

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE 5TH GLOBAL MEETING OF THE MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP: 11-13 DECEMBER, 2017

The fifth Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership took place at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) in Rome, Italy from 11-13 December 2017. The meeting celebrated International Mountain Day on 11 December, and the 15th anniversary of the Mountain Partnership. The meeting brought together 215 participants representing governments, academia, research institutions, intergovernmental organizations, and civil society.

The Framework for Action was launched at the start of the meeting, and members considered the challenges of, and responses to, the Framework for Action, including: the relationship between mountains and climate change, disaster risk management, food and water; mountain goods and services; mountain communities and migration; and its relationship to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. The Mountain Partnership Secretariat reviewed activities, challenges and achievements, and Steering Committee members reported back on the achievements, priorities and challenges in their constituencies over the past four years.

On the governance of the Mountain Partnership, members approved decisions to: maintain the current Membership Fee provisions and status of voluntary contributions; select alternate Steering Committee members; remove inactive members from the membership list; continue the hosting arrangement of FAO hosting the Secretariat; and delete the function of innovation as one of its focal areas. The members elected new and alternate Steering Committee members for the period 2017-2021; adopted the Advocacy and Communication Strategies; and discussed priorities and identified the main areas of work, including advocacy, capacity development, joint action, and communication.

BRIEF HISTORY

The first major international decision to include language on mountains and mountainous regions was at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Agenda 21, the main outcome document, called for the creation of a Commission on Sustainable Development to ensure effective



View of the Fifth Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership during the launch of the Framework for Action. ©FAO

follow-up of UNCED, enhance international cooperation, and examine progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the local, national, regional and international levels. Chapter 13 of Agenda 21, on mountains, recognizes the important ecological, economic and social functions of, and services provided by, mountainous regions. In its capacity as the lead agency on mountains within the UN system, FAO was made the Task Manager of Chapter 13 in 2003.

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INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF MOUNTAINS 2002: By its resolution 53/24, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 2002 as the International Year of Mountains, with the objective of raising international awareness about mountains, their global importance, the fragility of their resources, and the necessity of sustainable approaches to mountain development.

The UN General Assembly designated 11 December, from 2003 onwards, as International Mountain Day. FAO was designated as the coordinating agency for the preparation of this celebration and is mandated to lead its observance at the global level.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE

DEVELOPMENT: The Mountain Partnership was founded by the Governments of Italy and Switzerland, FAO and UNEP, and launched at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002.

FIRST AND SECOND MEETING OF THE GLOBAL

MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP (GMP): The first meeting was held in Merano, Italy from 5-6 October 2003 and provided a forum to identify common needs, priorities and concerns, and to explore key issues related to the structure, membership and governance of the Partnership. The second meeting was held in Cusco, Peru from 28-29 October 2004. Partnership members exchanged experiences, reviewed progress and charted the future course of the Mountain Partnership and its dynamic core, the Partnership Initiatives. The Cusco Conference endorsed the governance of the Partnership set out in the Organization Membership and Governance document and adopted the Cusco Framework for Action. Participants also affirmed their collective commitment to the goals of sustainable mountain development through the Declaration of the Andes.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREEN ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN VIEW OF RIO+20:

This meeting was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 5-7 September 2011. The outcome of the conference was the “Kathmandu Declaration on Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development.” The Declaration called for, *inter alia*: the establishment of mechanisms to compensate and reward communities for mountain ecosystem services and improvement in markets for these services; and creation of an enabling environment for promoting the green economy and investment in mountain regions.

THIRD AND FOURTH MEETINGS OF THE GMP: The third meeting took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Tuesday, 19 June 2012, in the sidelines of the Rio+20 summit. The event was aimed at, *inter alia*: sharing lessons and best practices from joint action over the past ten years; and building the future cooperative efforts of the Mountain Partnership on a synergistic inclusive and committed foundation.

The fourth meeting convened in Erzurum, Turkey from 17-19 October 2013. During the meeting, participants addressed: the new Mountain Partnership Strategy and Governance; mountains in Rio+20 and the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the Mountain Forum knowledge platform for sustainable mountain development; regional coordination mechanisms; and the selection of the Steering Committee.



Thomas Hofer, Coordinator, Mountain Partnership Secretariat ©FAO

FIRST AFRICAN MOUNTAINS REGIONAL FORUM:

This event, themed ‘Towards a Shared Mountain Agenda for Africa,’ took place in Arusha, Tanzania, from 22-24 October 2014. During the meeting, participants: identified strategic actions to address major emerging issues; addressed the promotion of linkages and collaboration between different stakeholders for a regional framework on sustainable mountain development in Africa; and shared lessons learned in meeting the conservation and development challenges, including biodiversity, water, energy, food security and climate change in African mountain regions.

WORLD MOUNTAIN FORUM: This meeting convened from 17-20 October 2016 in Mbale, Uganda. The Forum was preceded by the Special Africa Mountains Event that highlighted key issues affecting mountain ecosystems and communities in Africa. Under the theme ‘Mountains for our Future,’ the Forum provided a platform to discuss sustainable mountain development in the context of the Paris Agreement on climate change and the SDGs, and considered: mountains and climate change; mountain communities and livelihoods; mountain ecosystem services; and sustainable mountain agriculture.

MOUNTAINS’ WEEK: This event took place from 10-14 July 2017 in Bogotá, Colombia, and convened under the overall theme of ‘Towards a Regional Vision of the Andean Mountains.’ Representatives from eight Andean countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cost Rica, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, shared their experiences and visions for the integrated management of mountain ecosystems and discussed how to position the Andes in the public agendas of the Andean countries.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

OPENING STATEMENTS AND CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN DAY: Moderator Thomas Hofer, Coordinator, Mountain Partnership Secretariat, suggested that global challenges of climate, hunger, drought and migration affect mountains, but they also offering solutions to, and lessons in, dealing with these challenges. Highlighting the celebration of both International Mountain Day and the 15th anniversary of

the Mountain Partnership, he urged members to prioritize the advancement of the mountain agenda and to bring to the global attention the protection of mountain ecosystems.

Initiating remarks by founding members, Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General, FAO, emphasized the need to raise awareness about the impacts of climate change on food security and migration patterns, she noted that one out of three people living in mountains in developing countries is vulnerable to food insecurity. Semedo called on Mountain



Andrea Olivero, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policy, Italy ©FAO

Partnership members to take early action towards operationalizing and resourcing the Framework for Action, which will prove a critical litmus test of its near-term viability and long-term impact.

Hofer, on behalf of Mario Giro, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Italy, lauded the over 300 members of the Mountain Partnership, which he said represents the main global tool to guard and fight for landscapes that are home to

nearly a billion people. He pledged the continued support of the Italian government for the Mountain Partnership's work, and urged learning from the experiences of small island developing states (SIDS) in raising tremendous support for SIDS, in order to bring the plight of mountain ecosystems and people to the attention of the world.

Andrea Olivero, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policy, Italy, reminded of the original intent behind celebrating International Mountain Day, including to: create awareness on the importance of mountains for life; highlight opportunities and constraints related to the development of mountain areas; build alliances that bring positive changes for mountain people and environments around the world. He noted that achieving sustainable development would be impossible without full recognition of the key role of mountains, and urged national governments to protect those communities who have guarded these environments for centuries.

Dominique Kohli, Assistant Director-General, Federal Office for Agriculture, Switzerland, highlighted the Mountain Partnership as a unique platform that brings countries and institutions together towards a single goal. He referenced the Framework for Action, saying it is key for global sustainable development, and alignment with the SDGs will unlock indispensable environmental services, such as air quality and fresh water.

Matthias Jurek, Programme Management Officer, UN Environment, reported on UN Environment's recent activities to support the often-marginalized communities living in mountain areas, including by reducing mountain litter and pollution

through launching the Mountain Waste Outlook, and working with the Mountain Protection Commission of the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation, among others. He highlighted the International Climate Initiative to support mountain ecosystem-based adaptation, the Vanishing Treasures programme, and the Mountain Adaptation Outlook series.

Initiating remarks by the Mountain Partnership ambassadors, His Holiness Drikung Kyabgön Chetsang, head of the Drikung Kagyu order of Tibetan Buddhism, warned that mountains and mountain people are face threats as never before, including war, loss of income and jobs, increasing levels of hunger, and displacement among mountain people. Noting that most religions are closely associated with mountains, he called for a concerted effort from the Mountain Partnership to seek out and involve more religious and spiritual leaders in the quest to protect mountains.

Arjun Gupta, founder, TeleSoft Partners, describing the work of his companies, said all successful ventures start with a small group of people who recognize a problem, develop solutions, scale these technologies, and then form partnerships.

Jake Norton, Founder, MountainWorld Productions, said mountains frighten, educate, and inspire in equal measure, and described how mountains have taught him numerous lessons in the physical and spiritual realm. He urged participants not just celebrating and remembering the plight of mountains and mountain people for one day, but to act on their behalf every day.

Andrew Taber, Executive Director, The Mountain Institute (TMI) and Chair, Mountain Partnership Steering Committee, presented his experiences in securing mountain goods and services through local enterprise. He expressed the hope that a similar community to that of the SIDS can be built among mountain countries, who will speak with one voice and will implement a long-term strategy to advance mountain priorities through international processes.

LAUNCH OF THE FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:

Dominique Kohli moderated this session. In a keynote address, Petteri Taalas, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), drew attention to the high impact that environment-related crises are likely to have on the planet, compared to other global risks. He outlined the main pressures mountains are facing today due to climate change, such as water shortage and flood severity with resulting loss of economic opportunities, and advocated for the development of early warning system capabilities for flash floods. On WMO's contribution to sustainable mountain development, he identified: facilitating the development of weather, water and climate services and information to support decisions and policies on adaptation strategies in mountain areas; stimulating innovation and experience in transferring research results to operational services; and providing a framework for broad engagement at regional level on weather, water, and climate.

Grammenos Mastrojeni, Assistant Director-General, Coordinator for the Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy, lamenting "business-as-usual" as the worst phenomenon in the context of climate change, emphasized the responsibility



Goodwill Ambassadors for Mountains: **Arjun Gupta**, TeleSoft Partners; His Holiness **Drikung Kyabgön Chetsang**; and **Jake Norton**, MountainWorld Productions ©FA

of the Mountain Partnership in bringing the destabilization of these fragile ecosystems to the attention of decision makers, lest the effects impact all connected ecosystems and people. He urged using the implementation of the Framework for Action to avoid the potential movement of millions of mountain-dependent people.

Bhutan highlighted the use of highland festivals as a platform to educate and inform about ecosystem services and the cultures of mountains people, while considering the survival of the mountains' cultural vibrancy under a changing climate. Kyrgyz Republic stressed the significance of partnerships and international community support, highlighting achievements in the conservation of snow leopards through the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP) by identifying critical landscapes for the species. Peru underlined the threat that climate change poses on Andean glaciers affecting fresh water supply, ecosystem integrity and tourism, and urged for the approval of the Framework.

Chile applauded the regional Andean Mountain Initiative where seven countries consolidated work to protect mountain ecosystems. Colombia highlighted the main conclusions of the International Congress of Highlands and Mountain Ecosystems in Bogotá, stressing the need for inputs in public policy to regulate fishing and agricultural activities in the highlands.

Nepal underscored the importance of its 10-point commitment to protect the livelihoods of mountain communities, including building resilient mountain communities and ensuring water management. Pakistan drew attention to the lack of empowerment of local communities, and Costa Rica emphasized the need for awareness raising via partnering with the UN regional economic commissions, and ministries of foreign affairs and environment.

THE FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION AND THE 2030 AGENDA – CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES: Mountains:

climate change and disaster risk management: This session was moderated by Ekrem Yaziki, FAO. Carolina Adler, Executive Director, Mountain Research Initiative (MRI), outlined the trends faced by mountains due to climate change, including increasing temperatures and changes in precipitation. As impacts from climate change, she cited melting glaciers, runoff, species extinction, and reduced growing seasons, and she highlighted the challenges of: increased demand for water storage; reducing risk; biodiversity protection and food production; and climatic variability going beyond the limits of past experience.

Shukri Ahmed, Deputy Strategic Programme Leader – Resilience, FAO, presented on FAO's work under the Organization's 5th Strategic Objective to improve disaster risk management in mountain areas, warning that 3.5 billion people depend on water originating in mountains, and every year natural disasters affect vulnerable forest-dependent and mountain communities. He highlighted FAO's research on quantifying disaster impacts on agriculture and human systems, and stressed an increasing need to build climate resilience, including healthy mountain systems.

Mountains: Food and water: This session was moderated by Isauro Torres, Director of Environment and Ocean Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chile. Anil Mishra, Programme Specialist, Hydrological Systems and Water Scarcity, International Hydrological Programme (IHP), Division of Water Sciences, UNESCO, stressed the increasing levels of threat to water security while lamenting the limited coverage of global in-situ observation systems, notably in alpine regions. Mishra highlighted IHP's role in providing a scientific knowledge base for policy advice and presented a number of tools to support decision-making.



Carolina Adler, Executive Director, Mountain Research Initiative ©FAO

Paul Mafabi, Director of Environment Affairs, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda, shared experiences in sustainable management for food and water from Uganda's Mount Elgon, lamenting its compromised ecosystem functionality and integrity due to climate change. He identified landslides, flooding and land-use changes due to deforestation, land fragmentation and encroachment as risks to the ecosystem. Mafabi called for direct involvement of local communities in planning and executing programmes, quality education for mountain populations, political commitment and long term programmatic financing.

Mountains and their goods and services: This session was moderated by Christian Guillermet-Fernández, Director-General of Foreign Policy, Costa Rica. Matthias Jurek presented on understanding the benefits of mountain ecosystems as “water towers” worldwide, providing water to half of humanity for drinking, irrigation and energy production. Highlighting the multiple complex problems facing mountains, he urged fully inclusive, coordinated, interdisciplinary approaches, and overcoming traditional ways of thinking that mountains are isolated areas.

TMI Executive Director Taber presented on experiences in securing mountain goods and services through local enterprise, portraying the challenges for sustaining the wide range of goods and services that mountains provide. He identified further options to blend livelihood improvement with securing mountain goods and services, and concluded by identifying key needs in: investment; training and capacity building; cooperatives and business building; and certification schemes.

Mountain communities and migration: This session was moderated by Mumtaz Kassam, Permanent Representation of Uganda to FAO. Laurie Vasily, Knowledge and Communication Manager, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), explored the governance, drivers and consequences of migration in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region, and drew attention to mountain depopulation as a new trend, highlighting its effects on social and ecological systems.

As policy recommendations to address the challenges caused by migration, she identified, among others: mainstreaming migration into national policy processes; measures to reduce migration costs and decentralize migration governance; and capturing quality data on seasonal migration, remittances, and reintegration of returnees.

Krystyna Swiderska, International Institute for Environment and Development, via video link, provided perspectives from the International Network of Mountain Indigenous Peoples (INMIP) on mountain communities and migration, noting issues they are facing. She emphasized Biocultural Heritage Territories like the Potato Park in Peru as a key response to climate change, hunger and migration, and expressed INMIP's mission of providing a global platform knowledge and experience exchange for the promotion of indigenous mountain biocultural heritage.

MAKING A GLOBAL FRAMEWORK WORK:

Showcasing practical approaches: This panel discussion took place on Monday, and was moderated by Tehmina Akhtar, Deputy Global Manager, Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme, UN Development Programme (UNDP). Matthias Fiechter, Communications Manager, GSLEP, stressed the outcomes of the International Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Forum in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic in 2017, and commended the high-level political will behind the process. He described the priority projects in each range country, and emphasized the capacity of Asia's mountain communities to adapt to climate change as critical for the snow leopard's future.

On the importance of using networks and partnerships to advance the objectives of the Mountain Partnership, Matt Reed, Chief Executive Officer, Aga Khan Foundation, Aga Khan Development Network, described success factors to be: long associations with, and listening to, communities before developing strategies; development being a long-term priority, since winning trust, learning about communities and building relationships take time; and to first establish institutions, either within the communities, or with local governments, in order to effect change.

Hersey Kyota, Ambassador of the Republic of Palau to the US and Board Chair, Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), urged closer bonds between GLISPA and the Mountain Partnership. He shared what “being involved” meant to Palau, describing the Micronesia Challenge, an ambitious commitment to conserve 30% of marine and 20% of terrestrial areas by 2020. On success factors in gaining attention for the initiative, he identified: not merely relying on donor funding, but leveraging funds through tourism levies; using in-flight videos to broadcast the message of islands under threat; introducing pledge stamps in tourist passports; and collaborating with all small island entities.

Kate Brown, Executive Director, GLISPA, highlighted the reasons for SIDS' high profile in political circles, including: partnerships and political leadership; strong sense of “co-opetition” where islands encourage each other to make bigger commitments; sharing lessons on how to implement the SDGs; and participating regularly on the global multilateral stage.



Matthias Jurek, Programme Management Officer, UN Environment
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Matthias Jurek, Programme Management Officer, UN Environment, Carpathian Convention, highlighted the different thematic areas and protocols within the Convention, noting as benefits policy development and implementation from within the working groups. He emphasized that policy development should precede project implementation, while setting up robust legal frameworks engender trust and attract funding.

15 YEARS OF THE MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP - STOCKTAKING AND NEW PRIORITIES FOR THE GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP'S GLOBAL ACHIEVEMENTS, PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES:

This session took place on Tuesday, and was moderated by Eva Müller, Director, Forestry Policy and Resources Division, Forestry Department, FAO, who invited members to share their thoughts on technical matters pertaining to the governance and management of the Partnership. She reassured members of FAO's commitment to hosting and supporting the Secretariat and pledged to ensure a smooth transition when a new coordinator is identified by members.

Thomas Hofer noted: mountains' low international profile; scant political and financial support; and absence of mountain issues in the Paris Agreement. He outlined relevant global frameworks and processes including the SDGs, presented the main objectives of the Partnership, and drew attention to the sharp increase in members since 2003. On the main achievements of the Mountain Partnership, he highlighted strengthened multi-action and regional cooperation. He referred to global advocacy campaigns including: presence in UN conventions; three targets in the SDGs that make reference to mountain ecosystems; and development of the Mountain Green Cover Index to monitor target 15.4 (conservation of mountain ecosystems). Among communication efforts, he outlined: media outreach, newsletters and publications; and capacity development and science through IPROMO, the Iberian Mountain Research Network and a global database on mountain courses. Under joint action he particularly highlighted the Mountain products Programme.

Hofer focused on the vision for the next four years, including: an alliance with GLISPA on fragile ecosystems; the establishment of a multi-donor small grants facility; connection

with other global initiatives; knowledge creation and sharing on emerging issues; and a political alliance of members through the Framework for Action.

During the ensuing discussion, members provided feedback on, *inter alia*: the need for cooperation with the Rio Conventions and global agencies and institutions; designing a common message on the SDGs; sharing experiences from within countries more widely; highlighting capacity building as an important step in advancing the mountains agenda; expanding the work of the Mountain Partnership to include more research activities; and combining indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices with modern technologies to improve mountain ecosystem management.

REPORTS BY STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS, PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES IN THEIR CONSTITUENCIES:

This session was moderated by Steering Committee Chair Taber, who invited Committee members to report on their experiences. Cameroon, on behalf of governments of Sub-Saharan Africa, highlighted efforts in his region, including: the first African Mountain Forum held in Arusha, Tanzania in 2014; setting up the Africa Champions programme and institutional framework to coordinate the African Mountain Partnership activities; and the World Mountain Forum held in Uganda in 2016, which led to the Call for Action.

Argentina, for South America, highlighted: the Andean Mountain Initiative, which consists of a technical secretariat and represents the seven countries sharing the Andes mountains; Mountains' Week, held in Colombia in 2017, which focused on some of the priority issues relating to páramo and mountain ecosystems, and formalization of strategic alliances for the integrated management of mountain territories.

Mexico, for North and Central America and the Caribbean, identified efforts within Mexico, including its national programme on community forestry to foster sustainable management of forested areas in mountains, a payment-for-ecosystem services programme for water run-off from mountains, a carbon capture and biodiversity increase programme, and the Tree League set up by indigenous peoples.

Turkey, for Europe, lamented the lack of European participation, and pledged greater involvement in the future.

Nepal, for Asia and the Pacific, noted the environmental, socio-economic, and cultural diversity of the region, with the highest mountains and largest populations dependent on the major rivers flowing from these watersheds. She outlined challenges facing the populations downstream, including freshwater runoff, reduced glacier melt, and volcanic outbursts, which lead to a loss of lives and livelihoods annually, and adds to burdening the fragile economic systems.

ICIMOD, for Major Groups of Asia and the Pacific, noted the misfit in their constituency between representing the Hindu Kush Himalayan region and the Asia and Pacific region, and suggested strengthening advocacy and collaboration with the Rio Conventions.

Euromontana, for Major Groups of Europe, highlighted ongoing projects, including: the Alpine Space Programme's Wiki Alps and Alpine Ecosystem Services and projects involving Mountain Wilderness and other Mountain Partnership members;

and elaborated on networks they're involved in, *inter alia*: Espace Mont-Blanc; the Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments (GLORIA); and the Network for European Mountain Research.

The Mountain Environment Protection Society (MEPS), for Major Groups of Middle East and North Africa, lamented limited activity from his region where water scarcity provides a dire threat to all countries in the region, of which 90% of fresh water originates in the high regions and mountains. He proposed either joining another regional, more active group, or strengthening the efforts of two promising new Iranian NGOs.

The Aspen International Foundation (AIMF), for Major Groups of North and Central America and the Caribbean, reported on initiatives from the region, including: contributing to drafting the three paragraphs on mountains in the SDGs; establishing the VERTEX website, which hosts virtual communications and a social media platform; launching new sustainable mountain development platforms; hosting the International Pathways Conference on sustainable ecosystem management; and establishing the Mountain Resilience Collective in the Rocky Mountains as a global hub for social and ecological networks to pursue environmental justice for mountain communities.

Fundación Agreste, for Major Groups of South America, reported on, *inter alia*: the Center for High Mountain Studies to guide research in the Andes: hosting Mountains' Week in 2017; and celebrating five years of the Andes Forests network and eight years of the GLORIA Andes network, which represent 60,000 hectares of ecosystem restoration. As challenges, she outlined: resource mobilization, raising the visibility of the plight of mountains, and raising the profile of the added value civil society can bring.

TMI, on behalf of Major Civil Society Groups, identified challenges, including: communication and feedback from members; diverse interests and focuses among members; and minimal participation from the private sector. He applauded achievements, such as a small non-profit organization that raised awareness about mushrooms and fungi growing in mountain areas, and urged considering meeting more frequently.

UN Environment, on behalf of Intergovernmental Organizations, pledged continued support for the Mountain Partnership's work through focusing on: raising the profile of mountains in the international meetings; involvement in work on waste, litter and pollution in mountain environments; sustainable management of mountain ecosystems; and engagement with the Alpine and Carpathian Conventions.

Italy, on behalf of Donor Organizations, called for greater involvement from member countries, particularly regarding funding, and said it is crucial that mountains become part of an economy that sustains itself as an income opportunity and involves business in its endeavors.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION: Andrey Kushlin, Deputy Director, Forest Policy and Resources Division, Forestry Department, FAO, moderated the session, which focused on lessons learned by major players. Arjun Gupta observed that



René Castro Salazar, Assistant Director-General, Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water Department, FAO ©FAO

available financial resources are sufficient, but said a key constraint is the lack of technically viable projects. He stressed that creating awareness and product branding precedes any success in fundraising, and emphasized the type of project the private sector will invest in, generally start small, are piloted, and then eventually scaled up. Gupta said the private sector looks for projects with clear costs and benefits, measurability and accountability, and good governance, with a strong focus on investing in “low-hanging fruits.”

Tehmina Akhtar stressed that UNDP's Small Grants Programme's community-based initiatives look for the inclusion of women, indigenous peoples, and youth in projects, and highlighted the focal areas that have special focus on mountain landscapes, including biodiversity, land degradation, and climate change mitigation. She underscored the partnership with the INMIP and with the Global Support Initiative to Indigenous Peoples and Community Conserved Territories and Areas aimed at strengthening traditional knowledge.

René Castro Salazar, Assistant Director-General, FAO, warned that traditional pilot practices might be less effective as the current generation lacks the luxury of time for experiments and waiting for society to change, saying “nature can no longer wait for diplomats and politicians to negotiate strategies” while there are clear signals of ecosystems collapsing. He urged using the new wave of individual investors, and supporting and learning from small and fast-growing initiatives.

Sameer Karki, GEF Coordination Unit, Climate and Environment Division, FAO, stressed the importance of GEF collaboration with FAO, noting the cumulative value of FAO-GEF projects is currently over US\$650 million. He drew attention to the high proportion of funds allocated to member countries for mountain-focused projects during the GEF-6 Funding Cycle, and presented the upcoming 7th Funding Cycle, highlighting the opportunities for mountain-related projects through stakeholder engagement at national, regional, and global fora. As examples of FAO projects in the GEF-7 Funding Cycle, he highlighted two: under the climate-change mitigation focal area, a project on reducing GHG emissions through community forests and sustainable biomass energy in Afghanistan; and under



Thomas Hofer, Coordinator, Mountain Partnership Secretariat, and **Eva Müller**, Director, Forestry Policy and Resources Division, Forestry Department, FAO ©FAO

the biodiversity, land degradation and climate change mitigation focal area, a project on transforming Indian agriculture for global environmental benefits and the conservation of critical biodiversity and forest landscapes.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES: On Tuesday, Thomas Hofer introduced the Mountain Partnership Governance Paper, approved at the fourth Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership. He identified modifications made to the Governance Paper and invited members' ideas on: introducing a membership fee; including Central Asia as additional region; alternating Steering Committee members; addressing inactive members; reviewing hosting arrangements; and removing the "innovation" function.

On options for instituting **membership fees**, Hofer cautioned that the introduction of a membership fee is not intended as a resource mobilization strategy, and the options presented for discussion were mainly based on a review of other existing partnerships. He proposed five options: no change to the current provisions and status; no change to the current provisions, with an enhanced monitoring by the Mountain Partnership of the voluntary contributions and commitments by the members; a minimum threshold for a membership fee for organizations from developed countries; a membership fee for all current categories of members (amounts and form of payment to be determined); and a membership fee for all members according to a scale of associated benefits (amounts and form of payment to be determined).

Members posed questions and comments on the: steps in the process for deciding or voting about a membership fee; financial implications of maintaining the status quo; in-kind contribution as a replacement for financial funds; and matching incentives for contributing. South America Major Groups preferred not establishing membership fees, and proposed investigating other mechanisms. Switzerland suggested defining more precisely what funds would be utilized for.

ARCOS for Civil Society of Sub-Saharan Africa requested using the term "contribution" since the Mountain Partnership represents a WSSD Type II partnership initiative, and supported maintaining the status quo. Many other members urged further investigating the membership fee composition, structure, and implications to reach an informed decision. Steering Committee Chair Taber referred the matter to the newly-elected Steering Committee. The meeting approved the second option of having no change to the current provisions and status of voluntary contributions.

Inclusion of Central Asia as additional region: On Tuesday and Wednesday, the meeting discussed the request to create a separate Central Asia regional group currently under the Asia and Pacific region. Some members requested greater clarity on the exact geographical areas affected by the change, and which Major Groups will be affected by it. Others mentioned that having another region will add complexity, and asked for the decision to be deferred to the next meeting to allow for greater clarity on what is involved.

On Wednesday, the Secretariat clarified that the Central Asia group would include six countries, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, two sub-national authorities Altai republic and Dagestan, and the Major Groups associated with these countries.

Bhutan queried about the view of the Steering Committee on this request, and SC Chair Taber reported that there had been consensus in the Steering Committee about the merits of the request. The issue was then put to a vote, with the majority approving the inclusion of Central Asia as a new regional group of the Mountain Partnership.

On Tuesday, participants considered **alternate steering committee members**, where standing members are absent. The meeting approved the decision to select alternate Steering Committee members.

On Tuesday, on the issue of **approach for inactive members**, participants agreed to remove inactive members from the membership list.

On Tuesday, participants considered the **hosting arrangements**, and the meeting approved the proposal that FAO remain the host organization of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat.

On Tuesday, participants agreed to the **deletion of the Mountain Partnership function of innovation**, as one of its focal areas.

On Wednesday, participants considered the **advocacy strategy**. Bhutan suggested refining the strategies in finer detail, and MRI urged prioritizing showcasing the efforts of individual members and initiatives within countries. FAO suggested using the 2019 UN Secretary-General Report as a potential milestone to use in advocating for sustainable mountain development. The meeting approved the document.

On Wednesday, participants considered the **communication strategy**. MRI requested including a process on how to take advantage of communication within the policy space, and recommended a proactive approach and better coordination ahead of large meetings. She called for more transparent and formal communication internally among members. Pakistan proposed better use of social media platforms and of translating the science, and suggested reporting from mountain communities. Costa Rica suggested releasing publications on technical issues and translating these into other languages. Ecuador proposed communicating the message to member countries' ambassadors to the UN in Rome and elsewhere, and Steering Committee Chair Taber noted the need for a longer-term strategy and more frequent meetings of the Steering Committee. The meeting approved the document.

GEARING UP THE MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT THE GLOBAL FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

ELECTION OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE: This session, which took place on Wednesday, was moderated by Thomas Hofer. Members selected the following representatives for the governments of:

- Asia and the Pacific: the Philippines, with Nepal as alternate member;
- Europe: Italy, with Turkey as alternate member;
- Middle East and North Africa: Tunisia, without an alternate member;
- North and Central America and the Caribbean: Dominican Republic, with Guatemala as alternate member;
- South America: Argentina, with the coordinator of the Andean Mountain Initiative, as alternate member. Chile is the current coordinator of the AMI, and when this will change, the new alternate member will be announced;
- Sub-Saharan Africa: Uganda, with Cameroon as alternate member; and
- Central Asia: to be confirmed in the near future; Representatives of Major Groups from:
 - Asia and the Pacific: Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre; with Pan Himalayan Grassroots Development Foundation as alternate member;

- Europe: Centro de Investigação de Montanha/Euromontana, with no alternate member at this stage;
- Middle East and North Africa: MEPS, with no alternate member at this stage;
- North and Central America and the Caribbean: AIMF, with Fundación Comunidad as alternate member;
- South America: Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion, with Fundación Agreste as alternate member;
- Sub-Saharan Africa: Foundation for Environment and Development in Cameroon, with Les Compagnons Ruraux as alternate member; and
- Central Asia: Institute for Sustainable Development Strategy Public Fund, with the Snow Leopard Conservation Foundation as alternate member.

Representatives from Global Major Groups: MRI, with TMI as alternate member.

Representatives from Intergovernmental Organizations: UN Environment, with ICIMOD as alternate member.

Representatives from Donors: Switzerland.

THE MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP LOOKS AHEAD:

Sam Kanyamibwa, Executive Director, ARCOS, moderated the session on Wednesday, which focused on setting priorities and identifying the main areas of work for the next four years. He introduced four themes: advocacy; capacity development; joint action; and communication. Andrey Kushlin highlighted the importance of the proactive actions in the initial two years in the Framework for Action.

On **advocacy**, members expressed views on the proposed advocacy actions, with Steering Committee Chair Taber suggesting the creation of a platform where mountain countries and civil society can present and discuss. One member recommended the inclusion of a chapter on mountain land degradation in the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessment on land degradation. UN Environment urged the Mountain Partnership to provide language on mountain issues to be included to the GEF-7. One member suggested the Mountain Partnership could participate in the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2018.

On **capacity building**, Central Asia emphasized the importance of building the capacities of countries to develop indicators on the SDGs and the role of mountains in achieving



Sam Kanyamibwa, Albertine Rift Conservation Society ©FAO

these. MRI agreed, noting that the Institute is currently finalizing a report on this issue, and that it could be explored further in a workshop. Costa Rica urged refining definitions of “mountains,” and developing educational and extension materials. Pakistan urged capturing the stories of the mountain people, and building the capacity of local and regional media. Kanyamibwa suggested using a venue such as the World Mountain Forum in 2018 to showcase stories from individual countries.

On **communication**, Pakistan shared its experience with mountain festivals, which expose 50,000 people to mountain cultural activities and information about mountain ecosystems’ fragility and functions.

Chile cited her country’s strategy of reaching out to the general public through web platforms to solicit impressions on the country’s national plan, and proposed that the Mountain Partnership adopt this methodology to build capacity and raise awareness. The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention emphasized using “umbrella” events such as mountain days, and urged members to share their success stories with the Partnership.

UNDP noted the GEF Small Grants Programme provides support for collaboration initiatives between civil society and government officials and suggested: the voluntary national reviews to the HLPF as an entry point for the Mountain Partnership members to include mountain issues in their national plans; participation with, and facilitation of, side events at large meetings to focus attention on the contribution of mountains; and offered collaboration to extend the Mountain Partnership local product labelling to other regions.

On **joint action**, Chile stressed the need for governments to create national committees to take advantage of the great number of stakeholders on the table. Peru highlighted the need to: understand mountain communities’ needs by working closely together with them; and work with academia and governments in regional and local levels. Kyrgyzstan advocated for scaling up joint initiatives.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION: This session, which took place on Wednesday, was moderated by Andrey Kushlin. Emphasizing progress of the last 15 years, including improving procedures and governance, and launching the Framework of Action, Thomas Hofer urged taking the mountain agenda “to the next level.” He suggested all members become more proactive, promote and communicate the message, use the Framework and respond to requests from the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee Chair Taber applauded the enthusiasm of the initiative, and reminding of the accomplishments, noting the diversity of the Partnership is its greatest asset.

Grammenos Mastrojeni noted the importance of the Framework’s adoption underscoring the momentum created leading to global realization of the importance of the mountains. François Pythoud, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development and World Food Programme, identified the need for the expansion of the Mountain Partnership’s membership to mountain countries

that are not yet members, such as India, China, Canada, the US. He recognized a need for technical support for countries wishing to apply for funds from the GEF and the Green Climate Fund.

Hiroto Mitsugi, Assistant Director-General, Forestry Department, FAO, noted the importance of governance, resource mobilization, and involvement of the private sector. Kushlin gavelled the Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership to a close at 5:06 pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

World Mountain Forum 2018: The next World Mountain Forum will convene in 2018 in a Central Asian country to be determined to continue discussions on local, regional and global experience in mountain development, and strategies to further SMD. **dates:** 2018 **location:** Central Asia **contact:** Mountain Forum Global Node Office **phone:** +51-1-618-9400 **email:** mtnforum@mtnforum.org **www:** <http://wmf.mtnforum.org>

Reconciling human-wildlife interface in Kangchenjunga Landscape: A Regional Dialogue for Action: This ICIMOD regional workshop will aim at developing a strategic roadmap to address the critical issues of human-wildlife conflict and wildlife crime in the landscape. **dates:** 15-20 February 2018 **location:** Chintan Bhavan, Gangtok, Sikkim **contact:** Priyadarshinee Shrestha **email:** darshinee.p@gmail.com **www:** <http://www.icimod.org/?q=28790>

State of the Cryosphere in the Himalaya: Focus on Sikkim and the Eastern Himalaya—Gaps, Challenges, and Opportunities: This event aims to bring together scientists, policy makers, students, and local communities to understand the latest scientific developments in glaciology and the needs and problems of local communities. The deliberations are aimed at institutionalizing a mechanism to develop a policy framework where scientific research can address societal needs and prepare the society to adapt to the changing times through various mitigation and adaptation strategies. **dates:** 19-20 February 2018 **location:** North Bengal, India **contact:** Nakul Chettri **email:** Nakul.Chettri@icimod.org **www:** <http://www.icimod.org/?q=28790>

IPBES-6: The sixth session of the IPBES Plenary will consider for approval four regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration. **dates:** 17-24 March 2018 **location:** Medellín, Colombia **contact:** IPBES Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-0570 **email:** secretariat@ipbes.net **www:** <https://www.ipbes.net/event/ipbes-6-plenary>

48th Sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies: The 48th sessions of the subsidiary bodies to the UNFCCC and the APA are expected to take place in April-May 2018. **dates:** 30 April - 10 May 2018 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** http://unfccc.int/meetings/unfccc_calendar/items/2655.php?year=2018

ForumAlpinum 2018: The conference will address, *inter alia*: consequences of water scarcity, water as a driving factor for alpine economies, and social issues on water distribution and regulation. **dates:** 4-6 June 2018 **location:** Breitenwang, Austria **contact:** ISCAR office **phone:** +41-31-306-93-46 **email:** iscar@scnat.ch **www:** http://www.iscar-alpineresearch.org/forumalpinum_alpweek/



Members comment on possible amendments to the Governance paper. ©FAO

Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) Subsidiary

Bodies: The twenty-second meeting of the CBD SBSTTA will take place from 2-13 July 2018. **dates:** 2-7, and 9-13 July 2018 **location:** Montréal, Québec, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=5691>

Thinking Mountains 2018: This triennial interdisciplinary mountain studies summit, promoting dialogue about mountain places, peoples and activities around the world, will include presentations on a wide variety of topics showcasing diverse research. **dates:** 2-5 October 2018 **location:** Banff, Canada **contact:** Heather Green **email:** thinkingmnts@ualberta.ca **www:** <http://www.thinkingmountains.ca>

CBD COP14: COP14 is expected to be held in November 2018 in Egypt. **dates:** 10-22 November 2018 (to be confirmed) **location:** Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt (to be confirmed) **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** www.cbd.int/meetings/

UNFCCC COP 24: The UNFCCC COP 24 and associated meetings will take place in Poland. **dates:** 3-14 December 2018 **location:** Katowice, Poland **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** http://unfccc.int/meetings/unfccc_calendar/items/2655.php?year=2018

Mountains 2018: This is an international conference that will bring together academics, professionals, politicians and others to discuss aspects of mountain systems. **dates:** 10-14 December 2018 **location:** Nova Friburgo, Brazil **contact:** Luis Felipe Cesar **email:** Felipe@crescentefertil.org.br **www:** <http://www.crescentefertil.org.br/>

GLOSSARY

AIMF	Aspen International Foundation
ARCOS	Albertine Rift Conservation Society
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GSLEP	Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IHP	International Hydrological Programme
INMIP	International Network of Mountain Indigenous Peoples
MEPS	Mountain Environment Protection Society
MRI	Mountain Research Initiative
UNCED	UN Conference on Environment and Development, 1992 (the Earth Summit)
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
Rio+20	UN Conference on Sustainable Development, 2012
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	small island developing states
TMI	The Mountain Institute
WFES	World Future Energy Summit