



Ministerial Conference Oslo 14-16 June 2011

Conference **Proceedings**

FOREST EUROPE

Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

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ALPINE CONVENTION

Mr. Marco Onida Secretary General

The Alpine Convention welcomes the decisions which are being taken at this Ministerial Conference

In the Alps, forests cover around 43% of the land surface, playing a crucial role for the preservation of biodiversity, the prevention of natural hazards and contributing to form the typical cultural landscape of the Alps, an essential basis for tourism.

The Alpine Convention has already acquired considerable expertise and knowledge in the field of sustainable forest management, through:

1. A legally binding Protocol on mountain forests, dating from 1996. *Main objective:* to preserve mountain forests as a near-natural habitat and to improve their stability, *Specific provisions:* priority to the protective function of forests, ensuring the effectiveness of forests for water resources, climate balance, air quality and noise protection, ensuring their biological diversity, recreational functions and their role as a source of employment and income for the resident population, calling for compensations for services of mountain forest economy and the promotion of professional training for foresters.
2. The climate action plan adopted by the Xth Alpine Conference contains measures regarding the promotion of the use of wood from mountain forests as a source of renewable energy (mitigation) and measures concerning the development of wood industries and the maintenance of forests with protective functions (adaptation). Furthermore the Contracting parties have agreed to develop guidelines for the follow-up of mountain forest facing climate change.
3. The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention was observer in forest related projects of European Territorial Cooperation programs such as KnowForAlp, Manfred and Network Mountain Forestry.

4. Important aspects of forest management are currently treated within the activities of the Alpine Convention platforms on water management, wildlife and society, ecological networks, natural hazards and mountain agriculture.

The Alpine Convention was happy to contribute to this process so far, will be pleased to continue contributing and is looking forward to a further fruitful cooperation.