

Peak to Peak

The Mountain Partnership Newsletter



HIGHLIGHTS

Twenty-three governments plan efforts to include mountains in the Post-2015 development agenda



The Mountain Focus Group, a group of countries committed to sustainable mountain development, strategized on ways to include mountain-related issues in the Post-2015 development agenda on 17 October 2013. Gathered at the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations (UN) in New York, 23 governments planned to take actions, such as holding side-events and disseminating policy briefs, to draw attention to mountain communities and environments during the Open Working Group sessions on the UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Many of the nearly 40 participants, which also included representatives of US-based Major Groups, academic institutions and civil society, belong to the Mountain Partnership (MP), a UN alliance established in 2002 to promote the health of mountainous regions and their inhabitants.

"In 2015, we have to be ready with a new agenda and a new plan for preserving the planet and its resources for future generations. With this in mind, and very much aware that mountains must be at the forefront of the development architecture, we must work together at the international, regional and community level," said Ambassador of Italy to the UN Sebastiano Cardi, host and chair of the meeting. [Read more](#)

NEW MEMBERS

As of October 2013, there were 220 members of the Mountain Partnership: 52 governments, 13 intergovernmental organizations and 155 major group organizations (e.g. civil society, NGOs and the private sector). For information on their activities and contact details, and to update your own details, visit the [members section](#) of the Mountain Partnership website.

We welcome the following new members. Please feel free to contact them for possible collaborative projects and ideas

[Alba Forest](#) (Albania)

[Bingol University](#) (Turkey)

[Central Himalayan Environment Association](#) (India)

[Fundecor](#) (Costa Rica)

[Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement](#) (Nepal)

[Les Compagnons Ruraux](#) (Togo)

[Tajik Social and Ecological Union](#) (Tajikistan)

UPDATE ON MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Mountains to be highlighted during world climate change talks

The Mountain Partnership (MP) will hold a two-hour session called "Building Climate Change Resilience in Mountains" during the Global Landscapes Forum on 16 November 2013 in Warsaw, Poland from 16:30 to 18:30. The two-day Forum, held on the sidelines of the 19th session of the Conference of Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) aims to develop the potential of landscape approach to inform UNFCCC negotiations and Sustainable Development Goal discussions.

The session, organized by the MP Secretariat on the first day of the Global Landscapes Forum, will provide an opportunity for governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), major groups, UN agencies and others to elaborate key messages and recommendations to raise awareness about the significance of mountains in the climate change debate. The two-hour session, moderated by Thomas Hofer, Coordinator

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of the MP Secretariat, will feature a panel of speakers that will include representatives of MP member governments and organizations. [Read more](#)

You may register to participate at <http://www.landscapes.org/register/>

Dénia, Spain, and Ccorca, Peru, pair up for International Mountain Day

The [Municipality of Dénia](#) (Spain) and Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion (CONDESAN) are organizing a twin celebration of International Mountain Day with an awareness-raising focus involving school children from two regions. Moreover, they are connecting the local authorities in Dénia with their counterparts in Ccorca (in the Cusco region of Peru). For more information, email: [Musuq Briceño](#) or [Jesus Reina](#).

Holding an International Mountain Day (11 December) event?

Let us know how you mark International Mountain Day (IMD) this year - we would like to [publicize your event](#) and [share news](#) of your celebrations on the IMD website. Please send photos and news stories to: Mountains-Info-Eng@fao.org
IMD fact sheets and posters are available for [download](#) in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

ASIA and PACIFIC

Uzbek NGOs start mountain land degradation reduction efforts

[Ecoforum](#) of Uzbekistan launched the project, "Promoting the reduction of land degradation in mountain areas of Akhangaran district of Tashkent region." The project is implemented with the support of the Public Fund for Support of NGOs and other civil society institutions under the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) of the Republic of Uzbekistan. It is now in the first phase - reconnaissance, which includes the detection of landslide and debris flow processes and a survey of the local population.



Himalayan town in India prepares disaster response

Uttarkashi, a small hill town in Uttarakhand, a mountain state in Indian Himalaya that was badly hit by flash floods last summer, observed International Day for Disaster Reduction 2013 with an evacuation drill. Organized by the [Centre for Environment Education](#) (CEE Himalaya) with support from JSW Foundation in Mumbai, experts from Fire & Emergency Services, Red Cross Society and National Rural Health Mission, provided tips on disaster response and preparedness for students of 16 schools. [Read more](#)



EUROPE

Spanish cities and provinces coordinate IMD plans

Representatives of Spanish municipal and provincial administrations and institutions coordinated plans to celebrate International Mountain Day (IMD) on 11 December 2013 in various cities and towns throughout the country. Gathered at the Barcelona Maritime Museum on 4 November, participants viewed the audiovisual material available for the occasion. Vicente Chelet, Councilor of the [Dénia Municipal Council](#)'s Local Agenda 21, who co-chaired the meeting, encouraged the audience to continue using the website www.welovemountains.org and its social networks as a broadcast platform. [Read more](#)



An SMD pilot site to open in the Sudety Mountains in Poland

The [European Association of Elected Representatives from Mountain Areas](#) - Poland (AEM) and Wojtowice - Back to the Future, two NGOs, will open a demo site with a seminar to show sustainable mountain development (SMD) in September 2014. The 3.3 hectare-site, granted by the local government for 25 years, is called "Sudety Demo" and will include six plant species under protection, a mini-vineyard, an orchard of forgotten Sudety fruit species and a renovated small XVIII-century cemetery. Read more www.wojtowice-widok.eu



Volunteers bring health and economic advice to Greek plateau community

In late September, 50 volunteers visited the Municipality of Lassithi Plateau where 180 patients (mostly older adults and children) were examined by doctors. Also part of the outreach efforts, "Kafeneion of the Mountains" were held so that local residents could discuss economic issues with [University of the Mountains](#) (UoM) professors and scientists in coffee shops. [Read more](#)

'Change the Approach' competition underway

[Mountain Wilderness](#) has opened its annual contest, *Changer d'approche*, or Change the Approach, to promote sustainable travel in mountains, meaning forms of transport that do not involve personal automobiles. Participants are invited to share stories, photos or videos of their mountain excursions before 15 September 2014. [Read more](#)



MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Gathering on mountain legal structures in Iran

On its 20th anniversary and to mark International Mountain Day (IMD), the [Mountain Environment Protection Society](#) (MEPS) will organize a one-day gathering in Tehran, Iran, on 16 December to highlight the need to create mountain legal structures and promote governmental capacities concerning sustainable mountain development in Iran. Government officials as well as academics, mountain environment experts, NGO representatives and mountain lovers will attend the gathering held in collaboration with the Department of Environment; Faculty of Environment of the University of Tehran; Forest, Range and Watershed Organization; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and FAO office in Iran. [Read more](#)

NORTH & CENTRAL AMERICA and the CARIBBEAN

North American MP members continue strategy planning with Kyrgyz Ambassador

[Utah Valley University](#) (UVU) and Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at UVU, together with the [Aspen International Mountain Foundation](#), [The Mountain Institute](#), [Vista 360](#) and the Permanent [Kyrgyz](#) Mission to the United Nations continued to discuss strategies for the inclusion of a mountain agenda in the Sustainable Development Goals, immediately following the 17 October 2013 Mountain Focus Group meeting in New York, USA. The MP Secretariat and UNEP were also part of the informal gathering that delved into strengthening regional cooperation, both in the Rocky Mountains and with other mountain regions of the world.

SOUTH AMERICA

Experts publish declaration on disaster prevention

On 13 October 2013, which was proclaimed International Day for Disaster Reduction, the First International Forum on Glaciers concluded with the Huaraz Declaration, which was signed by 22 institutions - including MP Members, such as the governments of [Ecuador](#) and [Peru](#), [The Mountain Institute](#), [Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion](#) (CONDESAN) and others. The purpose is to promote, implement and launch mechanisms for the monitoring and early warning of natural hazards caused by rapid retreat of glaciers. [Read more](#)

Rural Andean communities share family farming approaches

The international conference, "Knowledge and Practices of Rural Communities," closed with a 15-point declaration appealing to policy makers of the Andean region to support family farming on 1-3 October 2013 in Lima, Peru. The event drew more than 150 participants, including small farmers, researchers and development leaders from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, with the participation of Mountain Partnership members, the [Government of Peru](#) and [Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion](#) (CONDESAN). [Read more](#)

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Helping bats enrich the soils in the Togo mountains

[Les Compagnons Ruraux](#), a Togolese non-governmental organization (NGO) that promotes the conservation of mountain ecosystems and their biodiversity, is looking for partners and donors to set up field activities in the Tsamé Mountain Chain. In addition to environmental benefits, the bats' sanctuary at the bottom of the hillside, considered sacred by the local community since 1720, has become an eco-tourist attraction. Thus, the sanctuary also yields a financial profit for the community. [Read more](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Sacred Art of Weaving in Crete

Athens, Greece

2 Nov - 29 Dec 2013

The Benaki Museum will feature an interactive exhibition by the Penelope Gandhi Mission in which students from schools all over Greece will experience and learn the traditional Cretan techniques and philosophy of mountain culture, such as weaving, dyeing and spinning from Cretan weavers. The mission is an innovative, volunteer, non-government initiative of the [University of the Mountains](#). [Read more](#)



Impacts of Global Climate Change on Snow, Glaciers and Water Resources in the Andes

Quito, Ecuador

20-22 November 2013

This science and policy workshop, organized by the Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion (CONDESAN) and the

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), will bring together researchers and policy makers to work on policy recommendations for adaptation strategies on global change impacts on snow, glaciers and water resources. [Read more](#)

Addressing Poverty and Vulnerability in the Hindu Kush Himalayas

Kathmandu, Nepal

1-4 December 2013

This international conference aims to crystallize science-based evidence for policy planning and action plus showcase good practices and lessons learned and identify means for scaling up potential innovative solutions. The four-day event, organized by the [International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development](#) (ICIMOD), also proposes to set the tone for forging and strengthening regional partnerships for addressing poverty and vulnerability in the Hindu Kush Himalayas. [Read more](#)

PUBLICATIONS

The importance of generating hydrological information in the Andes

This policy brief summarizes progress in Regional Initiative of Hydrological Monitoring in Andean Ecosystem and its protocol proposal. It also describes the agreements to promote joint efforts with national research centers to strengthen the links between science and policy in the Andes. [Read more](#)

Colombia is Changing

Colombia is Changing is a publication (in German) written by Axel Borsdorf and Martin Mergili and published by Geographic Institute of the University of Innsbruck about their findings and impressions of a three-week study trip through central and southern Colombia. [Download](#)



Final Report: Research in two communities in the Peruvian Urubamba Valley

The Consortium for Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion (CONDESAN) and the Centro para el Desarrollo del Indígena Amazónico (CEDIA) joined efforts to conduct research on two indigenous communities in the High and Lower Urubamba to analyze the climate change and adaptation process of those communities. [Read more](#)

Poster: Monitoring Global Change impacts on High Andean Ecosystems in Ecuador, as part of the Andean Environmental Monitoring and Information System

The Ecuadorian High Andes are a priority region for conservation and sustainable management national policies due to their sensitivity and vulnerability to environmental changes. However, there are still severe knowledge gaps, and scientific information derived from quantitative experiments and long-term biodiversity monitoring processes, which is essential to reinforce the development of adaptation guidelines for High Andean ecosystems in face of global changes. [Read more](#)

NEWSLETTERS

New Comité de Montañas newsletter online

The fourth edition of the bimonthly digital newsletter of the Committee for Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions of Argentina (Comité para el Desarrollo Sustentable de las Regiones Montañosas) is now online. The October newsletter contains news and events relevant to the various agencies and organizations of its Advisory Board members. [Read more](#)

CALL FOR NEWS

Keep other Mountain Partnership members informed about your activities! Please [send us](#) info about new projects and programmes, initiatives, events, publications, newsletters, vacancies and calls for papers for inclusion in next month's Peak to Peak.