
Land saving targets in Alpine countries and regions

Summary

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Background

As part of its 2021/2022 mandate, the Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development Working Group contributed to the Alpine Climate Target System. This survey addresses Step 3 of the Spatial Planning Implementation Pathway 1 “Alpine wide concept “Spatial Planning for Climate Action”” in the form of an overview of land saving targets and challenges. The task was to assess which Alpine Convention states/countries have adopted land saving targets or are discussing them. The survey was supplemented with an overview of measures foreseen in the specific documents and the current land take in the Alpine countries and selected regions/federal states/provinces.

An important reference for the Alpine country’s land saving targets is the EU policy objective to achieve zero net land take by 2050 – first formulated in the EC Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe and reiterated in the EU Soil Strategy for 2030.

Results

At a national level, Austria, France, Germany, Slovenia and Switzerland have adopted quantitative land-saving targets in the form long-term targets (net-zero by 2050) and/or mid-term (2030) target. At federal state respectively regional level, Bavaria, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, Piedmont, Veneto and Lombardy have adopted quantitative land saving targets. Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and Piedmont are even aiming to achieve the net zero target by 2040.

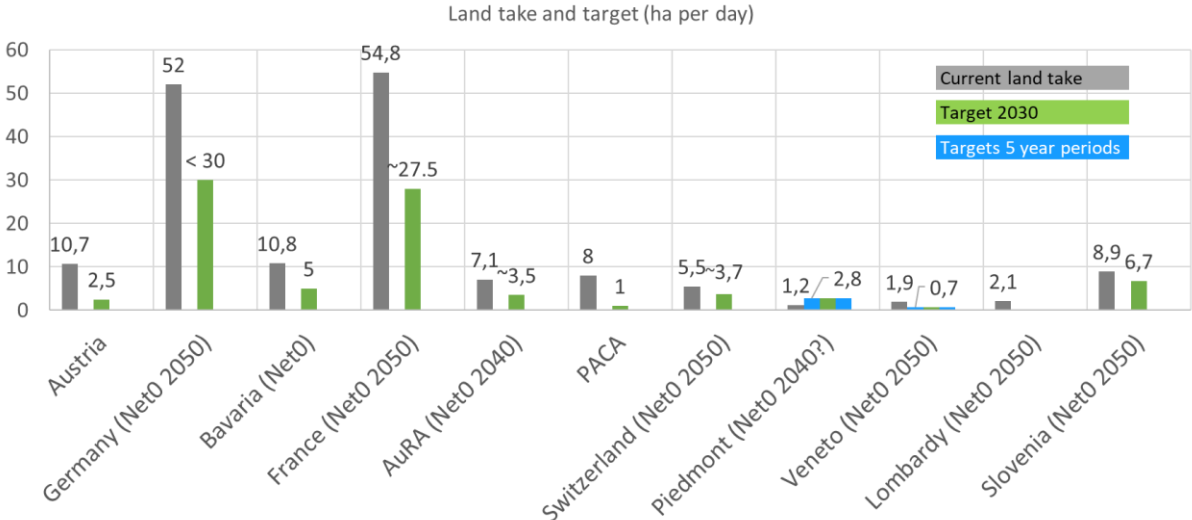
While Italy lacks a quantitative land saving target at national level, binding implementation mechanisms exist in the Italian regions of Piedmont, Lombardy and Veneto.

Three different approaches to land saving targets can be identified:

- Voluntary targets at national level without regionalisation or cap (AT, DE, FR, SI). For France, targets and trajectories have to be adapted at each territorial level of spatial planning: regional, subregional, local, with deadlines.
- Regionalised land saving targets (Italian regions, not yet realised but foreseen for French Regions in the course of the following years)
- Regulatory framework that limits urbanisation at municipal level based on binding mechanisms (CH, South Tyrol) but without explicit regionalisation of quantitative targets.

Conclusion

Alpine countries as well as the regions that have adopted land saving targets are still facing considerable challenges in regard to reducing land take and embarking on reduction pathways that would lead to net zero land take by 2050. However, the topic is very dynamic in many parts of the Alps and discussions on effective instruments can be expected to intensify when approaching the crucial timeline of 2030.



Current land take (AT, FR, IT, AuRA, PACA, Bavaria, Lombardy, Piedmont, Veneto: 2020, DE: 2019, CH: 2018 SI: 2012) and land saving targets in the Alps