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TWENTY-SIXTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Merida, Mexico, 10-14 April 2000

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNTAIN AREAS

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INTRODUCTION

1. The mountain areas of Latin America and the Caribbean occupy a substantial proportion of the Region and include significant segments of the population, including indigenous and cultural groups whose stability depends on the rational management of natural resources. The conservation of these areas has an impact on the quality of local, national and global environments and, in many cases, on the socio-economic conditions of the inhabitants of medium- and lower-watershed areas. The way these areas are used is therefore of priority concern to countries. The mountain areas also include some of the most fragile ecosystems of the Region, requiring special treatment and operational coordination and linkage between the relevant national authorities, civil society and the local communities.
2. The present state of degradation of natural resources in large expanses of the Region's mountain areas is largely due to the lack of integrated management, which is affecting forest sustainability, contaminating waters, eroding productive land and exacerbating the instability of fragile areas vulnerable to extreme climatic events. There are a few examples of management with integrated planning and implementation, although recent successful projects are encouraging public and private bodies to become involved and are generating new expectations of participation among diverse social, governmental and private circles and sectors.
3. Chapter 13 of Agenda 21 (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992), entitled *Managing fragile ecosystems: Sustainable mountain development*, defined two programme areas: a) generating and strengthening knowledge about the ecology and sustainable development of mountain ecosystems; and b) promoting integrated watershed development and alternative livelihood opportunities. Subsequently, in 1993, the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development designated FAO as task manager for Chapter 13.
4. In the light of the global importance of sustainable development in mountain areas, the UN General Assembly agreed to celebrate the year 2002 as the "International Year of Mountains", for which it is defining structures, functions and activities that will reflect and support ongoing actions in individual countries.
5. This report includes a brief description of the present state of mountain areas in terms of their environmental aspects (including water, soil and plant resources) and related social, economic and institutional aspects. It reviews progress made under the Agenda 21 agreements and puts forward objectives and guidelines for action to achieve their sustainable development.

SITUATION AND TRENDS IN THE MOUNTAIN AREAS OF THE REGION

6. About one third of Latin America and the Caribbean is mountainous territory (Box 1: Physical Geography of Latin America). This is made up of different geographical zones that encompass sizeable urban centres, infrastructures and rural populations in most of the countries. The mountain areas in this geographical profile form an axis running down the length of Latin America, with the prominent feature, the Andes Mountains, extending as far as Antarctica.

Box 1: Physical Geography of Latin America

Mountain Areas	Countries included
1. Andes Mountains	Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina.
2. Brazilian Highlands	Mountain areas in the Northeast, Southwest and South.
3. Central American Highlands	Countries of Central America.
4. Sierra Madres and Mexican Highlands	Mountain areas of the Sierra Madres (3), ranges and highland areas of the Pacific coast.
5. Caribbean Sierras and highlands	Countries of the Caribbean and island territories.

7. Because of their altitude, mountains regulate local climates and determine climatic conditions creating special biospheres and ecosystems that impact directly on medium- and low-lying areas. The geomorphologic and terrestrial structure of these areas renders them unstable. They also include areas of water catchment, which determine water quality and supply and thus influence the maintenance of local production capacity and the quality of life of local inhabitants. The mountain areas have a wide array of ecosystems, in addition to mineral and forest resources that can be exploited in many ways. Their natural beauty also makes them attractive to tourism and for recreational activities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

8. The Region's ecosystems considered fragile are those whose structure or functioning can be changed or degraded in the short or medium term by human activity, because of the restricted capacity of their ecological components to absorb, offset or reverse the disruption caused by their exploitation. The high mountain areas are considered to be the most vulnerable of Latin America's fragile ecosystems requiring environmental priority. A study has been made of the eco-regions or landscape units that have suffered the highest degree of intervention and that are most at risk of resource degradation (Box 2: Fragile mountain areas of Latin America).

9. The location of water resources in the Region differs widely from one country and one eco-region to another. There is a significant difference in water availability per unit of surface area between the watersheds of the Atlantic slope and those of the Pacific slope, and between tropical, temperate and dry climates. The presence of interceptor mountains produces arid conditions in localized areas.

Box 2. Fragile mountain areas of Latin America

High mountain areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High mountain rangelands/plateaux, punas. 2. Slopeland farming. 3. Lake and glacier systems 4. Areas with biodiversity, endemic flora and fauna. 5. Areas subject to extreme events 6. Mountain tropical rainforest
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10. The increased exploitation of mountain areas, mainly for extractive purposes, has had a serious impact on, for example, fresh water bodies and watershed soils and forests, affecting water regimes and the quality, quantity and availability of water.

11. Mountain ecosystems give rise to the main inland water bodies of Latin America, with millions of hectares of lake, lagoon and wetland. Because of their considerable hydroelectric potential, these areas also include the continent's large-scale water control works. These infrastructure works built from regional investment are among the primary public and private capital assets and are the mainstay of energy resources, irrigated farming and clean water supply.

12. The factors most frequently obstructing the conservation of lake ecosystems are the unregulated urbanization of lake shores, the failure to treat discharged waste waters, the absence of basic sanitation services for the catchment population and the inappropriate use of lakes for different unsustainable purposes.

13. The building of roads and spontaneous urban settlements, coupled with mining and agricultural activities that degrade the fragile natural resources of mountains that serve as watersheds for lowland areas, are increasingly affecting production activities and the quality of life of local populations who, in the rural sector, generally live in conditions of poverty and destitution.

14. The main characteristic of the mountain areas is their diversity of geological origin, natural landscape formation and evolution to form different types of soil. The mountain slopes and their different altitudes offer a wide range of ecological system. Because of their vertical dimensions, mountains create gradients of temperature, precipitation and insolation. A given mountain slope may have several different climatic systems, for example, tropical, subtropical, temperate or high-altitude.

15. The mountain areas of Latin America have mega-diversity due to their abundance of ecosystems and their wide range of genera and species of mammals, birds, amphibia, fish and flora. There is also a high degree of endemism in their desert and temperate and tropical climate ecosystems.

16. Their rich biodiversity and high endemism give the mountain ecosystems their stability and contribute to their scenic beauty. Their functions are essential in maintaining ecological equilibrium, water security and production diversity of medium- and lower-catchment areas.

17. Forest biodiversity has been heavily degraded, with the indigenous forests causing the greatest concern of all the fragile mountain ecosystems. The mountain native forest has been increasingly worked in recent years with a loss not only of forest stands but also of its rich biodiversity. The priorities of urban and industrial development, with all the associated implications, and the extraction of oil, mineral, gold and timber and agro-industrial activity of recent decades have caused the most damage to the mountain areas.

18. The high-lying forests and catchments are those most exposed to extreme events (floods, drought, landslides). Accumulated pressure from human intervention undermine the stability of geomorphologically active slopeland which, in turn, affects the lower-lying areas that suffer the consequences of upland changes. These endangered areas can be demarcated and placed under environmental surveillance, with the application of preventive measures and treatments.

19. Current use of mountain lands increasingly involves agricultural activities with lower sustainability. Frequent conservation inadequacies arise from changes in land use, following expansion of the agricultural frontier, over-utilization of land, fires and introduction of exotic species. Large high plateau areas have experienced changes in their multiple environmental function, especially as catchments of surface and underground water resources, with intensified degradation and erosion.

20. The expansion of the agricultural frontier in critical mountain areas indicates a lack of ecological land-use planning, whereby land is used according to capacity and population pressure on fragile soils is regulated, with the promotion of sustainable forms of use and management.

21. As regards soil loss from erosion, this natural phenomenon in mountain areas is clearly easily accelerated by the impact of human removal of protective plant cover. The pressure for ever more agricultural land because of inadequate cultivation techniques, and the indiscriminate or uncontrolled extraction of highland forests are generating a process of soil degradation that is resulting in the desertification of extensive mountain areas and the definitive migration of local populations to urban areas.

SOCIAL ASPECTS

22. Historically, important civilizations have settled in the Region's mountain areas. The large cultural centres of pre-Columbian civilizations, with their division of labour and their orderly use of natural resources, could only have existed in areas where food surpluses were made possible by appropriate hillside cultivation and water management techniques. Hundreds of major irrigation systems built before the arrival of the Spanish have been discovered, and closed catchments above 2000 metres successfully managed to sustain the Aztec empire and Inca and other settlements. There are many examples of civilizations that acquired their water supplies from the mountains, that used appropriate technologies for hillside cultivation and that saw the mountain as a life-sustaining sanctuary.

23. The current social factors determining rural development in mountain areas relate to key aspects such as socio-culture, poverty, organization and participation capacity, and traditional know-how.

24. The indigenous populations living in mountain areas have cultural and ethnic characteristics that are unique because adjusted to an environment characterized by its vulnerability and by the technical and ecological restrictions placed on its sustainable use. A large proportion of the population that has recently settled in mountain areas therefore requires support so that they can adapt fully and so that new practices can be so adjusted not to degrade a fragile environment.

25. The ancestral cultures perfected a variety of soil and water conservation techniques, for example, terraces, contour furrows, irrigation canals and organic farming which were all technological aspects that enabled them to live for a long period in a sustainable manner. Colonization produced a severe dislocation of traditional know-how and techniques, seriously impairing local population response to the degradation of the natural ecosystem. Recent archaeological and anthropological surveys show that much of the backwardness in the development of rural mountain communities can be explained by the loss of basic traditional know-how in the use of production and medicinal species and conservation techniques; this, coupled with marginalization on the part of the extension, technical support and financial services and the implementation of development policies inappropriate for these areas.

26. In some areas, the level of ecological degradation and the conditions of poverty in the agricultural sector are so extreme that an unquantified but significant proportion of the local communities are migrating to urban areas in search of better living conditions. Critical climate events, such as droughts and flooding, are especially likely to produce emergency situations causing episodes of hunger and massive outmigration.

27. The incidence of poverty is higher in these regions than in all other rural areas. Hence the need to focus public and private sector support on regions with socio-economic and geographic priority, mindful that the largest number of indigenous groups and the highest levels of extreme poverty are to be found in these areas.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

28. The management of mountain areas with the greatest conservation difficulties has been in the hands of by the indigenous groups, especially after the Spanish colonization which occupied the best lands. These indigenous groups have had to survive under environmental conditions very similar to those of prehistoric times. The growing need for land to perpetuate the slash and burn system leaves increasingly less available farmland. Even so, the indigenous cultures have developed forms of technology that have enabled large areas to remain unchanged, areas that are permanent sources of goods and services and that in many cases have to be reconciled with designations as protected wildland.

29. The important challenge is to study, validate and regularize ownership of resources and services from mountain areas, so that local populations can improve their income-earning opportunities and maintain conservation processes that in turn sustain services, resources and activities for the other inhabitants of the catchment area.

30. The production potential of the mountain areas is huge in terms of energy, forestry, water catchment and control, and genetic resources and also in terms of sustainable agricultural production using appropriate technologies. Some mountain areas also have high touristic and recreational potential and therefore a high natural potential that needs to be sustainably exploited, with land-use planning, appropriate technologies and a participatory social framework- coincidentally, the year 2002 is also the Year of Ecotourism.

31. A number of countries have recently introduced programmes for mountain areas, with methodological and technical support for the design of planning and management policies, strategies and operating mechanisms that will ensure their sustainable development, as well as the conservation, rehabilitation and regulated use of natural resources in ecosystems.

32. The adopted approach adopted focuses on the management of landscape units or biogeographical regions with uniform characteristics, so that project planning and implementation can be perceived at catchment and micro-catchment level in pilot areas. This approach makes it possible to direct human and economic resources towards reversing natural resource deterioration, resolving utilization conflicts and promoting integrated and sustainable development.

INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS

33. The accelerating process of natural resource degradation and deterioration of living conditions is exacerbated in rural communities where conflicts are ever more numerous and where local organizations have broken down. Such low organizational capacity weakens the ability to negotiate with institutions and to participate in markets.

34. There is a frequent imposition of programmes and projects designed on the outside, without attention to the real needs of the high mountain inhabitants and without envisaging their active participation. Areas with low organizational capacity frequently lack mechanisms for dialogue and consensus, and have no regularization of property titles to land and water.

35. There have recently been successful examples of participatory “planning-action” processes comprising all social stakeholders in rural and urban communities, and laying the groundwork for democratic consensus for sustainable civic actions. The use of such processes in production activity and environmental conservation also helps communities consolidate their efforts for self-management of natural resources, evaluate results and determine corrective measures in good time.

36. The institutional and policy framework calls for a participatory and community determination of assessable environmental objectives and goals in mountain areas, defining socially admissible levels and specific rules of utilization at geographical, provincial and watershed level. This requires the bolstering of local technical, organizational, administrative and financial capacities to be able to move forward towards self-management and deal with the implementation requirements of the various alternatives for sustainable local development.

37. A high percentage of mountain areas in the Region have formal status as Protected Wildlands, although significant ecosystems are not represented, and population growth, the spread

of exogenous animal and plant species, tourism and illicit deforestation within the protected areas and their areas of influence increase the risk of destruction.

38. There is a worrying level of spontaneous and uncontrolled intervention in many protected mountain wildlands, because of disproportionate utilization and pollution from economic activity within the area or in the area of influence.

39. There is general recognition of the lack of sustainable and integrated management policies, strategies and plans in the mountain areas, especially in fragile ecosystems. Where such policies do exist, these need to be implemented and their results evaluated to effectively assimilate a large proportion of the causes of past and present degradation of natural resources, and to validate achievements.

40. The frequently abundant legislation that exists on natural resource management and the different legal texts regulating public and private activities in mountain areas need to be updated and made coherent and complementary. In some cases, legal measures that have impacted negatively will need to be redirected, incentives will need to be targeted, and processes of titling will need to be reconciled with criteria of land-use planning and sustainable land use. Appropriate legislation will help achieve the objective of directing and regulating forest, agricultural and trade policies impact on and contaminate resources, and that limit the scope for development actions at local level.

REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

41. Sustainable development draws upon technical, environmental, economic and ethical concepts that are geared towards conserving scarce natural resources so as to ensure that these are made available for future generations. Sustainability arises from the local context, from participation under the control of the direct stakeholders, from consensus, and from social and environmental equity. Key interventions are required in specific areas:

- Action of the State focusing on the definition of clear and stable policies and regulations, participating directly in areas where the private sector has no competence or sees little financial interest in intervening.
- Integrated and participatory actions with communities, leading to their self-management, with the support of relevant bodies, thus satisfying expectations of democratization and fostering integrated and sustainable development.
- Planning and management of catchment and micro-catchment use, introducing measures and processes that will help correct, prevent or mitigate local environmental problems, and defining development actions that will optimize natural resource utilization.

ENVIRONMENTAL

42. The geographic profile of mountain areas imposes natural restrictions on their use for production because of their steep slopes and the low-carrying capacity of the basic natural resources, soil and water. In view of this and considering that the conservation of these areas

impacts on the lower-lying areas, rural communities without the means and resources of carrying out viable and sustainable production should receive solidarity and support from the development agents of society.

43. Although Agenda 21 deals separately with sustainable mountain development, the following chapter (XIV) deals with promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development. Such complementarity is needed in an integrated approach to development and will help facilitate the solving of conflicts of use, the interaction between mountain areas and production activity of lower-lying areas, and the interactions between rural and urban areas.

44. Land classification models are being applied in the Region, with consideration of the technical and socio-cultural determinants of natural resource use in hillside areas and fragile ecosystems in the framework of ecological land-use planning, and classification of land by capacity of use. These should serve as a working reference for broader and more ambitious national initiatives for sustainable environmental management and land-use planning in mountain areas.

45. The noted environmental features of mountain areas need to be addressed through “corrective-preventive” actions, and the technical and policy measures described below implemented. Land use needs to be controlled in cultivated hillside areas, inland water bodies (lakes, wetlands, reservoirs), high plateaux and forest areas with endemic species under pressure from intensified use, and biodiversity, flora and fauna that are endangered or under threat of extinction need to be protected.

46. Because of the localized occurrence of geomorphologic and terrestrial processes in that threaten the stability of human activity and basic infrastructures, risk zoning should be introduced to set up monitoring and early warning systems and to prepare for extreme weather events (torrential rains or extensive periods of drought), thereby lessening the high vulnerability of local populations.

47. Priority needs to be given to protecting the natural resources of mountain watersheds that are in a critical state of conservation and to managing them in an integrated manner, for they impact heavily on environmental stability, human activities and vulnerable low-lying areas.

48. Sustainable integrated rural development programmes need to be established to counter the increased degradation of renewable productive natural resources, water, soil, vegetation and fauna. To reverse declining yields in cropping and forestry, changes in land use need to be agreed with local communities, thereby reducing conflicts of use. As agreed by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, activities related to the environment and forests need to be organized within the frame of reference of the national forest programmes of individual countries.

SOCIAL

49. The rural population living in mountain areas represents a “social capital” in which society needs to invest for its enhancement and development. Food security and livelihood opportunity strategies (clean water, irrigation, production infrastructure, education, health) need to

be put in place with the more vulnerable local population groups to help them deal with external changes and extreme weather events (severe drought and flooding).

50. Development actions are needed for rural mountain areas, with technical and policy measures to improve the low quality of life of local populations living in conditions of poverty. This will require enhanced social infrastructure (clean water, health, education), production infrastructure (roads, reservoirs, storage facilities, shelters), local organizational capacity and the exchange of production technologies.

51. Community organization mechanisms need to be activated to foster integrated participation and the self-management of local resources. The encouragement of community participation, dialogue and local consensus will facilitate agreement on the regularization of natural resource ownership by communities, communal holdings and rural producers (regularization of property titles to water and land).

52. Technical assistance to agricultural, livestock and forest producers needs to be boosted to raise the supply of technical, economic and legal information and to provide specific support to minority and neglected groups (women and children).

53. It is important to safeguard elements of community culture (traditions, customs) as well as local ancestral know-how on the use and management of natural resources, biodiversity and endemic species.

ECONOMIC

54. The present state of mountain ecosystems and populations is such that national policies and strategies need to be upgraded and directly as a matter of priority to these areas. More specifically, policies, direct incentives and mechanisms to foster the conservation and management of renewable natural resources need to be established for the agro-forestry sector. Specific actions targeting priority population groups need to be carried out in areas with persisting poverty.

55. Rural communities and agricultural producers with limited production infrastructure need to have easier access to financial and economic resources and to incentive instruments associated with sustainable rural development.

56. Effective participatory policies and channels are needed to promote the market integration of marginalized populations, especially for products and services particular to mountain areas, thus raising level of competitiveness. Other possible actions are assistance to investment projects for national and international cooperation in mountain areas and the introduction of incentives to guide production and conservation activities.

57. Integrated strategies involving mountain area producers and local authorities need to be perfected so that they can combine efforts on organization, training, technical assistance, marketing, funding and community micro-enterprises.

INSTITUTIONAL

58. The most frequently noted institutional restrictions can be overcome by developing an appropriate institutional legal framework to guide activities in fragile mountain areas, and by having legal texts include provisions on the management of fragile ecosystems.

59. An appropriate institutional framework often needs to be established to address the planning, administration and control of critical mountain areas and to determine the juridical, technical and regulatory provisions for the utilization of natural and environmental resources.

60. Integrated actions need to be promoted and conducted with public and private bodies involved in the development of mountain areas and their fragile ecosystems, which will mean activating regionalization and strengthening of local capacities.

61. Human resources need to be educated and trained in technical, social and financial areas for the administration and support of self-management in mountain areas.

62. The public and private sectors need to be encouraged to undertake an integrated study of resources in mountain areas, including their dynamics and potentialities. At the same time, lines of research and teaching need to be established to monitor and conserve mountain areas and their fragile ecosystems, using relevant attributes to evaluate climate change at regional and local level.

FAO OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTAIN AREAS OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

63. The current work proposal for mountain areas is based on the integrated management of catchment natural resources, enabling the physical area and its natural, economic and socio-cultural phenomena to be dealt with in a participatory, systemic and comprehensive manner.

64. As part of its programme of natural resource management, the FAO Regional Office has prioritized the conservation and development of mountain resources and has promoted actions related to policy making and methodological and technical support for the planning and management of sustainable development. The Regional Technical Cooperation Network on Watershed Management has focused its actions, with FAO support, on the management of mountain micro-catchments.

65. The strategy objectives are:

- To support governments, civil society and local authorities and communities in the design of specific policies and strategies for the participatory planning and management of sustainable development of mountain areas. This will enable countries to move forward on the commitments for mountain ecosystems in Agenda 21.
- To raise country capacity for the participatory and integrated sustainable management of renewable natural resources in fragile mountain ecosystems, in support of the agreements

of Agenda 21, the World Food Congress and the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

- To give follow-up to the UN Proclamation for the International Year of Mountains, in which FAO and countries are invited and urged to participate and to raise awareness of the importance of the sustainable mountain development.

66. The selected lines of work aim to promote integration of the sustainable development of mountain areas in the different FAO thematic areas, working closely with each country's national forest programme. These lines of work are summarized below.

67. Countries will be encouraged and helped to draft national plans of sustainable development in mountain areas. The principle elements for the elaboration, execution and monitoring of these plans will be defined, as will training and teaching materials to support the participatory formulation of national and local plans.

68. Assistance will be provided to the implementation of systems of information on natural resources and experiences in the rehabilitation and management of catchments and micro-catchments in mountain areas, linking these to appropriate existing information networks.

69. Emphasis will be placed on training representatives of community organizations, national, state and local officials, NGOs and farmers in integrated natural resource management, participatory planning, extension, conservation of production activities, and operational planning for the sustainable development of mountain ecosystems.

70. Support will be provided for implementation of local plans for demonstration micro-catchment networks for sustainable development of mountain areas, based on participatory monitoring of operational planning and implementation, and a network of selected model areas.

71. Indicators of impact and results will be studied and determined, methodologies refined and natural asset accounts examined, including the total flow of resources and services to and from the mountain areas.

72. There will be specific projects linked to existing technical cooperation networks (watersheds, protected wildlife areas, agroforestry, dendroenergy), both in the context of FAO operations and associated national and interregional networks and in individual national forest programmes.

ANNEX 1

**UNITED NATIONS PROCLAMATION ON THE
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF MOUNTAINS**

General Assembly

3 November 1998

Fifty-third Session

Agenda Item 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunis, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zambia: draft resolution.

International Year of Mountains

The General Assembly,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/30 of 29 July 1998,

Recalling also the relevant provisions of Agenda 21 on sustainable mountain development,

Noting the work already undertaken to achieve sustainable mountain development by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and particularly its role as task manager for Chapter 13 of Agenda 21.

1. *Proclaims* the year 2002 has the International Year of Mountains;
2. *Invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to serve as the lead agency for the International Year of Mountains, in collaboration with Governments, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the United

Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations;

3. *Calls upon* Governments, national and international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to make voluntary contributions in accordance with the guidelines of the Economic and Social Council for international years and anniversaries and to lend other forms of support to the International Year of Mountains;
4. *Encourages* all Governments, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the International Year of Mountains in order to increase awareness of the importance of sustainable mountain development;
5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its Fifty-fifth Session a report on the state of the preparations for the International Year of Mountains.