

## **UIMF participated at the Mountain Partnership activities at HLPF 2018**



Mountain Partnership  
Partenariat de la montagne  
Alianza para las Montañas

On July 16, 2018, during the first days of attending the High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development of the United Nations (UN), members of Utah Valley University (UVU) delegation had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Grammenos Mastrojeni, the chair of the Steering Committee of the Mountain Partnership (MP) and representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy as well as Mr. Grussi, from the MP who accompanied Mr. Mastrojeni. The MP is a voluntary alliance of institutions from around the world, who are jointly promote the UN agenda of sustainable mountain development. I knew from my class on Globalization and SMD that the MP was created in 2002 under the auspice of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO-UN) which is headquartered in Rome, Italy. This time, my peers and I had a great opportunity to meet with officials of MP face to face and introduce ourselves.

The intent of the meeting was to discuss the potential for future growing relationships between UVU and the MP. UVU joined MP in 2006 and was active since that time to spread a word about the importance of SMD agenda in the State of Utah and North America. At the beginning of the meeting Mr. Mastrojeni shared his vision about the importance of the role of civil society in developing mountain policies and goals. We agreed that mountains have largely escaped out of the focus of the UN attention though much science exists and is very clear that mountains are the most susceptible to unsustainable development the policymakers involved haven't recognized mountains to their full extent. We discussed that the way forward in discussing sustainable mountain development. It rings true that policymakers respond to voters and that if voters don't know the issues, then there will be no movement from policymakers. Mr. Mastrojeni stated that things will move if society puts mountains as a priority. He stated that the way in which UVU can assist the MP comes through participating in a system of interconnected universities within the United States that are each focused on SMD. Mr. Mastrojeni explained that he would be willing to use his position within the MP and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to help us to create those bridges between UVU and other universities across the world. He said that as we

create this bridge that we should focus on assisting the MP in finding a way to help with effective use of social media, including, for example, the Twitter amplification of mountainous messages. He emphasized again that by using the complex and multifaceted world of social media, all of us, who care about mountains, will be able to amplify the message of ensuring sustainable development to mountain communities. He said that as we work within this principle we will be able to further the important message of sustainable development through contacting all members and amplifying our message until it resonates with civil society and translate into actionable policy change by policymakers. From our side, our adviser, Dr. Abdrisaev mentioned that recent video about importance of the mountain featuring Mr. Mastrojeni posted on the blog of Leonardo Di Caprio is one of the very good examples for us at UVU to follow. We informed officials from the MP about UIMF activities at HLPF 2018: meetings with Permanent Representatives of several mountain nations accredited at the UN, about written statement of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences and UIMF which highlighted mountain targets and how UVU student engaged learning model advocates for SMD since 2006. We also presented a folder to both MP officials with documents which UVU delegation will present during HLPF 2018 including the final version of the oral statement scheduled for presentation during general debates at HLPF on July 19, 2018. At the end of the meeting we presented to Mr. Mastrojeni couple of souvenirs symbolizing Utah and UVU. We also invited him to visit Utah and he agreed to do that very soon. The meeting was a very productive conversation that fostered a great connection and relationship with the MP.



*Andrew Jensen, Sam Elzinga, and Damon Ashcraft take a picture with Silvia Calvó Armengal, the Minister of Enviroments, Agriculture, and Sustainability for Andorra*

In the evening of the same day, July 16, 2018, our entire delegation attended the side event, titled “Mountains and the 2030 Agenda”, and hosted by the Government of Andorra under the initiative of the MP Secretariat. It was chaired by Mr. Mastrojeni, who was joined at the panel by Silvia Calvó Armengal, the Minister of Enviroments, Agriculture, and Sustainability for Andorra who presented on Andorra’s Voluntary National Review and current goals; René Castro, the Assistant Director General of the FAO who presented: Setting the stage – the Framework for Action for Mountains and the Agenda 2030; Mr. Alejandro Verdier the Deputy Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations, Mr. Jorge Iglesias the Deputy Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, and Mr. Christopher I. Lang who is an adviser for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) all presented: Implementing the Framework for Action; Giorgio Grussu who is part of the Mountain Partnership Secretariat within the FAO who presented: Why mountains matter in SDG 15 and tracking progress on SDG 15.4 The Mountain Green Cover Index; Yako Watanabe who is the Global Manager for the UNDP GEF SGP who presented: The achievements and milestones in implementing 6 key SDGs: Outcomes of Government – Civil Societies dialogues in select mountain countries; and finally Grammenos Mastrojeni from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chair of the Mountain Partnership Steering Committee who presented: The way ahead: Building a political alliance within the MP.



*Dr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, UIMF adviser addresses the attendees of the side event on mountains at the High-Level Political Forum 2018*

I am confident, that through such joint efforts MP members, and UV included will be able to raise an awareness at the UN level as well about the importance of the implementation of three mountain targets as a path to ensuring the sustainable future for the mountain communities worldwide. I am happy that our delegation contributed own efforts in achieving that goal at different ECOSOC forums during 2018.

*Andrew Jensen, President Model UN Club at UVU*