

## Changing Landscapes

The Hindu Kush-Himalayan region extends 3500 km across eight countries. The region contains over 3700 square kilometres of eternal snow and ice. It is known as the 'third pole' of the earth due to the amount of water stored in the ice and snow. It is also the 'water tower' of Asia, the source of ten large river systems that provide water to around 210 million people. The basins of these rivers supply freshwater to a further 1.3 billion people. The Himalayan people contribute very little to global warming, yet it is affecting both the mountain communities and the fragile mountain ecosystem.

The impact of global change, and especially climate change, in the Himalayas is apparent. The powerful drivers shaping the lives and livelihoods of the Himalayan people include globalisation, migration, population growth, changes in local land-use, and introduction and removal of species, as well as the climate change which is linked to all of these. Climate change is leading to a higher incidence and intensity of natural disasters, as well as affecting the farming systems. It is extremely difficult to predict how these changes will develop; the complexity of the mountain climate system means that predictions vary widely, and the smallest changes can have severe consequences.

The Himalaya – *Changing Landscapes* photo exhibition aims to draw the world's attention to the enormous impact of global change, and especially climate change, on the world's highest mountain range. Global warming in particular is likely to have far reaching consequences – on water, agriculture, biodiversity, and the many other factors that provide a basis for people to survive. Globalisation affects people's expectations and opportunities, for better and worse. The people of the Himalayas have always had to survive under challenging conditions. But the changes today are different – more rapid, more extreme and more difficult to predict.

The exhibition also includes a collection of photographs of the scientific teams conducting their research in the 1950s.



ICIMOD is an independent regional knowledge and learning centre serving eight member countries in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region, as well as the global mountain community. Founded in 1983, ICIMOD is based in Kathmandu, Nepal. ICIMOD brings together a partnership of regional member countries, partner institutions, and donors with a commitment to secure a better future for the mountain people and environment.

ICIMOD believes in a future where mountain people have enhanced livelihoods and increased social and environmental security, and where the benefits and opportunities afforded to the region by nature can be enjoyed for generations to come.

### ICIMOD

International Centre for Integrated  
Mountain Development

GPO Box 3226  
Khumaltar, Kathmandu, Nepal

Phone +977 1 5003222  
Fax +977 1 5003299

[www.icimod.org](http://www.icimod.org)  
[info@icimod.org](mailto:info@icimod.org)

# Himalaya

~ *Changing Landscapes*



## Photo exhibition

### Bern

October 25 – 31, 2009

Waisenhausplatz  
(Meret-Oppenheim-Brunnen)

10 am – 6 pm

Contents in English, German  
and French

Entrance free

ICIMOD

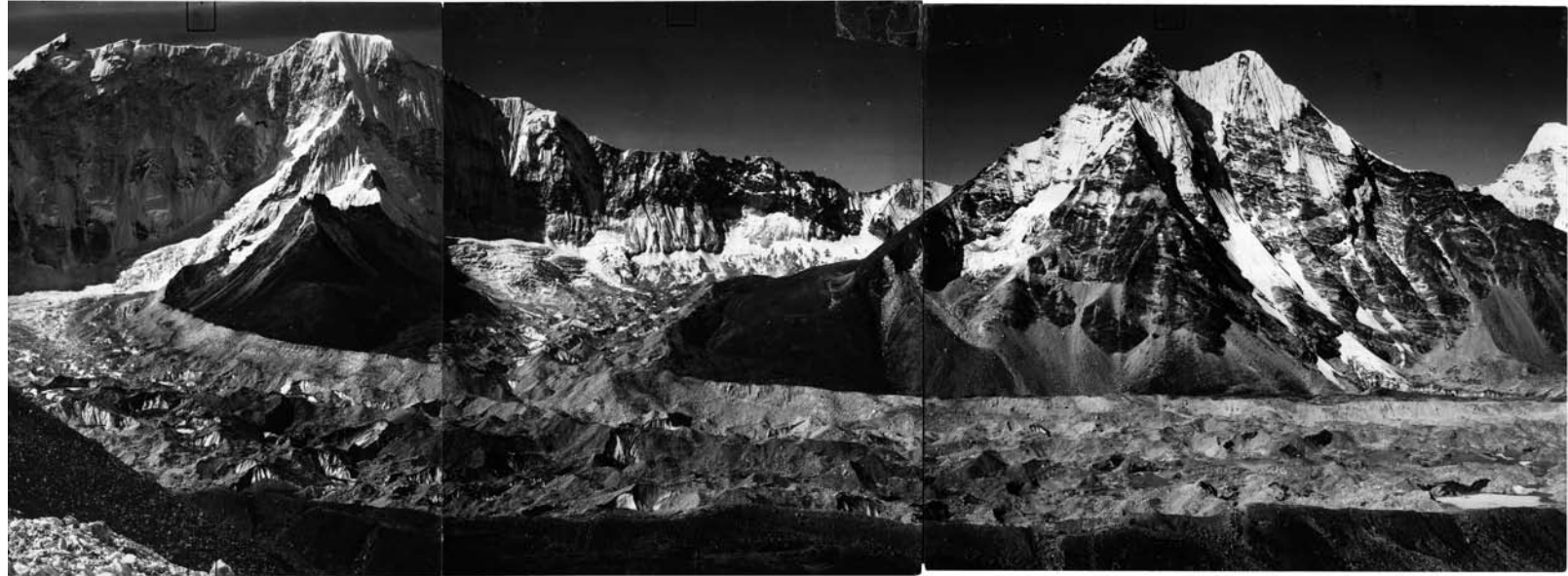


[www.changing-landscapes.com](http://www.changing-landscapes.com)

## Historic Photographs

During the 1950s and 1960s Austrian and Swiss scientists conducted extensive glacier studies of the Everest region in Nepal. The hundreds of black and white photographs taken by these teams are of immense value in understanding the impacts of climate change on the Himalayas. In 2007 mountain geographer Alton Byers revisited many of original photo sites and took replicates, illustrating the changes in the landscapes over the past half century.

These repeat mountain panoramas, together with other photographs from renowned Swiss photographers Fritz Berger and Toni Hagen, have now been united in a unique photo exhibition: *Himalaya – Changing Landscapes*, put together by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).



The repeat photographs show evidence of fluctuations in the glaciers and glacial lakes in the wake of global climate change.

The exhibition features historical portraits of the Himalaya's residents – and how their culture and habits have changed over the last decades.



Over the last fifty years small ponds have grown into a huge lake that threatens downstream communities in the event of an outburst.

