

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) celebrates the International Year of Biodiversity

International Year of Biodiversity dedicated webpage (February, 2010)

ICIMOD is marking the International Year of Biodiversity 2010 by organizing various activities including participation in global conferences and meetings, hosting regional level trainings, and organising local events. A dedicated IYB webpage was launched on February with the message of Director General of ICIMOD. The webpage contains valuable information on biodiversity richness of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region, the centre's work on biodiversity conservation and management, events for 2010, knowledge products, media coverage, global/regional news and e-discussion on Gender and Biodiversity and ICIMOD Photo Contest at www.icimod.org/iyb

Biodiversity show at Open House (March, 2010)

ICIMOD opened its doors for the public and its partners from Nepal for an Open House event on 6th March. The stalls included a special 'Biodiversity Show' as part of the celebrations for the IYB. The show as designed to create awareness of the importance of biodiversity in our lives, the factors for biodiversity loss and the urgent need to protect our living plant to assure its services to mankind. The show has many visitors, young and old, who learned about the flora and fauna of Nepal, and the Centre's effort towards biodiversity conservation and management. Visitors were fascinated by the displayed materials including foodstuffs, fodder, fibre, fuelwood, clothes, shelter materials, and medicinal plants that people use in their daily life. Culture was given due consideration by displaying materials that make use of biodiversity like incense sticks and prayer flags. Especially researchers and students were delighted to take the IYB promotional flyer, and bookmarks with biodiversity conservation messages. They were eager to understand approach, interventions, and efforts in the region towards implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Understanding was helped through presentation of posters on environmental change and ecosystem services, landscape conservation planning, wetlands, access and benefit sharing and honeybees and biodiversity.

The younger generation, especially college and school students, enjoyed themselves at the quiz corner. They learned about biodiversity and IYB through questions with focus on biodiversity. Students flocked t the corner and participated enthusiastically in the quiz and small gifts were presented to the winners. www.icimod.org/?page=923

Fourteenth Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-14) (May 2010)

ICIMOD also promoted the IYB by participating in the SBSTTA-14 of the CBD from 10-21 May in Nairobi, Kenya. The centre participated in the meeting and organised a side event in partnership with its regional member countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan- to bring the international notice the collective efforts of the Centre and the regional member countries on biodiversity conservation and management. The side event was focused on 'Implementation Status of CBD especially on the Programme of Work on Mountain Biodiversity' and 'Draft ABS Regional Framework of the HKH region'. ICIMOD's presentations were followed by panel presentations from HKH country representatives and the panellists agreed to collaborate on the

Regional ABS Framework. The country representatives of HKH region, international conservation organisations and representatives of other mountain regions of the world were present.

Along with the side event, a total of 7 ICIMOD posters covering various topics related to mountain biodiversity and livelihoods were displayed from 10-21 May 2010 at the SBSTTA-14 venue. The posters attracted large number of the participants. The extended abstracts of the posters represented all the thematic topic categories of the SBSTTA-14 Abstract Publication reflecting ICIMOD's wide coverage of topics in biodiversity management and livelihoods. The topics covered were:

- Access and Benefit Sharing
- CBD Implementation in HKH countries
- Conservation Connectivity
- Gender and Biodiversity
- Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation Initiative
- Medicinal and Aromatic Plants
- Trans-Himalayan Transects

The details of SBSTTA-14 and presented posters can be accessed at www.icimod.org/iyb

International Day for Biological Diversity (May, 2010)

ICIMOD had an in-house celebration of the International Day for Biological Diversity on 24 May 2010. The event was an opportunity to share some of ICIMOD's efforts to conserve and better manage the biodiversity in the HKH region. ICIMOD has several biodiversity related activities planned throughout the year 2010 to commemorate the "International Year of Biodiversity". The in-house programme, on the occasion of the International Day for Biological Diversity 22 May 2010, unfolded highlights of:

- Photo contest on Mountain Biodiversity
- Street drama on the theme "Biodiversity and water"
- E-discussion on the gender and biodiversity in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan Region

Photo Contest on Mountain Biodiversity

To raise awareness of importance of biodiversity in sustaining life in the HKH region, ICIMOD successfully organised a Photo Contest on *Mountain Biodiversity* reflecting themes of IYB 'Biodiversity is life Biodiversity is our life' and International Day for Biological Diversity 'Biodiversity, Development and Poverty Alleviation'. Different categories were focused in the contest:

- Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge associated with Mountain Biodiversity
- Livelihood and Ecosystem Services related to Biodiversity
- Mountain Agro-biodiversity; threats to Mountain Biodiversity
- Women and Mountain Biodiversity

The contest was focused in the HKH region and a total of 783 entries were received from eight regional member countries. The top 90 photographs were exhibited and the winners of the contest were announced on the celebration day of the International Day for Biological Diversity.

Street drama on “Biodiversity and water”

The street drama was organised at three different public places in the capital city, Kathmandu, to raise awareness on the importance of ‘Biodiversity and Water’ among the general public. The drama at the public places was an exciting event which drew attention of hundreds of people. It highlighted the importance of linkages between water and biodiversity and the immense role they play in the lives of all living beings. Threats that human beings have been causing to biodiversity were also highlighted. For instance, long term effect of water pollution on people, aquatic life and agriculture. The concept of ‘share water and share opportunities’ was given emphasis during the show. It also focused on overpopulation and its impact on biodiversity. The drama emphasized the relationship between the environment and people and how the environment is the lifeline for survival of all living beings.

E-discussion on Gender and Biodiversity (May 2010)

A 3-week long e-discussion on ‘Gender and Biodiversity’ was organised from 3-10 May to discuss on issues and challenges on biodiversity management with gender perspective; and to share knowledge among the participants in relation to:

- Difference in understanding of women and men on biodiversity;
- Role women and men in conservation and management of biodiversity;
- Difference in affects by impacts of climate change on biodiversity on women and men, particularly the poor and marginalized; and difference in adaptation of women and men to these changes;
- Enabling and constraining factors in adapting to the changing biodiversity situation.

A total of 400 participants and partners contributed their views in the discussion. Actual case studies and research where the documentation of gender-disaggregated data and information helped in effective biodiversity management or helped community to better cope with, or adapt to, the impacts of climate change were shared. Regional Member countries of HKH region were encouraged to share their stories and lessons learnt on gender based case studies helping promotion of policies for effective biodiversity conservation and management.

Hindu Kush Himalayan Conservation Portal

On the occasion of the International Day for Biological Diversity, ICIMOD launched the “Hindu Kush Himalayan Conservation Portal”. The Portal is the regional repository of biodiversity and conservation related information in the HKH region. It has been developed to serve as a platform for sharing biodiversity data and information among the countries in the region and beyond and also help facilitate the standardization during database development for biodiversity conservation at the landscape level. The portal has a data upload facility and all partners, other organisations, researchers, students and individuals are encouraged to use the facility and contribute data and information to the portal, so that the information in the portal is built continuously and helps address the data and information gap regarding biodiversity in the region. The details can be accessed at www.icimod.org/hkhconservationportal/

