

Mountain Day Bulletin

A Summary Report of Mountain Day 2

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MOUNTAIN DAY 2: 3 DECEMBER 2012

Mountain Day 2, "Mainstreaming Rio+20 outcomes in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) processes for prosperous, resilient, and sustainable mountain ecosystems and communities," was held in Doha, Qatar, on 3 December 2012, on the sidelines of the 2012 UN Climate Change Conference. It was organized by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and the Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS)/Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), in the context of the Strategic Initiative for Mountains and Climate Change funded by the Development Grant Facility of the World Bank. Other sponsors and partners included the Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), Water and Climate Coalition (WCC), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the ICIMOD-based Himalayan Climate Change Adaptation Programme (HICAP) and the Government of Nepal.

The Day was structured into two High Level Sessions, three Plenary Discussion Sessions, and one Parallel Knowledge Café Session. The discussion sessions focused on: climate change stories from different mountain regions of the world; integrated management of mountain water resources; and the role of mountains in food security and livelihoods. The high level opening session focused on the Mountain Agenda in post Rio+20 scenarios. The closing high-level round table reflected on the key messages to convey to the climate change negotiators.

The Day started with a keynote speech made by Gyan Chandra Acharya, Under Secretary General and High Representative for Least Developed, Landlocked and



Gyan Chandra Acharya, Under Secretary General and High Representative for Least Developed, Landlocked and Developing Small Island States, UN

Developing Small Island States, UN, who recalled the International Conference of Mountain Countries on Climate Change organized by Nepal and noted its importance for the inclusion of mountain concerns in the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20). He concluded by emphasizing the need for coordinated work between the Rio Conventions, noting the need to include mountains in their action plans.

Co-chair Keshab Man Shakya, Minister of Environment, Science and Technology, Nepal, underscored the increased frequency of floods and glacier melts, and the unpredictable decline in water availability. He highlighted the challenges of addressing sustainability in a rapidly changing climate, emphasizing that such challenges call for partnerships and increased funding for financing climate adaptation in mountain environments. Co-chair Marco Onida, Secretary General of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, stressed the importance of coming together to push the mountain agenda, as mountains may not always be a political priority for many countries.

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http://enb.iisd.mobi/

The main outputs of the session were the Key Messages from the discussion session to the Eighteenth Meeting of the



Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 18) negotiators. Thomas Hofer, MPS/FAO, noted that the role of mountains as water towers of the world is threatened by the melting of glaciers; mountain communities are used to coping with climate variability but the effects of climate change are very strong and thus

they need support to implement their adaptation strategies

and for capacity development; and there is a need for partnerships and strong and rigorous science to understand and address climate change in mountain ecosystems, which are extremely complex. Mats Eriksson recalled the centrality of water in addressing climate change and mountains, stating that local knowledge needs to be brought onboard. Virendra Pal Singh, ICRAF, said that climate change remains poorly



Mats Eriksson, Stockholm International Water Institute

understood due to the lack of capacity-building and limited knowledge, and that the theme of food security should be utilized to expand learning opportunities.

Sameera Zaib, youth ambassador, ICIMOD, highlighted the need to: enable the participation of youth in climate negotiations; elevate the mountain agenda in such negotiations; and reach the most marginalized communities.

A Brief History of Mountains, Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Nearly half the world's countries have significant mountainous regions. Mountain ecosystems provide more than half of the world's population with drinking water, and provide water for agriculture, industry, power generation, and other uses for many hundred million others. Additionally, mountains are home to half of the world's biodiversity hotspots as well as to many threatened and endangered species, and also provide tourism and recreation opportunities.

Mountain regions are amongst the most sensitive to climate change, and receding glaciers are one of the most visible indicators of global change. If current trends continue, many glaciers are expected to disappear completely by the end of the century, potentially leading to catastrophic changes in weather and water availability for large parts of the world.

One of the first and only major international decisions to include language on mountains and mountainous regions was the UN Conference On Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit. This meeting was held from 3 to 14 June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and involved over 100 Heads of State and Government, representatives from 178 countries, and some 17,000 participants. The principal outputs of UNCED were the Rio

Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 (a 40-chapter programme of action), and the Statement of Forest Principles. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity were also opened for signature during the Earth Summit. Agenda 21 called for the creation of a Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED, enhance international cooperation, and examine progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the local, national, regional and international levels.

On mountains, Chapter 13 of Agenda 21 recognizes the important ecological, economic and social functions of, and services provided by, mountainous regions. It also makes a number of recommendations to governments on mountains, including: promoting erosion control; incentivizing resource conservation; promoting alternative livelihoods; creating protected areas to save wild genetic material; developing early-warning systems and disaster-response teams for hazardous areas; identifying mountain areas threatened by air pollution; and creating information centers on mountain ecosystems including building expertise on sustainable agriculture and conservation areas. In its capacity as the lead agency on mountains within the UN system, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was made as the Task Manager of Chapter 13.

More recently, organizations such as the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) have held dozens of meetings, workshops and conferences on mountains and mountainous regions. One of their most recent meetings, a UNCSD associated event, was the International Conference on the Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development: Opportunities and Challenges in View of Rio+20, which was supported by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from 5 to 7 September 2011. Participants discussed the relevance and scope of the green economy in the context of sustainable mountain development. The conference explored strategies, approaches and options for enhancing the role and prominence of mountain systems in regional and international debates and discussions.

The outcome of the conference was the "Kathmandu Declaration on Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development." The Declaration made several recommendations to governments, calling for, *inter alia*: the establishment of mechanisms to compensate and reward communities for mountain ecosystem services and improvement in markets for these services; creation of an enabling environment for promoting the green economy and investment in mountain regions; the ecosystem-based management approach; and efforts to ensure access and rights for women and indigenous communities, including valuation and utilization of traditional knowledge and practices.

Mountain Day: The first Mountain Day took place on 4 December 2011 during the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 17) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in Durban, South Africa. Mountain Day was organized by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, and the Mountain Partnership Consortium. The event highlighted the critical role that mountain ecosystems play in climate adaptation and sustainable development as well as the vulnerability of mountains, and those who depend on them, to climate change. Mountain Day assembled two high-

level panels of ministers and decision-makers to call attention to the value and role of mountains, and to call on COP 17 delegates and global development partners to protect vital mountain ecosystems from the threats presented by climate change. Key messages from the event included that: mountains are the water towers of the world and global hotspots for biodiversity; the value of the ecosystem goods and services derived from mountains is under-recognized, under-valued and poorly compensated; major downstream ecosystems and economies are highly dependent on mountains; international organizations and national governments should introduce policies and financing to support adaptation programmes in mountains for improved livelihoods and sustainability; and global development strategies and policies should recognize, value and create incentives to enhance benefits derived from mountains.

REPORT

OPENING SESSION

Madhav Karki, Deputy Director General, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD),

opened the event, welcoming participants and introducing the co-chairs of the event: Keshab Man Shakya, Minister of Environment, Science, and Technology, Nepal and Marco Onida, Secretary-General, Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention. David Molden, Director General, ICIMOD, stressed that Mountain Day Two is a time



to reflect and double efforts to communicate the importance of mountains, their people and the ecosystem services they provide. He also highlighted that youth play a critical role in conveying this message to world leaders and thus welcomed the presence of youth ambassadors at the meeting. Thomas Hofer, Interim Coordinator, Mountain Partnership Secretariat (MPS), Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), introduced a video on the role of mountains and how they are impacted by climate change. He highlighted three messages: many partnerships have been established to pursue the mountain agenda; mountain ecosystems contain sensitive indicators of climate change; and one of the key functions of the MPS is to mainstream mountains into international negotiations.





L-R: **Keshab Man Shakya**, Minister of Environment, Science, and Technology, Nepal, and **Marco Onida**, Secretary-General, Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention

Gyan Chandra Acharya, Under Secretary General and High Representative for Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Small Island States, UN, recalled the International Conference on Green Economy and Sustainable Mountain Development organized by ICIMOD in 2011, noting its importance for the inclusion of mountain concerns in the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20). He closed his remarks emphasizing the need for coordinated work between the Rio Conventions and noted that mountains need to be part of their action plans.

Co-chair Keshab Man Shakya underscored the increased frequency of floods and glacier melts and the unpredictable decline in water availability. He highlighted the challenges of addressing sustainability in a rapidly changing climate, emphasizing that such challenges call for partnerships and increased funding for financing climate adaptation in mountain environments. Co-chair Onida stressed the importance of coming together to push the mountain agenda, as mountains may not always be a political priority for many countries.

STORIES ON CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS AND LOCAL RESPONSES FROM DIFFERENT MOUNTAIN REGIONS OF THE WORLD

Thomas Hofer, MPS/FAO, introduced the session, organized by MPS, in collaboration with ICIMOD. Highlighting that many of the climate change discussions are general and at a policy level, he said that what happens on the ground is not so often heard.

Noting that the Alps are a laboratory for innovation and renewable energies, Marco Onida, Alpine Convention, highlighted: scarcity of land; the use of hydropower and the need to balance it with the need to protect watersheds; and the potential for use of solar roofs. He said that the effects of climate change in the Alps are visible and expensive, and that the impact of natural hazards is high. Madhav Karki, ICIMOD, discussed the impacts of climate change in the Hindu-Kush Himalayan region, noting that: the region is warming faster than any other part of the globe and that as a result of climate change it is experiencing more extreme weather events impacting people and ecosystems. He highlighted key messages, including the need to: improve value chain and watershed management to build the resilience of local communities; improve communication between researchers and local communities, as often they are not aware of why certain weather events happen; and establish early warning systems to increase preparedness of local communities.

Hofer highlighted hydrological trends in small watersheds in the Fouta Djallon highlands in West Africa, emphasizing that it is difficult to differentiate between climate variability and climate change, and that observed hydrological trends might also be attributed to land use changes. He also cited the

difficulty in identifying overarching trends, given varying mountain terrains. Gonzalo Beker, Peru, presented on the impacts of climate change on glaciers, ecosystems and the people in the Andes. He noted that the capacity to respond to climate change is present among local people and that traditional knowledge should be harnessed. Jose Luis Balmaceda, ambassador of Chile, highlighted that the severity of glacier melt in his



country is mainly caused by climate change.

INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND OTHER MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEM SERVICES FOR MEETING ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE GOALS

Karin Lexen, Water and Climate Coalition, introduced the session, organized by the Stockholm International Water



Karin Lexen, Water and Climate Coalition

Institute (SIWI) in cooperation with WCC, on integrated management of water and other mountain ecosystem services. She highlighted the need to focus on how countries participating in the Doha Climate Change Conference can make decisions on climate mitigation and adaptation that are informed by local implementation. She noted that local knowledge is critical to the success of measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change. She highlighted: the cross-cutting nature of water;

the gaps between policy and implementation; and the need to integrate water into programmes and mechanisms under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Fred Boltz, Conservation International and the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation, citing the case of the Colorado River,



Fred Boltz, Conservation International and the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation

noted that often infrastructure and water resource management have been designed for a single climate and in the future multiple climate scenarios should be considered. Mats Eriksson, SIWI, noted that there are lessons regarding infrastructure development, particularly related to flood mitigation, that are overlooked. Citing the example of the embankment construction in the Koshi Basin, between India and Nepal, he called for better

cost-benefit analysis, improvement of governance systems, and transparency in projects and institutions. He concluded by noting the need to fight corruption and involve the local level in infrastructure development. Pervaiz Amir, Global Water Partnership (GWP), discussed mountains and water in Pakistan, noting that very little knowledge gleaned from local experience is mainstreamed into policy-making. He also stressed that water management has implications for conflict and governance.



Bai-Mass Taal, Executive Secretary, African Ministers' Council on Water, stressed the importance of finding the "bridge" between

Bai-Mass Taal, Executive Secretary, African Ministers' Council on Water, shared the importance of finding the "bridge" between negotiators. Noting the lack of engagement of ministers with non-environmental portfolios, he stressed the need to understand the politics of multilateral negotiations, since these can hinder the advancement of science. As a solution, he proposed focusing on areas of agreement and moving from "conference hotels" towards implementation.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION IN MOUNTAINS FOR FOOD SECURITY, LIVELIHOODS AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

David Molden, ICIMOD, introduced the last session, which was organized by CGIAR, through its research initiative on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), in collaboration with ICIMOD and its Himalayan Climate Change Adaptation Programme (HICAP). Suman Bisht, gender specialist, ICIMOD, presented the key message from the recent international ICIMOD conference, Bhutan+10: Gender and Sustainable Mountain Development in a Changing World. She highlighted that women are important game changers and that their adaptation practices can be an important resource in introducing climate change adaptation strategies. However, Bisht noted that women are not often heard. Nand Kishor Agrawal, HICAP/ICIMOD, on challenges for adaptation, said uncertainty is obstructing local action, since local-level climate projections are not yet established; institutions are unaware of the issues; and community knowledge remains underexplored. However, he argued that adaptation cannot wait until knowledge is perfect and explained how the HICAP



Nand Kishor Agrawal, HICAP/ICIMOD



Virendra Pal Singh, Regional Coordinator, HICAP/ICIMOD, presented on climate smart agricultural practices for food security, drawing from experiences in India and Bhutan.

project is enhancing resilience to climate change by reducing uncertainty and improving knowledge development and management both short- and long-term. Virendra Pal Singh, Regional Coordinator, HICAP/ICIMOD, presented on climate smart agricultural practices for food security, drawing from experiences in India and Bhutan. He highlighted lessons learned there, including: that joint planning with stakeholders made implementation easy; and that participation of local communities was key to the success of the projects.

Dietrich Schmidt-Vogt, ICRAF, reflected on agroforestry experiences in the ICRAF East Asia node. He stressed that the agroforestry approach allows greater resilience against environmental stresses, as it allows for diversification. He noted that the complexity of mountain environments could be an asset for more flexibility in the face of climate change.

PANEL RESPONSE AND DISCUSSION

A panel, moderated by David Molden, ICIMOD, convened to reflect on the day's discussions and address questions raised by the audience. Nand Kishor Agrawal highlighted that many mountain regions struggle with issues of land tenure, water use rights and access to food, exacerbated by drought events. Arjun Karki, LDC Watch, presented the civil society perspective, recalling how politics of climate change can negatively affect the least developed countries and the most vulnerable regions by hindering bold climate action. He stressed the limits of

adaptation policies due to the need for significant mitigation action. Asuncion St. Clair, Centre for International Climate and Environmental Research (CICERO), emphasized the need to use adaptation measures that take into consideration the resiliency and vulnerability of communities. Peter Akong Minang, ASB-Partnership for tropical Forest Margins, focused on the implications of Mountain Day 2 for Africa. Recalling that agriculture is strongly affected by adaptation projects, he argued the need for better synergies between adaptation and mitigation policies, especially in terms of land use and use of ecosystems resources. Virendra Pal Singh, ICRAF, expressed agreement with Schmidt-Vogt that diversification is the best strategy for adapting to climate change. He suggested that Africa and Asia work more closely on developing common strategies.

PARALLEL SESSION: KNOWLEDGE CAFÉ – THE MOUNTAIN AGENDA IN POST RIO+20 SCENARIOS

May Zin Taw, Myanmar, Youth Ambassador, ICIMOD, introduced the parallel session "Knowledge Café" presenting the work of the organization "Youth Informed" in urban areas. She stressed the importance of building local and global knowledge platforms in order to cope with sustainable development challenges. Moderator Ania Rasmussen. ICIMOD, presented the work method for the session, which consisted of rounds of 10-minute debates between ICIMOD Youth Ambassadors and senior members of large NGOs. During the presentation of the outcomes, Sameera Zaib, Pakistan, Youth Ambassador, ICIMOD, highlighted three potential solutions to the question of how to further engage youth in the official negotiations, including the use of social media tools, engagement in bilateral debates with negotiators and voicing youth's needs during plenary discussions. Timila Dhakwa, Asia-Pacific, Youth Ambassador, ICIMOD, noted the need for a "combined narrative on mountains" and highlighted the group's idea to publicly stress the role of mountains as providers of freshwater. Reflecting on what youth can do, May Zin Taw emphasized the need for policy makers to be proactive and work on the reduction of language barriers when engaging with young people. She also mentioned the importance of networking among youth movements to guarantee the implementation of sustainable development policies on the ground.



Panel Response and Discussion. L-R: Asuncion St. Clair, CICERO; Virendra Pal Singh, Regional Coordinator, HICAP/ICIMOD; Dietrich Schmidt-Vogt, ICRAF; Nand Kishor Agrawal, HICAP/ICIMOD; Suman Bisht, gender specialist, ICIMOD; and David Molden, Director General, ICIMOD.





MINISTERIAL/POLICY MAKERS' ROUNDTABLE PANEL DISCUSSIONS

The roundtable panel discussions, moderated by David Molden, ICIMOD, were attended by: Co-chair Keshab Man Shakya, Maria Fabiana Loguzzo, Minister Director General for Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Argentina, Krishna Gyawali, Ministry of Industry, Nepal, Gabriela Seiz, Head of International Affairs Division, Federal Office of Metereology and Climatology, Switzerland, Pema Choephyel, Director, Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation, Bhutan, Alfredo Guillet, Directorate General for Development Cooperation (DGCS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy, and Ksenija Skrilec, Minister Plenipotentiary, Directorate for Global Issues and Multilateral Political Relations, Slovenia.

Sameera Zaib, Youth Ambassador, ICIMOD, highlighted three key messages from the parallel session: to enable the participation of youth in climate negotiations; to elevate the mountain agenda in such negotiations; and to reach the most marginalized communities.

Thomas Hofer, MPS/FAO, presented the key messages from his session: the role of mountains as water towers of the world is threatened by the melting of glaciers; mountain communities are used to cope with climate variability but the effects of climate change are very strong and thus they need support to implement their adaptation strategies and for capacity development; and there is a need for partnerships and strong and rigorous science to understand and address climate change in mountain ecosystems, which are extremely complex.

Mats Eriksson recalled the centrality of water when approaching climate change and mountains, stating that local knowledge needs to be brought onboard. Virendra Pal Singh, ICRAF, summarized the main points from his session: climate change remains poorly understood due to the lack of capacity-



Maria Fabiana Loguzzo, Argentina

building and limited knowledge; and the theme of food security should be utilized to expand learning opportunities.

The panelists reacted to the key messages presented. Maria Fabiana Loguzzo, Argentina, noted that mountain communities are one of the most important aspects of the mountain agenda, in light of their vulnerabilities to climate change. She mentioned that Argentina is working on empowering local mountain

communities, which implies the sharing of more information, including on development issues, as well as access to education and capacity-building opportunities. She stressed the challenging task of enabling participation of local mountain communities in decision-making at the national level. She noted that Argentina would push to move the mountain agenda forward but noted that on this day it was hard to predict whether the climate change negotiations would progress and if mountains would have a place in them. Pema Choephyel, Bhutan, noted two necessary factors: governance, which is critical for an effective climate policy for mountainous regions, and the existence of national capabilities that could be shared through partnerships. He underscored that a nation should not wait for funding to "keep working", and expressed Bhutan's desire to further engage on the mountain agenda.

Alfredo Guillet, Italy, highlighted his country's support for partnerships, including the MPS, as key to elevating the mountain agenda and sharing lessons learned, and for incentives for supporting mountain communities' livelihoods, which are at risk of being displaced because of climate change. He stressed that the key to mobilizing the global mountain agenda is to engage at the national level.





L-R: Gabriela Seiz, Head of International Affairs Division, Federal Office of Metereology and Climatology, Switzerland, and Alfredo Guillet, Italy

Gabriela Seiz, Switzerland, highlighted the role of science for tackling the effects of climate change on mountains, saying that systematic observation tools are fundamental. She recommended that parties reach out to their national focal points in order to verify the availability of scientific tools to conduct systematic evaluations. Krishna Gyawali, Nepal, commended the work of ICIMOD and recalled that the most



Krishna Gyawali, Nepal

important stakeholder in this debate is "the people", due to their capacity for generating knowledge. He underscored that messages of policy makers need to be conveyed to local communities. He stated that simply saying that mountains are important to fight climate change is not enough and suggested that a common story on mountains needs to be built, based on strong input from science. Ksenija Skrilec, Slovenia,

highlighted the value of transboundary cooperation and sharing of lessons, including collaborations between local communities and national bodies.

Members of the audience agreed with the need to address climate change in mountains, but some noted the challenge of identifying what actions to undertake and suggested it is best to identify those first at the local and national level. Co-chair Keshab Man Shakya summarized the discussions, noting that many questions remain open on how to mainstream mountains

in the global agenda. Thomas Hofer, MPS/FAO, made some concluding remarks, calling on, *inter alia*, "breaking the silos", by integrating water and food security in the mountain agenda. Madhav Kharki, ICIMOD, expressed the hope that the messages stemming from this meeting would inform not only the climate negotiations but other multilateral processes as well.

David Molden, ICIMOD, closed the meeting at 7.51 pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Expert Consultation on Research and Management Priorities for High-Altitude Rangelands and their Interfaces: The Expert Consultation on Research and Management Priorities for High Altitude Rangelands and their Interfaces in the Hindu Kush Himalayas, organized by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), will bring together partners and international experts working on ecosystem interfaces of high-altitude rangelands to identify knowledge needs and priorities and to develop an advocacy plan for high-altitude rangelands in the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) region. The workshop will build on ICIMOD's efforts to promote the conservation of rangelands and regional cooperation in transboundary landscapes, including the Kailash Sacred Landscape, as well as identify development opportunities for local communities dependent on high-altitude rangeland ecosystems. dates: 10-11 December 2012 location: Pokhara, Nepal **contact:** Muhammad Ismail **e-mail:** info@icimod.org www: http://www.icimod.org/?q=8964

International Conference on Climate Change, Water and Disaster in Mountainous Areas: This conference is organized by the Society of Hydrologists and Meteorologists, SOHAM-Nepal. It will focus on climate change, water and disaster in mountainous areas, and address the following topics: climate change and implications on society, hydrological regimes and water in mountainous countries; hydrometeorological response to mountainous ecosystems; water and renewable energy; disaster risk reduction (DRR); traditional and modern knowledge for water resources management; transboundary issues on water resources; and adaptation strategies.

dates: 27-29 November 2013 location: Kathmandu (Bagmati), Nepal contact: SOHAM Nepal email: info@soham.org.np
www: http://www.soham.org.np/news/international-sem-2013.



Group photo of some of the panelists and participants following the closing session.