

## Local governance in mountain regions

(01.12.2005) Around 150 representatives of six mountain regions convened for an exchange of experience and knowledge on the role of local governance in sustainable development at a meeting held in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) from 16 to 18 November. The aim of the conference was to consolidate existing networks and promote sustainable development at community level..... [more on page 1](#)

## Carpathian Convention now in force

(12.01.2006) The Carpathian Convention came into force on 4 January following the ratification by the fourth signatory state, Hungary. While the Convention has already been ratified by the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro have yet to do so. The first conference of the contracting parties is to be held in June, and decisions are expected regarding the Convention's work programme. .... [more on page 2](#)

## Glacier data from outer space

(27.01.2006) With the aid of new satellites glaciologists in Zurich are now able to study the world's ice regions with greater precision than before. The results of the data surveys are not encouraging: the Alps' glaciers are melting at a much faster rate than previously thought. Major changes have been noted in an increasing number of glaciers. The Zurich glaciologists are definite in their diagnosis: there is now no stopping the shrinkage of alpine glaciers..... [more on page 3](#)

## Local governance in mountain regions

(01.12.2005) Around 150 representatives of six mountain regions convened for an exchange of experience and knowledge on the role of local governance in sustainable development at a meeting held in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) from 16 to 18 November. The aim of the conference was to consolidate existing networks and promote sustainable development at community level. Participants from the Central Asian mountain regions of Pamir and Tien Shan, from the Altai, the Carpathians, the Caucasus and the Alps seized the opportunity to exchange their experience and establish contacts for further co-operations.

In various working groups they drew up success factors and recommendations for strengthening local governance units in mountain regions. These were set out in a resolution addressed to the governments of all the mountain countries, the UN, the contracting parties to the Alpine Convention, and to interested parties. The conference was organised by the Central Asian Mountain Partnership (CAMP) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC). The Alpine Convention supported the event both logistically and financially.

The conference was preceded by the 4<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Alliance of Central Asian Mountain Communities, which was established in 2003 in co-operation with CIPRA and the *Alliance in the Alps* community network. Like its Alpine sister organisation the Alliance of Central Asian Mountain Communities focuses on sustainable development in mountain communities and the exchange of experience and knowledge among communities. The co-operation between the two networks was consolidated with the establishment of a foundation. A number of sponsorship agreements are already in place between individual alpine communities on the one hand and Central Asian mountain villages on the other. This co-operation is now to be taken one step further, in particular in the energy sector.

Source and information: CIPRA-International; <http://www.cde.unibe.ch/Agoca.asp> (en)

## Contents

Local governance in mountain regions .....	<a href="#">1</a>
Carpathian Convention now in force.....	<a href="#">2</a>
CIPRA Yearly Symposium 2006: tourism and regional planning in weather stress	<a href="#">2</a>
European Charter of Mountain Quality Food Products .....	<a href="#">2</a>
Ländergender – cross-border gender mainstreaming .....	<a href="#">2</a>
Glacier data from outer space.....	<a href="#">3</a>
International Master of Landscape Architecture ..	<a href="#">3</a>
Swiss FSC wood for Harry Potter .....	<a href="#">3</a>
GenderAlp!: Gender-sensitive spatial planning is possible .....	<a href="#">3</a>
Miscellaneous.....	<a href="#">4</a>
Agenda .....	<a href="#">4</a>
Oh!.....	<a href="#">4</a>

## Carpathian Convention now in force

(12.01.2006) The Carpathian Convention came into force on 4 January following the ratification by the fourth signatory state, Hungary. While the Convention has already been ratified by the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro have yet to do so. The first conference of the contracting parties is to be held in June, and decisions are expected regarding the Convention's work programme.

The Carpathian Convention was drawn up in co-operation with and modelled on the Alpine Convention, with a number of alpine countries providing support. The Convention's Interim Secretariat is currently located in Vienna/A and is co-ordinated by UNEP, the United Nations Environment Programme. The Carpathian Convention aims to combine the economic requirements of the region's population with the protection of the environment. Today the Carpathians is home to around 18 million people.

Sources and information: <http://www.carpathianconvention.org/index.htm> (en),  
<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=467&ArticleID=5072&l=en> (en)

The Carpathians are home to some 200 plant species that do not grow anywhere else.



© Derková M.

## CIPRA Yearly Symposium 2006: tourism and regional planning in weather stress

(01.12.2005) The 2006 Yearly Symposium of the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps (CIPRA) is to be held in Bad Hindelang/D from 18 to 20 May. The Symposium is to focus on the growing threat to alpine regions posed by natural hazards and the impact of the climate change on alpine tourism. One key feature of the event is the presentation of best practice examples of strategies aimed at adapting to climate change in such areas of natural hazards and tourism as well as CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. Excursions are also planned to illustrate the adaptation strategies under discussion.

The final conference of the Interreg IIIB Project DYNALP is to be held along with the Yearly Symposium. Some 50 communities throughout the Alpine range carried out projects in four topic areas as part of DYNALP: Regional Planning and Sustainable Development, Conservation of Nature and the Countryside, Tourism and Mountain Farming. The DYNALP projects and those of *Future in the Alps*, a knowledge management project by CIPRA, are to be showcased at a "project market".

The conference languages are German, French, Italian and Slovenian; the registration deadline is 1 May 2006. Programme and registration: <http://www.cipra.org> (de/fr/it/sl)

## European Charter of Mountain Quality Food Products

(12.01.2006) The European Charter for Mountain Quality Food Products was officially signed in the European Parliament in Brussels on 7 December 2005. The signatories, which include organisations from France, Italy, Switzerland and Slovenia, undertake to protect – and promote the sale of – quality food products from mountain regions. The Charter launched by Euromontana as part of a European project is designed to provide farmers and enterprises in mountain areas with better opportunities for the sale of quality products and enable a sustainable agriculture. Inadequate certification methods are to be brought in line with the specific problems of identification of quality mountain products and thereby promote the image of mountain products as a whole. Financing and know-how support are also required, providing one form of compensation among others for the benefits to society of management and husbandry in the mountain regions of Europe.

Information: <http://www.mountainproducts-europe.org> (de/fr/it/en)

## Ländergender – cross-border gender mainstreaming

(27.01.2006) As part of the Interreg IIIA *Ländergender* Project the governments of Vorarlberg/A, St. Gallen/CH and Liechtenstein plan to pool their efforts aimed at equal opportunities for men and women. The aim is to co-ordinate – and assist with – the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the regional administrations of the Lake Constance Region. The project is based on documentation and on the development of models and instruments for gender mainstreaming, as well as the compilation of a database with gender mainstreaming experts. Information campaigns and training courses are also to be carried out.

Examples of successful implementation have already been presented at an event held in mid-January: "Catalogue of criteria for gender-compliant building" and "Gender mainstreaming as a planning criterion in public buildings and areas" are just two of twelve concrete examples.

For more information: <http://www.laendergender.org> (de)

## Glacier data from outer space

(27.01.2006) With the aid of new satellites glaciologists in Zurich are now able to study the world's ice regions with greater precision than before. The results of the data surveys are not encouraging: the Alps' glaciers are melting at a much faster rate than previously thought. Major changes have been noted in an increasing number of glaciers. The Zurich glaciologists are definite in their diagnosis: there is now no stopping the shrinkage of alpine glaciers.

GEO reporters have also described the risks posed to the Alps and their inhabitants by glacier shrinkage in the February 2006 issue of the GEO magazine. From the high-altitude Alps of France to the Engadine, from the Piedmont to the Ötztal and the Hohtentauern range, glaciated regions are to see an increase in the frequency of flooding, ice and debris avalanches, over-spilling glacier lakes and rock falls caused by thawing moraines. On the Monte Rosa Massif for instance glacial lakes regularly form on both the Swiss and the Italian sides, and they could completely destroy neighbouring villages if they were to overspill.

Information: <http://www.zdf.de/ZDFde/inhalt/26/0,1872,3274042,00.htm> (de); GEO February 2006 issue, <http://www.geo.de/> (de)

The European Space Agency's (ESA) ers-1 satellite



© ESA International

## International Master of Landscape Architecture

(12.01.2006) The Master of Landscape Architecture (IMLA) at the University of Applied Sciences Rapperswil/CH is to be expanded in 2006, and will now also be available jointly at the Universities of Nürtingen-Geislingen/D and Weihenstephan/D. The Masters programme focuses on the acquisition of skills aimed at investigating unfamiliar landscapes in the shortest possible time, questioning the concepts involved, and arriving at creative and innovative solutions.

Given the geographic location of the three universities the focus is on project work in Europe and the Alpine range in particular. So far these projects (under the motto of the Urbanisation of the Alps for instance) have taken students to France and the Rhine valley, to the area of the border triangle between Switzerland, Austria and Liechtenstein, to address issues involving the alpine reaches of the Rhine and aspects of local recreation areas. The next course of studies is due to begin in March, with lectures provided in German and English.

Information and registration: <http://www.imla.de> (de/en), contact: [hkrauss@hsr.ch](mailto:hkrauss@hsr.ch)

## Swiss FSC wood for Harry Potter

(12.01.2006) The latest volume of Harry Potter (in English) was printed largely on eco-friendly FSC-certified paper from the Swiss Alps. The FSC abbreviation stands for Forest Stewardship Council and is a guarantee of ecologically sound and socially and economically sustainable forestry activities. The use of FSC paper was one of the demands made by J.K. Rowling, the star author of the Harry Potter series.

The prestigious (and sizeable) paper production order went to Ravensburg/D, one of the few paper mills in Europe with the FSC quality seal. However the 30,000 tonnes of timber required exceeded by far the capacity of the FSC-certified forests of Baden-Württemberg, which is why around 80 per cent of the timber requirements had to be outsourced from the Swiss mountain cantons of St Gallen and Appenzell.

Source: *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 16 December 2005

## GenderAlp!: Gender-sensitive spatial planning is possible

(15.12.2005) The Interreg IIIB Project "GenderAlp! Spatial Development for Women and Men" has been up and running for a year now. The Land of Salzburg/A as lead partner already has a number of project results to show. "Needs-oriented spatial planning for women and men in Salzburg" is just one of 47 partial projects by GenderAlp!

The Salzburg Project shows how regional planners can contribute towards taking account of the different needs of men and women in their practical work, for instance when drawing up zoning plans or development plans: in areas such as housing, the living environment, social infrastructure, public transport connections and safety in public areas. As a next step a practical guide is to be drawn up with quality objectives, criteria and indicators for planners and decision makers. Partners participating in GenderAlp! include Austria, Germany, France, Italy and Slovenia; the project runs until the end of 2007.

Sources and information: <http://www.genderalp.com> (en), <http://www.salzburg.gv.at> (de) 09.12.2005

## Miscellaneous

### Increasingly dense network of GMO-free regions

(15.12.2005) The alliance of regions voluntarily committed to dispensing with the use of genetically modified organisms in agro plant cultivation (founded by Upper Austria/A and Tuscany/I in November 2003) now includes 36 members across Europe. At the conference of GMO-free regions held in Rennes/F in December 2005 Tyrol/A, Lower Austria/A and Piedmont/I also joined the network as new members. The alliance members demand a right of self-determination in the coexistence of genetic and conventional cultivation in the regions concerned.

Source: <http://www.genfood.at/Aktuell/News/1034/index.html> (de)

### 54<sup>th</sup> mountain film festival in Trento

(27.01.2006) The International Mountain Film Festival is to be held in Trento/I for the 54<sup>th</sup> time from 29 April to 7 May 2006. This unique festival worldwide is devoted to mountains, exploration and adventure. The event itself is accompanied by exhibitions on themes related to the mountains. The first ever festival of its kind was launched by the Italian Alpine Club and the town of Trento in 1952. Over the past 50 years the festival has highlighted not just the technical and philosophical changes in alpinism, but also the problems with which the mountain world is confronted. Contributions can be submitted up until 28 February 2006.

Information and registration: <http://www.trentofestival.it> (it)

### Water consumption high despite dry spells

(27.01.2006) According to data from Arpa Piemonte the Piedmont region/IT had only half the amount of its usual rainfall last year (430 mm). The consequences of this dry spell now include a lack of drinking water and low water levels in the region's lakes. Insufficient snowfalls in the mountains could also have a negative impact. Current average snow levels are only 25 cm; they should be around 120 cm at this time of year. Moreover, to ensure minimum snow levels of 50 cm on the Olympic ski slopes, around 1 million m<sup>3</sup> of water were used in spite of the drought to produce a total of 2 million m<sup>3</sup> of artificial snow.

Source and information: [www.arpa.piemonte.it](http://www.arpa.piemonte.it) (it) and CIPRA Italy

### South Tyrol reviews subsidy programmes

(27.01.2006) Under the heading of "Objective 2 and Leader+. EU co-financed projects for rural areas" in its 24-page brochure the province of South Tyrol has reviewed the initiatives and projects it has successfully implemented. The projects are aimed at supporting rural alpine regions as an autonomous economic and living environment and ensuring their sustainable development. The brochure, published in German and Italian, highlights the way in which structural funds have been used and provides information on project objectives and contact addresses.

For information and to order: [europa@provinz.bz.it](mailto:europa@provinz.bz.it) (de/en/it) , Tel: +39 0471 413160

## Agenda

### 32<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Alpine Convention;

4 – 6 April 2006, Bolzano/I; conference

languages: German, French, Italian, Slovenian; organisers: Standing Committee of the Alpine Convention;

Information: <http://www.alpenkonvention.org/> (de/fr/it/sl)

Seminar: **More Trains in the Alps in Future?**; 30 January 2006, 9:30 – 13:00, Turin/I (Centro Servizi VSSP, Via Toselli 1); conference language: Italian; organisers: CIPRA Italia and Pro Natura.

Information: <http://www.cipra.org/> (it), [cipra@arpnet.it](mailto:cipra@arpnet.it)

Touring exhibition: **Hothouse Glaciers**, 13 February 2006 – 23 March 2006, Rapperswil/CH (HSR University of Applied Sciences Rapperswil); organisers: University of Applied Sciences Rapperswil,

Information: [simona.stalder@hsr.ch](mailto:simona.stalder@hsr.ch), Tel: +41 55 222 49 32

World Forum: **Cities and Quality of Life – Global Challenges, Local Solutions**; 18 – 20 May 2006, Geneva/CH; conference languages: French, English, Spanish; organisers: City of Geneva, Fondation du Devenir;

Information: <http://www.qualitedevie.org> (fr/en/es)

### Oh!...

... With the tallest Olympic torch of all times the Winter Olympics in Turin/I are certain to make history. 170 tonnes of steel have been used to construct the torch, which will be twenty storeys high. Costing around €1.5 million, the torch is expected to consume around 8,000 m<sup>3</sup> of gas an hour, a consumption which has kindly been sponsored by Italgas. Over the 16-day period of the Olympic Games the Olympic symbol will burn some 3 million cubic metres of gas.

Source: *La stampa* 22.12.2005