

12th Alpine Conference Poschiavo, September 7 2012

MINUTES OF DECISIONS

Item 1 Approval of the agenda

The Alpine Conference approves the agenda.

Item 2 Decision on powers

The Alpine Conference ascertains that the representatives of the Contracting Parties have the necessary full powers.

Item 3 Admission of the organizations with observer status

The Alpine Conference determines that the present organisations are admitted as observers.

Item 4 Current state of ratification

The Alpine Conference takes note of the report of the Depositary.

Points A on the agenda

Item A 1 **Reviewing procedure**

The Alpine Conference

- Feels that the compliance with the Alpine Convention and its implementation protocols is of key importance,
- Believes that a mechanism to verify the compliance with the Alpine Convention and its implementation protocols can be a significant contribution for the effective application of the commitments taken on by the Contracting Parties,
- In reference to its Decision VII/4 and in light of the experiences gathered on its basis,
- Decides to regulate anew the form, object and intervals of the reporting process, the structure and functions of the Compliance Committee and the procedure of the compliance mechanism according to the Annex¹, which is an integral part of this Decision the, and thus replace the Annex of Decision VII/4,
- Gives mandate to the Compliance Committee, as far as necessary, to revise the adapted standardized structure used by the Contracting Parties as basis for their periodic reporting,
- States that the reporting and the mechanism to verify the compliance with the Alpine Convention and its protocols by the Contracting Parties may be used also for future amendments of the Alpine Convention and its protocols, irrespective of any possible additional audit mandate assigned,

¹ See Enclosure 1 - Document ACXII/A1/1

- Further states that the reporting, the structure and functions of the Compliance Committee, as well as the procedure of the mechanism can be submitted to a review on the occasion of the Alpine Conference,
- Further states that the procedure of the mechanism has consultative nature and is non- confrontational, non judicial and non discriminatory,
- Points out that the state of compliance with the Alpine Convention and its implementation protocols was lastly registered in the report of the Compliance Committee presented at the 11th Alpine Conference, with deadline September 1 2009.

ITEM 2 Future of the Task Force Protected Areas

The Alpine Conference,

Taking into account that the Task Force Protected Areas – as of January 1, 2014 – will no longer be incorporated in the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention,

1. Thanks France for the many years of great support to the tasks made possible by the Task Force Protected Areas and shares Frances' opinion that the implementation (of Art. 12) of the Conservation of Nature and Countryside Protocol continues to be of key importance for the Alpine Convention,
2. Acknowledges the intent of ALPARC to take on a legal personality,
3. Asks the ALPARC Permanent Secretariat of ALPARC to agree on a cooperation agreement for the 52nd meeting of the Permanent Committee to allow the continuation of the tasks made possible by the Task Force.

ITEM A 3 Population and culture

The Alpine Conference

1. Decides not to prepare any provisional Protocol on the topic “Population and Culture”,
2. Takes the view that the “Population and Culture” Declaration is a key instrument for the social, cultural and economic development of the Alpine region and asks the Contracting Parties and the observers to systematically translate the contents of the declaration into common ongoing activities and to strengthen the relevant communication activities,
3. Asks the Presidency of the Alpine Conference, during its current mandate, to organize at least one event on the topic of the declaration with the support of the Permanent Secretariat,
4. Agrees to further submit the “Population and Culture” Protocol to the compliance mechanism of the Alpine Convention.

ITEM A 4 Appointment of the Secretary General

The Alpine Conference decides to extend the selection process to the end of October 2012.

ITEM A 6 Fifth Report on the State of the Alps

The Alpine Conference

1. States, in implementing the “Population and Culture” Declaration and in light of the relevance of this topic for the implementation of the Alpine Convention as a whole, that the “Demographic Change in the Alps” shall be the topic for the fifth contribution to the Report on the State of the Alps,

2. Asks the Permanent Secretariat – in agreement with the Presidency of the Alpine Conference – to coordinate the preparation of the fifth contribution to the Report of the State of the Alps, accompanied by an ad-hoc expert group and with the involvement of the representatives of the Contracting Parties - which will participate as much as possible - and of the most important stakeholders in the scientific field, of observers and of interested parties from other institutions, and to present it timely for its approval at the 13th Alpine Conference.

ITEM A 7 Progress report on the Multiannual Working Programme

The Alpine Conference

1. Takes note of the Report of the Presidency² including Enclosures I and II,
2. Authorizes, as an exception, the 51st Permanent Committee to approve the future mandates of the Working Groups and Platforms,
3. Asks the Contracting Parties, if necessary and each within their own abilities, to ensure the cooperation with and between the Working Groups and Platforms of the Alpine Conventions (including ALPARC) through specific projects,
4. Asks the Permanent Secretariat, the Contracting parties and the Observers to further strengthen the integration of the MAP in their activities.

² See Enclosure 3 - Document ACXII/A7

Points B in the agenda (points for debate)

ITEM B 1 Report on activities 2011-2012

The Alpine Conference

1. Takes note of the reports of the Presidency, the Permanent Secretariat and the Observers on their activities and cooperation³,
2. Takes note of the oral report of the Contracting Parties and Observers,
3. Asks the Contracting Parties to intensify the implementation of the Alpine Convention and, to include the regional and local authorities more intensively in the process,
4. Asks the Contracting Parties, the Permanent Secretariat and Observers, to intensify constructively their cooperation based on the experiences gathered in recent years and in the context of the Alpine Week 2012, particularly with the organization of common activities on the topics of the MAP, and through a stronger involvement of Observers in the implementation of the Alpine Convention,
5. Asks the Permanent Secretariat to report on the progress in the cooperation between Contracting Parties, Permanent Secretariat and Observers and on the integration of the MAP in their activities at the 13th Alpine Conference.

³ See Enclosure 4 - Document ACXII/B1

ITEM B 3 Sustainable development: Rio +20

The Alpine Conference

1. Reaffirms its commitment to greater sustainability of mountain areas;
2. Takes note of the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future we want” and recognizes the documents’ paragraph about mountains, as to the legitimacy of the Alpine Convention activities at international level and as its basis for future work. From the perspective of the implementation of this document, the Permanent Committee, through the Permanent Secretariat and with the support of observers, asks:
 - to analyze the compatibility, with the Alpine region, of the definition and proposed directives in the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future we want” on the topic of Green Economy for Sustainable Development and to assess the potential applications of such an instrument in the Alps;
 - to closely follow the negotiations for the development of Sustainability Goals by 2015 and to analyze their relevance for the Alpine region;
 - to strengthen the dialogue and partnership with other mountain regions and other related entities and to strengthen the exchange of experience.

ITEM B 4 Climate and Energy

The Alpine Conference

1. Takes note of the Report of the Presidency and of the Permanent Secretariat⁴,
2. Confirms that climate change is an important challenge for the Alpine region, and therefore encourages the Contracting Parties to carry out corresponding activities, according to the Multiannual Programme of the Alpine Convention,
3. Firmly believes that, in view of the reduction of energy consumption and of sustainable energy production and use in the Alps, it is important for the Alpine Convention to deal more intensively with the topic of energy infrastructures in the Alpine region and their consequences in particular on the environment and landscape,
4. Is aware of the relevance of the topic of energy in the Alps, sets up an Energy Platform and commissions the Permanent Committee to approve the mandate of the Platform at its 51st meeting, in light of the discussions held at the 12th Alpine Conference,
5. Encourages the Contracting Parties to take further initiatives in the area of climate. It therefore welcomes the initiative by Liechtenstein and Switzerland of a second call for proposals for the Architecture Award, as well as the planned information campaign organized by Germany in cooperation with the network of communities "Allianz in den Alpen" to raise awareness and involve Alpine communities in the effort for climate protection,
6. Asks the Permanent Secretariat to report on the implementation of the proposed activities contained in Table 4 of the document in Enclosure 5 at the 13th Alpine Conference.

⁴ See Enclosure 5 - Document ACXII/B4

ITEM B 5 Fourth Report on the State of the Alps on Sustainable Tourism

The Alpine Conference

1. Takes note of the progress report on the Fourth Report on the State of the Alps in the area of “Sustainable Tourism”⁵,
2. Authorizes the Permanent committee to finally approve the Fourth contribution to the Report on the State of the Alps in the area of “Sustainable Tourism” at its 51st meeting, taking into account the discussions held at the 12th Alpine Conference,
3. Prompts the bodies of the Alpine Convention and the Contracting Parties, to appropriately make use of and communicate the Fourth Report on the State of the Alps in the area of “Sustainable Tourism” and to implement activities in the areas considered as priorities by the report.

⁵ See Enclosure 6 - Document ACXII/B5

ITEM B 6 Working Group “Macro-regional Strategy for the Alps”

The Alpine Conference,

In light of its decision XI/B3 (Brdo, 8/9 March 2011) and in light of the conclusions of the European Council of 23/24 June 2011, in which the European Council invited Member States to continue work in cooperation with the Commission on possible future macro-regional strategies (chapter “Other items” indent 3)

Aware that the Alpine Convention represents an essential framework in the Alpine area in harmonising protection and economic development in the Alpine region with the objective to sustain the Alps as living space for people and nature as well as economic area,

1. Welcomes the efforts for and the development of a process leading to a possible macro-regional strategy for the Alps.
2. Underlines the importance of a contribution of the Alpine Convention to the process towards the possible development of a macro-regional strategy for the Alpine region.
3. With a view to a possible adoption of a macro-regional strategy for the Alpine region by the European bodies:
 - a. is prepared and willing to contribute on the basis of its experience of over two decades of transnational cooperation in the Alpine region and its balanced approach between development and conservation;
 - b. offers to contribute its existing networks;
 - c. is ready to contribute to the implementation of such a strategy in the specific subject areas covered by the Alpine Convention, with particular regard to the thematic areas listed in the input paper;
 - d. is ready to participate in the stakeholder dialogue when the macro-regional strategy gets established by the European Council.
 - e. recommends the Contracting Parties to make use of the potential of the Alpine Convention in the further development of the process leading to a macro-regional strategy.

4. Underlines its commitment by endorsing the paper "Contribution of the Alpine Convention to the process towards a macro-regional Strategy for the Alps"⁶ (input paper) which identifies in particular the Alpine Convention added-value by pointing to Alpine specific issues, key messages and Alpine Convention resources,
5. Mandates the Permanent Secretariat with the submission of the input paper to all relevant European institutions as the contribution of the Alpine Convention towards a possible macro-regional strategy for the Alps,
6. Suggests the strengthening of the coordination among all relevant actors interested by a macro-regional strategy for the Alps through open participatory processes and underlines that the macro-regional strategy is an opportunity to enhance the cooperation potential between the Alps and their surroundings,
7. Enables the Permanent Committee to renew the WGs mandate in the future, if or when there is a need to do so,
8. In view to contribute to the process for a possible MRS for the Alps, invites the Alpine regions and the ASP to a joint conference in Brussels in the second half of 2013 on the future of the Alps. The objective of such a discussion are:
 - a. Exchange on their respective strategies for the Alps
 - b. Possible ways of a stronger cooperation in the future
 - c. draw from the Commission's evaluation of the existing MRSs.

⁶ Siehe Anlage 7 - Dokument ACXII/B6/1

ITEM B 7 Future Italian Presidency 2013/2014: preliminary programme

The Alpine Conference

1. Takes notice of the report on the main goals and priorities of the future Italian Presidency⁷,
2. Authorizes the Permanent Committee to set up a Working Group on Mountain Forests,
3. Hands over on the Presidency of the Alpine Conference for the period 2013-2014 to Italy and thanks Switzerland for the work carried out during its Presidency.

ITEM 5 Approval of the preliminary Minutes of Decisions

The Alpine Conference approves the preliminary Minutes of Decisions and forwards them for approval in their final version to the Permanent Committee.

⁷ Siehe Anlage 8 - Dokument ACXII/B7

List of Enclosures

- Enclosure 1 Mechanism for the verification of the compliance with the Alpine Convention and its implementation protocols (compliance procedure) - Document ACXII/A1/1
- Enclosure 2 Report of the Compliance Committee to the 11th Alpine Conference on the state of the compliance with the Alpine Convention and its implementation protocols - Document AC11/A1/1
- Enclosure 3 Progress report on the Multiannual Working Programme (MAP/ SAP) - Document ACXII/A7
- Enclosure 4 Report on the activities of the Presidency, the Permanent Secretariat and Observers 2011-2012 - Document ACXII/B1
- Enclosure 5 Report on Climate and Energy - Document ACXII/B4
- Enclosure 6 Fourth Report on the State of the Alps “Sustainable Tourism in the Alps” – Progress report - Document ACXII/B5
- Enclosure 7 Contribution of the Alpine Convention to the process towards the creation of a macro-regional strategy for the Alps - Document ACXII/B6/1
- Enclosure 8 Report on the main goals and priorities of the future Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention 2013 – 2014 - Document ACXII/B7