

# Asia Pacific Mountain Network (APMN) Bulletin

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## From the Coordinator's Desk

A reasonable amount of progress has been made by the APMN since the first APMN Bulletin last March. So far, we have concluded agreements with four focal points throughout Asia. Some of these focal points have already started providing inputs for the Bulletin. A meeting of the Focal Point Coordinators has been set for March 17-19, 1997. The second issue of the Bulletin is in front of you and a full-time assistant has been appointed by ICIMOD to manage the increasing volume of work.

All of these represent developments that have been initiated by the APMN Secretariat and are, in our opinion, important and essential. However, in order to be sustainable, we must be demand driven and not supply governed. The main challenge for APMN is to find a real niche among the mountain people and their organisations in Asia. All of you out there who are concerned about the future of your mountain people and their habitats, the message to you is GET INVOLVED!

There are several ways of getting involved. Firstly, make a firm commitment to bring about sustainable mountain development. Secondly, mobilise and generate information on critical mountain-related issues. Thirdly, evaluate actual successes and failures and, fourthly, provide inputs on how to pursue successful policies and programmes for the benefit of mountain people and their environments. UNCED Agenda 21 has provided a whole range of important subjects and issues for us to work on. Let us all get involved and see how best we can promote sustainable mountain development. Please write to us at ICIMOD or to any of the subregional focal points (page 4) if you wish to share some aspect of mountain development that you consider relevant for the future of mountain people and their environments.

Dr. Mahesh Banskota  
APMN Coordinator, ICIMOD

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## FIRST APMN COORDINATORS' MEETING

**MARCH 17 -19, 1997, KATHMANDU**

With most of the subregional focal points of the APMN on board, it is now time to start planning for face to face interaction on how best to energise the APMN. The tentative dates for the first APMN Coordinators' Meeting is scheduled for the week of March 17, 1997 for approximately 2-3 days. The venue is Kathmandu.

The main objective of this meeting is to further define and refine the activities of the APMN - both collectively as well as individually by the different focal points. There is an urgent need for the focal points to become more active in their respective areas, especially in terms of collecting issues and identifying priorities. Each focal point must now develop a short-term as well as a long-term agenda for their specific subregions. Based on this, we may succeed in putting together a concrete programme for the future, including the mobilisation of requisite resources.

--The APMN Secretariat, ICIMOD

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## UNCED AGENDA 21, CHAPTER 13

### THE THIRD ADHOC INTERAGENCY MEETING ON FOLLOW-UP TO UNCED AGENDA 21, CHAPTER 13

The Third Ad hoc Meeting was held in Aviemore, Scotland on April 22, 1996, and was attended by representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations University (UNU), ICIMOD, the International Union of Forestry Research Organisations (IUFRO), International Mountain Society (IMS), The Mountain Institute (TMI), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), Centre for Alpine Environments (ICALPE), African Mountains' Association (AMA), and the International Union of Alpinist Associations (UIAA). The meeting was chaired by Mr. Luis S. Botero of the FAO Forestry Department.

The principal objective of the meeting was to review the progress made after the Second Inter-agency Ad hoc Meeting held in Lima, Peru, on February 20, 1995 and the follow-up action taken by the concerned agencies and organisations on the recommendations of the Third Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). The meeting also discussed the future course of action in view of the upcoming five-year review of action taken on all Chapters of Agenda 21, since the Rio Conference in 1992, scheduled for 1997.

The first item on the agenda for the meeting was an overview of the progress made in implementing the decisions and recommendations of the Third Session of the CSD, which was given by the FAO, the Task Manager for Chapter 13. The overview included information on the regional consultations on Chapter 13 and the work undertaken on the development of criteria and indicators for sustainable mountain development. A presentation was then made by each representative on the progress made since the second inter-agency meeting. Some of the highlights were the establishment of the Uganda Mountain Resources' Centre, a regional centre focussing on mountain research; four new mountain sites among 13 new biosphere reserves; IUFRO's recently established Task Force on Mountains and Forest Development; the significant growth of the network of scientists and managers working in mountain protected areas; the role played by IUCN's European Programme and ICALPE in organising the European Intergovernmental Consultation on Chapter 13; new mountain publications by ICALPE; the upcoming AMA meeting in 1997 on community involvement and participation in mountain development; TMI's work in high-altitude archeology and on sacred mountains; ICIMOD's role in establishing the APMN; and UIAA's efforts to channel financial inputs from hikers and trekkers directly into local mountain communities.

Item five on the agenda covered the recent work undertaken by the FAO and other UN agencies on the development of criteria and indicators for sustainable mountain development. FAO indicated that it would like to include members of the inter-agency group in further development of the criteria and indicators. In terms of the guidelines for formulation of sustainable mountain development programmes, which the FAO had requested TMI to develop, the participants unanimously agreed on the usefulness of such an exercise. Other activities reported upon and discussed during the meeting included the continued and important role of NGOs in shaping and pursuing the Mountain Agenda; advances in national and regional-level action; the possibility of holding a major international meeting on Chapter 13; the planned publication of *The State of the World's Mountains - 1997*; and the status of the quarterly journal, *Mountain Research and Development*.

Discussions were also held on the upcoming fifth session of the CSD and the planned session of the UN General Assembly in June 1997. The Meeting recommended that the Fourth Inter-agency Meeting on Chapter 13 Follow-up be held in conjunction with the second session of the European Inter-governmental Consultations to be held in October 1996 in Trento, Italy.

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## THE MOUNTAIN FORUM

### PAYING FOR MOUNTAINS: INNOVATIVE MECHANISMS AND PROMISING EXAMPLES FOR FINANCING CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (PFM)

#### AN ELECTRONIC CONFERENCE

The Mountain Forum, a global electronic network, offers a venue for global linkage of individuals and organisations concerned with mountain cultures, environment, and sustainable development and was formed with the purpose of providing mutual support and exchange of ideas and experiences. The Mountain Forum's first electronic conference, PFM, began on July 9 and ended on August 8. It was initiated at the request of the FAO and the content moderator was Lynelle Preston of The Mountain Institute. The goal of this conference was to identify innovative financial mechanisms and derive operational principles that can help reverse the net loss of resources from the mountains.

There were approximately 210 subscribers to this conference from throughout the world with an average of 10 new postings every day. The discussions began with the topic of user fees and associated community rights.

Specific cases on this topic included the Annapurna Conservation Area Project in Nepal and the Pippen System in Sikkim, India. Another thread of discussion revolved around trust funds; a useful description of Debt-for-Nature swaps and information regarding the Regional Consultations on Trust Funds in Latin America and the upcoming consultation in Asia were also posted.

The second and third weeks saw more discussion on user fees and potential fees that could be established to help pay for the mountains such as a-dollar-a-day fee for enjoying the mountain scenery, a tourist tree tax, and a multi-tiered fee structure. An interesting posting suggested employing mountain farmers as mitigators of global warming. A discussion on the transfer of urban water utility revenues to finance watershed protection and biodiversity conservation was thought provoking. It is encouraging to witness active thinking on how to get downstream users to compensate for upstream communities and environments. Discussions were held on the use of transferable development rights as a mechanism to finance the protection of conservation areas and regional trademarks as a mechanism which ensures that low-cost competition is avoided and an appropriate price is maintained for a particular (mountain) product. Many promising and specific examples of mechanisms were documented such as village micro-hydropower schemes.

The fourth week was an especially busy week with the discussions touching on a variety of issues and mechanisms such as micro-enterprise development, eco-tourism, and community forestry in Nepal; the Bhutan trust fund; localisation; incentive-based initiatives in Mongolia and Tibet; Mt. Taranaki in New Zealand; and mountain management in the Sumava Mountains of the Czech Republic, among others.

These discussions will serve as input to a document that will seek to provide guidance to policy-makers and planners in developing programmes and policies that will mobilise more financial resources for mountain conservation and sustainable development projects. This document will be used in the U.N. review of Agenda 21 next year.

For further information on PFM, contact:

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## **SUBREGIONAL UPDATE**

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### **AUSTRALASIA/PACIFIC**

#### **A NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE HIGH COUNTRY OF NEW ZEALAND: SUMMARY OF A WORKSHOP SPONSORED BY THE CENTRE FOR MOUNTAIN STUDIES, LINCOLN UNIVERSITY**

The workshop focussed on the potential contribution of a national policy statement (NPS) for the high country of New Zealand. The topic itself is consistent with Chapter 13 of Agenda 21 and other political and resource management considerations. The workshop participants included representatives from the Federated Farmers, Ministry of Environment, Canterbury Regional Council, Royal Forest and Bird Protection Council, Lincoln University, North Canterbury Fish and Game Council, and the Department of Conservation. In New Zealand, there is only one existing example of an NPS, the Coastal Policy Statement, and this is not a useful example for the High Country case. The 1979 statement of Government policy on the High Country could perhaps be taken as a more relevant starting point. The Workshop participants judged that an NPS should be a statement which ... provides the vision and policy direction on issues of national importance.

The need for an NPS was highlighted by the unsustainable practices in many parts of the High Country; the need for consistency of approach when dealing with issues in the High Country; and the need to update the 1979 statement of government policy.

Some of the reasons for developing an NPS were that an NPS could potentially achieve a coordinated approach to some parts of integrated resource management in the high country and an NPS would identify criteria and principles to be applied in pursuing integrated resource management in the high country.

Some of the reasons given against developing an NPS included the facts that determining a national policy under the RMA would be time consuming and costly; a revision of Regional Policy

Statements, regional plans, and district plans would be necessary; and the high country is too diverse for a national policy. During the Workshop it had been argued by many present that an NPS would be most helpful if it dealt with policy and goals, rather than specific objectives and tactics. The Workshop members recommended that ... the Ministry for the Environment be urged to consider the merit of initiating a 1979-like representative meeting to consider if it is worth maintaining, reviewing and updating the 1979 policy on High Country. The outcomes of this workshop could be of international interest. However, the questions of politics, ownership, and relevance must not be overlooked.

For further information, contact Dr. Ken Hughey

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### **NORTH CENTRAL ASIA**

The International Centre for Geocology of the Arid Mountain Countries (ICGAMC) was established as a

non-governmental, non-commercial research institution. The main focus of this Centre is the study of hydrology and glaciology in the mountain massifs of Central Asia, namely, the Tien Shan, the Pamir, and the Altai. The Centre includes three research stations located around Almaty, the capital city of Kazakhstan, within an altitudinal range of from 2,300 to 3,500masl. The Centre invites cooperation from institutions and individuals in the field of geoecology and sustainable development of mountain areas.

The International University of Kyrgyzstan and the National Academy of Sciences are planning to establish the Central Asian International Mountain Society with the purpose of strengthening research cooperation in sustainable development in Central Asia. Special emphasis will be on the upland Issyk Kul Lake and the Tien Shan. The Society will be founded by the International University of Kyrgyzstan during the International Conference on Highland Studies in October 1996.

The Government of the Republic of North Ossetia-alania has begun formulating a Mountain

Law which will establish legal grounds for sustainable development of mountain regions in the Republic. The law will take into account the experiences of several European countries, such as Switzerland, France, and Italy, and the recommendations of the European Inter-governmental Consultations on Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions (Scotland, Italy, 1996). The Organising Committee of the Vladikavkaz Conference has distributed the First Information Letter of the Third International Conference on Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions which will take place in September 1998 in Vladikavkaz. Some of the thematic areas suggested for discussion are as follow.

1. Theoretical aspects of the strategy for sustainable development in mountain regions
2. Monitoring of ecosystems , information systems, communications, and accessibility of data banks
3. Social and environmental aspects of transition to sustainable development
4. Cultural and natural heritage of nations, protected natural territories, and biodiversity of the mountain countries

For further information, contact Dr Yuri Badenkov

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## **WEST ASIA**

### **THE TURKISH FOUNDATION FOR COMBATING SOIL EROSION, FOR REFORESTATION, AND FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATURAL HAZARDS**

TEMA was founded in 1992 under the leadership of Hayrettin Karaca (President, TEMA) and Nihat Gokyigit (Vice President, TEMA) and 30 prominent businessmen and industrialists with the aim of raising awareness and bringing about public and political pressure on issues related to land degradation, deforestation, topsoil level protection, natural habitats, and wildlife. It also aims to bring about environmentally-sound policies for combating soil erosion as well as biodiversity conservation. TEMA has been actively involved in developing and implementing projects on rural development, rangeland rehabilitation, reforestation, erosion mapping, and education. It is the only country-wide Turkish NGO that focusses specifically on combating erosion.

It has approximately 5,850 members and 67 voluntary representatives working in different regions of Turkey. The foundation works in collaboration with a scientific council consisting of 54 scientists from various Turkish Universities. TEMA is the first NGO in Turkey to have addressed Parliament. In order to raise awareness amongst the Turkish public on environmental issues, TEMA has a strong public education focus which includes seminars, audio visual materials, and so on. TEMA is also represented at the international level: it is accredited by the UN, INCD Secretariat and by Habitat II and is a member of many international organisations and networks, one of which is the Asia Pacific Mountain Network.

For further information, contact Dr Leyla Celikel

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## **MOUNTAINS OF ASIA**

### **THE SACRED ALTAI**

The Altai is a mountain chain stretching from South Central Siberia into Western Mongolia, forming the boundary of Northern Sinkiang and sloping away into the Gobi Desert. Although similar in character to the Alps, the Altai cover a far greater area, extending from the Irtysh Valley eastward to the Sayan Range. The majority of this chain is located in Russia (Republic of Altai) and in Mongolia (Mongolian and Gobi Altai). The highest peak of this range is Mt. Beluha (4506 m).

A quarter of the Republic of Altai is wooded and the most valuable tree species is cedar - "the Altai Taiga Tsar". The landscape of Altai is diverse and picturesque. Altai is a pra-motherland of the Altai language family which includes over 35 Turk nations. Furthermore, three religions of the world - Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam - come together in this region. Shamanism is also widespread among the indigenous people.

The Altai region has been a transitional area for many nations and tribes such as the Scyphs, Hunns, ancient Turks, and the Mongol warriors of TENGHIZ-KHAN. Towards the middle of the 19th Century, the Altai region became part of the Russian Empire. However, in the 20th century, Altai became an autonomous unit of the Russian Federation under different names at different times, such as the Karakorum okrug (1920), the Oyrot oblast (1922), the Gorno-Altai oblast (1928?), and the Republic of Altai (1992).

At present, the territory of the Republic of Altai is 92,000 sq.km. and the population is 200,000 (1995). The capital, Gorno-Altai, has a population of 46,700. The territory is weakly developed and the average population density is 2.2 pers. per sq.km. More than 70 percent of the total population live in the rural areas. The economic axis of the Republic is directed from north ( with the relatively developed foothill and lowland Altai Kray) to south ( with the marginal mountain regions of Mongolia) along the ancient caravan route of the Chuy Valley. Over 90 per cent of the Republic's budget is donated from the Federal budget. The industries are also economically weak.

The Government and the Parliament (El Kurultai) of the Republic have, at present, been actively searching for the ways to transit to a sustainable development model and achieve a balance between economic growth and protection of the environmental and spiritual values of Altai. These issues will be discussed at the International Conference on "Altai in the System of Sustainable Development of the Mountain Territories", which will take place in Gorno-Altai. For further details on the Conference, please contact Dr. Yuri Badenkov.

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