Participants:

Antonio Ciaschi - IMONT (Italian National Mountain Institute)
Bruno Cavini - UNCEM (National Union of Mountain Communities, Municipalities and Institutions)
M. Teresa Pellicori - UNCEM Press Office
Lino Zani - Italian Foundation for Mountains
Paolo Angelini - Italian Ministry of the Environment and Land Protection
Domenico Mastrogiovanni - Euromontana Italia
Ewa Westman - IDLO (International Development Law Organization)
Giulio Zanetti - IDLO
Douglas McGuire - Interim Secretariat for the Mountain Partnership
Rosalaura Romeo - Interim Secretariat for the Mountain Partnership
Peter De Brine - Interim Secretariat for the Mountain Partnership
Luisa Guarneri - Interim Secretariat for the Mountain Partnership

This meeting with Italian representatives of the Policy and Law Initiative of the Mountain Partnership was organized to identify means and areas in which Italian experience in the field of regulations and legislation regarding the protection of mountain areas could be shared with other members of this Initiative.

With the definition of 12 Partnership Initiatives (seven of which are thematic and five geographic), the Mountain Partnership has entered its operational phase. This meeting was the first of a series of meetings for those Partnership members who had offered to assume a leading role within the scope of the various Initiatives. The outcomes of the meeting will be circulated among other members of the Policy and Law Initiative in order to prepare a document to be presented at the Second Global Meeting of the Mountain Partnership, or the ‘Cusco Conference’, which will be held in Cusco, Peru at the end of October this year.
Paolo Angelini, from the Italian Ministry of Environment, underlined Italy’s role in the field of sustainable development and partnership. Such efforts had culminated in the development of the Alpine Convention which focuses on cooperation in cross-border mountain areas. He stressed the economic importance of the so-called “Alpine doughnut” at the heart of Europe, i.e. the area of the EU with the highest gross domestic product (GDP). The Italian Ministry of the Environment is working together with UNEP on the Carpathian Convention. Such work involves a definition of the area’s borders, a legislative audit, the issuing of guidelines for the implementation of the Convention and a decision over a permanent secretariat for it.

Main points identified by Mr. Angelini:

• The need for cross-border legislation and international agreements to regulate and manage mountain areas shared by several countries, in order to coordinate national interests that may be at odds.
• The need to decentralize knowledge.
• The example of the Mont Blanc area where three different regions have joined together to manage 8 million euros, a sizeable amount of money. This model could be exported.

Antonio Ciaschi, the director of the Italian National Mountain Institute (IMONT), briefly presented his institute’s areas of work, which are defined as “planning research”, and give priority to the knowledge of local areas and international activities. The Institute has worked at an observatory for Mediterranean mountain areas and conducted a study of Italian mountain areas and their depopulation, a cultural as well as an economic problem. IMONT is currently working on creating a database for the study of glaciers and their possible repercussions on the atmosphere and pollution, and on multi-purpose services to be offered to mountain communities. The Institute has a widespread presence across Italy, including the Alps, the Apennines and Italian islands and is launching a study on mountain food and handicraft products. When speaking of the development of mountain areas, a distinction must be made between developed and developing countries. What is good for the former is not necessarily good for the latter. For example, agricultural development is not necessarily a priority in the Alpine chain. A kind of methodological grid should
be imagined, in which the various geographical areas are asked to fill in their specific requirements.

Main points identified by Mr Ciaschi:

- Mountain areas have a wealth of resources to offer. A common point of reference could be the need for regulations regarding the management of these resources, so that their benefits remain in the hands of mountain populations.
- Knowledge of the various geographical areas and their specific requirements should be acquired.

Giulio Zanetti of the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) briefly presented IDLO’s mission: the promotion of law in developing countries, including environmental law. This work of IDLO could contribute to the Mountain Partnership by providing international support in legal expertise with respect to mountain legislation. IDLO is a network of more than 14,000 lawyers, who have often been requested by governments to collaborate in the development of constitutions and laws. These IDLO members have a great deal of experience in legal training, including distance learning. Legal support at international level for drawing up legislation and regulations regarding protection of mountain areas.

In this respect, the FAO Legal Office (LEGN), whose representatives were unable to attend the meeting, has expressed its willingness to contribute data and knowledge regarding renewable natural resources legislation. In particular, FAO-LEGN has offered expertise relating to the development of legislation and regulations acquired via its institutional activity of gathering and disseminating information and legislation, and technical assistance to FAO member countries in legislative matters.

Lino Zani referred to the recent establishment of the Italian Foundation for Mountains, of which he is president. Unlike IMONT which is involved in research, this foundation will mainly deal with communications and awareness-raising.

Bruno Cavini spoke briefly about the National Union of Mountain Communities, Municipalities and Institutions (UNCEM), the Italian national association that brings together local mountain bodies
and represents their legislative and trade union issues. The problem of governance for mountain areas has aroused great interest, including at international level. The possibility of exporting the (exclusively Italian) UNCEM model elsewhere was discussed. UNCEM is currently involved in developing an European Mountain Charter Developing the capacity to have specific impacts on governments’ political choices.

Mr Cavini’s main point:
- The need for government incentives regarding repopulation of mountain areas.

Maria Teresa Pellicori, also from UNCEM, proposed beginning to identify concerns and priorities via a questionnaire that could be followed by a screening of existing national and international laws and policies regarding mountain areas.

Domenico Mastrogiovanni briefly explained the work of Euromontana, which he defined as a lobby organization for European mountain areas. Euromontana is present throughout Europe including beyond EU borders, and is highly diversified. It has around 50 member organizations. Their current project, which led to the Cordoba Conference in June 2004, deals with high-quality mountain food products. The aim is to exert pressure on the European Parliament and the European Commission in Brussels. Lobby central governments to implement mountain policies. Identify the areas in most need of initiatives in order to try and understand whether it is legislative instruments or their application that are required.

Main points identified by Mr Mastrogiovanni:
- Analysis of existing international agreements (on sustainable development, biodiversity, climate change, desertification and renewable sources of energy), to determine whether regulations and legislation exist regarding their implementation in specific mountain situations.
- On the basis of the exceptional generation of interest arising from the International Year of Mountains 2002 (IYM), need to determine how national committees established during that year were mobilized.
• Correct use of primary resources. Any legislation should ensure that populations are respected.
• Capitalize on examples of good practice that have led to positive outcomes. This element is common to both the EU and Africa.

**Conclusions:** Thanks to the presence of numerous organizations that deal with mountain development, Italy has much to offer other members of the Mountain Partnership, especially those who have joined the Policy and Law Initiative. The challenges are to identify action priorities and the most suitable mechanisms in which to export Italian experience.

One possible mechanism would be to organize a workshop or training session for member countries of the Mountain Partnership, in which development models would be presented at the national and regional level. Such an event would rely on the experiences of UNCEM, IMONT and the Mountain Foundation for experiences at the national level, and use the experiences of the Alpine Convention and Euromontana as regional models. Recent laws regarding the development of mountain areas could form an integral part of this pilot course. Given its wide experience in the field of training, IDLO could be responsible for the organizational aspects.

At the same time, a strategy could be developed for more in-depth gathering of information on existing policies and legislation regarding mountain areas at the global level. This could be facilitated by IDLO which, thanks to its network, is present in a great number of countries. The computerized legislative database, FAOLEX, which is managed by the FAO-LEGN, could also make a worthwhile contribution in this respect. The Mountain Forum could also contribute to this process of compiling information, which should also analyze the state of implementation of United Nations conventions regarding mountain areas.

**Forthcoming activities:**
• Preparation of a short document (workplan) regarding immediate actions, to be first submitted to participants of the
meeting and then to all members of the Policy and Law Initiative.

- Preparation of a project proposal containing the actions identified and the inputs received from all the members of the Policy and Law Initiative.
- Discussion of the proposal during the next meeting of members of the Policy and Law Initiative, to be held at the Cusco Conference.
- Finalization of the proposal and fundraising for its implementation.