

Side event

THE ROLE OF MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEMS IN THE GEO WORK PROGRAM

14 January 2014, 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Room 13 (level 2)
Centre International de Conférences de Genève (CICG)
17, rue de Varembé, Geneva, Switzerland

Mountains are globally distributed environments which are home to a significant fraction of the world's human population, flora and fauna. These mountainous environments are rich in endemic and, sometimes, endangered species, particularly within biodiversity hot spots. Simultaneously, mountain ecosystems and environments are directly linked to downstream regions through natural pathways (e.g. rivers and ecologic corridors) as well as human infrastructures. Through these pathways, mountains play an important sustainable development role by providing essential water resources and services to not only the communities living in proximity, but also to the surrounding downstream societies and ultimately the global community.

All mountain areas and mountain ecosystems are sensitive to the effects of climate, global and environmental change. The threat of losing crucial goods and services and associated benefits for the well-being of communities depending on mountain resources is increasing (mountain societies in particular). And although mountain regions in diverse areas around the globe share many common aspects, they are often trans-boundary in nature and have individual peculiarities which need to be both specifically and commonly addressed. It is also important that data and information exchange between the various mountain regions be facilitated, and access to this existing body of knowledge be made more readily available to policy makers and decision makers in order to respond to the challenges faced by mountain communities.

It is thus important to strengthen the role of data on mountain ecosystems in the framework of GEO and develop global platforms for sharing information at all levels.

Program

- 4:30-4:40** Opening remarks
Maurizio Biasini, Scientific Counsellor of the Italian Mission at UN
Dominique Reeb, Deputy Chief of the Secretariat of the UNECE/FAO
Forestry and Timber Section in Geneva, Mountain Partnership
- 4:40-4:50** UNEP mountain activities
Matthias Jurek, UNEP /GRID - Arendal, Austria and Norway (TBC)
- 4:50-5:00** Observation network in the Himalayan Region
Basanta Shrestha, ICIMOD, Nepal
- 5:00-5:10** MRI activities
Greg Greenwood, Mountain Research Initiative, Switzerland
- 5:10-5:15** Mountain observations
Elisa Vuillermoz, Ev-K2-CNR Committee, Italy
- 5:15-5:25** Rainfall extremes and erosion in mountain environments
Bodo Bookhagen, University of California, USA
- 5:25-5:35** The Pyrenees Climate Change Observatory, a natural laboratory
Maria del Carmen Llasat, Un. of Barcelona, Spain
- 5:35-5:45** TBA
Ricardo Jaña, Instituto Antártico Chileno (TBC)
- 5:45-5:50** The role of GEO-BON
Henrique Pereira, iDIV and GEO-BON
- 5:50-6:00** GEO-GNOME presentation and final discussion
Antonello Provenzale, CNR-ISAC, Italy