

Workshop 4

Mountains and research

Some key issues

- Representation of mountain areas:
 - ‘handicapped’ or ‘privileged’?
- Diversity / heterogeneity
 - Between & within mountains
- How specific are mountains compared to other regions?

Recent / ongoing research

- National (CH, A, D, Sw, N, F)
- EU: Framework RTD programmes, DGs, Interreg
 - Natural science priority
 - Socio-econ research more scattered
 - Few comparative studies (between ranges, mountain vs. non-mountain)
 - Action-oriented research difficult to implement

Mountain Partnership

Objectives from Cusco meeting

- Wider dissemination of knowledge
 - Research activities, organisations, funding
 - E-consultation
- Consultative process
 - 1st set of priorities
 - issues assessment (MRI)

Involvement of stakeholders

Transdisciplinary research

- desirable and increasingly required by funders, but
 - budgets and time allotted often insufficient
 - often difficult to engage with local community; mostly with activists
 - not all kinds of research suitable for involvement of stakeholders

Dissemination of research outcomes

- few resources to ensure dissemination after projects are complete
- often difficult to communicate results to user groups
- invite researchers to future Euromontana conferences, but to address issues together with stakeholders, policymakers, etc.
- publish key papers on Euromontana website?

Research issues (1)

Mountains provide diverse services to mountain and wider populations

- altitudinal linkages between land uses over seasons
- multifunctional land uses
- mountain-lowland linkages
- how to evaluate these and communicate the resulting values to inform policy development

Research issues (2)

Need for comparisons of mountain & non-mountain areas

- economies, employment (esp. pluri-activity)
 - differences between functional and jurisdictional boundaries
 - functional linkages between mountains and surrounding areas; mountains are not isolated

Research issues (3)

- Building social capital
 - institutions and best practice
- Information and communications technologies
 - constraints and potential benefits
- Global changes influencing mountain areas
 - climate change, water

Education / training

EU Research Training Network?

- BOKU, Austria (forests)
- Clermont Ferrand, France (middle mountains)
- UHI, Scotland (online MSc)
 - link into European Master's degree?