

EUSALP AG 6 WORK PLAN 2020-2022 (Abridged version¹)

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¹ The complete version of the AG6 work plan 2020-2022 with its sections on AG6 working structures and methods, proposed activities, coherence with the EUSALP Action Plan and first ideas on financing, which has been adopted by the AG6 members, constitutes the binding working basis for AG6 undertakings.

1. Executive Summary

Within the period January 2020 to June 2022 AG6 will deal with the overarching topic **“Co-operating for landscapes in times of climate crisis”**. The topics of spatial development and soil protection, food and wood as well as water remain at the core of the AG6 activities as they are closely related to the selected overarching topic allowing to tackle it from different angles. AG6 will also strengthen the links between its topics by developing joint transversal activities.

The sustainable use of resources and the protection of biodiversity and landscapes have not only an intrinsic value in themselves but have also proven to be highly beneficial for local economies, especially in sectors such as tourism and quality food production that are very important for the Alpine area. Therefore, the main activities of AG6 concern the two leading strands protection and valorization of Alpine natural and cultural landscapes and Alpine food heritage. In addition, AG 6 will be involved in a series of transversal activities, the most important ones being the contribution to the work of the Task Force Multifunctional Forests and Sustainable Use of Timber (TF MFSUT) and the collaboration with other AGs within the strategic priority policy area “Spatial Planning”.

2. Targets, composition and working principles

2.1 Mission statement of the Action Group

EUSALP AG6 (“To preserve and valorize natural resources including water and cultural resources”) aims at preserving and sustainably valorizing the Alpine natural and cultural heritage and at balancing protection and economic development in order to meet the overarching challenge to sustain the Alpine Region as a unique living space for people and nature as well as economic area. The overall mission of EUSALP AG6 is to provide valuable contributions to an Alpine strategic framework that allows the establishment of sustainable and balanced models of resource management and production. The motto of EUSALP AG6 is **“With Alpine heritage today for a sustainable, resilient and innovative tomorrow”**.

2.2 Composition and Sub-Groups

AG6 members represent national ministries, regional administrations, non-governmental organisations as well as research and education institutions from Austria, France, Italy, Liechtenstein and Slovenia.

AG6 will apply a flexible mode of operation without defining fixed sub-groups responsible for implementing specific parts of the work plan. For the single activities envisaged AG6 members commit themselves to work together as coordinating members or supporting members.

A continuous flow of information between the AG6 members and the exchange with other relevant EUSALP-Action Groups as well as with the other EUSALP governance levels, with the aim to follow a cross sectoral approach, will ensure not only transparency but also ownership. These objectives are also served by regular updates of AG6 on current developments in the EUSALP process and on other pertinent Alpine processes and by using synergies with the bodies of the Alpine Convention relevant for the AG6 topics.

The AG6 members are listed in annex 1². All members are committed to representing their institutions in AG6 with the objective of advancing things in the fields of preserving and valorizing natural resources including water and cultural resources. This includes identifying and generating projects tackling the

² The publication of annex 1 requires the GDPR consent of all AG6 members.

challenges of the Alpen Region in the policy areas mentioned and will result in intensifying cooperation in the framework of EUSALP. Additional members are welcome to increase the expertise within and the representativeness of AG6.

2.3 Involvement of the stakeholders

AG6 comprises representatives from national administrations, regional administrations, civil society, research and education institutions and other organizations. All of them are involved in the AG6 activities within their respective competences and interests.

- National administrations:

Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (AT), Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea (IT), Ministry of Home Affairs, Education and Environment (LI), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food (SI), Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning (SI), Ministry of Culture (SI)

- Regional administrations:

Carinthia (AT), Lower Austria (AT), Tyrol (AT), Vienna (AT), Bavaria (DE), Lombardy Region (IT), Veneto Region (IT), Autonomous Province of Trento (IT),

- Civil society:

WWF Austria, Alpine Convention Alliance Carinthia (AT), Economic Chamber of Tyrol (AT), Office of the Chambers of Agriculture of the Departments of Savoie, Haute-Savoie, Isère and Drôme (FR), "Plattform Land" - South Tyrolean alliance for living rural areas and intelligent land use (IT), CIPRA International (LI),

- Research and education institutions:

Environment Agency Austria (AT), Polo Poschiavo (CH), National research institute for agriculture food and environment (FR), EURAC research (IT), Slovenian Forestry Institute (SI), Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy for Sciences and Arts (SI), Slovene Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry (SI)

- Other organizations:

European Commission, Joint Secretariat of the Alpine Space Programme, Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, National Association of Italian Municipalities - Liguria Region (IT)

3. Fields of activity 2020-2022

In the period January 2020 to June 2022 AG6 will deal with the overarching topic "Co-operating for landscapes in times of climate crisis". The work plan includes new activities and activities that can be considered as a continuation or capitalization of initiatives developed in the previous period. AG6 envisages to carry out the following specific activities in its thematic areas:

- Study on preservation and valorization of the diversity of Alpine natural and cultural landscapes in times of climate crisis
- EUSALP map of natural and cultural landscapes
- EUSALP Landscape Conference
- Actions for the promotion of Alpine Food Heritage
- Second Territorial Brands Conference
- Mapping of agri-food Territorial Brands and collection of information about their structure
- Meeting with FAO representatives on implementation of FAO programme on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) in the Alpine Region
- Mapping of non-wood forest products
- Awareness raising campaign on the value of soils for climate mitigation and adaptation for stakeholders at municipal level
- Follow up of the projects Next Generation 2030 and AlpJobs

In addition, AG6 will contribute to the elements of the capacity building process in the EUSALP Learning Environment as foreseen in the AlpGov 2 application form. This includes the contribution to identifying topics of strategic relevance for capacity building, to developing the modules for the selected topics, to elaborating the concept of the EUSALP Learning Environment and to its implementation and evaluation.

Furthermore, AG6 will collaborate with the respective Presidency for the inclusion of its themes as common implementation priorities in the program of the presidencies' period according to the provisions of article 10 of the rules of procedure of the EUSALP Executive Board. AG6 will also contribute to the implementation of the presidencies' programme within the limits of available resources and if compatible with its work plan through e.g. participation in events and organization of workshops.

The implementation of this work program depends on the lasting commitment of the respective AG6 members for the single activities envisaged. All activities are subject to possible changes.

4. Contribution of the AG to the Alpine Green Deal

4.1 Strategic sectoral implementation initiative

Landscape is a basic component of the natural and cultural heritage and an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside. The quality and diversity of Alpine natural and productive landscapes constitute a common resource. In the period 2020-2022 AG6 will care about this resource by contributing with several activities to a general framework, in which this quality and diversity can be safeguarded and innovated through international cooperation towards protection and sustainable management. In this connection one of the strategic sectoral implementation initiatives pursued by AG6 is the **EUSALP Landscape Conference**.

This lighthouse project aims at giving the Political Declaration on Sustainable Land Use and Soil Protection elaborated by AG6 in 2018 a substantiated follow up. Furthermore, the study on preservation and valorisation of the diversity of Alpine natural and cultural landscapes in times of climate crisis and the EUSALP map of natural and cultural landscapes that AG6 will produce, shall be presented to a broad public. Capitalizing results from projects with AG6 implementation, such as Impuls4Action, will be another important element of the Conference. Finally, recommendations with regard to safeguarding and managing the diversity of the natural and productive landscapes, the traditional practices, the cultural heritage and also the urban locations of value in the light of climate crisis shall be drawn up.

Preparatory activities such as the definition of the date and the program, the invitation of the speakers and of political representatives as well as the organization of the interpretation will start in the first half of 2021. This applies also to the selection of the venue and the organization of the catering in case the conference will not be held virtually. The Conference shall be implemented, and its results shall be spread in the second half of 2021/first half of 2022.

The stakeholders to be involved include the members of AG6, other AGs dealing with related topics, such as AG4, AG7, AG8, AG9, and representatives of pertinent projects, such as Open SpaceAlps, LUIGI, Smart Altitude, InTerracedNet and AlpFoodway. Furthermore, the Alpine Convention's Alpine Climate Board, Working Group on Soil protection and Working Group on Spatial planning as well as the structures of the European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe shall be addressed.

4.2 Participation to cross-sectoral strategic initiatives

In addition to the activities listed in point 3 AG6 will contribute to three of the five Strategic priority policy areas with various undertakings aimed at reaching the AG6 goals.

AG6 will contribute to the activities of the TF MFSUT, which is co-led by two members of AG6 and comprises members of the AG2, AG7, AG8 and AG9. The envisaged mandate of the TF MFSUT foresees among other things a follow-up of the cross-sectoral workshop “Climate Crisis and its effects on Forest and Timber Value Chains” held at the EUSALP Annual Forum 2019 and a contribution to the AlpGov 2 strategic priority policy area “Innovation hub for green business”, as one of the three main topics of this line of work deals with “wood and timber value chains”. In addition, the TF MFSUT is expected to organize an online workshop on multifunctional Alpine forests to be held at the EUSALP Annual Forum 2020 and to implement a project proposed by the French EUSALP Presidency on the use of forests as nature-based solution for the protection of biodiversity and natural risks management in the Alps.

All AGs are being called upon to contribute to the AlpGov2 strategic priority policy area “Spatial planning”, as this is a true cross-sectoral topic, which is relevant for all nine AGs. AG6 will contribute to the activities planned, on the basis of its Political Declaration on Sustainable Land Use and Soil Protection from 2018 and the provisions of the Spatial Planning Protocol of the Alpine Convention, which is legally binding upon all States of the EUSALP apart from Switzerland, through seeking synergies and complementarities with activities carried out at about the same time by several technical working bodies of the Alpine Convention. Contributing to the making of a common spatial development perspective for the EUSALP area has been included in the AG6 work plan 2020-2022.

Finally, AG6 will contribute to the AlpGov2 strategic priority policy area “Innovation facility” with the objective of exploring the feasibility and potential framework for mobilizing further funding sources for EUSALP implementation. The AG6 co-leader from Carinthia participates in the advisory group.

Apart from that AG6 will also participate in the activities envisaged in the AlpGov 2 project regarding the assessment of the implementation of its strategic initiatives according to the “3-phase development” model of the COWI study. For a harmonized monitoring of the strategic implementation initiatives in the EUSALP a common set of targets and indicators will be developed and integrated in the reporting mechanisms.

4.3 Mobilization of strategic target groups

The transfer of the results and outputs of AG6 into public policies is on the one hand part of the responsibility of the AG6 members in their own sphere of action and on the other a matter of the ordinary communication activities of AG6. In this connection the AG6 road show stop has a particular importance.

In addition, the public events planned by AG6, in particular the EUSALP Landscape Conference, the second Territorial Brands Conference and the awareness raising campaign on the value of soils for climate mitigation and adaptation for stakeholders at municipal level offer good opportunities for making known the policy recommendations developed by AG6 by strategic target groups and transferring them subsequently into public policies.

Beyond that AG6 is involved in three of the five strategic priority policy areas, all of them aiming at developing policy recommendations (see point 4.2). Moreover, the participation of AG6 in the activities envisaged in the AlpGov 2 work package “Mobilizing strategic target groups” will help other AGs getting acquainted with AG6 outputs and will hopefully result in influencing public policies. Through this work package, policy makers will be involved according to their level of competence in addressing policy gaps. Their engagement will be based

on the policy cycle process: they will be initially mobilised to help identify the relevant policies and potential policy gaps, they will then be involved in the capitalization phase in order to discuss and review policy recommendations and, finally, promote effective policy adaptations. Replication among EUSALP policy makers will be facilitated by policy peer reviews and results will be made available via communication tools and activities.

5 Contribution of the AG to the recovery of the alpine economies and societies after coronavirus breakdown

Several activities of the AG6 work plan could contribute to the recovery of the Alpine economies and societies after the Covid 19 crisis. These activities are aimed at strengthening the resilience of the Alpine Region and at counteracting the social and economic impacts of the pandemic.

The actions for the promotion of Alpine Food Heritage, the organization of the second territorial brands conference and the mapping of agri-food territorial brands as well as the mapping of non-wood forest products planned by AG6 could have a positive effect on improving the resilience of the Alpine Region through fostering integrated small-scale economic circuits in rural areas and balanced rural-urban partnerships with the objective of maintaining/creating local capacities for sustainable food production and marketing on the basis of endogenous natural resources, local knowledge and social network capital.

In addition, the activities of the TF MFSUT co-led by members of AG6, in particular the activities related to wood value chains within the AlpGov2 strategic priority policy area “Innovation hub for green business” could show the importance of regional and local value chains and thus support a sustainable restart of the social and economic system.

As a general orientation AG6 strives for designing the recovery after the Covid 19 crisis not as a comeback of the old “normal”, but to induce changes towards green economy concepts turning the Alpine Region into an area, where a resource efficient, circular economy supporting quality of life and well-being prevails and where economic growth is decoupled from resource consumption.

6. Communication

6.1 Dissemination and communication activities

The targeted use of existing and newly developed tools in internal and external communication will enhance the visibility of AG6 activities and results and will raise awareness for AG6 topics. This also includes the allocation of AG6 topics and activities to the SDGs, also considering their sub-targets. Regular updates of the AG6 section in the EUSALP and the AlpGov 2 websites as well as in the internet presence of the Alpine Convention and of Carinthia will be provided.

The public events planned by AG6, in particular the EUSALP Landscape Conference and the second Territorial Brands Conference, will be embedded in corresponding public relations activities that process the AG6 topics.

Upon request of the leader of the Work Package Communication within AlpGov 2 AG6 will come up with materials of relevance for communication elaborated during AG6 meetings and other activities, especially to feed the newsletter in a storytelling frame.

The AlpGov 2 AG6 Road Show stop will be designed and performed by the leaders of AG6 with support of all AG6 members and with assistance of the EUSALP/AlpGov 2 communication staff.

6.2 Events

Within the period January 2020 till June 2022 AG6 will organize a kick-off meeting, a final conference and at least one regular meeting every six months. AG6 meetings can be carried out in different formats, including virtual and physical meetings, as required.

AG6 will also organize larger scale public events such as the Second Territorial Brands Conference (first half 2021), the EUSALP Landscape Conference (second half 2021/first half 2022) and the AG6 roadshow stop.

As far as already foreseeable AG6 will be involved in organizing a workshop at the Annual Forum 2020 and will have a share in events related to the strategic priority policy areas and to other events in the framework of the AlpGov 2 project.

All planned events will be carried out respectively supported within the limits of the resources available and are subject to changes due to the Covid 19 context.

6.3 Road Show

The Road Show is coordinated by the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention (PSAC) in close collaboration with the various Action Groups and the EUSALP/AlpGov2 communication team.

The stop dedicated to AG6 will offer a stage to present its concrete activities and their relation to the broader EUSALP context. AG6 will identify the topic(s) for the stop as well as a date and, if the stop will be carried out physically, a location. Furthermore, AG6 will design the specific modules “Policy dialogue”, “EUSALP concrete” and “Cultural program”, define objectives and participants (speakers, local decision makers, audience), implement the event and promote it on the local level and in the respective networks.