

# Towards the creation of a **global mountain label**



## **Mountain products and services have great potential to improve livelihoods and boost local economies.**

Worldwide demand is on the rise for quality, high-value foods and beverages produced in mountain areas, such as coffee, honey, herbs and spices, as well as handicrafts, cosmetics and medicines. Although small-scale mountain agriculture cannot compete with the prices and volumes of lowland production it can focus on niche markets and tap into the rising demand for sustainable, fair trade products.

In addition, tourism -related services such as

skiing, climbing, cultural heritage or nature trails that allow visitors to discover unique biodiversity are also some of the offerings provided by mountains and mountain communities. If sustainably managed, tourism can provide an opportunity for development in mountain regions.

However, consumers cannot always distinguish mountain products from others when displayed in the marketplace. A global mountain label, supported by adequate value chains and marketing strategy, can allow small producers to obtain fair compensation for their specific quality products as well as provide added value to the customers.





The Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS) organized a workshop to discuss the establishment of a labelling scheme to brand high value mountain products as a strategy to build sustainable development in mountain regions. The workshop is part of the Mountain Partnership (MP) project Climate Change and Mountain Forests, funded by the Government of Italy.

The participants, most of whom are Mountain Partnership members with experience and knowledge of marketing mountain products, called for the establishment of a taskforce to devise a roadmap to create labelling scheme to brand high value mountain products.

In some regions, mountains are already associated with eco-sustainable practices and high value products. In Europe, a law was approved in 2014 authorizing the use of labels for agricultural products and foodstuffs. The label indicates that the food or raw materials come from mountain areas and, in the case of processed products, are produced in mountain areas. "Consumer can now recognize and appreciate that a product was grown or produced in one of Europe's magnificent mountain regions," says Andreja Borec of Euromontana.



### **What products come from mountains?**

Nearly everyone uses mountain products, you may not even realize it. Mountain communities are known for offering high quality products, such as: coffee, honey, herbs and spices as well as handicrafts, cosmetics and medicines, which many of us use on a daily basis.

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*Labels have the potential to bring small producers of mountain products to compete to sell their quality products in the global market,”* says Emilie Vandecandelaere, a labelling expert at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), who is involved the MP global mountain label endeavour.