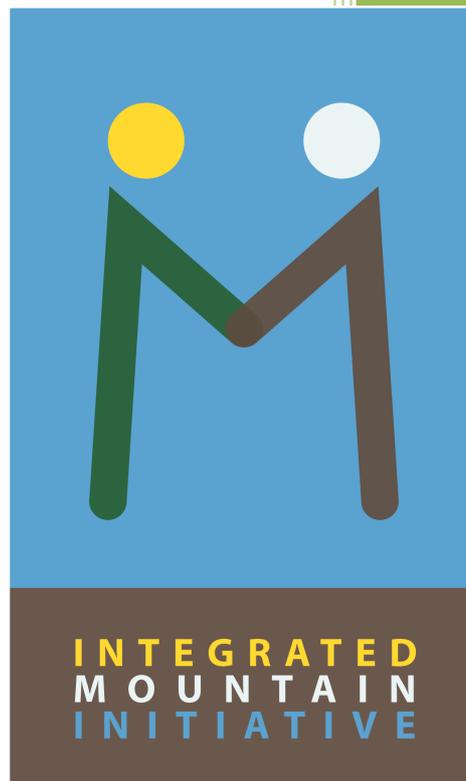


2014

Background Paper



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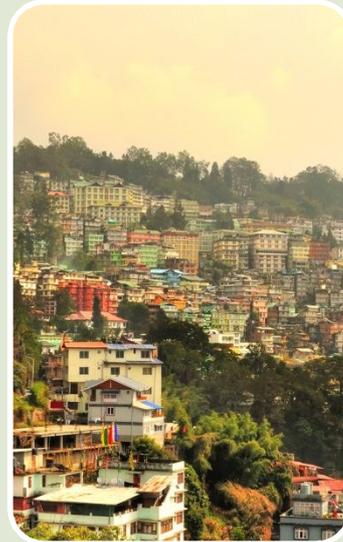
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## Mission, Vision, & Values



### MISSION

We are a collective initiative for recognizing the value of mountain regions and enabling people to realize its potential by integrating the knowledge and experiences of multiple stakeholders

### VISION

Making the people of India proud of our mountains

### VALUES

- Integrative
- Inclusive
- Collaborative
- Voluntary
- Passionate
- Democratic
- Open

## Genesis

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The Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) plays a vital role in sustaining life. It is important to the 50 million mountain people who live on its slopes, and equally, if less visibly, important to nearly 1.2 billion people, a fifth of the world's population who depend on its downstream river basins. Another 3 billion rely on it indirectly in terms of food and energy production. The Integrated Mountain Initiative (formerly Indian Mountain Initiative) seeks to focus attention on IHR's contributions, and aims to mainstream the concept of sustainable mountain development into the administrative planning framework of IHR, *inter alia*.

The genesis of the Integrated Mountain Initiative is, in many ways, intertwined with the conception of the Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS). The need for the 'development of backward hill areas' of the country was first formally recognized by the *National Commission on Development of Backward Areas* (B. Shivaraman, 1981), which was followed by a *Task Force for the Study of Eco-development in the Himalayan Region* (Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, 1982). These resulted in the need to define 'hill areas' to ensure uniform development opportunities in all categories of hill areas, and this was done by the *Working Group on Hill Area Development Programmes* for the 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (1985).

Since then there has been an *Action Plan for Himalaya* (1992), the *Expert Group on National Policy on Integrated Development of Himalaya* (1993), a *High Level Commission on Transforming the North-Eastern Region* (1997), a *Task Force on the Mountain Ecosystems for the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan* (2006), *Himalayan Mission under National Action Plan on Climate Change* (2008), *NE Region Development Vision 2020* (2008), *Governance for Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem (G-SHE) – Guidelines & Best Practices* (2009) and the *Shimla Declaration on Sustainable Himalayan Development* (2009). One of the most recent in this series has been the Task Force constituted by the Planning Commission in 2010 to 'look into problems of hill states and hill areas and to suggest ways to ensure that these states and areas do not suffer in any way because of their peculiarities' (Task Force, 2010).

As the fate of several recommendations by these various bodies remained unknown, no sooner had the recommendations of the Task Force, 2010 been brought into the public domain, than the Central Himalayan Environment Association (CHEA), a civil society organisation based in Uttarakhand, resolved to implement its main recommendation without awaiting an official initiative. The Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS) was organized by way of seeking consensus among IHR states regarding the creation of a platform where diverse stakeholders working on issues pertinent to mountains could come together to engage in an

informed debate on identified themes, with the objective of informing and influencing policy formulation in respect of the mountain region.

In doing so, CHEA also took heed of the *National Action Plan on Climate Change* (2008) which identified the Himalayan and the North-eastern states as most vulnerable regions from the point of view of climate change, and recommended the constitution of a National Mission on Sustainable Himalayan Ecosystem. It also took a cue from the Mountain Initiative begun by Nepal during COP 15 (Copenhagen, 2009) of the UNFCCC, in addition to furthering the *Mountain Agenda* (Chapter 13) of *Agenda 21* (UNCED, 1992). The emergence of IMI is thus deeply embedded in a historical sequence of national reflection on the importance of mountain regions in India, spread over a period of at least three decades (1981-2010).

## ***Sustainable Mountain Development Summits***

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The first Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS-I), convened under the aegis of the Integrated Mountain Initiative (IMI), was organized with active support from the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*, India (GIZ-India), and others. IMI and SMDS thus simultaneously came into existence in May, 2011 at Nainital, dedicating itself to being 'a forum for open and informed dialogue amongst all stakeholders of the IHR states' (Task Force, 2010).

### **THE FIRST SMDS**

SMDS-I saw over 250 participants of various backgrounds, with representation from the 11 Indian mountain states and Darjeeling district of West Bengal. The themes of the Summit were hydro-power projects, adaption measures under the climate change scenario, rural tourism, and community forestry. From its very inception, IMI functioned as a forum which collated important perspectives, ideas, initiatives, and policy recommendations in respect of IHR.

Drawing on the contribution and discussion by participants, SMDS-I pointed out the absence of a systematic body of research on the adaptation strategies of mountain communities and how they can be involved in climate change mitigation. With regard to hydro-power projects, it was noted that there was a need for a paradigm shift in the conceptualization and implementation of Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) plans. Myndtu Leshka Hydro-Power Project in Meghalaya, which involves several government departments and local tribes, was identified as a model worth studying and replicating.

The negative externalities of rural tourism were discussed and ideas regarding estimation of carrying capacities and certification mechanisms for sustainable tourism were mooted. It was suggested that estimates of carbon sequestered by *van panchayats* (village forest committees) could be considered by the State Finance Commission, Uttarakhand, while making recommendations on devolution to *gram panchayats* (village local government body). Fourteen Members of Parliament from IHR made a formal recommendation to the Planning Commission to constitute a Working Group on mountain states which would look into mountain specific aspects of the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2012-17).

### **THE SECOND SMDS**

The next year, the Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim (ECOSS), undertook the responsibility of organizing the second edition of the SMDS in May, 2012 at Gangtok. SMDS-II also saw participation from over 250 delegates from across IHR. Deliberations were held on

water, mountain livelihoods, communities and forests, with climate change and innovation being flagged as cross-cutting themes which posed significant challenges to the mountain region.

SMDS-II pointed out the necessity to mould mechanisms such as the Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD and REDD+) to mountain contexts, particularly examining avenues for involvement of communities in such programmes, as opposed to solely NGOs and civil society organizations. The need to lobby state governments to increase the inadequate water norm of 40 litres/person/day to 70 litres/person/day was identified, following the model of Himachal Pradesh. The Government of Sikkim's spring renewal project was lauded and noted as a paradigm to be replicated across IHR.

The contested space occupied by hydro-electric power in the Himalayas was acknowledged. It was proposed that various rounds of seminars, involving stakeholders and experts, be held with the aim of creating a policy paper on the topic. The infrastructure for IT-enabled services was identified as an area for IMI to lobby with governments, as was the promotion of Sikkim's State Institute of Capacity Building, after suitable study. A revision of national policies relating to financial inclusion to address the specific constraints of mountain regions was suggested.

IMI advocated the inventorying of existing innovations in IHR, examining reasons for their inability to scale-up, and taking up remedial measures with relevant authorities. Policies, however, need backing from local leadership. IMI's platform could be used to nurture such leaders and link their visions with the larger Himalayan vision. Given the vulnerability of mountain regions to water-induced natural disasters, IMI sought to take up disaster zone mapping with state governments and put forward the option of getting involved in disaster management planning.

SMDS-II ended with the adoption of the *Gangtok Declaration*, in light of the then forthcoming *Rio +20* (June, 2012), which resolved that 'the mountain states in India have not received the attention due to them, and that the sustainable mountain development agenda was far from even being conceptualized....greater focus and emphasis be given to the sustainable mountain development agenda for the next 20 years'.

### **THE THIRD SMDS**

The third SMDS (SMDS-III) was held in Kohima, in September, 2013. SMDS-III proved to be a break-through event in the sense that the host, the Sustainable Development Forum, Nagaland (SDFN), came into existence as a state collective of several civil society organizations until then working independently in Nagaland. The themes of this Summit were forests (governance,

challenges, and opportunities), water (rivers, streams, and springs), and agriculture (sustainable mountain agriculture and small-scale farming). Although there are thematic overlaps across the three summits, the focus, during each summit, is on different sub-topical issues within the larger thematic areas.

Very high attention was placed on disaster risk reduction (DRR) in IHR during SMDS–III, and participants discussed the earthquake in Sikkim in 2011 and the destructive floods in Uttarakhand in 2013. The critical importance of end-to-end information systems linking scientists, governments, and communities was noted. Discussions were also held on the need to document and validate traditional knowledge systems regarding agriculture, and draw such practices into the mainstream in a way that also ensures the financial security of small farmers.

## ***Parallel and Other Events***

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Alongside SMDS-I was held the first ever **Himalayan Photography Competition** on the theme of 'Life and Traditions of the Mountain States'. The second edition of this event during SMDS-II was organized on the themes of the Summit, i.e. water, livelihoods, and communities and forests. This event was continued at SMDS-III.

A major contribution of SMDS-II was the **Legislator's Meet** comprising parliamentarians and legislators from IHR states, which deliberated upon the establishment of the Indian chapter of the Global Legislators' Organization for Balanced Environment (GLOBE), an institution that looks at climate change legislation around the world. Legislators discussed the importance of formulating State Action Plans for Climate Change, and noted the lack of clarity regarding funding processes and implementation structures to operationalize these. It was also noted that a mechanism for compensating IHR states for their role as India's carbon sink needed to be brought into place.

SMDS-II also convened a parallel event on **Mountain Cities**, where participants discussed the urbanization challenges faced by mountain cities, and pointed out that national urban development guidelines do not distinguish between cities in the plains and in the mountains. The need for separate guidelines and standards for planning and development of mountain cities was highlighted. This discussion spiralled into IMI holding a **National Workshop on Mountain Cities** in January 2014, at Mussoorie, Uttarakhand. This workshop deliberated on specific suggestions to influence the National and State Urban Development Programmes to enable visible changes in the provision of urban amenities in mountain cities, which were often neglected in view of their small populations, weak financial base, and various mountain specificities. The Delhi School of Architecture undertook a study using a 3D model, generating considerable awareness among participants from all mountain states and belonging to diverse organisations.

A welcome addition to the SMDS was a **Youth Summit** held during SMDS-III, and the recommendations of the youth participants were shared at the second cycle of the GLOBE Legislator's Meet, held at the Nagaland State Assembly. Another novel contribution of SMDS-III was a **Policy Maker's Dialogue**, which shared the 'Appropriateness of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) and other Programmes for Indian Mountain States' with government officials of Nagaland and other policymakers gathered on the occasion. Separate instalments of this event were subsequently held in January 2014, alongside the National Workshop on Mountain Cities, and once again in March 2014, on 'Compensating Mountain States'.

In order to ensure that the initial momentum and enthusiasm generated during SMDS-I would continue, it was resolved that a **Meet of the Mountain States** (MoMS) would be convened between two successive SMDSs. MoMS is an avenue for sharing with a larger audience, the outcomes of the preceding SMDS, at the national capital of New Delhi. Thus, the first MoMS (MoMS-I) was held at New Delhi in November, 2011, and the next after SMDS-II in March, 2013. The primary aim of MoMS is to disseminate the latest developments, through releasing reports of the SMDSs among the IMI diaspora and policymakers. MoMS is also a forum for advocacy particularly directed towards sensitising national policymakers about mountain issues. In addition, the event aims to reinforce the commitment of civil society organizations to take forward the cause of sustainability in the development of mountain regions.

## ***Evolution & Contribution***

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### **KEY AREAS**

Over the course of the three Summits, two MoMSs, one national workshop, and several other mountain-related events it participated in, sustainable mountain development, climate change, disaster risk reduction, and urbanization in the mountains, have spontaneously emerged as the key thematic areas of IMI. These themes call for continued deliberations among the stakeholders of IMI, particularly in terms of related national and state policies and schemes which are in place or are being conceived of, and the administrative and institutional framework that anchor each of these themes. It is vital that IMI examines avenues for advocacy about changes and modifications that its stakeholders perceive critical to their objectives.

Each of these major themes play a significant role in the Indian context, and require constant and effective sharing of experiences, identification of technical and scientific interventions that may not be available within the country, and above all a continuous examination of all policies and programmes that are continuously unfolding both at the centre and at the state levels. This is particularly relevant as a follow-up to post-*Rio+20* and the post-2015 *Hyogo Framework of Action* (HFA), in so far as they apply to IHR. Convergence of these disparate challenges calls for an urgent need for far more effective coordination and collaboration among various ministries and departments, both within and between the Government of India and the state governments, as well as between various international and regional entities and Indian policymakers.

India being a federal polity, centre–state relations are always in a flux. Mountain states being ‘special category states’ have hitherto received a special set of financial dispensation. Globalisation and liberalisation of the Indian economy and the acknowledged multiple–vulnerabilities of all IMI states present a situation where the need for a platform for discussion about major local, national, regional, and global concerns, and possibilities, was never more urgent or essential.

During the past three years, despite its institutional framework being in formative stages, IMI has been instrumental in the constitution of a Working Group on Mountain Ecosystems under the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2012-17). IMI contributed recommendations to the B.K. Chaturvedi Committee under the Planning Commission, with regard to infrastructural deficiencies of mountain states, the ‘Green Bonus’, and process issues such as land-use changes and relaxation norms. Its continuous advocacy of a robust administrative architecture for mountain regions has arguably helped in the establishment of a dedicated ‘Mountain Division’, the nodal agency

for mountain development within the Ministry of Environment & Forests (now a unit of the G B Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development, Almora).

### **INSTITUTIONALISATION AND ARCHITECTURE**

During SMDS-II in Gangtok, serious consultations were held with regard to giving a formal shape to IMI, and to create an institutional framework. MoMS-I, held at the Nagaland House in New Delhi on 11 December 2012, was used to formulate the vision and mission of IMI, after an intensive day-long workshop involving key members. The institutionalisation process of IMI, which was further concretized during SMDS-III, took into account various points of view which were directly or indirectly expressed by a range of stakeholders over the course of three years from SMDS-I to SMDS-III. IMI took heed of these suggestions, while also taking the opportunity to examine the administrative architecture of other similar organizations.

IMI is now in the process of institutionalizing its programs, activities, and administrative framework, together with greater participation of stakeholders in this process. Towards this, IMI registered itself in May, 2014 and created a small, permanent secretariat in New Delhi. IMI has, through a very broad-based consultative process over a period of more than three years, emerged as a dedicated forum for all states of IHR, including the North-eastern Region. It consists of individuals and institutions dedicated to achieving its vision and mission. It now endeavours to further its work in the three key areas of its agenda.

## *Present & Future*

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The positions that are taken by disparate stakeholders and by members of civil society in IHR states may, at times if not often, not be in harmony and congruence with each other. Similarly, under the ever changing centre–state relationship, the states may need interlocutors and advocates who facilitate mediation between two or more opposing sides. Indian mountain states are historically entities, often without adequate financial and administrative experience, and human resources.

Through the SMDs and other events, IMI has consciously reached out to mountain-specific international regional organisations such as ICIMOD, multilateral-funding agencies such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and GIZ, and charities such as the Sir Ratan Tata Trust, in addition to state governments, ministries and departments of the Government of India and other central and state educational and R&D organisations. IMI is a member of Mountain Partnerships, a United Nations voluntary alliance of partners dedicated to improving the lives of mountain people and protecting mountain environments around the world.

At present there is no administrative framework or central ministry which is in a position to effectively implement the goals set for sustainable development and disaster risk reduction, and address the challenges posed by climate change. Each of these requires dedicated attention, resources, and evolving interventions. Mountain ecosystems add yet another dimension to this complex situation, and this aspect needs to be informed by the latest in science and technology. Arguably, the resultant vacuum is not easy to fill and it calls for a dynamic and effective discussion forum, where all issues can be discussed openly and in an informed manner, feeding the outcomes to the concerned ministry, department, or state agency.

The Integrated Mountain Initiative makes a modest, but determined attempt to create such a discussion forum in India, through an integrative, inclusive, voluntary, participatory, and transparent process, with support from the Union Government, state governments, multi-lateral international and regional agencies involved with mountain regions, and more importantly with the help, co-operation and support of civil society organisations in IHR. As and when, an official discussion forum to address the evolving and expanding needs and problems of Indian mountain states is constituted, the role of IMI would transform into supporting such a forum in achieving its objectives by linking it firmly with civil societies of the mountain regions of India. In reaching out to individuals and institutions which may be in a position to make it more effective and transformative, IMI is taking the first steps towards this lofty objective.

## ***Governing Council and Office Bearers***

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Dr. Raghunandan Singh Tolia is the **President**. He presently steers the Centre for Public Policy, School of Social Sciences, Doon University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand as its NTPC Chair Professor. He is a former civil servant, having held the position of Chief Secretary and Chief Information Commissioner of Uttarakhand.



Alemtemshi Jamir is the **Vice-President**. He joined the Indian Administrative Service in 1977, and retired in January 2014 as Chief Secretary, Nagaland. He was the Team Leader of NEPED and is a strong proponent of jhum (shifting) cultivation.



Sushil Ramola is the **Secretary**. He is the co-founder and currently MD and CEO of B-ABLE. He is an active member of the board of several well-known NGOs. He is a chemical engineer and an IIM, Ahmedabad alumnus.



Fantry Mein Jaswal is the **Treasurer**. She is a former civil servant. She joined the Indian Revenue (Service Customs & Central Excise) in 1976. In August 2012, she was appointed the Chairperson of the Arunachal Pradesh State Finance Commission. She retired in June, 2014.



P D Rai is a sitting Member of Parliament (Sikkim) of the 16th Lok Sabha. He is an acknowledged expert in the area of public policy and has served as the Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Commission of Sikkim. He is an alumnus of IIT Kanpur and IIM Ahmedabad.



Rigzin Spalbar is the Chairman of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council.



Dr. Tej Partap is the Vice Chancellor of the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir.



Amba Jamir is the Executive Secretary of the Sustainable Development Forum, Nagaland.



Dr. T S Papola is a leading Development Economist. He was Director, Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow and the Institute for Studies in Industrial Development, New Delhi. He also worked as a Senior Advisor with the Planning Commission of India and as a Division Head with ICIMOD. Currently, he is Honorary Professor at ISID.



Dr. Pushkin Phartiyal is the Executive Director of CHEA. Dr. Phartiyal has 16 years of experience in the Indian Himalayas in particular, and different parts of the region in general. Pushkin is Fellow of LEAD, Ashoka, Synergos, UNEP's Eco-Peace Leadership Centre, South Korea and UNEP's Asia Pacific Leadership Programme, China.



Rajendra Prasad Gurung is the CEO of the Ecotourism & Conservation Society of Sikkim. He is a member of the Sikkim State Board for Wildlife, a Member of the Expert (Ecotourism) Committee, Sikkim State Biodiversity Board, and a founding member of Zero Waste Himalayas.



Mridula Paul is the **Programme Director**. She is an environmental lawyer and development professional. She has practised before the High Court of Madras and worked with Keystone Foundation in the Western Ghats. She has an MPhil in Development Studies from the University of Oxford.

The first Sustainable Mountain Development Summit, Nainital, May 2011



SMDS-II  
Gangtok  
May, 2012

Institutionalization  
workshop in  
Nagaland House,  
December, 2012



SMDS-III  
Kohima  
September,  
2013

