



CIPRA

**Zukunft in den Alpen
Avenir dans les Alpes
Futuro nelle Alpi
Prihodnost v Alpah
Future in the Alps**

FUTURE IN THE ALPS

**Disseminating knowledge –
networking people**

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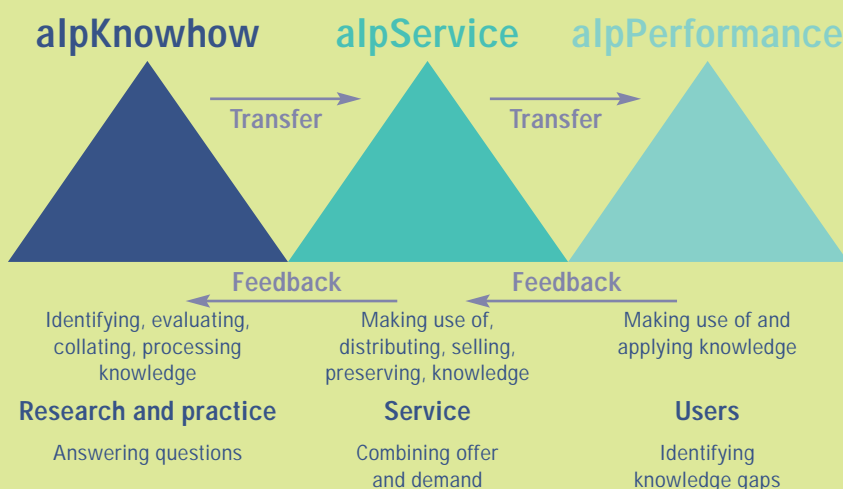


Networking and knowledge sharing

Future in the Alps, a broad-based knowledge management project run by CIPRA, the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps, is aimed at promoting sustainable development in the alpine region. The objective of the project is to encourage people, businesses and institutions to network in order to share and implement know-how and information and thus stimulate sustainable development in the Alps. With this project, CIPRA is contributing to the implementation of the Alpine Convention. The project runs from July 2004 to December 2007.

Disseminating practical knowledge

Future in the Alps is designed to promote existing and new initiatives aimed at harmonising the calls of environmental protection, the needs of the inhabitants and economic objectives. Practical experience and the latest research findings are collated, evaluated and processed for further application (alpKnowhow). alpService makes the results available to a wide range of actors. Sustainable pilot projects that apply this knowledge are in turn supported and monitored in alpPerformance.



Sustainability with a six-fold focus

Future in the Alps addresses six key issues, which are the main subject of this folder: regional value added, governance capacity, protected areas, mobility, new forms of decision making, and policies and instruments.

Store of knowledge in alpKnowhow

In the framework of alpKnowhow, the first phase of the project, about 40 experts from all the countries of the Alps spent several months collecting and processing the latest findings of research and other publications, and the results of practical experience gained with model projects for each of the six key issues. An evaluation system was developed to support the process of selecting knowledge for Future in the Alps.

The results from alpKnowhow are available in English at www.cipra.org/future. They include a working report plus annexes on each of the six main issues as well as 20–40 of the most relevant publications and 20–30 examples of good practice from all the countries of the Alps and other regions. There is also a synthesis report listing the conclusions, recommendations and main points addressed for the six key issues, and a general summary of the results of the research phase. The authors of alpKnowhow have also produced a project glossary and a collection of unanswered questions for the attention of the research community.

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1 Regional value added

How can successful use be made of the endogenous potential for creating product and service chains with high regional value added?

Future in the Alps serves to identify the key factors for regional product and service chains with a focus on endogenous resources such as social and cultural identity, land use and farming. The teams of experts studied the information available in the literature and from best practice examples of successful regional value chains and co-operative ventures. The results were then used to identify potential for regional value added.

Recommendations

Future in the Alps has the following recommendations to offer, among others, with regard to the promotion of regional product and service chains:

Regions in the Alps should pursue an **outward-looking economic and social strategy** capable of matching local potential to national demand and targeted at co-operation with non-alpine urban areas as the key to optimised service and product marketing in the Alps.

The development of **high quality services that also make sparing use of resources** should be encouraged, e.g. sustainable tourism, natural hazard and risk management. Local authorities should foster an awareness of how sustainable use can be made of endogenous resources.

Unique selling points for the Alps, with the development of unique products, services and institutions, are of central importance for successful marketing strategies. They should link innovation to the use of endogenous resources.

The establishment of a **Masters in Development in the Alpine Space** could help capacity building in terms of the qualifications of key actors

Successful projects

A selection of examples of good practice (more examples at www.cipra.org/future):

- Innovation and co-operation in the timber value chain at Qualitätsgemeinschaft Vorarlberger Holzbau (A) (Vorarlberg Quality Control in Wood Construction)
- Bio Alp Tea: new ice tea products from organically grown herbs (CH)
- Heu Vital (Vital Hay): promoting gentle tourism and mountain farming (D)

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2 Governance capacity

What is it – other than economic and ecological aspects – that prompts people to stay in the Alps or to move to the Alps? How can we consolidate the governance capacity of individuals and communities?

Future in the Alps clarifies the relationships existing between social structures, social dynamics and governance capacity. There may be no correlation between the attractiveness of a region and governance capacity. The team of experts found such concepts as «social cohesion», «social capital» and «common interests» to be particularly useful in evaluating governance capacity. These aspects were mainly analysed with the tools of social science and illustrated with examples of good practice.

Recommendations

Future in the Alps has the following recommendations to offer, among others, with regard to improving social cohesion at the local level and governance capacity:

Local alpine societies should recognise their **social diversity** and foster special interests and expectations, especially those of women, children, incoming residents, immigrants and second home owners etc. in order to avoid social exclusion.

There should also be a focus on building a **common identity** to integrate the identities of the majority of inhabitants and interest groups as well as the interests of social, cultural, ethnic, religious and political minorities.

Local societies should seek to develop a **common perception** of their region, taking into account the specificities of the various municipalities and economic activities in the context of local planning and cultural events.

Initiatives should be supported for new and more appropriate infrastructures. With public subsidies becoming increasingly limited and public services privatised, local communities must co-operate and pool their needs and resources.

Successful projects

A selection of examples of good practice (more examples at www.cipra.org/future):

- Reactivation of urban/rural links through local agreements between farmers and consumers (F)
- Kempodium – Allgäuer Zentrum für Eigenversorgung (D) (Allgäu Self-sufficiency Centre)
- Space for Youth: support for young people in the border area between Austria and Slovenia (A)



3 Protected areas

Under what circumstances can large protected areas be instruments of sustainable development and at the same time suitable tools for protecting natural diversity?

Future in the Alps collects and evaluates examples of good practice in order to highlight the conditions under which protected areas can contribute to regional value added. The focus is on cross-sectoral projects where the management of a protected area co-operates with tourism businesses, farmers, commercial enterprises and other sources of regional value added. The teams of experts analysed the contribution made by protected areas and their networks – in particular large protected areas – to the preservation of biodiversity. The focus here is on projects which consider both regional development and biodiversity.

Recommendations

Future in the Alps has the following recommendations to offer, among others, with regard to the contribution of protected areas to regional development and the preservation of biodiversity:

Large protected areas should rely on a **leading key actor** capable of integrating promoters and the local population in the project. Where there is no strong leader or team available, the management of the protected areas should receive training in motivation, moderation and conflict management skills to make it easier to recruit support from policy-makers, the business community and the general public.

Future protected areas should have a **planning base** with clearly defined objectives, measures, process design and rules for co-operation etc, taking due account of the needs of the business community, the environment and society in equal measure. The planning base must be communicated to all players, and full use made of potential synergies and win-win situations involving the various stakeholders.

Regular **evaluation** and monitoring of the ecological, social and economic effects of the protected area help maintain the motivation, positive attitude and support of all parties involved.

The establishment of **ecological networks** combining various protected areas and their surroundings is an important measure to preserve biodiversity on a major spatial scale.

Successful projects

A selection of examples of good practice (more examples at www.cipra.org/future):

- Protection of agriculture and biodiversity through extensive agriculture in the Hohe Tauern National Park (A)
- EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) in Mont Avic National Park (I)
- Ecological network in the Département Isère (F)



4 Leisure, tourism and commuter mobility

How are mobility and the development of regional structures related? What solutions are there to today's fast growing leisure, tourism and commuter mobility?

Future in the Alps gathers and processes available knowledge on the subject of mobility in the Alps, focusing on the relationships between mobility and economic and social development in the alpine regions. Good accessibility is not always a decisive factor for the prosperity of a region. Future in the Alps supplies new arguments for the debate on the transport infrastructure in the Alps. In order to improve our knowledge and awareness with regard to sustainable forms of mobility in the Alps, the teams of experts also gathered examples of good practice from the Alps and other regions relating to mobility for leisure, tourism and commuting.

Recommendations

Future in the Alps has the following recommendations to offer, among others, for a better approach to new transport infrastructure projects and their impacts on the environment and landscape:

For the **public debate** on new transport infrastructure projects in alpine areas, answers need be found to the following questions among others: What will the effects be on existing businesses, tourism and land use? Will the project encourage people to continue to live in peripheral areas? How would the local people spend the money if the decision were theirs?

Successful regions without good accessibility can serve as examples of best practice. The factors determining the positive performance of such regions should be studied.

More and also more binding regulatory instruments for spatial and regional planning are needed to steer developments in transport systems and spatial structures. That would make it possible to prevent urban sprawl and the construction of green-field shopping centres, and to achieve better control over settlement structures and public transport as well as better organisation of public services.

Successful projects

A selection of examples of good practice (more examples at www.cipra.org/future):

- Re-opening of the railway line between Merano and Malles Venosta (I)
- Dorfmobil Klaus: needs-based public transport (A)
- Cycling to school and work (F)

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5 New forms of decision making

What new forms of decision making are the most promising with regard to sustainable development in the context of regional planning negotiations?

Future in the Alps offers ideas for innovative and sustainable decision making processes and presents successful models for improving existing practice with regard to sustainable development. In this connection the teams of experts collated and analysed current knowledge and examples of good practice relating to the other five key issues in Future in the Alps.

Recommendations

Future in the Alps has the following recommendations to offer, among others, for improving the decision making processes:

Knowledge should be integrated from different sources: knowledge from the region itself, outside knowledge, research results and practical findings. Active knowledge transfer between the different groups is to be encouraged and more attention paid to related disciplines.

Training and continuous education and institution building can help reduce current deficits in terms of process and negotiation skills and enhance the decision-making culture.

The creation of regional platforms and **institutions** can help improve the framework for debate and negotiations on future developments in the Alps.

Successful projects

A selection of examples of good practice (more examples at www.cipra.org/future):

- Participatory planning process in the development of Ela National Park (CH)
- Long-term programme for integrated rural development and village renewal (SI)
- Sustainable mobility, environmental education and awareness building in schools (I)

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6 Impact and further development of policies and instruments

What impact do policies and instruments have on future regional development? How should these policies and instruments be adapted so that they contribute more effectively to sustainable development? How can policy assessment and research processes be improved to help reduce the discrepancy between recommendations and actual implementation?

Teams of experts collated the current state of knowledge on the impact of policies and instruments on future regional development in the alpine region. They formulated proposals for adapting those policies and instruments to make a greater contribution to sustainable development. The focus was on political instruments targeted at the goals of sustainability in the fields of regional development policy for the rural space and mountain areas.

Recommendations

Future in the Alps has the following recommendations to offer, among others, in order to improve public policies with regard to sustainable regional development:

Integrated policy approaches at the regional level should be strengthened. This involves improving the exchange of information, incorporating the viewpoints of the various sectors contributing to regional development, and improving cross-sector collaboration and co-ordination of stakeholders.

Regional policies should take more account of local resources and regional assets. A public policy that responds to **regional needs** through a participatory process with all stakeholders is more likely to succeed.

The **long-term perspectives** for local and regional projects supported out of public budgets have to be secured beyond the term of the funding period.

Policy evaluations should be more than tools for assessment and controlling. They should also help to find solutions for the deficits identified, and they should motivate the actors of regional development and stimulate action.

Successful projects

A selection of examples of good practice (more examples at www.cipra.org/future):

- Creation of employment opportunities in protected area management, PR and environmental education in Bavaria (D)
- Sustainable economic development through cross-border co-operation among protected areas in the Eco Regio Alpe Adria (A/I/SI)
- Polo Poschiavo: cross-border regional development project for education and e-learning (CH/I)



Future in the Alps competition

In the framework of Future in the Alps, CIPRA held an alpine-wide competition in 2005 to select the best projects for sustainable development in the alpine region, to provide publicity for innovative solutions already adopted and to promote networking. The awards were made at CIPRA's 2005 annual conference in Brig/CH, with a total of 160,000 in prizes going to eight winning projects.

The six main prizes were worth 25,000 each, and CIPRA also awarded two special prizes, each worth 5,000. Three prizes went to projects from Austria (Salzburg, Tyrol, Vorarlberg), two to projects from Italy (Friuli, South Tyrol), and one prize each to projects from Germany (Allgäu), Slovenia and Switzerland (Grisons).

570 projects in the online database

All 570 entries can be called up at www.cipra.org/future. The files can be searched by keywords, the six project issues and the countries of the Alps. The winning entries and a further fifteen finalists are presented in English, French, German, Italian and Slovene.

The winners are using the prize money to continue working on their various projects with the support of Future in the Alps. That means they can benefit from findings to date from Future in the Alps and at the same time generate new practical knowledge for sustainable development in the Alps. Some of the projects entered for the competition will be integrated in future activities in the framework of Future in the Alps, e.g. in the form of workshops.

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Knowledge transfer through personal contacts and the media

For the long-term use of the knowledge collected, various demand-based products and services are being developed in several languages in the framework of alpService and made available for practical application and research. Workshops for key players in the regions that Future in the Alps is organising in collaboration with professional partners are targeted at deeper study of the topics and cross-border knowledge sharing. Personal contacts will also be promoted through international conferences in which Future in the Alps is involved.

As far as the print media are concerned, CIPRA will be presenting the results of Future in the Alps in a «Third Alpine Report», in «CIPRA Info» and in articles in the relevant journals. For the general public there will be additional coverage in the daily newspapers.

The project Newsletter and the database-supported website at www.cipra.org/future offer digital access to the collected data. Moreover, Internet users will be able to contribute on-line via a number of forums.

Implementation of the findings in projects and networks

In the first half of the project, Future in the Alps already generated two major international projects. They form part of alpPerformance, in which the results of Future in the Alps are implemented by the actors in the regions.

In an INTERREG IIIB project called NENA (Network Enterprise Alps), ten partners from all the alpine countries have set themselves the goal of establishing an alpine-wide network of small and medium-sized businesses and thus promoting sustainability-oriented enterprises.

In the framework of the DYNALP² project, which is organised by the Alliance in the Alps network of local authorities, municipalities in the alpine region are implementing recommendations made in Future in the Alps.





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The Future in the Alps project is organised by CIPRA, the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps, and financed by the MAVA Foundation for Nature Conservation. Through the project, CIPRA is contributing to sustainable development in the alpine region and to the implementation of the Alpine Convention.

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