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CONCLUSIONS

Regional Technical Meeting on Climate Change Impacts, Adaptation and Development in Mountain Regions

Santiago de Chile

26-28 October 2011

As noted at the Lucerne World Mountain Conference in October 2011, mountains are vital for humankind's sustainable development and well-being. More than half the world's population depends on fresh water from mountains, and mountains also provide important global goods and key services, which are under increasing pressure because of globalization and climate change.

Aware of this situation, the Mountain Partnership, FAO and the Government of Chile, with the support of the World Bank, organized a regional technical meeting in Santiago, Chile, on 26-28 October 2011, to discuss climate change impacts, adaptation and development in mountain regions. The meeting was attended by representatives of the governments of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru, together with international experts. The participants discussed the impacts of climate change in mountain zones, generated recommendations to meet the challenges and laid out strategies to ensure that the issue of mountains is addressed in international processes.



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The participants agree as follows:

- “(1) To highlight the environmental importance of mountain ecosystems, because they are the world’s foremost reservoirs and water regulators, a key source of energy and the origin of world biodiversity, sustaining the life of the world’s population. The meeting also reiterates the need for greater commitment on the part of governments, civil society and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for the preservation, conservation and sustainable use of mountain ecosystems and associated environmental goods and services. Inasmuch as mountains are ecosystems highly vulnerable to the impact of climate change, the need is stressed to address this issue through concrete strategies that should include awareness-raising, capacity-building, the boosting of research, sustainable land-use planning and land management that is environmentally appropriate for mountain ecosystems.
- “(2) Climate change is giving rise to serious modifications in the economic and productive dynamics of mountain ecosystems, an impact that is also reflected in lowland areas, with major repercussions for the inhabitants of both zones. These modifications must be countered through strategies for adaptation, capacity-building, the establishment of public policies and inter- and intra-regional cooperation. The meeting thus reiterates the importance of considering and incorporating the special features of these zones in priorities, plans and strategies in forums where issues connected with climate change are discussed.
- “(3) To propose to governments and national and international bodies that an effort should be made to give the issue of mountain zones and their adaptation to climate change greater visibility, viewing it in cross-



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sectoral terms and stressing the social, environmental and economic aspects in national, regional and international agreements, standards, measures and public policies.

“It is also recommended that consideration of protection and sustainability objectives be encouraged in the development of mountain regions through the creation and boosting of national, regional and international institutions that address interactions between the upper and lower zones of catchment basins and cross-border cooperation, and support capacity-building, knowledge generation and dissemination, technical capacity-building and innovation for the sustainable development of mountain communities.”

The participants consider that the following actions should be promoted:

1. creation and boosting of spaces for exchanges on technical and policy matters;
2. inclusion of the issue of mountain ecosystems in national documents intended to carry weight in international forums;
3. promotion of research on various aspects connected with mountains (studies of economic optimization, ecosystem services, baselines etc.), together with the sharing of outputs and lessons learned, with a view to decision-making;
4. institution-building in the region's countries regarding issues concerned with mountains;
5. promotion of education and public awareness-raising on topics connected with mountains;
6. establishment of new funding mechanisms and use of existing mechanisms in order to implement the above recommendations.



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The participants urge the Mountain Partnership, FAO and governments:

- to continue to facilitate technical meetings in the Latin-American region and between regions; similarly, the organization of events during international meetings concerned with climate change;
- to promote the creation of national forums for sharing among decision-makers on public, technical and scientific policy, including the creation and boosting of national mountain committees;
- to promote the creation of specific financing windows in multilateral funds for activities connected with the environment and climate change and projects connected with mountains;
- to disseminate the conclusions of the present regional technical meeting through the various information networks, and also to share them with participants in the regional meetings to be held in Tajikistan and Uganda in November this year to discuss the impact of climate change in mountain zones.

The participants in the Workshop on Mountains and Climate Change held in Santiago on 26-28 October wish to express their appreciation to the Government of Chile, which, together with FAO, was such an excellent host for the workshop. They also wish to thank the Mountain Partnership and the World Bank, which made the event possible.

Santiago de Chile, 27 October 2011