

KEY ASPECTS OF THE KNOWLEDGE INQUIRIES



The Future in the Alps Project is borne by the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps (CIPRA) and financed by the MAVA Foundation for Nature Conservation. Through the Project, CIPRA is contributing towards sustainable development in the Alpine region and the implementation of the Alpine Convention.

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This document is extracted from the guideline for the selection and the structuring of the compiled knowledge. The guideline was used by the six teams working on the questions as a common base for the knowledge inquiries and should be taken into account when investigating and compiling scientific knowledge and best practice examples of the themes addressed by the 6 questions.

1 SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE KNOWLEDGE BASE

The following **8 criteria** for the selection of the knowledge base represent a multidimensional framework within which the knowledge gathering process should take place. They are technical rather than thematic and relate to the knowledge gathering and knowledge transfer process. They should be taken into account when assessing the relevance of information for the theme in concern. Thematic criteria depend on the theme of the question and can be derived from the detailed description of question 1 to 6.

- (1) **State of the Art / Topicality:** For each thematic question the state of the art of the scientific and practical knowledge up to now is needed. Special emphasis is laid upon topical results, experiences, techniques and methods which are of special interest and highly applicable at the present time. Approved knowledge as well as new and promising issues should be taken into account and be indicated as such. The same goes for regional and cultural differences of transformation or target knowledge.
- (2) **Quality / Representativeness:** Only high quality knowledge is needed rather than numerous information of which the quality is difficult to evaluate. A representative number of the best achievements is required. Formal criteria to evaluate the quality of knowledge depend largely on the source of information (see 2. Types and sources of knowledge). The following general criteria can be applied especially to non-reviewed publications, internet-sites and expert knowledge:
 - Objectivity of the originator of the information
 - Qualification of the author or originator of the information
 - Generation of the information (research, practical example, opinion aso.)
 - Completeness, level of detail and target audience of the information
 - General appearance and formal accuracy
- (3) **Innovation potential:** The information is based on innovative concepts, ideas or methods which can be further developed.
- (4) **Applicability:** The results, experiences, techniques and methods are directed towards implementation. The positive impact on nature and environment, the

positive impact on community and culture and/or the contribution to an economic value added can be numeralised to some extent.

- (5) **Transferability:** The results, experiences, techniques and methods presented have already been or can be transferred thematically to other areas or sectors or/and spatially to other regions in the Alps.
- (6) **Inter- and Transdisciplinarity:** The results, experiences, techniques and methods have been generated in the framework of interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary projects and processes.
- (7) **Good Governance:** The results, experiences, techniques and methods have been elaborated according to good governance principles (involvement of all relevant stakeholders, transparency, subsidiary aso.).
- (8) **Consideration of new forms of decision making (question 5) and the impact of policies and instruments (question 6):** Special emphasis should be laid upon results, experiences, techniques and methods which can be of value for the teams working on question 5 and 6. They will provide a guideline to be taken into account with the inquiries.

Criteria 1 to 3 focus on aspects regarding the constricton and qualification of the compiled publications and good practice examples. Criteria 4 to 7 will allow facilitating an adequate knowledge transfer process and criterion 8 refers to the interrelation between the questions 1 to 4 and the questions 5 to 6.

2 TYPES AND SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

Future in the Alps requires different **types of knowledge** to answer the six questions. At first priority, transformation knowledge is required, but also target and system knowledge will be needed depending on the question investigated.

1. **Transformation knowledge:** Reflective and instrumental knowledge about how to modify actions and attitudes in order to achieve a goal (instruments and methods). Knowledge about the feasibility of an action or measures have to be taken into account. Transformation knowledge includes knowledge from all disciplines of science and practice.
2. **Target knowledge:** Knowledge about the goals of different actors and their normative evaluation (objectives and value systems of actors). Target knowledge includes empirical knowledge about the value system of different social groups as well as normative considerations. Laws and norms also have to be taken into

account.

3. **System knowledge:** Knowledge about empirical relationships between different parameters. System knowledge can be both quantitative and qualitative and includes knowledge from all scientific disciplines and practice. System knowledge can be of general interest or refer to a particular place, object or people.

In the framework of transdisciplinarity, system knowledge is based upon normative goals (target knowledge) and aims at establishing options for actions (transformation knowledge).

There exist different **sources of knowledge** that are valuable for the inquiries. Quality assurance should be adjusted to the source of knowledge taken into account (see chapter 4: selection criteria for the knowledge base):

- Reviewed publications and books
- Non-reviewed publications, reports, books, handbooks
- Internet-sites and reports
- Expert knowledge (science and practice)

The knowledge inquiries will thematically concentrate on the themes of the six questions. The inquiries should not be restricted spatially, but gather knowledge that is relevant and applicable to the alpine space.

3 FURTHER RESULTS OF THE INQUIRIES

The inquiries by the Question Teams will provide further information on **research projects, enterprises and terms** to be included in the report as annexes. They will be valuable in order to complete and improve the glossary of ‚Future in the Alps‘, to identify the future members of the network ‚Enterprise Alps‘ and to enlarge the ISCAR/ICAS-database of research projects in the Alps.

3.1 GLOSSARY

A draft glossary defining the key terms of questions 1 to 6 has been provided by the

Core Team and updated according to the remarks from the Question Team members in a first step. It is a collection of terms as they are used in the project „Future in the Alps“ and represents a common base for the knowledge inquiries by the teams working on the questions 1 to 6. In order to form a product of alpKnowhow that will be finalised at the end of the inquiries, the glossary has to be completed and the definitions of the key terms have to be reassessed by the experts of the Question Teams.

Therefore, the Question Teams should provide **appropriate definitions of the key terms** relating to their question and add **new terms** to the glossary, if necessary.

Definitions of the key terms should be applicable to other future projects addressing the sustainable development of the Alps. They should be precise but generally valid for the Alpine bow.

3.2 ENTERPRISE ALPS

‘Future in the Alps’ aims to bring together innovative enterprises and to establish the network ‘Enterprise Alps’. The participating enterprises will have the opportunity to exchange experiences and initiate co-operations. ‘Enterprise Alps’ will have to be established via thematic sub-networks focussing on specific issues, e.g. tourism marketing, handicrafts, aso.

The investigations of the state of knowledge and best practice examples related to the questions 1 to 6 will provide information in order to **identify enterprises, key actors and opinion leaders**, which would be interested in joining thematic sub-networks of ‘Enterprise Alps’. Therefore, the Question Teams are asked to deliver the following information:

- business name, relevant contact person, location, address (phone, fax, email, webpage)
- sector(s), short description of innovative activities
- present networking (membership in sectoral networks etc.)
- declared interest in joining the network ‘Enterprise Alps’.

3.3 ISCAR-DATABASE OF ALPINE RESEARCH PROJECTS

The International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps (ISCAR) and the Swiss Interacademic Commission for Alpine studies (ICAS) operate an online database on ongoing research projects in the Alps (<http://www.alpinestudies.ch/projekte.html>). The database will be of great value for the Question Teams in order to identify ongoing projects and their (unpublished) results. Yet, most of the projects in the database are located in Switzerland, but the aim is to extend the database in order to cover all alpine countries.

On the one hand, ISCAR will provide a list of research projects categorised according to the themes of 'Future in the Alps' distributed to the Question Teams not later than by the end of August 2005. On the other hand, the Question Teams are asked to complete the list with **ongoing research projects in the Alps** which they come across during the inquiries and sum them up in the report. For each new research project related to the question in concern, the following aspects should be filled in in a form provided by ISCAR and distributed to the Question Teams together with this guideline:

- Project title (in original language)
- Project title (in English)
- Start date and end date of the project
- Web address of the project
- Project leader (name, email-address, institution/city)

20 July 2005

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