1. Introduction

This communication strategy was developed by the Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS) to provide a framework to support the activities of the Mountain Partnership (MP), in line with the 2022-2025 priorities defined in the advocacy strategy and governance document. The current strategy builds on the previous one referring to 2018-2021.

Since its inception, the MPS has facilitated knowledge sharing and collaborative action among MP members. The Secretariat, in consultation with members, has developed a powerful brand and visual identity, a website, a monthly newsletter in English, a brochure in four languages, social media channels, videos, technical publications, databases, policy and issues briefs, United Nations (UN) reports and other materials. It has also developed guidelines for news stories to be published on the website, a social media guide as well as brand guidelines (see Annex 2).

This communication strategy sets out objectives, key audiences and target groups, including specific messages, tools and activities, all aimed at maximizing the impact of the communication efforts of the MP. The strategy builds synergies and aims to contribute to existing communication strategies and platforms of different members. It is meant to help MP members and others that are interested in mountain issues to navigate through the various MP communication channels by finding them all in one place.

In addition, MPS communication plans are devised yearly according to the priorities set by the Steering Committee and MP members, and in coordination with the advocacy strategy and its priorities. International Mountain Day (IMD) communication plans are devised yearly as well as in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)'s corporate communication team.

2. Communication goals and objectives

The overall goal of this communication strategy is to strengthen the MP by promoting a collective voice and outreach to promote sustainable mountain development (SMD). The strategy aims to achieve this goal through:

1. utilizing several communication tools that are available to all members of the MP; and
2. by encouraging members to utilize the MP channels and key messages for simultaneously promoting their work and raising global awareness and attention to mountain issues.

The external and internal communications objectives that the MP aims to achieve through the communication strategy are as follows:

External communication objectives

- Ensure attention to mountains by mobilising the MP constituency and building on their respective strengths;
- Expand outreach to new audiences not already working on or involved in addressing mountain-related issues (e.g. social and environmental activists, youth, artists, musicians, fashion designers, athletes, indigenous people, etc.) to engage them in supporting the mountain cause;
• Maintain the MP’s position as the key UN voluntary alliance in which members work
together for the improvement of mountain peoples’ lives and the protection of mountain
environments;
• Inform policy-makers and civil society with evidence-based information to build
commitment and support for national strategies and programmes, policies and laws that aim
to sustainably develop mountain areas, in close conjunction with advocacy efforts;
• Build awareness about the importance of sustainable mountain development, empower
mountain peoples and enhance the conservation and sustainable use of mountain
ecosystems to mark the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development 2022;
• Raise awareness for and inform about mountain-specific issues of priority at UN events,
relevant fora, regional events and on International Mountain Day (11 December), among
others;
• Build awareness among existing and potential resource partners of the activities of the MP
to consolidate and increase financial support;
• Foster synergy, coordination and collaboration with other actors, networks and initiatives
concerned with mountains or other topics related to sustainable development;
• Share lessons learned, incorporate and promote indigenous, local knowledge and new
scientific knowledge and promote good practices that can assist in the strengthening of
sustainable development and the resilience of mountains and mountain peoples to issues
such as food insecurity, climate change and the effects of globalization; and
• Promote and share the communication and outreach activities of MP members that are
consistent with the MP’s SMD messaging, and
• Increase media coverage of the MP and its initiatives.

Internal communication objectives (among MP members) facilitated by the MPS

• Develop and coordinate knowledge and science based consistent messages to promote
SMD;
• Ensure MP members access to the information they need to communicate and advocate at
global, regional and local level as well as to information about the Partnership’s activities;
• Strengthen the MP communication network, share the communication products of MP
members, and facilitate the exchange of knowledge within the Partnership so to build
synergies and avoid duplication and overlap;
• Promote key messages and a standardized visual identity to be used in all communication
channels of the MP; and
• Provide visibility to the resource partners supporting the MP and the MPS.

3. Target audiences

• MP members
• Policy-makers
• UN Conventions negotiators and delegates
• Governments
• Civil society
• Scientific and technical community
• Media
• Private sector
• Youth and students
• Donors
4. Key messages

Mountain Partnership members should disseminate key messages that have been developed by the MPS in collaboration with MP members, that can be tailored according to audience and used in speeches, events, posters, media interviews, etc. The MPS updates key messages regularly with new data with the support of MP members. The emphasis should be on global issues that affect mountain communities and environments, such as food security, livelihoods, climate change, water and biodiversity issues. Key messages are also issued annually for International Mountain Day based around that year’s specific theme. Attention can be called to mountains at events that do not strictly pertain to mountains by choosing strategic key messages and entry points.

Examples of key messaging:

- Mountains cover about 27 percent of the earth’s land area.
- Mountains are home to 15 percent of the world’s population (1.1 billion people); over 90 percent of whom live in developing countries.
- 62 percent of mountain people live in rural areas, where agricultural production is mainly carried out by smallholder family farmers and pastoralists.
- 1 in 2 rural mountain people in developing countries are at risk of hunger and malnutrition.
- Mountains host about half of the world’s biodiversity hotspots and 30 percent of all Key Biodiversity Areas, as well as vital genetic resources for locally adapted crops and livestock.
- Mountains attract about 15-20 percent of global tourism.
- Mountains provide crucial goods and services, such as water, food and energy, for all humanity.
- Mountains provide up to 60-80 percent of the world’s freshwater resources for domestic, agricultural and industrial consumption.
- Climate change is melting glaciers and threatening mountain communities and environments.
- Mountain areas have some of the highest migration rates worldwide.
- Mountains require policies and investments so they can continue to provide global goods and services.
- In mountain areas, agriculture and food production are key economic and development drivers, both through alleviation of food insecurity and their potential for generating income and employment, as well as their links with tourism and niche markets.

5. Tools, activities and services

Over the past few years, the MPS has successfully expanded its reach by employing the use of social media in addition to traditional media to improve the reach and efficacy of communication activities. The MPS Communication Team can count on the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) corporate communication team’s strong support for corporate activities and events and capitalize on their large networks and followers.

The following tools are made available to all MP members to convey the messages and activities of the MP:

- **Websites** – The [MP website](#) is managed by the MPS, with editorial contributions from MP members. It has centres on news, events, priorities, activities, needs and contact details of MP members. It aims to constantly build its public reach and disseminate mountain-related news even
further. It is currently in English. The MPS also manages the pages for the SMD training programmes I PROMO and GROW as well as the website for International Mountain Day (in three languages), where activities, messages and information materials are posted.

Social Media – The MPS maintains seven strategically selected social media channels – a blog on Exposure, Facebook page, Flickr photo account, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn – to promote the activities of the MPS and MP members, increase awareness of mountain issues, and interact with MP members and the greater public in a fast-paced fashion. The MPS also manages two Facebook groups – Youth for Mountains and International Mountain Day Event Organizers – and encourages the members of these groups to engage with each other. The MPS can also count on FAO Forestry’s official Twitter account and FAO’s official corporate social media channels for the dissemination of key messages.

MP members are encouraged to create social media accounts if they do not already have them, to engage with the official MP social media channels and to provide content to the MPS for these channels. Regular usage of the MP’s official hashtag #MountainsMatter where appropriate is also highly encouraged.

Peak to Peak – The MP newsletter allows for the monthly delivery of a round-up of MP news and events to the inboxes of MP members and a greater network, called “Friends of the MP”. It reports regional and member information submitted by MP members to the MPS as well as “closed” meetings and other endeavours that are pertinent to SMD, especially when they could be replicated in other regions. Peak to Peak is managed by the MPS.

Email listservs – The MPS uses three email lists. One is for MP members as a whole who are regularly sent targeted messages that pertain to them or are not intended for the general public. The MPS also maintains and uses lists for “Friends of the MP” and I PROMO alumni. The MPS are the moderators of these listservs and therefore must approve any messages sent to them. All MP members are invited to send the MPS content for distributing through the listservs.

Publications – A wide range of publications written by MP members document in-depth knowledge on various subjects related to SMD and are made available for public consultation on the MP website as well as on members’ websites. The MP publication archive is available online here and provides links to members’ publication repositories. In addition, the MPS produces ad hoc publications in collaboration with key members.

Information sheets – Information sheets in six languages for IMD are produced yearly by the MPS as well as information sheets on key topics (e.g. Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, sustainable food systems, etc.).

MP brochure – The MPS regularly produces a brochure in English, French, Russian and Spanish, showcasing its pillars of work plus global and regional activities. The brochure is available digitally on the MP website, and physical copies can be requested from the MPS.

Videos – When financial resources are available, the MPS produces videos, both long versions and social media ones about the MP and IMD to advance SMD messages and showcase specific programmes and initiatives. MP members are encouraged to produce videos about their projects and to share these with the MPS for disseminating via the MP’s various channels.

Resource mobilization proposals – Regular proposals are produced by the MPS and support is available on request. More information is available here on the MP website.
Presentations and speeches – PowerPoint presentations and PowerPoint templates created by the MPS can be requested and adapted by MP members according to need and audience. Speeches are produced and tailored for specific events, and the MPS can provide MP members assistance on these when requested.

Mountain Partnership Goodwill Ambassadors – To inspire goodwill toward improving the quality of life and sustaining healthy environments in the world’s mountain regions, and in line with the MP advocacy strategy, MP members nominate well-known personalities to champion the cause of SMD. Currently, the MP has six Goodwill Ambassadors: Ludovico Einaudi, Arjun Gupta, Reinhold Messner, Jake Norton, His Holiness Drikung Kyabgön Chetsang and Mira Rai.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

The quality and success of the implementation of the communication plan should be measured and audited to monitor progress and what to improve. Currently, Google Analytics and other reporting tools are used to track the reach of MPS communication products and channels, including the MP and IMD websites, social media and Peak to Peak, and audiences’ engagement with them. These analytics are regularly presented at the annual or biannual Steering Committees. The SC may propose other methods of evaluating and the specific pieces of information to collect to assess the quality and success of the communication plan.
Annexes:

1. News guidelines
2. Brand guidelines
3. Social media guidelines
Annex 1: News guidelines

Web news stories should not exceed 500 words and be accompanied by at least one photo.

The MP shares information about sustainable mountain development, so news stories must be centered on mountain communities and/or environments and be as timely as possible.

Headlines

- Have a limit of 50 characters with spaces (no abbreviations or acronyms)
- Must have the word mountains or name of a mountain or mountain range
- Should have an action verb in the present tense
- Establish geographic location – region, country, mountain range

News structure

The first sentence of the news should be about the latest development and ideally include:

- who (name of MP member, if applicable)
- what the action/development is
- when, the day the news occurred (please try to submit news as early as possible)
- where – town/city and country
- how and why, if possible but those can also be explained further down in the story

Quotes are a great way to make the story more interesting and add perspective. In a story of 500 words, one or two quotes suffice; three should not be exceeded.

All stories end with a ‘read more’ link to another website, so writers should provide a website where readers can find either the same (originally published) article or more information than what was provided in the story. One link is enough.

Byline

Articles can be signed by an individual or by an organization, if preferable. Members of the Mountain Partnership should be sure to include the name of their organization in the news itself as well as in the byline at the end of the article.

Photos

Images should always be high quality - resolution 300 dpi is best but less is acceptable. Multiple photos are appreciated and will be used on Facebook and Flickr. Please be sure to provide the name of the photographer. All photos published by the MP website are subject to a granting of copyright through the signing of a FAO photo permission form.
Annex 2: Brand guidelines

Use of the Mountain Partnership Brand

An activity or initiative can be labeled as being implemented within the MP if the following criteria are met:

- at least two MP partners are involved in or contribute to the initiative; and
- the initiative is clearly related to SMD and contributes to the MP mission and objectives.

It is important that all initiatives which are being implemented under the MP logo are reported to the MPS in order to ensure proper communication to the entire membership.

Visual Guidelines

Our external/internal audiences recognize MP as a strong, self-standing, distinct brand. By using the same logo, typefaces, slogans and colours to share our key message, we convey a cohesive and consistent message, which makes our individual voices stronger.

Name in English / French / Spanish:
Mountain Partnership / Alianza para las Montañas / Partenariat de la montagne

Tag line in English / French / Spanish:
Working together for mountain peoples and environments / Œuvrer ensemble pour les populations et les environnements de montagne / Trabajando juntos por los pueblos y el ambiente de las montañas

Logo

The Mountain Partnership logo features four green mountain peaks surmounted by black brush strokes.

MP members are invited to use the MP logo, which can also be placed on members’ websites or used when organizing an event or initiative to promote SMD with at least one other MP member.
International Mountain Day Brand Guideline:

Header
OPTI
Champion
Bold

Body
Source Sans
Pro

#f89746

#39a841

#8cb4de

#0274c0

11 December
International
MOUNTAIN DAY

11 December
Journée internationale de la MONTAGNE
Annex 3: Social media guidelines

Social media is a powerful tool for communications and outreach. In addition, it is a fast and low-cost way to quickly share information with a large audience. The MP uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr and FAO’s YouTube to share news, event announcements and relevant information about its members and sustainable mountain development. The MPS encourages MP members to utilize social media in their communication as well as explore the latest features of the various social media platforms. For example, TikTok is an emerging platform that can be used to make short videos to reach younger audiences, and reels and IGTV are a new video feature of Instagram that members can also use to communicate messages to followers.

The official hashtag used by the MP is #MountainsMatter and the handle is @UNmountains.

Twitter

How often to post:

- Connecting with MP members via Twitter is a daily activity. This platform is used for: promoting MP events, initiatives, calls for studies/action, MP member content, retweeting when tagged, and more.
- Keeping track of Twitter impressions / hashtag analytics is important to measure the MP’s social performance. Using Twitter’s analytics function allows us to measure how our audience reacts to the content that the MPS shares.

Content:

- Content featured via the MP’s official Twitter consists of: MP member news stories published on the MP website, event promotion, advocacy, and key mountain messages.

Facebook

How often to post:

- To stay present and visible on Facebook, the MPS publishes at least one post per day, maximum two posts per day.
- The MPS maintains monthly analytics of the MP’s page, accounting for the number of followers, size of post reach, number of people engaged and the page’s star rating. Based on these analytics, the MPS adjusts what and when it shares content.

Content:

- Facebook content should be varied. It is important to publish a mixture of photos, videos, links and articles to keep audiences engaged.
- Facebook posts are meant to be short and colloquial, avoiding overly technical language or acronyms, and to link to further information. The recommended length of text for a Facebook post is 40 characters.
- When referring to another organization in a post, tag the organization’s page, if possible. To tag the MP’s Facebook page, write: @MountainPartnership

Instagram
How often to post:

- Engage daily with MP members, like, comment and share their content. Share images, short social media videos, IG stories and feed posts weekly.
- Connect with and follow MP members.

Content:

- Content is based around the following: promotion of upcoming events, International Mountain Day content, UN International Days content, quizzes on mountains, Mountain Partnership Products Initiative, and sharing MP members’ content.
- The goal of the MP Instagram is to engage our audience and gain reactions via likes, comments and shares to amplify outreach efforts.

Flickr

The MP shares photos of mountains, mountain peoples and MP events on its Flickr. Members are welcome to submit photos to the MPS to be shared on the Flickr. Photos should be of good quality (high resolution, at least 300 dpi, in jpg format) and can be sent to the MPS at mountains.mps@gmail.com.

Anyone may request to use photos from the MP Flickr for non-commercial use by contacting the MPS. Appropriate attribution should be provided, including the name of the photographer. All photos published by the MP website are subject to a granting of copyright through the signing of a FAO photo permission form.

YouTube

The Mountain Partnership produces short videos about sustainable mountain development and International Mountain Day and publishes these on FAO’s official YouTube account. Members are welcome to share these videos on social media and tag the Mountain Partnership’s accounts to be reposted.