Building and the Transfer of Knowledge and Know-how

There is a demand for capacity building and training of private sector actors on understanding climate change and adaptation issues and their potential



impact on businesses. ICIMOD can help bridge this gap and assist the private sector in understanding their role in climate change as well as emerging business opportunities. Through meaningful engagement, ICIMOD and the private sector can explore opportunities where private sector support is required to strengthen adaptation and enhance the resilience of vulnerable mountain households, communities, and ecosystems.



## ICT for Development (ICT4D)

Information and communication technology (ICT) not only provides the tools and platforms for the effective management, sharing, communication, and dissemination of knowledge, it also offers avenues to contribute to ICIMOD's mandate through ICT for development (ICT4D) programmes and initiatives. Examples could range from helping mountain people expand their markets by providing access to market information, to establishing flood early warning systems using wireless networks and mobile phones to provide people with life-saving alerts and information. Similarly, mountain communities can use ICT to market tourism-related products in non-local markets.



## Mobile-Based Agro-advisory Services

In August 2014, an SMS service was launched in remote Pithoragarh District, in Uttarakhand, India. The service provides farmers with direct access to weather information, market rates of farm products, agriculture advisories, and general news. The service is being extended by Reuters Market Light Information Services Pvt. Ltd. (RML-ISPL) India, together with the Central Himalayan Environment Association (CHEA) and ICIMOD.

Under the first phase, 250 farmers in Uttarakhand producing 'chyura', a high-value product, will be provided access to the SMS service. The service is expected to provide extended information services to communities in Uttarakhand, including providing them with tools to enhance the value chains of chyura honey and other products such as kidney beans, off-season vegetables, and bamboo handicrafts. The partnership will help enhance the livelihoods of marginalized mountain communities residing in far-flung areas where access to market information and agro-advisories are still limited.

## Prospective Private Sector Partners

- Agri-based companies
- Irrigation and water equipment companies
- Financial institutions
- Infrastructure developers
- Private forestry sector
- Production sector
- ICT companies
- Manufacturing companies
- Tourism industry
- Herbs and medicinal plant related companies

## For further information contact

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