

Transboundary educational programme on sustainable mountain development in the Hindu Kush Himalaya

Phanchung, PhD, ICIMOD Mountain Chair (2017–2019), and Director of the Department of Research and External Relations, Royal University of Bhutan



ICIMOD

HUC
Himalayan University Consortium

THE HINDU KUSH HIMALAYA (HKH) AT A GLANCE



- 8 countries
- 240 million people in the HKH mountains and hills
- 1.65 billion people downstream
- 4 Global Biodiversity Hotspots
- Largest reserves of ice outside the polar regions
- Diverse cultures, languages, religions, and traditional knowledge systems

HIMALAYAN UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM (HUC)

HUC is committed to enhancing collaboration and networking among Himalayan universities, promoting research and mountain-specific education among professional women and men for sustainable mountain development (SMD).

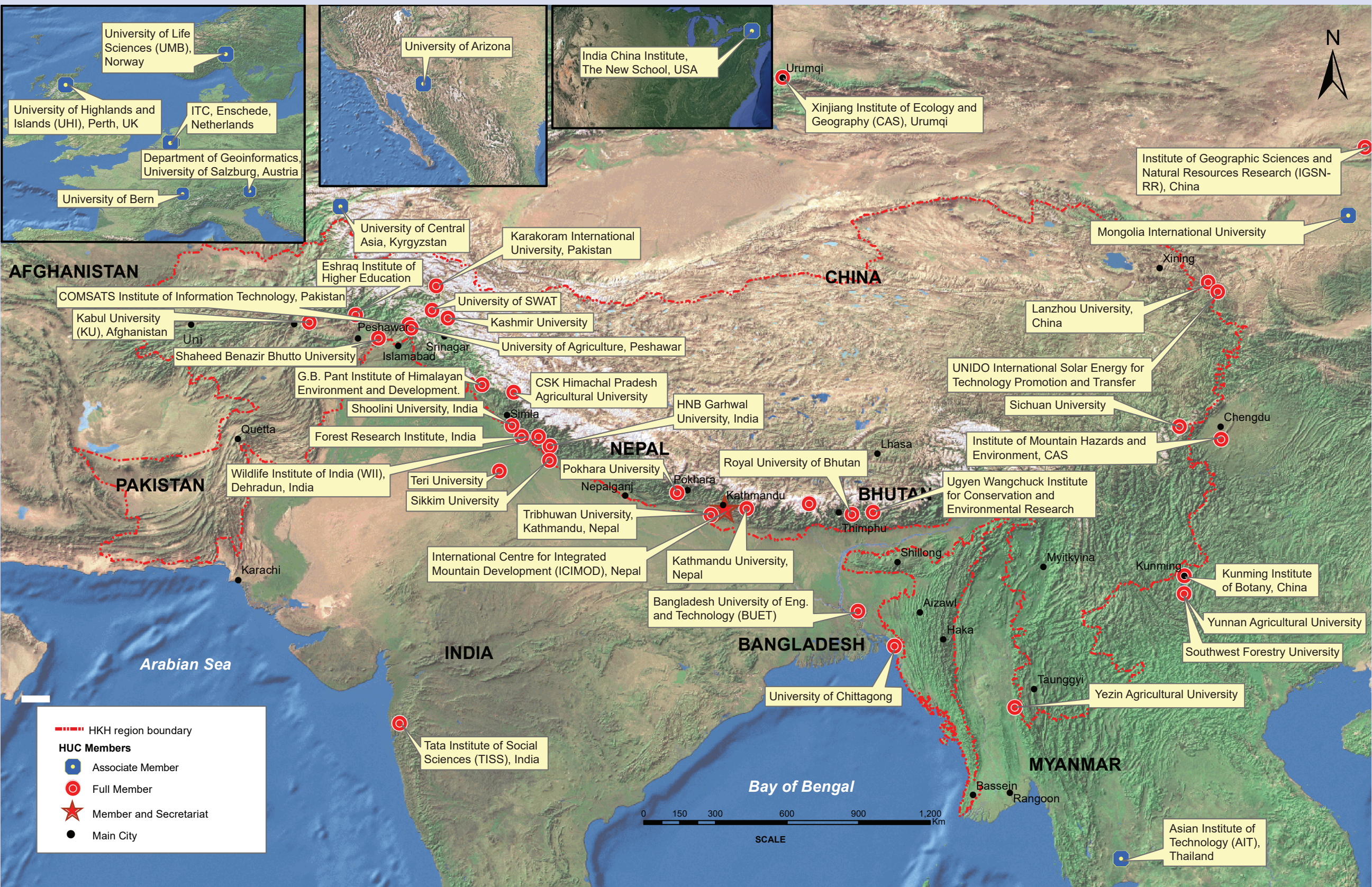
- 77 Total members,
- 62 Full members,
- 15 Associate members

The HUC Secretariat is hosted at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), based in Nepal.

HUC is building a dynamic mountain knowledge partnership among universities, ICIMOD, and regional member country partners to promote research and learning.

HUC partners are involved in developing and sharing new curricula that address mountain challenges of the future.

The Consortium aims to make regional academic institutions capable of generating high-quality knowledge. It also seeks to build capacity and skills for SMD in the HKH region.



Transboundary educational programme on SMD in the HKH

Mountain and downstream communities are faced with myriad challenges posed by climate and other drivers of change.

Universities in the HKH are ideally placed to lead the efforts for sustainability by producing competent graduates who can work for the wellbeing and welfare of mountain people.

Youth from the HKH region face dilemmas in balancing their pursuit for gainful employment, ideals, and regional identity. Universities in the HKH should provide a platform to students for acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills, and ethics to contribute to the sustainability of their communities and the environment.

A transboundary educational programme on SMD — offered by HUC members — would help build a network of future-generation actors committed to SMD.

Challenges for the SMD curriculum across borders and disciplines

The curriculum needs to cover transboundary perspectives

Holistic/inclusive SMD disciplines need to be studied through a transdisciplinary approach

Students need to possess knowledge, skills, and core transferable competencies

The curriculum needs to ensure students' productive future work, personal development, and active citizenship

Opportunities for the SMD curriculum within HUC

A network of academics and researchers can be formed among HUC members

Active student exchange programmes can be set up

Credits can be transferable within HUC members

Students can imbibe cultural values and transboundary, transdisciplinary learning

Students serving as ambassadors can foster people-to-people connect