

The Alpine Convention Newsletter is published quarterly by the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention.

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Dear Colleagues,  
Dear Friends,

Have you ever wished being able to read the coffee brew to derive answers from its diffuse reflections? Instead of doing so, I want to seize the opportunity of this newsletter to take a look back together with you, at the activities and work of the Alpine Convention in the past year.

The 12 Thematic Working Bodies of the Alpine Convention worked hard to implement their mandates, finalize their statements, recommendations and reports on their specific topics related to a sustainable development of the Alps. Last month, the Permanent Committee was holding its 66<sup>th</sup> session in Innsbruck (AT). At the centre of attention was the 2<sup>nd</sup> priority "Taking action on climate change" of the [Multi-Annual Work Programme \(MAP\) 2017-2022](#). The Alpine Climate Board presented the "Climate Target System" in regard to the perspective of a climate neutral Alpine space by 2050. At the 24<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, I had the honour to present the Alpine Convention's work on climate change.

For me, one of the cherries on top of the hard work is the success of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of our Reading Mountains Festival. Bringing people together in a time that online communication is flourishing is a difficult but worthy task. The festival is a spark that lights up real-life discussions across generations and borders, celebrating the rich Alpine cultural diversity, in such a way that different opinions reinforce, rather than counteract each other. You can read more about the [festivities](#) later on in this newsletter. As reading is gymnastics for the brain we put a (non-exhaustive) [list of Alpine literature](#) at your disposal for the upcoming winter evenings.

I wish you many heartfelt encounters with family, friends and neighbors, merry and peaceful Christmas days and good luck for the upcoming year!

Ambassador Markus Reiterer  
Secretary General of the Alpine Convention



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### **A new chapter of a successful story**

The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Reading Mountains Festival brought thousands of people in about 110 events together to celebrate Alpine literature. The happenings took place in all 8 Alpine countries and one each in Great Britain, Poland, Romania and Spain. The biggest share of events was organized in Slovenia where readings took place all over the country, followed by Italy and Austria.

The institutions which organized events were as diverse as the locations and the events itself. Schools, libraries, cultural and nature organizations, museums, book stores and many other different institutions organized lectures, cultural evenings with traditional music, readings with a local dinner, excursions, podium discussions and many other kinds of events with a literary background. Most of the events were planned for one evening, some even for more days, but all had in common that people from various ages and backgrounds discussed about the Alps, Mountains in general and got a new perspective on our beloved Alpine region. There is also the common opinion to keep up the spirit and organize other similar events to promote Alpine literature this way.

In the following, we are highlighting some events carried out by the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention and its info points. Click [here](#) for an overview of all the events that took place in scope of the Reading Mountains 2018 or visit the [photogallery](#).

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### **IMD celebrations: Reading Mountains Festival**

The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention (PSAC) and Tyrolia bookshop kicked off already on 10 December with two book presentations under the title "*Geschichten des Gelingens*" (stories of succeeding). Bishop Hermann Glettler read from the book "*Franziskus - Schule der Armut*" with linocuts by Luis Höfer and texts by Willibald Hopfgartner; Prof. Josef Nussbaumer presented the book "*Hoffnungstropfen*" (drops of hope). Markus Reiterer, Secretary General of the Alpine Convention, and Ingrid Felipe, deputy Governor of Tyrol, joined the podium for a podium discussion, led by the moderator Axel Klemmer. Also because of the musical frame by Stubai Freitagsmusik, the audience left with the general opinion that this evening became a "Story of Success" itself. One day later, another literary event co-organised by the PSAC took place at the Wagner'sche bookstore in Innsbruck. The authors Hubert Flattinger and Erich Ledersberger read and talked about alpine literature.

The event at our branch office in Bolzano/Bozen was dedicated to the female discovery of the mountains: stories of female mountaineers of the past, present and future challenges. It was a fascinating afternoon in the company of the writer Ingrid Runggaldier, who read pieces from her book "*Frauen im Aufstieg*", the South Tyrolean mountain guide Veronika Schrott and Roberta Silva, manager of the mountain hut Roda di Vaèl.

At the end of the events a toast was proposed to International Mountain Day!

See you back next year!

#WeLoveMountains

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### **Reading Mountains Info-Point Award 2018**

Info point Domodossola decided to organize a [literary contest](#) for the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the [Reading Mountains Festival](#), the event that celebrates International Mountain Day. The title of the contest: "Mountain and Imagination. Let's free your creativity!", supports the aim of the project, *i.e.* promoting alpine literature, mostly through the active participation of kids of the middle schools in the Verbano Cusio Ossola Province could participate in the contest with their literary works. This project was possible thanks to the cooperation with "Parco della Fantasia" Gianni Rodari in Omegna and the local middle schools, but also with the contribution of Fondazione Cariplo. On 31 August 2018 the info point presented the initiative during a press conference in the Forum of Omegna, where also the awards ceremony will take place. The first three works selected by the panel of judges will win this first edition of Reading mountain Info-Point award and a collection of books and a publication with their scripts.

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### **Tolmin celebrating IMD with Andrej Štremfelj**

There is no better way to celebrate the International Mountain Day in Soča Valley than to listen to the holder of the Piolet d'Or Lifetime Achievement Award of 2018. The Slovenian alpinist Andrej Štremfelj presented his more than successful and challenging lifelong worldwide journey in the mountains and offered to the participants an insight into extreme alpinism. In addition to the presentation he also announced the winners of the contest in the scope of the *Reading Mountains Festival*, that was organised by Tolmin public library with the support of the Alpine Convention, its info point at the Soča Valley Development Centre and others. More than 160 impressions and comments on books and mountains were collected from readers since September confirming that mountaineering goes well in line with reading the mountains.

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### **Events in Slovenian Alpine Museum - Info point Mojstrana**

In November the museum hosted two worldwide-known Slovenian mountaineers – Luka Stražar, one of the Piolet d'Or winners, and Aleš Česen. Together with a Brit Tom Livingston they were the second ones in history to conquer the peak of Latok I (7145m) in Karakoram, Pakistan, and the first ones to do so from its northern face. For the presentation of this historic achievement the mountaineers have chosen the Slovenian Alpine Museum.

In December the International Mountain Day was celebrated. On 7 December the exhibition of the photo contest by the Alpine Association of Slovenia, Planinski vestnik (Alpine journal) and CEWE company titled #LjubimGore (I love mountains) was opened. In the scope of the Reading Mountains Festival a newspaper supplement to the Female courage exhibition was presented, and up until New Year all the books in the museum store will be sold with a discount.

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### **Our Info points passing on the message of IMD**

#### **Info point Chamonix**

On the International Mountain Day a two-part-reading took place in the Chamonix Alpine Museum and the mountain stick of Jacques Balmat, the first man on Mont Blanc, was presented to the public the first time ever. More highlights were the choir of the Compagnie des Guides and free entrance of the Museum in the evening.

#### **Info point Morbegno**

The first part of the event in Morbegno consisted of reading with students from the Alpine school of the secondary school "Damiano" in Morbegno. It took place in the courtyards of the school and in significant points in the old town. The final reading happened in the civic library, which is also the seat of the Info point. The second part was organized in the evening in the library and another walk through the city with musical animation and a collective reading closed the event in Morbegno.

#### **Info point Gran Paradis**

The event organized by the Info point Gran Paradis took on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 December at the Rhêmes-Notre-Dame Visitor Centre. All visitors could read a publication of their choice from various ones offered by the Info point. Additionally the visitors were asked to answer the question "What do the Alps represent for you?" to collect opinions about the Alps from people with different backgrounds.

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### **Creative tributes paid to IMD in Innsbruck**

Under the title "Crescere con le montagne/Aufwachsen mit den Bergen", the German-Italian bilingual elementary school "Innere Stadt" in Innsbruck (AT) organized for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time a school project within the scope of International Mountain Day (IMD). Based on various (children's) books, different aspects of the mountains were examined in more detail. This year, a theatrically translation of the book the book "Prinzessin Lillifee und der Bergkristall" was staged by theatre teachers. The children had to invent and present a different end of the story. The excellently illustrated book "Sophie und das große Horn" by Hans Traxler was taken as an opportunity to present the alphorn as a musical instrument of the Alpine region and give the children the opportunity to play the horn themselves, which turned out as one of the most impressive and funny moments of the event!

With the "Powerpoint Karaoke" another event in Innsbruck took place at the University. The evening was organized by the local entity of the [European Geography Association](#) for geography students and young



[geographers](#). Voluntary speakers had to give an impromptu Powerpoint presentations on random topics. The presentations led to enthusiastic reactions from the public, inside a positive and warm atmosphere.

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### **Thanks from the Secretary General of the Alpine Convention, Ambassador Markus Reiterer**

We kick-started the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Reading Mountains Festival in tropical warm conditions, knowing that we wanted to spread the same warm wave on International Mountain Day in December. And so we did, with the support and the cooperation of hundreds of local volunteers, literary artists, word performers and musicians, bookshops, libraries, schools and you (!), the inhabitants of the Alps. The Alpine cultural diversity is so omnipresent in our daily lives that we all too often take it for granted. Therefore, a festival like Reading Mountains gives us the opportunity to celebrate the cultural heritage as well as modern Alpine literature under the umbrella of the Alpine Convention. Thanks to everyone who made it possible to enrich our mind, soul and to fill our ears and eyes with literary and artistic creations!

Click [here](#) for an overview of all the events that took place in scope of the Reading Mountains 2018 or visit the [photogallery](#).



## **66<sup>th</sup> Permanent Committee Meeting**

The 66<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Permanent Committee on 6 and 7 November 2018 in Innsbruck was dedicated to the priority "Taking action on climate change" of the Multiannual Work Programme. The Committee provided the opportunity to take stock and appreciate the outcomes of all activities that the Alpine Convention has carried out in 2017-2018 on the topic, including the "Climate Target System of the Alpine Convention", the Green Economy Action plan as well as the "ClimaHost" contest for climate protection in the hotel and gastronomy sector. The Seventh Report on the State of the Alps on the topic of Natural Hazards Risk Governance, elaborated by the Platform on Natural Hazards and a major outcome in view of the upcoming Alpine Conference, was also approved. Always in preparation for the discussions at the XV<sup>th</sup> Alpine Conference, the 66<sup>th</sup> Permanent Committee looked at the activities of the Alpine Convention in 2019-2021; among the topics tackled were the ideas for the upcoming French Presidency programme and for the future work of the Alpine Convention Thematic Working Bodies.

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## **Workshop on Mountain Forests, Air Pollution and Health**

Together with the NGO „Kuratorium Wald“, the Austrian Presidency organized a Workshop on Mountain Forests, Air Pollution and Health which was held on 3 December 2018 in Vienna (AT).

*What is the current situation like concerning air pollution as a result of forestry measures? What is the forest's contribution to human health – also in the light of biodiversity? How can the Mountain Forests Protocol of the Alpine Convention contribute to those issues?*

Experts from various disciplines and fields (medicine, biology, forestry, law) presented lectures and within small groups the participants discussed questions like the ones mentioned above. You will find the relevant documents soon by following this [link](#).

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**ClimaHost**



### **ClimaHost Contest**

Managers of 35 hotels (from mountain huts to 5-star hotels) and 4 restaurants submitted their applications to the alpine-wide contest "[ClimaHost – Climate protection and energy efficiency in hotels and restaurants](#)". The contest, which is supported by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism and the German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, aims at hotels and restaurants that make high efforts and contributions to climate protection. Applications came from Italy, Switzerland, Austria, France, Germany and Slovenia. An independent jury of international experts selects the winners who get a professional video shot as their prize. The award ceremony will take place at the XV<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Alpine Conference. This initiative is both an advertisement for the enterprises as well as an awareness raising activity focusing on climate change and follows up on the initiative started in the framework of the German Presidency 2015/16.

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## **News from the Secretariat**



### **Fruitful cooperation with the City of Innsbruck**

The Secretary General of the Alpine Convention, Ambassador Markus Reiterer met the new Mayor of Innsbruck, Georg Willi for a first time on 23 October 2018. During their meeting, the role of the Alpine Convention in general as well as the presence and visibility of the Permanent Secretariat's seat in Innsbruck were discussed. Moreover, new ways and possibilities for further cooperation between the Alpine Convention and the city of Innsbruck were explored. A first visible result of the constructive cooperation between the two partners was the intense 2-day "Experience exchange on MTB- and bicycle networks in the Alps", that took place in Innsbruck and could count on a lot of interest from various stakeholders (for the coverage click [here](#)). The city of Innsbruck will also support in the 67<sup>th</sup> Permanent Committee meeting, the XV<sup>th</sup> Alpine Conference and the [AlpWeek Intermezzo](#) (2-4 April 2019), all three will be hosted in the Tyrol's capital!

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### **For a sustainable energy transition in the Alps**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> EUSALP Energy Conference took place in Innsbruck (AT) on 2 October 2018, organized by EUSALP Action Group 9 on the topic “*Energy Transition in the Alps*”. Deputy Secretary General Marianna Elmi presented the work done on energy issues in the frame of the Alpine Convention and participated in the final panel discussion. *“Energy efficiency, and actual energy savings, are a major objective of the Energy Protocol, and paramount to achieving climate protection goals. As for renewable energy development, it needs to happen in partnership with the inhabitants, agriculture, tourism etc., on appropriate sites within the ecological limits of the Alps.”* These messages were also underlined by many experiences presented by participants from various Alpine countries. Have a look back at the recommendations from the German Presidency’s collection of “Best-Practice Examples for renewable energy projects compatible with land use and nature protection in the Alps” (in [DE](#), [IT](#), [FR](#), [SLO](#)) for further insight.

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# Happy Birthday



## **Hip Hip Hurray !**

On 7 November 2018, we celebrated the 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Alpine Convention! More than a quarter century later, the Alpine Convention continues to serve as a commitment for safeguarding the rich biodiversity and the cultural and living conditions in the Alps. With a view to future generations, the Alpine Convention – its Contracting Parties, Observers, Focal Points and Partners – aims at keeping a balance between economic growth, social welfare and nature protection in the Alps and redressing it where needed.

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## **Expert Workshop: The Mountain Dimension of Cooperation, case study “The Alps”**

On 9 November, Brussels formed the creative heart of the Alps discussing the Mountain Dimension of Cooperation during a one-day expert seminar on how to foster the development of mountainous areas in the European Union. The Alpine Convention was represented by Deputy Secretary General, Ms. Marianna Elmi. She outlined the good practices and transnational cooperation project within the Alps to interested stakeholders.

Ms. Elmi: *"The joint priorities to foster the implementation of the targets and specific rules, as described in the Alpine Convention and its protocols, are reflected in our Multi-Annual Work Programme 2017-2022, offering a framework for actions, strategies and tools for improving living situations and addressing the challenges facing the Alpine area, like climate change, accessibility to urban centers and transport intensity, depopulation and ageing of the population, just to mention a few".*

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Photo: Aleš Krivec

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### **ROCKTheALPS**

On 10 October the partners of the Interreg Alpine Space Project [ROCKTheALPS](#) participated in the first midterm conference of the project in Innsbruck (AT). During this meeting, the partners illustrated – through Power Point Presentations, maps and models – the objectives and challenges of the projects, the first European harmonized rockfall natural risk and protection forest mapping for the entire Alpine Space, to the public. A poster section was also organized, in order to allow to all the partners and stakeholders to better understand the status quo and the future developments of the project. The follow-up conference will be organized by the Italian partners and is already scheduled on 11 December in Milan (IT).



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### **Preparing for the upcoming French Presidency**

Secretary General Markus Reiterer met the Vice President of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region in charge of the environment and sustainable development Eric Fournier on 24 October in his town of Chamonix (FR). They discussed the issues which could be dealt with in the frame of the upcoming French Presidency of the Alpine Convention, in particular air quality and transport. They also exchanged with Commissioner Philippe Matheron, representing the national spatial planning authority and Secretary of the Committee for the Alpine Massif, and with the team of the Frison-Roche secondary school, member of the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention (YPAC).

Furthermore, on 4-5 December in Paris the Permanent Secretariat also met the French Focal Point and several sectoral experts within the French administration to reflect on possible activities during the French Presidency.

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### **International experience exchange on MTB- and bicycle networks in the Alps**

On 27 and 28 November the Alpine Convention and the City of Innsbruck (AT) invited different

stakeholders, who deal with the management of bicycle traffic at municipal, regional or national level, in particular mountain bikes, to an international exchange of experiences on MTB- and bicycle networks in the Alps. Since the rich Alpine landscape diversity and the natural heritage are inviting to a wide range of recreational activities, the Alps are a preferred destination for sport lovers. Mountain biking - and cycling in general – is probably one of the most popular leisure activities in the Alpine region today. Secretary General of the Alpine Convention, Ambassador Markus Reiterer: *"This joint initiative generated valuable discussions on the different (legal) situations, problems and approaches concerning mountain biking in the Alps. The participants debated on challenges and possibilities towards good practical solutions to conserve the sustainability of Alpine nature on the one hand and mountain bike activities in the Alps on the other hand"*. Mr. Reiterer also expressed his warm appreciations concerning the fruitful cooperation with the City of Innsbruck! The event also served as a test run for possible future activities in this field.

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### **Deepening our understanding**

The projects [SPARE](#) – Strategic Planning for Alpine River Ecosystems and [AlpES](#) – Alpine Ecosystem Services held a joint Final Conference in Innsbruck (AT) on 21-22 November. As Observer in both projects, Secretary General, Ambassador Markus Reiterer recalled in his keynote the manifold challenges faced by the Alps:

- The challenge of human attitudes,
- The challenge of the changing climate,
- The challenge of the soil.

He also insisted on the importance of a reinforced cooperation between Alpine stakeholders, an effective communication and a secured continuity. Hence, food for thought and action in the upcoming year!

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### **Global perspective on climate change in mountains**

The Permanent Secretariat's delegation travelled by train to Katowice, Poland to promote the mountains' perspective at the COP24 World Climate Conference. At a side-event co-organised by Austria and the Permanent Secretariat in the EU Pavilion on 7 December, Deputy Secretary General Marianna Elmi moderated a discussion on climate change mitigation priorities and measures in mountain areas in Europe, the Hindu Kush Himalayas and globally. Secretary General Ambassador Markus Reiterer introduced the upcoming Alpine Convention Climate Target System 2050 and 7<sup>th</sup> Report on the State of the Alps on Risk Governance in the context of natural hazards at a further side-event, focussing on mountain regions' adaptation to climate change, co-organised on International Mountain Day by Austria and UNEP. The situation in mountain areas in different regions of the world differ vastly, but they share common issues, such as the role of forests in climate change mitigation and the need for a careful water management to achieve resilience. *"Communicating on climate change in an empowering way as well as working hand in hand with the young generation – such as with YPAC, which will focus its 2019 session in Merano/Meran on the topic of climate change – are key to overcoming the challenges we face"*, concluded Reiterer.

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**NEWS FROM THE THEMATIC WORKING BODIES**



### **5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Water Platform hosted in Regione Piemonte**

The 5<sup>th</sup> and last meeting in the 2017-2018 mandate of the Platform “Water Management in the Alps” was hosted by *Regione Piemonte* and the Italian Ministry of the Environment, Land and Sea in Turin (IT) as a noon-to-noon gathering. The agenda was focused around the finalization of two reports, respectively on droughts and on small hydropower. Both reports will be presented at the XV<sup>th</sup> Alpine Conference. Besides that, the draft proposal for the 2019-2020 mandate as well as the activity report were discussed and completed.

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### **13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Mountain Agriculture Platform**

During the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Mountain Agriculture Platform on 24 and 25 October in Vienna (AT) the finalization of two statements was on top of the agenda: a statement on Alpine Farming and its contribution to the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 as well as a statement on Mountain Agriculture and Energy. Both have been discussed and finalized in the meantime and will be submitted as a draft decision at the XV<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Alpine Conference.

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### **Transport Working Group met in Paris**

The Transport Working Group met for the last time before the Alpine Conference, on 4 December in Paris (FR). Members discussed final adjustments to the four reports the group plans to submit to the Alpine Conference: on the external costs of traffic-induced air pollution and noise in mountainous areas, on innovation in rail freight and on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the Alps. The group also agreed on a mandate proposal for the next biennium.

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### **Meeting of the Ecological Network Platform of the Alpine Convention**

On 6 and 7 December, the 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ecological Network Platform of the Alpine Convention (ECONET) took place in Munich (DE). During this meeting the members of the Platform discussed the draft report on spatial planning, in particular on the policy recommendations and the final products. In addition, the discussion also covered past and future activities of the EUSALP Action Group 7, the European projects [ALPBIONET2030](#) and [LOS\\_DAMA](#). Finally, the members of the Platform Ecological Network were also informed about the



decisions taken at the last meeting of the Permanent Committee of the Alpine Conference and discussed the future of the Platform.

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### **Meeting of the Working Group Mountain Forests of the Alpine Convention**

On 12 December the meeting of the Working Group Mountain Forests of the Alpine Convention took place in Ljubljana (SI). The meeting was hosted by the Slovenian partners in the framework of the GreenRisk4ALPs workshop. During this meeting the members of the Working Group discussed the two draft reports on *"Interdependencies between mountain forests and flood protection and between mountain forests and freshwater provision"* and *"The role of forests in the framework of a green economy in the Alpine region"*. Finally, the Members of the Working Group Mountain Forests were also informed about the decisions taken at the last meeting of the Permanent Committee of the Alpine Conference and discussed the future of the Working Group.

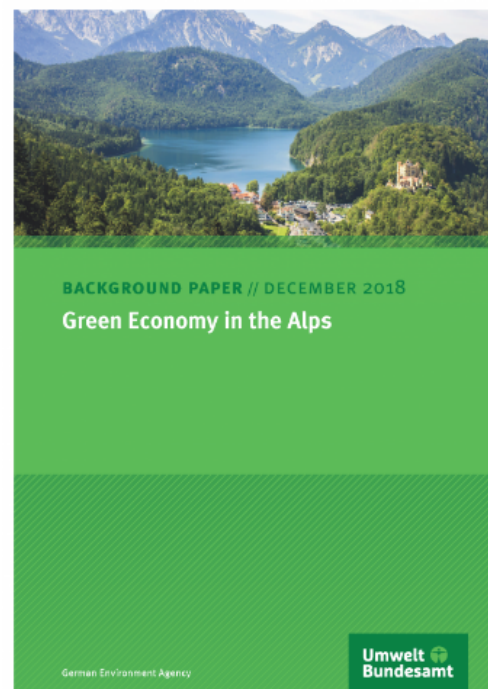
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### **Green Economy Advisory Board Meeting in Berlin**

The Green Economy Advisory Board met for its final meeting in Berlin (DE). The draft of the Green Economy Action Programme (GEAP) for the Alpine region has been further developed during the last months. The working bodies of the Alpine Convention and some relevant EUSALP action groups delivered input for the finalization of the green economy action proposals – the centerpiece of the GEAP. At the meeting, the results of the inter-ministerial consultations were discussed and final amendments were accepted. Furthermore, upcoming communication tasks were presented. One is the preparation of a booth contribution to the AlpWeek Intermezzo, to provide an opportunity for further discussion among the participants from Alpine associations and networks as well as businesses and science on the future of the Alps. To boost the transformation towards an Alpine Green Economy, the proposed green economy actions of the GEAP need to be implemented and refined continuously. To support the implementation, the board proposed measures to monitor and evaluate the progress. Moreover, Italy and Germany presented promising follow-up projects.

For everyone who wants to get a quick insight into the topic of a Green Economy in the Alps, the German Environment Agency has published recently a [background paper](#) on this topic.



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## News from EUSALP

### **Project assessment within EUSALP AG4**

The AG4 (Mobility) wishes to assign a label to projects in the field of transport with particular relevance for the Alpine area. A task force has been established, to which the Permanent Secretariat is an observer, in order to define the corresponding methodology. Two meetings took place so far, on 1 October (Trento) and 7 November (Brussels), a further one is planned in early 2019.

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### **Meeting EUSALP Action Group 7**

The EUSALP Action Group 7 invited the leader actors and the European decision makers to attend the event "EUSALP meets LEADER", which has been organized in Torino on 17 October 2018. On this occasion, the strategies and the instruments for the governance of the Green Infrastructures were discussed in view of the new programming period for the Common Agricultural Policy. Particularly, the opportunities and the value entailed by these Green Infrastructures for nature, people and economy in the EUSALP territories. Special sessions were dedicated to the projects and good examples. Reflections and recommendations emerged during an afternoon workshop.

In the framework of this event the meeting of the Action Group 7 has been organized on 18 October, during which the events and the initiatives carried out in the previous months were summarized. The members also discussed the next steps of the Action Group, as well the possibility to submit an alpine space project proposal. Finally, a researcher of the Autonomous University of Barcelona presented the GRETA-project: Near-surface Geothermal Resources in the Territory of the Alpine Space.

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### **Permanent Secretariat and AG6 represented @ the 2<sup>nd</sup> EUSALP Annual Forum**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> EUSALP Annual Forum took place in Innsbruck (AT) on 20-21 November 2018 and included a variety

of events, which ranged workshops interlinking different Action Groups to exchanges with the European Commission and sessions involving the Alpine Space Programme. The Networking Village, which was organized in form of a Market Place, featured the Alpine Convention, all 9 EUSALP Action Groups, the European Commission and the Alpine Space Programme. The Forum allowed the public to achieve concrete insights into the work of the mentioned stakeholders.

The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention (PSAC) and Action Group 6 (AG6), co-led by the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention and the Land Carinthia, presented their activities in multiple ways. Visitors of the PSAC market stand could discover more about the topic on "Natural Hazard Risk Management" and "The Role of Women in Mountain Areas". The biannual event "Young Academics Award" and the wish tree, collecting wishes for the next generation in the Alps, could both count on a lot of attention of the students, who participated with great enthusiasm in the workshops of the Annual forum.

The AG6 market stand at the networking village highlighted the AG's activities related to the topic of spatial planning and soil conservation. Students of the [Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention](#) presented their resolutions on soil and the project "Next Generation 2030" on the perspectives of young mountain farmers initiated by the Bavarian EUSALP presidency 2017 contributed to attracting many visitors to the market stand. AG6 also co-organized two successful workshops: one with AGs 2, 3 and the Interreg Alpine Space Project [YOUrALPS](#) on future visions for the EUSALP regarding economy, education, nature and culture; the other together with AGs 2, 7 and 9 on Alpine Forests.

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### **6<sup>th</sup> EUSALP AG6 Meeting at EURAC in Bolzano/Bozen**

The meeting, organized as a "Green Event", was officially opened by Richard Theiner, member of the regional government of South Tyrol responsible for spatial planning, environment and energy, Roland Psenner, director of EURAC and Marianna Elmi, Deputy Secretary General of the Alpine Convention.

The 6<sup>th</sup> EUSALP AG6 Meeting was characterized by an active and result-oriented exchange within the three sub-groups, in which considerable progress was made. Particularly noteworthy is the adoption by AG6 of the collection of good practices and recommendations in the field of "green" infrastructure solutions for an integrated and sustainable water management.

AG6 members also had the opportunity to exchange views with Elisabeth Schaber (Univ. Innsbruck), Prof. Diego Rinallo (Kedge Business School Marseille) and members of the EUSALP communication staff for the concrete implementation of the AG6 work plan.

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### **EUSALP Executive Board and General Assembly under Tyrolean Presidency**

The most important topics of the *EUSALP Executive Board* held on 24-25 October 2018 in Innsbruck concerned the preparation of the second Annual Forum and of the Joint Declaration for the upcoming General Assembly as well as an outlook on the Italian Presidency of the Strategy in 2019.

The *General Assembly of the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region* (EUSALP), which was embedded in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Forum of the Strategy, took place on 20 November 2018 in Innsbruck. In a Joint Declaration the representatives of the States and Regions of the EUSALP acknowledged the [Declaration on sustainable land use and soil protection](#), which has been supported by 6 Alpine States and 20 Regions in a written procedure during the autumn. Furthermore the list of implementation priorities for 2019 has been endorsed. In his statement, Secretary General Ambassador Markus Reiterer emphasized that better and more cooperation is needed to tackle the challenges the Alpine Region is currently facing and did not conceal that more progress could have been achieved in strengthening the cooperation between the EUSALP and the Alpine Convention. He underlined that the objective of the Transport Protocol to reduce the negative effects of and risks posed by intra-Alpine and transalpine transport to a level which is not harmful to people, flora and fauna and their environments and habitats is legally binding under European and international law, so that the question of non-compliance may arise with an ever increasing transport in and across the Alps.

Picture: The members of the EUSALP General Assembly with representatives of the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention

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# Interreg Alpine Space



EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

## **AlpGov Partner Meeting: Update on status quo and new beginnings**

On 13-14 December 2018 an AlpGov Partner Meeting and BAGL Meeting took place in Trento. Besides the usual updates on the implementation status of the activities by the project partners, also the planned extension of the project by 6 months was discussed. In addition, ERSAF, the project partner responsible for the implementation of the communication work package presented its ideas for activities for 2019. Action Group 1 also gave an insight into the upcoming Italian EUSALP Presidency. The setting up of a follow-up project was also intensively discussed.

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## News from Delegations, Observers, Partners



## **Cooperation Alps 2020+**

*Contribution by Alpine Space*

The Cooperation Alps 2020+ conference organised by the Interreg Alpine Space programme, which took place on 1 and 2 October in Salzburg kicked off the preparation of the future of territorial cooperation in the Alps. The event brought together representatives of the ESIF (European Structural and Investment Funds) programmes 2014-2020, the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP), the Alpine Convention, the European Commission (DG Regio) and other Alpine stakeholders with the aim of fostering exchanges and identifying main future challenges for the Alpine area as regards topics, governance and processes,

as well alignment with the EUSALP. [More](#)

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### **MEET&MATCH Forum**

*Contribution by Alpine Space*

The MEET&MATCH forum organised by the Interreg Alpine Space programme in Salzburg on 23-24 October stimulated the development of project ideas and partnerships for the fourth call for project proposals. The participants heard key notes on trends identified for the area, ranging from digitalisation to lifestyles and demography, governance and social innovation, and the implementation of environmental policies. They received first-hand information on the open call which will close on 12 December (step 1). The event gathered over 150 potential applicants and project partners. It was also the occasion to look at the achievements of the Interreg Alpine Space projects to date and make an outlook towards the future of cooperation in the Alps. [More](#)

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### **Sustainable tourism in the Alps. Who does the job?**

*Contribution by CIPRA International*



Some Alpine regions report new records in the number of overnight stays year after year, while people emigrate from other parts of the Alps. Recipes for sustainable tourism can be found in many places, but often only at the regional level. Overtourism meets rural exodus, in some places nature is degraded to a backdrop and exploited. What is actually needed is an alpine-wide caretaker for sustainable tourism. This is why CIPRA International invited international experts to a [workshop](#) in Innsbruck at the beginning of November 2018. The result of the workshop will be a recommendation for action on the one hand and a concrete job profile on the other, which will be available at the beginning of 2019. CIPRA International organised the workshop. What was discussed there can be also listened to in a [podcast](#) (in German language). CIPRA International is carrying out the project with the support of national CIPRAs in Switzerland, Austria, France, Italy, Germany and Slovenia. It receives financial support from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety with funds from the German Bundestag.

Picture: Experts from various Alpine countries worked out sustainable tourism job profiles in the workshop.

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### **Make Climate Visions become Reality**

*Contribution by CIPRA International and Alliance in the Alps*

At the conference "Make Climate Visions become Reality" in the framework of the European Climate Initiative (EUKI), which took place on 7 and 8 November in Innsbruck (AT), cities, municipalities and network organizations from all Alpine countries discussed their ideas for joint climate protection. Three years after Alpine municipalities signed an appeal to act for climate change mitigation in Benediktbeuren (DE), the "Alpine Partnership for Local Climate Actions", [ALPACA](#), with the support of several Contracting Parties of the Alpine Convention: [Alliance in the Alps](#), [Alpine Town of the Year](#) and [CIPRA International](#).

Picture: Launch of the "Alpine Partnership for Local Climate Action".

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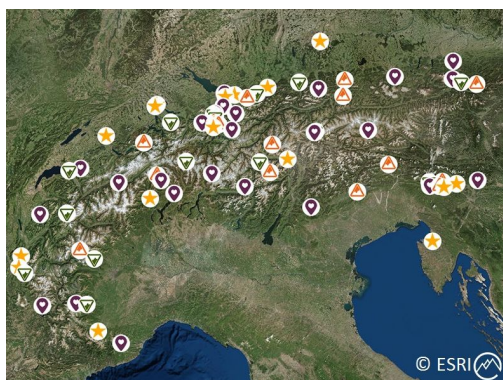


### **Youth participation is a must, not a nice extra**

*Contribution by CIPRA International*

Promote actively a political culture of participation, anchor the involving of young people in decision-making processes, make youth participation a must, not just a nice extra! This appeal was addressed to the politicians of the Alpine countries during the final conference of the Alpine wide [GaYA project](#). More than 200 young people, politicians and interested parties from various Alpine countries travelled to Chambéry, France, to discuss about youth participation and governance. The event offered interactive sessions as well as projections of short films produced by young people, that were presented as part of an alpine-wide film competition. Besides the international exchange and the political recommendations, the project partners presented a toolbox for youth participation and a comparative study on participatory democracy in the Alps.

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### **CIPRA launches Interactive Alpine Map**

*Contribution by CIPRA International*

*What is my favourite place in the Alps and why? Where are threatened and where are saved landscapes? Which good practice examples bring landscape changes and the significance of landscape closer to people?* With the new [Interactive Alpine Map](#), CIPRA presents information, examples, stories and activities on selected topics throughout the Alps. The Interactive Alpine Map invites its visitors to explore new contents and questions, to inform themselves and to reflect on what they have read, seen and heard. The results come from different projects and are arranged thematically. The "Re-Imagine Alps" project on landscape is the first to be online.

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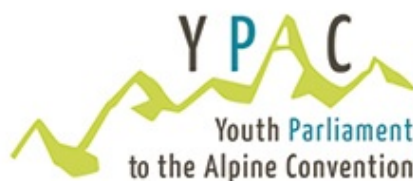
### **Biological diversity: When communities learn from each other**

*Contribution by Alliance in the Alps*

How can communities in the Alps promote biological diversity? This question has engaged project supervisors from different Alpine countries at the [\*speciAlps project\*](#) meeting in Sonntag/AT in October 2018. The Biosphere Park House of the Reserve Walsertal was the perfect venue to exchange ideas and experiences. As pilot region, the Walsertalers are aiming at development and strengthening of flowering areas with two perspectives: flowering of diversity and flowering of cooperation (human quality). Within *speciAlps* they focus on public green areas, fruit tree cultivation and near-natural gardens. *"Things develop through doing. The steps can also be very small, as soon as one step in the implementation is successful, further steps follow"*, says Christine Klenovec, Director of the Biosphere Park Walsertal. With the project [\*speciAlps\*](#), Alliance in the Alps and CIPRA International contribute towards the topic of biodiversity as defined in the [Multiannual Work Program](#) of the Alpine Convention.

Picture: View from the Biosphere Park House of the Walsertal valley in Sonntag (AT).

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### **Coordination Meeting for 14<sup>th</sup> YPAC Session**

*Contribution by YPAC*

The Coordination Meeting for the 14<sup>th</sup> session of [YPAC](#) in Merano (IT) 2019 took place in Sonthofen (DE) on 14 - 16 November. It included a feedback on the 13<sup>th</sup> session, held in Maribor (SL), and important decisions for the upcoming session in Merano. The general topic of the 2018 YPAC was Preservation of Soil, so the four committees engaged in finding out all they could on the subtopics of agriculture, spatial planning in urban and rural areas and coping with natural hazards.

During the coordination meeting the decision was taken that the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the Youth Parliament to the Alpine Convention will take place on 25-29 March 2019. The meeting will be organized and hosted by



the "Marie Curie" Merano Secondary School of Tourism and Biotechnology. Eighty young people from all over the Alpine region will discuss the issue of dealing with climate change and draft resolutions. After the session, the delegates to the YPAC will pass on their decisions to the political representatives in their regions of origin.

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## **LiKS4Soils: Channelling energies towards sustainable soil management**

*Contribution by Klimabündnis Tirol*

The nine Links4Soils project partners further discussed the cooperation for sustainable soil management at the Links4Soils project meeting in November in Munich. The cooperation of Alpine soil experts, regional governments, sectoral agencies and multipliers in the [Alpine Soil Partnership](#) is the core of the project.

Why is this necessary?

1. Alpine Soils are special.
2. Climate change challenges current strategies. The Alpine region will suffer more from climate change. We need to work together to find soil solutions for climate protection as well as climate change adaption.
3. The capacity of soils and the ecosystem services they provide depend on management. Different sectors are responsible to develop sustainable soil management strategies.
4. We need to work together to find sustainable soil solutions.

The Alpine Soil Partnership wants to make initiatives and good management practices in the Alpine area visible. The Links4Soils partnership is in close contact with the Alpine Convention, who is an Observer of the project and as well as with the EUSALP Action Group 6 to tackle those burning questions cooperatively.

Save-the-date: The final conference of Links4Soils will take place on 15-16 October 2019 in Innsbruck.

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**Feedback from the XI<sup>th</sup> European Mountain Convention on Cultural Heritage in Romania**  
*Contribution by EUROMONTANA*

From 25 to 27 September 2018, nearly 200 mountain stakeholders from all over Europe gathered in Vatra Dornei, Romania, to participate in the European Mountain Convention on “**Cultural Heritage as an Engine for Creativity, Innovation and Socioeconomic Development of Mountain areas**”, organised jointly by Euromontana and several Romanian organisations, including the Mountain Areas Agency and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Following three days of study visits, exchanges of good practices and debates, participants called upon EU, national and regional institutions to better recognise this mountain cultural and natural heritage, in a common [Declaration](#).

For all information regarding the event, including the proceedings, the press release, the brochure of initiatives and the presentations, visit [the page of the event](#).

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**Inspiring examples of social innovation in mountain areas!**

*Contribution by EUROMONTANA*

The [SIMRA](#) - Social Innovation in Marginalised Rural Areas - project has published a [brochure collecting examples of social innovation in mountain areas](#), including in the Alps.

The specificity of mountains is recognised both by EU policies such as the Common Agricultural Policy and the Regional Policy; and by global agreements such as the Sustainable Development Goals and UNESCO designations. Mountains cover 26.7% of SIMRA's study area. They are important sources of energy, water and biological and cultural diversity, and characterised by their altitude, terrain, roughness, slopes, low population density and difficulties of access, making them sometimes marginalised rural areas. This collection of examples of social

innovation focuses on **how communities capitalise on the natural and social assets in mountainous areas in terms of community life, living environment, and dynamic approaches to governance.**

You can also access SIMRA's collection of brochures by clicking [here](#) and get inspiration for your own territory. There are at the moment 4 brochures.

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### **Oreka Mendian, a new EU Life project on the conservation and the management of mountain pastures**

*Contribution by EUROMONTANA*

[Oreka Mendian](#) is an EU LIFE project running from 2016 to 2021, which aims to develop a strategy for the conservation and the management of mountain pastures located in Natura 2000 areas in the Basque Country. Euromontana is directly involved in the project.

This project implements preservation measures in 15 Natura 2000 sites in the Spanish Basque Country, as well as in 8 Special Preservation Zones in French Basque Country. Indeed, mountain pastures being both very rich ecosystems in terms of biodiversity but simultaneously highly endangered ecosystems in Europe, they should be sustainably managed to guarantee the conservation of the habitats and species that coexist within them.

You can find out more about this project and its results on the [project's website](#) or by checking out the new brochure available in [English](#), [French](#), [Castilian](#), and [Basque](#).

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### **Between tradition and technology for the conservation of mountain pastures**

*Contribution by EUROMONTANA*

On 26 November 2018, the LIFE project [Oreka Mendian](#) held a conference on "**The Role of the Shepherd. Tradition and technology for the conservation of mountain pastures**" in Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain. Different aspects related to the current changes in the agro-livestock use of mountain pastures and the conservation problems derived from them were presented, such as how to impede an increasing number of wild fires due to climate change with a decreasing number of shepherds up in the mountains. Different initiatives that are developed at the European level to alleviate these problems and promote the sustainability of mountain farms were commented upon by Euromontana. Innovative monitoring tools were also presented during the conference and demonstrated during a field visit to the Aizkorri-Aratz natural park such as highly accurate scrub monitoring by drone photography for example. More information on the conference [here](#), and on the study visit [here](#).

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## **Upcoming events**

Below you can find an overview of the upcoming events organized by the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention and its Partners. An updated list of events is available on the [webpage](#) of the Alpine Convention.

### **January 2019**

22	5 <sup>th</sup> Alpine Climate Board Meeting	Vienna (AT)
24-27	Danielo Re Memorial & ALPARC General Assembly	Les Contamines Monjoie (FR)

### **February 2019**

06-08	28 <sup>th</sup> Compliance Committee Meeting	Vienna (AT)

### **March 2019**

12	Workshop on the Climate Target System 2050 of the Alpine Convention	Salzburg (AT)
25-29	Youth Parliament to the Alpine Convention	Merano/Meran (IT)



[Save the dates!](#)

- 02-03 April 2019: 67<sup>th</sup> Permanent Committee Meeting, Innsbruck (AT)
- 03-04 April 2019: [AlpWeek Intermezzo](#) "Tomorrow in the Alps", Innsbruck (AT)
- 04 April 2019: XV<sup>th</sup> Alpine Conference, Innsbruck (AT)

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