



Mountains, Living Solutions for Development

The 1992 “Earth Summit” in Rio de Janeiro was a milestone for the political recognition given to Mountains and their contribution to global sustainability. Now, after 20 years, enhancing the stewardship of mountains is more urgent and pressing than ever before.

At the Rio+20 Summit, the global community has to unite behind mountains. A strong and extended mandate for Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD) is urgently needed to seize the opportunities and address the challenges of SMD at the required scale.

Enhanced management of **Mountain Landscapes** will provide living solutions to the world’s most urgent challenges:

- Healthy **Mountain Landscapes** and **Mountain Services** are fundamental to global human well-being. They are economic assets and investing in them generates direct fiscal benefits and boosts economic wealth.
- **Mountain Services** will be essential for facing the three major challenges of the 21st century: Clean and reliable water supplies, renewable energy, and food security.
- **Mountain Landscapes** are inevitably connected to water – and water is life! Water is central to all aspects of green growth, from human development to food security, energy, urbanization, cultural heritage, and climate change. The global community will have to come up with innovative ways to manage water assets to prevent running out of water for basic needs in the coming years. And mountains are the key landscape where this has to happen.
- Adaptation to Climate Change and the sustainability of **Mountain Services** has to go beyond classic adaptation measures. **Mountain Services** have to be strengthened for the benefit of the poor mountain population and in the interest of the global community.

As veritable towers of life, mountains are in all of us. **Mountain Services** are in our water, mountains are in our food, and mountains provide the solutions for clean and renewable energy. Consequently, recognition of the importance of **Mountain Services** has to extend beyond the Rio+20 Summit. **Mountain Landscapes** require a mandate and commitment that assures continuous prioritization by the global community. The High-Level Task Force on Sustainable Development is one of many appropriate mechanisms to take on such a responsibility.

A global vision responding to the needs of a post Rio world calls for regionally adapted strategies. International and regional partnerships will need to strengthen the upstream-downstream relationship, promote transboundary cooperation and thus develop the knowledge for the design of appropriate answers.

This is “The Future We Want”!