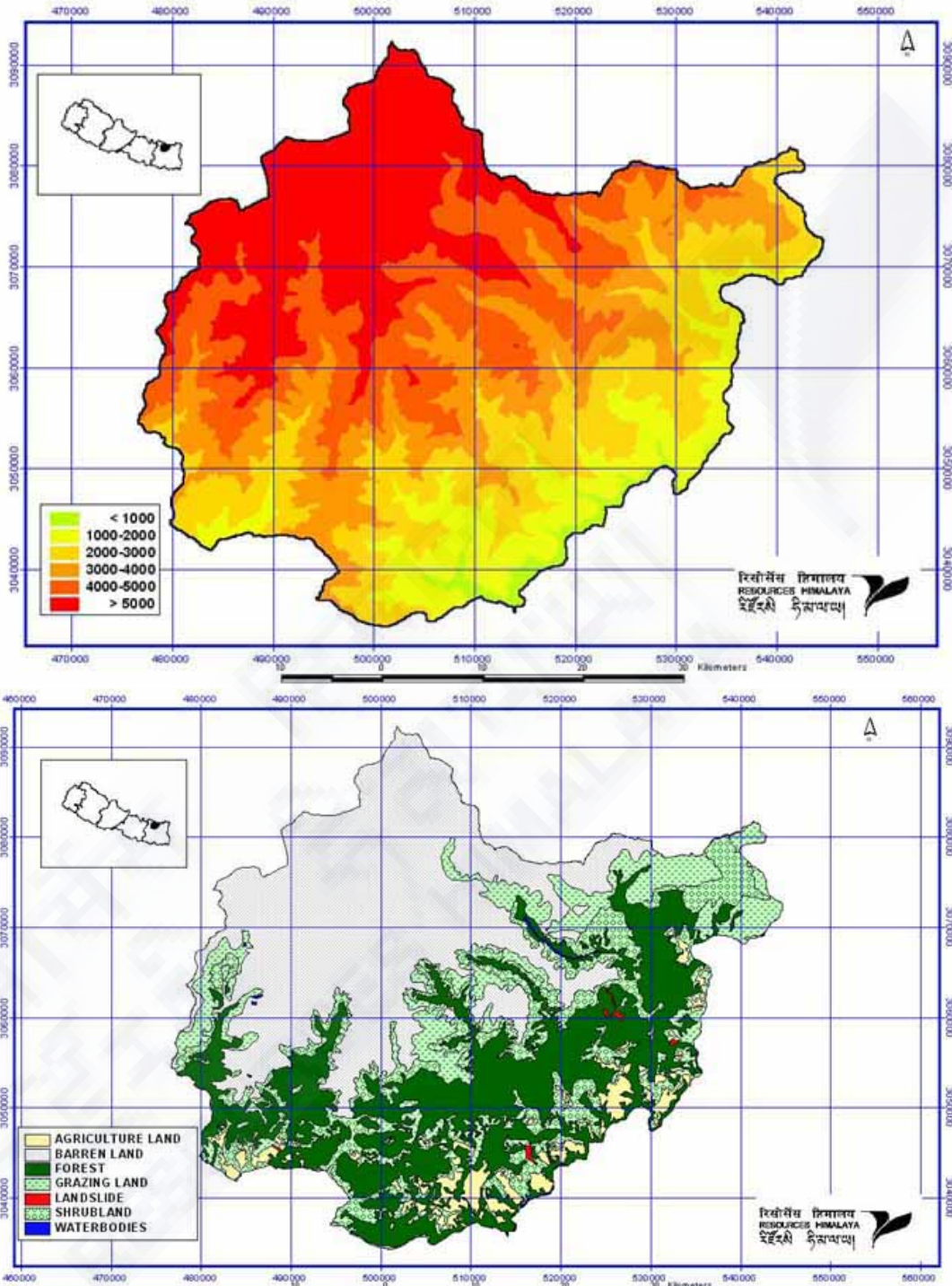


MAKALU BARUN NATIONAL PARK

Declared in 1991, the physical setting of Makalu Barun is unique as it encompasses 1,500 km² of pristine ecosystems of the eastern Himalayas as core, and 830 km² of buffer zone area with 32,000 resident ethnic groups. Within 40 km span, the altitude of 435 m at the confluence of the Arun and Shankhuwa Rivers shoots up to the 8,463 m summit of Mt. Makalu. Makalu Barun National Park shares its border with Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park in the west and with Qomolangma Nature Preserve of China in the north.



All ecological zones ranging from tropical to alpine occur in Makalu Barun. Being one of the wettest areas of Nepal (mean annual rainfall: 1,200 - 4,000mm), it supports 27 types of forests with 3,128 species of flowering plants. Of these, 56 are rare and threatened species. Over 88 species of mammals including musk deer, red panda, snow leopard, clouded leopard, black bear, Himalayan thar, serow and goral, and other common species are found. With 421 bird species, 78 species of fish, 43 species of reptiles, 16 species of amphibians and 315 species of butterflies, this area is biologically diverse and rich. Most of the households are poor and depend on subsistence farming. Livestock depredation and crop damage by wildlife are persistent.