



COP23 Bonn Mountain-related Events

Implementing the 2030 Agenda & Paris Agreement in Mountains: Building a Framework for Action

14 November 2017 at 18.30-20.00, UNFCCC COP23 – Meeting Room 2

Remarks by Andrew Taber, Executive Director, The Mountain Institute

On behalf of The Mountain Institute and the Mountain Partnership, it is a great honour for me to address and moderate this official side event on implementing **the 2030 Agenda & Paris Agreement in mountains** which has been requested by the Government of Kyrgyzstan and the International Climbing and Mountain Federation.

I am the Executive Director of The Mountain Institute – an International NGO working on mountain sustainability around the World. We are honoured to Chair the Steering Committee of the UN's Mountain Partnership. Today, we have a full agenda and I will be introducing our speakers in turn. Please hold your questions and comments until the latter part of this event.

We are here to raise the level of attention to the plight of mountain peoples, who are among the hungriest and poorest in the world, and to mountain ecosystems, that are among the most vulnerable to climate change.

Mountains serve as the essential “water towers” on every continent. They provide between 60 and 80 percent of the freshwater resources that over half of humanity relies on every day, but climate change threatens their ability to provide freshwater and other ecosystem goods and services for literally billions of people downstream.

Glaciers in mountain ranges around the world are disappearing due to atmospheric temperature increases. Experts predict that for every degree of warming in lowland areas, mountain regions will warm an average of 1.8 degrees. **At least 600 glaciers** have disappeared completely over the past decades, affecting water storage and increasing risks of glacial lake outburst floods, drought and landslides.

Climate change, climate variability and climate-induced disasters, combined with political, economic and social marginalization, increase the vulnerability of mountain peoples to food shortages and extreme poverty – **1 in 3 peoples in mountain areas are at risk of going to bed hungry every night.**

However, to date **there remains very limited awareness and international response** to the global impact caused by climate change on mountain regions. Mountains do not receive the attention they deserve for the services they provide humanity. **The Paris Agreement makes no specific reference to mountains and the impact of climate change on these fragile ecosystems—despite intensive advocacy at the time.** And the threats to mountain people

and ecosystems are growing due to climate change and a range of unsustainable development trends.

There is an **urgent need to place mountain ecosystems and peoples** at the centre of international negotiations, policies and investments; and to ensure that the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the Agenda 2030 don't neglect mountains and their peoples — **which are being left behind.**

You – as delegates to this COP – have a key role to play to ensure that mountains are fully included in international negotiation and processes. Our meeting today shares lessons, and an opportunity to discuss ways we can work together to advance sustainable mountain development in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

Today, many Mountain Partnership government members, led by the Government of Italy, along with NGO and other civil society organizations are working together **to launch a Framework for Action at the upcoming Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership on 11 December 2017 at FAO in Rome. You are all invited to join at the highest political level.**

This framework—that my colleague **Grammenos Mastrojeni from the Government of Italy, and vice chair of the Mountain Partnership Steering Committee,** will explain in detail—is not **just another Declaration.** It outlines concrete investments, policies and advocacy action needed at international, regional and local levels. And it **will require a firm, commitment by mountainous countries, developed and developing,** plus their partners.

