



## DECLARATION OF HUARAZ ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEMS

The “Mountain Ecosystems World Meeting, Mountains Towards 2020: Water, Life and Production”, held in Huaraz on the 12, 13 and 14 of June, 2002 was attended by representatives and experts from Argentina, Austria, Bolivia, Brasil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Germany, United States of America, France, Italy, Mexico, Nepal, The Netherlands, Peru, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland and Venezuela, who formulated the Declaration of Huaraz in the following terms:

Welcoming the initiative by which the United Nations declared 2002 as the International Year of Mountains to increase awareness of the importance of mountain ecosystems preservation and sustainable development of their populations;

Remembering the previous efforts aimed at the sustainable development of mountain ecosystems; among others, the proposals submitted by the Andean countries at the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1991; the achievements in the framework of the Declaration of Manaus on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992; Chapter 13 on the Management of Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development from 1992's Program 21;

Acknowledging the role played by organizations belonging to the United Nations system, such as Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Mountain Focus Group, among others, as well as the efforts made by several domestic, regional and international groups;

Joining efforts in the process initiated following the Declaration of Cusco on Sustainable Development of Mountain Ecosystems which promotes sustainable mountain development.

Uniting international efforts aimed at sustainable mountain development in the Preparatory Meetings for the World Sustainable Development Summit to be held in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa. Likewise being aware of the existing opportunities throughout the International Year of Mountains and the process leading to the World Sustainable Development Summit to advance the environmental, economic and social agenda of the mountainous countries, namely, the alliances forged in the framework of said world event.

**WHEREAS:**

1. Sustainable development of mountain ecosystems in times marked by climatic changes, globalization and its impacts on ecosystems, encourage governments to join efforts to preserve and rationalize the use of environmental and natural resources.
2. The conditions of great diversity and extreme economic, social and environmental vulnerability of mountain ecosystems require a comprehensive management of water resources, life and production, with an ecosystem-wise approach, at a local and national level.
3. The heterogeneity in space, climate, biology and society, as well as in production activities triggers the identification of those sustainable processes and products with added value at a local and regional level which contribute to job creation and poverty relief.

**THE PARTIES HEREBY COMMIT THEMSELVES TO:**

** In terms of management and sustainable use of water resources:**

- Acknowledge that water is a common, vital and strategic good
- Promote a comprehensive basin management, knowing the function of the mountain ecosystems in water production
- Promote strengthening of local, regional and national institutions which guarantee the sustainable use of water
- Promote participatory processes in water resource management that facilitate a fair and equitable access to its use and benefits among the population, while recognizing the importance of indigenous, peasant and other local communities;
- Include the different approaches of urban and rural populations as well as of different productive sectors in the water resource management processes;
- Contribute to the assessment of water produced by basins, specifically in mountainous areas;
- Look for mechanisms that allow for the preservation and sustainable use of water resources;
- Promote technologies for the use and exploitation of water resources, ensuring its quality and sustainability, and including the traditional uses and know-how.
- Foster research into mountain ecosystem preservation; and,

- Promote, implement and strengthen inter-institutional cooperation programs at a national, regional and international level.

 **In terms of biological and cultural diversity:**

- Encourage the preservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, species and genetic resources of mountainous areas;
- Exploit the social and cultural diversity in the interests of the sustainable development of mountain settlers;
- Take into account the different realities and singularities, the specificity of the problems stated, as well as the potential solution that the cultural heritage and traditional know-how of its population bring.
- Promote educational and capacity-building systems adapted to the specific conditions of life in the mountains; and,
- Foster an experience and know-how exchange in terms of sustainable development and vulnerability among mountainous countries.

 **In terms of productive processes in mountain ecosystems:**

- Identify comparative advantages of products and production chains from competitive and sustainable mountainous areas;
- Encourage sustainable productive processes in mountainous areas which offer greater economic and environmental benefits, as well as a fairer and more equitable distribution throughout the production chains;
- Strengthen producer's associations at every level in sustainable productive chains and establish links to markets and global financing mechanisms;
- Promote sustainable tourism in mountain countries by maximizing the benefits to local populations and by preserving natural and cultural heritage and values;
- Facilitate and encourage access to information and know-how, drawing together and integrating tradition with state-of-the-art know-how and technology.
- Encourage strengthening of local capacities related to sustainable production in mountain ecosystems, integrating know-how and practices and fostering the active participation of settlers; and,
- Encourage research into economic, social and environmental sustainability of the different productive activities in mountain ecosystems.

**AND RECOMMEND THAT:**

1. Governments of mountainous countries have to endorse this Declaration.
2. Actions have to be taken in accordance with this Declaration and in coherence with the nature of Chapter 13, Program 21, the Agreement on Biological Diversity and the outcomes of the **World Sustainable Development Summit**, to be held in Johannesburg, in the topic on mountains.
3. A Mountain Ecosystems Task Force is to be created in order to make specific commitments that contribute and consolidate the implementation of Chapter 13 of Program 21. This shall be done grabbing the opportunities that the process leading to **the World Sustainable Development Summit** brings, creating and strengthening alliances which will integrate the efforts made by governments and the main groups identified in Program 21 so as to collectively build sustainable development in the mountains.

Huaraz, June 14<sup>th</sup> 2002