

Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Region (SNC-mt)

Memorandum of the establishment of the SNC-mt

The Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Region (hereinafter: “SNC-mt”) is organized¹ as an open network of researchers and other stakeholders interested in disciplinary, interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research and collaboration, building research capacity in the Caucasus region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Russian Federation, Turkey) and linking research to the needs of sustainable development and environmental protection in the region.

The Network strongly relies on the input and participation of all its members and further benefits from the experiences from other mountain regions and networks such as the “International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps” (ISCAR), the “Science for the Carpathians” (S4C), “South Eastern European Mountain Research Network” (SEEmore) and the “Mountain Research Initiative” (MRI). To further develop the Network, a Scientific Steering Group (consisting of the members of the Informal Ad Hoc Working Group established on the basis of the Tbilisi Joint Declaration, 29 May 2013) has been established in Tbilisi on 29 November 2013.

1. Aims and objectives

a. The Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Region (SNC-mt) addresses research relevant to the sustainable mountain development in the Caucasus, a unique region with a rich natural and cultural heritage. Among the main topics currently identified for the Caucasus region are *inter alia*: Conservation and management of biological and landscape diversity, ecosystem services, spatial development, demographics, socio-economic development, water resources, forestry, land use and management, agriculture, transport and infrastructure, (eco)tourism, energy, cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, climate change, extractive industries and waste management.

The aims and objectives of the Network are the following:

- to promote research collaboration that generates knowledge on mountains to support sustainable development;
- to promote the development of a comprehensive research strategy for the Caucasus Mountain Region;
- to strengthen research capacities and to make the Caucasus more prominent in the European and global context;
- to exchange knowledge and share best practices within the Caucasus and with other mountain regions;
- to strengthen the nexus between science, practitioners and decision-makers.

2. Scientific Steering Group

- a. The Network is guided by a Scientific Steering Group (SSG).
- b. The SSG provides scientific guidance to, and oversees the further development of the Network and represents the Network.

¹ The Network follows the initiative “Towards a scientific network in the Caucasus mountain region” by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG) and University of Geneva (UniGE).

c. The SSG elaborates its organizational setup, oversees bodies of the Network such as the Coordination Unit and Thematic Working Groups (TWGs), as well as defines procedures of membership in the Network.

d. The SSG is comprised of two persons per country from the wider Caucasus region, representing research and practice in the Caucasus Mountain Region.

3. Coordination Unit

The Coordination Unit is formed by the SSG. The Coordination Unit supports the SSG and is responsible for the day-to-day operation and for the further development of the Network.

4. Thematic Working Groups

TWGs representing various research fields relevant to the Caucasus region can be pursued by the SSG.

5. Forum Caucasicum

The SCN-mt promotes the periodic organization of a Forum Caucasicum for scientists, practitioners and policy-makers interested in research and sustainable development in the Caucasus Mountain Region. The objectives of the Forum are to share scientific findings as well as to link science, practice and policy in support of sustainable development in the Caucasus Mountain Region.

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Declared by the

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