

## NEWS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

### START Executive Director Visits the APN Secretariat

Dr. Hassan Virji, Executive Director of the Global Change System for Analysis, Research and Training (START) International Secretariat, visited the APN Secretariat Office in Kobe, Japan on 14 January 2011. This visit provided a strategic and perfect opportunity for both APN and START to update each other on initiatives and ongoing efforts in global change research, capacity building and strengthening science-policy linkages, particularly in the Asia-Pacific Region and also to discuss potential partnership activities ahead. Dr. Virji expressed his sincere gratitude to the APN for its strong collaboration and support towards START activities in the past including the funding provided in a number of projects and activities such as those organised by the START Regional Centres.



Dr. Hassan Virji, START Executive Director (third from right)

Specific activities and plans were discussed and the APN Secretariat positively welcomed the proposed strategies to further enhance the partnership between APN and START. Concept papers on targeted activities will be developed for comments and further input by the APN Steering Committee before presenting at the 16<sup>th</sup> APN Inter-Governmental Meeting (IGM)/Scientific Planning Group (SPG) Meeting in April for IGM's approval. Both APN and START are committed to engage more actively in each other's activities to strengthen their partnership on global change-related endeavours in the future.

## APN OUT AND ABOUT

### Workshop on Integrated Studies of Environmental Change in Tibet-Himalayan Region, Kathmandu, Nepal, 13-15 September 2010

The Workshop on Integrated Studies of Environmental Change and Climate Adaptation Responses in the Tibet-Himalayan Region was held jointly by the Australian National University (ANU), Australian Government Overseas Aid Program (AusAID), Institute for Development and Innovation (IDI), Nepal, and Monsoon Asia Integrated Regional Study (MAIRS), China, on 13-15 September 2010, in Kathmandu, Nepal. This workshop, attended by 40 experts, is part of the activities of an APN-supported project entitled 'Impacts of Global Change on the Dynamics of Snow, Glaciers and Runoff over the Himalayan Mountains and their Consequences for Highland and Downstream Regions.' The project is being led by Dr. Kedar Lal Shrestha, IDI President. Mr. Yukihiro Imanari, APN Secretariat Executive Manager delivered a presentation highlighting the network's major activities and its role in supporting regional collaboration and promoting global change research in the Asia-Pacific region.

Building upon a couple of presentations on the current status of research in the Tibet-Himalayan region, workshop participants tried to identify gaps, by particularly looking at the following areas:

- Water resource changes;
- Land/ecosystem changes;
- Climate governance and water/land management; and
- Regional collaboration framework.

The participants explored the option of establishing a committee to coordinate research activities and possible regional/sub-regional collaboration. Joint efforts are crucial: the fragile ecosystems and the diverse patterns of land use in the Tibet-Himalayan region are additionally endangered by the complicated topography, economical and political pressure, and lack of scientific infrastructure in many basic areas. To achieve a tangible output, the participants discussed the development of a strategic framework or road map that will guide a clear research agenda with shared visions, goals, strategic objectives and projects for the Tibet-Himalayan region.

Knowledge and information sharing comprised Session 5. The Session Chair led the discussion to determine an effective mechanism to enhance knowledge sharing in the region. The region's need for a Knowledge Management System or a web-based Geographic Information System (GIS) Decision Support System was emphasised as well as the important role of media and other organisations in keeping civil society well informed.

A brief Wrap-up Session discussed next steps that must be taken to address challenges in climate change adaptation specifically in the Tibet-Himalayan region. More information will be included in the final project report to be uploaded on the APN website in due course: <http://www.apn-gcr.org/newAPN/resources/list2009projects.htm>.

