

THE IUCN MEDITERRANEAN MOUNTAIN INITIATIVE

Conservation and sustainable development in mountain areas is a high priority for IUCN, where in December 2007, Mediterranean governments, NGOs, international organizations, scientific and research institutions and experts were convened to identify the challenges to mountain ecosystems, highlight the importance of mountains to the livelihoods of Mediterranean people and produce recommendations to support the achievement of sustainable development in Mediterranean Mountains.

The urgency to implement this initiative became more evident after the 2007 IPCC report, which highlighted the fact that the Mediterranean environment as a whole, and mountains in particular, are among the most vulnerable ecosystems on earth to climate change.

IUCN is undertaking the necessary steps to host the Mediterranean Mountain Initiative, which will act as a hub for the FAO based Mountain Partnership Secretariat. The main role of this partnership is to respond to the international agenda at the Mediterranean level (and mainly the implementation of the UNFCCC COP decisions and the CBD programme of work on mountain biological diversity), share and exchange information, best practices and knowledge as well as provide technical support and enhance capacities for conservation and sustainable development in Mediterranean mountains.

The Mediterranean Mountain Partnership will raise the profile of mountain ecosystems at the national, regional and international levels and influence policy relevant to the outstanding biodiversity and cultural values of Mediterranean mountains, and the unique role that these systems play in ensuring the maintenance of vital resources and services to the societies and economies of the region.