



## Mountain Partnership Steering Committee meeting

Thursday, 1 December 2022

15.00 – 17.00 hrs (CET)

### Agenda

**15.00 – 15.05** Opening and adoption of agenda

**15.05 – 15.25** Creation of a scientific/independent advisory body

- Report from the Open-ended Scientific Committee for the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development 2022 on their discussions – *For information*
- Discussion of Terms of Reference and next steps – *For discussion*

**15.25 – 16.00** Defining the hosting arrangements of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat

- Update from FAO Legal Office – *For information*
- Discussion

**16.00 – 16.15** Funding of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat

- Update from the MPS – *For information and discussion*

**16.15 – 16.50** Work planning

- Update on UNFCCC – *For information*
  - Update on MPS events
  - Update from Andorra on ministerial event
- Update on CBD – *For information*
  - Update from UNEP
- Update on International Mountain Day
  - IMD 2022 update – *For information*
  - 2023 theme proposals – *For discussion*
- Update on the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development (IYM 2022)
  - Update from the MPS – *For information and discussion*
  - Update from SC members, reports from constituencies – *For information*
- Initial discussion of Mountain Partnership Secretariat's 2023 work plan – *For information and discussion*
- Discussion

**16.50 – 17.00** Other matters, discussion and conclusions

## **Opening and adoption of agenda**

Livio Spadavecchia, Steering Committee Chair, Italy, welcomed participants to the second meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) following the one held immediately after the Global Meeting (GM) of the Mountain Partnership (MP) in September 2022. He thanked the Aspen International Mountain Foundation (AIMF) for the successful organization of the GM. He informed that the [United Nations General Assembly resolution on sustainable mountain development](#) (SMD) that proclaims 2023-2027 as Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions, co-sponsored by the governments of Italy and Kyrgyz Republic, was adopted on 22 November with the support by more than 100 countries, confirming cross-regional engagement for SMD. He called for the MP to put a stronger focus on implementation and on developing collaborative projects, particularly around the theme of water. He referred to exploring the possibility for MP members to join the new Action for Water Adaptation and Resilience (AWARe) Initiative launched at the Sharm El Sheikh Climate Conference/COP27 in November 2022 by Egypt, and to creating a simple mechanism, to be managed by the Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS), to take stock and keep track of the voluntary commitments made by MP members regarding mountains (e.g. national legislation) so to identify and share best practices.

The SC agreed with the suggestions, noting the importance of keeping a regional perspective in these and other MP activities. The [UN 2023 Water Conference](#) in March 2023 was highlighted as an important opportunity for MP contributions.

### ***Decision***

- The MPS will explore options for MP members to participate in the AWARe Initiative and in the UN 2023 Water Conference.

## **Creation of a scientific independent body**

Nina Shatberashvili, Caucasus Network for Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions, presented a summary of the discussions at the 5th meeting of the Open-ended Scientific Committee (OESC) for the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development 2022 (IYM 2022), noting the clear interest in having a scientific body to continue working beyond 2022 and to maintain the momentum created by the OESC and the IYM2022. She informed that a working group to discuss the name, mandate and ToRs of this body will be established and meet in January 2023.

The MPS clarified that while the members of the MP are organizations, participants in the scientific body will be individual in their personal capacity not representing their organizations.

In the ensuing discussion, SC members agreed that:

- the new scientific body will build on the OESC but obviously with a mandate going beyond the IYM 2022;

- participation in the Working Group to further discuss the mandate and activities of the scientific body will be voluntary;
- the new scientific body will promote the mountain agenda and support the work of the MP and of its Secretariat;
- it will work in a coordinated modality with the MP SC, while having a different role and mandate;
- members of the OESC will be all invited to join the new body and the open-ended nature of the body will be maintained; and
- members of the SC will have a standing invitation to the meeting of the new scientific body.

### ***Decision***

- The Working Group to be established in January 2023 will be voluntary and open to the participation of MP and non-MP members, and it will report to the next meeting of the SC on progress made regarding the name, mandate, composition and functioning of the scientific body, possibly in the form of a written proposal. The SC will offer its comments to contribute to finalize this new body and will endorse the new proposed status.

### **Defining the hosting arrangements of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat – Update from FAO Legal Office**

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Legal office presented the FAO internal process for the definition of the hosting arrangements, highlighting that FAO is carrying out a comprehensive review of the various secretariats hosted by it, which operate using FAO's legal personality and thus create potential legal and financial liabilities for FAO, in view of ensuring that they conform to FAO's rules and procedures and that any potential risks are addressed.

For the MPS, the result of this exercise will be the clarification of the FAO rules applicable to the MPS, taking into account the practices that have evolved since its establishment in 2002; that the hosting arrangements will provide details of the rules that apply to the provision of support by FAO to the MP via the Secretariat; and that the process will involve internal FAO consultation by the Legal Office with the MPS and relevant FAO divisions, consultation with the SC, before approval by the FAO Director-General and acceptance by the next MP Global Meeting of the final hosting arrangements as an appendix to the MP Governance document.

FAO also clarified that this process is not meant to impact the role of FAO as a member of the MP and as the lead United Nation specialized agency for mountains within the United Nations System.

## **Funding of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat**

The MPS informed that the annual contribution by Italy will be decided in the coming months, that the in-kind contribution by Andorra is confirmed, and that a meeting with Switzerland is planned in early December regarding their intention to continue funding the Secretariat. Noting that existing resource mobilization strategies and previous SC efforts have not been successful for expanding the funding basis of the Secretariat, the MPS called on SC members to use their respective networks for assisting in raising funds, both from governmental and non-governmental resource partners, including the private sector.

SC members agreed that the resources for the Secretariat should allow for the continuation of its activities and for providing support to MP members. They also noted the importance of increasing the visibility of the MP achievements and activities also at country level; of involving the private sector; of the need to speak with “one voice”; and of approaching donors with specific themes that are attractive to them rather than with “mountains” generic themes. In this regard, the ongoing Mountain Partnership Product Initiative and the Mountain Facility were cited as innovative and successful examples of fund raising for activities that support actions at the community level.

## **Work planning and initial discussion of Mountain Partnership Secretariat’s 2023 work plan**

The MPS informed the SC that, following the established procedure, the MPS will present its annual workplan for SC approval at the first meeting of the SC in 2023. The MPS highlighted some of the key events in which the MPS will be involved, clarifying that this is an initial list to be completed, also with inputs from MP members.

### **Update on UNFCCC**

- Update on MPS events

The MPS presented four mountain-related events, organised by MP members with the support by the MPS, at the Sharm El Sheikh Climate Conference/COP27: on mountain sustainability and innovation; on climate change science for mountains and the science-policy-action interface; on the proposed International Year of Glaciers 2025; and on leveraging the International Year of Mountains 2022 to bring mountains to the forefront of the international debate. The COP27 [decision](#) on Matters related to science and review Research and systematic observation, that emphasizes the need to address systematic observation gaps, particularly in developing countries and for ocean, mountain, desert and polar regions and the cryosphere was recalled as an important outcome for a better understanding of the impacts of climate change related risks and adaptation limits in mountains.

- Update from Andorra on ministerial event

Josep Casals, Andorra, provided a brief summary of the ministerial meeting organised by Andorra on 17 November at COP27 with 16 countries participating from all regions. He relayed Andorra's intention to send a letter to the UNFCCC Secretariat to request the inclusion of an agenda item on mountains at COP28 in the United Arab Emirates in 2023. He called on SC government representatives to inform their ministers about this initiative and follow-up with them regarding their willingness to send similar letters.

### **Update on CBD**

Mathias Jurek, United Nations Environment Programme, informed participants of the upcoming high-level event on 14 December 2023 during the Biodiversity Conference/Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 in Montreal, that will consider how to support the implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in mountains and the possible reactivation of the CBD Programme on Mountain Biodiversity. He recalled the policy briefs on elevating mountains in the Convention on Biological Diversity's jointly developed by MP members (a summary is available [here](#)).

### **Update on International Mountain Day**

The MPS presented the communication material developed by the MPS for International Mountain Day (IMD) 2022 under the theme "Women move mountains" highlighting: the FAO photo contest and promotional video; infographic in 6 languages; Social media cards in 6 languages; IMD website in 6 languages; editorials for worldwide media coverage; FAO press release and video in 7 languages; high-level event with a fashion show "Women move mountains" that will be held at FAO Headquarters on 9 December; an event at the Vatican on 12 December titled "The Message of the Mountains"; and the publication "Mountain women of the world: Challenges, resilience and collective power" to be launched on IMD.

The MPS presented four possible themes for IMD 2023: climate change, peace, restoration and water, and informed participants that a poll will be sent in the coming weeks for SC members to suggest additional topics in addition to these initial ideas and make the final choice of the theme, after consultation with their constituency.

Past IMD themes can be seen at:

<https://www.fao.org/international-mountain-day/information-material/en/>;

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/92901/en/>

### **Update on the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development (IYM 2022)**

The MPS presented the main events and achievements related to the IYM2022, highlighting that the year has provided opportunities for building scientific evidence for policy advice and development; for media awareness and outreach, with at least 37 major events held worldwide; for supporting a roadmap for climate action in mountains; and for the adoption of

the UN Resolution approving the 2023 – 2027 as the “Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions”.

**Update from SC members, reports from constituencies**

The agenda item on reports from constituencies by SC members was postponed to the next meeting of the SC in 2023.

The date of the next SC meeting will be communicated by the MPS after consultation with the SC Chair.

## Annex 1: Participants' list

### Steering Committee members

#### Donor Organizations

Livio Spadavecchia, Italy (**Chair**)

#### Governments

**Asia and the Pacific** – Sindhu Dhungana, Nepal

**Central Asia** – Nurlan Aitmurzaev, Kyrgyzstan

**Europe** – Josep Casals, Andorra

**North & Central America and the Caribbean** – Julia Vicioso, Dominican Republic (**Vice Chair**)

**South America** – Ana Teresa Lecaros, Peru

#### Host Institution of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS)

Thomas Hofer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

#### Intergovernmental Organizations

Melissa de Kock, Harald Egerer, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

#### Global Civil Society Organizations

Björn Alfthan, GRID-Arendal

#### Major Group Organizations

**Asia and the Pacific** – Gobinda Bahadur Shahi, Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDARC) (**Vice Chair**)

**Central Asia** – Abduvohid Safarov, Tajik Social and Ecological Union

**Europe** – Simão Pinho, Centro de Investigação de Montanha (CIMO)

**Near East and North Africa** – Mohamed Ddich, Coalition Civile pour la Montagne

**North & Central America and the Caribbean** – Karinjo DeVore, Aspen International Mountain Foundation (AIMF)

**South America** – Hugo Mantilla, Centro de Estudios de Alta Montaña

**Sub-Saharan Africa** – Sonigitu Ekpe, Cross River State

### Absent Steering Committee Members

#### Governments

**Near East and North Africa** – Yemen

**Sub-Saharan Africa** – Malawi

### Observers

#### Aga Khan Agency for Habitat

Onno Ruhl

#### Albanian Alps Alliance

Gent Imeraj

**Aspen International Mountain Foundation**

Margi Levitt

**Caucasus Network for Sustainable Development of Mountain Region**

Nina Shatberashvili

**The Grassroots Institute**

Hasrat Arjjumend

**GRID-Arendal**

Laurent Fouinat

**FAO**

Anne Conestabile

Valeria Santori

**International Centre for Environmental Education and Community Development**

Fongoh Eric

**Mountain Partnership Secretariat**

Samantha Abear

Giorgio Grussu

Yuna Lee

Fabio Parisi

Patricia Quillacq

Rosalaura Romeo

Laura Russo

**Peru**

Luis Fernando Cisterna Aguilar

**United Nations Environment Programme**

Harald Egerer

Matthias Jurek

**United Nations University**

Joerg Szarzynski