

**"Implementation Plan for the World Summit on Sustainable Development" in
Johannesburg**

(Conditions of sustainable and equitable development of mountain regions)

Art 40. The States and the international community should attach the greatest importance to the future of mountain territories particularly because of strong inequalities or discrimination from which their people suffer, the vulnerability of the ecosystems and natural resources, the threats weighing on mountain cultures, traditions and societies.

The States and the international community are invited to define the objectives and means of policies, actions or programmes with the representatives of these territories, so that they acquire greater empowerment over their future. These should reconcile three inseparable requirements of equitable and sustainable development of these territories: economic and social development that could rapidly reduce inequalities, maintenance of the high quality of the mountain environment, its area and natural resources, ensuring continuity of local identity and cultures.

To ensure simultaneous fulfilment of these three requirements, the following actions should be implemented in a simultaneous and coordinated fashion :

1-Encouraging the evolution of the mountain economy towards diversification of activities and development of products and services with high value added that could make up for low productivity and reduce pressure on natural resources; for this purpose, provide direct support to the development of these activities by setting up regulatory, support and market access schemes and compensation of environmental service to enable them to deploy these activities successfully.

2-Adapting the organization, operating methods and means of financing of services and facilities to the characteristics of these territories so that the population can have full access to them while ensuring their good environmental integration.

3- Respecting the rights of the populations on their territories and, insofar as necessary, democratically defining the rules for good spatial management and the use of natural resources in a concerted way with these populations, who should remain the real managers of their territories with all the responsibilities that are associated with that mission.

4- Recognizing the cultures, traditions and identities of mountain peoples, in their originality and their wealth, as a privileged means of ensuring the continuity of their contribution to knowledge and understanding of the mountain environment and maintaining the cohesion of local societies.

5- Reinforcing the responsibilities and capacity of action of mountain organizations in the fields of management of the territory, impetus of economic development, implementation of services, integration of basic communities and minorities, so that these peoples can truly take their future in hand by means of these organizations, and define their path to development themselves.