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SPECIAL EVENT
Islamabad-Skardu September
2013 Special Event

A long path to high altitude

by Agostino Da Polenza

In July I went to the Baltoro glacier, up to Concordia and then to the K2 Base Camp. It is an easy hike for a good climber, although a bit rusty like me, but a tiring one, taking you in the heart of the most impressive mountain system of the earth. Not that the Himalayan, Andean or Alpine systems are less beautiful, fascinating, interesting or large. No! But the Karakorum and the mountain range overlooking the Baltoro combine all the superlative features that make us love mountains: size, strength, verticality, harmony, shape, color, light, to the unique majesty of K2. All concentrated in that 70 km route on the glacier, impressive though charming to your eye and even to your feet. Yes, because on the Baltoro you do not have a thousand meters uphill hike, but you go walking for hours along moraines, most of the times with a gentle slo-

pe. It is the length of the path which leads to an altitude. It is this way you can see, feel and absorb the full force of these mountains. There I met my EvK2CNR researchers, who together with the PMD and the GCISC colleagues (Pakistani authorities dealing with climate) were conducting GPR surveys to evaluate the mass and the melting, actually the health, of the glacier. This is because, with the other glaciers in the region, this is the most impressive water supply in this part of Asia. I stopped for a couple of days in Concordia, on a 20 km glacial circle in the middle of which there was the camp of our Rescue Team, supported by the SEED Project, funded by the Italian Cooperation and by the Pakistani Ministry of Finance. A team composed by fifteen people well-trained to mountaineering and rescue by Pakistani

and Italian technicians. While I was there, there have been two demanding operations at the Broad Peak. But at Concordia I also was surprised to see the excellent functioning of the toilets and the waste removal system by the "Keep K2 Clean" group, always from SEED. It is one hundred years we are working in Karakorum, having inherited Professor Desio's dre-

ams and scientific planning, the last 25 years as the EvK2CNR Committee. Since five years we are focused on the consolidation of the great Central Karakorum National Park - CKNP - in the K2 region. All this is described by the images of this Mountain News special and it is deepened during the days of the *The Italian science and cooperation at the shadow of K2* initiative.



Pakistan activity 2013

Baltoro-Deosai: summer scientific missions 2013

In 2013 there were three summer scientific missions in Karakorum.

On the Deosai plateau, at 4000 meters above sea level, the EvK2CNR technicians Giampietro Verza and Marcello Alborghetti, with WAPDA and Pakistan Meteorological Department's technicians, worked together to install the *Pakistan Climate Observatory*. A true engineering gem of reduced dimensions, the climatic-environmental monitoring station is able to detect, in addition to climatic data, the quality of air. This is the first station in the Unep-ABC network to be installed at high altitudes in Pakistan.

Renato Colucci, an EvK2CNR and University of Insubria technician, was involved in the second mission to detect the presence of permafrost - the permanently frozen ground portion of the polar areas or

high altitudes - on the Deosai plateau and in the Baltoro area. Permafrost is a key element in the stability of the land hydrogeology to understand climate change and biodiversity.

The third mission was performed on the Baltoro glacier and has reached an altitude of 6400 meters on the Gasherbrum plateau.

It was a glaciological and hydrological monitoring with studies on the glaciers ablation and the high altitude snow accumulation, coordinated by Christoph Mayer, Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities, in collaboration with the SHARE (Stations at High Altitude for Research on Environment) project for the climate and environmental monitoring, and the SEED (Social Economic and Environmental Development) project, aimed at the integrated development of the region of the Central Karakorum National Park.



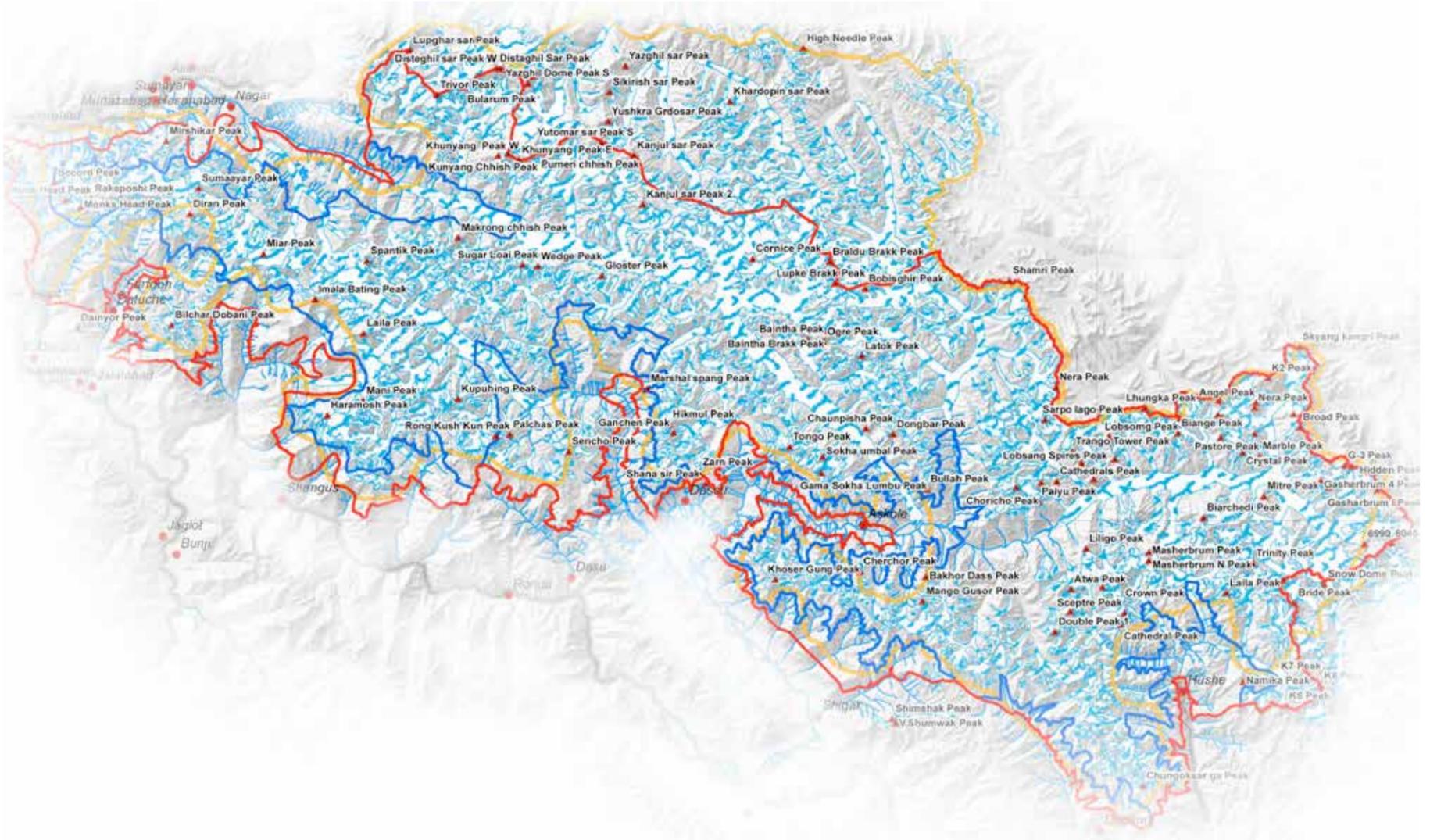
Pakistani journalists on the field

During the summer scientific campaign, EvK2CNR organized a journalistic expedition on the Deosai plateau and a journalistic workshop

in Skardu which saw some of the most important Pakistani environmental journalists' participation.



Central Karakorum National Park



Ten thousand square kilometers, some of the highest and evocative mountains of the Planet including K2, Gasherbrum, Broad Peak, and also the Trango Towers or the Masherbrum's awesome vertical elegance, and then again history, culture, unique flora and fauna as the shy and magnetic snow leopard: this is the Central Karakorum National Park.

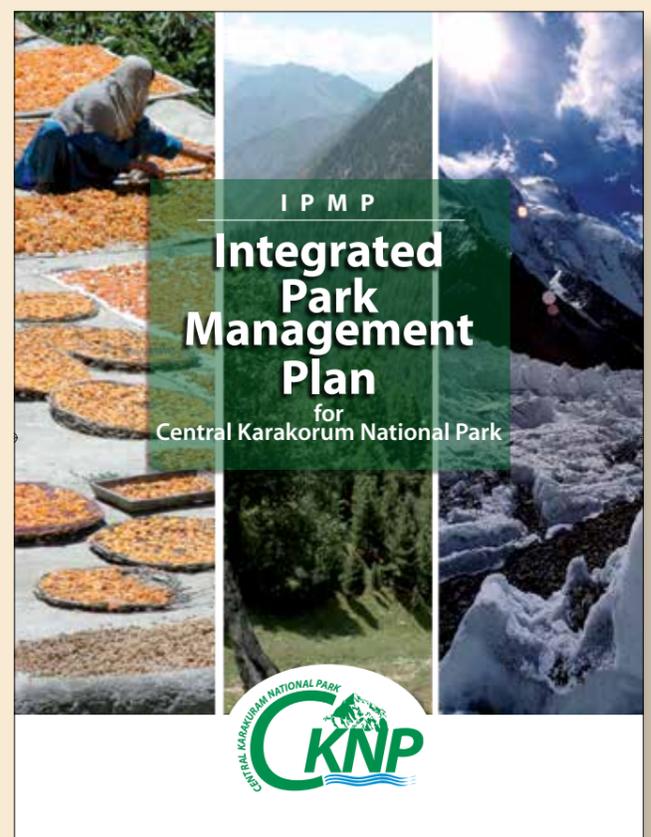
2013 was a key year for the CKNP. In fact it has been presented, for the first time signed by the Government of the Gilgit Baltistan, the management plan of the "higher" Park of the Earth, showing its definitive boundaries.



The Management Plan

In the Integrated Park Management Plan for Central Karakorum National Park, a big book of over 300 pages, boundaries, areas, directions and rules for the management of the park are defined. It was necessary to create the forest's, glaciological and biodiversity mappings, a new cartography, to identify conservation areas and to map items and areas at risk. The management plan is

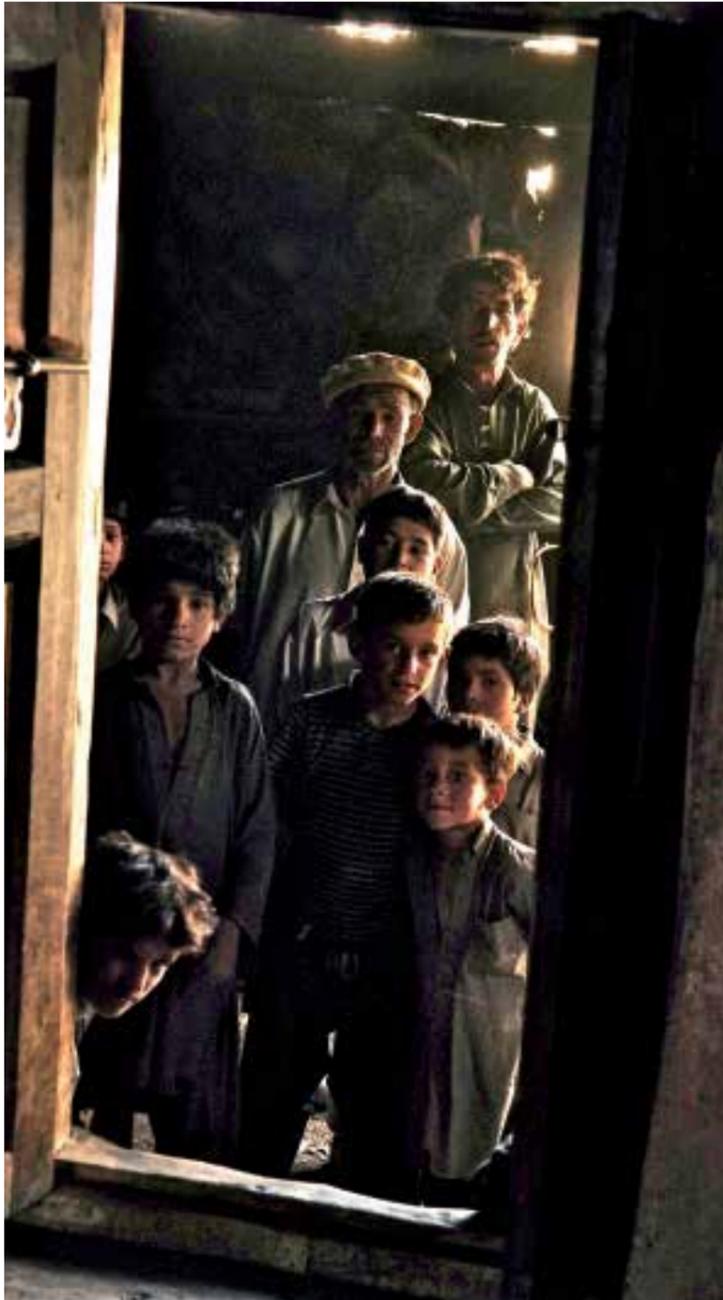
the result of years of work carried out together with the Karakorum International University and local institutions and with the contribution of the SEED project. A work that integrated earlier versions, this management plan is a first version to be followed by a second one by the end of 2013 that will implement the observations received by local communities.



Sharing the Management Plan with local communities

Throughout 2013, meetings with the local communities of the villages bordering the Park followed one another. The first version of the Management Plan was presented and the local populations are in fact the real key players in the making of the plan itself. This means, among other things, sharing the

resource management rules to be taken to preserve the land, measures to prevent deforestation and uncontrolled hunting. Without the real and effective involvement the plan would merely be a project on paper. The new version presented later this year will be the result of these meetings.



EvK2CNR and the Pakistani Government, agreement on the study of climate change

Under a thunderous hailstorm, in the month of March an important agreement on the study of climate change was signed between EvK2CNR and the Pakistani Government. Approved by the General Director of the Ministry Ali Khan for the Pakistani Government and the Global Change Impact Studies Center and by Agostino Da Polenza for the EvK2CNR Committee, the agreement covers support and observational activities on the climate change studies and provides for the sharing of important data: a pact aimed at improving international cooperation and efficiency in research.



The Concordia Rescue Team and the 1122

The Concordia Rescue Team was born in 2012 to cope with the lack of a first-aid service within the Central Karakorum National Park Service, a service addressed to hikers, mountaineers, researchers and to Pakistani carriers who work in the park during the summer season. This year the Pakistani 1122 Emer-

gency Service Rescue and the Concordia Rescue Team, the mountain rescue team stationed in the K2 park, have come to an agreement. Following a joint training course, coordinated by Maurizio Gallo, the EvK2CNR technical advisor, two organizations have provided their coordinated services throughout the just ended

summer season. During the season they have provided aid to 400 carriers, 12 hikers and 4 mountaineers. Unfortunately a body has been recovered from a crevasse. Moreover, the Rescue Team has equipped with fixed ropes all exposed parts of the paths from Concordia to the base camps.



Reforestation in the SEED project

71,801 trees planted for an extension of 217 hectares in the valleys of Pakistan: these are just some of the numbers showing the recent commitment of EvK2CNR on projects concerning reforestation. Since 2010, within the SEED Project, the EvK2CNR Committee, in collaboration with the TESAF Department of the University of Padua, is carrying out a specific research on the forests of

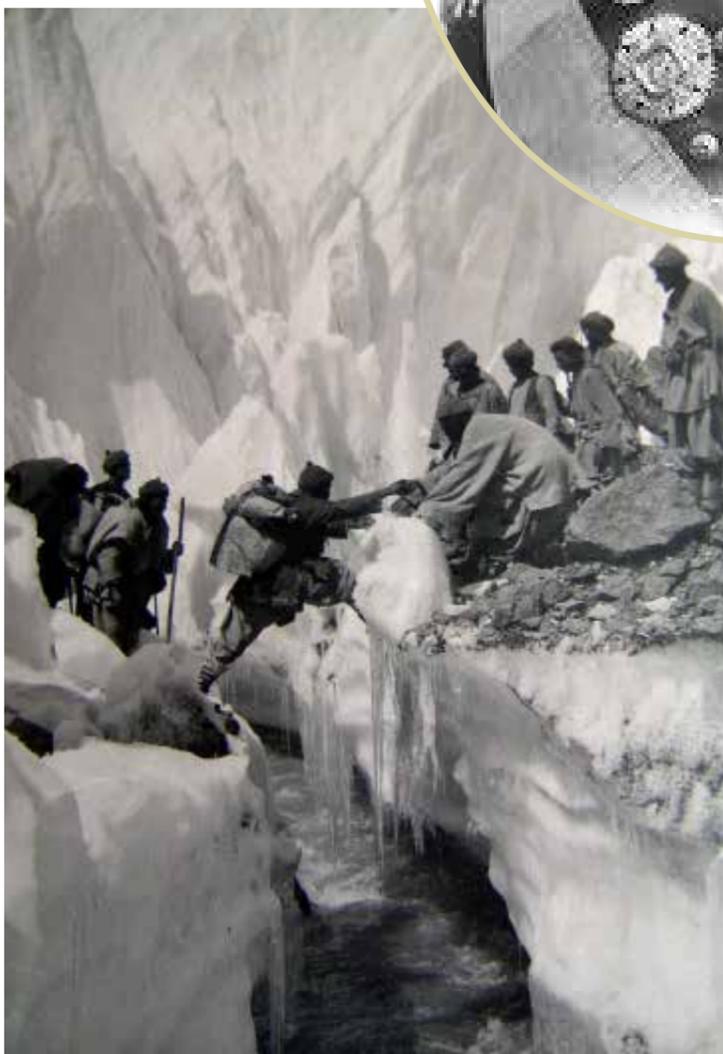
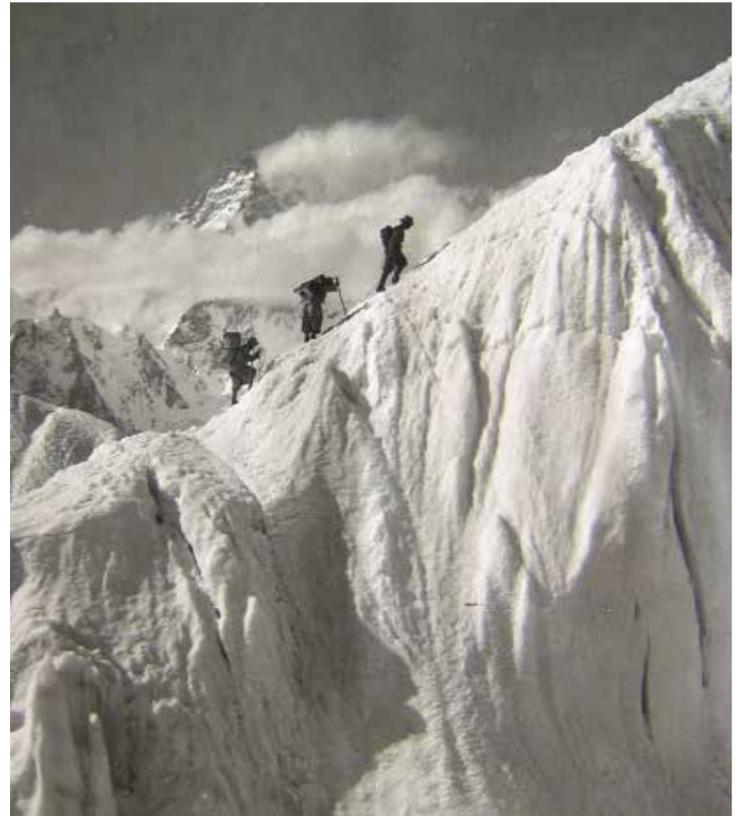
the Central Karakorum National Park in Pakistan; activities integrated into the management plan of the Park developed inside the SEED project, adopted and approved by the Gilgit Baltistan Government. During 2013 the commitment has not stopped, the seeds of local conifers (pines and firs) collected during 2012, were planted in two areas identified by local communities.



KARAKORUM 1909

The Duke of Abruzzi and Pakistan

Extraordinary figure, tied hand in glove with the Pakistani territory, in 1909 the Duke of Abruzzi has made his expedition in the Karakorum, failing in his attempt to climb K2, but setting a new world altitude record. Since then the K2 spur brings his name. EvK2CNR wanted to celebrate this great explorer with a photographic exhibition at the Pakistan National Council of Art.



KIU: a new photovoltaic system

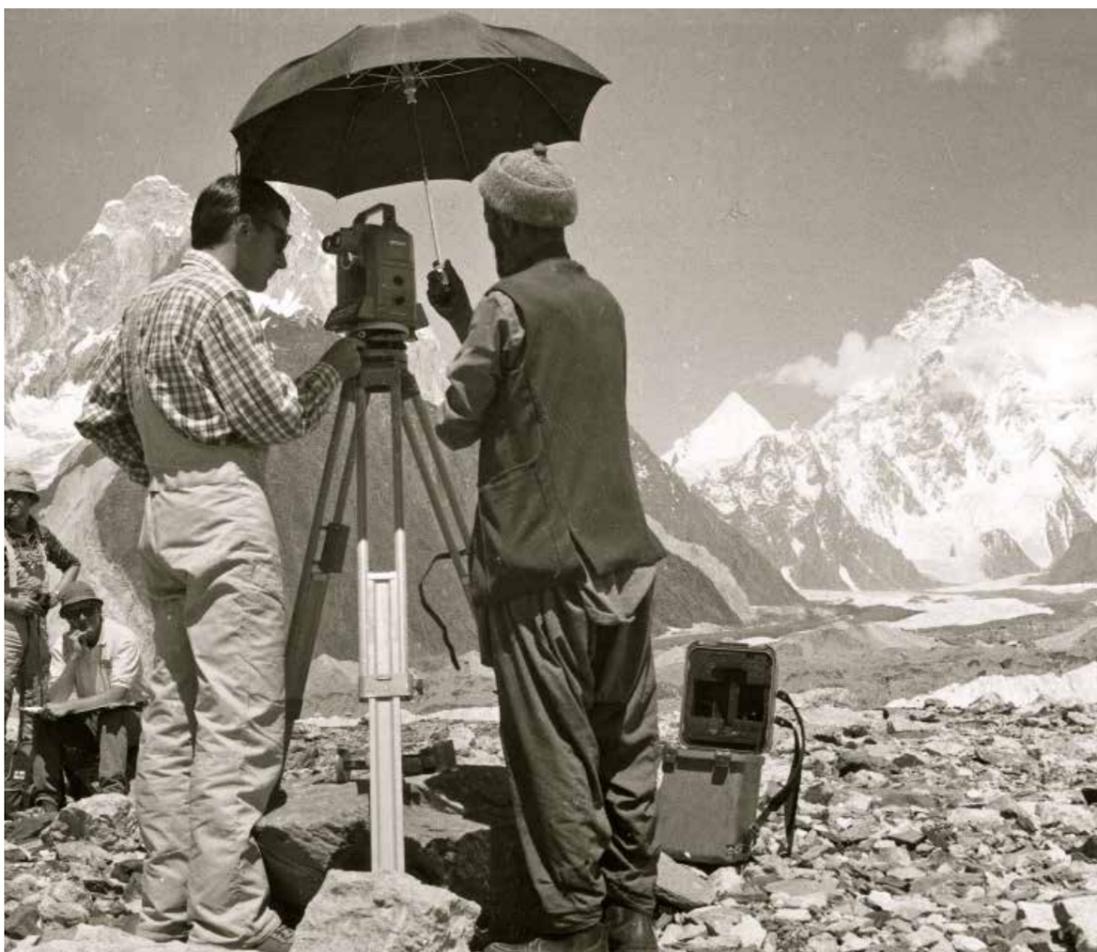


In the month of March 2013 the photovoltaic system powering the Karakoram International University computer system has been implemented. The collaboration between KIU and EvK2CNR traces back to 2005 and since then

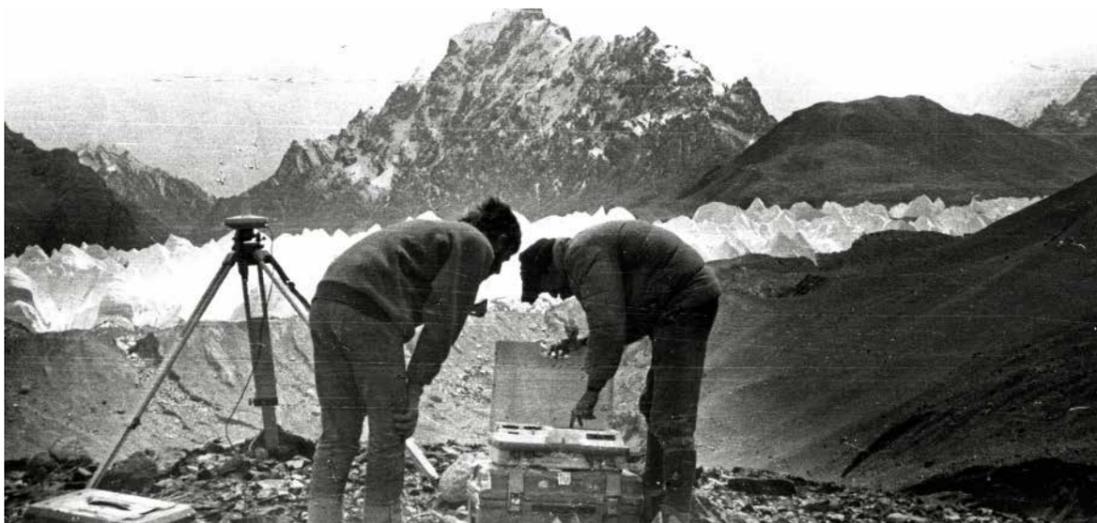
the two are working closely together. The two companies are the main promoters of the SEED Project. This year seventeen University students have been followed in their doctoral path in the SEED project.



EvK2CNR experience in Pakistan



1987 Mount Everest and K2 re-measurement campaign by means of GPS. The campaign was directed by Professor Ardito Desio and Agostino Da Polenza



1988/89/90 During these three years geological, geodesic-geophysical and topographical researches were carried on in the Karakorum



1996 K2 Geo-expedition, re-measurement of the peak always with laser and GPS technologies. Here the expedition team. In this expedition Lorenzo Mazzoleni (the man on the left with long hair) died coming down from the summit

It is difficult to identify a start date in the history of the relations between the EvK2CNR and Pakistan, this in fact is intertwined with many other stories to trace back to a game of correspondences to the great season of the Italian expeditions in the Karakorum in the early 1900s, the 1909 expeditions by the Duke of Abruzzi with his attempt to climb K2, and Filippo De Filippi in 1913. Then there is the story of the first ascent of K2 by the Italian expedition led by Ardito Desio. Another significant date is 1983, when Agostino Da Polenza, President of

EvK2CNR, spent a whole night to admire, from the top of K2, the sixty peaks above 7000 meters of Karakorum.

In 1987, always Ardito Desio, together with Da Polenza, conceived and achieved the EvK2 expedition, to measure, with new tools, the height of the two mountains. It is from that expedition that the EvK2CNR, which was officially founded in 1988, was named. Since then, as the photographs of these pages are telling, scientific research and the projects achieved together with many Pakistani friends have never stopped.



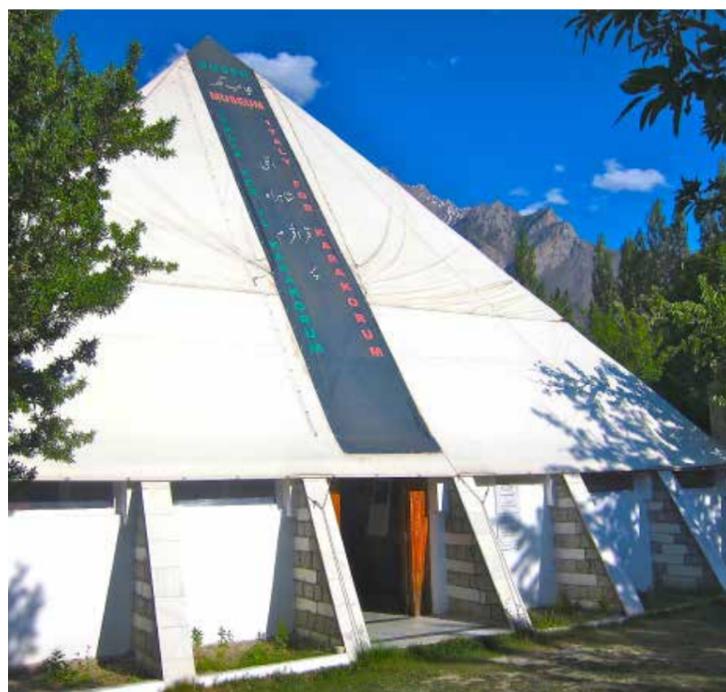
1996 K2 Geo-expedition, re-measurement of the peak always with laser and GPS technologies. Here on the top of K2



2001 Inauguration of Lorenzo Mazzoleni's dispensary in Askole by the association Amici di Lorenzo (Lorenzo's friends)



2003 Launch of the project HKKH Partnership on Ecosystem Management. The aims were to contribute to the consolidation of the institutional capacity for systemic planning and management focusing on poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation



2004 Inauguration of the Italian K2 Museum in Skardu. The structure has been the base tent at K2 base camp



2004 K2-2004 Everest and K2 expeditions. Fifty years after the first ascent of Desio's expedition, five Italian alpinists of this expedition reach the summit of K2: Karl Unterkircher, Silvio Mondinelli, Walter Nones, Michele Compagnoni, Ugo Giacomelli. Here at the base camp the Pyramid tent is well visible. Today is the Italian K2 Museum of Skardu. In the same year the aqueduct in Askole was built



2005 Birth of the Karakorum Trust project. Here the signing of KIU - EvK2CNR agreement



2006 First campaign Keep Baltoro Clean. In the same year the Italian scientific expedition Gasherbrum 2006 engaged in the study of the glaciers and geology of Karakorum



2007 The Gasherbrum II expedition, Daniele Bernasconi on the top of the mountain. Karl Unterkircher and Daniele Bernasconi, together with Michele Compagnoni, climbed for the very first time the northern slope of the mountain. In the same year the Gemm project was born



2008 The President of Pakistan Zardari during his visit to Italy with Agostino Da Polenza



2009 SEED signature of MoU between EvK2CNR and the Government of Gilgit Baltistan. In the center of the photo the Chief Minister



2009 Earth installation at Askole. In the same year a new Keep Baltoro Clean expedition



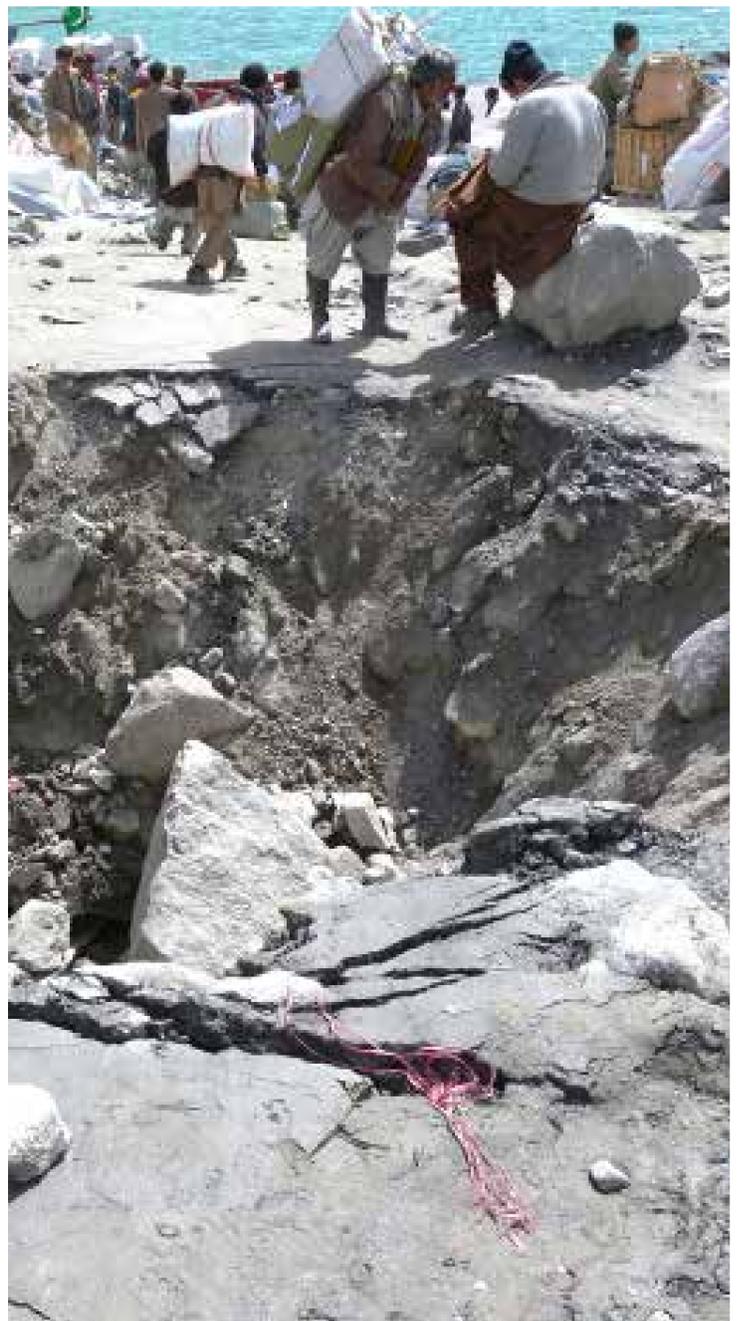
2009 Birth of SEED project: Social Economic Environment Development in the Central Karakorum National Park (CKNP) in the Gilgit Baltistan Region



2009 Inauguration of the Askole House Museum



2010 The Keep K2 Clean expedition. During the expedition, promoted by SEED project, also the high camp 2 and 3 have been cleaned. In the same year the first training of Rescue Team



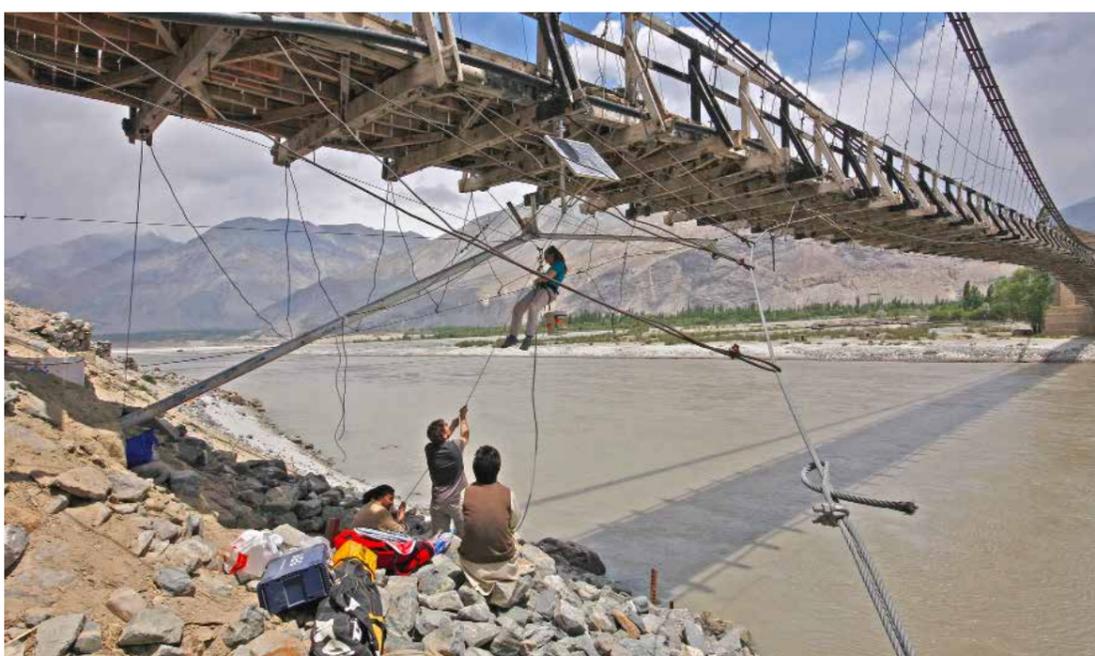
2010 Intervention at Hunza landslide. Here men at work and the lake created by the terrible landslide



2011 The “Mountaineering Instructor Course”, the school camp organized by the EvK2CNR Committee together with the Pakistani Alpine Club. A course in Karakorum to train the high altitude porters’ future trainers



2012 Birth of the Concordia Rescue Team, mountain rescue service providing medical care assistance for tourists and particularly for the carriers, first-aid activity on the glacier and safety adjustment of the paths



2012 Shigar bridge Pakistan: positioning of the new hydrological station

September 2013 special event

The Italian science and cooperation at the shadow of K2

Islamabad - Skardu: programme of the event

Islamabad PNCA National Art Gallery

9 September

9 am: Unep ABC Seminar

2.30 pm: SEED project, Institutional workshop

5.00 pm: Formal inauguration, in the presence of Italian Ambassador Adriano Chiodi Cianfarani, of De Filippi photo exhibit:
Rediscovering the abode of snow

5.45 pm: Official opening of the International Mountain Film Festival. Chief guest: Samina Baig
- *In the heart of Asia: Filippo De Filippi and his expedition*, directed by S. Ardito, Italia 2013
- *Next Time Inshallah*, directed by Alex G. De Bikuna, Spain 2011

7.00 pm: Open buffet at the National Art Gallery terrace

10 September

8.30 am - 6.00 pm: Scientific Conference: Karakorum resources and climate change: glacier, water and ecosystem

9.00 am - 11.00 am: International Mountain Film Festival
- *Next Time Inshallah*, directed by Alex G. De Bikuna, Spain 2011
- *Beyond the summits*, directed by Rémy Tézier, France 2008

11.00 am - 1.00 pm: International Mountain Film Festival
- *Alone on the wall*, directed by Nick Rosen, USA 2009
- *Mount Saint Elias*, directed by Gerald Salmina, Austria 2009

6.00 pm: International Mountain Film Festival
- *The Karakoram anomaly*, directed by Niccolò Piazza, Italia 2013

Skardu Italian K2 museum

12 September

6.30 pm: International Mountain Film Festival
- *In the heart of Asia: Filippo De Filippi and his expedition*, directed by S. Ardito, Italia 2013
- *Next Time Inshallah*, directed by Alex G. De Bikuna, Spain 2011

8.30 pm: International Mountain Film Festival
- *The Karakoram anomaly*, directed by Niccolò Piazza, Italia 2013

13 September

CKNP New Headquarters

10.00 am: Official opening of the CKNP New Headquarters

Italian K2 Museum

5.00 pm: Official opening of THROUGH THE CKNP Exhibit

5.30 pm: International Mountain Film Festival
- *Alone on the wall*, directed by Nick Rosen, USA 2009
- *Mount Saint Elias*, directed by Gerald Salmina, Austria 2009

8.00 pm: Open buffet

The Ev-K2-CNR Committee and Karakorum International University, in the framework of SEED project, are presently organizing a set of events in Islamabad and Skardu to celebrate and underline the development of the bilateral cooperation between Italy and Pakistan. The four-day event inaugurated in the presence of Italian Ambassador Adriano Chiodi Cianfarani, is patronized by the Italian Embassy in Islamabad.

In Islamabad scientists from different parts of the world will participate to the Scientific Conference on Glacier, Water and Ecosystem in Karakorum. The scientific event is pre-

ceded by a seminar organized by Unep on the Atmospheric Brown Clouds and by the Institutional Workshop, organized in collaboration with the Pakistan Italian Department for Swap Agreement and dedicated to the results of the monitoring mission of SEED Project.

The well-structured program then provides for the opening of the photo exhibition (open until 11th October), dedicated to the 1913 Filippo de Filippi's expedition on the Karakorum mountains and to the International Mountain Film Festival. The guest of honor of the festival will be Samina Baig, the first Pakistani woman to have reached the Everest summit.

A buffet will be offered to the participants at the end of the first of two events. The film festival will then move to the mountains, to Skardu, gateway to the major peaks in Pakistan. At the Italian K2 Museum five of the six festival movies will be presented again.

Always in Skardu the new headquarters of CKNP will be inaugurated and also the new exhibition at the Italian K2 Museum, dedicated to the Park.

An open buffet in the garden of the Ptdc Hotel will be the closing event of the festival dedicated to the collaboration between Pakistan and Italy, to the projects and the strong friendships born in these years.



Scientific Events



Photo Exhibits



CKNP Events



International Mountain Film Festival

The Italian science and cooperation at the shadow of K2

NATIONAL ART GALLERY ISLAMABAD, SEPTEMBER 9-10

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

Karakoram Resources and Climate Change: Glacier, Water and Ecosystem

SEED PROJECT

Institutional workshop

ABC SEMINAR

FILIPPO DE FILIPPI PHOTO EXHIBIT

Rediscovering the Abode of Snow

INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL

Special guest: Samina Baig the first Pakistani woman to climb Mount Everest



ITALIAN K2 MUSEUM SKARDU, SEPTEMBER 12-13

INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL

THROUGH CKNP EXHIBIT

Historical, cultural, environmental routes on the way to the mountains

CKNP NEW HEADQUARTERS

Inauguration



Patronage



Ambasciata d'Italia
Islamabad



A project funded by the Governments of Italy and Pakistan

