

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

[View this email in your browser](#)



## ALPINE CONVENTION NEWSLETTER

Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention

[info@alpconv.org](mailto:info@alpconv.org)

[www.alpconv.org](http://www.alpconv.org)

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that we present you with the second edition of the Newsletter with updates from the Presidency, the Permanent Secretariat and our Working Groups and Platforms as well as from our Infopoints and Partner organizations.

As you will notice from a variety of news here below, the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the year was a pretty busy period for the Alpine Convention; we were working on the fifth Report on the State of the Alps – its layouting and printing, as well as on the presentations of its content; we have organized or supported several Workshops on different Alpine Convention-related topics; many of the Working Groups started with their activities for this mandate period etc. A big project on promotion of the Alpine Convention - the Mountain week at Expo - just finished. In this scope many Alpine countries organized events and activities related to the topics of agriculture and energy in the Alps. Read more about it in the news here below. Expo2015 was also an opportunity to show the new film of the Alpine Convention on mountain farming that we also launched successfully on our social media.

We also worked on the preparations of the "2015 We are Alps" tour, focusing on the topic of Climate Change, which is just about to take off. Starting on Monday we will be posting daily reports from the tour on our webpage and social media and we invite you to check them out. Of course, we will also report on the tour in the next Newsletter.

I wish you all a good read a nice summer.

Markus Reiterer



## News from the Presidency

**A Multiannual Vision for the Alps**



The German Presidency supported by Liechtenstein and the Permanent Secretariat organized a workshop for developing ideas and visions for the next Multiannual Work Programme of the Alpine Conference for the years 2017-2022. Representatives from civil society, local governments, regional development, research, Contracting Parties und Observers of the Alpine Convention discussed priorities,

challenges and possible tools for sustainable development in the alpine region in upcoming years. In this open forum a wide variety of discussions took place as stakeholders developed their views on topics such as climate change, biodiversity, spatial planning, changing lifestyles and governance questions. In a next step, this work will be reported to the *Ad hoc* working group for the preparation of the new [Multiannual Work Programme](#) and to the Permanent Committee.

### **Climate Protection Conference for Municipalities in the Alps**



© Kloster Benediktbeuern

In the framework of the German Presidency of the Alpine Convention, CIPRA International, the network of municipalities "Alliance in the Alps" and the "Alpine Town of the Year" Association will organize a conference on climate change mitigation in municipalities on 29 and 30 October 2015. The Conference will be supported by the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU) and the German Federal Ministry for the

Environment (BMUB) of which German Parliamentary State Secretary Rita Schwarzelühr-Sutter will take part. About 100 participants from all alpine countries are expected in the Center for Environment and Culture at the monastery in Benediktbeuern (photo), Germany. The conference goal is to emphasize local potential and achievements of climate protection and to address and overcome obstacles in the implementation of practical measures. The Conference aims at bringing together representatives of local authorities, local businesses, NGOs and other experts.

It is also envisaged that the conference participants will formulate a key message from the Alps that will be carried to COP 21 in Paris in December 2015.



## News from the Secretariat

### **“Reading mountains” initiative to celebrate the International Mountain Day**

“Reading mountains” is an initiative of the German Presidency of the Alpine Convention 2015-2016 in the scope of the International Mountain Day 2015. The objective is to promote Alpine literature by initiating events dedicated to reading modern Alpine literature in various places around the Alps to celebrate International Mountain Day (11 December). We kindly invite all partners, friends and supporters of the Alpine Convention to organize an event and register it on our [webpage](#). All participating organizations will receive posters and bookmarks for the promotion of their event. For more information on the initiative, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

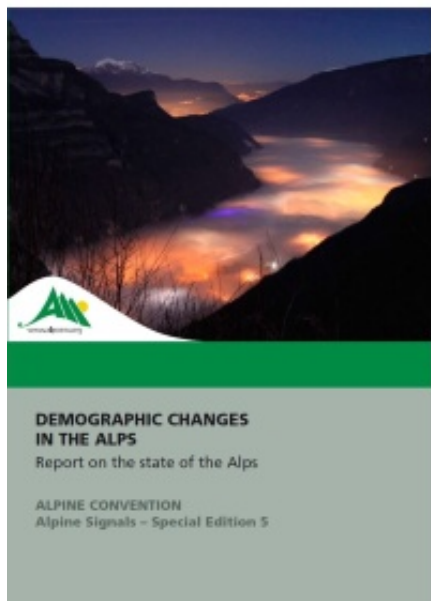
### **Alpine Convention and EUSALP**

The discussion on a possible governance structure for the EUSALP in the Steering Committee meeting in Ljubljana on 21 April 2015 focused on core elements regarding the composition of the institutions foreseen as well as on their functions and interaction. On the basis of the corresponding decision of the 58. Permanent Committee meeting in Bolzano the Permanent Secretariat called for granting the Alpine Convention full membership in the General Assembly and the Executive Board. Just as the Alpine States and Regions the Alpine Convention is invited to present until mid-September 2015 a well-founded expression of interest concerning its participation in Action Groups as leader or member. For the next EUSALP Steering Committee on 2 July 2015 in Vienna an in-depth discussion on governance is expected. Furthermore the Secretary General gave a presentation at the public hearing on the EUSALP organized by the European Economic and Social Committee on 25 June 2015 in Ispra. On 26 June in Lugano, Heads of Government of Arge Alp Regions adopted a resolution stressing the importance of partnership and cooperation with the Alpine Convention, the Alpine Space Programme and also civil society.

### **RSA 5: online publication**

The Fifth Report on the State of the Alps on Demographic changes is on its way! In the first half of July the report will be available online and, shortly after, hot from the press in its printed version that can be already [pre-ordered](#). Of course, copies in all alpine languages will be available.

In the meantime, why not refreshing your memory by checking the previous Reports on the State of the Alps and other Alpine Convention [publications](#) here?



### **Demographic change at local level**

The topic of demographic change is of particular interest for local communities and decision-makers, which are the ones that have to deal most directly with the consequences of demographic change.

Aware of the importance of involving local communities, the Infopoints of the Alpine Convention in Morbegno and Domodossola in cooperation with the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention and the Italian delegation organized, events with a preview of the main results of the RSA 5.

The event in Morbegno in the Valtellina area was held on the 18 April with the participation of both academia and practitioners. The presentation of several experiences of initiatives for dealing with demographic change from local and neighboring regions was also part of the programme. The narration of intense personal experiences, such as the one of a midwife who was active in the area in the '50s and had to assist her patients by walking sometimes enormous distances, gave an idea to the participants of the importance of improving and maintaining basic services in the Alps.

The event organized by the Infopoint Domodossola took place in the village of Crodo in Piedmont on 20 May and was combined with a previous visit to the Agricultural Institute "Fobelli" where students had the opportunity to show their achievements, such as an exemplary cheese production room, a pilot project on hemp and a school brewery. The dedication and passion of students and teachers alike gave a very optimistic expectation on the future! After the presentation by the Secretariat, a round table with a series of "new mountain inhabitants" of the area was held; the participants could here share their views and personal experiences of what going to live in the mountains is.

Other two relevant events for the preview of the RSA 5 results were organized in cooperation with the Alliance in the Alps network. The first presentation was held on 24 April in Austria in St. Kanzian am Klopeiner See in the framework of an event on accessibility and services. Here, some specificities on demographic change in Austria were presented. The second presentation

event was organized in France in the town of St. Martin de Belleville in the framework of the Alliance in the Alps thematic conference on the topic "social and natural diversity – activating the key resources in the alpine municipality" (19 and 20 June). The vice-secretary general Simona Vrevc gave a preview of the most interesting results during the Alpine Convention day in Mojstrana on 29 May.

### **Alpine Convention at Expo2015**



Activities of the Alpine Convention at Expo2015 in Milano were organized in the scope of the Mountain week that took place between 4 and 11 June 2015 and saw high level participation from Alpine countries and the Permanent Secretariat. The Mountain week started

with the meeting on "Mountain Cooperation for Food: initiatives in the Alps, the Carpathians and other mountain regions" at the Biodiversity pavilion, organized by the Italian delegation. In parallel, a trip with the Slow train took the participants on an Alpine Experience (experiencing Alpine food and culture in the Valtellina and Val Poschiavo). On Sunday, 7 June an "Alps. Borderless" concert was organized at the Expo by CIPRA International, where tree alpine music groups (from Italy, France and Slovenia) played together for the first time, which is especially impressive considering that the groups live up to 800 kilometers apart, speak different languages and have different needs, such as the fact that 32 of the musicians have mental disabilities. The next day, Switzerland organized an "Energy forum" where key issues in renewable energy sources from the Alps were discussed to foster progress towards the vision of Renewable Alps.

The German Pavilion dedicated a day (8 June) to the Alps and organized a high level event focusing on mountain farming, where the significance of mountain farming and the prime quality products of upland farmers was highlighted. The event was also an opportunity for two dozen Alpine youth, who travelled to Expo using only sustainable means of transport, to meet local and national decision makers. CIPRA International's project "Youth Alpine Express" encouraged young people to scrutinize their activities and habits and collect points for their activities (the greater their CO2 footprint, the more points are added). With the goal to collect less than 100 point a day and show that sustainable living is possible. You can see the results of the travel on the webpage of the project. The Expo 2015 was also the occasion to premier the new film of the Alpine Convention on Mountain Agriculture. Mountain week concluded with an event titled "Selling the mountain excellence: labels, marketing and internationalization of mountain farming products" organized by the Italian Ministry of Environment at the Biodiversity Pavilion on 11 June. These are just some of the events organized in the scope of the Mountain week, for the full list of events; please consult [the webpage](#) dedicated to it. You can find a [photo gallery](#) from Expo2015 on the webpage of the Alpine Convention.

## **A new place to discuss climate change in the Alpine region – “Alpen-Forum-Innsbruck”**

The first edition of a new series of events, called Alpen-Forum-Innsbruck, took place on 23 June in the Aula of the University of Innsbruck on the topic of climate change and natural risks. The Alpen-Forum-Innsbruck is a joint initiative by the Research Focus “Alpine Space - Man and Environment” and the France focus center of the University of Innsbruck, the alpS-Research Center, the French Institute in Austria and the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention. The aim of this initiative is to provide a forum for public information and discussion to address the issue of climate change in the Alpine region. The President of the Planalp Platform, Maria Patek, was one of the key note speaker. The next Alpen-Forum-Innsbruck will take place on 20 October on the thematic of climate change and energy. More information will be available [here](#).

## **„From bag to bag” exhibition at the Permanent Secretariat**

At the end of May the Permanent Secretariat concluded a project, launched at the beginning of the school year in cooperation with the Management Center Innsbruck and the Higher School of Arts of the Agglomeration of Annecy. Students from both schools were asked to work together to come up with a new, artsy and fashionable exhibition about the Alpine Convention. Students from the Management Center Innsbruck worked predominantly on the communication strategy and messaging by elaborating information panels and the students from the Higher School of Arts of the Agglomeration of Annecy worked on the general design of the exhibition and especially developed works of arts on the overall idea of backpacks for various Alpine topics such as forest, biodiversity, tourism, climate change etc. The exhibition has been supported by the Land Tyrol and the City of Innsbruck and is currently on display at the office of the Permanent Secretariat in Innsbruck.

## **New film on Agriculture in the Alps**

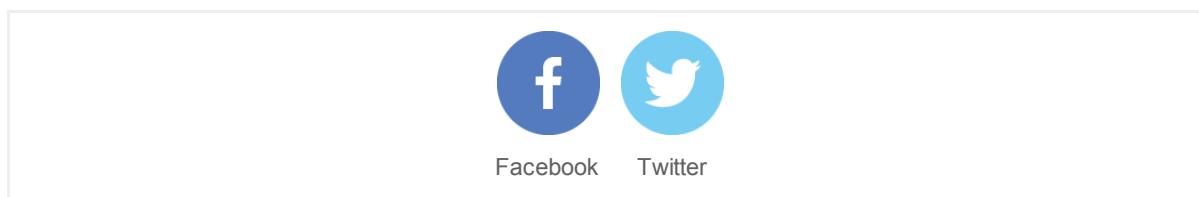


It is with great pleasure that we present the new film of the Alpine Convention dedicated to alpine agriculture and mountain products. The film premiered at EXPO Milano 2015 highlighting the EXPO theme "Feeding the planet, energy for life" from an Alpine perspective. You can find the film on our [Facebook](#), [YouTube channel](#) or on our [webpage](#); with subtitles in all the alpine languages.

Please feel free to distribute the film through your channels.

## Online activities

The Permanent Secretariat regularly publishes photos from the events on the webpage and on the Social media. Check it out on the [webpage](#), like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).



## News from the Working Groups and Platforms

### Mountain Farming Platform

At the beginning of May the Mountain Farming Platform met in Vienna to continue its work on how mountain farming can contribute to Food security. The main question relates to the actual share of food production resulting from mountain agriculture in the individual Alpine countries and its significance for assuring food security for the local population and beyond. At its meeting the Platform discussed first results obtained on the basis of a questionnaire investigating recent data on agriculture areas, number of animals reared and production volumes within the alpine convention perimeter of the individual contracting parties. The results will feed in a report on Food Security, which will be submitted to the next Alpine conference. Additionally the representative of Switzerland gave an update on the initiative to incorporate the principles of food security into the Swiss Constitution.

The group also took stock of the recommendations elaborated for the labelling of mountain products and the possibilities to further promote the results of the Platform. In relation to the latter a NGO, which is Observer in this group (Verein zum Schutz der Bergwelt) proposed to include into the draft guidelines on labelling of "Alm/Alp" products issues related to the use of Genetically Modified Organism in fodder and the use of possible health damaging pesticides in the production. They were invited to submit a written proposal to be discussed at the next meeting of the Platform, scheduled for autumn this year. Austria introduced Mr. Ignaz Knöbl as the new chair of the Platform.

### WISO Platform

The first meeting of the WISO platform in this mandate period took place in Rome on 29 May. At the meeting, three topics were discussed more in detail: the Wolf management tools, where the approach of Italy was presented; the Update on the RowAlp Project, where the proposal of the group was made to focus on the general criteria of management in the guidelines and the Report on the problem bear behavior in Europe, where a study made in the scope of the EU was presented. All the documents can be found on the [webpage of the Platform](#).

## **RSA 6 expert group**

The *ad hoc* working group established under the German Presidency and dealing with the topic of "Greening the economy in the Alpine Region" held its second meeting on 9-10 June in Innsbruck at the premises of the Permanent Secretariat. The experts from practically all alpine countries participating in the group are dealing with questions such as: what are the alpine specificities when we speak about green economy? Which is the situation and what are the potentials for a green economy in the Alpine area?

## **Contribution to an exhibition on women in the Alps and a conference on system engineering in natural risks protection**

The PLANALP group has contributed to an exposition on woman in the Alps in order to highlight the gender specificities and the role of women in natural hazard risk perception and management; the [exhibition "Ich, am Gipfel. Eine Frauenalpingeschichte"](#) can be visited until 26 October 2016 at the Frauenmuseum in Hittisau (Vorarlberg, Austria).

Moreover in connection with the next meeting of the platform, a conference on the topic of "Protection Systems against Natural Hazards - Durability through Systems Engineering?" on the role of system engineering in natural risks protection, synthesizing [the brochure with the title "Persistence of Alpine natural hazard protection"](#) of the last mandate, will take place in Munich (Germany) on 13-14 October 2015.

## **Water Platform meeting and workshop**

The Water Platform under the German-Italian co-chairmanship, pursuing its mandate, linked the meeting to the workshop on » Fluvial geomorphology and the interactions with sediment transport« organized as part of a big international "Integrative science and sustainable development of rivers Conference" that took place in Lyon between 22 and 26 June 2015. The workshop was a good opportunity for a presentation of good practices and examples on sediment transport management and geomorphologic river restoration in the Mountain Rivers. The day after the workshop, on Tuesday 23 June the platform meeting was organized where the outcomes of the Workshop have been evaluated and the agreement was reached on the need to produce workshop proceedings that will be available online. The meeting also set the plan of work for the mandate period and identified possible dates for the upcoming events. The main even of the platform in this mandate period will be the 6. Water Conference that will take place during the Alpine Week at the Chiemsee in October 2016.



## **News from Delegations, Observers, Partners**

### **Slovenian Day of the Alpine Convention**





For the sixth time Slovenian stakeholders of the Alpine Convention organized the Slovenian Alpine Convention day. It took place over the last weekend of May starting with an event dedicated to the challenges of mountain and border areas, where the new Report on the State of the Alps on demographic change was presented,

and current trends and future options discussed with the local and regional representatives. The next day was traditionally dedicated to sustainable mobility with organized walking and cycling trips in the Alpine valleys of the Triglav National park. The weekend aimed at bringing the Alpine Convention closer to the general public; in the spirit of the Convention, the event, which combined elements of sport, culture and science and was recognized by high level participation from the Ministry and the Permanent Secretariat.

### **Balancing energy and nature in the Alps: final conference of the recharge.green project**

The Alps offer great potential for renewable energy production. But this simultaneously increases the pressure on nature. The final conference of the international recharge.green project took place on 20-21 May 2015 in Sonthofen, Germany.

The recharge.green experts have estimated the potential of renewable energy from wind, water, forest biomass and solar energy in the Alpine countries. They have developed scenarios about conflicts of aims with nature conservation, environmental protection and other ecosystem services. A decision support system has also been developed for politicians and energy producers.

The recharge.green project runs from October 2012 to June 2015 and is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund in the Alpine Space Programme. The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention was a project observer.

### **News from the CIPRA: Invitation to the Annual Conference**



Cipra International invites you to participate at their yearly conference that will be held on 25 and 26 September 2015 in Ruggell, Liechtenstein, where questions like What does it take to ensure a good life in the Alps and What social and political changes are necessary will be addressed. Several renown experts will explain the changes needed for

development on the level of the individuals and society; as well as the processes of abandoning old habits and daring to embrace the new in order to gain new perspectives and options for action. For more information on the conference, check out their [webpage](#) and register before 31 August 2015.

### **News from the Info-point Gran Paradiso: The XIX Gran Paradiso Film Festival – 24-29 August 2015**



The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention is supporting the Gran Paradiso Film Festival, an international festival dedicated to nature cinema held in the territory of the Gran Paradiso National Park (Cogne, Rhêmes-Saint-Georges, Villeneuve, Champorcher, Ceresole Reale) from 24 to 29 August 2015.

The purpose of the Festival is to contribute to the wider circulation of nature cinema, to the furthering of knowledge of the naturalistic heritage and to the growth of respect and awareness of the environment. The Festival comprises of three different sections: the International competition, open to international feature films and medium-length films dedicated to nature, aiming at promoting a wider knowledge of the natural and environmental peculiarities of the whole world also through cinema; CortoNatura, open to international short fiction films, short animated films or short documentaries dedicated to nature, in order to increase youth participation to the festival and promoting audiovisual production related to Nature; the cycle of events De Rerum Natura. During the Festival, Fondation Grand Paradis and the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention will organise a special event, the "Alpine Convention Quiz".

[More info](#)

### **News from the Info-point Gran Paradiso: Opening of the Gran Paradiso National Park Visitor Centres**



The Gran Paradiso National Park Visitor Centres in Aosta Valley, designed as "Alpine Convention Information Point" where visitors can find information and documentation about the Alpine Convention, will open on 1 July. The three Visitor Centres develop different themes aiming at stimulating and intriguing visitors of all ages thanks to explanatory models, multimedia

systems, interactive games and dioramas, together with recreations of different settings and taxidermized animals.

[More info](#)

*Copyright © 2015 Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, All rights reserved.*

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

