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Editorial

Broadened Governance for *MRD* and Reviews of Climate Change Research in the HKH

Dear Readers,

MRD *is proud to announce a broadening of its geographic and thematic expertise, achieved through a change in governance introduced earlier this year and supported unanimously by the institutional members of the International Mountain Society (IMS)*—MRD's *publisher. This change in governance has enabled* MRD *to enlarge chief editorship from one to several distinguished experts who have a track record in mountain research and development and represent a renowned mountain organization.* MRD *welcomes Dr David Molden, Director General of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), as its second Editor-in-Chief. Immediately after agreeing to serve in this important strategic position, David Molden worked with Hans Hurni on a call for papers on "Water Governance in Mountains"(*MRD *33.3) and supported the focus of the present issue's MountainNotes section on reviews of climate change research in the Hindu Kush–Himalaya. This kind of strategic guidance will further strengthen* MRD's *mission. Chief editorship is planned to be shared by 3–4 renowned mountain experts who promote* MRD*'s long-term vision and define the journal's strategic orientation, under the overall guidance of the IMS.*

In this Open Issue, 3 papers in the MountainDevelopment section present very different tools and approaches to sustainable development in mountains, and analyze how they can best be applied to manage and use ecosystem services both sustainably and equitably. In the first paper, Hett and coauthors show how a country-wide comparison of Lao PDR forests' carbon storage capacity with a village-level mapping of poverty can become a feasible means of ensuring that implementation of the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) mechanism takes into account both environmental and human factors. In the next paper, De Ros et al analyze the function of mountain landscapes in local initiatives aiming for sustainable development in the Italian Alps. The authors use the sociology of translation to demonstrate how effective networks between human and nonhuman actors (in this case landscapes) were created. Finally, Fuller and Zahnd show how a solar greenhouse project succeeded in enhancing food security in Nepal's marginalized Humla District; in this case, using solar energy helps to add value to local development of a poverty-stricken mountain area.

The MountainResearch section opens with an article by Steinicke and Neuburger that assesses the impact of community-based tourism on regional development in the Mt Kenya region: looking into the democratically organized Mt Kenya Guides and Porters Safari Club, the authors show that while this organization has reduced the vulnerability of local families, the impact at the regional level remains minimal due to the overall small volume of tourist inflow in the area. In the following paper, Lehr and colleagues offer a comparison of the impact of large-scale climatic oscillations on snowfall parameters in the world's major downhill ski areas; this extensive overview is intended as a support tool for managing such areas. In the final paper in this section, Agarwal et al analyze the dependence of spring discharge on rainfall in the Midwestern Himalayan Hills of Uttarakhand; they underline that local communities suffer from water scarcity despite the area's rich water resources, and suggest how to remediate this development problem.

The MountainNotes section offers 3 review papers emerging from an ICIMOD workshop in August 2011 where experts debated up-to-date scientific knowledge about the impacts of climate change in the Hindu Kush–Himalayan (HKH) region. Miller and co-authors review key scientific evidence of climate change impacts on glacier hydrology and river discharge, concluding with 7 striking insights and a number of challenges to be met by future research. Bonasoni et al offer a much needed overview of research findings on atmospheric pollution in the HKH region; they analyze the implications of "brown clouds" for the regional climate and make policy recommendations based on the evidence reviewed. Finally, Rita Sharma presents a synthesis of information available on the impacts of climate and land use change on human health; the article concludes with a research agenda that underlines the need for interdisciplinary work on quantifying, modeling, and valuating health impacts.

We hope that the insights and agendas provided by the articles in this Open Issue will stimulate further research and development efforts in other mountain areas.

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