



Mountains and the Sustainable Development Goals



In a world struggling with scarcer resources, growing population and the consequences of climate change, mountains can contribute to a more sustainable future.

Mountains supply more than half of humankind with water. They are reservoirs for food, energy and biodiversity. The benefits derived from mountain regions were recognized as 'essential for sustainable development' by the Rio+20 summit. States were invited to 'strengthen cooperative action' and encouraged to 'adopt a long-term vision and holistic approaches'.

This call to action - by mountain countries, organizations, communities – aims to help ensure that mountains are included in the Sustainable Development Goals, which will take effect in 2015 when the Millennium Development Goals expire.

Call for action

Key facts and figures



Mountains are home to one tenth of the world's population and cover 25 percent of the earth's land surface

Around 40 percent of mountain populations in developing and transition countries – about 300 million people - are food insecure with half of them suffering from chronic hunger

Mountains provide up to 60-80 percent of the world's freshwater resources for domestic, agricultural and industrial consumption

Mountains are early indicators of climate change, as evidenced by rapid glacier melting and loss of snow cover, whose implications go far beyond mountain boundaries

Mountains hosts approximately one quarter of all terrestrial biodiversity and half of the world's biodiversity hot spots.

Mountains in the Sustainable Development Process

- 1992 Earth Summit - Agenda 21 - Chapter 13
- 2002 WSSD – Plan of Implementation - para 42
- 2012 Rio+20 – The Future We want - paras 210, 211, 212

SDG issues and themes

POVERTY ERADICATION

Mountain people are among the world's poorest and hungriest. In developing countries, a vast majority live below the poverty line and an estimated 300 million are food insecure. **Targets:** mountain specific policies adopted to eradicate poverty by fostering growth, employment, social protection, infrastructure and investment. **Indicators:** xxx percent of countries with mountain territories have mountain specific policies included in their national development agendas by 2030.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, About 40 percent of the mountain population in developing and transition countries, or nearly 300 million people, are vulnerable to food insecurity. **Targets:** policies adopted to enable mountain communities to access safe and nutritious food, encourage mountain agriculture, improve market access, and restore degraded land. **Indicators:** at least xx percent reduction in mountain food insecure people and xx percent degraded land restored by 2030.

WATER

Mountains provide up to 60-80 percent of the world's freshwater, which is essential for all forms of life. Population growth, intensification of land use, and climate change impact water availability, altering the water regime for agriculture, energy production, industrial use. **Targets:** policies adopted to develop integrated water resource management strategies and implementation in mountain areas. **Indicators:** at least xx percent of countries adopt policies for water resource management by 2030.

ENERGY

Mountains provide sustainable energy such as hydropower, solar power, wind power and biogas. **Targets:** policies to sustain the production of sustainable energy, improve the access by mountain communities and ensure that they receive compensation. **Indicators:** sustainable energy production levels increased by at least xx percent in mountain areas by 2030.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mountain ecosystems are easily disrupted by variations in climate. Many mountain glaciers are melting and snow cover is changing, which will affect water supplies globally. **Targets:** policies adopted to promote resilience and adaptation in mountain areas employing traditional knowledge and technology. **Indicators:** resilience and adaptation measures established in at least xx percent of countries with mountain areas by 2030.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Mountain people are highly vulnerable to extreme events and natural disasters including floods, landslides, and avalanches, and they are particularly affected by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. **Targets:** policies adopted to increase the preparedness and the resilience of mountain people for disasters. **Indicators:** at least xx percent of mountain countries integrate disasters and risk management plans in their national policies.

FORESTS

Forests cover 23 percent of the global mountain area. They provide timber, fuel, medicinal and aromatic plants, food and fodder. Mountain forests protect the earth by reducing CO2 emissions and shielding against natural hazards. **Targets:** sustainable forest management policies adopted by mountain countries. **Indicators:** at least xx percent of national sustainable forest management plans pay attention to mountain forests.

BIODIVERSITY

Mountains host approximately 25 percent of terrestrial biodiversity as well as vital genetic resources for key crops and livestock. Land use change and climate change are seriously threatening this global asset. **Targets:** policies adopted to implement the CBD programme of work on mountain biological diversity. **Indicators:** achievement of the Aichi Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 in at least xx percent of mountain countries by 2020.

EQUALITY, SOCIAL EQUITY, GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Mountain dwellers often belong to indigenous groups and minorities which adds to their social and economic exclusion. Mountain women are at higher risk of hunger and malnutrition and are often excluded from decisions affecting the management and use of local resources. **Targets:** policies adopted to empower mountain people and mainstream gender. **Indicators:** mountain people included in the development processes and with land ownership increased by xx percent; gender equality increased by xx percent in mountain areas.

Mountains must be included in the post-2015 development agenda

They require specific strategies and policies to achieve development. Goals and targets must be set to improve the livelihoods of mountain people and to conserve mountain ecosystems for the sustained prosperity of the present and future generations.

What you can do

Governments can request a Sustainable Development Goal dedicated to mountains, and that mountains be included in the targets and indicators of other related SDGs

Organizations can sign in at <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/account.php?menu=1457> and then take part in the discussion by sending mountain-specific messages

Individuals can write to their Ministry of Foreign Affairs asking for an SDG on mountains



Mountain Partnership Secretariat
FAO, Forestry Department
www.mountainpartnership.org
www.facebook.com/mountainpartnership