

**ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE
ALPINE BIODIVERSITY BOARD
FOR THE PERIOD 2021-2022
(BETWEEN THE XVI AND XVII MEETINGS OF THE ALPINE
CONFERENCE)**

1. Overview of the mandate given by the XVI Alpine Conference

Summary of the objectives according to the 2021-2022 mandate or work programme

In the XVI Alpine Conference, the ABB mandate was redefined up to the XVII Alpine Conference:

- *Identification of a series of indicators relevant to mountain biodiversity, complementing and updating the indicators of the "Ecological Network" platform; indicators can serve as a starting point for more comprehensive and joint monitoring in Alpine countries;*
- *Jointly work on a potential target for the Alpine Convention that includes vulnerable/threatened ecosystems such as mountains, also through the planning of a specific funded project (Alpine Space Programme);*
- *Organise actions at several institutional levels to urge the importance of a specificity of mountain biodiversity both in international and national strategies;*
- *Contribute to reaching the 2050 Alpine Climate Targets by working closely with the Alpine Climate Board on implementing the Pathways IP_Ecol: "Protection and management of vulnerable and Alpine specific landscapes and ecosystems", and IP_Eco2: "Enhance transboundary cooperation on ecological connectivity".*

2. Meetings

Summary of the meetings held (date, place, main topics and milestones)

- 21 April 2021 – First ABB meeting for the new mandate 2021-2022, held virtually.
- 5 August 2021 – Second ABB meeting: Set of indicators to be identified; analysis of any potential development of the activities through design assumptions; involvement of ABB activity in the various important international sessions, in particular the IUCN meeting and that of the CBD.

- 15-16 December 2021 - **Alpine and Carpathian Biodiversity Forum**. This event, held virtually, brought together experts and political representatives from mountain regions around the world. During the forum the main conclusions and recommendations were collected. These conclusions and recommendations are aimed at experts and those who want to put them into practice.
- 21 January 2022 - fourth ABB meeting: examination of the first results of the work of the different CGs + discussion and decisions on the next steps of ABB in view of the fifth meeting.
- 1 April 2022 - fifth ABB meeting: discussion of the project proposal, the Memorandum of Cooperation with the CBD-CC and the draft mandate and the useful documents in view of the next PC.

3. Activities carried out

Synthetic description of further activities carried out (including outreach and communication activities)

- *13 January 2021 - Mountain Biodiversity Day. This was a special event on mountain biodiversity held virtually. The event served as a platform for those working in the field of mountain biodiversity to discuss effective tools and mechanisms to protect this precious biodiversity.*

In order to streamline the most important activities, the different tasks of the ABB were divided amongst three "Core Groups" composed of the ABB members interested and qualified for each of the topics.

- *Core Group on the identification/selection of relevant indicators of Alpine biodiversity*

The work of so-called Core Group 1 started from the analysis of the relevant indicators for the specificity of mountain biodiversity.

The adoption of indicators that promote the conservation of mountain biodiversity will help realize the CBD vision of "Living in harmony with nature" by 2050 and consider goals and targets of the GBF post-2020.

The indicators suggested in CBD / SBSTTA / 24 / 3Add.1 are divided into three groups:

- **Headline:** a minimum set of high-level indicators that can be used to monitor national, regional, and global progress on GBF goals and targets;
- **Component:** a set of indicators to monitor each component of each goal and target of the GBF;

- Complementary: a set of indicators for thematic or in-depth analysis of each objective and target.

As a result of the common discussion and of the desk research, Core group 1 identified a set of indicators that are suitable to monitor the specificity of mountain biodiversity. A specific set of indicators for the Alpine region, organised on the basis of the most widely used ones in the scientific literature, were selected in consultation with partners and experts based on specific criteria:

- (Meta)data publicly available;
- Methodology for data product published or peer reviewed;
- Evidence for regular update of the indicator;
- Mechanism for maintenance of the indicator;
- Can be disaggregated for mountains.
- *Core Group for jointly working on a potential target for the Alpine Convention that includes vulnerable/threatened ecosystems such as mountains, also through the planning of a specific funded project*

The indicators identified in the context of Core Group 1 have merged into the work of Core Group 2 for the development of a project proposal for monitoring ecosystems and biodiversity in the Alps, based on common cartography on which to develop it more efficiently and effectively in a systemic, homogeneous, and pan-alpine way.

Objectives:

- to develop an IT tool for mapping and evaluating biodiversity;
- to develop a homogenous pan-Alpine methodology;
- to build a technical package, a knowledge replicable tool useful to planners, both on a large scale and on a local scale.

The project proposal develop until now takes into account the various partial experiences matured and in progress for a pan-Alpine system. The proposal involves the construction of a computerized technical tool for Mapping, Assessing and Monitoring Ecosystems and Biodiversity in the Alps.

- *Core Group to organise actions at several institutional levels to urge the importance of a specificity of mountain biodiversity both in international and national strategies*

The work of Core Group 3 was aimed at strengthening the existing collaborations and at implementing new international partnerships. Amongst other things, the Core Group conducted an inventory of the relevant ongoing international processes as well as of the international events and for a where the instances of mountain biodiversity

could be raised and advocated for. Additionally, Core Group 3 identified possible priorities, deliverables, objectives, partnership opportunities for the ABB.

4. Outputs and results

Description of the main outputs and results achieved

- Identification of the set of indicators for monitoring mountain biodiversity.
- Joint work for the development of a project proposal that takes into account the set of indicators identified and that develops an IT monitoring tool for mountain biodiversity. The project will be finalized and possibly submitted for application to a suitable financing mechanism during the next AC Presidency (2022-2023).
- The Alpine-Carpathian Biodiversity Forum complemented and reinforced the positions and conclusions of the "Declaration of the XVI Alpine Conference on the Protection of Mountain Biodiversity and its Promotion at International Level" adopted by the XVI Alpine Conference. It also complemented and reinforced the S4C – Science for the Carpathians initiative and the Forum Carpaticum, established in 2008, connecting scientists in Central Europe, with the aim of defining research priorities for the region and enhancing international collaboration with partners from outside the Carpathians. The main purpose of the Alpine-Carpathian Biodiversity Forum was to open a discussion with experts at national and international level about issues and critical aspects related to the protection of mountain biodiversity.
- Strengthening of existing collaborations and implementation of new partnerships at an international level. The state of development of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (UN DER) has been studied; International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development: proposed joint initiative among ABB/AC, Mountain Partnerships, UNEP-SCC to enhance the ABB/AC visibility and simultaneous promotion of the AC.
- Regarding this last point and in the wake of the Alpine and Carpathian Biodiversity Forum of December 2021, the organization of a new Forum is planned at a higher level with the title "*Mountain biodiversity from 2002 to 2022*", in order to provide an overview of the progress and the significant achievements in the past 20 years from Alpine (ABB-PSAC), Carpathian (UNEP-SCC) and Global (Mountain Partnership Secretariat-FAO) perspective and strategic approach for the future. This event will be in line with the UN resolution (UNDOC/GEN/N21/399/09) and the outcomes of the Alpine and Carpathian Biodiversity Forum, contributing to elevate mountain biodiversity and mountain ecosystems at the international environmental

agendas, including the CBD and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, also in view of the effects of climate change on mountain biodiversity.

5. Cooperation

Description of cooperation developed with other Alpine Convention bodies and further relevant partners and processes, and of the resulting benefits

Cooperation with UNEP/Secretariat of Carpathian Convention

- Promotion of the recognition of a mountain approach in the relevant global biodiversity related processes;
- Like the CBD post-2020 process;
- Contribution to the renewal of the trilateral Memorandum of Cooperation Alpine Convention/Carpathian Convention/Convention on Biological Diversity.

Continuation and strengthening of the existing collaborations:

- UN Global Biodiversity Framework: the ABB joined the efforts for the recognition on the specificity of alpine and mountain biodiversity;
- Analysis and hypotheses for drafting policy briefs;
- Consolidation and strengthening collaborations with ACB members, with particular reference to the definition and implementation of the strategic pathways of the Climate Action Plan of the Alpine Convention;
- Involving PSAC in the CG3;
- Involving the chairs of EUSALP AG 7 and AG 6 to the next ABB meeting to learn more about existing and future work.

Exploring opportunities for new collaboration and establishing new partnerships

- UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (UN DER): it has been suggested that ABB also promote through the PC. In this sense, AC could contribute submitting to UN a draft proposal from the PC
- International Year of Mountains - Proposed joint initiative among ABB/AC, Mountain Partnerships, UNEP-SCC

6. Attachments

List of the documents attached to this report, such as papers proposed for approval by the XVII Alpine Conference (thematic reports, guidelines, statements etc.) and supporting documents (workshop proceedings, survey reports, communication

materials etc.). *Please kindly provide a PDF file of each attachment. Do not include the minutes of regular meetings!*

- Alpine and Carpathian Biodiversity Forum 15-16 December 2021 – Conclusions and Recommendations
- Selected indicators for Alpine Biodiversity specificity (CG1)
- Draft project application form on Mapping, Assessing and Monitoring Ecosystems and Biodiversity in the Alps (CG2)
- Calendar of relevant events for the promotion of Alpine Biodiversity (CG3)