



PLATFORM “ECOLOGICAL NETWORK”

- ALPINE CONVENTION -

REPORT TO THE ALPINE CONFERENCE

MANDATE PERIOD 2013-2014

The Platform Ecological Network of the Alpine Convention acts as facilitator for the cooperation of a wide range of different stakeholders that share the common goal of implementing an Alpine ecological network. The Platform was created in 2007 as interface between different groups (e.g. experts, scientists, decision makers, representatives of pilot regions) on different levels and has since then been working according to the mandates provided for a 2-year period by the Ministers of the Alpine Countries at the Alpine Conferences. At the beginning of the Platform activities, France and Germany took turns in chairing the Platform. For the last mandate period 2013-2014 it was decided to have a joint French-German presidency under a French chair.

1. Evaluation of the current mandate

All activities of the Platform aim at reaching the establishment of an alpine ecological network, a coherent network of interlinked natural spaces in order to guarantee a sustainable protection of Alpine biodiversity as stated in the Alpine Convention. As this task is not a short-term action, but a long-term vision, all smaller activities of the Platform contribute to this overall goal.

According to the mandate the pilot areas were a central point for the Platform work: two of the Platform meetings held during this mandate period took place in officially nominated pilot regions for ecological connectivity, one in the Ecoregion Prealpi-Giulie (I) and one in the Département Isère (F). These meetings were the occasion for the Platform members to see and discuss the achievements of the work on ecological connectivity reached by the pilot regions and to intensify the link to specific implementation projects. For all Platform meetings additional practical workshops were proposed in addition in order improve the participation of the different types of experts in the Platform work: a workshop for the joint development of needs and expectation for future Alpine projects on the topic of ecological connectivity, a workshop together with scientists to start the

process of answering the 50 most important questions linked to ecological connectivity in the Alps¹ (project supported by the Platform during the 2009-2011 mandate), a workshop coorganised with the greenAlps project “Keys for regional biodiversity policy implementation”.

Furthermore, the Platform intensified the exchange with the WISO Platform of the Alpine Convention by exchanging meeting protocols and taking part in Platform meetings and conferences. The WISO Platform was invited to get involved as a partner in a conference organised by the Platform Ecological Network and ALPARC on the topic of “Wildlife and connected habitats” that will take place in Austria in December 2014.

Together with the Carpathian Convention, the Alpine Convention was invited to participate in the meetings of the Working Group “Green Infrastructure and Restoration” of the European Commission. The Alpine Convention was represented in the WG by the Platform Ecological Network.

The Platform actively worked on communicating the efforts of improvement of Alpine ecological connectivity through the Platforms section on the Alpine Convention homepage and at different occasions such as the large conference held in April 2013 by the BioREGIO project and the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas in Tatranska Javorina (SK).

The landscape aspect that was added to the Platforms activities in the last mandate was integrated in the activities via the ecosystem service approach and is also currently outlined in the two Alpine space projects recharge.green and greenAlps, in which the Platform participates as observer.

Concerning the functioning of the Platform there have been several changes among the official country representatives of the Platform in this period leading to a reduction of participation in group activities at the beginning of the mandate period. The missing representatives have now been replaced (except for Austria) and the cooperation between group members could be reinforced at the last Platform meeting.

The new mandate will take charge of the continuation of ongoing activities and also of a strong involvement in the macroregion strategy development, the participation in the development of the European Green Infrastructure with the European Commission and working on the link between ecological connectivity and Green Economy. The mandate has been developed in cooperation with the Platform members.

2. Meetings and events

Platform meetings

18/06/2013, 11th meeting of the Platform “Ecological Network” of the Alpine Convention, Prato di Resia (Italy)

¹ <http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0053139>

27/03/2014, 12th meeting of the Platform “Ecological Network” of the Alpine Convention, Innsbruck (Austria)

30/09/2014, 13th meeting of the Platform “Ecological Network” of the Alpine Convention, Grenoble (France)

Events

19/06/2013, International Workshop “Alpine Ecological connectivity - project development”, Prato di Resia (Italy)

26 - 27/03/2014, International Workshop “Take advantage of land-use change for improving connectivity”, Innsbruck (Austria)

29/09/2014, Transsectoral Workshop on successful implementation of measures to improve ecological connectivity: frame conditions at a regional level, Grenoble (France)

3. Annex

- I) MINUTES of the 11th meeting of the Platform “Ecological Network” of the Alpine Convention
- II) MINUTES of the 12th meeting of the Platform “Ecological Network” of the Alpine Convention
- III) MINUTES of the 13th meeting of the Platform “Ecological Network” of the Alpine Convention