

# The Central Andes and sustainable development: The Mendoza High Mountains Strategic Plan, Argentina

Andean starfield in Polvaredas  
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The Mendoza High Mountains Strategic Plan (MHMSP) is a key instrument for the public management and land-use planning of the Aconcagua region, Argentina. It involves stakeholders from government, the private sector, scientists and local communities in the Central Andes to promote collective action for making Aconcagua a sustainable tourism destination, within the context of climate change and COVID-19 (Figure 1).

The MHMSP is supported by the Federal Investment Council of Argentina and the Inter-American Development Bank. The Commission for Sustainable Development of the High Mountains of Mendoza comprises actors from the public and private sectors and was created to monitor the plan's follow-up.

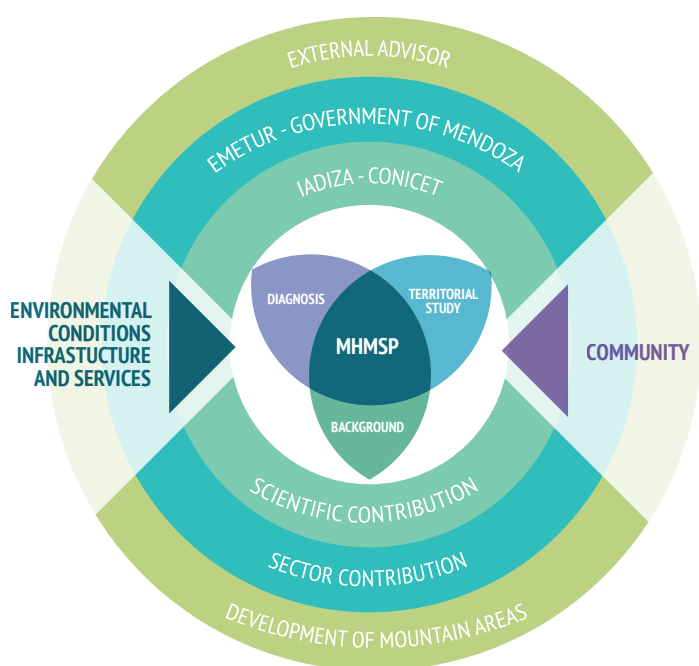
Climate change adaptation and mitigation are part of the process outlined in the MHMSP, and support for the adoption and incorporation of new technologies plays a central role. Local communities whose livelihoods depend on snow tourism are vulnerable to the impact of climate change. Different mechanisms have been incorporated into the plan to promote mountain villages' adaptation to climate change, to reduce their vulnerability.

One of the main results achieved includes securing foreign investments to develop infrastructure and services in the towns of the Central Bioceanic Corridor. For example, works are being carried out to turn the mountain village of Las Cuevas into a mountain sports centre in the Central Andes; to make the town of Puente del Inca a cultural destination for the dissemination of knowledge on the multiculturalism of the Andes; to make the town of Penitentes a multifunctional centre for adventure and snow tourism; and to

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promote the town of Polvaredas as an agro-ecological centre and hub for the exchange of local handicrafts from the high mountains.

Among the lessons learned from this strategic planning process, the importance of incorporating the Sustainable Development Goals as a strategic framework stands out. This has contributed to the sustainability and operation of the projects despite the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, to strengthen governance, there is a need for clear mechanisms and parameters to promote the effective participation of all actors. Likewise, it should be noted that the systemic vision built from the ties established between the governmental, scientific and civil society sectors constitutes one of the keys for achieving the proposed objectives for the integral and sustainable development of the high mountains of the province of Mendoza.



**Figure 1.** Methodological process for the development of the MHMSP.  
Source: Own elaboration