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# **AFRICA MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS MEETING**

**Enhancing the mountain partnership in Africa for  
Sustainable Development in African Water Towers**

## **MEETING SUMMARY**



**KIGALI, 20 FEBRUARY 2013**

# INTRODUCTION

The Africa Mountain Partnership Members Meeting took place in Kigali, Rwanda on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2013 with the aim of continuing to build an African agenda and a strong Mountain Partnership constituency on the sustainable development of mountain ecosystems, while also contributing to climate change and water discussions. The meeting was officially opened by Mr Dismas Bakundukize, representing Hon Stanislas Kamanzi, Minister of Natural Resources, Government of Rwanda.

The meeting took stock of the results of the previous “Regional Meeting on Sustainable Development in African Mountain regions - climate change impacts, adaptation and development in fragile ecosystems” that took place from 17 to 19 November 2011 in Mbale, Uganda. It specifically sought to activate the Mountain Partnership in Africa by setting up a tangible regional structure with a clear mandate, thus enabling the undertaking of regional initiatives that promote the mountain agenda on the continent.

A total of 12 Mountain Partnership focal points or their attended the meeting. In addition, some observers were invited to the meeting including officials from the Rwandan government and the private sector in a bid to encourage them to join the Mountain Partnership membership.

The meeting was organized by the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS) in collaboration with the Mountain Partnership Secretariat and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, with support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The day before the meeting, a field trip was organised to visit Nyungwe National Park, one of the Africa’s largest montane forests, situated on the Congo-Nile divide in south-western Rwanda.

This meeting summary gives an overview of proceedings and major decisions by the participants for next steps.

## PROCEEDINGS

In his opening statement, the representative of the Minister of Natural Resources made it clear that although the Rwandan Government is not yet officially a member of the Mountain Partnership network, it is nevertheless engaged in protecting mountain ecosystems and the valuable services they provide for both local communities and the country. He went on to thank ARCOS as the organizer of the event and the Mountain Partnership Secretariat and the MacArthur Foundation for their support, as well as all the participants for their commitment and enthusiasm for promoting the mountain agenda on the continent.

ARCOS' Executive Director, Dr Sam Kanyamibwa, welcoming participants to the meeting said: *"Mountains provide solutions to many of the poverty-related problems that Africa is facing. They provide water, food and energy both to their inhabitants and to communities and businesses in the lowlands. Yet, the many threats they face are overlooked since mountain communities are often poor and marginalized."*

On behalf of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat, Ms Rosalaura Romeo praised the commitment and enthusiasm African Mountain Partnership members showed in promoting the mountain agenda in Africa. Expressing her belief in the success of the meeting she said: *"It is important for the Mountain Partnership to have a strong regional representation and initiatives in the African region. We believe that this meeting will create the basis for a clear road map for the promotion of issues in Africa, such as water, that affect both highland and lowland populations."*

The discussions on the new Mountain Partnership Strategy focused on how the priority areas defined in the document can be aligned to Africa's priorities and challenges. As such, the following thematic areas were identified as the main focal areas for the African Mountain Partnership members' activities: research and knowledge, information sharing, policy and advocacy, community livelihoods and development, payment for ecosystem services, capacity building and private sector involvement.

On the implementation side, the meeting decided to establish the Africa Mountain Partnership Champions Committee, with the mandate to revitalise the activities of the Mountain Partnership in the African region and promote sustainable mountain development in Africa. Three main working groups were formed to discuss in detail three main focus areas:

- The TORs for the new Africa Mountain Partnership Champions Committee
- Priority pillar actions for the Water Towers Initiative
- Framework for Networking and the Africa Mountain Partnership Membership.

# Results

The following are the highlights of the results from the various working groups that were set up during the meeting.

## 1. The African Mountain Partnership Champions Committee and its TORs

The meeting elected the African Mountain Partnership Champions Committee and drafted the committee's Terms of Reference. This committee will work in close cooperation with the entire MP African constituency and other relevant players and in close consultation with the MP Secretariat and the MP Steering Committee.

The committee members are: Moses Hansley Duku (Ghana), Margaret Afoma Chukwu (EATS - Nigeria), Sam Kanyamibwa (ARCOS), Festus Bagoora (Uganda), Mookho Monnapula (Lesotho), and John Owino (IUCN). It was also proposed that Cameroon joins the committee. In addition, it was suggested that UNEP and the Mountain Partnership Secretariat (FAO) join as observers and overall supporters to the committee.

The mandate of the Champions committee is the following:

1. Contact all members to revitalise focal points and confirm commitment to the MP.
2. Provide advisory services to the MP Secretariat.
3. Identify other key stakeholders for collaboration and take stock of on-going mountain projects.
4. Identify opportunities and collaborative projects in the region.
5. Engage political authorities and other decision makers through, among other methods, the production and distribution of policy briefs, to achieve buy-in for MP activities in the region and globally.
6. Develop and implement a work plan for the Africa Mountain partnership Initiative through a consultative process and share it with all African MP members.
7. Share info and promote MP activities in the region.
8. Liaise with other regions through the MP members and the MP Secretariat.
9. Deal with any other issues that may arise.

## 2. Identification of priority areas of action under the Africa Water Towers Initiative

For the Africa Water Towers Initiative, it was decided that the initiative will initially focus on generating knowledge on mountain ecosystem issues, carrying out stakeholder and institutional analysis to understand the actors involved and their activities in mountain ecosystems, create awareness for politicians and for urban, industrial, private and corporate water-users for them to see the need for payment for ecosystem services, as well as promote mountain people's alternative sources of income, address issues of access and benefit sharing and thus bridge the income gap between upstream and downstream communities.

Six priority areas of action were identified under the Africa water Towers Initiative:

- Research and Knowledge,
- Information sharing,
- Advocacy/policy,
- Community livelihoods and development,
- Payment for Ecosystem Services,
- Capacity building and Private sector involvement

For each focus area, specific objectives were formulated and the approach to take in order to achieve the objective(s) was defined.

## Networking and Mountain Partnership Membership

For Networking and Mountain Partnership Membership, channels for exchange and information-sharing were identified. Recommendations include the establishment of an Africa mountains e-newsletter linked to the ARCOS Newsletter Backbone, setting up various online social networks like LinkedIn, having a link for the Africa agenda on the Mountain Partnership website, etc.

Strategies for networking were drawn up and include putting the mountain-relevant issues on the agendas of various meetings held by member organizations, integrating the programme within the framework of existing conventions such as the CBD or UNFCCC, and building synergies with other networks which have linkages with the Mountain Partnership priorities such as AfroMont or Agri-ProFocus Network.

For membership, it was decided to follow up with dormant members to reactivate their participation in the MP (assessment to be done annually) and to look for potential non-members who might be interested in joining the Partnership.

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## Field Visit: 19 February 2013



*Meeting participants trekking along a trail in Nyungwe forest (left), Congo-Nile divide in the middle of the forest (right)*

*Nyungwe is one of the Africa's largest montane forests, situated on the Congo-Nile divide in south-western Rwanda. During the field visit, participants took a nature walk and climbed the canopy walk in the forest. They also visited the mountain wetland of Kamiranzovu, which acts as natural sponge, filtering water and releasing it slowly in such a way that downstream communities have a regular water supply even during the dry seasons. Nyungwe forest assumes the role of a water tower not only for the communities in its vicinity but also for the whole region.*

# AFRICA MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS MEETING

KIGALI, 20 FEBRUARY 2013

## PROGRAMME

Time	Activity	Speaker
08:30-09:00	Arrival and Registration	ALL
09:00-09:10	Welcome by ARCOS and Introductions	Sam Kanyamibwa, ARCOS Executive
09:10-09:30	Opening Remarks by Guest of Honour	Hon Minister S. Kamanzi, Minister of Natural Resources,
09:30-10:00	Mountain Partnership Update, and new Strategy 2013-2017	Rosalaura Romeo, MP Secretariat (FAO)
10:00-10:30	Discussions and questions on the Mountain Partnership	ALL
10:30-11:00	Coffee/Tea Break	
11:00-11:30	Mountain Partnership priority areas for action in Africa	ARCOS, MPS and IUCN
11:30-13:00	Discussions	Participants
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break	
14:00-16:00	Working Groups: Defining Shared Road Map for Mountain Partnership Agenda Africa - WG1: Implementing Mountain Partnership Strategy	ALL
16:00-16:15	Coffee/Tea Break	ALL
16:15-17:00	Working Groups Reporting Back	WG Rapporteurs
17:00-17:30	Conclusions, Final Remarks and Closing	ARCOS and MP Secretariat
18:30	<b>Cocktail (also joined by delegates attending the Great Lakes Forum)</b>	
<b>Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> :Field Visit to Nyungwe Montane Forest and Water Tower- Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> and Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> : Great Lakes Forum on Freshwater Ecosystems</b>		



No	INSTITUTION/COUNTRY	COUNTRY	NAMES	EMAIL
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