

Highlights of the Austrian Presidency of the Alpine Convention

Austria was holding the Presidency of the Alpine Convention from October 2016 until April 2019. On this page you can find a summary of the most important topics that will be of important for the Alpine region also in the future.

For two and a half years the Contracting Parties of the Alpine Convention were working under the Austrian Presidency. From October 2016 until April 2019 the motto “Protect and Utilise” was at the heart of the work in the Alpine region. The three pillars of sustainability – social, ecological and economical aspects – have always been taken into consideration.

Austria especially focused on the topics of **climate protection** and **soil protection**. The Alpine Climate Board developed the Alpine Climate Target System 2050. Twelve sectoral targets have been described which have to be met in order to make Alps a climate-neutral and climate-resilient area until the year 2050. The **Alpine Climate Target System 2050** has been adopted by the ministers of the Alpine states at the XV meeting of the Alpine Conference. Its operationalisation is now at the top of the agenda of the Alpine Climate Board, of some Thematic Working Bodies and of the Alpine Biodiversity Board. Furthermore the 7th Report on the State of the Alps (**RSA7**) on the topic of “**Natural hazard risk governance**” has been elaborated. Both documents, the Target System as well as the RSA, have been emphasised in the **Declaration of Innsbruck “Climate-neutral and climate-resilient Alps 2050”**. You can find a summary of these three publications [here](#).

During the Austrian Presidency, the Compliance Committee was focussing on “**Economical use of soil**”. Thereby relevant regulations from the Protocols on Soil Conservation and Spatial planning and sustainable development have been checked for their effectiveness. A conclusion thereto: “The Compliance Committee strongly recommends reinforcing the planning on a regional and supra-municipal level regarding the effective reduction of soil/land consumption using binding guidelines for municipalities.” At the Alpine Conference in April the ministers established of a Soil Protection Working Group.

In the scope of a conference, Austria set an important example regarding the **role of women in mountain regions**. The results of the conference that took place in 2017 in Alpbach, hosting representants of mountain regions worldwide, is a declaration, which formulates nine steps which are necessary to strengthen the role of women in mountain regions on a global level. You can find this declaration [here](#).

The first priority of the [Multi-annual Work Programme of the Alpine Conference](#) is aiming at activities in the field of “**Population and Culture**”. Austria set an important impulse through the initiative **ClimaHost**, the support of the **Youth Alpine Interrail Project**, the **Reading Mountains Festival** and various other events, to raise awareness on the Alpine Convention and the sensitive Alpine region. The motto “Protect and Utilise” has been communicated in all times.

Austria has strived strategically to **intensify the collaboration with the EUSALP, the EU Macro-regional Strategy for the Alpine Region** - on one hand to avoid dual approaches and on the other to make use of the synergies between those entities, which are both dealing with the Alpine region.

In the course of the XV Alpine Conference on 4 April 2019, the former federal minister Elisabeth Köstinger **handed over the Presidency to France**. Information on the French working programme, the

new structure and the Thematic Working Bodies as well as general information on the Alpine Convention you can find on the [website of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention](#).

Photo 1: Final photo of the conference „The role of women in mountain regions“.

Photo 2: ClimaHost challenge: The eco-hotel der daberer is number one in Austria. The German minister of environment, Svenja Schulze, and the former Austrian minister for sustainability and tourism, Elisabeth Köstinger, congratulated them during the evening reception of the XV Alpine Conference. (BMNT / Paul Gruber)

Photo 3: Exhibition in the scope of the Reading Mountains Festival in the library of Dornbirn.

Photo 4: Reading Mountains Festival in the bookshop Tyrolia.

Photo 5: Impression of the Initiative Youth Alpine Interrail 2019.

Photo 6: Impression of the Youth Alpine Interrail 2018.

Photo 7: Impression of the Youth Alpine Interrail 2018.

*Courtesy translation provided by the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention.

Source: https://www.bmnt.gv.at/umwelt/eu-international/umweltpolitik_internat/alpenkonvention/alpenkonventionsvorsitz-oesterreich-2016-2019.html