



ALPENKONVENTION
CONVENTION ALPINE
ALPSKA KONVENCIJA
CONVENZIONE DELLE ALPI

Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention

ACTIVITY REPORT

December 2020 – December 2021

A RESILIENT NETWORK

Foreword by the Secretary General



Photo: Die Fotografen

Over this past year, the Alps have again proven to be extremely important for our health and wellbeing. As the pandemic continued, many of us sought out nature and the outdoors as a place of respite. The Alps have been an important destination for this escape, but have also suffered as a result – e.g. with the overcrowding of sensitive sites due to increased regional and domestic travel. The ongoing global health crisis has not only placed public and individual health front and centre, but has spotlighted our relationship with nature, and its direct impacts on our health. These experiences – both the positive and negative – have strengthened our resolve to look after the Alpine environment. The Alpine Convention is uniquely positioned to do so.

Working in a transnational manner to address the challenges we face has remained the priority of the Convention. Over the past year, the

Permanent Secretariat, together with the outgoing French Presidency and the incoming Swiss one, all Contracting Parties, the Observer organisations and other partners, has worked hard to further the goal of the protection and sustainable development of the Alps.

This activity report reflects these efforts. It is packed full of the many events and meetings we organised and attended, the activities and projects we implemented and concluded – often in cooperation with our partners across the Alps. The number of activities that were successfully carried out during these uncertain times is a tribute to the commitment of the Alpine Convention family to work together. We have now mostly settled into this new “normal” defined by uncertainty and a constant changing, reorganising, postponing and sometimes cancelling of conferences, events, meetings and even in our private lives. The positive spirit of the team at the Secretariat helped make this process a lot easier and showed that when we put our minds to it, we can move mountains!

Alenka Smerkolj

Secretary General of the Alpine Convention

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SUPPORT TO THE BODIES OF THE ALPINE CONVENTION

Alpine Conference



*Ministers and Observers speaking at the XVI Alpine Conference, 10 December 2020.
Photos: PSAC*

The XVI Alpine Conference took place on 10 December 2020. It was the first Alpine Conference to be held online, due to the sanitary situation. The Permanent Secretariat supported the French Presidency in developing various organisational scenarios along the year and in implementing the event. Despite the delegations from the Presidency, Contracting Parties, Observers and the Permanent

Secretariat participating each from different locations, the conference ran smoothly. Two declarations, on integrated and sustainable water management in the Alps and on the protection of mountain biodiversity and its promotion at international level, were adopted, as well as the Eighth report on the State of the Alps and the Climate Action Plan 2.0. The Conference took note of the results of all Thematic Working Bodies and adopted the mandates for the next period. The Presidency was handed over to Switzerland.

On 10 December afternoon, an interactive exchange between participants of the Alpine Conference, EUSALP Annual Forum and the AlpWeek Intermezzo was also organised.

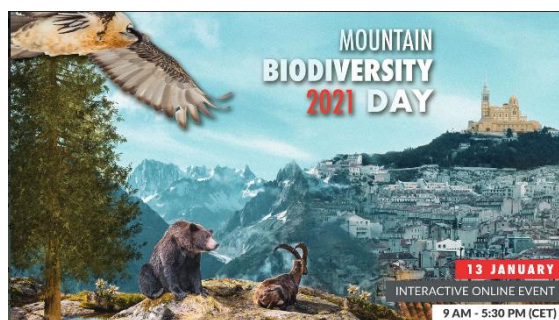
The Permanent Secretariat is in constant exchange with the Swiss Presidency to prepare the XVII Alpine Conference, scheduled to take place on 8 September 2022 in Brig (CH).

Permanent Committee

The Permanent Secretariat worked closely with the Swiss Presidency to organise three meetings of the Permanent Committee (PC) in 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 71st, 72nd, and 73rd PC meetings had to take place virtually on 10 March, 8 June, and 16 November 2021 respectively. Since the first online PC meeting in July 2020, the Permanent Secretariat has been able, through ongoing research and continued

testing of new software, to find and optimise a setting that allows for the online participation of all Contracting Parties and Observers. In cooperation with the interpreters, interpreting technicians, and IT technicians, the Secretariat provided a functioning platform with interpretation into the four Alpine languages to allow the meetings to run as smoothly as possible.

French Presidency



Banner of the Mountain Biodiversity Day

Although the French Presidency officially concluded with the XVI Alpine Conference, the Mountain Biodiversity Day, a global event to raise awareness and exchange on the wealth, vulnerability and protection of mountain biodiversity, which had been postponed due to the sanitary situation, was organised as a direct follow-up on 13 January 2021. Aimed at providing input in advance of the IUCN Congress 2020 and the COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the event was held

online in cooperation with the French EUSALP Presidency and jointly coordinated by ALPARC, the Permanent Secretariat and the

Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention as well as UNEP. Over 300 participants from 39 countries participated in the sessions dedicated to global mountains, the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and Alpine biodiversity.

A further product resulting from the outgoing French Presidency was the Handbook “Measuring the tourism sustainability of mountain destinations in the Alps”, prepared by an ad hoc Steering Committee coordinated by France, and which France presented to PC73 and subsequently translated in the four Alpine languages.

Swiss Presidency

The Swiss Presidency, with the support of the Permanent Secretariat, organised several projects and events in 2021 to implement its five-point plan.

In the area of cycling tourism, the Swiss Presidency organised the international online conference "MoVe the Alps". During the conference on 22 April, more than 200 participants discussed how to promote sustainable and climate-friendly cycling tourism in the Alpine region. The Permanent Secretariat provided support concerning content and communication and the Secretary General gave a welcome address. The Swiss Presidency, as well as the Permanent Secretariat, together with Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein and Slovenia, also supported the 3rd edition of YOALIN, the youth mobility project of CIPRA Youth Council (CYC) and CIPRA International. The Permanent Secretariat supported its dissemination and created, in coordination with CIPRA International, an online map

representing some chosen destinations to advertise the project. The Permanent Secretariat also participated and intervened during the closing event in Innsbruck (AT) in September.

The Swiss Presidency also initiated the "Climate Hour", aimed at showing the variety of small and large climate actions in the Alpine region. The 1st edition of the Climate Hour took place on 5 June (World Environment Day) as a decentralised event with more than 20 activities all over the Alps. The Permanent Secretariat supported this initiative through the organisation of a scavenger hunt in Innsbruck, in cooperation with Climate Alliance Tyrol. Furthermore, it coordinated seven further events carried out by the Infopoints of the Alpine Convention. Finally, the Permanent Secretariat provided communication support and distributed the promotional material prepared by the Presidency (flyers, cotton bags).

klimastunde
heure du climat
ura za podnebje
ora del clima



Banner of the Climate Hour and participants in the scavenger hunt organised by the Permanent Secretariat in Innsbruck. Photo: PSAC

On the topic of sustainable construction and renovation in the Alps, the Swiss Presidency held an online conference with more than 100 participants on 10 June, in the context of the 10th anniversary of the Constructive Alps Architecture Prize. The Permanent Secretariat provided communication support.

To highlight Alpine urban spaces and their climatic, environmental, and social challenges, the Swiss Presidency launched the "Climate Action in Alpine Towns" pilot in the framework of the Territorial Agenda 2030. A peer learning workshop "Climate action in Alpine towns – How to?" was organised by the Swiss Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE with the support of the Permanent Secretariat and ESPON and took place online on 18 June with about 70 participants. The Permanent Secretariat handled the logistical and technical implementation of the workshop, which was interpreted in

all Alpine languages and English. Activities for the elaboration of the Ninth Report on the State of the Alps on Alpine Towns are reported in the chapter dedicated to the SOIA.

Finally, the Permanent Secretariat assisted the Presidency in disseminating a discussion paper in preparation to the online conference of the Environment and Transport Ministers of the Alpine countries and the EU on the decarbonisation of transport in the Alps, scheduled for 14 January 2022.

Beyond the statutory meetings, the Permanent Secretariat furthermore provided support for the organisation and the contents of three Heads of Delegation meetings held online on 9 December 2020, 16 June and 7 October 2021. The Secretariat also participated in eight sessions of "Observer Dialogues" called by the Presidency on different topics.

Activities related to the preparation of the new Multi-Annual Work Programme of the Alpine Conference

Compliance Committee

In 2021 the Compliance Committee held two formal and one informal online meeting on 9 March, 8 June and 17 November to discuss the ongoing ordinary compliance procedure, the ongoing procedure for reviewing the implementation of the Declaration on Population and Culture, the envisaged in-depth review on a topic related to the Transport Protocol as well as ideas for redesigning the ordinary compliance procedure. The Permanent Secretariat supported the Presidency both in terms of contents and with the organisation.

After the submission of all national reports on compliance of the Contracting Parties with the obligations under the Alpine Convention, the ongoing ordinary compliance procedure continued with the preparation of a first draft report by the Permanent Secretariat, which was discussed by the Compliance Committee in its meeting on 17 November 2021. The Contracting Parties and Observers have the opportunity to come up with their comments on the draft report and on the ideas for conclusions presented at the meeting until mid-

are detailed in the paragraph dedicated to the corresponding Thematic Working Body.

February 2022. These statements will be considered in the updated draft report, which will be finalised in the next meeting of the Compliance Committee with a view to its submission to the Permanent Committee for the attention of the XVII Alpine Conference.

In 2021 no progress was made with regard to the ongoing procedure for reviewing the implementation of the Declaration on Population and Culture.

As foreseen in the current compliance mechanism, the selection of the topic of the envisaged in-depth review related to the Transport Protocol was postponed until the recommendations from the final report of the ongoing ordinary compliance procedure are available. The implementation of the in-depth review is expected to take place under the upcoming Slovenian Presidency.

In the context of the late submission of the national compliance reports, the Compliance Committee also discussed the redesign of the ordinary compliance procedure. This activity will continue in 2022.

Thematic Working Bodies

At the XVI Alpine Conference, the seven regular Thematic Working Bodies (TWBs) were entrusted with new mandates and three new Working Groups were created: the Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development Working Group, chaired by Germany, and the two ad hoc Working Groups for the preparation of the Ninth Report on the State of the Alps (RSA 9) and of the Multi-Annual Work Programme of the Alpine Conference (MAP) 2023-2030, both chaired by the Swiss Presidency.

The Permanent Secretariat, as always, published the results of the concluded period, as well as the new mandates, on the Alpine Convention website and managed the nomination process of the representatives of the Contracting Parties and Observers. It has been continuously supporting the now ten TWBs by providing advice on strategic and institutional issues, offering organisational support to the Chairs

(especially during the meetings), and attending and contributing to all meetings, as will be outlined in the following paragraphs. In total, 31 regular meetings of TWBs were organised – all of them online due to the ongoing pandemic – as well as several coordination meetings and events.

Additionally, together with the Swiss Presidency, the Permanent Secretariat organised on 17 June an online workshop for the exchange between the TWB. Structured along short interviews of the Chairs (including leaders of the Green Economy editorial team, the Expert Group on the Sustainability of Mountain Tourism Destinations and EUSALP AG6) and discussions, the workshop was attended by over 60 members of the PC, TWBs and Infopoints. Preparations for a second online workshop, due to take place on 25 January 2022, were also carried out.

Alpine Biodiversity Board



Photo: Pierre Adenis

The Permanent Secretariat supported the Alpine Biodiversity Board (ABB), chaired by Italy, which met three times in 2021 (21 April, 5 August, 19 October).

To address the three main objectives of its mandate, the ABB established core groups dealing respectively with the definition of a set of indicators of Alpine biodiversity, the preparation

of a project proposal to be presented for EU funding, and international activities in the field of biodiversity.

The ABB was actively involved in the Mountain Biodiversity Day (see above). As a next step, on 15-16 December, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention and further partners, the Board organised a public online event, the Alpine and Carpathian Biodiversity Forum, structured along seven thematic sections. The Secretary General gave a welcome address and the Permanent Secretariat contributed further two speaking slots, and also supported the organisational, logistical and technical preparation of the event.

Alpine Climate Board



Photo: Marko Mlakar

The work programme of the Alpine Climate Board (ACB) until the XVII Alpine Conference focuses on the

implementation of the Climate Action Plan 2.0. To this effect, ten implementation communities, coordinated by one or two “caretakers” from the Contracting Parties or Observers, have been set up.

The Permanent Secretariat continued to be part of the informal core group supporting the Chair, Austria, in organising the work of the ACB, which met five times. Three plenary meetings took place, on 26 January, 18 May and 22 September as well as three meetings between the caretakers and the core group.

Furthermore, the ACB organised three webinars with guest speakers, dealing with the topics of financial options for activities, youth involvement and climate-neutral lifestyles in the Alps, which attracted a broader audience. The Permanent Secretariat actively participated in each of these activities, and also supported the kick-off of the Energy implementation community, by liaising with EUSALP AG9 and ALPACA.

The Permanent Secretariat also provided specific support to the communication activities of the ACB. A communication plan was drafted together with the Chair and Switzerland. The Permanent Secre-

tariat produced a set of two graphical representations of the implementation pathways of the Alpine Climate Target System 2050, translated in five languages, and provided input and translations for a slide presentation to be used by ACB members. Regular articles and posts to promote the “caretaker of the month” have been published on the communication channels of the Alpine Convention. The Permanent Secretariat also presented the work of the ACB at the “City-mountain cooperation: together towards carbon neutrality” conference organised by EUSALP in Grenoble (FR) in October, and at the meeting of the Soil Protection Working Group in March

Large Carnivores, Wild Ungulates and Society Working Group (WISO)



Photo: Omurkul Borubaev

The Large Carnivores, Wild Ungulates and Society Working Group, chaired by Slovenia, gathered for the first time under the Swiss Presidency

on 19 May at a kick-off meeting. Initially planned in Bled (SI) with a field trip, the second meeting also had to be held online, on 18 November.

A draft map of the ecological connectivity for large mammals in the Alps and the main barriers was discussed. Questionnaires to review the implementation of recommendations made in the previous mandate periods on the coordinated management of bear, wolf and lynx in the Alps are also being prepared.

Mountain Agriculture and Mountain Forestry Working Group



Photo: Hannes Schlosser

The Working Group on Mountain Agriculture and Forestry, chaired by Italy, met three times in 2021 on 28 April, 2 July and 12 November. The planned outputs of the current mandate are a stocktaking on organic farming in the Alps, a collection of organic farming scenarios in the Alps and a study

report on the state of the value chains in the agriculture and forest sectors.

A first thematic workshop "Status and perspectives of organic agriculture in the Alps" was organised online on 18 November. Experts, stakeholders and local actors discussed the status quo, best practices and scenarios as well as the interrelations of organic mountain agriculture and the agroforestry sector with agritourism, conservation of agroforestry biodiversity and genetic selection and protection of species, as well as socio-economic developments.

A second thematic workshop, on value chains, was prepared for early 2022.

Natural Hazards Working Group (PLANALP)



Photo: Beda Sylvester Widmer

The Natural Hazards Working Group, in short PLANALP, chaired by Austria, held three meetings in 2021. The work of the new mandate period

was kicked-off with a short coordination meeting on 25 March and continued with meetings on 21 June and 12 October. As usual, a part of each meeting was dedicated to reports on past and current events regarding natural hazards in individual countries and regions.

The main task of the current mandate is focusing on nature-based solutions for natural hazard risk reduction and prevention, which will result in a policy paper with

recommendations. Special attention is also given to the promotion of past activities and results. For this

Soil Protection Working Group



Photo: PSAC

The Soil Protection Working Group is chaired by Austria, which also financed a dedicated Project Officer at the Permanent Secretariat to provide continuous support to the Chair in 2021, including in drafting working documents and communicating with the group's members.

The Working Group started into its second mandate phase just two days after its adoption by the XVI Alpine Conference, by holding a technical meeting on 14 December 2020. This was crucial for using a short window of opportunity to significantly improve the representation of the Alpine area in the European wide LUCAS Soil survey 2022.

The group then met three times in 2021, on 17 March, 16 June as well as 2-3 November. Additionally, two technical meetings took place on 14 December 2020 and 6 September

purpose, the Working Group is preparing factsheets for distribution in all Alpine languages.

2021. All meetings had to be carried out in an online format, even though the meeting in November had originally been planned to take place in Bolzano/Bozen (IT). Still, the latter meeting included a joint session with the Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development Working Group to discuss soil functions and spatial planning, a topic on which the two groups are jointly planning a public workshop for March 2022.

The structure and topics of the soil protection long-term action plan were defined by the group, and submitted for feedback to other bodies and networks, after which responsibilities for preparing the chapters were distributed between Contracting Parties.

Networking remained an important aspect of the Working Group's activities, which presentations during the Austrian Soil Forum in May, EUSALP AG6 meeting in July, the Geneva EUROSIL 2021 in August, the first European Soil Observatory Stakeholder Forum in October, the annual meeting of the Alpine Soil Partnership and the Austrian national EUSALP coordination committee in December 2021. The

collaboration with the Alpine Soil Partnership was pursued through mutual participation in meetings as well as joint activities such as the newly established “Alpine Soil

Newsletter” (two editions in 2021) and the translation of the FAO “Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management” in the missing Alpine languages German and Slovenian.

Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development Working Group



Photo: Wolfer Mayrhofer

The XVI Alpine Conference established the Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development Working Group, chaired by Germany, which had developed from the former ad hoc Expert Group on Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development (2015-2019). The Working Group met three times in 2021, on 8-9 March, 5 July and 2-3 November.

The Working Group is building on the previous work of the Expert Group as well as the Alpine Climate Target System 2050. In its first mandate it is

preparing an assessment study on cross-border cooperation and coordination of spatial development – particularly coordination of spatial planning and sustainable territorial development – within the Alpine Convention perimeter. This study will serve as a basis for further work of the Working Group in the upcoming years. The Working Group is also contributing to two prioritised implementation pathways of the Climate Action Plan 2.0, namely the elaboration of an Alpine wide concept of „Spatial planning for climate protection” and the definition of Alpine wide guidelines for minimised land take and sealing. The latter is done in cooperation with the Soil Protection Working Group (see above). The Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development Working Group also contributed to the elaboration of the RSA 9.

Transport Working Group



Photo: Franco Benetti

The Transport Working Group, chaired by France, met on three different occasions during 2021: on 4 March, on 2 June and on 28 September. Five reports are being prepared under the lead of different Contracting Parties, dealing with the external costs of transport, sustainable mobility policies and measures, technologies for sustainable passenger transport, the accessibility of

remote mountain destinations and commuters' behaviour. The Permanent Secretariat helped keeping track of the different delegations' inputs and contributions.

The Permanent Secretariat also provided proposals and input for the realisation of a map as foreseen on the mandate, besides making available its technical support and mapping platforms to the Group.

Additionally, the Secretariat supported the coordination with other ongoing processes such as EUSALP AG4. The Secretariat also promoted the involvement of the Transport Working Group in the process leading to the Conference of the Environment and Transport Ministers of January 2022.

Ad hoc Working Group for the preparation of the Multi-Annual Work Programme

The current Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAP) of the Alpine Conference is ending in 2022. The Swiss Presidency is leading the elaboration of the fourth MAP, due to cover the period 2023-2030. To this effect an ad hoc Working Group was set up, which met three times: a kick-off meeting on 29 April and two workshops on the identified priority areas (27 May on Climate action and Quality of life and 30 June on

Biodiversity and Ecosystems as well as on the draft structure of the MAP). The Permanent Secretariat has been supporting the coordination of the work, providing feedback to meeting documents and the first draft of the MAP.

Furthermore, from 6 to 14 September the Presidency organised a series of six regional meetings to present and discuss the MAP process, targeted at a broader circle of stakeholders: in

Bolzano/Bozen (IT), Bohinj (SI), Vienna (AT), Munich (DE), Berne (CH) and Chambéry (FR). They were attended by a total of over 90

participants. The Permanent Secretariat managed the invitation and registration process and participated in each meeting.



roadMAP workshops in Bohinj (SI) (left) and Munich (DE) (right). Photos: PSAC

NETWORKING

Despite the sanitary restrictions that dominated the year 2021 the Permanent Secretariat actively

sought to further ties with Contracting Parties, Observers, and partners both online and in person.

Contracting Parties

Following to governmental changes in Liechtenstein, in August the Secretary General visited in Vaduz (LI) the new Minister in charge of the Alpine Convention, Sabine Monauni, Deputy Prime Minister and leading the Ministry of Home Affairs, Economy and Environment.

They addressed the priority topics of protection and sustainable development in the Alps, also in the view of Liechtenstein possibly taking on the Presidency of the Alpine Convention

In September 2021, the Secretary General had a meeting with the French Secretary of State in charge of biodiversity, Bérangère Abba, at the Col du Lautaret (FR), to discuss the continued involvement of France in the Alpine Convention after its Presidency. Having just hosted the IUCN World Congress and as upcoming EU Presidency during the CBD negotiations, France is committed to continue furthering the protection of Alpine biodiversity – also as initiator of ALPARC, which was celebrating its 25th anniversary at this occasion.



Secretary General in Vaduz (LI) visiting Sabine Monauni, Deputy Prime Minister. Source: IKR



High-level meeting at 2100m altitude: Secretary General with French Secretary of State Bérangère Abba and ALPARC, Col du Lautaret (FR). Photo: PSAC

The Secretary General participated in several meetings in Ljubljana (SI) with the Slovenian Head of Delegation, further Ministry officials and other stakeholders in December 2020, July, September and December 2021, to discuss current issues and start preparing the Slovenian Alpine Convention Presidency, starting after the XVII Alpine Conference. In the view of the intended focus of the Slovenian Presidency on quality of life, the Secretary General attended a panel on this topic organised by ESPON in Bled (SI) in December.



The Secretary General participating in a panel discussion on Quality of Life for ESPON in Bled (SI). Photo: ESPON

The Permanent Secretariat also participated in the 11th and 12th editions of the Slovenian Alpine Convention Day, in December 2020 (to which the Secretary General gave a welcome address) and May 2021.

Finally, the Secretary General travelled to Rome (IT) in November to meet the Italian Head of Delegation to the Alpine Convention and discuss current issues.

The Permanent Secretariat also provided communication support and participated in the final event of the series of three conferences of sustainable tourism organised in the follow-up of the XV Alpine Conference, the Conference “Healing Power of the Alps”, organised by Austria together with ARGE ALP in October in Bad Hofgastein.



The Secretary General addressing the “Healing Power of the Alps” conference. Photo: Healing Power of the Alps

Observers

Throughout the year, the Permanent Secretariat maintained close contacts with many Observer organisations. In particular, the Secretary General had a meeting in September with the new co-presidents of CIPRA, Serena Arduino and Bianca Elzenbaumer in Bolzano/Bozen. She also gave addresses to the General Assemblies of ALPARC (January), Alliance in the Alps (September) and Alpine Town of the Year (October).

In June the Secretary General was invited to Mallnitz (AT) to learn more about the 8A Alpine Municipalities training projects, developed by the Alliance in the Alps network, and visit the new training center at the Hohe Tauern National Park visitor center.



Meeting in Mallnitz (AT) to discuss the 8A project. Photo: PSAC

She also took active part in the 25th anniversary of ALPARC held in September in the cradle of the network, Le Monêtier-les-Bains in Les Ecrins National Park (FR) and gave an interview published in ALPARC's Activity Report 2021.



ALPARC 25th anniversary, Le-Monêtier-les-Bains (FR). Photo: PSAC

The Permanent Secretariat also attended festivities of the 40th anniversary of Triglav National Park (SI).

Furthermore, the Permanent Secretariat liaised with EUROMONTANA to schedule a presentation of the Eight Report on the State of the Alps by the Chair of the ad hoc Working Group in EUROMONTANA's online workshop "Improved mobility, improved air quality in rural and mountain areas" in March.

The Permanent Secretariat participated as member in the reflection group of the Alpine Changemaker Network, initiated by CIPRA and other partners with the aim of empowering young people to implement their ideas for social change and sustainable development in the Alps; the Secretariat attended

Infopoints

The seven Infopoints of the Alpine Convention continued promoting the Alpine Convention and its messages throughout the reporting period. In particular, with financial support from France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland, they each organised events within the Reading Mountains Festival in December 2020 and 2021 and, with financial support from the Swiss Presidency, within the Climate Hour in June 2021. The Permanent Secretariat concluded Memoranda of Understanding with the Infopoints for each event and carried out the financial management of the contributions.

In July, the Secretary General was able to visit the Infopoints in Villach (AT), Tolmin (SI) and Mojstrana (SI). The Deputy Secretary General participated in two webinars organised by the Domodossola Infopoint (IT) on the topics “Water,

part of the first Alpine Changemaker Basecamp in Poschiavo (CH) in July.

Finally, the Permanent Secretariat continued following the projects DuALPlus, trAILs, OpenSpaceAlps, LinkingAlps and ADO, financed under the Alpine Space Programme, in quality of observer.

Environment and Mankind” (in March) and “Tourism, Mountains and Health” (May). The Permanent Secretariat also attended the “Fire in the Alps” event organised by the Villach Infopoint in August.

The Permanent Secretariat also financially supported the Grand Paradis Infopoint for the organisation of the 24th edition of the Gran Paradiso Film Festival and the Giroparchi Nature and Culture Trail project, which received the international award of UIAA – International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation.

Finally, in 2021 the Permanent Secretariat renewed for three further years its Memoranda of Understanding with Ars.Uni.VCO and with the Municipality of Morbegno for the operation of, respectively, the Infopoints of Domodossola and Morbegno



The Secretary General visiting the Mojstrana and Villach Infopoints. Photos: Slovenian Alpine Museum (left), Dobratsch Nature Park (right)

Connecting the dots

While the Infopoint networking workshop planned by the Permanent Secretariat, with financial support from Austria, had to be postponed further due to the ongoing sanitary crisis, the Secretariat, on the initiative of the Bolzano/Bozen operational branch office, held individual virtual update meetings with each Infopoint in the spring and carried out a survey on their perception of their role, to which all but one Infopoint provided answers. Their analysis showed that the hosting organisations find their role as Infopoint useful, most of them even very useful, for their own

missions, and that they mention the Alpine Convention (mostly its concrete activities) also in other contexts. While every Infopoint is different they mostly focus on information dissemination, education and awareness-raising. The interaction with the Permanent Secretariat was evaluated as very engaging. Facebook and the Alpine Convention website are the most used communication channels of the Infopoints.

The Infopoint networking workshop is now provisionally scheduled in Bolzano/Bozen in June 2022

EUSALP

In 2021 the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention continued its strong commitment and efforts to contribute to EUSALP – the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region – in several ways: by representing the Alpine Convention in the General

Assembly (GA) and the Executive Board (EB), by co-leading the Action Group 6 (AG6) together with Land Carinthia, by participating as an active partner in the AlpGov 2 project and finally as Observer in Action Groups 4 and 9.

Representing the Alpine Convention in the EUSALP process

During the French EUSALP Presidency, which had been extended to 2021, the Permanent Secretariat participated in the meetings of the EB on 12 January, 8 April, 1 July and 6-8 October. All meetings included joint sessions with the Board of Action Group Leaders (BAGL). These meetings paved the way for setting up a EUSALP Technical Support Structure, which is expected to start its work in 2022 providing assistance for the implementation of the strategy. The high points of the French EUSALP Presidency were the Annual Fora held online on 10 December 2020 and in a hybrid format in Nice (FR) on 14-15 December 2021.

Each featured meetings of the GA and a series of workshops. In the 2020 GA, Deputy Secretary General Marianna Elmi underlined the opportunities that sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism represents

for the future of tourism in the Alps. In the 2021 GA, Deputy Secretary General ad interim Wolfger Mayrhofer highlighted that the achievements of AG6 in the field of promoting the production, transformation and consumption of local Alpine products in short supply chains are important not only in terms of sustainability in general, but especially in the context of resilience. The 2021 GA entrusted Italy with the EUSALP presidency in 2022. This Presidency will be operated by the Autonomous Provinces of South Tyrol and Trentino. Furthermore, the creation of the EUSALP Youth Council was formally approved and the French Region Grand Est was granted the Observer status in the EUSALP bodies.

As regards the participation in the workshops of the Annual Fora, in 2020 the Permanent Secretariat

cooperated with the Bourgogne-Franche Comté and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regions (FR), as well as the AlpWeek co-organisers, to schedule an afternoon focusing on youth, on 10 December, which included the presentation of the winners of the Alpine Convention Photocontest, the Young Academics Award ceremony and an exchange between youth representatives and participants of the Alpine Conference, the Annual Forum and AlpWeek.

In 2021, the Permanent Secretariat was engaged in two thematic workshops, on "Territorial Brands, UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage and FAO Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems" as well as on "Spatial planning for a fair and green Alpine region". Moreover, in both Annual Fora the Permanent Secretariat was involved in the

preparation of a workshop on multifunctional forests.

The Secretariat also participated in an exchange with the Swiss Presidency, the French Delegation and the French EUSALP Presidency in April and presented the work of the ACB and on the RSA9 at the conference "City-mountain cooperation: together towards carbon neutrality" organised by EUSALP in Grenoble in October.



EUSALP Annual Forum in Nice (FR), 14-15 December 2021. Photo: PSAC

Activities of EUSALP Action Group 6

In 2021 the AG6 met three times online on 24-25 March, 12-13 July and 9-10 December to discuss the implementation of its current work plan. Recurring items on the agenda concerned the planning of single activities, cross-sectoral themes and financing issues. The most important single activities carried out by AG6 were: the finalisation of a study on

preservation and valorisation of the diversity of Alpine natural and cultural landscapes in times of climate crisis and the preparation of the EUSALP Landscape Conference planned for spring 2022; the second international workshop on Territorial Brands, organised in collaboration with EURAC Research on 10-11 June with 80 online participants on each

day; the mapping of Territorial Brands; an exploratory meeting with FAO representatives on the implementation of the FAO programme on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems in the Alpine region on 15 October in Poschiavo (CH); and the mapping of non-wood forest products.

Among the cross-sectoral topics, AG6 contributed significantly to the results of the Task Force Multifunctional Forests and Sustainable Use of Timber including among others a contribution to the consultation on the new EU Forest Strategy

and comprehensive feedbacks to a document of the French EUSALP Presidency on multifunctional forests providing nature-based solutions for the resilience of Alpine territories. Furthermore, AG6 contributed substantially to the Joint Paper on Spatial Planning elaborated within the AlpGov 2 strategic priority policy area “Spatial planning”. Finally, the members of AG6 were informed about the priorities and opportunities for cooperation of the Alpine Space Programme 2021-2027 and about the terms of reference of the current first call for submission of project proposals.

Participation in the AlpGov 2 project

In the period covered by this report the Permanent Secretariat participated in all six AlpGov 2 project partner meetings on 29 January, 7 April, 26 June, 8 July, 4 October and 2 December. These meetings often served to prepare the joint EB-BAGL sessions held shortly afterwards.

With regard to the involvement of the Permanent Secretariat in numerous other meetings for the progress of the different work packages of the project, the following main activities should be mentioned: an online workshop on impact-oriented work design on 16 June and another online workshop on 21 October on capacity building and learning within the

work package “Skills development and EUSALP AGs empowerment”; the definition of targets and indicators for monitoring the strategic sectoral and cross-sectoral implementation initiatives of the Action Groups (AGs) within the work package “Strategic Steering and monitoring of implementation”; as well as the elaboration of a policy brief summarising the already elaborated policy recommendations from all AGs within the work package “Mobilising strategic target groups”. For AG6, the commitments from the political declaration on sustainable land use and soil protection were inserted. This document will be completed in 2022 with additional

policy recommendations coming from the current activities of the AGs.

Moreover, the Permanent Secretariat is organising the EUSALP Road Show in cooperation with the other AGs as part of the work package “Communication”. The EUSALP Road Show aims at bringing the EUSALP closer to citizens and outlining sustainable solutions for the benefit of the Alpine region. It will take place in different Alpine countries and will address local and regional stakeholders and the civil society in a direct and easy-going way. The first of five planned Road Show stops is scheduled for 26 January 2022 in Bolzano/Bozen in the context of the kick-off of the Italian EUSALP Presidency.

The end of the AlpGov 2 project in June 2022 is approaching. Therefore,

Observer role in AG4 and AG9

The Permanent Secretariat continued fulfilling its Observer role in AG4 (Mobility) and AG9 (Energy), attending the respective meetings in the reporting period (three for each body) as well as the 4th EUSALP

the upcoming Italian EUSALP Presidency convened an online meeting with the Action Group Leaders on 18 November to start a discussion on the options for funding the AGs post AlpGov 2. The Permanent Secretariat emphasised the importance of financing the day-to-day operation of the AGs. This includes the organisation of the regular AG meetings, the horizontal coordination with other AG leaders as well as activities to implement the respective work plans, such as conferences, workshops, studies, communication etc. It is foreseeable that the new framework conditions will have a direct impact on the perspectives of the participation of the Permanent Secretariat in the EUSALP.

Mobility Conference. The Permanent Secretariat regularly reported on the activities of the Alpine Convention and especially the Transport Working Group (to AG4) and the Alpine Climate Board (to AG9).

International Organisations

Carpathian Convention and UNEP

The Secretariats of the Carpathian and Alpine Conventions pursued their cooperation in several areas. First, in the field of mountain biodiversity, following to their collaboration in organising the Mountain Biodiversity Day in January (see above), they continued liaising about the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (post-2020 GBF) negotiations and received just before the end of the year positive feedback from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity on the draft new Memorandum of Cooperation between the three Conventions. The draft is expected to be finalised in early 2022 for signing promptly after the adoption of the post-2020 GBF.

Furthermore, Austria, UNEP, ICIMOD and the Permanent Secretariat co-organised a side-event at UNFCCC COP26 (Glasgow/UK, hybrid) on 9 November, under the title “Elevating adaptation action in mountains – from the Andes to the Alps,

Carpathians and Hindu Kush Himalaya”. The Secretary General intervened in this high-level event.

The Permanent Secretariat also presented the work of the Alpine Convention at two events organised by UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and CONDESAN: the “Regional Dialogue on Governance in the Andes and Mountain Regions” on 28 April (under the auspices of the Andean Mountain Initiative) and the “Bridges in the Andes” conference on 9 December.



The Secretary General speaking at COP26, 9 November 2021. Photo: PSAC

GLOMOS

Thanks to the cooperation with EURAC Research, which enabled the Secretariat to expand its network internationally, the Permanent Secretariat wrote a chapter in the book "Safeguarding Mountain Biodiversity – A Global Challenge" to

be published by GLOMOS in 2022. The chapter outlines the contribution of the Alpine Convention to the Sustainable Development Goals in the fields of climate action, soil protection and risk governance.

Others

Host Cities and institutions

The Secretary General maintained regular contacts with the City of Innsbruck and met the Mayor several times, especially in connection with the planned renovation of the Innsbruck office, which had to be postponed to 2022 due to administrative issues.

She also had a meeting in May with the Governor of Tyrol as well as an online meeting in April with his deputy, whom she also met at the inauguration of Steinberg am Rofan (AT) as a Mountaineering Village in September (see below). She also attended, along with further officials, the opening of the Innsbruck Festival of Early Music in August, which was an excellent networking opportunity.

The Secretary General exchanged with the Governor of South Tyrol at the yearly event of the Mountaineering Villages in October

(see below). She also maintained excellent relationships with EURAC research as hosting institution of the Bolzano/Bozen operational branch office of the Secretariat through regular meetings with the President and the Director of EURAC. The cooperation with the municipality of Bolzano/Bozen was further developed through one of the few events held in presence within the Reading Mountains Festival 2021 (see below).



Secretary General exchanging with the Governor of Tyrol, Günther Platter. Photo: Angerer/Land Tirol

AlpWeek



One of the sessions of the AlpWeek Intermezzo 2020. Photo: PSAC

The AlpWeek Intermezzo 2020, co-organised by several Observer organisations and the Permanent Secretariat like the last editions, took place around the XVI Alpine Conference on 9-11 December 2020. The topic was “Youth & Climate –

How can young people in the Alps be involved in shaping their future?”. Over 350 people registered to the programme made of 22 online sessions.

Already in 2020, the Observers and the Permanent Secretariat had decided to organise a further AlpWeek event back-to-back with the XVII Alpine Conference, on 6 and 7 September 2022 in Brig (CH). The Permanent Secretariat participated in ten online preparation meetings so far.

Mountaineering Villages



Former Deputy Secretary General Marianna Elmi at the inauguration ceremony of the new Mountaineering Villages Lavin, Guarda and Ardez (CH). Photos: Dominik Täuber



The active collaboration with the Mountaineering Villages continued. This successful implementation project of the Alpine Convention (linked to the Permanent Secretariat by a MoU) managed by the Alpine

Associations and the many engaged inhabitants of the villages, grew significantly in 2021 and become even more international with the entry of the Swiss Alpine Club (SAC) in the network in 2021. Six new

villages from Austria, Italy and, for the first time, Switzerland were accepted into the initiative.

The Deputy Secretary General welcomed the new Swiss Mountaineering Villages on 22 August in Ardez and the Secretary General



The Secretary General at the joining ceremony of the new Mountaineering Village Steinberg am Rofan (AT). Photos: PSAC

Delegates were able to travel to the Mountaineering Village Lungiarü in the Ladin Dolomites (IT) in October for the 13th annual meeting, which was also attended by the Secretary General.

congratulated Steinberg am Rofan (AT) during its celebration on 12 September. This brings the number of Mountaineering Villages to 35, with 22 in Austria, four in Germany, five in Italy of which two are in South Tyrol, and two each in Slovenia and Switzerland.



Furthermore, the Secretariat contributed an article about the Mountaineering Villages as case study in the UNWTO and FAO's publication "Mountain tourism – Towards a more sustainable path", released for International Mountain Day 2021.



Secretary General and Governor of South Tyrol Arno Kompatscher attending the annual meeting of the Mountaineering Villages in Lungiarü (IT). Photos PSAC

Youth Parliament to the Alpine Convention

The Permanent Secretariat continued to support the Youth Parliament to the Alpine Convention (YPAC), which remained active in 2021 despite the pandemic's impact on youth and schooling in general and the organisation of the YPAC partnership in particular.

The school of Trogen (CH) organised the 2021 YPAC session from 23-26 March on the topic of *Children's rights in the Alpine region*. Carried out for the first time in an online format, the event included multiple different sessions, meetings and leisure time activities. The Secretary General held a speech at the opening ceremony and addressed the young Alpine parliamentarians again at the start of their General Assembly.

The Permanent Secretariat also participated in November in an

online preparation meeting of the next YPAC session, to be organised by the Liechtensteinisches Gymnasium on 15/18 March 2022, if possible on-site. The Permanent Secretariat furthermore supported the involvement of YPAC students in different Alpine Convention activities such as the joint session Alpine Convention – AlpWeek – EUSALP on the afternoon of the XVI Alpine Conference or the roadMAP workshops. The Secretariat also keeps supporting YPAC by providing the server space for hosting their website and carrying out the financial management of a contribution from Germany to the network organisation. The Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretariat and the YPAC Association, signed in 2018, was renewed by a formal exchange of letters for a further three-year period.



Impressions of YPAC 2021. Photos: YPAC

ARGE ALP

The Permanent Secretariat continued assuming its role as Observer in the ARGE ALP; the Secretary

General virtually attended the Conference of the Heads of Government in October.

PROJECTS

Reading Mountains Festival 2020 & 2021

In 2020, the Reading Mountains Festival took place for the 6th year in a row, celebrating the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Alps on the occasion of International Mountain Day, 11 December. Because of the limitations in event organisation due to the pandemic, the 2020 edition of the Festival could not take place to the extent we are used to. Despite this many partners responded to the invitation and organised (online) events: 58 partners in seven Alpine countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, and Switzerland), as well as Spain and Poland, organised [66 events](#) all together.

Due to the sanitary situation, instead of live events in Innsbruck or Bolzano/Bozen the Permanent Secretariat organised four virtual events, one in each of the Alpine languages, premiered as Facebook Live events.

In 2021 also, many old and new partners responded to the invitation and organised an event as part of the 7th edition of the Reading Mountains Festival. More than 60 different

partners in 6 Alpine countries (Austria, France, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, and Switzerland), as well as Spain, organised [82 events](#) all together.



Students reading their favourite piece in the event organised for Reading Mountains 2021 by the Morbegno Infopoint. Photo: Oscar del Barba

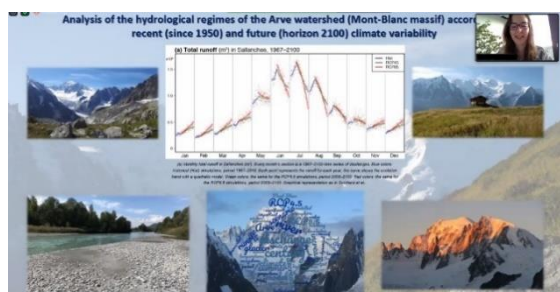
Unfortunately, also in 2021, the sanitary situation did not allow live events in Innsbruck – the Permanent Secretariat, therefore, organised an online event with bookshop and long-time Festival partner Wagner'sche. Additionally, the Permanent Secretariat cooperated with the Municipality of Bolzano/Bozen and organised a Reading Mountains event as part of the municipality's "Un Natale di Libri" (A Christmas of Books) initiative.

As in all previous editions, the Permanent Secretariat coordinated the partners and offered them support in the form of event promotion and information also in 2020 and 2021. In addition to sending posters, bookmarks, leporellos, and stickers to registered events, the Permanent Secretariat created a dedicated [Reading Mountains Facebook page](#) for the 7th edition of the Festival, promoting each registered event in the language in which it was taking place.



Reading Mountains event in Bolzano/Bozen (IT), 11 December 2021. Photo: PSAC

Young Academics Award



Online presentation at the 2020 Young Academics Award ceremony. Photo: PSAC, contents: Léa Laurent

In an online session organised by the Permanent Secretariat back-to-back to the XVI Alpine Conference and embedded in the EUSAP Annual Forum, the 5th Young Academics Awards were presented to [five students](#) from Italy, Slovenia and France, authors of selected Master theses related to the topic “Climate

change and air quality, measurement and measures”.

Thereafter, still in connection with the SOIA activities and coordinated by the Bolzano/Bozen operational branch office, the Secretariat started the planning and the preparation of the 6th edition of the project. In coordination with the Swiss Presidency, and with the support of the Transport Working Group and ISCAR, the topic “Sustainable mobility in the Alps” was chosen and different sub-topics specified. The Secretariat invited again the Infopoints of the Alpine Convention to join the initiative by providing the additional “Infopoint prizes”: four Infopoints are

participating in this edition and will award works with a specific relevance to their territories. The [call](#) is open until 30 June 2022 and the

prizes will be awarded at the occasion of the XVII Alpine Conference.

Photo Contest

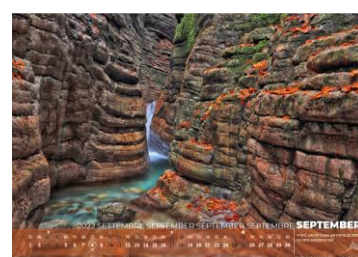
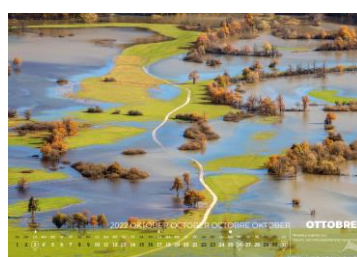
The winning photographs of the 11th edition of the annual Photo Contest, together with images taken by YOALIN travelers, were the backbone of a virtual and visual journey through “Contrasts in the Alps” organised in the afternoon of the XVI Alpine Conference, on 10 December 2020.

In May 2021, the Permanent Secretariat launched the 12th edition of the Photo Contest. This edition focused on the topic of “Alpine water bodies & their biodiversity”.

The Permanent Secretariat drafted and launched the call with an intensive communication and disse-

mination campaign thanks to which a total of 97 participants submitted almost 400 pictures before the September deadline.

The Permanent Secretariat also organised the voting of the jury, composed of all members of the Swiss Presidency and Permanent Secretariat teams. The winners were announced in social media in a new way, through an advent calendar with the winning picture announced at Christmas. The authors of the [winning photos](#) were awarded with financial prizes and copies of the calendar.



Winning pictures of the 2021 Photo Contest. From left to right: Mauro Lanfranchi (1st place), Simon Kovačič (2nd place), Josef Hinterleitner (3rd place)

At the same time, the design of the calendar was made more modern, and the materials were changed, opting for a lighter, more sustainable paper which does not require the application of synthetic coating.

The calendar was distributed to all the Contracting Parties and partners of the Alpine Convention as well as to other interested individuals.

SOIA

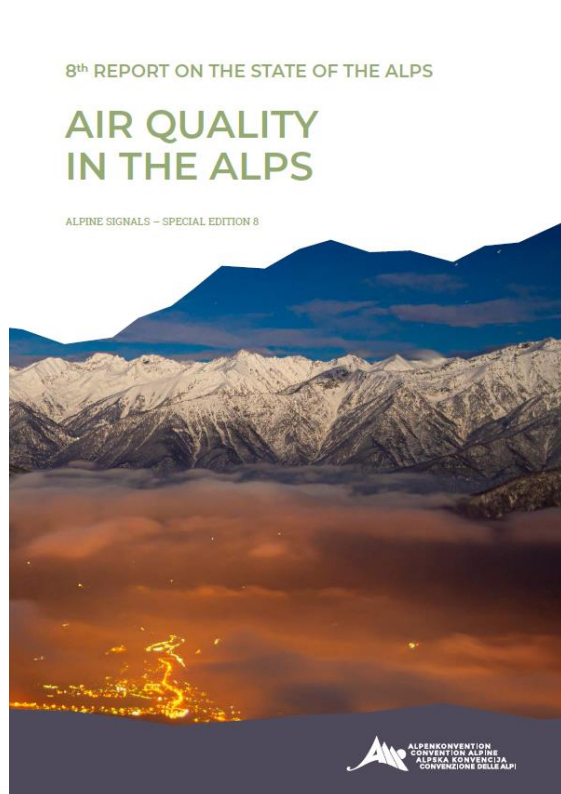
In 2021, the main activities of the Permanent Secretariat in the framework of the System for the Observation and Information on the Alps were related to the translation, layout, printing and dissemination of the Eighth Report on the State of the Alps (RSA) on air quality, to the support to the ad hoc Working Group for the elaboration of the RSA 9 on

Alpine towns and to the finalisation and launch of the new Alpine Convention Atlas.

As always, the activities related with SOIA were coordinated by the operational branch office of the Permanent Secretariat in Bolzano/Bozen.

Reports on the State of the Alps

Eighth Report on the State of the Alps



Cover of the 8th Report on the State of the Alps on Air Quality.

After the XVI Alpine Conference gave official approval to the RSA 8 in

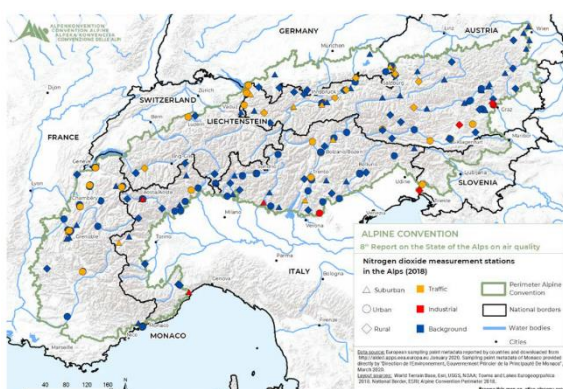
December 2020, the Secretariat carried out the harmonisation of the translations, layout, printing and dissemination of the report.

The linguistic harmonisation of the five different language versions was a particularly challenging task given the very technical nature of the RSA 8. Also, a new design for the RSA was conceived in accordance to the renewed corporate identity of the Alpine Convention. The Permanent Secretariat also ensured all the maps, the tables and the graphs were correct and properly layouted. The resulting text was printed and shipped to the national delegations, the Infopoints and other interested people and organisations.

On 4 June, the Permanent Secretariat organised on behalf of the former French Presidency an online launch event for the RSA 8: the occasion was the European Green Week, which this year had the fitting topic of “Zero pollution” and where the Secretariat obtained a “partner event”. The event was well attended, professionally moderated by a representative of the European Commission and interactive through online polls.

A video testimonial by the Secretary General is also featured on the [web page of the Green Week](#).

The RSA 8 was also presented at a workshop of EUROMONTANA in March, as described in the “Observers” section. Further dissemination activities included advertising the Report on the website and the social media.



One of the maps appearing on the RSA 8.



Attendance certificate for the EU Green week 2021.

Ninth Report on the State of the Alps



Workshop for the elaboration of the RSA 9, Innsbruck (AT), September 2021. Photo: PSAC

The Permanent Secretariat supported the ad hoc Working Group and its

Swiss Chair in coordinating the Group and its activities.

On the organisational side, the Permanent Secretariat supported the Chair of the RSA 9 Working Group in running the six Working Group's meetings, which took place in 2021, five of them virtually and one with live participation (online: 9-10 February, 30 March, 22 June, 6-7

December; live in Innsbruck, with additional experts invited, on 16-17

September). In particular, the logistics of the Innsbruck meeting, which included one venue, two rooms with the respective catering and a restaurant were organised entirely by the Secretariat, fulfilling all the requirements to obtain the Green Event Tirol certification.

At the same time, the Secretariat kept track of the different delegations' inputs, proposals and requests and, in

general, participated in setting the timeline, steering the process as well as advising the Chair on strategic decisions and institutional aspects. As mentioned above, the Permanent Secretariat also presented the work on the RSA 9 at the EUSALP "City-mountain cooperation: together towards carbon neutrality".

Alpine Convention Atlas

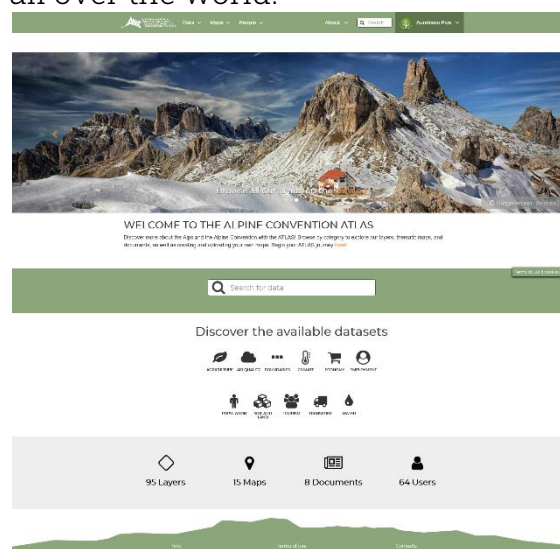
2021 was a key year for the Alpine Convention Atlas, with all aspects finalised in the first months of the year and the Atlas officially launched in March also thanks to the valuable and longstanding contribution of EURAC Research.

Since then, the Permanent Secretariat has been advertising it widely through different channels including the social media, the website, journals and magazines articles, presentations in several conferences as well as a dedicated webinar which was held in the beginning of May and that was attended by more than 50 participants.

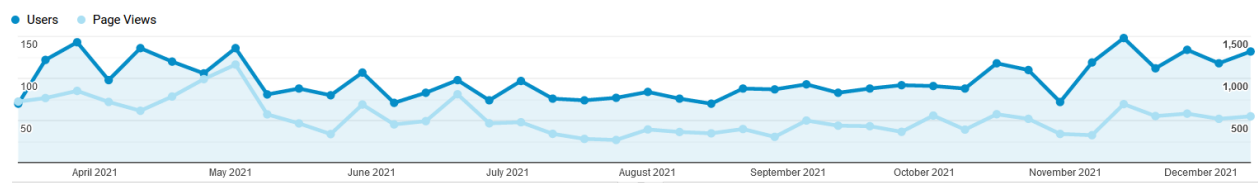
The use of the Atlas was also advertised and promoted by the Permanent Secretariat within different TWBs.

Also on the content side the Permanent Secretariat was very active: new layers were added and maps created in order to keep the platform interesting and up-to-date.

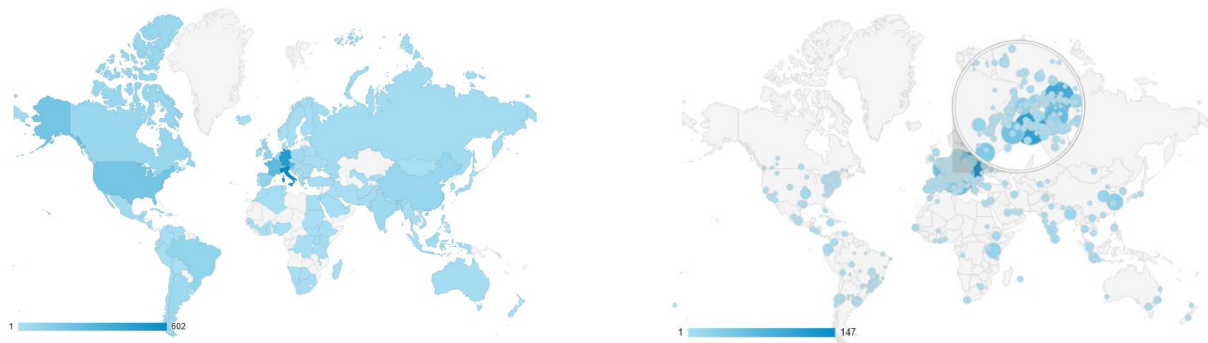
Since its release, the Atlas has attracted more than 60 registered users, with an average of more than 100 visitors and more than 500 views per week. Users currently come from 122 different countries and 1173 cities all over the world.



Screenshot of the Atlas home page.



Average weekly users and views since the release of the Atlas.



Visits of the Atlas by country (left) and by city (right, with zoom on the Alps) since its release.

COMMUNICATION

The Alpine Convention has had an official Communication Strategy since 2020. The Strategy contains objectives for communicating the Alpine Convention, its work and activities. The Permanent Secretariat implements the Strategy in its daily work, both in terms of content production as well as longer term objective setting. The following sections provide an overview of some of the most important communication and outreach activities carried out in 2021. News stories on the Alpine Convention website as well as digital and printed media constituted one part. In addition, the Secretariat continues to carry out its own communication projects. Further-

more, the Secretary General and her team also attended numerous fora and conferences, often in digital form, as reported in the previous sections.

The new corporate identity of the Alpine Convention is present and promoted in all areas of activity of the Permanent Secretariat. The Secretariat also provides ongoing support to the Contracting Parties and Observers for a coherent implementation of the corporate identity in all products and outputs of the Alpine Convention. The Secretariat also continues to support the Contracting Parties and Observers in communicating their activities.

Communication cooperation

After interest was expressed at the Observer Dialogues, a “communication jour fixe” was established to facilitate information sharing between the Permanent Secretariat, the Contracting Parties and the Observers. These quarterly meetings are an opportunity to informally exchange ideas and information on the diverse communication activities

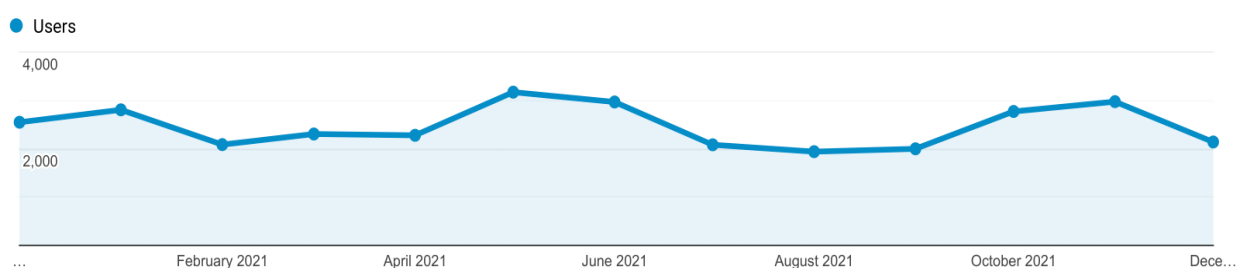
of the Alpine Convention and its bodies. The jour fixe is also a forum in which Contracting Parties and Observers can provide insights and updates on their own activities contributing to the implementation of the Convention and explore synergies for communication activities with others.

Online presence

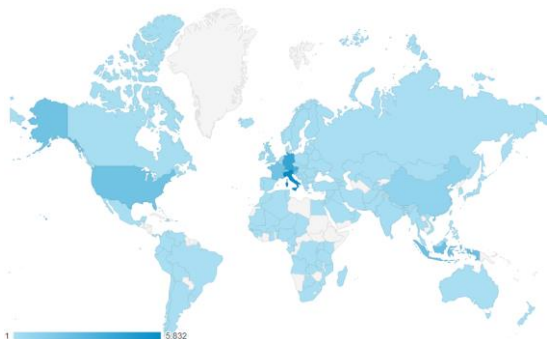
The Alpine Convention website provides a centralised collection of documents, technical information and other relevant resources to the Alpine Convention and its bodies, as well as serving as an information base for the general public. The website also hosts the different projects organised by the Secretariat

such as Reading Mountains and the annual Photo Contest.

The website remains a well-used tool for communicating ongoing work and projects and other important developments in the Alpine Convention and its bodies.

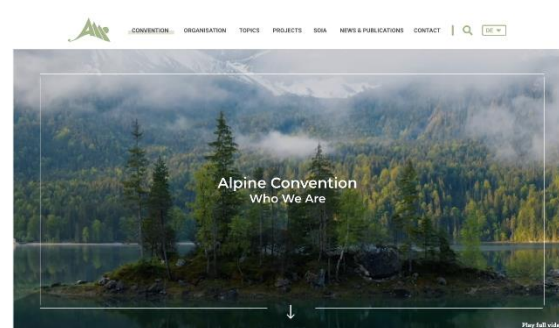


Website visits from December 2020 – December 2021.



Visits of the website by country from December 2020 – December 2021.

Since the launch of the new website in summer 2019, the Secretariat has been working on further increasing its attractiveness. Thanks to financial support from Germany, the decision was made to hire a company to work with the Secretariat to improve the general website expe-



Upcoming layout of the Homepage.

rience and fully align its design to the new Alpine Convention corporate identity. In spring 2021, a new call was published and, after a suitable company was found, work to improve the website began in winter 2021. It is expected to conclude in early 2022.

The Permanent Secretariat has increased its activity on its two social media channels (Facebook and Twitter), which resulted in an increase of followers, reaching 1.686 on Twitter and 2.568 Facebook likes in December 2021. This was an increase of 283 Twitter followers and 251 Facebook likes compared to the same period the previous year.

The Secretariat uses these channels to promote events and interesting

and important developments in the Alpine Convention and its network, to communicate Contracting Party, Observer and partner events, to spread awareness of Alpine issues, and to celebrate various International Days.

Some of the most popular posts are linked to the projects of the Secretariat, such as the Photo Contest, the new video and International Days

Happy #InternationalMountainDay - this year we are celebrating by beginning the #AdventCalendar countdown for the winners of the 2021 #AlpineConvention #PhotoContest - starting with special mention to Silvio Amici 📷

Stay tuned as we countdown the winners to Christmas 🎄 pic.twitter.com/ElqnYgiGhV



🔄 5 ❤️ 33

Twitter post on launching the Photo Contest awards on International Mountain Day and Facebook post on International Translation Day

Alpine Convention
Published by Alp Alpcnv · 30 September 2021 · 🌐

🗣️ The #AlpineConvention has four official languages: German, French, Italian and Slovenian, making it a wonderfully multilingual organisation!

👤 This diversity also means that, while all staff speak two or more languages, meetings often have to be simultaneously translated to ensure everyone is on the same page. This is made possible thanks to the work of our translators INTRALP Conference Interpreters and Translators! International #TranslationDay

890 People reached 115 Engagements — Distribution score [Boost post](#)

🔄 24 8 shares

Video

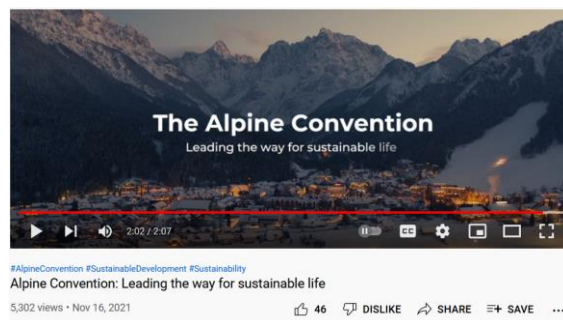


Filming of the new Alpine Convention video on site in Slovenia. Photo: PSAC

Another activity to raise public awareness about the Alpine Convention was concluded this year. The production of the new Alpine Convention video clip started in the summer of 2020, but because of unfavourable weather conditions, a part of the filming had to be postponed until summer 2021. The production of the 2-minute-video in English was concluded in November. A synchronisation to the four Alpine languages is currently ongoing and should be finalised in the first quarter of 2022.

[The video](#) is full of immersive images from all around the Alps, presenting a story of the rich natural and cultural heritage of the Alps, which has to be protected and preserved through sustainable development for the future generations. The video features an original soundtrack – “Alpine Convention Theme” – which is also available in audio form on all major music streaming platforms.

The new video has performed very well, reaching over 5.200 views in the first three months. This compared to the roughly 4.500 views for all language versions of the former video in a span of five years.



The new Alpine Convention video on YouTube.

Travelling outdoor exhibition



Model of the outdoor exhibition.

@ look!design

In 2020, cooperation with a design agency had started in order to explore the production of an outdoor exhibition which would showcase the Alpine Convention in different places. In January 2021, thanks to the support of the outgoing French Presidency, the Secretariat attended a conception workshop with the agency.

After this, the Government of Tyrol offered to financially support a project promoting the Alpine Convention among the Tyrolean inhabitants and visitors. The Permanent Secretariat proposed to dedicate this to a pilot version of the envisaged outdoor exhibition. Upon the request from Tyrol, the Secretariat started working together with the Austrian Alpine Club and the

Pro Vita Alpina Association on a common exhibition concept, which consists of the old Großglockner bivouac as well as five additional side elements and is set to travel to five Tyrolean district capitals in 2022.

The exhibition will shed light on different aspects of life in the Alps, to which the Alpine Convention contributes through its work. The exhibition elements will serve as a teaser to attract visitors, with different images, key messages, and sounds. This will be complemented with extended online content as well as impulse events, which will be dedicated to different topics and organised in cooperation with local partners.

The exhibition tour through Tyrol is planned to conclude in autumn 2022. After this, the bivouac could be replaced by a different eye-catching element, which imitates a cairn – a stone structure that can be found in the mountains all over the Alps. This adapted exhibition would then be available to travel around the Alps to every Alpine country.

30th anniversary of the Alpine Convention

The 7 November 2021 was a special date, marking thirty years since the signing of the Alpine Convention in Salzburg (AT) – the first legally binding instrument dedicated to the protection and sustainable development of a mountain range shared by several countries.

Throughout the year, the Secretariat celebrated this occasion by highlighting the Convention's anniversary during speeches, interviews, conferences, and other occasions. This continuous promotion served to showcase the successes and milestones since the Convention's founding.

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary, a [celebratory video](#) was produced with contributions from Ministers and delegates from the Contracting Parties, Observer organisations, Infopoints and many other valuable partners from across the Alpine region. Kind and inspiring messages arrived from past and present members of the Alpine Convention family. At the Permanent Committee meeting held a few days

later, Austria commented a slideshow prepared together with the Secretariat, spanning the time since 1991. The new Alpine Convention video clip was also presented on this occasion.

The celebratory video was also advertised on the Alpine Convention social media pages, where the posts gained substantial attention.

🌐 7.11.1991-7.11.2021: Today we celebrate 30 years of protection & [#SustainableDevelopment](#) in the [#Alps](#) on the [#AlpineConvention](#)'s birthday! ▲

📺 Want to know why the Alpine Convention is important? Listen to some present & past family members: bit.ly/3EUeIGc
pic.twitter.com/GO19mLeb4U



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Celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Alpine Convention in social media.

Bringing the Alpine Convention closer to the people

Besides the preparation of the travelling outdoor exhibition, the Permanent Secretariat also carried out many other outreach activities in the past year by organising or participating in the numerous meetings and events mentioned above.

Alongside these various encounters, the Permanent Secretariat supported several external initiatives to raise awareness of the Convention. To this end, the Secretariat once again

provided financial support to the Innsbruck Nature Film Festival in return for visibility of the Alpine Convention during the festival. The Secretariat sent different promotional materials to the Alpine Convention Infopoints, which were handed out at events and competitions. Finally, the Permanent Secretariat continued to provide promotional materials including ClimCards, publications, notebooks, pens etc. upon requests from the public.

TEAM OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

2021 marked the end of the contract of the Deputy Secretary General, who had been working part-time since returning from parental leave in November 2020. She left the Secretariat in October 2021 after almost six years in this position and an overall seven years in the Permanent Secretariat. Following to the advertisement of the vacancy, the Legal Officer, who had been assuming the position of Deputy Secretary General ad interim, applied successfully, and he was appointed by the Permanent Committee through a written procedure, to take office in January 2022.

Throughout the reporting period, due to the ongoing sanitary crisis the team of the Permanent Secretariat has continued operating with a reduced occupation of both its premises, combined with home office. Only on 10 December, the first in-presence staff meeting since March 2020 could be held – a much welcome opportunity for the team to reunite in the Bolzano/Bozen operational branch office.

Despite this situation, the staff was successful in training four new colleagues who came to reinforce the team: the new Communications

Officer was first to join in early December 2020. A new Project Assistant was appointed mid-March, while the Project Assistant supporting the French Presidency concluded her contract at the same time. Both the Personal Assistant to the Secretary General and the Project Officer supporting EUSALP went on maternity leave in the Spring and two substitutes were hired, in March and August, respectively. Thanks to continued support from Italy, the second Project Officer in the Bolzano/Bozen Office extended his contract until the end of July 2022.

The Permanent Secretariat was also able to continue offering internships to interested Master students. Two of them were hosted in 2021, one under the ongoing Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Aosta Valley and one through an open call. The involvement of motivated young professionals once again proved to be a mutual enrichment.

Team members of both offices shared their passion for sustainability and the outdoors through the second enrolment of the Permanent Secretariat in the “Tirol radelt” bicycle contest. Over the spring and summer,

the Permanent Secretariat cycled a distance of 6.594 km and 112.470 m elevation. With 12 participants, the Permanent Secretariat came second

in terms of numbers and third in terms of percentage of the team in its category!



The team of the Permanent Secretariat in Bolzano/Bozen. Photo: PSAC



ALPENKONVENTION
CONVENTION ALPINE
ALPSKA KONVENCIJA
CONVENZIONE DELLE ALPI