

Report on the First Meeting of the Mountain Forum Council, Urubamba, Peru, 28 September 1999–1 October 1999

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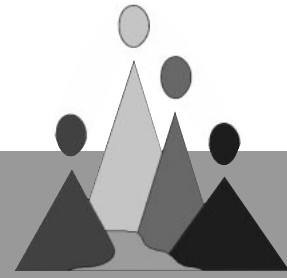
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Participants at the first meeting of the Mountain Forum Council, Urubamba, 28 September 1999–1 October 1999. (Photo by Jason Espie)

At the kind invitation of the International Potato Center (CIP), the first meeting of the Mountain Forum Council took place in Urubamba, Peru, from 28 September 1999–1 October 1999. All 22 members of the Council, who had been nominated by their respective regional/global nodes, FAO, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) were in attendance, as well as 20 special invitees, observers, and node managers. A detailed report of the meeting is in preparation.

The main results can be summarized as follows:

Governance and administration

1. The present council and secretariat will be merged into a board of directors, representing all five regions and the global constituency, which will be constituted by late 2000.
2. In the meantime, an interim board of directors has been constituted of representatives from each of the present node management institutions.
3. FAO has been invited to participate as a member or observer on both the new board and the interim board.

4. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has been invited to participate as an observer.
5. The chairmanship of the board will rotate every 2 years.
6. An executive secretariat will be established in a host institution to be determined by the interim board.
7. A general assembly of all interested members of the Mountain Forum will be held every 3–4 years.
8. The Mountain Forum should obtain independent legal status as soon as possible.
9. Primary responsibility for the activities within each region, including fund raising, shall remain within each region.

Establishment of new nodes

1. Detailed arrangements have been made for the establishment of the African Node of the MF, which is expected to be formalized in 2000. ICRAF in Kenya will be the focal point during this period.
2. Similarly, a North American Node of the MF is likely to be established in the near future. The Banff Center for Mountain Culture, The Mountain Institute, and the Mexican Indigenous Association for Sustainable Development will cooperate in this process.

International Year of Mountains IYM 2002

1. All participants considered the International Year of Mountains (IYM) a unique opportunity to draw the attention of a wide range of audiences to mountain-related problems, issues, and opportunities.
2. More than 50 suggestions were made for IYM-related activities at

global, regional, national, and local levels.

Work plans and budgets

All regional nodes and the Global Information Server Node presented broad outlines for their work plans and budgets for the next 2–4 years.

Responses from international organizations and the donor community

1. Representatives of 10 international organizations and donor institutions indicated their keen interest in close association with the MF and/or indicated the possibility of likely support.

Other

1. Presentations were given on communications policy and strategy, including the journal *Mountain Research and Development*, and on fundraising and financial sustainability. These were considered very useful in developing MF's global and regional programs.
2. The Council reconfirmed that the MF's major mission would continue to consist of
 - information sharing
 - mutual support
 - advocacy
3. The council requested the interim board of directors to report back on a regular basis to the council on progress made with the implementation of the various decisions made by the council.

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