



ALPINE CONVENTION NEWSLETTER

Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention

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Dear Friends,

the Alpine Conference is here! In a good week the ministers and high-level officials from the Alpine Countries, the EU and the representatives from our stakeholder organizations will be gathering in Grassau, Germany, to discuss key Alpine topics, such as the future development of the Alps, the priority fields for cooperation during the next six years, climate change, etc.

One of the main topics of discussion at the Alpine Conference will be green economy in the Alps; it is expected that the Conference will confirm the Sixth Report on the State of the Alps and we look forward to make it available to you shortly afterwards. Additionally, the topic of green economy in the Alps will also be discussed by the finalists of our Young Academics Award – read more about the award in the article below.

The Alpine Conference also marks the high-point of the German presidency of the Alpine Convention! Let me already now thank Minister Barbara Hendricks and the entire German presidency team for their tireless efforts, energy and engagement! At the Conference the presidency will be handed over to Austria – we wish you all the best for the next two years!

With the Alpine Conference and the Alpweek events, Grassau will provide the venue for numerous Alpine happening between 11 and 15 October. I really hope you will manage to join us! In Grassau also come by our stand where you can test your knowledge of the Alps – by looking, listening and touching!

Yours,

Markus Reiterer, Secretary General of the Alpine Convention



News from the Presidency

XIV. Alpine Conference

In two weeks the [XIV. Alpine Conference](#) will take place in Grassau, Germany, on 13 October. This ministerial level meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Alpine Convention is the political decision-making body of the Alpine Convention. It convenes every two years and sets the course for future efforts under the Convention and its Protocols. It also decides on the continuation and establishment of working groups and platforms for the next two-year period.

This XIV. Alpine Conference is also the final official event of the German presidency. The German Environment Minister Barbara Hendricks will present the results of the German presidency and lead a discussion among the

ministers on the topic of fostering a sustainable economy in the Alps. This debate will focus on different aspects of a green and sustainable regional development, which balances economic activities and the careful use and protection of natural resources.

The representatives will moreover discuss and adopt the next Multiannual Work Programme of the Alpine Conference for the years 2017-2022 which is the central instrument to target and focus the cooperation in the framework of the Convention.

The XIV. Alpine Conference will take place in parallel to the [AlpWeek](#), creating the opportunity for the representatives of the Contracting Parties and the stakeholders of the AlpWeek to meet and engage in an exchange on Alpine questions in general.

AlpWeek: one week left to register!

Thought-provoking sessions, market stands, and exhibitions await you. Take the opportunity to discuss the topics of culture, demography, and quality of life in the Alps! You have until Friday 30 September to [register](#) to the:

AlpWeek: Alps & People,

11-15 October 2016,

Grassau (Germany)

www.alpweek.org



Session by the German Presidency of the Alpine Convention during the AlpWeek

Best practice examples on land use and nature protection compatible renewable energy projects in the Alpine region

The Presidency invites to the session "Best practice examples on land use and nature protection compatible renewable energy projects in the Alpine region". It is part of the AlpWeek 2016 and presents the results of the German Presidency project. The meeting is organized by the consortium that elaborated the above mentioned report.

Renewable energies play a key role in meeting the energy demands in the Alpine region. This key role needs to be gradually increased in order to successfully reach the transformation to a sustainable and CO₂-neutral energy supply system. However, the implementation of renewable energy projects can go along with several spatial demands affecting natural habitats, the landscape or diverging interests of stakeholders. This can cause conflicts with nature and landscape protection, agriculture or forest management, tourism or with settlement and transport development in the Alps.

Exemplary renewable energy examples from the Alpine region that successfully avoided land use conflicts and best protect the nature will be presented and discussed. The examples have a clear focus on renewable energy systems (biomass, hydro, solar, wind, geothermal and combinations thereof) as well as smart grids and efficient energy storage.

The session is open to all AlpWeek participants. Representatives of the Contracting Parties and Observers of the Alpine Convention are kindly invited. The event will be held in German, Italian, French and Slovenian language. To participate, please register to the AlpWeek under: Registration AlpWeek until 30 September 2016.

In case of any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [Ms. Nina Kuenzer](#). We are looking forward to welcoming you at our AlpWeek session.

Exhibition "Alpine Space in Future"

The Travelling Exhibition "Alpine Space in Future", developed by the German Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, identifies with which measures the Protocol "Spatial Planning and sustainable development" is implemented and shows concepts for a modern Alpine region. It offers interesting information and advice how actors and citizens can support this approach. It includes a media station with an interactive board; short video clips and information brochures complete the offer.

The exhibition will be opened during AlpWeek on 12 October in the Golf Resort Achenal, by the State Secretary Rainer Bomba of the German Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure. Thereafter, the exhibition will be on view in Berchtesgaden and Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

"Joint research on Climate change"

In line with the objectives of the Alpine Convention and the resolutions adopted on climate protection the Permanent Committee of the Alpine Convention has invited the Contracting Parties and observers to support plans by the High Altitude Research Stations of Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Switzerland and Slovenia to intensify the already launched cooperation projects for a "Virtual Alpine Observatory" (VAO) and to develop it into a centre for climate and environmental research in the Alps. The main focus of the VAO is on intensive data exchange. Measurement data are to be collected in an Alpine Environmental Data Analysis Centre (AlpEnDAC) giving research scientists access to each other's findings. During the Alpine Week 2016 in Grassau the Virtual Alpine Observatory will take up Slovenia as a further partner. This will expand the VAO and consolidate its impact in the Alpine Region. The VAO has been established on the basis of bilateral cooperation agreements between the Environmental Research Station Schneefernerhaus, Zugspitze and high altitude research stations in the Alpine states.



Finalization of RSA6 – Greening the Economy in the Alpine Region

The fifth and last meeting of the ad hoc expert group on the elaboration of the sixth Report on the State of the Alps has been held on 28-29 June in Berlin. The main topics of the meeting were the review and endorsement of RSA6 and its executive summary. Both documents, including policy recommendations and an Annex with 90 Green Economy good practice examples from the Alpine countries have been forwarded for approval by the Alpine conference.

Further topics of the meeting were the implementation of the RSA6 recommendations and the communication of the report. First appetizers of the communication plan include the preparation of two posters about the content of the RSA6 in the frame of the poster exhibition of the Young Academic Award. After further editing, translating and printing, the RSA6 will be presented at an international conference in the first half of 2017.

Saving energy in Alpine hotels

Another new project concerning energy efficiency in hotels in the Alpine region has been launched by the German Presidency of the Alpine Convention. It aims at the establishment of energy management systems and it will help the hospitality industry fully exploit its great potential for energy efficiency, thereby assisting in making tourism in the Alps better for the environment and the climate.

The project will introduce an energy management system in one hotel in the Alpine region. The management system is tailored to small and medium-sized businesses. The system involves taking stock of the energy balance of the business and includes analysis of the energy sources used, a record of the energy use of various power systems and appliances, and an assessment of the potential for energy savings. The findings are reported to the business owner, who will take decisions about the implementation of efficiency measures. The project's introduction of energy management will be carried out by the company adelphi in cooperation with an energy expert from DEHOGA (the German Hotels and Restaurants Association).

Practical guidelines in all four languages of the Alpine region will offer other hotels in the Alps the opportunity to get started with systematic energy conservation in order to save costs and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that harm the climate. This initiative grew out of the project "Climate action and energy efficiency in hotels and hospitality in the Alpine region", which was part of Germany's platform during its Alpine Convention presidency. More information can be found under [here](#) and [here](#).

Special stamp "The Alps - Diversity in Europe": Awards for deserving Alpine conservationists and promotion of projects

On 30 June Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Environment Ministry, Rita Schwarzelühr-Sutter, together with the Bavarian Environment Minister Ulrike Scharf, presented men and woman who have made valuable



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contributions to Alpine protection with albums containing the special stamp "The Alps - Diversity in Europe" (Die Alpen - Vielfalt in Europa). The ceremony took place at the Sylvenstein Dam.

Among the men and women honoured were multiple biathlon world champion Magdalena Neuner as ambassador for nature and culture in the Bavarian Alps, the "herb mayor" Fritz Irlacher, the first head of the administration of the Berchtesgaden national park Dr Hubert Zierl, representatives of the German Alpine Association (Deutscher Alpenverein) and the German section

of the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps (CIPRA), and Dr Monika Konnert, head of the Bavarian Office for Forest Seeding and Planting (Bayerisches Amt für forstliche Saat- und Pflanzenzucht) in Teisendorf.

Schwarzelühr-Sutter: "The Alps cater to recreational and economic needs and are also a habitat. The glaciers contain important freshwater resources for large parts of Europe. Mountain forests protect from erosion, avalanches and floods. They require special protection, which we are trying to accommodate together with all riparian states and through the regulations of the Alpine Convention. Local engagement however, is at least as important as state action: Men and women are working hard, either in a voluntary capacity or professionally, to ensure that there is a balance between economic use and conservation of this unique habitat."



The special stamp "The Alps - Diversity in Europe" was published in June by Germany's Finance Minister to mark the German Presidency of the Alpine Convention. Those buying the stamp will pay a surcharge of 30 cents on top of regular postage. Profits made from the surcharge will go to projects aimed at strengthening sustainable development in the Alpine region. Such projects include, for instance, the *Aktiv Werkstatt Nachhaltige Mobilität* project (active workshop sustainable mobility) by Alpine Pearls, an association of 25 tourist municipalities across 6 Alpine countries. Together with the local population and stakeholders, the project aims to create sustainable mobility offers for local people and tourists.

The *Weißzonen* project (white zones) by CIPRA International is also supported. The aim of the project is to take the first steps in identifying, raising awareness of and appreciating unexplored areas of the Alps (wilderness, white zones). The target groups (authorities, scientific community, NGOs) will be provided with a platform to further develop and supplement knowledge and practical experience.

The project *WeWild* of the Alpine Network of Protected Areas, Alparc, aims to strengthen awareness among different user groups at national, regional and local level of wild animals in winter and actively manage visitor guidance through measures in mountain areas. More specifically, work in the Alpine-wide expert group on the development of a joint communication strategy will be supported. The project is a first step towards long-term cooperation.



News from the Secretariat

Briefly about the Alpine Convention – new film

With the aim of presenting the Alpine Convention “short and sweet” the new 1.5 minute film was prepared to highlight the goals and ideas of the Alpine Convention. The film is available at the [following link](#).

IMD-Reading mountains



Based on the success of the [first edition](#) the Alpine Convention organizes the Reading Mountains festival also this year and we invite you to participate! Join us with organizing your event, targeting your members/inhabitants/partners and celebrate International Mountain Day under the umbrella of the Alpine Convention. In 2016 the Festival “Reading Mountains” will take place for a whole week – between 5 and 11 December. The »Reading mountains« festival is an opportunity to celebrate the cultural diversity of the Alps – its many languages, different, yet similar cultural heritage and its arts in all shapes and forms. All participating organizations will receive posters, stickers and bookmarks for the promotion of their event. More information as well as the locations of reading can be found on our [webpage](#).

Young Academics Award – Final stage

The third edition of the Young Academics Award is coming to its final stage. The topic of this year is “Greening the Economy in the Alps”: approaches to this theme varied greatly, with focuses on renewable energies, architecture, tourism, ecosystems, biology and many more.

An international jury faced the difficult task of selecting 6 finalist, which will be invited to the AlpWeek in Grassau to present their works to the public and to compete for the 3 available prizes. The jury consists of:

- **Antonio Ballarin-Denti**, Professor of Environmental Physics, Catholic University, Milan; member of the Italian National Committee for Technological Innovation, of the Board of the Regional Plan of Air Quality Recovery as

well as of the International advisory groups on pollution effects assessment;

- **Hans-Joachim Hermann**, German Federal Environmental Agency, Acting Head, Unit International Environmental and Sustainability Strategies; German Presidency of the Alpine Convention;
- **Mimi Urbanc**, Deputy Director of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts; member of the ISCAR board; research topics: cultural geography, landscapes, rural agrarian geography.

These young academics made it to the final stage:

- **Alessandro Armani**: *Analysis of tourists preferences for management of the bear (Ursus Arctos) in Trentino (Italy): a comparison between best/worst and elicited choice probability formats.*
- **Alessandro Betta**: *Hybrid Alps. A technological anthropogeography.*
- **Marco Ciocca**: *Design of a new heating system running on woody biomass in the school district of Strona (VB).*
- **Pietro De Grandi**: *Sustainable touristic development: an application of the Weaver model.*
- **Cristina Dalla Torre**: *Alpine "marginal" communities: territorial policies for sustainability and innovation. The case study of Val di Non (Italy).*
- **Suzana Vurunić**: *Developmental and Protective Evaluation of ecosystem Services of Slovenia.*

In addition to them, two candidates are eligible for the Alpine Convention InfoPoint prizes, devised to recognize works geographically dedicated to the areas where InfoPoints are located and active:

- **Daisy Barailler**: *The Tourism Protocol of the Alpine Convention: a comparative analysis in Aosta Valley and in the Provençe of Trento (InfoPoint Gran Paradiso).*
- **Evelina Felisatti**: *Landscape and identity: the cultivation of hemp in the Ossola Valley (Domodossola InfoPoint Prize).*

All the finalists will be in Grassau, and there you will have the opportunity to hear about their research and their work. The finalists' workshop will take place Wednesday 12 October at 10:00: at this occasion the finalists will present their works to the jury, which will make its final choice.

An exhibition with the posters summing up the theses and containing extracts of the results will be in the foyer of the Golf Hotel for all the length of the AlpWeek. You will also have the possibility of meeting the finalists personally and to ask them questions about their works during the poster session, taking place Thursday 13 from 9:00 to 10:30 in the Hotel foyer.

The winners will be awarded during the Official reception by the German Presidency in Herrenchiemsee at the presence of the German Minister of the Environment, Ms. Barbara Hendricks.

We are Alps tour 2016

The 2016 edition of the "We are Alps" was carried out on the topic of Green economy and took the participating journalists from Innsbruck (A) to Gorizia (I) between 29 June and 5 July 2016. The programme was organized in cooperation with many local partners along the way and we would herewith like to warmly thank all of them. Curious

what we did during the tour?

Read the [day-by-day blog](#) and check out the [articles written](#) by the participating journalists.



Latest developments concerning the Compliance Committee

The 24. meeting of the Compliance Committee took place on 6, 7 and 8 July 2016 at the headquarters of the regional administration of the Tyrol in Innsbruck and was mainly dedicated to the topic of tourism. The Committee succeeded in finalizing the draft guidelines for the interpretation of article 6 (3) of the Tourism Protocol concerning the balance of intensive and extensive forms of tourism in areas of high touristic usage. These guidelines constitute a practical tool for the Contracting Parties for a consistent implementation of a core provision of the Tourism Protocol. Furthermore the report on the in-depth review of the subject "Tourism" was finalized. Both substantial products developed under the German Presidency were brought to completion and will be presented to the Alpine Conference for adoption. In addition the discussion on the in-depth review of the subject "Economical use of soil" was continued.

Finally as a result of a written decision making procedure among the Contracting Parties the report on the extraordinary compliance procedure regarding the landscape conservation area "Egartenlandschaft" and the application of article 11 (1) of the Protocol on Nature Protection was adopted by the Alpine Conference and [published](#) in order to allow for a prompt information of the public.

High level meetings in Slovenia

The Secretary General visited Slovenia in the beginning of the summer and met three Slovenian ministers: the minister of Culture, Anton Peršak where the main topic of discussion was the organization of the Reading mountains festival 2016; the minister of the Environment, Irena Majcen, who is the responsible minister for the Alpine Convention in Slovenia. The main topics of this meeting were the implementation of the Alpine Convention in Slovenia and the possible establishment of an Info-point as well as the upcoming Alpine Conference and the event on the Alpine Convention in Tinje/Tainach in October. Projects such as the Alpine Convention day, the Reading mountains festival and YPAC were also discussed. The last meeting of the day was with minister Alenka Smerkolj from the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy which also supported the last We are Alps tour. The main topics of discussion during the meeting were the involvement of the Alpine Convention in EU projects and AlpGov.

The Secretary General summed up the day: "It was a very productive day and the meetings with all three ministers open up many possibilities for further activities in and with Slovenia; may it be for further support to the existing projects or new ideas on how to bring the Alpine Convention closer to the people."

Alpine Convention at the Bled Strategic Forum

The Bled Strategic Forum took place for the 10th time this year and it was the first time that the Alpine Convention had a chance to participate at the event, bringing the Alpine dimension into the strategic international relations discussion. Secretary General Reiterer participated at the panel dedicated to "Water Risks in Global Perspectives", highlighting the importance of the Alpine area as the source of water for the wider European region and linking the discussion to the EUSALP process where AG6 is also discussing the water management issues.



News from the Working Groups and Platforms

PLANALP – Leveraging risk governance aspects in the Alps

From 21 to 22 September 2016 the Platform on Natural Hazards of the Alpine Convention (PLANALP) met in Annecy, France. Besides the usual exchange of knowledge and lively discussions the group had the opportunity to prepare the drafting of the RSA7 including highly welcome input by the deputy secretary general Marianna Elmi.

On the second day PLANALP had a highly interesting field trip enabling the participants to continue discussions on hazardous events and protection measures. The first stop was at a debris flow catchment, in which woody debris aspects and management were discussed intensively. A second stop at a rock fall dam protecting a settlement and subsequent aspects of risk mapping completed the insightful program.



News from Delegations, Observers, Partners

Memorandum of understanding with the Bergsteigerdorfer/ Mountaineering villages



On 16 September the Secretary General of the Alpine Convention, Mr Reiterer and the Vice-President of the Austrian Alpine Club, Mr Dunkel-Schwarzenberger signed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention and the Bergsteigerdörfer (Mountaineering Villages) to further deepen the existing cooperation in the future. On this occasion the Secretary General highlighted that "the Bergsteigerdorf is the idea of the Alpine Convention coming to practice. It is much more than just sustainable tourism; it is sustainability coming to life".

I-LivAlps: Workshop on sustainable winter tourism

Contribution by CIPRA

«Tourism is not an end in itself but needs to contribute to the quality of life, both for the local community and guests». This is a major conclusion drawn from a two-day workshop in Lecco/I held 2-4 September 2016. In the framework of the project «I-LivAlps» by CIPRA International, young participants together with experts and members of the national CIPRA branches discussed their visions of ecologically sensitive winter tourism strategies in the Alps and jointly elaborated a foundation for a position paper. Youth participation as a tool to fight the demographical change threatening the Alps is the central idea of the project. Find more information about the workshop and upcoming events [here](#).



alpMonitor: tracking changes

Contribution by CIPRA

Through the project alpMonitor, CIPRA International, together with the national CIPRA branches, strongly focuses on the responsibilities modern societies have in the shift towards sustainable development. The actual objective is “the



good life” in the Alps. CIPRA’s approach is based upon the values of participation, solidarity and frugality. alpMonitor acts complementary to scientific reports by actively discussing impacts and promoting solutions for selected areas of everyday life, such as nature and people, special planning, housing and working, tourism and social innovation. These areas are embedded into a topic landscape and strongly influenced by five main global

trends: climate change, segmentation of the economy, increasing mobility and medialisation. alpMonitor aims to observe long-term developments in order to raise awareness on changes and to be able to take the right decisions today. On these grounds CIPRA recently published a map, showing endangered or already harmed protected areas of the Alps. [More information](#).

“Youth at the Top” 2nd Edition: A collective operation to get young people (back) into contact with nature

Contribution by ALPARC

"Initially I thought it would have been boring... but in the end it was amazing!" Lilou and Kilian, France. “Those who climb higher, see further, and those who see further dream better!” Young participants in the Orobie Valtellinesi Park, Italy. Read more in the last press release [at this link](#).

On 12 July 2016, groups of young people met in several protected areas and natural sites throughout the Alps but

also in the Carpathians, in order to share a physical, human, cultural and artistic collective experience in the mountains. 41 events took place this year in 6 Alpine countries as well as in Slovakia and Romania: almost 550 children and young people reached the summit, accompanied by ca.150 adults.

This initiative aims to increase young people's awareness of mountains and their natural and cultural environment; to help them to feel connected to mountains through feeling, observing, playing, encountering, imagining, dreaming or self-expression. The project has great symbolic value as it runs simultaneously throughout the Alps and the Carpathians. It enables youngsters to get to know their mountain heritage better and strengthen their feeling of belonging to the Alps or to the Carpathians, as well as to Europe itself, for it brings together young people from France, Italy, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Slovenia, and as far as Slovakia and Romania!



The initiative is supported by the German Ministry for the Environment and coordinated by ALPARC, in partnership with Educ'Alpes in France.

More information [here](#).

ProMONT-BLANC « Young Ambassadors' Tour du Mont-Blanc » and 25th anniversary together with Espace Mont-Blanc and Alpine Convention

Contribution by ProMONT-BLANC

From 12 to 16 September ProMONT-BLANC guided French, Italian and Swiss young people (20 to 25 years old) along the cross-border "Tour du Mont-Blanc" hiking route, coaching them on the challenges of the area for the future, with the support of many experts. To close their journey, these fresh "ambassadors" participated in a festive evening dedicated to the involvement of young people in the future of the Alps and in particular of the tri-national Mont-Blanc area. The event was organised to celebrate the respective 25 year-anniversaries of ProMONT-BLANC, Espace Mont-Blanc (the cooperation structure encompassing 35 municipalities in the three countries) and the Alpine Convention (represented by the Permanent Secretariat).

Here the ambassadors exchanged views with the three organising partners as well as younger participants of cross-border hikes organized by Espace Mont-Blanc and YPAC participants from the Chamonix high school. The discussions lead to the spontaneous decision to set up a tri-national youth parliament for the Mont-Blanc, in order to include valuable ideas from the youth into the future actions of Espace Mont-Blanc.

More information on the webpages of [ProMont-Blanc](#) and [Espace Mont Blanc](#).



Upcoming events

The list contains events organized in the framework of the Alpine Convention, as well as by Partners. Please bear in mind that this list may not be exhaustive. Updated list is available on the [webpage](#) of the Alpine Convention.

October

XIV Alpine Conference and Alpweek

Venue
 Conference Hotel Golf Resort Achental
 Mietenkamer Str. 65
 D-83224 Grassau

Programme:

11 October
 19:00 Common Cultural evening „ALPWeek meets Achental

12 October
 14:00-16:00 Ministers and Delegations visit the ALPWeek
 18:30 Reception of the German Presidency for all delegations, observers and participants of the ALPWeek and the Water Conference (Castle Herrenchiemsee),
start from the hotel (Conference Hotel Golf Resort Achental) at 16:00

13 October
 10:00-13:00: XIV Alpine Conference (CLOSED FOR PUBLIC)
 13:15-13:45: Press Conference
 14:15-15:15: Meeting of the previous and present Presidents with the observers
 19:00 ALPS.Go.Culture; Celebration in view of 25 years Alpine Convention on invitation of the German presidency(Heftersaal Grassau)

3-5 October	<p>X° European Mountain</p> <p>Convention:Mountains’</p> <p>vulnerability to climate</p> <p>change:how can people and</p> <p>territories adapt and</p> <p>mitigate its effects?</p>	Bragança, Portugal
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11-15 October	Alpweek	Grassau, Germany
12 October	6th International Conference “Water in the Alps”	Schlosswirtschaft Herrenchiemsee, Germany

21 October	The Karawanks and the Alpine Convention	Tinju/Tainach, Austria
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November

4 November	Celebrating 25 years of the Alpine Convention	Salzburg, Austria
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December

5-11 December	Reading mountains festival	Alps
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