



## **The Mountain Facility**

Improving the sustainable management of mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain peoples

### **WHAT**

Mountains cover over a quarter of the earth's land area and are home to almost a billion people. Providing between 60 and 80 percent of the world's freshwater, mountains are also a source for food, biodiversity and energy that are vital for the whole of humanity.

Yet the vast majority of people residing in mountainous areas in developing countries lives below the poverty line and many are food insecure. Agriculture, their main source of livelihood, is challenged by harsh environments, isolation, natural hazards and the effects of climate change that disrupt infrastructures and hamper productivity and access to markets. Lack of capacity further hinders their development.

The Mountain Partnership is a United Nations voluntary alliance of partners (governments, IGOs and civil society) dedicated to working together to improve the lives of mountain peoples and protect mountain environments around the world. Since its launch on the occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 in Johannesburg, the Mountain Partnership has steadily grown to encompass more than 230 members. Members join forces to promote, facilitate and implement initiatives at national, regional and international levels and to raise awareness about the challenges faced by mountain peoples and environments. The Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS), hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), was established to serve the members' needs and advocate for sustainable mountain development worldwide

During the 4<sup>th</sup> Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership which was held September 2013 in Erzurum, members recommended the establishment of a Mountain Facility as a funding mechanism to promote collaboration among members and increase their impact at different levels.

### **HOW**

By providing grants, the Facility will strengthen the capacity of mountain communities in mountain development related issues such as, among others, food security and nutrition, sustainable farming systems, climate change, disaster risk reduction, natural resources management, access to markets, as well as the ability to feature prominently in decision making processes at local, regional, national and global levels.



The Facility will also have a knowledge component, which includes the dissemination of relevant traditional and scientific information and lessons learned among mountain communities as well as providing sound, statistical data that can support policy makers and encourage investments. The Facility will allow MP members to implement different sized activities and projects that may be up-scaled or replicated elsewhere. The Facility will be located in the Mountain Partnership Secretariat at FAO and benefit from the Organization's technical expertise.

The Facility will operate through a grant of 3 million dollars (US \$ 3,000,000) a year for five years, to be disbursed through the Mountain Partnership Secretariat at FAO. Applications for the grants will be made on an annual basis and valued by the Facility Steering Committee and a selection panel made up of experts and partners communicating mainly through emails. Pre-established selection criteria will be published ahead of each funding round to guide the development of submissions by potential grant recipients. There will be different sized grants (small, medium and large) categories according to the projects

Recipients of the grant will be required to provide a detailed work plan, progress reporting and terminal reports. In addition all data collected through the project should be analysed and shared widely.

The Facility will work on the following areas:

- **Climate Change.** Support the strengthening of understanding of climate change adaptation in mountain areas through awareness-raising, sharing climate change adaptation techniques and promoting sustainable mountain development activities that are carbon mitigating;
- **Conservation and ecosystem approaches.** Support initiatives that promote natural resource conservation and cultural heritage preservation using participatory approaches and local and indigenous knowledge.
- **Data collection and dissemination.** Support the increase of the production, analysis and dissemination of data both at national and at global level for the advancement of sustainable mountain development. Many mountain countries are requesting sound data to create policies and promote investments.
- **Capacity Development.** Support the expansion of the training activities on sustainable mountain management, such as the annual two-week IPROMO-courses which trains mid-level government and NGO staff to better understand mountain development issues and potential solutions. Many members have requested to organize similar courses in Latin America and Central Asia to improve their outreach.



- **Institutional strengthening.** Assist Mountain Partnership members initiatives to improve their governance structures to address mountain issues at different levels;
- **Participation strengthening.** Support the development of the capacity of Mountain Partnership members, in particular civil society and grassroots' organizations, to be informed, actively engaged and provide input on sustainable mountain management issues;
- **Mountain products and access to markets.** Support the strengthening of local mountain economies and their access to markets by supporting capacity in value chain approaches for mountain high quality, high value products and mountain related enterprises;
- **Knowledge sharing.** Support members in activities that identify good practices, lessons learned and innovative technologies in the sustainable management of mountains that can be shared and replicated; and
- **Resource Mobilization.** Support MP members in the formulation and promotion of investment proposals for sustainable mountain development, including obtaining finance from social and environmentally focused incentive mechanisms (e.g. carbon markets and green bonds).

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- adoption and improvement of more resilient mountain farming systems;
- strengthened mountain countries' institutional mechanisms for addressing mountain issues;
- improved policies on sustainable mountain management, better integration of international commitments in national development strategies and increased investments in sustainable mountain development;
- better scientific and economic data relating to sustainable mountain development;
- strengthen capacity at civil society level in contributing to country, regional and international SMD policy making fora;
- improved capacity in value chain approaches and wider access to markets of mountain communities and;
- better practices adopted and reduced vulnerability of mountain communities to food and water security, malnutrition and the effects of climate change.



## **WHY INVEST**

Past experiences during the International Year of Mountains have shown that funds used to establish multi-stakeholder national committees to plan and implement the national observance of the Year had a catalysing effect. Many of the 71 national committees established for observing the IYM become national mechanism for sustainable development of mountains and the first opportunity to implement a holistic approach to mountains.

In Latin America, an MPS/FAO TCP project has helped Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to establish an Andean Governmental Mechanism to address mountain issues in a regional and transboundary way. A similar initiative is being replicated by MP members in the Middle East and Northern Africa, to promote a regional mechanism for knowledge sharing and lessons learned on the effects of climate change in mountains.

Institutional strengthening, capacity building, sound data collection and knowledge sharing is therefore a prerequisite for achieving concrete sustainable mountain development.