



# Action Programme for a Green Economy in the Alpine Region

## Executive Summary

The Green Economy Action Programme (GEAP) for the Alpine region is based on the outcomes of the sixth Report on the State of the Alps (RSA6), in which a green economy is defined as “one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities”.

The RSA6 identified four key thematic areas within which the GEAP has formulated the following priority objectives with regard to progress towards an Alpine green economy 2030:

- ▶ The Alpine green economy will achieve high energy efficiency, using clean and renewable energy and absolute decoupling of economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions, in line with both the target of a climate-neutral and resilient Alpine region by 2050 and the energy goals of the Contracting Parties of the Alpine Convention.
- ▶ The Alpine green economy will increase resource efficiency and transform its production and consumption patterns into a circular economy, thereby focusing on the sustainable economic use of forest, water and soil within the framework of an ecosystem services (ESS) approach. This supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12) as well as a land degradation neutral world (SDG 15).
- ▶ The Alpine green economy will continue to preserve its natural capital and prevent the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. The application of the concepts of ecological networks and green infrastructure are considered crucial.
- ▶ The Alpine green economy will improve the quality of life and well-being of Alpine residents, especially through reduction of harmful emissions and the creation of green jobs. Moreover, by offering a unique landscape and natural experiences, the region can also positively influence the quality of life of people who are visiting the Alps.

The GEAP mentions several compelling reasons to highlight the Alpine area as a region with specific urgency for the implementation of a green economy: The large areas with a potential to deliver ESS, the spatial limitations of the territory, the high vulnerability of the habitats, the strong traditional anchoring of the inhabitants and the global visibility as a touristic hot-spot.

The challenge of evolving into a digital society is considered a crucial and cross-cutting theme that affects all future activities.

The GEAP has developed actions, all of which are clustered into action fields. The latter represent processes that are manageable, realistic and impactful and that help to foster the transformation toward an Alpine green economy 2030. The GEAP is thus not a thematic programme, but more an “operationalising” instrument for all thematic areas. The action fields are:

- ▶ Greening finance and the financial support structures,
- ▶ Encouraging eco-innovation,
- ▶ Greening regional development,
- ▶ Valorising ecosystems and biodiversity,
- ▶ Living and working in a green economy.



The GEAP has defined 33 actions, which may be implemented and tailored to demands, priorities and capacities. The actions are grouped into the above-mentioned clusters. These actions are broadly designed to allow for adaptation with regards to thematic or territorial specifications, country framework conditions or available funding. It is acknowledged that it might be necessary to mobilise additional resources (e.g. funding projects) to realise actions. Moreover, possible roles of key actors and co-operation partners are defined in a general way and will require further planning in the preparation for implementation.

All actions strictly follow key criteria, which ensure that the GEAP is a stakeholder-driven, realisable and broadly supported programme that builds on existing achievements, responds to economic needs or generates economic impact, and pushes innovative initiatives towards a truly transnational, cooperative approach. The list of actions represents a non-exhaustive “starting package” to which further actions can be added.

There are several options to boost transformation in the long term, such as being an active policy player, establishing a continuous learning process, integrating relevant actions into the future mandates of the working bodies of the Alpine Convention, involving young people (e.g. through the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention) and outreaching and collaborating with a wide range of observer organisations that ensure public participation.

Finally, in order to guarantee a long-term impact of the GEAP actions, monitoring and evaluation procedures are suggested. The GEAP requires institutional arrangements through the Alpine Convention and its bodies for the integrated implementation and management of its proposed actions.