



# Protecting Mountain Biodiversity

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IPROMO Course

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# Content

- How the journey began
- Experience of working with mountain communities with regard to environmental conservation
- Future plans and application contexts



# How did this journey begin?

- Early childhood: growing up in the Himalayan belt
- Volunteering work with LEDeG
- Academia & NGO experience: socio-environmental management + participatory policy making
- Living & working in fragile mountain ecosystems in India & Greece



# Academic Experience

- PhD - Participatory community development
- Post-Doc - Knowledge management in global development organisations - translation of specialised knowledge for indigenous communities.



# Work Experience

- Rural Wings - Remote Mountain communities in Europe (Environment, Sustainable Livelihoods, Health, Education)
- Africa4All (Capacity Development for African Parliaments; use of GIS & open source technology to improve environmental awareness of pressing problems, e.g. water shortage, marine life conservation)




# Monitoring & Evaluation

- Working with remote mountain communities on establishing baseline conditions
- Undertaking impact assessment of ICT and environmental initiatives
- Providing a feedback loop for community members & policy makers alike
- Where there is lack of political will - lobbying via increased transparency, social media



# Participatory Development

- Tapping into local knowledge (climate, soil types, vegetation, agricultural patterns, wildlife, etc.)
- Tacit knowledge - oral traditions, community level decision making - governance
- Outreach of environmental initiatives - benefits/ costs
- Ownership of technologies, knowledge and outcomes = shaping policy

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- 128 remote rural sites across Europe
  - Mountains & Island ecosystems
  - Environmental Education
  - Satellite based delivery of services





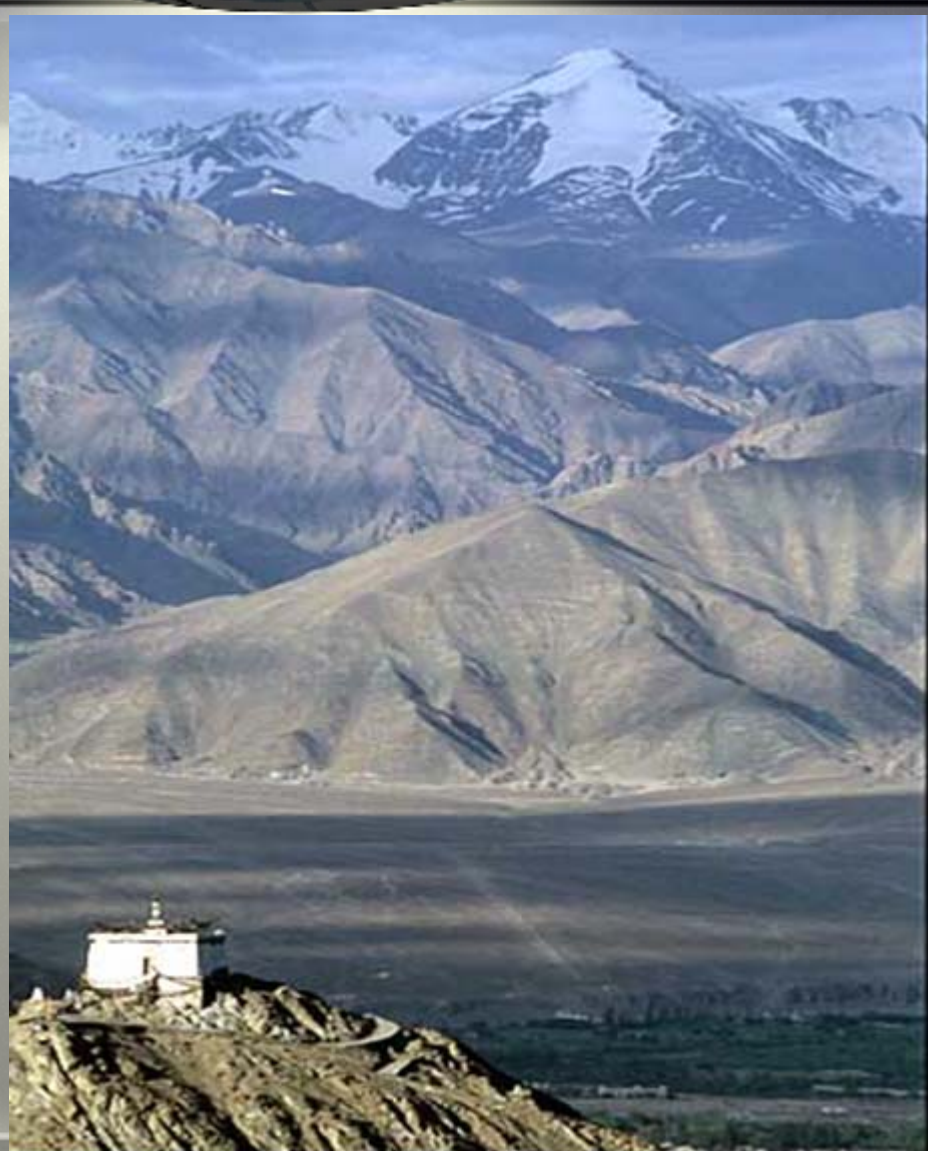
# LEDeG

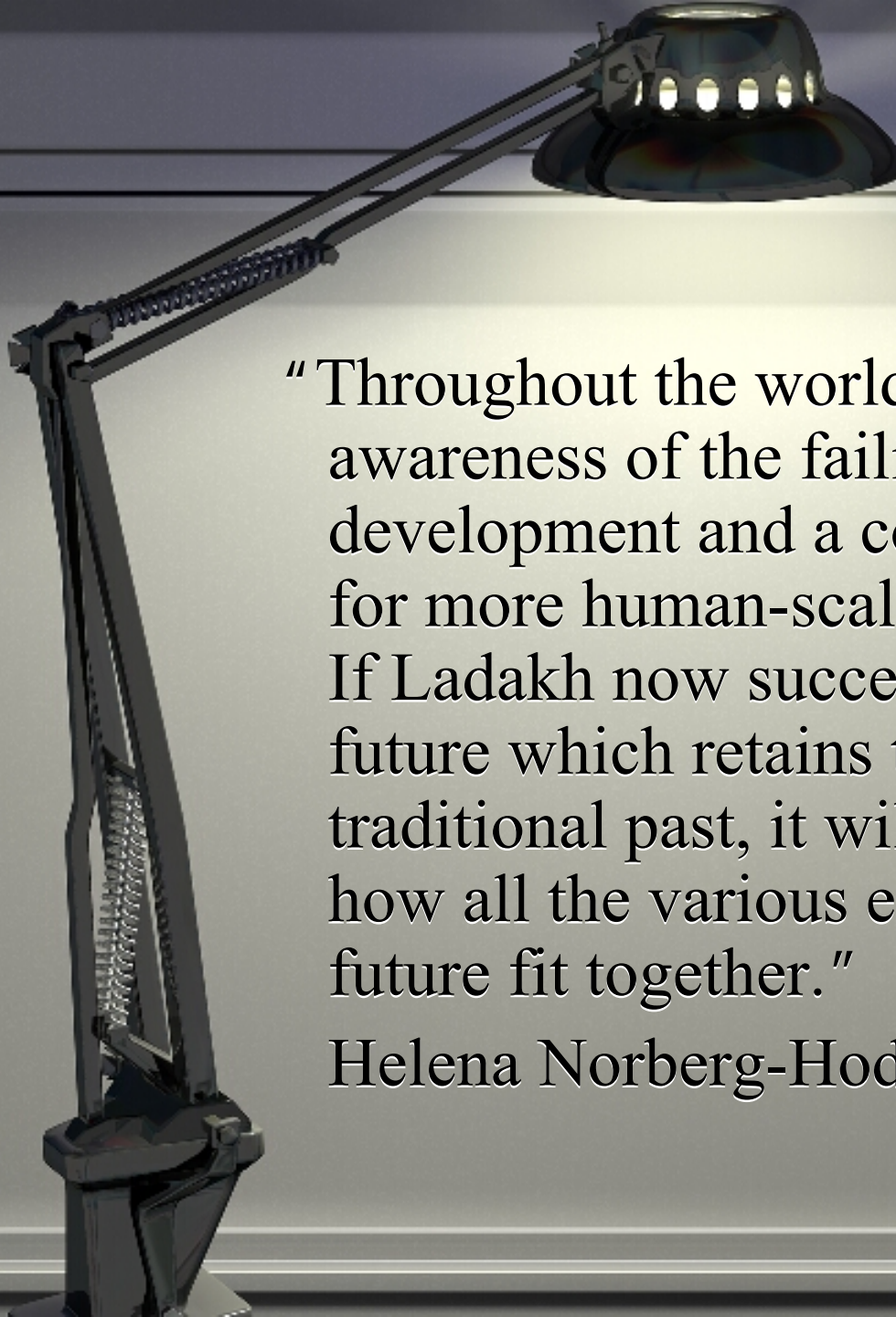


Ladakh Ecological Development Group  
Leh, Jammu & Kashmir, India









"Throughout the world today there is a growing awareness of the failings of the Western model of development and a corresponding desire to look for more human-scale, ecological ways of living. If Ladakh now succeeds in creating for itself a future which retains the foundations of its traditional past, it will be an inspiring example of how all the various elements of an ecological future fit together."

Helena Norberg-Hodge



## Mountain Environment in Greece

The Pindus (Greek: Πίνδος) mountain range is located in northern Greece and southern Albania. It is roughly 160 km long, with a maximum elevation of 2637 m (Mount Smolikas). Because it runs along the border of Thessaly and Epirus, the Pindus range is often called the "spine of Greece". The mountain range stretches from near the Greek-Albanian borders in Northern Epirus, entering the Epirus periphery and Macedonia region in northern Greece down to the north of the Peloponnese.



# Mountain Environment in Greece

The Pindus ecoregion covers a wide range of elevations and habitats, from deep canyons to steep mountains. The wide range in altitude results in two major forest zones:

- \* A conifer zone, with trees such as a subspecies of Austrian Peigne and the endemic Greek Fir, characterizes the highest elevations, with juniper woodlands dominating near the timberline.
- \* A mixed broadleaf forest zone dominates the valleys and canyons of the middle and lower elevations.



# Mountain Environment in Greece

- Large breeding colonies of herons, spoonbills, egrets, and pelicans fish the cool waters of the mountain lakes of the Pindus Mountain Conifer and Broadleaf Mixed Forests ecoregion. This is one of the few areas in Europe where the rare Dalmatian pelican can be found. Wolves, jackals, and bears are found in the forests.
- **UNDER THREAT!** Due to climate factors (lack of rainfall, low table water, high sunshine hrs) + Environmental mismanagement (lack of Govt. support or political will) Mediterranean Mts. (esp Balkan) will lose majority of biodiversity if conservation efforts don't kick in immediately!



# Mountain Environment in Greece



Pindus Range



# Future Steps

- Sustainable livelihoods in the Epirus belt - community participation in local environment conservation
- NGO focusing on environmental education, community advocacy, active participation of local residents in biodiversity protection
- Genuine dialogue to preserve local knowledge & sustain participation.



- Cross regional issues - affecting all fragile mountain ecosystems: lessons learnt?
- Need for a common platform for sharing knowledge & best practice - such as Mountain Forum
- Focus on participatory policy making



Thank you for your  
attention!

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