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Nature abhors a border

ALPARC, CIPRA, ISCAR and WWF: an ecological continuum

Nature in the Alps should be allowed to network more effectively; to this end, the hindrances that stand in the way of animal migration and the spread of vegetation and plants should be made more permeable. Four alpine-wide network organisations are aiming to create an “ecological continuum” in the Alps. The preliminary project has just been given the go-ahead.

Nature does not stop at the boundaries of protected areas or national borders. And, more and more often, man’s interventions in nature and the landscape are dissecting habitats and lastingly obstructing the exchange and migration of fauna and flora. This is putting Europe’s unique biodiversity in the Alps at risk.

A remedy is now being sought in the form of an ecological integrated network across the entire Alps and beyond. To this end, a large-scale project is being prepared by ALPARC (the Alpine Network of Protected Areas), CIPRA (the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps), ISCAR (the International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps) and the WWF’s European Alpine Programme. Initial activities include compiling a catalogue of measures, selecting pilot regions for the exemplary implementation of those measures, and identifying all the connections of relevance to an alpine-wide ecological network.

Within the framework of the Alpine Convention’s newly established “ecological network” platform the project partners are working closely with the Alpine states. The Swiss MAVA Foundation for Nature Conservation is financing the preliminary project, which is scheduled to run until the end of 2008.

Project sponsors

Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC) c/o Nationalpark Berchtesgaden, Doktorberg 6, 83471 Berchtesgaden, Germany; www.alparc.org

International Commission for the Protection of the Alps (CIPRA), Im Bletscha 22, 9494 Schaan, Liechtenstein; www.cipra.org

International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps (ISCAR), Schwarztorstrasse 9, 3007 Bern, Switzerland; <http://www.alpinstudies.ch/iscar/>

WWF European Alpine Programme, Piazzale Stazione 35, 6501 Bellinzona, Switzerland; www.panda.org/alps