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If we consider the Earth as our home in a similar way to which we might consider a great house with many floors and many rooms; then it is easy to understand the dangers, which threaten the whole house, should the roof become destabilized? In this manner it would help us to consider all upon Earth above 3,000 feet altitude as the roof and all below as the body of the house.

'The Roof of the World' is comprised of all of Earth's mountain regions. However some areas form the top of 'The Roof of the World'. One of these areas is the Andes another is known as the Himalayan Hindu Kush. The Hindu Kush-Himalayan region covers an area of more than 4.3 million square kilometres. It spans large areas of Tibet and China, along with areas in Bhutan, Nepal, India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan. This region stores more snow, ice and permafrost than anywhere else on Earth outside the Polar Regions. Due to this it is now being known as 'The Third Pole'.

Scientific evidence shows that the Tibet Plateau, the main body of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, is the "starter" and "regulating area" of Climate Change in the Northern Hemisphere, playing an important role in conserving water resources and controlling the Climate. It is the steep Qinghai-Tibet Plateau that changes the westerly wind circulation, and brings the currents of warm and wet air from the Indian Ocean to east China, The change of ground surface vegetation and ice cover, influence the stability of atmospheric circulation systems across Asia, and even the Northern Hemisphere (Zhang Yongze, Director of the Environmental Protection Bureau of Tibet Autonomous Region(TEPB).

As the Himalayas affects the Climate of the Northern Hemisphere, likewise the Andes affects the Southern Hemisphere. Imbalances here affect the whole world, not purely their locality. Considering this, the health of 'The Roof of the World'

seriously needs immediate attention and the detrimental affects of hydro-dams on the environment in these regions should also be reconsidered. Along with all life on Earth, hydro dams are dependent upon healthy glacial flow. With melting glaciers they are not so reliable now as when first conceived. Given the quantity of high quality free solar energy in mountain regions it would be beneficial to replace hydro-dam electrical projects with solar power projects.

'The Roof of the World' is integral for the regulation of Earths' Fresh Water Cycle, Climatic Cooling System and overall Climate. For these systems to work effectively indigenous mountain forests are essential. Earth's Fresh Water Cycle is by Nature, a fast regenerating system. Given the right ingredients of varied mixed mountain forest plants, it can provide enough fresh water for all life on Earth continuously. Related to the massive mountain region deforestation, which has taken place largely in the last 100 years, the Roof of the World has become seriously destabilized. It is recorded that as much as 75% of indigenous mountain forest has been removed worldwide. For the survival of biodiversity and all life on Earth the health of indigenous mountain forests are of paramount importance. If mountain region forests can be restored by approximately 23% and that, which we already have could be protected; then Earths' fresh water system could conceivably be regenerated and re-balance itself. Glacial retreat could be slowed down and halted and life on Earth could potentially continue indefinitely.

To conserve the natural environments already existing on Earth, fresh water is vital. It has already been agreed by world governments that high levels of funding, investment and greater support are required in mountain areas. This is essential for the survival of both highland and lowland communities (U.N General Assembly, 29 September 2005).

" In this respect it would be of benefit for downstream communities to invest in mountain region rehabilitation, as, through watershed protection, they provide direct economic benefits and ensure necessary environmental services such as protecting fresh water supplies." (Bishkek, Global Mountain Summit, 2002).

All of these factors, including the major part, which the Himalayas of Tibet, Nepal,

Bhutan and India play in Climate regulation, need to be considered, when contemplating the future of life on Earth. Compared to this, economic considerations are of secondary importance. Healthy environments are of far greater import as they support all life, along with all economies.

Something needs doing swiftly and we do not have time for further long discussions and deliberations. We still potentially have time to repair 'The Roof of the World'. According to principles agreed upon by governments of the United Nations in Rio de Janeiro in 1992:

“Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage; lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation. (UNCED, 1992 .Principle 15)

Humanity is part of the global biodiversity and cannot survive separately. This applies to all life on Earth. Concerted action with emphasis on and consideration of long-term environmental sustainability has to be adopted for the biodiversity of life on Earth to continue. For this to be effective deforestation in mountainous regions worldwide has to be discontinued.

It is important to recognize that the collaboration with mountain communities is essential for the effectiveness of any environmental mountain restoration program. It is only by involving and supporting them, that an endeavour of this magnitude can be successfully achieved and prove to be long-term sustainable.

It is in everyone's' interest to educate themselves and one another upon these matters while solutions are still possible. Our human responsibility is to take care. We all have a part to play in caring for our Earth home and all the children upon it.