



Mountain Partnership Steering Committee meeting

Thursday, 22 February 2024

15.00-17.00 (CET)

Agenda

- Opening and adoption of the agenda
- Update on the MPS work in 2023
 - Update on International Mountain Day (IMD) 2023 – *for information*
 - Update on the UNFCCC COP 28 outcomes – *for information*
 - Update on the Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions – *for information*
- Agenda item on the Five-Year Plan at the 174th FAO Council session
- Expanding the resource base of the MPS
 - Increasing the financial sustainability of the MPS – *for discussion*
- 2024 work planning
 - MPS' 2024 work plan and planning calendar – *for information*
 - Selecting the 2024 IMD theme and messaging – *for discussion*
- Reports from constituencies by Steering Committee members
- Other matters, discussion and conclusions

Opening and adoption of the agenda

Livio Spadavecchia, Mountain Partnership (MP) Steering Committee (SC) Chair, Government of Italy, welcomed the participants and opened the meeting.

The agenda was adopted without modification.

The Chair introduced Ewald Rametsteiner, representing the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in the Steering Committee. Ewald introduced himself as the FAO Deputy Director now overseeing the MPS after a reorganization of the Forestry Division. He explained the reorganization provides the MPS with more visibility.

Update on the MPS work in 2023

Sara Manuelli, MPS, shared an update on the MPS's work in 2023. She provided a recap of International Mountain Day (IMD) and the high-level event at the 28th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 28). Sara also highlighted some of the key mountain events at UNFCCC COP 28, along with the key mountain outcomes. The main outcome is the approval of an expert dialogue on mountains and climate change. The expert dialogue will take place at the 60th Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) in June 2024.

The ambition is making it an annual occurrence and long-term process on the model of the ‘Dialogue on oceans and climate’.

Hugo Mantilla-Meluk, Centro de Estudios de Alta Montaña (CEAM), underlined the importance of including tropical mountains in the expert dialogue.

Fabio Parisi, MPS, provided updates on the Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions 2023–2027. The second task force meeting was held in October 2023. The next steps for the Five Years of Action are to develop a global action plan, convene the inaugural working group meeting, and engage the task force in the first quarter of 2024.

Matthias Jurek, UNEP, asked for clarification on the anticipated long-term outcomes/vision of the mountains and climate change dialogue. Rosalaura Romeo, MPS, clarified that a meeting has been requested with the SBSTA chair. She emphasized that the next steps are to rally political support for the long-term dialogue and to convene a meeting among key partners when there is more clarity on the way forward.

Maheshwar Dhakal, Government of Nepal, urged the SC members to continue to push for the long-term dialogue. He informed the participants that the Government of Nepal is looking to organize a meeting in May to call for attention to mountains and climate change that could be part of the process leading to SBSTA.

Laurent Fouinat, GRID-Arendal, suggested that the Science and Knowledge Advisory Committee of the MP be included in the expert dialogue.

Nurlan Aitmurzaev, Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, concurred with Nepal. He informed the SC members that the Kyrgyz Diplomatic Mission to New York sent letters to all UN countries inviting them to join the UNFCCC Negotiating Group of Mountain Partnership. There is a request that the UNFCCC Secretariat organize an online meeting. Rosalaura Romeo, MPS, reminded the SC that the MPS can only provide support, and that the governments are the drivers of political action.

Decision

- **SC members will send relevant 2024 events to the MPS to be included on the planning calendar.**

Agenda item on the Five Year Plan at the 174th FAO Council session

Julia Vicioso, Vice-Chair, Government of the Dominican Republic, presented an update on the agenda item on the Five Years of Action discussed at the 174th FAO Council session in December 2023. The outcomes included that 135 FAO member countries requested: FAO fully takes up its role as the leading UN agency for sustainable mountain development; FAO to develop a Global Action Plan on Mountain Regions Development 2023-2027; recommended FAO to support Member Countries, subject to available extra-budgetary resources, with tools, methodologies and capacity-building activities to strengthen their capacity to scale-up sustainable mountain development initiatives with specific reference to the Five Years of Action; and encouraged FAO to continue supporting Member Countries in raising awareness on the challenges, problems and opportunities of mountain regions, and enhancing global efforts to address them.

The next steps are to develop the Global Action Plan on Mountain Regions Development 2023–2027, which will be presented at the 27th Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO 27) in July 2024, and to update the FAO Council at its 176th session in December 2024.

The Chair reminded the group that the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP CBD 16) is being held in Colombia from 21 October to 1 November 2024, along with the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in Saudi Arabia from 2 to 13 December 2024.

Expanding the resource base of the MPS

Rosalaura Romeo, MPS, underlined that mountains are becoming increasingly relevant in many UN processes. She explained that the priorities for resource mobilization are to expand the resource base of the MPS and its related projects and to mobilize donors for the implementation of the Five Years of Action. Rosalaura reminded the group that the Governments of Italy and Switzerland have been long-term supporters of the MPS. She expressed her gratitude to them and to the Government of Andorra for the continued support.

Julia Vicioso, Government of the Dominican Republic, called for teamwork. She offered to attend meetings as a supporter and to look for additional donors. She encouraged the other SC members to do the same.

Maheshwar Dhakal, Government of Nepal, encouraged collaboration with other agencies and suggested writing a proposal for funds through the Global Environment Facility or Green Climate Fund.

Nurlan Aitmurzaev, Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, informed the participants that the Kyrgyzstan diplomatic missions received instructions to contact prospective donors to mobilize resources for the MPS.

Matthias Jurek, UNEP, emphasized that resource mobilization is critical. He said it is important to provide potential donors clarity on exactly what is needed and ensure that it is attractive to donors.

2024 work planning

Sara Manuelli, MPS, presented the highlights of the 2024 work plan and event calendar, which were shared with the SC prior to the meeting for their approval.

Hugo Mantilla-Meluk, CEAM, reminded the participants that COP CBD 16 is in Colombia, which presents a great opportunity for participants from South America. Biodiversity and One Health are primary concerns for the region.

Maheshwar Dhakal, Government of Nepal, mentioned that the Nepal Government plans to organize an event on Mountains and Climate Change on 22-23 May which the MPS will also support.

Karinjo Devore, Aspen International Mountain Forum, mentioned that there has been a discussion about a meeting in Aspen in August and proposes this be a time to discuss resource mobilization.

Matthias Jurek, UNEP, emphasized UNEP's commitment to mountains and strong leadership and support to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), including putting a spotlight on mountain biodiversity-related issues. UNEP, together with WHO, FAO and WOA, is also part of the One Health Initiative and in this regard welcomed mountain countries to submit proposals for

the next upcoming call of the Nature for Health Trust Fund and encouraged the MPS to share the call, once public, through its network and channels.

2024 IMD Theme

Samantha Abear, MPS, presented the MPS' proposals for the 2024 IMD theme, including: climate change, youth, innovation and livelihoods.

Julia Vicioso, Government of the Dominican Republic, expressed her preference for innovation and youth together, specifically the proposed built-out slogan *"Mountain solutions for a sustainable future – adaptation, innovation, youth and beyond"*.

Maheshwar Dhakal, Government of Nepal, agreed that youth, innovation and adaptation were all important. He also proposed a theme on mountains and humanity.

Decision

- **The MPS will send a poll to the SC for vote for their constituencies' preferred 2024 IMD theme.**

Reports from constituencies

The Chair opened the floor to the SC members to share updates from their constituencies.

Matthias Jurek, UNEP, informed the participants that the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions Secretariat is carrying out many activities in support of waste management in mountain countries as planned for 2024. Additionally, he informed the participants that UNEP is supporting the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee (INC) on Plastic Pollution.

Other matters, discussion and conclusions

The Chair opened the floor for any final comments and asked the SC to express their preference for the date of the next meeting.

Julia Vicioso, Government of the Dominican Republic, proposed the next meeting be held before the summer.

The Chair asked the MPS to circulate a poll to identify the date of the next SC meeting. He reminded the SC members to share relevant upcoming mountain events with the MPS and to vote on the 2024 IMD theme.

The meeting was then officially closed.

Decision

- **The MPS will circulate a poll to decide the date of the next SC meeting, to be held before summer.**

Annex 1: Participant list

Steering Committee Members

Donor Organizations

Livio Spadavecchia, Italy (**Chair**)

Governments

Asia and the Pacific: Maheshwar Dhakal, Nepal

Central Asia: Nurlan Aitmurzaev, Kyrgyz Republic

Europe: Silvia Ferrer, Andorra

North and Central America and the Caribbean: Julia Vicioso, Dominican Republic (**Vice Chair**)

South America: Cristiana Leucci, Peru

Sub-Saharan Africa: Macpherson Nthara, Malawi

Host Institution of the MPS

Ewald Rametsteiner, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Intergovernmental Organizations

Matthias Jurek, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Doreen Robinson, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Major Group Organizations

Europe: Simao Pinho, Centro de Investigação de Montanha (CIMO) and Euromontana

Near East and North Africa: Mohamed Ddich, Coalition Civile pour la Montagne

North and Central America and the Caribbean: Karinjo DeVore, Aspen International Mountain Foundation (AIMF)

South America: Hugo Mantilla-Meluk, Centro de Estudios de Alta Montaña (CEAM), University of Quindío

Global Major Group: Laurent Fouinat, GRID-Arendal

Absent Steering Committee Members

Government

Near East and North Africa: Yemen

Major Group Organizations

Asia and the Pacific: Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (Vice Chair), Pan Himalayan Grassroots Development Foundation (Alternate)

Central Asia: Tajik Social and Ecological Union, Rural Development Fund (Alternate)

Observers

Patricia Breuer Moreno, Mujeres a la Cumbre

Margi Levitt, Aspen International Mountain Foundation

MPS Staff

Samantha Abear

Valeria Barchiesi

Arianna Bartolozzi

Allison Bozzi

Julie Cheek

Giorgio Grussu

Sara Manuelli

Fabio Parisi

Rosalaura Romeo

Antonella Sorrentino

Adrià Vergés Aleix