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Eco-politics of rangeland management in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan Region : articulating ecology into food sovereignty , environmental security , development and peace for a sustainable world

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Introduction Rangelands are the uncultivated areas or abandoned cultivated areas and occasionally fallow lands that harbour natural or seeded/ planted vegetation of herbaceous and woody species and that serve as habitats of a variety of wild animals , support domesticated animals , provide unique products and ecosystem services especially vital for the livelihoods of livestock-dependent communities (Singh 2007) . Rangelands make approximately 70 percent of the world's total area (Zhaoli 2004) . The current dismal state of the Hindu Kush-Himalayan (HKH) Region – in many areas full of chaos , turmoil and instability – could be transformed into a state springing hope , peace and development . Ecologically sound natural resource management is a precondition to maintain essential ecological integrity of any system , which is of critical value serving as the strongest foundation for the sustainability of the natural resources and systems on the living planet . Ecological integrity actually is the real substance of human happiness .

Materials and methods Matter for this paper has been largely based on the eco-philosophy the author has been brooding over for sometime . Eco-philosophy , from which emerges the eco-politics , could be a strong foundation for the reclamation of mountain rangelands shared by the countries of the HKH Region through co-management promoting mutual cooperation . Additionally , this would be instrumental in dispelling tension and restoring lasting peace vital for food sovereignty , environmental security and sustainable development in the HKH Region .

Results and discussion

Ecology as a Culture of Peace Ecological integration of all the ecosystems and biomes of the Earth is the most essential condition of the very sustainability of life on the planet . Peace on Earth emanates from the condition of the ecosystems that serve humanity with life-sustaining foods , life-supporting products and life-stimulating services . Ecology is the culture of peace . Ecological well being in the Region would ensure economic well-being of the livestock-dependent communities who form majority in the mountains .

Biological Corridors : A Concept Co-management of the rangelands in the HKH Region , as also proposed by Zhaoli (2004) , should be regarded not only essential but an imperative for restoring ecological balance and promoting peace and sustainable development in the Region . Rangeland ecosystems could be transformed into biological corridors linking the unique biodiversity-laden habitats between two or amongst many countries in the Himalayan Region .

Eco-politics Concept The eco-politics can induce the member nations of the HKH Region to undertake co-management of their natural resources in the border areas and share tangible benefits to be accrued through ecological affluence . Intangible benefits that would infuse sustainability in the land-based production and livelihood systems will come the natural way . Resource conservation-based eco-politics , rather than the resource degradation-oriented conventional geopolitics , would give healing touch to the wounded mountains and their long-suffering people .

Conclusions Eco-politics with meaningful fusion of ecology and politics that can guarantee unity and integrity would articulate into the welfare of the people and all living beings and the nourishing systems on Earth . Food sovereignty , environmental security , development and peace achievable through pragmatic eco-politics would be exemplary for other ecological regions of the world – a path towards acquiring a happy and sustainable world .

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