

The Power of Partnerships for Mountains

The 13th World Congress on Snow, Mountain and Wellness Tourism

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Mountain Partnership Secretariat



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

2023
—
2027



Five Years of Action
for the Development of
Mountain Regions



About the Mountain Partnership

Founded in 2002 during the **UN International Year of Mountains**, the Mountain Partnership is the UN alliance dedicated to protecting mountain communities and environments around the world.

686 members:

- **74** governments
- **25** intergovernmental organizations
- **588** major groups (CSOs, NGOs, private sector)

The Mountain Partnership Secretariat is hosted by FAO, and supported by **Andorra, Ireland, Italy** and **Switzerland**.



Seventh Global Meeting of the MP

Every four years, Mountain Partnership members gather for the Global Meeting to **shape the future direction of the partnership**

The next Global Meeting will be held from **26-28 March 2026, here in Andorra**

The theme: **"Mountains for the Future: Responsible Tourism, Thriving Communities"**

Main objectives:

- exchange best practices in sustainable mountain development
- collaborate on policies to support mountain communities
- promote responsible tourism that benefits both people and nature



MOUNTAINS
MATTER
FROM ANDORRA
TO EVERY SUMMIT

Bridging food and tourism: Empowering local communities

The International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017 recognized tourism as a tool for economic growth, environmental protection and cultural preservation.

Fragile ecosystems, such as mountains and islands, hold strong potential for sustainable tourism. Visitors seek authentic food, landscapes and local culture. This creates opportunities for mountain farmers as local gastronomy, farming systems and heritage become part of the tourism experience.

Tourism can strengthen sustainable agrifood systems. Local products supply restaurants, hotels and markets. Farmers gain new income streams and more stable demand.

To achieve sustainable food systems and sustainable tourism requires supporting small-scale producers, women entrepreneurs and youth employment within fragile ecosystems.

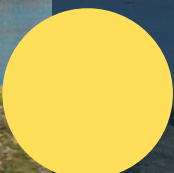


Sustainable tourism for fragile ecosystems – From highlands to islands

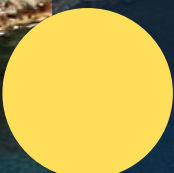
**27 March 2026, 17.00–18.30
CET**



Fragile ecosystems, from mountains to remote islands, face interconnected challenges, including geographical isolation, high transportation costs and vulnerability to external shocks such as climate change.



Agrifood systems play a central role in sustaining livelihoods by preserving cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, fostering biodiversity conservation and supporting sustainable resource management.



Mountains and islands share opportunities to strengthen resilience, through climate-smart agriculture, reinforced local value chains, and sustainable, nutritious food systems that enhance food security and livelihoods.



A vertical photograph of a mountainous landscape. The foreground shows terraced rice fields with some water, surrounded by dense green vegetation and palm trees. The middle ground features more terraced fields and a small cluster of buildings. The background consists of rolling green hills under a clear blue sky.

Our work on fragile ecosystems

Over the past decade, the MP has been working with vulnerable communities in fragile ecosystems, advocating for the protection of mountain and island ecosystems and the resilience of their populations.

Projects focus on the synergy between sustainable tourism and sustainable agrifood systems as a vehicle for change by:

- linking farmers with tourism operators
- providing technical support to small-scale farmers
- preserving local cuisine and local products
- raising awareness among visitors about their impact on fragile ecosystems, and how they can support

Key MP tools: enhancing mountain livelihoods

Business Incubator and Accelerator (BIA) for Mountains and Islands

- promotes innovative and equitable entrepreneurship
- enhances sustainability in food, textile and tourism value chains

Mountain Partnership Products Initiative

- labelling scheme for ethical, fair and organic mountain products
- first international network of Participatory Guarantee Systems for mountain communities

Fashion for Fragile Ecosystems

- offers technical and financial support to women artisans
- promotes equal exchange of skills, traditional knowledge and cultural heritage



Sustainable Food and Tourism Itineraries

Implemented in collaboration with UN Tourism



The project develops sustainable gastronomy tourism itineraries linked to local agrifood systems in seven Pacific SIDS: Cook Islands, Fiji, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Short tourism itineraries highlight local gastronomy and sustainable organic agriculture, connecting visitors with farmers, food traditions, and island landscapes.

The initiative creates alternative income opportunities for small scale producers while raising awareness of their role in protecting fragile ecosystems.

A joint initiative between FAO and UN Tourism, with support from Italian Development Cooperation and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine of Ireland.



Sustainable Food and Tourism itineraries – Results and next steps

● **69** different producer organizations have received capacity building on touristic offer and agroecology practices.

● **19** co-created gastronomy tourism experiences ready for the market

● **8** itineraries offering half-day or full-day tours in each country

● **6** practical resources developed to support gastronomy tourism experience design and strategy planning

● Next steps include “Empowering women in the Pacific SIDS” and “Climate-Smart Melanesia Indigenous Food Centre (CS-MIFC)”



Why partnerships matter?

Addressing complex global challenges requires collective action and strong partnerships.

Partnerships enable regions with similar experiences to build joint solutions.

Multistakeholder networks help amplify community voices and innovations on global platforms.

Partnerships with private sector open up markets, increase visibility and support livelihood diversification.

True partnerships empower local organizations and communities, focusing on building their capabilities rather than just delivering services.

We welcome you to join the Mountain Partnership and invite you to scan the QR code to connect and collaborate.





Thank You

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Mountain Partnership Secretariat

<https://www.fao.org/mountain-partnership/en>