



African Mountains Regional Forum

Towards a Shared Mountain Agenda for Africa

Arusha, Tanzania, 22nd - 24th October 2014

Final Announcement

1. Introduction

African mountains provide indispensable goods and services for communities living in and around them, and for various downstream users. Mountains also harbour unique biodiversity, provide non-timber forest products: water, food and energy security at local, national, and regional levels. However, pressure from increasing human activities and climate change are leading to rapid montane biodiversity loss, land degradation and natural disasters, jeopardizing their ability to balance people's needs.



A number of African countries, organizations, institutions and individuals are members of the Mountain Forum and Mountain Partnership. In September 2012, the Arusha Declaration on Africa's post Rio+20 Strategy for Sustainable Development by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) in its 14th session made reference to mountains in Africa. AMCEN asked United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to support the implementation of the agreed decision under the Rio+20 Conference regarding mountains in Africa.

During the Africa Mountains Partnership members (AMP) meeting organized by the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS) and the Mountain Partnership Secretariat at FAO, in collaboration with IUCN and UNEP in Kigali in February 2013, AMPs launched a special initiative on mountains, as African Water Towers and called for more effort in mainstreaming mountains in development agenda. The African working group at the 4th Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership in Erzurum, Turkey decided to build on the ongoing initiatives at national and regional levels and to promote experience exchanges among African Members.

Additionally the group explored to also draw lessons and experiences from other regions. At the regional level, management of mountain ecosystems is also provided for under Chap. 19 of the Treaty establishing the East African Community (EAC). Under this treaty Partner States agreed to cooperate in the management of shared natural resources and to take concerted measures to foster cooperation in the joint and efficient management and sustainable utilisation of natural resources within the Community for the mutual benefits of the Partner States. Article 9 of the EAC Protocol on Environment and Natural Resources Management puts emphasis on the need to promote the management of transboundary ecosystems in East Africa, while under article 20, Partner States agreed to protect mountain ecosystems such as critical water catchments, conservation and heritage areas and other areas of common strategic interest at local, national, regional and international levels.

However, the need to act has never been so urgent.



In response to these needs and in the framework of the Post-2015 Development Agenda/current discussions towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ARCOS and the Africa Mountain Partnership Champions Committee in partnership with the East African Community (EAC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) as part of a global programme "Promoting Sustainable Mountain Development for Global Change-SMD4GC" are organising the African Mountains Regional Forum 2014, with the overall objective of enhancing collaboration and framing a regional agenda for sustainable mountain development challenges in African mountains.

2. Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the Africa Regional Mountain Forum are:

1. To provide an opportunity for different sustainable mountain development stakeholders to enhance understanding of common conservation and development issues in the region;
2. To share lessons and experiences in meeting the conservation and development challenges including water, energy, food security and climate change in African Mountain regions;
3. To identify strategic actions to address major emerging issues such as climate change in the region.
4. To promote linkages and collaboration between different stakeholders (governments, civil society and private sector) for a regional framework on sustainable mountain development in Africa
5. The Forum will also entail a special session devoted to UNEP's inter-regional project "Climate Change action in developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems from a sub-regional perspective"



3. Themes and tentative programme

A full programme will be developed. The Forum will take three days from Tuesday 16th to Thursday 18th September and will focus on the themes below:

1. Theme 1: African Mountains Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
2. Theme 2: Water, Energy (SE4ALL), Food Security Challenges in African Mountains
3. Theme 3: African Mountains, and Climate Change
4. Theme 4: Community Livelihoods, Women/Youth and Sustainable Development
5. Theme 5: African Mountains in National, Regional and International Policy Agenda

The tentative programme for the Forum is scheduled as follows:

- *Tuesday 21 October 2014:* Arrival of participants
- *Wednesday 22 October 2014:* Official Opening + Themes 1 and 2
- *Thursday 23 October 2014:* Themes 3 and 4/ Special session related to UNEP's inter-regional project
- *Friday 24 October 2014:* Theme 5, Recommendations and Plan of Action
- *Saturday 25 October 2014:* Field Visit to Kilimanjaro Mountain, Mount Meru or Arusha National Park.

4. Expected Participants

Participants from African government institutions, academia, civil society and private sector are expected to attend the forum. Those who are interested in sharing experiences in the region and giving a presentation or a poster are encouraged to contact the Forum Focal Points below. Due to limited funds, priority will be given to participants from the region, especially those who are able to secure part of the funding.



5. Key dates

- » 15 August 2014: Final selection of speakers and presentation
- » 15 August 2014: Registration deadline
- » 31 August 2014: Final list of participants
- » 22 October 2014: Start of the AMRF14

For further information (a special event's website is available at: www.events.arcosnetwork.org).

For more information, please contact:

ARCOS

Ms Salome Alweny
African Mountains Programme Manager
Email: salweny@arcosnetwork.org;
Tel: +256 414 530 700.
Website: www.arcosnetwork.org;

EAC

Mrs Wivine Ntamubano,
Principal Environment and Natural Resources Officer
Email: wntamubano@eachq.org;
Tel: +255 765 456 111.
Website: www.eac.int.

UNEP

Ms. Felice van der Plaats
Associate Programme Officer
Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI)
Email: Felicitas.vanderPlaats@unep.org
P.O.Box 30552, Nairobi 00100, Kenya
Tel. +254 20 762 3130 (land line) or +254713601281 (Cell).
Website: <http://www.unep.org>