

Page 1: “Intact moors are the best and cheapest flood protection there is!”

Page 2: Results of the "Cool Heads in the Hothouse" climate conference now online

Page 3: Workshop for environmental educators from all Alpine states

Page 3: cc.alps demonstrates its presence on the international climate stage

Page 3: Informative climate links now available at www.cipra.org/cc.alps

[Interview with a “cool head”: cc.alps prize winner Christine Margraf, in charge of moorland protection at the environmental organisation Bund Naturschutz in Bayern](#)

“Intact moors are the best and cheapest flood protection there is!”

The German environmental organisation *Bund Naturschutz in Bayern* was the winner of one of the three main prizes in CIPRA’s cc.alps competition for its activities aimed at restoring moors to near-natural conditions. As the person in charge of moorland protection Christine Margraf actively campaigns to ensure it is anchored in all policy areas.

Interview: Aurelia Ullrich, cc.alps project team



As a speaker on issues relating to species protection in southern Bavaria, Dr Christine Margraf has been working on moorland protection for the Bund Naturschutz in Bayern since 1994.

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Moorland that has been returned to near-natural conditions provides not only a habitat for the mosaic damer, but also a unique recreational area for people to enjoy.

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Christine Margraf, the *Bund Naturschutz in Bayern* organisation received €20,000 in prize money in CIPRA’s cc.alps competition. Leaving aside the extra funds, what has winning the prize meant for your organisation?

Above all, it’s a wonderful confirmation of the work we do, most of which is done by people who work on a voluntary basis. It also boosts our image among our supporters, stakeholders and donors.

The *Bund Naturschutz* has been involved with moorland in the Alpine region for decades. Today we know that intact moors make a valuable contribution to climate protection. Does this mean you will receive greater support as a result?

There’s no denying the fact that public awareness of moorland protection has risen. Bavaria’s state government has made eight million euros from its “climate purse” available to moorland protection over the next three to four years. These funds are available to everyone involved in moorland protection. Unfortunately it does not represent 100% financing. An important and convincing argument when dealing with mayors, local authorities and other partners is that we can now also say: “See: your own government believes that moorland protection is important.”

Intact moors provide a habitat for endangered species such as the mosaic damer (*Aeshna subarctica*). But how does this benefit people?

People benefit by having a unique landscape for recreational use. Time and time again on our excursions we see how enthusiastic people get when they experience these landscapes; in fact, many

of them have never seen them before.

People also benefit indirectly inasmuch as intact moors are the best and cheapest form of flood protection there is. Moorland soaks up water like a sponge. That's also of benefit to settlement areas situated below the moors.

The *Bund Naturschutz* in Bayern has been involved with moorland areas in the Alpine region for several decades:

- Federal *Land*: Bavaria/Germany
- 165,000 hectares of moors, of which 90-95% are severely degraded
- Moorland area which the BN has so far returned to near-natural conditions: 120-150 hectares plus > 150 hectares of extensive use
- 1978: Launch of the first moorland protection project. Since then largely volunteer activities in 23 larger project areas in all alpine district groups
- 2006: *Bund Naturschutz* draws up an energy scenario to reduce greenhouse gases. Returning moorland to near-natural conditions is one of the activities.
- 2008: Winner of the main prize in the cc.alps competition organised by CIPRA

For more information:

www.cipra.org/en/cc.alps/competition/winners (en/de/fr/it/sl) and www.bund-naturschutz.de/fakten/artenbiodiversitaet/moore.html (de)

the greatest need for action is. We now urgently need a campaign so that moorland protection is anchored with a high level of priority in all policy areas and also implemented. That would require even more funds.

Also, a big step forward for us would be to reduce the red tape, for instance the extremely complicated and extensive forms. More volunteers would then enjoy helping out with these projects.

And what about the economic aspects?

Moors are often surrounded by a cultural landscape with litter meadows. With our projects, with the extensive nurturing and management of such habitats, we try and give farmers a mainstay.

What are the biggest difficulties you and your projects have to overcome?

Restoring highland moors to near-nature conditions usually means abandoning any form of land use. And it's very rare to come across landowners who simply say: "Here you are: I'm making the land area available to you, do what you want with it!" This means we have to buy up the land. Often that's a willingness problem and a financial problem as we have to raise 10 to 30 per cent of the funds ourselves.

We also had a case where, after an area had been returned to near-natural conditions, one particular plot of land we did not intend to include became waterlogged. The farmer then took action against us.

How will the *Bund Naturschutz* now be using the prize money?

We are spreading the €20,000 among our eight district groups to be used for purchases, maintenance measures – such as damming measures or removing tree growth – and renaturation projects. We're using part of it for our three area managers, who do the PR work for new moorland projects. And we shall also be featuring our moorland protection activities more prominently on our homepage.

The *Bund Naturschutz* cannot look after all the moors in Bavaria. What needs to be done to ensure that as many moors as possible do better?

Bavaria has a moor development concept, which indicates where

Results of the "Cool Heads in the Hothouse" climate conference now online

The presentations by the speakers at the climate conference in Bolzano/I in early April 2009, which was organised by CIPRA as part of its cc.alps project, provide concrete examples of climate response measures in the areas of carbon-neutral towns, energy self-sufficient regions as well as climate change and regional planning, and can now be downloaded at <http://www.cipra.org/de/cc.alps/tagung> (not available in English language).

Between the presentations CIPRA raised a number of climate issues and interviewed participants from all the Alpine countries. The statements, which were recorded on film, can also be found on the CIPRA web site at

www.cipra.org/de/cc.alps/klimatagung/interviews.

Around 180 people from different Alpine states took part in the conference. They were shown in a most vivid way that both improvements and adaptations to climate change must be cross-sectional tasks, but



The field trips successfully complemented the conference

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more importantly community tasks, too. In the energy sector, key areas for action included decoupling economic growth and energy consumption, and the use of renewable energies.

Workshop for environmental educators from all Alpine states

At CIPRA's invitation 35 specially invited representatives of various environmental education organisations from all Alpine states convened for a workshop held in Bolzano/It from 1 to 2 April 2009. The workshop had two main objectives: firstly, to promote the cross-border exchange of experience between organisations involved in youth education work in the area of climate change and climate protection. Secondly, CIPRA was keen to use the workshop to record and discuss the participants' ideas for future co-operation as part of the cc.alps project.

The workshop was a resounding success. Indeed, until now there has been virtually no cross-border exchange between the organisations. And it soon became clear that there was for instance a great deal of potential for a transfer of methodology and projects. Greenpeace Switzerland for example has outstanding youth solar projects; Upper Bavaria runs successful school project weeks on climate protection; and everywhere a great deal of material is being compiled on the subject. Many of these projects are transferable. The willingness of those involved to pass on their knowledge was also clearly expressed at the workshop. It was clear from the intense work carried out in small groups that the environmental education organisations are very interested in working more closely within an environmental education network, to be co-ordinated by CIPRA at the express request of the organisations themselves.

For more information: info@cipra.de

cc.alps demonstrates its presence on the international climate stage



Artificial snow cannot be the tourist industry's sole answer to climate change.

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Over the next few months the project team will be presenting the latest cc.alps findings at various international events.

Indeed, cc.alps is to present a paper at the 8th International Conference of the European Society for Ecological Economics, which is being held in Ljubljana/SI from 29 June to 2 July 2009 under the motto of "Transformation, Innovation and Adaptation for Sustainability". <http://www.esee2009.si>

cc.alps will also be attending the 15th International Symposium on Society and Resource Management in Vienna from 5 to 8 July 2009. Besides climate change, a broad spectrum of topics is to be discussed at the Symposium, ranging from tourism to protected areas and environmental education.

<http://www.issrm09.info/>

cc.alps will also be submitting a paper on the theme of "Snowmaking is not enough" at the international tourism conference entitled "Travel & Tourism in the Age of Climate Change" in Brighton/GB from 8 to 10 July. The conference results are to be included in a publication.

<http://www.brighton.ac.uk/ssm/research/symposia/2009>

cc.alps is also planning to take active part in other events during 2009.

For more information on climate events and interesting publications, go to www.cipra.org/cc.alps (de/en/fr/it/sl)

Informative climate links now available at www.cipra.org/cc.alps

The cc.alps website now features a list of some 30 climate links to the most relevant and informative internet sites from all the Alpine countries and worldwide. It includes for instance the official site of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Austria's climate portal with international data from politics and research, and the shared website of the French ministries on climate change.

See <http://www.cipra.org/en/cc.alps/links-1> for more details.

If you no longer wish to receive our Newsletter, please e-mail serena.rauzi@cipra.org with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

cc.alps in a nutshell

The Project "cc.alps – climate change: thinking one step further!" is organised by CIPRA, the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps, and financed by MAVA Foundation for Nature. Through the Project, CIPRA is helping to ensure that climate response measures in the Alpine region are in harmony with the principle of sustainable development.

www.cipra.org/cc.alps