



WMPA
World Mountain Peoples Association

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2nd December 2004

MINUTES

OF WMPA'S 2ND FULL BOARD MEETING

On Thursday 2nd December in Turin (Italy)

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1. PREAMBLE TO DISCUSSIONS

The Vice-Chairman of the Piedmont region, Roberto Vaglio, welcomes the members of the board on behalf of the Chairman, Enzo Ghigo. Chairman Lassalle thanks Roberto Vaglio for this welcome which reveals his unwavering commitment to the WMPA since its start. He then thanks Pierre Rémy – the spiritual father of this whole project– and also thanks the WMPA team, Claudine Stanislas and Gitta Jacob, for having organised this meeting in record time. He welcomes Alain Jouret and Philippe Pialoux, who are here to represent the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, and without whom the meeting in Turin would not have been possible. Thanks also go to VSF-CICDA and the Municipality of Saluzzo for their support given to this event. A big welcome to the delegates from Africa (Cameroon, Madagascar, Morocco, Uganda), and to those from Latin America (Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru), and from Asia (Kirghizstan, India, Nepal), and from Europe (France, Italy, Portugal, Rumania), the full list appears in the appendix.

He reminds us all of the significance of mountains to the world - that they make up 35 % of the planet's surface and accommodate 15 % of the planet's population. Mountains are source of some of the richest natural resources on the planet and yet mountain people possess almost none of this wealth. The political and cultural establishments are such that they often find themselves excluded. To recognise their right to have their say on such resources is essential for the future.

After Chambéry, the summit in Quito saw the official registration of WMPA's birth in 2002 with the adoption of the Charter which comprises its constitution, the structuring of the board and the main principles of the works outlined in the minutes of the full board meeting of Ispoure which was adopted unanimously.

We are yet, according to the Chairman, to give the momentum to this movement which would make it a movement simply impossible to ignore. He reminded the Board that the WMPA had not set out to usurp anyone but was there to work alongside anyone engaged in the delicate field of emotional quotient, comprehension and optimism. In a fractured world this initiative on the part of both men and women to help

those who wish to help themselves gives real legitimacy to this peaceful movement. After Europe, Asia, the Andes, this is what the WMPA wants to say to Africa next year.

So as to all be working towards the same objective, the Chairman invites each delegation to respond to the proposals forwarded with the aim of making the long litany of suffering heard at each meeting : namely that of depopulation, breakdown of communities, loss of identity, a thing of the past. *«However advanced the world may be in matters of thought and communication, it has never been so trapped in its prejudices. So many problems are pregnant with the seeds of violence. The men and women of the mountain - eternally pacifist - are carriers of hope. Their suffering has driven them to achievements, made greater by frequently extreme conditions, which have shown their genius and their creativity. In order for the global village, which whether we like it or not - is growing before our very eyes – to no longer be lead by armed groups spreading terror here and there, these mountain men and women must be committed in order to keep the thought process alive, the humanity, the equality, in a project that extends beyond their lifetime. What is hard is that they are the ones to be taking the first steps, the ones opening the road forward..»*

And then there is the lack of funds at the disposal of mountain communities. It is the role of the WMPA to respond to this, but they are not going to act alone, nor make promises they cannot keep; that is the sense of the action plan proposed. The priority is to complete the organisation. From the basis of three or four buttress ideas to be broadcast worldwide, we must share our conviction with everyone we meet. In order to change things in a significant way, the WMPA have begun working on a project for a foundation and have met potential sponsors responsive to their ideals. The WMPA want to hold the first intergovernmental conference on mountains in Paris, in Spring 2006. It is an ambitious project which has to mobilise the heads of state of all the world's mountain countries so that this great idea becomes a great programme, taken up by the powerful the world over. Simultaneously a world mountain observatory will be established because one cannot press for things to change, engage the support of militants, if there is no transparency in the challenges, the strengths and the difficulties entailed... This up to date log book should be a source of information for all those who are actively involved. It is a project that demands enormous commitment and work from each and everyone. The first label for Mountain Produce, which is, at this moment, under preparation, will mean that quality products can become a source of revenue for mountains producers. So that is the rough outline of the proposed programme.

« Every time a mountain person began forging a path where no path existed, he never turned back and he was, moreover, almost always followed. This programme means we can mobilise the powerful and enthuse the less so, so that man may meet man and in meeting they may take hold , in one united gesture ,of the great construction project of our time. It is up to us to know whether we want our mountain people to stand strong, keeping a light burning on their territory, the light of hope gleaming out over this foggy and difficult world. A little light of peace... »

2. WMPA's INTERNATIONAL ACTION

Pierre Rémy starts proceedings by reminding the board of his resignation as General Secretary for personal reasons entirely independent of WMPA's aims or organisation. He has chosen a back seat from where he can express his commitment more actively and with better use of his experience.

He draws our attention to the requirement for structuring our action on the charter to achieve fair and sustainable development of mountain territories. The importance of these two terms in the WMPA constitution, and the consequent originality thereof, is emphasised .

He makes reference to the two most important objectives which triggered its creation:

- To put mountain territories in touch with each other , North and South and also South and South so that they may share their experiences and their resources.
- To voice – internationally - the concerns and wishes of the mountain people to the powers that be.

Beyond the numerous initiatives already undertaken, a further dimension can be made available to the mountain people through an « intergovernmental conference » which should address the issue of specificity, raised by the mountain territories, within the framework of international, regional and national regulations. To achieve this, we need to create a tool to further its exposure worldwide. An « international observatory of mountains » would allow us to improve our knowledge of the main current trends and to act, to react, but above all to anticipate changes. What is more the creation of an “international foundation for the fair and sustainable development of the world's mountains” would release funds to set up structures and tools of communication.

The proposals for the development of the WMPA's activities are outlined in the 3 orientation papers distributed during the session (and listed in the appendix).

1. General orientations for 2005
2. Creation of an International foundation as a means of expanding cooperation between mountain territories.
3. Meeting of an intergovernmental conference on mountains to launch a positive interchange between local peoples and heads of government in mountain countries.
4. As a result of this discussion, these proposals are adopted unanimously with the following recommendations. They will be implemented with close consultation with the peoples represented and in full respect of their fundamental values (sustainability, equitability, solidarity and democracy), values that have presided over the creation of this communication forum which is the WMPA, keeping in mind at all times the importance of generating added value in order to gain greater support from all our partners, in particular financial backers.

Chairman Lassalle reminds us of the importance of gaining the governments' confidence so that they commit to supporting the peoples, enabling them to develop the action required. Communicating with and at all these different levels will be one of the top priorities for the future General Secretary to be appointed before the end of the year. On this point, Jean Lassalle thanks Pierre Rémy for his action, comments upon his resignation but also on his wish to continue to see the WMPA expand and to continue working from a distance. He remains a militant and a committed man, rich in ideas and experience. He intends to find before Christmas his replacement, whose remit will differ from his own. Pierre Rémy was General Secretary on a voluntary basis. He now suggests that the next General Secretary be remunerated and in charge of coordinating all the actions and implementing the policy defined by the board. He reminds us that, on October 6th the executive board asked for members to put themselves forward and that candidates keen to stand should come forward as soon as possible.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN MOUNTAIN TERRITORIES

AFRICA

Various structured depending on the country, inter-mountain territory cooperation in Africa is developing with one major concern, that of economic development made possible by the strong increase in added value of the valuable raw materials that they harbour. Faced with national concerns for the reduction of poverty, mountain regions are integrated into national programmes for fair and sustainable development while maintaining their comparative advantages. WMPA Madagascar, set up in 2002, drew up an action plan, approved by the Madagascan Government, on the theme of integrated management of water, on inter-communality and the promotion of products that have high added value (silk, vanilla, essential oils). In Cameroon initiatives have continued since the exchange of experiences between some of the mayors in Cameroon and in France in 2003 on the topic of local government and territorial management. These initiatives lead to the setting up of an association of elected mountain members and the decision to receive the WMPA in 2005. With the support of the NGO Mairies-Conseils, local councils have continued their efforts to identify opportunities for inter-communal cooperation between mountain ranges. In Uganda 50 % of the population live in the high territories, which are home to rare resources with enormous economic potential. A recent meeting of all the mayors on the issue of decentralisation meant that a task force was put in place for mountain development. Firm support for the WMPA would help the setting up of a structure specifically to favour dialogue between mountain communities and the Ugandan Government.

An important initiative on mountains has been launched in Morocco, through a project for new legislation or mountain policy currently under consideration by inter-ministerial committee.

Meanwhile most efforts, in particular that of the populations, are taken up by the immense cross-frontier issues which require answers urgently: the struggle against poverty, access to health and education for all , the status of women, democratic development and particularly local democracy, equality of rights and reconciliation commission for the prevention of serious violations of human rights, and the struggle against the various forms of fundamentalism...

The founding members of WMPA in Morocco have succeeded in raising awareness, around the WMPA, in quite a number of people, principally researchers plus some companion associations of mountain peoples. This initial support for the WMPA project is closely linked to the aim of setting up the Mediterranean WMPA together. Offering henceforth a base for one of the objectives taken on by the WMPA, namely to contribute to the construction of international solidarity (not just that of North-South, but also South-South and North-North), the Mediterranean WMPA represents one of the most innovative initiatives of the WMPA. To facilitate its setting up and to avoid such obstacles as the many conflicts that exist in the East, the founding members

in Morocco have suggested beginning with the setting up of West Mediterranean WMPA which would group together North Africa, and the neighbouring European countries such as Spain, France, Italy and Portugal. The pertinence of such a proposal can be seen when we look at the evolution of the Barcelona process and in how the current WMPA in the Mediterranean is made up, i.e. of members from the afore mentioned countries.

Within Morocco the current situation does not require a new organisation but a framework in which common aims and synergy can be played out by the different actors in the mountain community. Among them the traditional representatives of the mountain communities, who are considered by the local population as the most legitimate representatives, and merit special attention (along with a few "true elected members"). The whole WMPA is called up to persuade them to take up their roles, as defined in the WMPA statutes, and, in this way, reinforce the WMPA's first collegium.

ANDES AMERICA

In the Andes there are strong organisations (representing several million indigenous peoples) and multi secular organisations focusing on topics such as territory, resources, cultural identity and the sovereignty of peoples. The WMPA must support such organisations that are already active. And that is why in Bolivia, in October 2002 we held in Achocalla, the 1st Andes regional meeting which took place prior to Quito. The Andes have viewed the WMPA ever since as a means of expression, dialogue and vocalisation and a platform from which to defend community rights on a global level. Trans-national initiatives emerge from these foundation structures like AICO (Association of Indigenous Authorities in Colombia) between Colombia and Ecuador on the defense of the ecosystems under threat and between the Wayuu peoples of Colombia and Ecuador. To hold a continental meeting of the Andes and of the WMPA board would allow an exchange to take place on this project and would also give weight to the local initiatives driven by the peoples who are solidly organised and whose history transcends national frontiers.

ASIA

The Nepalese WMPA has registered its statutes and has, among its members, community representatives such as FECOFUN (*Fédération Népalaise des Groupes d'utilisateurs de la Forêt - Nepalese Federation of Forest Users*) that comprises 1000 representatives from local organisations.) and others who manage water, irrigation, energy, education and health.... They have held a meeting and begun to identify the most sensitive problems. After Ispoure, a concrete action plan was launched in the name of the WMPA by FECOFUN, in the form of a petition which resulted in a reduction in government tax on forest produce from 40 % to 15 %, and also to enable the local groups who manage the forest to benefit.

Nepal is prey to an armed insurrection maintained by the Maoists who demand one man from every household for their army and also demand a 50 % tax on all the produce. Even when the local population manages to loosen the governmental hold on local resources, the people are still left with the insurgents' demands to contend with. In Dailekh, 20,000 women and children have succeeded, thanks to their work over the last nine years, in standing up to the insurgents and in refusing to pay their tax and have even managed to chase the insurgents away. For these women and children, the real success, the truly positive result is here: the absence of all exterior power or administration has enabled them to organise themselves on a local level and to introduce a form of real, direct, participatory democracy, thanks to the smallness of the communities involved. For them it is proof that development should not depend so heavily on regional government but more on government by local population because the local population are seeped in the ancient tradition of organising and managing their own resources and their own territory.

In Hindoukouch to the west of the Himalayas, in Afghanistan (at 80% above 1000 m altitude), *Madera* (*Mission d'aide au développement des économies rurales en Afghanistan*) who has been participating in the WMPA since Chambéry, has seen the context evolve considerably over the last five years : after the fall of the Taliban, the Afghan state is in full reconstruction mode: President Karzai was elected with a strong turn out ; his government is in place, the legislative elections are in the Spring, followed, sometime later, by the local elections. But the promises of financial backing made by the international community have been too slow to materialize. Incidentally the growing of opium has taken off again. With devastating effect (rise in the cost of land, food producing crops abandoned, increased dependence on drug trafficking on the part of the local peasants...) and to eradicate it long term requires accompanying conditions which are not in place today, which shows how hard it is build a healthy rural economy quickly. Integrated development programmes are more necessary than ever (education, health, agriculture, livestock) and sadly difficult to achieve while NGOs and funding bodies function separately. *Madera* has been implementing operations backing rural development (civil engineering, agriculture, animal health, forestry, micro-credit) by trying to promote local development by means of the urgent actions that are always necessary in three zones of the country (in the East near the Pakistani border for the last eighteen years; in the centre, in Hazarajat, for the last ten years; and in the West, in the province of Ghor, for the last four years) financed by the international community in particular Europe and within Europe, France (<http://www.madera-asso.org>). These actions fall within the framework of regional programmes and are little by little being taken over by national policies such

as the NSP (National Solidarity Programme) : the population of the districts concerned are invited to elaborate priority investments (participative methods), to designate pilot committees that have the funding to act with the participation of the NGO or local businesses. *Madera* is an integral part of the WMPA charter and seeks partnerships between the Afghan territories, in which it is active, and other European regions or local governments, and endeavours to find and encourage Afghan organisations that are interested in making known the living conditions of their mountain peoples and their typical expectations vis-à-vis the international community.

From this point of view the role of the WMPA should not be one of launching their own actions. Their role is to support and motivate the local population's efforts to structure and manage their own development. In this way the Resource Centres Project enables mountain people, who are isolated and unable to access new information and technologies, to communicate with one another and to share their experience and skills and, through such an exchange, provide reciprocal information and training. The Foundation seems also to be an excellent way of collecting funds to help the local population to look after themselves. The many success stories of local management of national funds for water and irrigation, or electricity provide full justification for community management of such facilities. Lastly mountain people should receive some recompense for their service to the environment and their management of resources on the ground (water and forest). The action plan for a mountain label will not only promote survival but even create a means of survival for mountain people: tea, coffee, medicinal herbs etc.

EUROPE

In Europe local mountain communities have been structured for several years as organisations that act nationally (UNCCEM in Italy, ANEM in France) and at a European level (AEM). The Vice Chairman, Valerio Prignachi, reaffirms the enthusiasm and commitment of UNCCEM (Unione Nazionale Comuni Comunità Enti Montani), founding organisation of the WMPA, which represents all the Italian mountain communities. They have offered to hold a meeting at the beginning of January focusing on consultation and coordination to achieve better synergy between the founder organisations of the WMPA in the implementation of orientations and their funding. This meeting ought to bring new verve to the commitment of our European partners.

Switzerland, represented by a delegation from Canton du Valais, mentions that there is a mountain people group (called SAB) that they could envisage joining the WMPA in the future. The ability to convince and congregate greater numbers through the European organisation has, according to Vice-Chairman, Gabrielle Nanchen, to be achieved in compliance with the formal rules at statutory meetings.

There is discussion of a mountain section being set up within the Portuguese Municipal group which would allow for greater participation of the Portuguese in the WMPA in the future. If a WMPA meeting were to be hosted in Portugal, it would give weight to this project.

CONCLUSION : The calendar for 2005 should make room for the organisation of talk groups that could give additional support to local and regional initiatives by putting into place communication centres and relay hubs for their activities (setting up of a Mediterranean Region, follow up of activities in the Andes, Himalaya, Africa and Europe). The structuring of the network should be built up from the organisations that are both representative and legitimately established, but yet to be listed in detail. At their next board meeting, the WMPA should discuss methods of participation, communication and its internal organisation (the way it functions as an association on international level, reinforcement of both collegium 2 and 3, and how meetings are run) The consolidation of its activities requires special thought (capitalisation and transmission of initiatives, methodologies and forms of expression specific to peoples, recognition of mountain identity on a European level, work on the identity of the people along side the work on products and the project to label them).

4. FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS

Financial Year 2003: Treasurer, Jacques Larrochette, reports on Financial Year 2003 of the organisation. With proceeds totalling 249.000 Euros and expenses 103.000 Euros, a 146.000 Euros operating profit has enabled the organisation to cover 2002's operating loss of 90.234 Euros and 2001's operating loss of 46.011 Euros. 2003's net result is positive with 10.111 Euros. In order to fund its ordinary operations during 2003 and to cover its operating losses of 2001 and 2002, the organisation has received the following support: a subsidy of 30.500 Euros from the French Ministry of the Interior; a subsidy of 60.000 Euros from ANEM who, additionally, has waived their claim for reimbursement of their loan of 111.910 Euros to the organisation; a subsidy of 15.000 Euros from Fondation pour le Progrès de l'Homme. For the meeting in Ispoure in September 2003, the organisation received a financial support of 20.000 Euros from the Aquitaine Region and 8000 Euros from DATAR. The fees paid by the participants totalled 3.523 Euros. The Chairman emphasises that the setting up of the association generated significant costs and that it is debt free. Year 2003 accounts are approved unanimously.

Estimates for 2004: the budget will be balanced with a total of 238.000 Euros, the main revenues coming from subsidies from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior, as well as members' fees. After operating expenses (operating costs, travel costs, salaries, etc.) the operating result should total 20.000 Euros. The Treasurer emphasises that the association's own funds have become positive at the end of 2003 and that 2004 projected result will be balanced at about the same level as in 2003. However, the relatively low amount of such a result makes it imperative to pursue new sources of fundings with everybody's involvement.

Projections for 2005 : The Chairman reports on the current initiatives and receives unanimous approval from the board to pursue such initiatives with the objective to collect approximately 300.000 Euros for the 2005 budget – thus allowing the implementation of the programme adopted.

5. 2005 CALENDAR (2ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY & 1ST AFRICAN REGIONAL MEETING)

In 2005 the WMPA will hold, in Yaoundé, in the Cameroon, its 2nd General Assembly after Quito and the 1st African Regional Meeting, **according to the following provisional timetable (yet to be confirmed):**

- Sunday 11th December: Participants arrive.
- Monday 12th and Tuesday 13th December: 1st African Regional Meeting
- Wednesday 14th and Thursday 15th December: 2nd WMPA General Assembly
- Friday 16th and Saturday 17th December: A programme of organised visits
- Sunday 18th December: Participants leave.

Among the 39 African countries invited to the Africa conference there will be a dozen leading countries identified to further the thought process. Five participants per leading country will be involved at this preliminary stage (a representative from government on issues of decentralisation, two representatives from the local population, one elected and one non-elected, a technician/ researcher and a member representing the NGO).

Calendar:

- January: Constitution of a work group, which will comprise different partners, especially institutional, and will have the General Secretary at the centre. Recruitment of a group leader/ facilitator.
- February-April: Internet exchange forum on themes managed by the WMPA with the technical collaboration of Mountain Forum. Choices of topics and of participants through workshops lead by the leading countries.
- May-June: Preparatory meeting of fifteen or so people to finalise the methodology and work out the logistics.
- December: Meeting in the Cameroon.

Anticipated topics: decentralisation, management of natural resources, mountain agriculture, mountain typography and cartography.

Aims of the meeting:

- To set up a dynamic of national WMPA constitutions in the main African countries through mobilising the network of elected members and the NGOs whose census can be achieved with the assistance of the large networks who already have a base in Africa.
- To elaborate an action plan putting forward the specificity and diversity belonging to Africa. By increasing the visibility, partners already partly identified, will be encouraged to commit technical and financial aid.

The Cameroon delegation states having made contact with the appropriate authorities, which reveals the strength of their commitment and the political will to involve the local authorities towards international opening and cooperation. **However, because various institutions are under reconstruction due to the recent presidential elections, we will be hearing from other contacts over the following weeks as to their commitment.**

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1 - THE WMPA (THE WORLD MOUNTAIN PEOPLE ASSOCIATION): ORIGINS - PROJECT – PROGRAMME – ORGANISATION - RESOURCES

I – Origins. – The WMPA can be regarded as an expression, on a worldwide scale, of the multi-secular solidarity that exists between mountain people. Indeed, the mountains have a long tradition of solidarity. Without such inter-aid, mountain peoples would not have been able to survive and develop in their hostile and restricting environment. Solidarity was initially a feature of traditional mountain communities. As travel opportunities and visibility throughout the world developed, however, these communities became aware that other mountain areas were facing the same challenges as them and that it would be a good idea to meet, exchange ideas and work together to implement joint solutions. They also realised that their destiny was not merely in the hands of local authorities but that the decisions that affected the future of their areas were being taken at a national level. It was consequently imperative that they should play a role in this decision-making process. Finally, it became clear that decisions concerning mountain areas were not just crucial for the inhabitants themselves, but were also of the utmost importance for humanity as a whole, in light of the exceptional contribution made by these areas (nearly 35% of the surface area of all the continents and 15% of the world's population) to the environment, world culture and the economy. The mountain cause therefore had a universal dimension that required the intervention of the international community.

On the basis of these three observations, mountain populations started to introduce new forms of solidarity and organisations. These innovations initially saw the light of day in Europe's mountainous countries (Switzerland, Italy, France, etc.) where farmer's associations were first formed for mountain areas and then for regional districts (at a national level and then at a European level). This process then became global following the staging (on the initiative of the National Association of Elected Representatives of Mountain Areas and Chambery) of a World Mountain Forum in June 2000, which resulted a few months later in the birth of the WMPA (April 2001). The vocation of this new organisation was two-fold: to create a basis for co-operation and exchange between mountain territories for the sharing of knowledge and resources, and to introduce a tool that would form a platform for expression and international action in order to promote actions and policies designed to meet the new challenges faced by mountain areas.

II – Project. – In September 2002, the WMPA defined its project in Quito (in the heart of the Andes) in the form of a Charter for mountain populations throughout the world. The objectives and scope of this Charter were universal: to implement "fair and sustainable" development. 'Fair' for the inhabitants of mountain areas, which must: i) have access to the same civil rights, ii) retain control of their resources and the management of their area, iii) benefit fully from the fruit of the new showcasing policy, iv) be recognised for their true identity and the diversity of their cultures, v) enjoy a high level of independence in their actions and vi) benefit from a fair realignment of national resources. 'Sustainable' for the areas thanks to a policy to: i) diversify activities, ii) enhance the value of products, iii) control the usage of space, iv) protect agricultural and forestry activities, v) maintain biodiversity and vi) efficiently manage natural resources. Rapid development in these areas requires strong commitment on the part of the national administration and the international community, reinforced co-operation between mountain populations and permanent dialogue between the decision-makers and the representatives of the mountain populations. These are the major components of the project implemented by the WMPA.

III – action programmes. – The WMPA has formalised its two principal vocations via two action programmes: i) the sharing of knowledge and resources through exchange and co-operation, and ii) the association's role as the driving force behind new policies and actions to meet the new challenges faced by mountain areas.

- Action Programme N° 1: "Exchange and co-operation between mountain areas"

The implementing of this programme is underpinned by:

1-The introduction, within every mountainous country, of organisations that unite the mountain populations (based on the same model as the WMPA), capable of speaking and making commitments on behalf of these populations, and mobilising them to take part in different projects. Without these structures, measures could only be implemented on an occasional basis and they would be without any real impact.

2- The signing of partnership and exchange conventions between these organisations and their equivalents (European or other) in order to define the objectives, forms and terms of the co-operation (notably for the transfer of knowledge).

3- The staging, every two years, of a "Mountain Forum", with three principal components: a seminar, information and a platform for forming new partnerships, capable of creating or strengthening the exchange and co-operation dynamics between mountain areas during its preparation, implementation and extension phases.

In order to unite all the mountain partners concerned by the success of this enterprise, the creation of a "Centre for mountain co-operation and exchange" (supported by a Foundation) has been envisaged.

- Action programme N° 2: "New challenges, new partners and new tools"

This programme principally encompasses three main axes:

1- Making governments and international institutions aware of the stakes involved with mountain areas and the joint search for solutions to meet the new challenges faced by both the national administration and the international community vis-à-vis these mountain areas. One of the most important phases of this action will be the staging (in Paris) of an "Intergovernmental conference on mountain issues" in 2006. This will present the representatives of mountain populations with an opportunity to initiate dialogue with the representatives of the governments and international institutions.

2- The monitoring of the mountain situation at different levels (geopolitical, environmental, cultural, etc.) with a view to understanding and assessing developments in order to be able to implement corrective or preventive measures. The scheduled creation of a "International Mountain Research Institute" should provide a platform for centralising information and guiding initiatives and research.

3- The fine-tuning of policy, legislation and programme proposals adapted to mountain areas, on the basis of analyses of concrete situations and the evaluation of existing tools and their inadequacies (if any).

IV – Organisation. – The WMPA incorporates three categories of players: regional administrations and elected representatives, non-governmental organisations (NGO's) and researchers or experts. Thanks to this composition, it is capable of a very transversal approach to the different issues, by organising continuous dialogue between the representatives of the civil society (NGO's, scientists and experts) and the elected representatives and administrations or communities. This configuration offers four major advantages: regional representation, synergy of strengths and complementarity, mobilisation of an exceptional knowledge potential and access to the network of these different components, which guarantees a presence in numerous mountainous countries and areas.

The Bureau reflects the diversity of the WMPA's social and geographic components. Alongside the spokesmen of the founder associations of elected representatives, there is still plenty of room for the representatives of the mountain communities and administrations from all five continents, as well as the NGO's and qualified personalities. Jean Lassalle, the current chairman, is an elected representative for the Pyrenees (deputy for the 'Pyrénées Atlantiques' region). The organisation and introduction of structures based on the WMPA model has been committed to on a very widespread basis. The Quito meeting (in terms of both its preparation and its results) has provided a basis for a strong presence in Andean America. The holding of preparatory meetings in the Himalayas has also had an identical impact. Africa, where the WMPA's next AGM will be held and where (to coincide with this event) a meeting uniting Africa's mountain regions will be organised, represents one of the geographical priorities for 2004 and 2005.

V- RESOURCES. – During its first three years of existence (i.e. its launch phase) the WMPA was financed by the ANEM, the French public authorities, regional administrations and certain private partners. 2005 will be a transition year, which should see the introduction of more durable financing methods. Amongst these, it is important to underline the participation of the European members (administrations, associations and organisations, individuals etc), which should offer a means of dealing with the operational costs of the international structure and, notably, of drawing up programmes and proposals, and the organisation of community life, communication and information.

Other means need to be found for financing the two action programmes. Programme N° 1 (co-operation and exchange between mountain areas), which is designed to reinforce mountain solidarity, should also benefit from more generalised solidarity (that of a private Foundation, for example, on the initiative of the WMPA). Programme N°2 (new challenges, new partners and new tools), however, will target financing contracts with private or public institutions.

Project to create an International Foundation “For the equitable and sustainable development of mountain areas throughout the world”

The aim of this memo is to present the APMM Bureau with working proposals for the creation of an International Foundation. These proposals will cover the Foundation's object, vocation and financing requirements, and will form the basis of a model that can subsequently be presented to potentially interested partners.

I – A central objective: to promote the Charter for equitable and sustainable development of mountain areas.

The 500 mountain area representatives (from over 70 countries) that were present at the Quito World meeting of Mountain Populations, held in June 2002, adopted a Charter for the “equitable and sustainable development” of mountain areas. ‘Equitable’ for the inhabitants of mountain areas, which must: i) have access to the same civil rights, ii) retain control of their resources and the management of their area, iii) benefit fully from the fruit of the new showcasing policy, iv) be recognised for their true identity and the diversity of their cultures, v) enjoy a high level of independence in their actions and vi) benefit from a fair realignment of national resources. ‘Sustainable’ for mountain areas, thanks to a policy to: i) diversify activities, ii) enhance the value of products, iii) control the usage of space, iv) protect agricultural and forestry activities, v) maintain biodiversity and vi) efficiently manage natural resources. The process is, therefore, one of development, and one which must encompass every aspect of development, because this is the only way that success can be achieved in a mountain environment. This success also depends on the capacity of mountain areas to meet the expectations of both the populations concerned and the national and international community.

Those who participated at Quito created this new concept, which closely unites “equitability and sustainability”, because they held the view that no development could be sustainable if it were not equitable. As far as a large proportion of the planet is concerned (i.e. within developing or emerging countries), the concept of sustainable development alone seems to be largely inadequate. It only becomes acceptable if the concept of equitability is given equal priority.

At Quito, the APMM was assigned the task of promoting the implementation of this charter for equitable and sustainable development. This is an extremely ambitious objective, which demands the mobilisation of significant resources. The APMM consequently considers that it is important that this process should be boosted by civil society through the creation of a Foundation. Taking strength from the solidarity that exists between the populations of areas confronted by major development problems would seem to fit with the true vocation of a Foundation.

II – An essential assignment: to facilitate exchange and co-operation between mountain areas, and to help mountain populations organise themselves in order to implement the Charter.

The Foundation's principal assignment is to help the populations of the world's mountainous areas, who are often excluded or isolated, to become better organised so that they can find a way out of this isolation, broaden their perspectives, and exchange and co-operate with each other. For these populations, confronted with rapid changes to their economic and political environment and for whom it is imperative that innovative solutions are found on an ongoing basis, contact, exchange and co-operation with areas that are suffering (or have suffered) from the same problems represent three of the most crucial criteria for efficient progress.

In order to optimise the aid brought to these populations, the primary requirement is that they become organised at a national level. Once a structured, representative and democratic organisation is in place, a policy to generate exchange and to broaden contacts can be constructed, and full priority can be given to enriching these exchanges. The Foundation must therefore encourage the creation of this organisational approach. Once this platform has been built, the search for information and the sharing of knowledge with regard to development problems can be rationally organised. The Foundation will then be able to support the study and information assignments implemented by these organisations. It will also be able to support the organisation of mountain forums, which will represent the most effective opportunities for co-operation between mountain peoples and for dialogue with society.

1- Encouraging mountain peoples to organise themselves. The setting up of organised structures for mountain populations at a national level represents an extremely difficult, if not impossible, prospect without outside help within developing mountain countries. The representatives of the mountain communities in these areas are indeed suffering major problems in mobilising the financial resources necessary for paying for their travel, organising meetings, searching for information (and distributing it), carrying out analyses and drawing

up proposals; all of which are essential for the setting up and running of an organisation. The most difficult aspect of all, as everyone is aware, is finding the first Euro, the basis for starting up the machine. The second and third come more easily as, in the eyes of decision-makers and backers, receiving aid already represents recognition, which is even greater if it is international. The role of the Foundation is therefore to provide a start-up grant, which is easy to mobilise and use. In return for this, there is an obligation to produce results (and not resources). One of these results must be the representation and development of a national project for mountain development that is in line with the Charter. The average amount for this grant could be 20,000 Euros per country.

2- Providing backing for study and information assignments. These assignments have two objectives. The first is to search for information concerning the mountain-related problems endured by the issuing country (which initially requires in-depth preparation work) and, in return, the release and broad circulation of this information. The second objective is the setting up, within the country(ies) visited, of a network of contacts and, subsequently, ongoing and regular exchanges via this network. This means that the partner of the country concerned must be a mountain population organisation capable of mobilising networks (convention models will be drawn up by the APMM). In more general terms, the efficiency of these meetings (and the trips made) will be significantly increased if the organisations belong to the APMM's network, and are consequently required to re-distribute the information concerned and link up the organisations belonging to this worldwide, "mountain solidarity" network (North-South and South-South). Depending on the project (and according to these conditions), the Foundation could grant aid in the form of 20,000 Euros per assignment.

3- Supporting the organisation of mountain forums. These forums have several objectives. The first is to draw up regular progress reports on issues related to mountain development and, in order to do this, to bring researchers and local players into direct contact. The second is to produce periodical summaries of the situation in mountain areas and the policies or measures being carried out there. The third objective is to initiate dialogue with decision-makers, governments and international institutions. The fourth is to bring those companies or organisations likely to form partnerships into contact with each other. The fifth is to promote awareness of the most innovative approaches and initiatives. It is a case, in fact, of offering mountain areas, through these forums, the possibility of organising what well-organised sectors of society already do on a frequent basis: a check-point, refresher courses for the members of the community on information and techniques, and encouragement to form partnerships. These pivotal events will consequently form a platform (via their preparation, implementation and extensions) for creating new bonds, initiating the dynamics of co-operation and passing on knowledge. The Foundation's contribution to the organisation of a biennial Forum would be 300,000 Euros.

These three approaches (i.e. organisation at a national level, study and information assignments and forums) will be of high educational and training value if they are well prepared and managed, and they will have a major impact on the entire environment if they are well organised and if information is efficiently distributed. The interventions that accompany them should be considered as levers for mobilising other financing. In no way should they be considered as substitutes for the existing aids. These donations should not be considered as humanitarian contributions but rather as aid with initiating sustainable development. Their capacity to mobilise (or the cost/efficiency ratio) will be high, if one considers that 35 % of the planet's surface area is concerned, along with 10 % of the world's population in over 120 countries.

III – Financing requirements. In order to be able to carry out these three assignments, the Foundation will require annual financing of 650,000 Euros, if it is to be able to cover three quarters of the developing mountain countries:

- Programme 1: 20,000 Euros x 8 countries on average per year	= 160,000
- Programme 2: 20,000 Euros x 8 countries on average per year	= 160,000
- Programme 3: 150,000 Euros per year	= 150,000
- Technical support with the implementing of the programmes	= 100,000
- Annual operating costs	= 80,000

Once these guidelines for the Foundation's objectives, assignments and financing modes have been formally drawn up by Bureau, companies or other partners will be approached in order to mobilise the financing. A reasonable period of one year must be envisaged for creating the Foundation (providing the necessary partners are found). As the Foundation's vocation will not include managing these programmes from a technical stand-point, the creation of a "Centre for mountain exchange and co-operation" might be envisaged.

An intergovernmental conference on mountain areas to be held in paris in 2006

The APMM's executive Bureau has made contact with the French government with the suggestion that it should take the initiative of organising an "intergovernmental conference on mountain areas" (at ministerial level). The Bureau is keen that governments are made more aware (through a direct approach) of the issues at stake within mountain environments and that solutions should be found on a joint basis for implementation on a regional, national and international basis. The relevant international organisations would of course be invited to participate in these debates and in the decision-making process. The Conference would be concluded with a joint declaration, which would express the guidelines concerning the measures to be adopted by the community of States vis-à-vis these regions. This declaration would consequently form the basis of (and a commitment to) a charter for the sustainable and equitable development of mountain environments.

The response by the French government with regard to this request has been positive. Indeed, it was suggested that a proposal should be made to the government concerning the contents and the expected results before providing a definitive response. The APMM has expressed that it would like to see the government urgently consult the States concerned, and its partners within the European Union, with regard to the utility of this initiative. The objective of this memo is therefore to specify the conditions governing this conference.

I - Context – The APMM's initiative comes two years after the international year of the mountain and its featured events, notably the High Summit, the Brussels Seminar, the Summit of Johannesburg, the Quito Meeting and the Summit of Bichkek. These events represented the first steps towards making governments directly aware of the issues at stake. The conference should be considered as a continuation of these events and it should offer a platform for ministers representing their governments to discuss the most important mountain issues with their counterparts and to reach, in conjunction with the international institutions, joint solutions to the challenges faced by mountain environments in the 21st century.

II – Problems – Such an initiative can above all be justified by the developments being seen in mountain areas. Throughout most of the entire planet, these regions are being threatened by several mortal dangers: on the one hand: population losses, migrations, exoduses, over-population of urban zones and rapid de-structuring of societies, and, on the other hand: increasingly intensive usage of the available natural resources, costly attempts to find solutions vis-à-vis the competition now being faced (which these regions cannot sustain) and the usage of dangerous products. These situations are creating an increasing number of conflicts for the appropriation of resources or territories, control over products, the maintaining of identities and autonomies, access to the same places etc. These mountain regions are (or will be) nevertheless capable of offering humanity, society and our contemporaries some of the most currently (or future) sought-after assets: natural resources, water, biodiversity, landscapes, areas of freedom, products of quality, 'art de vivre', values of solidarity, cultures, traditions, etc. Governments and populations must therefore set themselves the objective – ambitious though it may be – to control all aspects of the development of these mountain environments in order to create sustainable and equitable development.

III - The conference's concept – The inter-governmental Conference must initiate genuine dialogue between governments and the mountain populations' representatives, with a view to forming, on a progressive basis, effective partnerships in each country so as to be able to "manage" mountain issues. It would be infinitely preferable that the guidelines governing the future of these mountain areas are defined on a joint basis. The Conference must therefore act as the forerunner to this dialogue, which does not mean, however, that responsibilities should be confused. Mountain populations are being confronted by considerable restraints, and it is clear that solutions cannot be arrived at (and even less so implemented) without the input of those concerned. Dialogue is the only way to reach these solutions. It is therefore proposed that the representatives of the mountain populations should be able to express themselves freely on the principal questions submitted to the inter-governmental Conference, that they are involved in its preparation and that the hierarchy upstream of their representatives should be consulted prior to the final declaration.

IV – Contents and themes – The theme proposed could be: "The future of the mountains, a crucial issue for the planet" – For an international charter for mountain environments –"

If the political objective chosen is indeed the one outlined above, i.e. controlled development of the mountain environment, such an objective can clearly only be attained through powerful input on the part of the public administration. The future of the mountains will initially be decided on in the national arena, before moving on to the international stage, but it should not be forgotten that mountains are also a "regional" phenomenon, since massifs often cross official border lines. In light of this factor, three items should initially be proposed for

debate at the conference according to the responsibilities in question: the mountain environment as part of the nation, the mountain environment as part of regional, trans-national groupings and, finally, the mountain environment as part of the international community. The issues at stake for each of these questions will be those best suited to being solved at this level.

1- The mountain environment as part of the nation:

- a. The populations: Recognition of rights, respect for identities, integration of minorities into the democratic process (and their access to civil rights) and reinforcement of autonomies
- b. The economy: Maintaining and modernisation of agricultural and forestry activities, structural policies vis-à-vis land issues, a showcasing of mountain products (quality, specific characteristics, protection etc), diversification of the economy, and finally, development and management of tourism by the mountain populations
- c. The regions: a quest for equal opportunities in the face of development, access to services, regional realignments and policies for improving the region
- d. Natural resources and the area itself: concerted management of strategic resources, the impact locally of improving these resources, control over usage of the areas themselves and maintenance of biodiversity,
- e. Summary and evaluation of the policies implemented in these different areas

2- The mountain environment as part of regional groupings:

- a. Mountains representing borders and obstacles: the securing of border regions and the freedom to come and go, co-operation for the crossing of massifs and the quest for appropriate infrastructures,
- b. Mountains and border resources: the international co-operative management of water and catchment basins, the networking of areas and the maintenance of biodiversity within the massifs,
- c. Mountains as a cultural, ethnic and historic border area: intergovernmental and international recognition of ethnic and cultural entities,
- d. Summary and evaluation of the international conventions existing in these different areas

3- The mountain environment as part of the international community:

- a. The role played by mountains in conflicts: how mountain peoples express themselves from an international standpoint; integration into arbitration or mediation procedures,
- b. The role played by mountains in world culture: the maintaining of living and authentic mountain cultures in order to meet the new challenges facing mountain societies,
- c. The mountains as part of the biosphere: the creation of an international programme specifically supporting the mountain environment in order to maintain and renew strategic natural resources
- d. The mountains as part of the world economy: the adaptation of the WTO's regulations to the constraints of a mountain economy (>regulation, support for activities, encouragement to achieve quality, quality labels, geographical indications etc) and the creation of specific programmes to support development,
- e. Summary and evaluation of the international programmes underway in these different areas

V – Conclusions – Follow-ups -

1- The Conference will finish with a "Final declaration", which will present the conclusions arrived at by the participants for each of the issues discussed above. With this declaration, the governments and institutions represented will be requested to implement these policies, and to commit energy and resources to making them a reality.

2- For most of the countries concerned, the implementing of these policies will require a marked effort by the national administration, together with reinforced outside aid tailored to the requirements of mountain areas (both these factors are indeed linked). A request will therefore be made to reinforce the bilateral and multilateral partnerships with these countries through greater involvement and a re-directing of resources.

3- A group of countries will be assigned the task of preparing an international charter for the mountains, which will give increased strength and legitimacy to this approach, whilst at the same time specifying the contents of the strategies and commitments.

4- The feasibility of "an international mountain research centre", proposed by the APMM, will be submitted for appraisal (under the responsibility of the APMM).

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