



# ARUSHA OUTCOMES

## TOWARDS A SHARED MOUNTAIN AGENDA FOR AFRICA

### Preamble

Representatives from governments, international organizations, civil society, science, academia and private sector, met in Arusha, Tanzania, on 22-24 October 2014 at the First African Regional Mountains Forum organised by the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS) and the Africa Mountain Partnership Champions Committee in partnership with the East African Community (EAC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The overall objective of the Forum was to provide an opportunity for experience sharing and lesson learning on sustainable mountain development in Africa, identify major issues affecting African Mountains and propose actions to address these challenges for advancing the African mountain agenda.

The African Mountains Regional Forum:

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that African mountains provide indispensable goods and services for both highland and lowland communities, and that they harbour unique biodiversity, provide non-timber forest products, water, food and energy security at local, national and sub- regional levels.

**CONCERNED** that pressure from human activities and climate change is leading to rapid montane biodiversity loss, land degradation and increasing disasters, jeopardizing mountains' capacity to support livelihoods.

**RECALLING** the various conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Programme of Work related to Mountains, the World Heritage Convention, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification especially in Africa, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and other relevant global conventions and agreements relating to mountain matters

**RECALLING** the African Convention on Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Maputo, 2003),

**RECOGNIZING** the importance of mountain areas, as underlined in Chapter 13 (Sustainable Mountain Development) of the Declaration on Environment and Development ("Agenda 21", Rio de Janeiro, 1992) and in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development as well as **REAFFIRMING** the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want" (Rio de Janeiro, 2012);

RECALLING Resolution 68/217 adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2013 related to sustainable mountain development and other relevant UNGA Resolutions encouraging states and all stakeholders to give appropriate consideration to the issues of sustainable mountain development in the elaboration of the Post-2015 Development Agenda;

RECALLING the African Mountains and Highlands Declaration (Gaborone, 1997), Arusha Declaration on Africa's post Rio+20 strategy for sustainable development (Arusha, 2012), the Gaborone Declaration on climate change and Africa's development at the fifth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (Gaborone, 2013), the outcomes of the "Mountain Partnership Regional meeting on Sustainable Development in African Mountain Regions" held in Mbale on 16- 18 November 2011, the outcomes of the "Africa Mountain Partnership Meeting" held in Kigali on 20 February 2013, the outcomes of the "Regional Conference on African Mountain Ecosystems as Impacted by Climate Change: Post Rio+20 Actions" held in Nairobi on 9 and 10 September 2013, the conclusions of the "Fourth Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership held in Erzurum, Turkey on 17-20 September 2013 as well as other relevant meetings;

ACKNOWLEDGING that there have been other regional initiatives promoting sustainable development of mountains in Africa such as the African Mountain Association;

RECOGNIZING that African mountain ranges are usually shared among several countries which have a need to strengthen capacity in research and evidence-based knowledge, create awareness, formulate adequate laws, policies and institutions on mountains, including adopting transboundary and regional frameworks on sustainable management of African mountains ecosystems,

NOTING the need to adopt a shared agenda for sustainable mountain development in Africa for the interest of the present and future generations;

ACKNOWLEDGING the deliberations in Arusha on the themes related to biodiversity and ecosystem services, climate change, mountain communities and livelihoods, food water energy nexus, policy and governance. The report of the meeting and the list of participants are attached as an annex

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The African Mountains Regional Forum made the following recommendations:

1. We propose that the African Union together with AMCEN, Regional Economic Communities and other partners develops and implement a sustainable mountain development agenda and strategy for Africa.
2. We propose the establishment of the Africa Regional Mountains Forum to promote the sustainable mountain development agenda and strategy in Africa and to provide a forum of knowledge, information exchange and policy dialogue in close cooperation with the Mountain Partnership.
3. We acknowledge the African Mountain Partnership Champions Committee and propose that it provides the Steering Committee of the Africa Regional Mountains Forum and propose that the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS) acts as an interim Secretariat and centre of excellence pending further inter-governmental consultations and conclusions on the establishment of a permanent institutional arrangement.
4. We further propose that the Africa Regional Mountains Forum should be convened every 2 years depending on the modalities developed by the Secretariat to promote the African mountain agenda.

5. We request African governments to develop and implement mountain-specific policies, laws and programmes as well as mainstream sustainable mountain development in their national development agenda.
6. We request national and sub-regional economic communities to develop and implement cooperative arrangements for the management of transboundary mountain ecosystems.
7. We encourage governments, private sector, civil society and development partners to develop and support public-private-civic partnerships to enhance the value chains linked to mountain ecosystems so as to improve the livelihoods of the mountain communities.
8. We call upon research and academic organisations, governments, civil society and private sector and development partners to strengthen and support the knowledge base and sharing of information on mountains so as to have evidence-based policies and bridge gaps in research, policy and actions.
9. We request governments and other stakeholders to enhance their climate change adaptation and mitigation policies and measures to ensure sustainable flow of mountain goods and services
10. We recommend the adoption of specific policies and initiatives related to ecosystems and natural resources management disaster risk management, sustainable farming systems, access to information, public participation, gender integration, education and job creation for the youth, and benefit sharing actions for sustainable management of mountains.
11. We call for inter-sectoral collaboration in the protection and management of African mountains given their critical importance as water towers, centers for economic development and source of livelihoods for the mountain communities.
12. We encourage all stakeholders to promote cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, development and transfer of technologies to enhance community development in mountain regions.
13. We request African Governments, AMCEN, other intergovernmental organizations and development partners to endorse and support these outcomes also ensuring the inclusion of mountains in the Post-2015 Development Agenda process and Sustainable Development Goals.
14. We appreciate both technical and funding support from Forum Partners namely: the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS), the East African Community (EAC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).
15. We welcome the African Sustainable Mountain Development Fund initiated by the Albertine Rift Conservation Society in collaboration with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in supporting the African mountain agenda.
16. We request development partners to support the implementation of the outcomes of the African Regional Mountains Forum
17. We welcome the expressed interest of the United Republic of Tanzania to join the Mountain Partnership and encourage other African mountain countries to join the partnership;
18. We appreciate the warm welcome and the hospitality extended to participants and the support received from the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Secretariat of the East African Community

Done at Arusha, 24 October 2014