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Tagung der Alpenkonferenz
Réunion de la Conférence alpine
Sessione della Conferenza delle Alpi
Zasedanje Alpske konference

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AKTIVITÄTEN DES STÄNDIGEN SEKRETARIATS 2013-2014

A Bericht des Ständigen Sekretariats

B Beschlussvorschlag

Anlage 1: Detaillierter Tätigkeitsbericht 2013-2014 des Ständigen Sekretariats der Alpenkonvention

A Bericht des Ständigen Sekretariats

Der Bericht des Generalsekretärs über die Aktivitäten des Ständigen Sekretariats (Sekretariat) in den Jahren 2013-2014 wurde gemäß Artikel 3 der Satzung des Sekretariats erstellt. Er gibt einen Überblick über die wichtigsten Aufgaben, die vom Sekretariat im Berichtszeitraum entsprechend seiner Verantwortlichkeiten und der zur Verfügung stehenden personellen und finanziellen Ressourcen ausgeführt wurden. Des Weiteren gibt der Bericht einen allgemeinen Ausblick auf die künftigen Prioritäten des Sekretariats unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner eigenen Projekte.

Wenn man auf die letzten zwei Jahre zurückblickt, kann die Arbeit des Sekretariats grob in drei Hauptbereiche unterteilt werden:

- Unterstützung der Organe und der Vertragsparteien der Alpenkonvention und vor allem des Vorsitzes;
- Umsetzung der Prioritäten des Mehrjahresprogramms 2011-2016 (MAP), unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der stärkeren Zusammenarbeit mit verschiedenen Interessenträgern im Alpenraum und Promotionsaktivitäten;
- Pflege und Weiterentwicklung des Alpenbeobachtungs- und Informationssystems, einschließlich Aktivitäten zur Förderung der Wissenschaft und Forschung über die Alpen.

Für jeden der drei Aspekte folgt nachstehend eine kurze Zusammenfassung der durchgeführten Aktivitäten; ein ausführlicher Bericht über die einzelnen Aktivitäten ist in Anlage 1 enthalten.

In Bezug auf die internen Strukturen ist es wichtig zu erwähnen, dass der Berichtszeitraum auch durch die Ernennung des neuen Generalsekretärs und dessen Stellvertreterin sowie durch weitere Personaländerungen gekennzeichnet war, die einen Umbau des gesamten Sekretariats zur Folge hatten. Unter Berücksichtigung dieser Umstände widmete der Generalsekretär den Netzwerkaktivitäten auf politischer und fachlicher Ebene besondere Aufmerksamkeit. Im Berichtszeitraum brachte das Sekretariat den Abspaltungsprozess und die rechtliche und finanzielle Übertragung der Task Force Schutzgebiete an ALPARC zum Abschluss.

1. Unterstützung der Organe und der Vertragsparteien der Alpenkonvention

Das Sekretariat arbeitete eng mit dem Vorsitz zusammen bei der Organisation der sieben Sitzungen des Ständigen Ausschusses und der abschließenden Alpenkonferenz. Diese Unterstützung beinhaltete administrative, organisatorische und inhaltliche Beiträge des Sekretariats. Das Sekretariat beteiligte sich auch an den Sitzungen des Überprüfungsausschusses sowie den Sitzungen der Arbeitsgruppen und Plattformen der Alpenkonvention (AG-PF).

Darüber hinaus war das Sekretariat wesentlich an dem Prozess für eine makroregionale Strategie für den Alpenraum beteiligt. Dieses Thema wurde in den vergangenen zwei Jahren zu einem Arbeitsschwerpunkt des Sekretariats, was die Relevanz und Intensität betrifft. Zu den spezifischen Aktivitäten des Sekretariats in diesem Bereich zählten Koordinations- und Organisationsaufgaben, die Teilnahme an Arbeitsgruppensitzungen sowie an Sitzungen des Steuerungsausschusses und der thematischen Untergruppen und die Mitorganisation der Stakeholder-Konferenz "Towards an EU Strategy for the Alpine Regions" am 17. Dezember 2013 in Brüssel.

2. Umsetzung der Prioritäten des Mehrjahresprogramms 2011-2016

Inhaltlich bemühte sich das Sekretariat, durch die Teilnahme an den Sitzungen der AG-PF sowie durch die Zusammenarbeit mit anderen relevanten Interessenträgern die Prioritäten des MAP in seinen Projekten umzusetzen.

Das Thema *demographischer Wandel* wurde im fünften Alpenzustandsbericht und in einem allgemeineren Rahmen in zwei anderen relevanten Projekten des Ständigen Sekretariats behandelt: "Superalp!" ("Entlang alter Verbindungswege, auf den Spuren der historischen Bevölkerung und der neuen Bewohner") und "Wir sind Alpen" ("Bäuerliche Familienbetriebe") sowie der Preis für junge Wissenschaftler, der die Beteiligung junger Menschen aus dem Alpenraum an Wissenschaft und Forschung fördert. Für die Ausgabe 2014 des Preises wurden die Themen *nachhaltiger Tourismus und Energie* ausgewählt, die unmittelbar zwei weitere Prioritäten des MAP betreffen. Neben dem Preis für junge Wissenschaftler wurden den jungen Menschen in den Alpen noch weitere Initiativen, wie die Zusammenarbeit mit dem Jugendparlament und mit Schulen im Alpengebiet gewidmet. Besonders was den letzten Punkt angeht, wurde ein Projekt entwickelt, das die Beteiligung von zwei Universitäten an der Gestaltung der neuen Ausstellung zur Alpenkonvention vorsieht. Alle

diese Aktivitäten unterstreichen die Bemühungen des Sekretariats, den Fokus auf die Jugend zu richten und zu anderen Initiativen in den Vertragsparteien beizutragen. Mit den Themen Energie und Effizienz befasste sich nicht nur der Preis für junge Wissenschaftler, sondern sie bildeten auch die Kernaktivitäten der PF Energie.

Eine Reihe weiterer relevanter Themen für die Prioritäten des MAP wurde durch die Teilnahme des Sekretariats als Beobachter an zahlreichen Alpenraumprojekten und an den jeweiligen Konferenzen behandelt.

Andere relevante Themen, mit denen sich das Sekretariat befasste, waren:

- Biodiversität und ökologische Vernetzung; in Zusammenarbeit mit der Plattform „Ökologischer Verbund“, der Plattform „Große Beutegreifer, wildlebende Huftiere und Gesellschaft“ und ALPARC wurden Biodiversitätsfragen erörtert.
- Klimawandel; im Rahmen seiner Aktivitäten befasste sich das Sekretariat mit dem Klimawandel als Querschnittsthema, einschließlich Anpassungs- und Milderungsmaßnahmen auf lokaler Ebene. Klimawandel war 2014 das Thema des Fotowettbewerbs der Alpenkonvention sowie ein relevantes Thema der „Wir sind Alpen“-Tour.
- Nachhaltige Mobilität; die Nutzung nachhaltiger Verkehrsmittel war das Leitprinzip der vom Sekretariat für Journalisten organisierten „Wir sind Alpen“-Touren. Darüber hinaus unterstützte das Sekretariat mehrere Projekte anderer Interessenträger zum Thema Mobilität, auch in Verbindung mit dem Tourismus (z.B. „Time tables in Slovenian Alps“; Beteiligung an AlpInfoNet und Access2Mountains sowie andere Alpenraumprojekte).

Wenn Projekte von Partnern unterstützt werden, aber auch bei der Entwicklung und Umsetzung eigener Projekte widmet das Sekretariat der Zusammenarbeit mit verschiedenen Interessenträgern im Alpenraum besondere Beachtung. Ein sehr positives Ergebnis dieser Aktivitäten ist die Einrichtung von Info-Points in Zusammenarbeit mit lokalen Partnern in Domodossola, Cogne und Chamonix 2013 und in Morbegno 2014. Diese Info-Points sind Teil der dezentralen Infrastruktur, um die Alpenkonvention der lokalen Bevölkerung näher zu bringen. Gute Beispiele dafür sind auch der Preis für junge Wissenschaftler, der mit Hilfe von ISCAR entwickelt und eingeführt wurde, sowie die „Wir sind Alpen“-Tour, die mit regionalen und lokalen Partnern organisiert wird. Ein intensiver Austausch fand auch mit CIPRA, dem Jugendparlament, Allianz in den Alpen, ArgeAlp, Perlen der Alpen, Alpenstadt des Jahres und nationalen Alpenvereinen (z.B. Bergsteigerdörfer-Projekt, Tag der Alpenkonvention) statt.

Diese Projekte wurden durch Presse- und Kommunikationsaktivitäten flankiert, einschließlich Webseite, Facebook, Twitter, Ausstellungen, Filmfestivals und andere Events. Das Sekretariat veranlasste auch die Veröffentlichung von Informationen und Nachrichten in anderen Medien. Ebenfalls verfasste das Sekretariat eigene Artikel zu spezifischen Themen der Alpenkonvention. Insgesamt wurden im Berichtszeitraum mehr als 200 Beiträge zur Alpenkonvention veröffentlicht.

3. Pflege und Weiterentwicklung des Alpenbeobachtungs- und Informationssystems (ABIS/SOIA), einschließlich Aktivitäten zur Förderung der Forschung auf Alpenebene und zu alpenspezifischen Themen

Im Rahmen der Koordination von Forschungsaktivitäten sowie der Alpenbeobachtung und -information konzentrierte sich die Arbeit des Sekretariats auf die Fertigstellung und Verbreitung des vierten Alpenzustandsberichtes zum nachhaltigen Tourismus. Des Weiteren war das Sekretariat mit der Koordination der Datenerhebung und der Ausarbeitung des Entwurfs für den fünften Alpenzustandsbericht zum demographischen Wandel befasst. Eine weitere Aktivität betraf die Pflege, Weiterentwicklung und Förderung der bestehenden Datenbanken mit Daten auf Alpenebene: In diesem Zusammenhang übernahm das Sekretariat die Diamont-Datenbank, machte sie auf seiner Webseite zugänglich und startete ein Pilotprojekt zur Entwicklung einer WebGIS-Plattform. Dieses neue Instrument wird die Verwendung der bestehenden Daten aus dem ABIS/SOIA für die geospatale Visualisierung in interaktiven Karten ermöglichen und die Verfügbarkeit von Informationen für verschiedene Gruppen von Endnutzern konkret verbessern. In Bezug auf die letztgenannte Aktivität gilt es hervorzuheben, dass hier noch Spielraum für weitere Verbesserungen besteht, vor allem im Sinne einer besseren Koordination der Forschungsaktivitäten zwischen den AG-PF durch die Hervorhebung möglicher Synergien bei fachübergreifenden und sich überschneidenden Themen und die Identifizierung von Bereichen für die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den AG-PF.

Ausblick auf 2015-2016

Das Sekretariat wird seine Arbeit in den nächsten zwei Jahren auf die Hauptverantwortungsbereiche gemäß seiner Satzung konzentrieren und sich dabei am Mehrjahresprogramm sowie dem Programm des künftigen Vorsitzes orientieren.

Vier wesentliche Aufgabenbereiche sind vorgesehen:

1. Unterstützung des Vorsitzes
2. Unterstützung der Vertragsparteien, Arbeitsgruppen und Plattformen
3. Umsetzung der Projekte des Sekretariats
4. Alpenbeobachtung und -information, einschließlich wissenschaftliche Aktivitäten (ABIS/SOIA)

Im Folgenden werden für jeden Aufgabenbereich die vorgesehenen Aktivitäten aufgeführt.

1. Unterstützung des Vorsitzes

Dieser Aufgabenbereich umfasst folgende Aktivitäten:

- administrative, logistische und inhaltliche Unterstützung bei der Organisation der Sitzungen der Organe der Alpenkonvention (Alpenkonferenz, Ständiger Ausschuss, Überprüfungsausschuss).
- Unterstützung des Vorsitzes bei der Organisation anderer Veranstaltungen (z.B. Alpenwoche).

2. Unterstützung der Vertragsparteien, Arbeitsgruppen und Plattformen

Dieser Aufgabenbereich umfasst folgende Aktivitäten:

- Erleichterung des Informationsaustausches zwischen Vertragsparteien, Arbeitsgruppen und Plattformen, auch durch die Organisation von Events oder Workshops.
- Stärkere Mitwirkung und Beteiligung des Sekretariats an der Arbeit der AG-PF zur Erleichterung des Informationsaustausches, Identifizierung von Synergien und Koordination von Forschungsaktivitäten, vor allem bei fachübergreifenden und sich überschneidenden Themen.
- Förderung von Aktivitäten und Projekten der Vertragsparteien, auch durch die Teilnahme an Veranstaltungen auf nationaler, regionaler und lokaler Ebene.
- Fortsetzung der Zusammenarbeit mit Partnern und Interessenträgern auf verschiedenen Ebenen bei Aktivitäten, die den Prioritäten des MAP 2011-2016 entsprechen.
- Unterstützung der Aktivitäten zur Alpenwoche bei der EXPO 2015.

3. Umsetzung der eigenen Projekte des Sekretariats

Das Sekretariat plant in den Jahren 2015-2016 die Umsetzung folgender Projekte:

- „Wir sind Alpen“-Tour 2015 und 2016; für 2015 ist das Thema Klimawandel vorgesehen.
- Preis für junge Wissenschaftler 2016; aufgrund der bisher gesammelten Erfahrungen ist für die neue Ausgabe eine Überarbeitung des aktuellen Auswahl- und Bewertungsverfahrens und eine verstärkte Werbung für den Preis auch in Zusammenarbeit mit Universitäten und Forschungseinrichtungen geplant.
- Fotowettbewerb der Alpenkonvention, der auf jährlicher Basis stattfinden wird.
- Ausstellungen, wie Fotoausstellungen und die neue Ausstellung in den Räumlichkeiten in Innsbruck unter Mitwirkung von Jugendlichen an Konzept und Gestaltung.
- PR-Aktivitäten zu den verschiedenen internationalen Tagen und dem Jubiläum des 25-jährigen Bestehens der Alpenkonvention im Jahr 2016.
- Entwicklung von Video-Werbematerial zur Alpenkonvention.
- Entwicklung und Umsetzung gemeinsamer Initiativen mit den Info-Points.

4. Alpenbeobachtung und -information

- Pflege der bestehenden Datenbanksysteme, einschließlich Diamont.
- Aufbereitung der vorhandenen Daten aus den Alpenzustandsberichten für die Darstellung auf der WebGIS-Plattform.
- Koordination und Kooperation im Rahmen des sechsten Alpenzustandsberichtes.
- Zusammenarbeit mit dem Alpenraumprogramm, Teilnahme am Programmkomitee und Beteiligung an Projekten, die zu den Zielen der Alpenkonvention und zum MAP 2011-2016 beitragen.
- Verbesserung der Zusammenarbeit mit wissenschaftlichen Einrichtungen in den Alpen durch die Organisation von Veranstaltungen und Seminaren, die Teilnahme an Konferenzen und die Präsentation der wissenschaftlichen Ergebnisse der Alpenkonvention, um ihnen größere Visibilität zu verleihen.

B Beschlussvorschlag

Die Alpenkonferenz:

1. nimmt den Bericht des Ständigen Sekretariats zur Kenntnis und beglückwünscht es für die geleistete Arbeit;
2. bittet die Vertragsparteien, die vom Ständigen Sekretariat in Einklang mit den Prioritäten des MAP/SAP geplanten Kooperationsprojekte zu unterstützen und zu fördern.



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ANLAGE/ANNEXE/ALLEGATO/PRILOGA

1

Activity report of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention 2013-2014

1. Preface

According to article 3 of the Statute of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, the Secretary General prepares an annual report on the activities of the Permanent Secretariat for the attention of the Permanent Committee and the Alpine Conference. The present report gives an overview of the detailed activities of the Secretariat during the years 2013 and 2014 and complements the Activity Report submitted by the Secretary General to the 55 Permanent Committee.

The last two years were characterised by an intensive effort of the new Secretary General to enhance networking activities on political and technical levels, as well as on cooperation and communication. Another defining element of the work was devoted to the process of the establishment of the Macro-regional Strategy for the Alpine Region. In addition, the relationship to ALPARC has been based on a new and sound foundation through a constructive process of formal separation from the Permanent Secretariat and the shared determination of constructive cooperation in the future. Additionally efforts have been made to further develop the System for Observation and Information of the Alps, which also includes coordination and contribution of the fifth Report on the State the Alps.

There are six main categories for describing the activities of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention in the period stated:

- Internal organisation
- Support to the bodies and the Contracting Parties to the Alpine Convention
- SOIA
- Other projects of the Permanent Secretariat
- Cooperation
- Information and communication

2. Internal organisation

2.1. Personnel of the Secretariat

In relation to the Personnel of the Secretariat the period of 2013-2014 can be characterised as a period of reorganisation and new acquisitions of staff. In 2013 Ms Simona Vrevc has been appointed as the new Deputy Secretary General by the 55 Permanent Committee. In 2014 several selection procedures were carried out for other vacant posts due to resignation of three former staff members. Furthermore, one position that had not been filled under the previous Secretary General was also tendered.

All the selection procedures were based on the same approach, with the aim to identify the best qualified candidate for the relevant position. This approach consisted of three stages: 1) preliminary evaluation based on the documents presented by the candidates, 2) "electronic testing" (i.e. written tests based on modern communication technology of selected candidates and 3) hearings of a selected group of candidates. Electronic testing and the hearings were based on standardized questions. Hearings were mostly carried out through Skype-calls to save costs. Based on this procedure the following candidates were appointed for the vacant posts: Ms Marianna Elmi, Mr Gilles Chomat, Ms Taja Ferjančič-Lakota, as project officers and Mr Wolfger Mayrhofer as legal advisor. In 2014 the Secretary General also used the possibility to employ additional staff on project basis, in order to enhance work on SOIA, but also for specific projects in the field of communication and promotion of the Alpine Convention.

The described changes in Personnel required adaptation of the internal organizations and requested additional flexibility from the staff in order to carry out all planned activities. In the meantime the restructuring process of the staff has been finalised by defining clear lines of responsibility.

It is noted that 2014 marked the 7 consecutive year in which the salary scales of the Permanent Secretariat were not adapted to current inflation levels (last modification was undertaken in 2008).

2.2. Separation of the Task Force Protected Areas

In accordance with the decisions of the Permanent Committee and the XII Alpine Conference decision on the separation of the Task Force Protected Areas (TFPA) of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention from the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention as of 1 January 2014, the Permanent Secretariat has worked on the preparations of the transfer of the TFPA to the ALPARC Association. For this purpose, a first meeting was organised between the TFPA, the ALPARC Association and the Secretary General on 8 August 2013. The purpose of this meeting was to prepare a smooth separation and transfer of the TFPA from the Permanent Secretariat to ALPARC by defining all administrative, financial and legal modalities to be taken into account and an appropriate time-plan as well as future cooperation with the Association ALPARC in line with the MoU signed with the Permanent Secretariat on 28 February 2013. On the basis of this constructive meeting, a report on the modalities of the separation was presented to the 54 Permanent Commit-

tee and the advanced transfer of the TFPA's investment and project funds to the Association ALPARC decided.

This meeting was followed by a number of other meetings, including the participation of the Secretary General in the managing board meeting of ALPARC on 21 October 2013, in a meeting with the Mayor of Chambéry on 24 October 2013 to discuss the transfer of the offices to the Association ALPARC and future cooperation, and a meeting with the TFPA team on 3 December 2013 in Chambéry to finalise the transfer and discuss further cooperation between ALPARC and the Permanent Secretariat. Regular contacts also took place between the Permanent Secretariat and the TFPA and/or the Association ALPARC in order to proceed with the implementation of the numerous modalities of the transfer. The Agreement between the Permanent Secretariat and the ALPARC Association on the modalities for the separation of the TFPA from the Permanent Secretariat, signed in November 2013, define the modalities and the time schedule of the transfer of rights, obligations and liabilities, the transfer of staff and office, as well as the transfer of movable goods and financial assets. The transfers of the non-financial assets took place on 1 January 2014, part of the financial assets were transferred by the end of January 2014, subject to final accounting. Specified amounts were kept until March and June 2014 respectively in order to cover the social insurance and regular running costs of 2013 as well as possible unknown and/or unexpected costs, according to the information provided at the 54 Permanent Committee. As of July 2014 all steps foreseen in the separation agreement were taken.

3. Support to the bodies and the Contracting Parties to the Alpine Convention

As part of the support functions to the bodies of the Alpine Convention, the Permanent Secretariat worked closely with the Italian Presidency for organising the 52 Permanent Committee that took place in Bolzano/Bozen (I) 7-8 March 2013, the 53 Permanent Committee that took place in Cortina d'Ampezzo (I) 26-27 June 2013, the 54 Permanent Committee that took place in Saint Vincent (I) 15-16 October 2013; the 55 Permanent Committee held in Gorizia (I) 20-21 March 2014 and the 56 Permanent Committee meeting that took place in Brescia (I) 24-25 June 2014. The Permanent Secretariat also supported the Italian Presidency in the organization of the 57 Permanent Committee and the XIII Alpine Conference in Turin (I) 19-21 November 2014.

The Permanent Secretariat supported the Presidency in preparation and realization of the 18 meeting of the Compliance Committee that was held in Ponte di Legno (I), the 19 meeting of the Compliance Committee that was held in St-Gallen (CH) 12-13 November 2013 and of the 20 meeting that took place in Genoa (I) 23-24 July 2014.

The Permanent Secretariat actively participated and supported, as required, the Presidencies of the Working Groups and Platforms at the following meetings:

- Working Group "Macro-Regional Strategy", Bolzano (I), 8 March 2013, Vienna (A), 24 July 2013; Bern (CH), 29 August 2013, Longarone (I), 27 September 2013, Innsbruck (A), 29 October 2013, Brussels (B), 17 December 2014, Milan (I), 14 January 2014 Milano (I), 14 February, Innsbruck (A), 3 April 2014, Rome (I), 13 May 2014, Milano (I), 6 May 2014,

- “Energy Platform”, Bolzano (I), 7 March 2013, Bern (CH), 29-30 August 2013, Luzern (CH), 24-25 October 2013, Bern (CH) 9-10 October 2013, Zurich (CH), 13 February 2014, Zurich (CH), 22 May 2014, Zurich (CH), 11 -12 September 2014.
- Working Group “Mountain Farming”, Bolzano (I), 5 March 2013, Galtür (A), 26-27 September 2013, Vienna (A), 3-4 July 2014
- “Natural Hazards” Platform, Brescia (I), 9-10 October 2013, Graz (A), 24 March 2014, Vaduz (LT), 2-3 October 2014..
- “Water Management in the Alps” Platform, Bolzano (I), 4 March 2013, Aosta (I), 18- 19 March 2013, Brescia (I), 9 -10 October 2013, Graz (A), 24 March 2014, Trento (I) 24 September 2014.
- “Large Carnivores, Wild Ungulates and Society” Platform, Cogne (I), 22 April 2013, Cevo (I), 28-29 October 2013, Innsbruck (A), 26-27 March 2014, Venzona (I), 2-4 July 2014.
- Ad hoc Expert Group “Fifth Report on the State of the Alps – RSA5”, Bolzano (I), 4 March 2013, Domodossola (I), 29-30 May 2013, Trento (I), 5 November 2013; Oстана (I), 17-18 February 2014, Belluno (I) 6-7 May 2014, Susa (I), 16 October 2014.
- Working Group “UNESCO World Heritage”, Bolzano (I), 5 March 2013, Verona (I), 27-28 May 2013, Gorizia (I), 5-6 December 2013, Nice (FR) 15 April 2014, Cuneo (I), 24 October 2014.
- Working Group "Mountain Forests", Bolzano (I), 5 March 2013, Udine (I), 16-17 May 2013, Trento (I), 3- 4 December 2013, Galbiate (I), 6-7 March 2014, Pieve di Cadore (I), 11 September 2014.
- Working Group “Transport”, Paris (F), 4 February 2013, Paris (F), 29 Mai 2013, Vienna (A), 12 December 2013, Rome (I), 27 February 2014, Paris (F), 28 May 2014, Paris (F), 8 September 2014,.
- “Ecological Network” Platform, Prato di Resia (I), 18 June 2013, Innsbruck (A), 27 March 2014, Grenoble (F), 30 September 2014.

Additionally, during the reporting period the Secretary General met with a number of high-level representatives from Contracting Parties, including the Ministers Marlies Amman-Marxer (Liechtenstein), Samo Omerzel (Slovenia), Karlheinz Töchterle (Austria), Marie-Pierre Gramaglia (Monaco), Andrä Rupprechter (Austria), State Secretaries Marco Flavio Cirillo (Italy), Andreja Jerina (Slovenia) and Bogdan Benko (Slovenia) as well as EU Commissioners Johannes Hahn and Janez Potočnik; the ambassadors of France and Slovenia in Austria; representatives from Alpine regions, incl. Presidents Günther Platter (Tyrol), Luis Durnwalder and Arno Kompatscher (Alto Adige/South Tyrol), and Minister Marcel Huber (Bavaria); Mayors of Alpine towns, including Christine Oppitz-Plörer (Innsbruck), Luigi Spagnoli (Bolzano/Bozen), Bernadette Laclais (Chambéry), Thierry Billet (Annecy); as well as a number of national and EU parliamentarians, including Enrico Borghi, Danuta Hübner, Eva Lichtenberger and the former EU parliament president Pat Cox.

Moreover, ties with the observers of the Alpine Convention have been fostered, including through regular exchange and interaction

3.1. Other Support Activities

3.1.1. Macro-regional strategy

During the reporting period the Permanent Secretariat actively participated in preparation of the EU Macro-regional strategy (MRS) for the Alpine Region. The Working Group on MRS met several times during 2013 and 2014. Based on the decision of the meeting in Bern, and in accordance with the Ministerial decision of Poschiavo (September 2012), a Conference in Brussels was organized on 17 December at the premises of the Permanent Representation of France in Brussels (see below). For the organization of the conference an additional meeting of the organizational committee was organized in Longarone (I) on 26 September back-to-back to the Workshop on “A Macro-regional Strategy for the Alpine Region and its potential added value for the implementation of the EU2020 agenda”, organized by the Italian Presidency on 27 September. Additionally, in promotion of the MRS the Italian Presidency organized a workshop in Varese (I) on 26 November.

On 18 October 2013 in Grenoble (FR) a “Political resolution towards a European Union Strategy for the Alpine region” was signed by the representatives of the Alpine States and Alpine regions. Preceding this Conference the drafting committee met with the Alpine Convention, represented by the Italian Presidency and the Secretary General, at meetings held in Vienna (A) on 25 July and in Paris (F) on 19 September. The representatives of the Alpine Convention were also present at the signing of the political resolution in Grenoble. As follow-up to the signing of the political resolution and in the preparation of the Joint Conference in Brussels, the Presidency and the Secretary General participated in two additional meetings organized in the French Permanent Representation in Brussels on 18-19 November and 17 December 2013.

Efforts towards the MRS for the Alpine Region culminated at the end of 2013, when the European Council mandated the EU Commission to draft an MRS for the Alpine Region by July 2015. In order to steer the process a group was established, consisting of 7 regional representatives, 7 State representatives as well as the Alpine Space Programme and the Alpine Convention in an advisory capacity. The Alpine Convention actively participated at the meetings of the Steering Committee where it was represented, as per the decision of the Permanent Committee meeting (PC54/B1) by the Presidency and the Permanent Secretariat.

Meetings of the WG MRS in the year 2014 usually corresponded with the meetings of the Steering Committee and were held: in Milano (I), 14 February 2014 in Innsbruck (A), 3 April 2014, in Milano (I), 6 May 2014 and in Rome (I), 13 May 2014. Agreements reached and the proposals to the drafting of the Discussion paper made at the WG meetings were then advocated at the Steering Group meeting by the Alpine Convention.

Additionally to the participation at the Steering Group meetings and as per the decision (PC55/B2b) of the Permanent Committee meeting in Gorizia (I), the Alpine Convention representatives (of the Presidency and the Secretariat) also participated at the meetings of the Subgroups (24 March 2014 in Milano (I) and 28 April 2014 in Luzern (CH)) of the EUSALP process, where work on specific pillars was done.

The last version of the draft Discussion paper was discussed in the Steering Group meeting on 12-

13 June in Chambéry. On 17 July the Public consultation started that was open till 15 October 2014. As per the decision of the Heads of delegations the Alpine Convention, since it participated in the preparation of the document, did not give any input in the public consultation, but encouraged observers and partners to do so. The link to the consultation paper was also published on the homepage of the Permanent Secretariat.

In addition, the Secretary General also participated in the head of governments meeting of the ArgeAlp on 27 June 2014, the high-level meeting of the Alpine regions organized by Trentino on the same day as well as the political level meeting organized by Tyrol and Austria on 17 September 2014 in Innsbruck.

3.1.2. Brussels Conference to promote a macro-regional strategy for the Alpine region

On the basis of the Ministerial decision (ACXII/B6, point 8) of Poschiavo (September 2012) and the decision of the Working Group for "Macro-Regional Strategy for the Alps", Working Group meeting in Bern on 29 August 2013, a Joint Conference "Towards an EU Strategy for the Alpine Region", was organized by the Italian Presidency, the Permanent Secretariat, the Alpine Space Programmed, the Initiative of regions and States and the Permanent Representation of France on the 17 December 2013 at the Permanent Representation of France in Brussels.

The event included welcome addresses by DATAR and the Secretary General of the Alpine Convention; an expert panel consisting of Bernard Soulage, Vice-president of the Rhône-Alpes Region and Member of the Committee of the Regions; Olaf Kjelsen, Minister at the Mission of Switzerland to the European Union; Claire Simon, CIPRA International; José Antonio Ruiz de Casas, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission; Anders Lindholm, Baltic Sea strategy and Jean Vaylet, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Grenoble. In the cultural interlude young Italian artists presented Verdi's music in light of celebration of 200 year anniversary of his birth. In parallel to the cultural interlude a press conference was held.

In the high level panel, the Commissioner for Regional Policy Johannes Hahn, Italian Under-Secretary of State for the Environment, Land and Sea, President of the Conference of the Ministers of the Alpine Convention Marco Flavio Cirillo, Lithuanian vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Vytautas Leškevičius, Chair of the Committee on Regional Development in the European Parliament Danuta Hübner, President of Tyrol Günther Platter and Slovenian State Secretary at the Ministry of Infrastructure and Spatial Planning Bojan Babič participated.

The evening also featured Alpine Catering sponsored by Val Poschiavo and Valtellina. The Conference was organized with contributions in cash or in kind by the Italian Presidency, Germany, Valtellina-Valposchiavo, ARGE Alp, the Permanent Secretariat, the Alpine Space Programme, and the French Permanent Representation in Brussels.

3.1.3. EXPO 2015

The Permanent Secretariat supported endeavours to work towards a presence of the Alpine Convention at EXPO 2015, including through participation in meetings in Sondrio on 1-2 October 2013

and in Milano on 3 March 2014. In cooperation with the Contracting Parties, the Permanent Secretariat supported the Italian Presidency to identify possibilities to participate at EXPO 2015. As per the decision (PC56/B4) of the Permanent Committee meeting in Brescia the Alpine Convention will be present at the Expo 2015 in a week-long event, called 'Mountain week' that will take place 4-11 June 2015 in the national pavilions. The Permanent Secretariat is supporting the Italian Presidency in the coordination of a programme of events at the national pavilions. Additionally a list of events that will be organized in preparation for Expo 2015 was prepared and is available at a special sub-page of the Alpine Convention webpage dedicated to Expo.

4. SOIA

4.1. Report on the State of the Alps

RSA4

The Permanent Secretariat took special care to ensure the distribution of the publication and dissemination of the RSA4 and a number of copies were sent to each contracting party. The report was also presented on a number of special events, including at a Conference on 3 July 2013 in Munich, where the Secretary General participated, at the Center Rinka in Solčava, Slovenia and at the 4 Global meeting of the Mountain Partnership in Erzurum (Turkey). It was also used in a number of bilateral contacts by the Permanent Secretariat.

RSA5

Following the decision of the XII Alpine Conference in 2012 (ACXII/A6), the Permanent Secretariat was involved in the preparation of the fifth Report on the State of the Alps in agreement with the Italian Presidency, together with an ad hoc expert group chaired by Italy. This expert group consists of the representatives of the Contracting Parties and the key actors in the scientific area, the observers and the other institutions concerned. The expert group continued the work started by the Working group Demography and Employment set up by the X Alpine Conference in 2009 (ACX/B4).

The Permanent Secretariat supported the Italian Presidency of the ad hoc group in the organization of the meetings listed in chapter 2 of this report. Moreover, the Permanent Secretariat supported the Italian Presidency and ISTAT in collecting the missing data, in advancing the finalization of the advanced draft of the report and in drafting the summary report, which will be submitted to the Alpine Conference for approval. In particular, the Permanent Secretariat collected and harmonized data at LAU2 level for the demographic indicators and at NUTS 3 level for the indicators concerning labour market and education and drafted the respective parts of the text. Besides the participation in the meetings of the ad hoc working group, in order to contribute to the finalization of the report through the intensification of the technical cooperation, a member of the Permanent Secretariat was hosted at the premises of ISTAT from August 4 to August 8, 2014, where joint activities in data check and harmonization were undertaken. The Permanent Secretariat continuously kept both the Intranet and the Wiki platforms updated in order to facilitate the exchange of information among the members of the Working Group. Finally, the Permanent Secretariat was in-

volved in Skype meetings with the technical partners involved, with the aim to review and finalize the contents of the report.

4.2. European Environment Agency

Common activities of the Permanent Secretariat and the European Environment Agency (EEA) have been implemented on the basis of the signed Partnership agreement, and the Work Plan 2011-2013. This Work plan was extended for an additional year to 2014 in order to better tailor the biennia of the Alpine Convention Presidencies. Most of the common activities were related to the elaboration of a thematic analysis by the European Topic Centre of the EEA, which will be included into the Fifth Report on the State of the Alps on Demographic changes. This thematic analysis is dealing with demographic developments and its relations to urban typology, accessibility of Alpine inhabitants to airports and land use change. Further collaboration took place on the issues of climate change, where the Alpine Convention participated in an EEA Survey and commented on the draft report on Climate change Adaptation practices in the EU. Cooperation is also ongoing on the possible contribution of the Alpine Convention the 5 State of the Environment Report of the EEA. During the second half of 2014 work has started to prepare the Work Plan for 2015-2016. The Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General also met the new Executive director of the EEA Dr. Hans Bruyninckx on 30 January 2014.

4.3. Inclusion of the DIAMONT database into SOIA

In 2013, the Permanent Secretariat and the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Health agreed to move the DIAMONT database to the Permanent Secretariat. Consequently, the data were migrated to a static website which is now available under diamont.alpconv.org. The DIAMONT database provides information about the status of municipalities in manifold fields of development and allows stake-holders to carry out benchmark analysis for their respective municipality in comparison to other municipalities across the Alpine Convention area. It is dedicated to support sound and transparent decision-making on regional and local level based on statistical data and a transnational collection of regional development instruments.

4.4 SOIA WebGIS pilot project

In June 2014 the Permanent Secretariat started a 6 months pilot project to develop a WebGIS platform (hereafter SOIA WebGIS) with the objective of improving the dissemination of the information and the usability of the current and future geographical data coming from different sources. The SOIA WebGIS will integrate data from the existing archive of the PSAC, integrating heterogeneous content starting from the data from the Report of the state of the Alps (RSA) which currently lack of a platform for geographical data visualization. In the future is planned to implement the DIAMOND database in the SOIA WebGIS Platform.

5. Other projects of the Permanent Secretariat

5.1. SuperAlp!

The seventh edition of SuperAlp! was organized 5-9 July 2013 and crossed 3 countries – Switzerland, France and Italy – using different kinds of sustainable transport: including walking, public transport and mountain and electric bikes. SuperAlp!7 was organized in cooperation with the Alpine Convention Info points in Chamonix, Cogne and Domodossola. 14 journalists participated at the trip (from 7 countries: Italy, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Slovenia, Nepal, Czech republic and Romania), resulting in over 20 press reports in printed and online journals and magazines, blogs and TV Broadcasts on Swiss national television. Additionally SuperAlp! was also presented in local media in the regions it passed (Domodossola, Valle d'Aosta).

More information: <http://www.alpconv.org/en/activities/SuperAlp/SuperAlp7/default.html>

5.2. We are Alps tour

Building on the SuperAlp!s experience the Permanent Secretariat launched a new project in 2014 focusing on a specific topic, meeting the local people and traveling across the Alps in a sustainable way. The new project aims to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities of the Alpine region and the Alpine Convention and its responses to the potentials and existing challenges. It emphasizes the characteristics, features, opportunities and common issues the Alpine inhabitants are facing, including public transport and a particular topic for each year.

The focus of 2014 edition of the tour was Alpine Family Farming and Mountain Products, in order to highlight the United Nations Year of Family Farming. Along the way participants met farmers, business people, inhabitants, experts and politicians from the Alpine area and got to know about many different ways of farming in the Alps. A group of 11 journalist (from Austria, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Slovenia and Switzerland) and representatives of the Alpine Convention info points (in Domodossola and Morbegno) was taken for a 8 day tour from Domodossola, via Morbegno, Sondrio, Poschiavo, Pratto allo Stelvio/Prad am Stelfserjoch, Bolzano/Bozen, Padaun to Innsbruck. The tour was organized in cooperation with partners on the territory and was reported about in the local media along the way, in a special blog by the Alpine Convention on its webpage and social media as well as by the participants upon their return. Some of the articles are still to be published, but for now over 20 press reports/articles were already printed.

5.3. Photo contest

In the years 2013 and 2014 the "Alpine Convention's Photo contest" was organized in order to invite the general public to send their pictures and participate in the selection process for them to be published in the next-years calendar of the Alpine Convention. The theme of the 2013 call was "Crossing Borders and pushing the limits", and the theme of 2014 edition was "Climate Change in the Alps – impacts, strategies and people's initiatives". Hundreds of pho-

tos were received every year. The 2013 Edition has been co-sponsored by the “Chamonix Mont –Blanc Mountain Festival”. The process foresees the best (12-14) pictures, graded by a jury formed by Secretariat staff to be published in the next-years calendar. Authors of the best pictures got prizes and some copies of the calendar.

In 2014 a photo-exhibition “Marks of Life in the Alps” was produced and presented in different sites around the Alps. It consists of a selection of pictures from previous editions of the photo-contest.

More information on the photo-contest (including the winning pictures for every year) <http://www.alpconv.org/en/activities/contest/default.html>

5.3. Info-points of the Alpine Convention

The presence of the Alpine Convention on the territory was strengthened by the activities of the Infopoints in Domodossola (I), Cogne (I) and Chamonix (F), which were opened progressively in 2013. A memorandum of Understanding for a new Infopoint was signed with the municipality of Morbegno (I) in 2014.

The objective of the process is twofold: 1) to enhance possibility to receive information on the Alpine Convention within the territory and 2) the Info-points will become a source of useful information for the Permanent Secretariat. The Permanent Secretariat and the Infopoints collaborated on a number of activities, including the Young Scientist Award, SuperAlp!7, We are Alps, Gran Paradiso Film Festival, sponsorship to the Info-point of Domodossola for the conference "Hydroelectricity: resource for the territory?". Info-points proved to be a valid mechanism to promote the Alpine Convention and its protocols and have a good potential for further development in the future. More information: <http://www.alpconv.org/en/convention/agreements/infopoints/default.html>

5.4. Award for Young Scientists

A new edition of the “Young Scientists Award” was prepared in 2013 and finalised in 2014. The Permanent Secretariat financed three awards in favour of diploma thesis, dissertations or master’s thesis on Alpine topics. ARS.UNI.VCO, representing the Infopoint of the Alpine Convention of Domodossola, decided to support this initiative by financing one additional award of 1.000€. The Jury was composed of four members, representing the AC presidency, ISCAR, the Infopoint, and the Permanent Secretariat. The edition 2014 focused on energy as well as sustainable tourism in the alpine region. The winners were selected from 42 submitted works and the awarding ceremony took place at Forum Alpinum in Darfo Boario Terme (Italy) on September the 18. The seven winners of the “Young Scientists Award” were invited to attend the ceremony and to participate at a workshop.

More information:

<http://www.alpconv.org/en/activities/younggeneration/YSAward/default.html>

Winners

2014:

<http://www.alpconv.org/en/activities/younggeneration/YSAward/results2014/default.html>

6. Cooperation

6.1 Territorial Cooperation Programme “Alpine Space”

Good cooperation with the Alpine Space Programme (ASP) continued during 2013 and 2014. This relates in particular to the cooperation in preparation of the Brussels Conference in December 2013, but also by the participation of the Permanent Secretariat in the ASP meetings and the contribution of the Secretariat in the Public consultations on the new Programme for the Period 2014-2020. The Permanent Secretariat participated in 2013 at the ASP meetings in Vienna (A) on 27 September, Munich (D) on 21-22 October, Zurich (CH) 3-5 December and in 2014 in Munich (D) 11-12 February and 18-19 March in Milano (I). The Permanent Secretariat also participated at the Alpine Space 2020 Conference, 21-22 October 2014, which aim is to mark the end of the current programming period and to introduce the next one from 2014-2020.

Additionally, bilateral meetings between Secretary General of the Alpine Convention and the Managing Authority and Secretary of the Joint task force of the Alpine Space Programme took place with the aim to further strengthen cooperation. The Permanent Secretariat acted as observer in many Alpine Space Projects related to themes particularly important for the Alpine Convention. In this function the Secretariat attended numerous final conferences of the respective projects, with special focus on the projects, where the Alpine Convention has the status of the Observer (Acces2Mountains – ETC Central Europe, Alpstar, C3-Alps, WikiAlps, GreenAlps, Alpinfonet,..)

6.2 Civil society organizations

On 9 August 2013 the Secretary General visited CIPRA International in Schaan (LT). It was decided to facilitate the information flow and diffusion through the respective networks in order to increase the visibility. The establishment of regular exchange meetings was agreed and implemented. As CIPRA is taking care of the management and secretariat of the association “Alpine town of the Year” and the network “Alliance in the Alps”, the good exchange of information with CIPRA will also facilitate cooperation with the members of these two networks.

A follow up meeting with CIPRA International was organized on 10 September 2014 where several points of future cooperation were discussed, including closer cooperation on specific topics, research and communication.

Meetings, exchanges and at times common projects were also carried out with other observer organization, including *inter alia* the CAA, Alliance in the Alps, Arge Alp, Alparc, ISCAR, FIANET, UNEP-ROE.

The Permanent Secretary, together with the Italian Presidency, was also actively involved in the preparation and implementation of the Observers Dialogue in the course of the 56 Permanent Committee meeting in Brescia. In the preparation of this meeting the Secretariat was

responsible for the coordination of the update of the questioners responded by the Observers already for the XII Alpine Conference in Poschiavo.

6.3 Cooperation with other Conventions and International Structures

6.3.1. Mountain Partnership

The Permanent Secretariat participated in the 4 Global meeting of the Mountain Partnership in September 2013, including through a presentation of the Alpine Convention in the general session as well as at the Partnership Fair where RSA4 was presented. The Permanent Secretariat supported UNEP's candidacy to represent the intergovernmental organizations in the Mountain partnership Steering committee.

At the invitation of the Secretariat of the Mountain Partnership and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and at their cost, the Permanent Secretariat participated in the closing workshop of the FAO funded project "Strengthening of the participatory management for the sustainable development of the Andes", held in Bogota (Columbia), 25-28 November. This Project is a follow-up of the 2007 "Andes" declaration and action plan that were presented by representatives of Argentina invited to the 36 Permanent Committee in Bolzano/Bozen (I) in October 2007, which had confirmed the readiness of the Alpine Convention to cooperate and exchange experience with the Andes region. This Project aims to develop some institutions to establish, discuss and coordinate common issues and priorities to the Andes mountain areas and consists *inter alia* in a series of regional workshops and compilation of related information and data. The Permanent Secretariat participated in the discussion, especially with regard to the setup of the regional mechanism and the link with national levels and presented the experience of the Alpine Convention with a particular focus on the legal and institutional aspects of the Convention and its protocols as well as trans-border cooperation and exchange of information/data.

The Permanent Secretariat regularly contributes to the newsletter of the Mountain Partnership.

6.3.2. United Nations

The Permanent Secretariat contributed to the preparation of policy briefs for different topics relating to the SDGs; this process is led by the Vienna office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Contributions were made in the field of Energy, Forest and Biodiversity and Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction. The Alpine Convention is expressly referred to in the Sustainable Mountain Development Resolution of the 68th United Nations General Assembly.

6.3.3. UNFCCC

At the 19 Conference of the Parties (COP19) to the UNFCCC the Permanent Secretariat was accepted as official observers to the UNFCCC and, for the first time, had the possibility to address the UNFCCC-plenary. The Secretary General gave a speech on the role of the Alpine Convention and the impacts Climate Change have on the Alps and called for bold action on Climate Change. Participation in the COP19 was also used for other outreach and promo-

tion activities. Preparations are under way for the participation at COP20 where the Joint Alpine-Carpathian Statement could be presented. Additional activities are under way to promote the Alpine Convention at the COP20.

6.3.4. Carpathian Convention

Cooperation between both Conventions and both Secretariats is ongoing and synergies are in place in cooperation with other mountain ranges and international cooperation's. As part of this initiative joint representation at the conference of the Pyrenees was organized, furthermore Alpine and Carpathian Convention have an alternating system in place for the participate at the EU Working Group on the Implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and on restoration (WG GIIR). Close cooperation with the Carpathian Convention was established also in preparation of the Joint Statement of both conventions for the UNFCCC COP20 in Lima as well as in activities in preparation for EXPO2015 in Milano. Exchange between the Secretaries of both Conventions is ongoing. The Secretary General of the Alpine Convention also participated at the COP of the Carpathian Convention in September 2014.

6.3.5. Pyrenees

In cooperation with the Carpathian Convention a joint presentation of both initiatives was done in Pamplona, Spain, in the framework of a conference where a similar regional mountain structure also for the Pyrenees was discussed. Cooperation with the Carpathian Convention is ongoing also in the fields on UN cooperation and the preparation of the SDGs. A joint meeting between the two conventions was planned for late December 2013, but later postponed.

6.3.6. Other cooperation

VIA ALPINA FELLOWSHIP:

The Permanent Secretariat supported the Via Alpina Fellowship in 2013. The Fellowship were awarded to four selected projects of trekking on the trails of the Via Alpina: "A cinema in the backpack", "The Via Alpina Geocache Trail: the Mediterranean Gate", "Attention Hannibalism – red elephant sighted on the Via Alpina!", "Unknown hiking area or famous tourist arena? The Via Alpina in north-eastern Italy". All the projects took place during summer 2013 and the winners reported their experiences by producing multimedia materials that are also available on the website of the Alpine Convention.

AGOCA:

In the year 2013 a bee-keeping project was carried out with financial support provided through the Permanent Secretariat. The cooperation agreement between AGOCA and the Permanent Secretariat was signed in November 2012 and the project was carried out throughout the year 2013, focusing on training and education concerning beekeeping in different times of the year. The main objective of the project was to promote an alternative income generating opportunity for rural areas of Kyrgyzstan. The project was recognized by

the local communities and regions as successful and was also mentioned at the Central Asian Annual Conference with special thanks to the Alpine Convention. Based on the good results and feedback from the project, it was extended to Tajikistan in 2014-2015. Cooperation agreement was signed between AGOCA and the Permanent Secretariat in July 2014 and the project will be carried out between November 2014 and November 2015.

ARDENNES AND APENNINES

The Permanent Secretariat supported the Italian Presidency in their activities under the Task Force for mountain cooperation concerning the Ardennes and the Apennines and also participated at an event carried out in Sedan (F) on 15-16 September 2014 where the Alpine and the Carpathian Convention were presented as good practice examples of cross-border mountain areas.

7. Information and communication

7.1. Media relations

One of the core activities of the Permanent Secretariat is the dissemination of information/promotion on all issues related to the Alpine Convention to the public. Therefore, a special focus was given to these tasks during the last two years resulting in an increased number of Articles in the media. On the initiative of the Permanent Secretariat more than 200 contributions were published in print and online media, on the radio and television as well as on the webpages of our partners. The Secretariat also took advantage of the appointments of the Secretary General and his deputy in order to use the momentum for the Promotion of the Alpine Convention. Project of the Permanent Secretariat, as the Young Scientist Awards, the Photo contest and the “We are Alps” tour were also used to the highest possible extent for promotion purposes and to increase the presence of the Alpine Convention in the media.

Furthermore Articles drafted by the staff of the Permanent Secretariat were published in various magazines; a series of Articles on the Alpine Convention in the leading Czech Mountain Magazin “Lide&Hory”, Articles published in the Publication of Cipra, magazine of the Monaco mountaineering club etc.

The Permanent Secretariat in coordination with the Italian presidency also developed and implemented a communication strategy to better promote the Alpine Conference taking place in Torino, 21 November 2014. In the time between September and the Conference specific topics, which should lead the public towards the Conference are selected and published on the website and in the social media.

7.1.1. Web

The number of users visiting the Alpine Convention's website grew constantly and has reached almost 40.000 visitors per year. The webpage became a point of reference for information on the Alpine Convention, but also enhancements like the map of the week have been added. The web-presence of SOIA has been redesigned and the DIAMONT database is now directly included. The webpages is user friendly and offers as much information as possible. News are published regularly and remain visible on the first page. The sub-page of the Presidency has been enriched in the last period.

Furthermore, the Mountain Lex Webpage was reviewed in order to better structure the different levels of legal provisions relevant for the Alpine area.

7.1.2. Facebook and Twitter

The Permanent Secretariat was active in promoting its activities and projects on social networks and uses them for strengthening cooperation with partners and cross-promoting. The Alpine Conventions Facebook account currently has almost 700 likes, and Twitter account has almost 300 followers. Posts are done regularly in order to ensure visibility. Connections

to partner organizations are made also on social media. A separate Facebook profile was established for the “We are Alps” brand and was actively used during the We are Alps tour.

7.2. Cooperation with Schools

In this last semester of 2013 the Permanent Secretariat organized interdisciplinary days with schools in Slovenia and in Switzerland, to promote awareness of the Alpine Convention. In addition the “World of the Alps” card game was made available to different schools in the Alps for their use.

The activities promoted were:

Switzerland

On the 2-3 December the Permanent Secretariat participated in the “interdisciplinary days” of the Scuola Media of Stabio (CH). The Alpine Convention with its activities and objectives was presented to around 100 students (12-13 years old) divided in 4 sessions of 3 hours each. The card game “The World of the Alps” allowed a more playful approach.

Slovenia

On 9 December the Alpine Convention was presented to the students of the second grade of Jesenice High School. Around 100 students participated in the presentation of the Alpine Convention and its significance for their local territory and the projects carried out in their surroundings. They were most interested in the linguistic and cultural differences in the Alps and expressed the interest to participate at the future activities of the Alpine Convention (Youth Parliament, Nuovoe Leve, Day of the Alpine Convention, etc).

YPAC:

The Secretary General met with the organizers of the Youth Parliament to discuss future cooperation. The coordinators of the Youth Parliament also held their meeting at the premises of the Permanent Secretariat. Meeting with the organizers of the next YPAC was carried out and support for their activities is foreseen. YPAC is also included in the promotion of the activities by the Secretariat where possible. Members of the Permanent Secretariat participated in the YPAC meetings in Sonthofen 2013 and Chamonix 2014.

7.3. Events, fairs and exhibitions

Events supported by the Permanent Secretariat

During the period reported the Secretary General and the staff of the Permanent Secretariat supported several initiatives relating to the Alpine Convention and organized in the Alpine to promote awareness of the Alpine Convention, its objectives and its activities.

7.3.1. Support for events

- Permanent Secretariat provided its patronage to the VII Edition of the OROBIE Film Festival, an international festival of mountain documentaries and fictional film (Bergamo, 19- 26 January 2013);

- Financial contribution of 1.000 € was given to the “Festival delle Alpi 2013” organized by the Association Montagna Italia in collaboration with the CAI Lombardia (22-23 June 2013)
- Permanent Secretariat provided its patronage for the XVII. Edition of the Gran Paradiso Film Festival – Trofeo Stambecco d’Oro (August 2013). In the framework of the Festival “Question Time” has been organized with the support of the Italian Presidency regarding the economy, tourism, new challenges and other aspects of Italian National Parks through the answers of eight experts active in the field.
- Participation with a seminar on "Mountain Forests: renewable energy source for the Alpine Region" in the framework of the Klimaenergy Fair, Bolzano/Bozen (I), 19 September 2013.
- Permanent Secretariat provided its patronage for the XIV. Edition of the BITM – Borsa Internazionale del Turismo Montano (2013);
- Participation with the stand at the Sustainable Tourism Fair, Longarone (I), 27-29 September 2013.
- Patronage to “Terre Alte...emozioni dal Mondo” International Festival of mountain films (Milan, 19-26 October 2013);
- The Secretariat gave patronage and financially supported the Innsbruck Nature Film Festival 2013 and 2014. At the 2013 edition a Podium Talk on the Alpine Convention entitled “The Alpine Convention, an unconventional Convention” was given and an information kiosk with materials and publications about the Alpine Convention.
- Patronage and financial contribution to the Compagnie des Guides de la Valpelline in commemoration of the first ascent of the Dent d’Hérens 150 years ago (2013).
- Permanent Secretariat provided its patronage for the VII Edition of the Literary Contest “Frontiere-Grenzen” (Primiero, 16 November 2013);
- Financial support was given to the Triglav National Park in 2013 for measures to enhance the recognition and visibility of the Alpine Convention.
- The Secretariat presented the Alpine Convention at the Alpinism Festival in Prague (November 2013 also planned in December 2014).
- Permanent Secretariat provided its patronage for the VIII. Edition of the Orobic Film Festival, an international festival of mountain documentaries and fictional film (Bergamo, 18-25 January 2014);
- Patronage for the III Edition of the “Fiera delle Sostenibilità nella Natura Alpina” organized in June 2014 by the Adamello Regional Park.
- Financial contribution of 500,00 euro to the “Festival delle Alpi 2014” organized by the Association Montagna Italia in collaboration with the CAI Lombardia (21-22 June 2014)
- Support for the Grand Paradiso Film Festival 2014 (25-30 August 2014)
- Support and active participation (with a stand) at the Chamonix Mountain Festival 2014. Alpine Convention has also participated at a conference about "Alpinism today"

7.3.2. Conferences (selection)

- The Secretary General took part in the Conference on Sustainable Tourism held in Munich (D) on 3 July 2013.
- On 4 July 2013 the Secretary General participated in the Workshop of the CIPRA-Austria *Rechtsservicestelle* on the Protocol on Nature Protection (Salzburg).
- The Permanent Secretariat took part at the conference “Dent d’Hérens 1863-2013” held in Valpelline (I) on 24 August 2014 to discuss the importance of the highest peaks in the Alps in increasing the awareness of new generations regarding the potential, the resources and perspectives of high mountains tourism. It included support to the initiative with the

patronage and a financial contribution to the Compagnie des Guides de la Valpelline in commemoration of the first ascent of the Dent d'Hérens 150 years ago.

- On 29 August 2013, the Secretary General participated in the award ceremony of the Architecture Price Constructive Alps in Bern (CH).
- Participation at the Innovation Festival with a Talk Show on the Alpine Space Project "AlpInfoNet" with the support of the Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention, and the collaboration of the Institute for Regional Development and Location Management of EURAC, Bolzano/Bozen (I) on 27 September 2013.
- The Secretary General took part in the annual meeting of the *Bergsteigerdörfer* focusing on the Energy Protocol on 3 October, in Lunz am See (A);
- The Permanent Secretariat participated in the annual meeting of CIPRA on 11th October 2013, in Bolzano/Bozen (I) and on 13 November 2014 in Annecy;
- The Permanent Secretariat participated in a conference organized by the International Sledge Sport Union on Sustainable Tourism in Bolzano/Bozen (I) on 11 October 2013;
- Participation by the Secretary General in the annual meeting of the project RechargeGreen on 12 November 2014 in Brig (CH).
- Participation by the Secretary General at the Award Ceremony of the Literary award Frontiere-Grenzen organized by the Cultural Association La Bottega dell'Arte in Fiera di Primiero (I) on 16 November 2013.
- Organization, on the occasion of the International Mountain Days, of an open day exhibition on the topic "Crossing borders and pushing limits" and a conference with the paraplegic climber Vanessa Francois, Innsbruck (A), 11 December 2013.
- Participation (and organization) at the Conference "Towards an EU Strategy for the Alpine Region", Bruxelles (B), 17 December 2013.
- Secretary General participated at the PLANALP conference in Graz, 25 March 2014;
- 26 March 2014 the Secretary General took part at the round table discussion on the Rolle of the Alps;
- Secretary General participated at the meeting of the Legal service of CIPRA Austria on the Tourism protocol, 17 March 2013;
- Secretary General participated at the Meeting of the Zurich Group in Leipzig, 21 May 2014;
- Secretary General and deputy Secretary General participated at the national consultation on MRS in Slovenia and at the Slovenian Day of the Alpine Convention (23-24 May 2014).
- Permanent Secretariat actively participate (also with a stand) and the Chamonix Mountain Festival and the conference "Mountaineering today in the Mont Blanc massif" organized on this occasion 28-29 June 2014;
- The Deputy secretary participated at the Water Conference in Trento, 25-26 September 2014;
- It is further envisaged to participate at the final conferences of many Alpine Space projects till the end of the year (GreenAlps, 13-14 October 2014, C3Alps, 14 October 2014, WikiAlps, 4 December) and on the following conferences: South Tyrolean Farmers Association, 31 October 2014, Rete Montagna, 7 November and WISO Conference, 5 December 2014, all in Bolzano/Bozen).
- The Permanent Secretariat supported the Presidency in organization of the thematic workshops held in parallel to several Working Groups and Platforms meetings.

7.3.3. International Days

The Permanent Secretariat marked the celebrations of the following International Days through press releases, news, video clips on the web site and side events.

The International Days celebrated were:

- European Mobility Week, 16 to 22 September 2013;
- World Tourism Day, 27 September 2013;
- World Habitat Day, 7 October 2013;
- European week for waste reduction, 16 to 24 November 2013;
- 22 Birthday of the Alpine Convention: a video message from the Secretary General and the President of the Permanent Committee has been published on the web site, Facebook and Twitter.
- Video clip to celebrate the International Day of Natural Disaster Reduction (13 October 2013) with a video message from the President of the Alpine Convention's Platform on Natural Hazards, Ms Maria Patek. The video message has been made during the PlanAlp Working Group meeting that took place in Brescia also to remember the victims of the Vajont disaster. The video clip is available on the Convention's website:
<http://www.alpconv.org/en/newsevents/latest/NewsDetails.html?entryid=135681>
- Celebration of the International Mountain Day: the International Mountain Day, held each year on the 11 December 2013, is an opportunity to create awareness about the importance of mountains to life. On the occasion of this special day the Secretariat organized an event at the Austrian Alpine Club Museum in Innsbruck. The activities organized were: open day exhibition on the topic of the 2014 calendar "crossing borders and pushing the limits". The calendar was also presented at the event. During the evening the paraplegic climber Vanessa Francois gave a presentation of her ascent of El Capitan. In addition, a panel discussion was carried out, led by Benedikt Sauer and with representatives of youth (Isabella Hilber), sustainable development (Fred Luks), economy (Harald Gohm), religion (Karl-Heinz Baumgartner), mountain farming (Hans Walder) and the Alpine Convention (Markus Reiterer) took place.
- Video clip to celebrate the World Water Day (21 March 2014) was done by the president of the Water Platform, Mr Riccardo Rigon.
- On the occasion of the International Day for Biological Diversity a joint statement was prepared by the Secretary General of the Alpine Convention, lead partner of EU Alpine Space projects about ecological connectivity and the director of ALPARC.
- Celebration of the Alpine Convention Day in Slovenia, organized on June 2013, where the Permanent Secretariat participated with a stand and was actively involved in the program during the day;
- Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General participated at the celebration of the 5th Alpine Convention Day in Slovenia, organized on 24 May 2014. The Permanent Secretariat also had a stand and was actively involved in the program during the day;
- Awareness raising was also done on the occasion of World Environment day (5 June 2014).