

ICIMOD Statement at GEO-X Plenary

The Hindu Kush-Himalayan Mountain Region provides ecosystem services to 200 million people living in the mountains, and 1.3 billion people downstream across Asia. These include water, biodiversity including high agrobiodiversity, carbon stocks, energy - all are important regionally and to the globe.

The mountains are under threat. Climate change, ecosystem degradation, air pollution, rapid social change have potential adverse impact on local people, the environment, and the global community if we cannot manage the situation. Special attention to the Himalayas is needed, and a special initiative of GEOSS should focus on the Himalayan region.

ICIMOD, the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development, is a regional, intergovernmental knowledge center deeply involved in developing solutions in mountain areas for its 8 regional member countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan. We have found that in spite of challenges of high mountain poverty and difficult terrain, we find that it is possible to devise the entire value chain to get information from space to village.

ICIMOD serves as a regional centre of excellence on earth observation and geospatial solutions, and believes in free and open access to data. ICIMOD participates in GEO, we closely interface with space agencies in our region, we host a SERVIR program supported by NASA, we are a node of JAXA, and a regional support office for UN SPIDER. Together with partners we are moving forward to fill important knowledge gaps and put these to use for improved policy and practice.

ICIMOD proposes a Himalayan GEOSS to:

- Provide information and services of critical mountain and global concern, and promote their use;
- To enhance regional cooperation;
- Enhance the capabilities of member countries

ICIMOD congratulates GEOSS on its progress, and looks forward to strong partnership. ICIMOD would also like to thank Swiss Government for hosting the Ministerial Summit and FEP Plenary and excellent hospitality. Thank you!