

NATIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP

Identifying policy and institutional gaps for managing rangelands for multiple benefits in the Hindu Kush Himalaya

22–24 August 2023 | 09:00–17:00 (BTT) | Paro, Bhutan



About the workshop

In collaboration with the Department of Livestock, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and the National Land Commission Secretariat, Bhutan, we are organising a national consultation workshop to support the Royal Government of Bhutan in improving policies and institutional coordination for integrated, participatory, and inclusive management of rangelands.

Objectives

- Sensitise national decision-makers and national partners of the Rangeland Intervention on the need for policy harmony and institutional coordination for managing the multiple functions and services of rangelands and available tools and approaches for the purpose
- Review the objectives, outcomes, consistency, and compatibilities of national/sector policies of Bhutan on rangelands management in the context of managing rangelands for multiple benefits
- Identify mandates, roles, and responsibilities of key stakeholders in Bhutan in rangeland uses and management

Expected outputs

- About 20 key staff from the Department of Livestock, National Land Commission Secretariat, and other key stakeholders sensitised to the multi-functionalities of rangelands and information on available management tools and approaches
- Knowledge and information on the sectoral policies, programs, and investments in rangelands management
- Recommendations for policy and institutional changes and project interventions

Participants

Participants of the workshop include representatives from key institutions, including government departments, business sectors, enterprises, local communities, civil society, and research organisations using or managing rangelands, sharing the benefits from rangeland management, or whose activities impact rangeland ecosystems.

Background

Rangelands account for about 60% of the land area in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH). They are the primary spaces and resources for the over 25–30 million indigenous and culturally diverse people who inhabit and depend directly on the extensive use of rangelands, which is, pastoralism, for livelihoods and subsistence. Rangelands also provide enormous ecosystem services and vital ecological assets of great importance to downstream areas and communities beyond the region. Driven by the climate crisis, unsustainable use, land use changes, and socio-demographic changes, rangelands in the HKH region are undergoing rapid degradation.

Until the not-so-recent past, rangelands were mainly regarded as fodder sources for livestock production. Rangeland management primarily focused on increasing the quality and quantity of fodder for more or better livestock raising. However, this has changed in recent years. People have increasingly recognised the multiple functions of rangelands and their diverse ecosystem services, for instance, forage or fodder production (livestock production), habitat for wildlife (biodiversity conservation), carbon sequestration (climate change mitigation), ecological processes (soil and water), and cultural and aesthetic values (recreation and spiritual sites). The goals and objectives for managing the same rangeland areas have thus become complex and more diverse, sometimes diverging from each other. As a result, there is a significant expansion of rangeland stakeholders in quantity and space.

One common issue related to rangeland management was that rangeland policies were often developed without the active participation of the local pastoral communities, the actual users of the rangelands. Stakeholders for rangelands management were relatively fewer in number and more homogeneous: Local communities on the one hand and the government on the other. The existing policies and institutions often fail to address the complex and interconnected challenges rangeland management poses, which led to policy and institutional gaps in managing rangelands for multiple benefits in the HKH region. Therefore, identifying the policy and institutional gaps is of paramount importance.

The shift in managing rangelands for multiple purposes, and the expansion of stakeholders and interest group space, make management much more complex. It requires policies and governing institutions to take an integrated and coordinated approach (for different functions), be inclusive (of people), ensure stakeholder participation in decision-making (a process of management), ensure equity in cost and benefit sharing, and encourage international cooperation (to address issues of regional or global scale).

Recognising this, ICIMOD launched its Rangeland Intervention: Managing rangeland for multiple benefits, under Action Area D (Restoring and Regenerating Landscapes) in its fifth Medium-Term Action Plan (MTAP V). A primary objective of this intervention is to support national partners in developing evidence-based enabling policies and institutions for managing rangelands for multiple benefits.

At the inception workshop held in Kathmandu from 29 May to 1 June 2023, participants from key national partner institutions jointly developed the implementation plan for the intervention at both regional and national levels. Identifying policy and institutional gaps and recommending changes was one of the significant activities relevant and necessary for all the countries.

Among the HKH countries, Bhutan has a vast area under rangelands undergoing unprecedented change under the recently revised Land Act. Following the inception workshop, Bhutan's National Land Commission Secretariat and Department of Livestock initiated to bring together relevant government agencies and draw their attention to issues surrounding rangelands in Bhutan. Appreciating the proactive engagement in the topic, ICIMOD has chosen Bhutan as the first regional member country to conduct a rapid desk review of the policies and institutions regarding rangeland management. After the review, we are organising a national-level stakeholder consultation workshop in Bhutan. Similar reviews and workshops are planned for Nepal and Pakistan later this year.

Agenda

All time stamps are in Bhutan Time (BTT).

DAY 1: 22 August 2023

Sensitisation workshop: Managing rangelands for multiple benefits

Time	Programme
08:30–09:00	Registration – Rekha Rasaily , Programme Associate, ICIMOD
09:00–10:30	Opening session Facilitator: Kesang Wangchuk , Biodiversity Specialist, ICIMOD
09:00–09:05	Welcome remarks – Towchu Rabgay , Chief Livestock Officer, Department of Livestock, Bhutan
09:05–09:15	Overview of ICIMOD – Bandana Shakya , Action Area Coordinator, Restoring and regenerating landscapes, ICIMOD
09:15–09:35	Managing rangelands for multiple ecosystem services in the HKH: Implications for policies, governing institutions, and staff capacities (online) – Wu Ning , Professor, and Director General, Chengdu Institute of Biology, Chinese Academy of Sciences
09:35–09:50	Rangeland and its significance in Bhutan – Jigme Wangdi , Specialist II, Department of Livestock, Bhutan
09:50–10:05	Introduction to intervention: Managing rangeland for multiple benefits and workshop objective and agenda – Yi Shaoliang , Intervention Manager, Managing rangeland for multiple benefits
10:05–10:15	Remarks by Dasho Tshering Gyaltshen Penjor , Secretary, National Land Commission Secretariat, Bhutan
10:15–10:25	Participants introduction
10:25–10:30	Vote of thanks – Kesang Wangchuk , ICIMOD
10:30–10:45	Group photo and tea break
10:45–12:00	Facilitated discussions: Managing rangelands for multiple benefits in Bhutan’s context – Bandana Shakya , Yi Shaoliang , Srijana Joshi , Ecosystem Specialist, ICIMOD
12:00–12:30	Tools and approaches that can be used in managing rangelands for multiple functions and services – Srijana Joshi , ICIMOD
12:30–13:30	Lunch break
13:30–16:00	Planning management for ecosystem services: Introduction to a manual to practitioners (Six steps in planning management for ecosystem services)
13:30–14:15	Step 1–2 (1: Define management area and process; 2: Identify demand for ecosystem services) – Yi Shaoliang , ICIMOD
14:15–15:00	Step 3–4 (3: Determine ecosystem services supply; 4: Determine ecosystem functioning for ecosystem services) – Srijana Joshi , ICIMOD
15:00–15:15	Tea/coffee break
15:15–16:00	Step 5–6 (5: Consider ecosystem resilience to drivers of change; 6: Specify management for ecosystem services) – Bandana Shakya , ICIMOD
16:00–16:45	Open discussion: Needs, availability, and accessibility of rangeland management data in Bhutan, including site-level information for Laya District – ICIMOD Team/Bhutan
16:45–17:30	Closing session Feedback on further capacity building, workshop evaluation Closing remarks – Kesang Wangchuk , ICIMOD

Day 2: 23 August 2023

Policies in the context of managing rangelands for multiple benefits: issues, challenges and emerging opportunities

Time	Programme
08:30–09:00	Registration – Rekha Rasaily , ICIMOD
09:00–10:30	Opening session Facilitator: Kesang Wangchuk , ICIMOD
09:00–09:10	Welcome remarks – Tashi Yangzome Dorji , Director, Department of Livestock, Bhutan
09:10–09:20	Overview of ICIMOD – Bandana Shakya , ICIMOD
09:20–09:35	Managing rangelands for multiple ecosystem services in HKH: Implications for policies, governing institutions, and staff capacities – Yi Shaoliang , ICIMOD
09:35–09:50	Emerging issues and opportunities of Rangeland in Bhutan: Need for multisectoral collaboration in sustainable Rangeland Management – Geley Norbu , Director, Department of Land Administration and Management, Bhutan
09:50–10:00	Workshop objective and agenda – Uttam Babu Shrestha , Consultant, ICIMOD
10:00–10:15	Remarks – Dasho Thinley Namgyal , Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Bhutan
10:15–10:20	Vote of thanks – Kesang Wangchuk , ICIMOD
10:20–10:45	Group photo and tea break
10:45–12:00	Facilitated group discussion: Exploring multiple benefits of rangeland ecosystems in Bhutan Facilitators: Kesang Wangchuk , Bandana Shakya , Yi Shaoliang , Srijana Joshi , Uttam Babu Shrestha
12:00–12:30	Group presentations
12:30–13:30	Lunch
13:45–14:45	Facilitated group discussion: Emerging opportunities and challenges of managing rangeland ecosystems in Bhutan Facilitators: Kesang Wangchuk , Bandana Shakya , Yi Shaoliang , Srijana Joshi , Uttam Babu Shrestha
14:45–15:00	Group presentations
15:00–15:15	Tea/Coffee break
15:15–16:45	Facilitated group discussion: Policies and programmes for managing rangeland ecosystems in Bhutan Facilitators: Kesang Wangchuk , Bandana Shakya , Yi Shaoliang , Srijana Joshi , Uttam Babu Shrestha
16:45–17:00	Sharing and closing of the day

Day 3: 24 August 2023

Stakeholder mandates, roles, and responsibilities in rangeland use and management

Time	Programme
09:00–09:15	Recap of Day 1 – Uttam Babu Shrestha , ICIMOD
09:15–10:30	Facilitated group discussion: Gaps in rangeland and other sectoral policies in Bhutan Facilitators: Kesang Wangchuk , Yi Shaoliang , Srijana Joshi , Uttam Babu Shrestha
10:30–10:45	Sharing and presentation
10:45–11:00	Tea/Coffee break
11:00–12:30	Facilitated group discussion: Institutions and stakeholders of rangeland management in Bhutan and their interests and demands Facilitators: Kesang Wangchuk , Yi Shaoliang , Srijana Joshi , Uttam Babu Shrestha
12:30–12:45	Sharing and presentation
12:45–13:45	Lunch
13:45–15:15	Facilitated group discussion: Institutional and stakeholder mandates, responsibilities and programmes in/related to rangeland utilisation and management in Bhutan Facilitators: Kesang Wangchuk , Yi Shaoliang , Srijana Joshi , Uttam Babu Shrestha
15:15–15:30	Tea break
15:30–15:45	Sharing and presentation
15:45–16:30	Plenary discussions
16:30–17:00	Workshop synthesis and closing

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