Mountainous areas, with their characteristic snow and glacier cover, have long been recognized as special hydrological environments, receiving relatively heavy precipitation. The streams originating in the mountains, nourished with distinct seasonal rhythms, provide water for the often heavily populated adjacent lowlands. In recognition of the importance of mountains as sources of water supply, the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) through its International Commission on Snow and Ice (ICSI) has sponsored many symposia on the subject (the titles of some of the more recent proceedings volumes are listed elsewhere in this volume).

The International Symposium on Snow and Glacier Hydrology (ISSGH'92) was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 16 to 21 November 1992. Hosted and organized by His Majesty's Government of Nepal, Ministry of Water Resources, Department of Hydrology and Meteorology and supported by the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the Symposium was sponsored by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and by the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) through its International Commission on Snow and Ice (ICSI). The Symposium was attended by 54 participants from 11 countries and 19 observers from three countries.

The Scientific Committee for the Symposium consisted of: Dr. S. P. Adhikary (Chairman), Prof. S. R. Chalise, Dr. W. E. Grabs, Prof. K. Higuchi, Prof. M. Kuhn, Prof. H. Lang, Prof. P. A. Mayewski, Dr. O. Reinwarth, Mr. K. Shankar, Dr. M. Spreafico, Prof. W. Tangborn, Prof. G. J. Young. In addition to members of the Scientific Committee, Dr. J. C. Rodda, Dr. D. N. Collins and Dr. M. Stone undertook review of the papers.

As a result of discussions during the Symposium the following recommendations were made:

- The Hindu Kush-Himalaya is a unique region of critical importance to the people of the Central Asian Region in many ways. It is of particular importance as a source of water for surrounding areas. Water is essential for maintaining the natural environment which is under increasing stress, and for sustainability of socio-economic development through provision of fresh water for drinking, agriculture, energy and industry.
- The recent International Conference on Water and the Environment and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development stressed the need for better water resources monitoring and better
scientific understanding of the resource as a basis for more informed management decisions.

With these principles in mind and in strong support of the recommendations made at the Second Consultative Meeting at the Regional Working Group on Mountain Hydrology (March 1992), the participants of the Symposium recommended that:

1. Scientific studies to further the understanding of snow and ice processes including glacier dynamics and atmospheric processes influencing them in the high mountain environment be promoted and encouraged in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya (HKH) region.

2. Long-term monitoring programmes on snow and ice resources as well as on changing climatic conditions based on already existing programmes, taking account of local conditions and utilizing local expertise, be actively promoted.

3. Models and other techniques for forecasting water supply, sediment load and flood hazards relative to the HKH region be further developed and applied with particular attention to the mitigation of glacier lake outburst floods.

4. Data bases on snow and glacier hydrology should be developed for practical end uses and should be made freely available so that rational water management decisions may be made.

5. Innovative techniques including remote sensing and GIS be encouraged in order to collect, store and analyse data efficiently.

6. Consideration be given by the countries of the region, in cooperation with the International agencies, in conducting a Himalayan Experiment (HIMEX) similar to the ALPEX initiative in the Alps.

7. Setting up of experimental watersheds to include glacierized areas be actively encouraged to promote integrated watershed management and to facilitate environmental impact assessments.

8. Dialogue between scientists and water managers be encouraged through the holding of meetings, workshops and symposia on a regular basis.

9. Training of technicians and managers be undertaken on an on-going basis and in a structured programme.

10. Coordination of scientific monitoring and training activities be promoted at a central location with the active involvement of ICIMOD, WMO, UNESCO, governments and institutions of the region and external support agencies as appropriate.

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