QUESTIONNAIRE TO UN AGENCIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING RAUN RESEARCH FOR 2017-2018.

Please answer the following questions as comprehensively as feasible to allow for clarity. Your information will help us ensure that a relevant research topic is formulated and a quality research project is conducted.

1. What research **topic** are you interested in? Please describe the research field and problem set that you want to be analyzed. (This can be an issue your organization plans to work on or is already working on.)

Topic: Women and Sustainable Development

Gender inequality is one of the most pervasive threats to sustainable development. It has negative impacts on access to, use of and control over a wide range of resources, and on

the ability to meet human rights obligations with respect to enjoyment – by women and men – of a clean, safe, healthy and sustainable environment.

As household managers, women play a critical role in sustaining and managing important environmental resources, with a rich bank of distinctive skills and knowledge. However, they are often more vulnerable and disproportionately affected by the environmental consequences of climate change and natural resource degradation.

Mountain people rank among the most deprived sectors of the world's population, and yet it is well recognized that their stewardship of mountain natural resources is closely linked to the sustainability of life in lowland areas. What has received less attention, however, is the dominant role that women in these mountain areas play in natural resource management, agricultural production and the well-being and very survival of mountain families, including children. In mountain regions, women, as a class, are generally more undernourished, more undercompensated for their labour and more underrepresented in formal decision-making bodies than men.

Achieving sustainable development in mountain areas will require to confront and transform the condition of women, and to continue down a path toward gender equality.

There are very few data on the situation of mountain women, or of gender relations in mountain regions. Much of the information available in the countries concerned has not been disaggregated to give information on mountain people, much less by gender.

In order to further stress the importance of the issues above mentioned, the UN Environment Programme supported the organization of the conference [“The Role of Women in Mountain Regions”](http://www.fraueninbergregionen.at/ms/fraueninbergregionen/fib_welcome/), which took place in Alpbach/Tyrol on 18-19 April 2017. The Conference focused on the unique role of women in mountain regions and examined their indispensable contribution to the protection, preservation and development of these regions.

The aim of the event was to make a political statement about women and their situation in the mountain areas, about the huge importance of their specific knowledge and expertise, and about their indispensable contributions to people’s lives, their co-existence and survival and to culture and the environment – and all that in spite of the fact that their interests are still under- (or less) represented in politics.

The results of the conference discussions will be very important for influencing the discussions in other institutions and on other regional, European and possibly global platforms and will be shared with the RAUN research group.

In terms of content, the women’s conference was a continuation of previous events such as the ICIMOD “Conference Celebrating Mountain Women” (2002), the Bhutan+10 “Gender and Sustainable Mountain Development in a changing world” (Thimphu, Bhutan, 2012), and it will be followed by a “World Mountain Forum” which is planned for 2018 and will take place in Central Asia.

1. Please define a particular research **question**.

How can you evaluate women access to natural resources, participation in natural resource preservation and management in mountain areas? Case studies from different regions and possibly (based on students backgrounds) on Carpathians and Alps should be developed.

Please analyse structural constraints (if there are) based on cultural, social, economic and historical reasons and decision making processes and the benefits deriving from an improvement of women empowerment in the targeted areas. This should include an analysis of the female economic and education integration status and potentials in the areas analysed. A comparison on women access and participation among the different mountain regions targeted should be included.

Background information: In the Alpbach Conference it was shown that in several Alpine Countries, female employment rates are substantially lower in mountain regions although female tertiary education levels are higher. This would be an important aspect to analyse – at least in the Alpine case study - in order to fully estimate the empowerment potential of women in mountain regions.

1. What should be the desired **outcome** of the research (e.g. policy brief, technical paper, legal analysis, academic paper, etc.)?

An academic paper (based on rigorous analysis of solid data) with policy and future research recommendations to be presented also during other Academic fora/ international conferences of the Alpine/Carpathian Convention, World Mountain Forum.

1. What **methods**/methodology do you perceive to be suitable/feasible to conduct the research in order to achieve the intended outcome? (Besides desk research (review of background materials), RAUN students usually conduct qualitative interviews with experts or other relevant stakeholders or a quantitative survey to answer the research question.)

Partly desk research, partly qualitative interviews with experts or other relevant stakeholders (possibly conduction of community-based gender analyses to gain detailed information from rural women themselves on their constraints, needs and priorities for accessing to natural resources and participation in management at local and regional level).

For the Alps there are also demographic quantitative data from the Fifth Report on the State of the Alps available for the preliminary desktop research.

1. What specific **support** can you or your organization provide to the students? How can you support the implementation of the research projects (e.g. access to interview partners, provision of data, etc.)?

Access to experts and facilitation of access to /communication with local communities, provision of available data, link to already existing publications and research networks (Science for the Carpathians, Mountain Research Initiative, ISCAR-Forum Alpinum)

1. Would you like to **disseminate** the outcome of the research? Do you have any possibility to disseminate the outcome of the research projects to a wider audience (e.g. through a report, policy paper, information on homepage, etc.)?

The paper developed will be shared among the communication channels of the UN Environment, the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention and might be presented during different related conferences:

-“World Mountain Forum” which is planned for 2018 and will take place in Central Asia

-Forum Carpaticum, Hungary 2018