



## **Background Note**

# **SERVIR-Himalaya Regional Inception Workshop**

### **1. Background**

SERVIR is an earth observation, monitoring, and visualization system that integrates satellite and other geospatial data for improved scientific knowledge and decision-making by managers, researchers, students, and the general public. The SERVIR system is web-based ([www.servir.net](http://www.servir.net)) and makes available earth observation data, decision-support tools for interpreting the data, and online mapping capability. In 2007, SERVIR was recognized by the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) as an early achiever of the GEO vision, and as such, SERVIR provides a model for building the capacity of countries to use earth observations and geospatial information technologies in regions around the world. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has partnered with NASA to support development of additional “geospatial one-stop” earth observation systems in other regions of the world.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) has been promoting the use of geographic information and earth observation applications to support the development and adoption of mountain policies and practices in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region (HKH). ICIMOD is recognized as a regional resource center on geo-information and earth observation application for the HKH region. In the context of achieving the common goals, USAID, NASA and ICIMOD have joined hands to work together to establish SERVIR-Himalaya as the third regional SERVIR operational facility. The SERVIR-Himalaya aims to augment ICIMOD and its network of partners’ capabilities as an established regional resource centre on geospatial information and earth observation applications in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region.

The overarching purpose of SERVIR-Himalaya initiative is to improve environmental decision-making in the HKH region through dissemination and analyses of earth observation information. The applications and information services will be prioritized and developed based on users’ needs assessment which will look into the gaps and needs for capacity building of the stakeholders for efficient and effective use of these applications. The Regional Inception Workshop is being organized to introduce SERVIR-Himalaya to the stakeholders from the HKH region and engage them in the process of defining the needs for development of information products and the establishment of the geospatial portal.

## **2. Objectives**

The workshop will introduce the SERVIR-Himalaya initiative to the national partner institutions and stakeholders from the region and will help to identify the gaps and needs of different information products from SERVIR Himalaya.

## **3. Audience**

The overarching purpose of the SERVIR-Himalaya initiative is to improve environmental decision-making in the HKH region through dissemination and analyses of earth observation information. Stakeholders for this kind of information range from decision-makers at the regional level addressing trans-boundary issues, to national governments, scientists, students, the general public, donor agencies and development practitioners working in the region. The workshop will include the scientists, researchers and professionals working in the field of environment, disaster, ecosystem, natural resources and protected area management from different institutions of the HKH region.

## **4. Expected outcome**

The workshop will provide an opportunity to introduce the SERVIR-Himalaya initiative and its activities to the regional stakeholders and potential partners. The feedback and suggestions from the participants will be useful in needs assessment, understanding national priorities and planning for further activities within the SERVIR framework.

## **5. Venue and logistics**

The workshop will take place at ICIMOD Conference Hall, Kathmandu on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2010.