

CENTRAL ASIA MAJOR GROUP

Rome, Italy SC Meeting 26-27 March, 2019

Central Asia Major Group includes

- 37 organizations
- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Mongolia, Russia (Altai and Dagestan)

Why the Central Asia mountains matter?

- storage and release of fresh water; watershed
- protection; forest products and land for food production;
- habitat for flora and fauna of local and global significance;
- the regulation of natural hazards and climate;
- natural areas for leisure and recreational activities.

Why the Central Asia mountains matter?

- crucial to the maintenance of natural and agricultural global biodiversity
- host at least 20 distinct ecosystems and thousands of species of vascular plants, many of which are unique to the region.
- home to globally significant fruit-and-nut forests comprising walnuts, almonds, pears, apples, cherries and pistachios.

Accomplishments/Important events – 2018 – Kyrgyzstan hosting

- The Forth World Mountain Forum 23-26 October 2018 - a great platform to share best practice/lessons learned on SMD among stakeholders/MP members

<https://wmf2018.org/> <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=565826727184582>

<https://wmf2018.org/a-call-for-mountains>

- MP partners gathering during the Forum
- Mountain Expo – side events during the Forum where all CA/Kyrgyzstan MP partners actively participated
- 3rd World Nomad Games – 3-7 September 2018

Current trends/dynamics in CA

- Federation of Organic Movement of Kyrgyzstan "BIO-KG" together with the Mo Agriculture and Melioration of the KR has promoted Law "About organic agriculture" which is currently the Parliament (4th reading)
- Most organizations work on climate change issues and their impact on mountain communities
- AGOCA (Alliance of Mountain Communities of Central Asia) promoted the concept of eco-tourism and created the Central Asia Association on eco-tourism – 27 communities in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
- Both in Tajikistan focus on the green economy – Kyrgyzstan approved the National Concept on Green Economy for 2018-2023
- 18 organizations (private companies, NGOs), mostly MP members (RDF, UNISON, ISDS, FOD, etc.) created an Alliance for Sustainable Development

Current trends/dynamics

- Last few years there are increasing number of projects focusing on conservation mountain ecosystems and mountain people's livelihood. Our project Snow Leopard Enterprises is collaborating with these projects to support livelihoods of these communities. For 2018, SLE project is expanded in 6 communities in Khovd Province and their handicrafts would be started to be marketed internationally in 2019. Mountain Partnership label is received to be used for the handicrafts made by these communities.
- The newly started projects as mentioned above are implemented by WWF Mongolia (Future with snow leopards), Mountain ecosystem conservation in western Mongolia with community participation by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Nature resilience and sustainability project by Ministry of Nature Environment and UNDP.
- World Snow leopard Day, which was announced during one of the Bishkek Meeting by Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP) in every 23rd of October is celebrated nationally. Nationwide media and local events happen on this day to raise conservation awareness of mountain ecosystem and umbrella species as snow leopard.
- Several organizations like SIDA are focusing on Mountain ecosystem preservation with focus of sustainable use of pasture and grazing land.

Challenges

- Public expenditures on education and health are less than one quarter of the previous (Soviet) levels.
- The official literacy rate is high, but the declining quality of education in mountain countries is becoming an obstacle to sustainable development.
- Child mortality rates are falling, but the risk of malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and other diseases remains high.
- The rules on ownership rights have relaxed across the region, and a free and competitive market system has evolved, but corruption marred the transition.
- Tajikistan's animal husbandry and food production exceed 1991 levels, and honey production has substantially increased.
- Kyrgyzstan's food production has increased, but its animal husbandry order security concerns have constrained the movement