

MOUNTAIN RESEARCH INITIATIVE (MRI)

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The Mountain Research Initiative (MRI) is a multidisciplinary organization that supports research on global change in mountain regions around the world. MRI is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zürich) and is endorsed by the International Geosphere Biosphere Programme, the International Human Dimensions Programme, GTOS and UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB).

GLOCHAMORE: from the global template...

The GLOCHAMORE Research Strategy was the final product of the Global Change and Mountain Regions Project (Specific Support Action under the EU 6th Framework Programme) which MRI and the University of Vienna (Austria) coordinated in 2004 and 2005. The Research Strategy laid out a global template for global change research in mountain regions (see link below).

...to its implementation through Regional Global Change Research Networks (GCR Networks)

In 2006, the MRI broadened its focus from strategy development on a global level to include the initiation and support of regional networks of global change researchers. It is through these regional networks that the strategy is being implemented. During 2006, MRI allocated substantial funds to the GCR networks and launched efforts in the Americas and Europe, while establishing partnerships with other entities in Monsoon Asia (see networks box).

AMERICAN CORDILLERA ACTIVITIES

Immediately after the "Climate Change: Organizing the Science for the American Cordillera" (CONCORD) conference, MRI and UNESCO MAB chaired a workshop on the creation of an American Cordillera



MRI has initiated a consortium of ten African and international organizations for the workshop on "A Global Change Research Network in African Mountains", held in Kampala, Uganda, in July 2007

Transect (ACT), a network of sites along the American Cordillera where research could be pursued within the context of the GLOCHAMORE strategy. During the ACT workshop, six work groups were established (see link below for details).

Of the six work groups, the Cordillera Forest Dynamics Network (CORFOR) is an exemplary project. This international group of collaborators maintains hundreds of long-term forest monitoring plots along the American Cordillera, from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. No other forest network spans such a wide range of environmental gradients:

- a latitudinal gradient from 60°N to 50°S,
- elevational gradients spanning thousands of metres,
- west to east precipitation gradients crossing the Cordillera,
- broad gradients of topography and soils, and
- broad gradients of land use and disturbance history.

These gradients offer unique opportunities to understand consequences of forest management and the environmental controls of forest structure, composition, biodiversity and dynamics.

The implementation of the global research strategy through regional networks



Photo by C. Drexler

FUTURE STEPS

To achieve the full objectives of the initiative, MRI will continue and amplify support to regional networks for global change research in mountains. The goal is to initiate and facilitate the development of research proposals whose results will be meaningful at the policy level. MRI's role is to integrate existing and new programmes into a coherent framework (Research Network Programme), while the actual monitoring or modelling activities take place in individual programmes with their own funding.

THE NETWORKS INITIATED AND SUPPORTED BY MRI INCLUDE:

- **The American Cordillera Transect for Global Change Research**
<http://mri.scnatweb.ch/content/category/3/45/67>
- **Global Change Research Network in European Mountains (GCRN_EM)**
<http://mri.scnatweb.ch/content/category/3/47/68>
- **Global Change Research Network in African Mountains (GCRN_AM)**
<http://mri.scnatweb.ch/content/category/3/61/80>
- **Mountain Component to Monsoon Asia Integrated Regional Study (MAIRS)**
<http://mri.scnatweb.ch/content/category/3/53/71>



Developing a global change research network: going beyond FP7, Zürich, Switzerland, 1-2 February 2007

RELATED LINKS:

GLOCHAMORE: <http://mri.scnatweb.ch/content/view/74/31> | **American Cordillera Transect (ACT):** <http://mri.scnatweb.ch/content/category/3/45/67>
CORFOR: www.corfor.com