



ADAPTATION AT ALTITUDE

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Taking Action in the Mountains

Inter- and transdisciplinary mountain data in the Caucasus: Identifying user requirements and access preferences

*A joint GEO Mountains, Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain
Region, & University of Geneva / GRID-Geneva Workshop*



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Key Words: *mountain observations and data; interdisciplinary, in situ; remote sensing; GEO Mountains; information gaps*

Abstract:

GEO Mountains is an Initiative of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and one of several partner organisations involved in Adaptation at Altitude – a global programme funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

This workshop addressed GEO Mountains' first objective: to identify the needs of diverse users of data and information pertaining to global mountain environments and, as far as possible, satisfy these needs by making relevant data freely discoverable, accessible, and usable. To optimize our activities in this regard, it is necessary for us to understand as fully as possible, in the Caucasian context:

1. What requirements or wishes users of mountain data might have with respect to (an) online database(s)/portal(s) through which mountain data will be searchable and made available?
2. Which organizations and institutions are major providers of relevant data? and;
3. What are the major gaps experienced by users with respect to the discoverability, accessibility, and usability of the datasets themselves?

The workshop provided an excellent opportunity to discuss other related challenges and learn from the experiences of relevant actors in the region, expand our data and resource inventories with contributions from the region, and identify collaborations and exchanges that support the overlapping objectives of the MRI, GEO Mountains, and the Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Region (SNC-mt, coordinated by Sustainable Caucasus).

In line with scope of Adaptation at Altitude, specific emphasis was placed on data related to climate change drivers, processes, impacts, and adaptation in the region, but other topics and corresponding types of data and information were also discussed.

Agenda:

<i>Welcome and introductions</i>	MRI, GEO Mountains, & SNC-mt
<i>Earth Observations in support of the Caucasus Regional Research Agenda 2020-2030 – The state of play</i>	Mamuka Gvilava, GIS & RS Consulting Center GeoGraphic
<i>Climate Indices results in the Lesser Caucasus</i>	Serhat Şensoy, Turkish State Meteorological Service
<i>A brief look at the GEO Mountains and UNEP-GRID data inventories</i>	James Thornton, MRI & GEO Mountains & Yaniss Guigoz, UNEP-GRID
<i>Open discussion of the questions</i>	All
<i>Make a start on the survey</i>	All
<i>Wrap-up</i>	All

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Key points from discussion:

- Data coverage in the region remains somewhat lacking in certain regards, both spatially and temporally. For instance, most data sources are relatively recent, with many gaps over the last few decades, and many datasets are only available in aggregated formats.
- Key knowledge gaps identified relate to energy, natural hazards, water, and waste management.
- Transboundary approaches are important, in particular for hydrological observations at catchment level, linking upper and low-lying areas.
- Countries are making efforts to share data, despite bureaucratic barriers to doing so.
- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) could play a critical role in promoting regional data exchange.

Outputs:

Data collection for the regional data needs survey, [Inter- and transdisciplinary mountain data in the Caucasus Identifying user requirements and access preferences](#), is ongoing. Survey results will be appended in due course.

News articles on the [GEO Mountains](#) and [MRI](#) websites describe the workshop in greater detail.

A recording of the workshop is available on request. Please contact geomountains@mountainresearchinitiative.org.