

Report from Global Major Groups from civil society, NGOs and the private sector

Mountain Research Initiative - MRI (Carolina Adler)
Mountain Partnership Steering Committee Meeting (26-27 March 2019)

As of 25 March 2019, the "Global Major Groups from civil society, NGOs and the private sector" constituency of the Mountain Partnership (MP) included 22 members. A call was issued by MRI in February to alert members of the call issued by the Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS) for inputs on news and campaigns to feature in the MP 2018 Annual Report. Members were provided with a template issued by the MPS, and requested to deliver their inputs directly to the MPS by the end of March for the report content compilation.

A brief overview of highlights from MRI and UIAA are shared here. Overall, the past year has been a busy one for the scientific research community that MRI represents, with events and sessions chaired at the World Mountains Forum held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan in October 2018, as well as taking part in a communications campaign as part of the Sustainable Mountain Development for Global Change Program (SMD4GC) on #VanishingGlaciers, to raise awareness of the issue of climate change in mountains at the UNFCCC COP24 meeting in Poland, December 2018. MRI has also been particularly involved in climate change issues over the past year, given the focus on mountains in the current Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sixth assessment cycle (AR6), which includes a Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC), with a chapter on 'High Mountains', and the cross-chapter paper on 'Mountains' to feature in the Working Group II report on Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation in AR6. MRI has also been involved in the preparations for the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) High Mountains Summit, to take place in October 2019, with MRI (Carolina Adler) appointed as Co-Chair of the Summit, together with John Pomeroy, representing the International Network for Alpine Research Catchment Hydrology (INARCH), who is based in Canada. The UIAA has had a busy year as well, with various projects now evolving to global campaigns and movements for action, such as the UIAA Mountain Protection Award, and the 'Respect the Mountains' global movement. They had a very prominent presence at the last Sustainable Summits Conference held in Chamonix in June 2018, with workshops held on sustainable mountaineering and tourism with the support of the MRI, UN Environment and GRID-Arendal. More recently, the UIAA joined the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to participate in the UNFCCC 'Sports for Climate Action' campaign, and is looking at a collaboration with MRI, UN Environment and the International Federation of Mountain Guide Associations, the IFMGA, to conduct projects and events on mountain sustainability issues regarding tourism and recreation.

The call issued by MRI in February to the members of the Global Major Groups from civil society, NGOs and the private sector, also sought views from members on the various items that would be discussed at the MP Steering Committee Meeting in Rome later in March, including the proposed voting system and the proposal for the MP to join the Coalition for Fragile Ecosystems for advocacy. Only three responses were gathered (MRI, UIAA, and the TMI). On the voting system, there were mixed responses, with preferences stated for Options 1 (Proxy system) and Option 3 (online voting as per survey). The rationale given for Option 1 is that this provides the opportunity for physical representation at the Global Meeting for members not able to attend, which would also require an exchange to state preferences to the proxy. The UIAA has had extensive experience with their proxy system, which has worked well for many years and has facilitated the details of that process for the MPS and the Steering Committee to consider as a model to develop for the MP. With regards to Option 3, it was stated that this would seem both simple and the most precise way to carry out the voting.

Regarding the Coalition for Fragile Ecosystems, TMI mentioned that the Joint Planning Calendar includes the major sustainable development events (CBD, UNFCCC, HLPF, IUCN) where presentation of issues facing fragile environments (in particular mountains and islands) would be logical and

welcome to highlight. However, opportunities to reach less well-aware and less receptive audiences, should also be sought. Speaking at the events listed would likely be seen as 'preaching to the already converted', a view also shared by MRI. Whether making presentations at the venues listed, or to an expanded, less usual set of venues, the Coalition has the opportunity to add value, over and above separate activities of mountain constituencies and of island constituencies, by raising issues related to common constraints facing sustainable development in the two environments. Many of the events listed seem to be related to one or the other fragile ecosystems. Opportunities could be sought to raise awareness of constraints and of effective approaches related to such things and technology transfer to these remote and fragile ecosystems, natural resource based income generation and market chain development; tourism development in an environmentally sensitive manner, among others. In short, there is general support from those that responded from this Group, noting that there is an opportunity here to also leverage these messages in other contexts where mountain-related issues are less visible or known.

A request was also expressed to the MPS that the member list be reviewed and updated, given some institutions no longer exist, and/or names/email addresses no longer active or loner on positions representing those organizations.

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