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FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

Basanta Shrestha, Director of Strategic Cooperation works at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) with the key portfolio to provide strategic leadership and partnership development to bring about transformative change on ICIMOD's operations. Mr. Shrestha has a Masters in Engineering in Computer Science from the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand in 1989 and a Bachelors in Electrical and Electronic Engineering in 1985 from Madras University, India.

Mr Shrestha is well-known for his outstanding strategic leadership quality, an experienced manager and team builder, and proven track-record of excellent networking in the ICIMOD region and around the world. Under his leadership, he has developed highly successful partnerships with the national institutions and strategic cooperation with key international agencies towards sustainable mountain development in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region. Mr Shrestha has been instrumental in mobilizing resources and has developed, planned, managed, and implemented highly successful programmes to support mountain development policies and practices.

Mr Shrestha joined ICIMOD in 1990 as a founder member of Mountain Environment and Natural Resources Information System (MENRIS) programme at ICIMOD. Under his leadership, MENRIS is widely known for its pioneering efforts in promoting the use of earth observation and geospatial technologies for sustainable mountain development. He has championed the successful partnerships with NASA and USAID to spearhead SERVIR-Himalaya programme – a flagship initiative to bridge technology and innovation to mountain development challenges.

Mr Shrestha is a key proponent in promoting mountain agenda in the global and regional forums and successfully aligned ICIMOD programmes with global priorities such as GEO, SERVIR, GBIF, FAO, International Space Charter among others. Mr Shrestha has been granted a Presidential Award (2001) and Special Achievement Award (2014) by Environmental System Research Institute, USA, the award was given to his leadership and in recognition of ICIMOD's contributions towards promotion of GIS technology and applications in the Himalayan region.

