

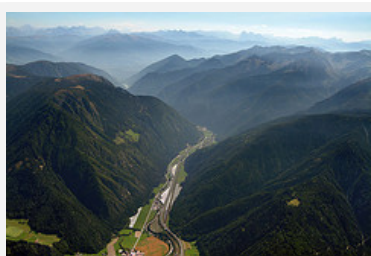
alpMedia Newsletter

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www.cipra.org/alpmedia



Feasibility of Alpine Crossing Exchange to be examined at the European level

The transport ministers of Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Germany, France and Slovenia have commissioned an in-depth analysis relating to the introduction of the Alpine Crossing Exchange. At a meeting of the ministers in Vienna/A a body was entrusted with clarifying the preconditions for the implementation of the three traffic management systems, specifically the Alpine Crossing Exchange, the emissions trading scheme and “Toll plus”.



It remains to be seen whether the Alpine Crossing Exchange is established at the European level.

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(20.05.2009) CIPRA International welcomes this initiative of the transport ministers; indeed, for years now it has been advocating the swift and sweeping introduction of the Alpine Crossing Exchange at the European level to achieve the urgently needed shift of freight traffic from the roads to the railways. The Alpine Crossing Exchange is based on the principle of a limited quota of truck journeys across the Alps, with individual journey rights traded on an internet-based exchange. The environmental organisation Alpine Initiative launched the idea of the

Alpine Crossing Exchange as an instrument designed to reduce freight transported by road across the Alps. The technical feasibility and economic compatibility of such an exchange were already confirmed for Switzerland some years ago by an independent study.

According to the Swiss Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC) the transport ministers are aiming for a three-stage approach to regulate transit traffic across the Alps. The first phase focuses on promoting the introduction of low-emission trucks. During the second phase the heavy vehicle fee (HVF) of the other Alpine countries is to be brought in line with Swiss levels. The implementation of the “Toll plus” concept is the focal point at this stage. The third phase of the approach looks at the transfer of traffic using steering instruments such as the Alpine Crossing Exchange.

Sources: Die Südostschweiz, 08.05.2009; Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 08.05.2009; <http://www.cipra.org/de/alpmedia/news/1691> (de/fr/it/sl)

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400 European towns, cities and municipalities have signed the Covenant of Mayors. Local authorities are committed to go beyond the European Union's objectives for 2020 in terms of CO2 emissions and energy efficiency and to tackle climate change measures without further delay.

Page 3: A European League for renewable energies

The RES Champions League is a network of national renewable energy leagues and also a competition for renewable energies between European cities, towns and villages, which was launched on 23 April 2009 at the annual meeting of Énergie-Cités and the Climate Alliance.

400 European municipalities committed to climate change issues

(23.04.2009) 400 European towns, cities and municipalities have signed the Covenant of Mayors. Local authorities are committed to go beyond the European Union's objectives for 2020 in terms of CO₂ emissions and energy efficiency and to tackle climate change measures without further delay. The signatories also undertake to draw up a sustainable energy action plan, with civil society involved in its development, and to share experience and know-how with other territorial units. Alpine regions have so far been underrepresented: only 9 of the 400 towns or municipalities are located in the Alps. While Germany, Liechtenstein and Switzerland do not have any signatory Alpine towns, the following localities are committed to the Covenant: Andora/I, Avigliana/I, Bolzano/I, Echirolles/F, Grenoble/F, La Bastidonne/F, Laxenburg/A, Wolfurt/A and Ljubljana/SI. The Covenant of Mayors was founded in 2007 as part of the EU's energy and climate protection package and calls upon municipalities, town and cities to tackle climate change issues without delay.

Information: <http://eumayors.eu> (en)



Nine Alpine towns and cities, among them Grenoble/F, are committed to tackle issues of climate change without delay.

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EU Parliament agrees to ratify Transport Protocol

(07.05.2009) At the end of April 2009 the European Parliament agreed to the ratification of the Alpine Convention's Transport Protocol. In doing so it agreed to reshaping Europe's transport policy in favour of environmentally and user-friendly forms of transport and the protection of the Alps. Among the topics agreed upon on the Transport Protocol is a reduction of the negative effects of the risks posed by intra-Alpine and transalpine transport, in particular by transferring the volume of traffic from the roads to the railways. On the European Union's side, ratification by the EU Council of Ministers is now outstanding. To date, five contracting parties – Austria, Germany, France, Liechtenstein and Slovenia – have ratified the Transport Protocol, but not Italy, Monaco and Switzerland. Whether or not the Transport Protocol is ratified by the European Union is questionable. The Protocol is being blocked by Italy, which has so far defaulted as a contracting party. It is up to the Czech EU Council Presidency, among others, to convince Italy of the urgency of ratification so that the Transport Protocol can appear as an agenda item at the next meeting of the Council of Transport Ministers scheduled for 11 – 12 June 2009. Source: CIPRA



Transport Protocol: relocating road freight traffic to the railways using the appropriate infrastructure and market-compliant incentives

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“RiskPlan” facilitates risk management

(23.04.2009) The “RiskPlan” analysis software was developed by the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) and the Swiss Federal Office of Civil Protection (FOCP) and presented as part of the AdaptAlp Project (Adaptation to Climate Change in the Alpine Space). The software is designed to provide a better assessment of natural hazards. Special about “RiskPlan” is that it offers the possibility of integrating the knowledge and experience of experts and those directly affected in a simple and uncomplicated way.

AdaptAlp's main objective is to draw up measures aimed at mitigating the impact of climate change in the Alps. The three-year AdaptAlp Project was initiated in 2007 by the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Public Health (StMUG). AdaptAlp is 76% financed by the EU and, besides the StMUG, it is also co-funded by the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, the European Academy in Bolzano/I and the Geological Survey of Slovenia (*Geološki zavod Slovenije*).

You can apply for your own risk assessment by registering at www.riskplan.admin.ch (de/fr/en).

Manifesto for sustainable building

(07.05.2009) The KlimaHaus Agentur in Bolzano/I is calling for the signing of the “Manifesto for Sustainable Building”. The manifesto is a guide for anyone wishing to be actively involved in sustainable development. Every individual is to be encouraged to push ahead with the restructuring of the current energy system. The signatures collected are to be handed over to delegates at the Climate Conference in Copenhagen/DK in December 2009. The importance of energy efficiency in buildings in the future is underscored by the English-language report *Transforming the Market: Energy Efficiency in Buildings* recently published by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). The publication shows how energy use in buildings can be cut by 60 per cent by 2050, thereby contributing significantly to reducing the impact of climate change. The report also highlights obstacles which currently stand in the way of implementing the existing technical know-how.

Source: <http://www.agenziacasaclima.it/de/klimahaus/manifest-zur-nachhaltigkeit.html> (de/it), <http://www.wbcscd.org/Plugins/DocSearch/details.asp?DocTypeld=251&ObjectId=MzQyMDY> (en)

A European League for renewable energies

(20.05.2009) The RES Champions League is a network of national renewable energy leagues and also a competition for renewable energies between European cities, towns and villages, which was launched on 23 April 2009 at the annual meeting of Énergie-Cités and the Climate Alliance. Eight organisations from six countries co-operate as part of the RES Champions League Project. The network has a number of objectives, including the transfer of innovative approaches, speeding up technologies and strategies among municipal stakeholders, and generating and boosting local dynamics for the sustainable use of energy. Points are awarded for solar energy (photovoltaic and solar thermal) and wood energy for heat generation, based on the installed power or surface area per inhabitant. Participation is free.

1,756 towns, cities and villages are currently listed in the Solar Ranking, including German and French towns in the Alps. For instance: the French municipality of Teyssières, where one enthusiastic village resident has triggered off a veritable avalanche of renewable energy.

Information: <http://www.res-league.eu/> (de/ fr/en)



Teyssières/F promotes solar energy.

© www.res-league.eu

Alps insight: Schengen for Flora and Fauna

(20.05.2009) CIPRA's Alps insight No. 90 (formerly CIPRA Info) "Schengen for Flora and Fauna" is devoted to the topic of biotope networking. In the last few years there has been a paradigm shift in the protection of nature and species – away from the targeted conservation of rare biotopes to a more holistic view of the natural space. That has led to the ecological network model and to an approach to protected areas which integrates the world around.

What are the benefits does a fully functional network offer to human beings? Why are protected areas important and yet not sufficient if the diversity of the Alpine flora and fauna, which is significant for Europe as a whole, shall be preserved. These and other questions are addressed in this issue of AlpsInsight. Many of the subjects addressed derive from the three big networking initiatives ECONNECT, Ecological Continuum and Platform Ecological Network of the Alpine Convention.

For further information, go to <http://www.cipra.org/szenealpen> (de/fr/it/sl), <http://www.econnectproject.eu/> (en), <http://www.alpine-ecological-network.org/> (en)



Biotope networking is the subject of this edition of Alps insight t: "Schengen for Flora and Fauna".

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European Day of Parks 2009

(20.05.2009) The European Day of Parks is to take place on and around May 24, as it does every year. The date was chosen to commemorate the creation of Europe's first national parks in Sweden on 24 May 1909, an event which has been duly celebrated since 1999. This year's motto for the event is "Youth – the future of our parks", and it highlights the centenary anniversary of national parks in Europe and the supporting role of young people for the future of nature conservation. Several protected areas in the Alpine region will also be taking part in the European Day of the Parks 2009. They include a number of Swiss park regions such as the Parc Ela in the very heart of the Grisons Canton, in the Alpine pass landscape of the Albula, Julier and Septimer, with an interesting programme of excursions conveying a wealth of knowledge on birds, snails and meadow flowers.

For more information on participating parks and activities go to:

http://www.parc-ela.ch/seiten/set_home.shtml (de), <http://www.parks.it/giornatadeiparchi/index.php> (it),

<http://europarc.org/what-we-do/european-day-of-parks> (en)

Awards for six sustainable tourism projects

(09.04.2009) During its presidency of the Alpine Convention France is focusing on sustainable tourism. A competition launched at the end of 2008 announced 39 initiatives from five Alpine states aimed at showcasing project ideas on sustainability. An international expert jury from the official delegation of the Alpine Convention has named five award winners in each Alpine country: Solare Mobilität Südkärnten, Karawanken/A; Il Cammino delle Dolomiti/I; CRPOV Dovje Mojstrana/SI; Kulturwege Schweiz – Via Stroria/CH; Diversification touristique innovante de l'Argentièrre la Bessée/F; and Naturinformationszentrum Bergwelt Karwendel/D.

The projects from Slovenia and France received the highest marks as part of the evaluation process. The jury was most impressed by the broad spectrum covered by the projects and complimented the fact that the initiatives were supported not only by the public sector but also by private local stakeholders. The awards were presented by the French State Secretary with responsibility for town and country planning at the 10th Ministerial Conference of the Alpine Convention held in Evian/F in March.

Source: CIPRA France

Miscellaneous

UNESCO Biosphere Entlebuch wins TO DO! Award 2008

(09.04.2009) Every year since 1995 the Institute for Tourism and Development (*Studienkreis für Tourismus und Entwicklung*) stages its "TO DO!" competition for socially responsible tourism. For the first time in nine years there is once again a European project among the prize winners, namely the UNESCO Biosphere Entlebuch. The other award winners are the South American projects "Rede Tucum" in Eastern Brazil and the "Mountain Lodges of Peru" on the Salkanta Route.

Unlike other biosphere reserves, in Entlebuch the application for recognition as an UNESCO biosphere reserve was made following a municipal referendum of the local population. UNESCO's "Man and Biosphere" Programme was adopted in the realisation that only a comprehensive and integrated concept could offer a genuine balance between man and nature. Source: <http://www.todo-contest.org/presse2009.html> (de/en)

A guide to the Alpine Convention

(23.04.2009) The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention recently published a book in five languages (de, en, fr, it, sl) entitled *The Alps: Eight Countries, A Single Territory*. The book in two parts reports on the Alpine Convention as well as its objectives and the implementation tools at its disposal. It also features the Alliance in the Alps network of municipalities, ALPARC, the Alpine Town of the Year Association, and Via Alpina. These networks were formed to implement the strategic principles of the Alpine Convention. The richly illustrated book with its concise articles is a highly recommended guide to the Alpine Convention.

Information: http://www.alpconv.org/archive/public01_de.htm (de/fr/it/sl)

Master in Sustainable Mountain Development

(20.05.2009) The new degree programme "MSc Managing Sustainable Mountain Development" begins at Perth College/UK in August 2009. The course was created for those with an interest in mountain environments and recognises the growing international attention being given to mountain regions. It aims to meet the needs of mountain communities by bringing together professional skills with economic, social and environmental knowledge, to offer a qualification for practitioners and agency officials working in mountain areas. Further information regarding course details can be obtained under http://www.perth.ac.uk/courses/Pages/U91L7_P1_PB.aspx (en)

History of the Alps now also in English

(20.05.2009) Jon Mathieu's book entitled in German *Geschichte der Alpen, 1500-1900: Umwelt, Entwicklung und Gesellschaft* is now available in an English translation. The work features a comprehensive and accurate historical portrait of the Alps and addresses economic and socio-political aspects of that history. It analyses the interplay between the population, economic development and the alpine environment. Mathieu's book demolishes widespread clichés about the Alps, which seek to portray the Alpine region as the complete reversal of society in lowland areas, or as a world segregated from the rest of Europe.

Mathieu, Jon. History of the Alps 1500-1900. Environment, Development, and Society, Morgantown: West Virginia University Press.

Agenda

Hiking festival: **Basecamp09: Experiencing Environmental Changes.**

01.05.-13.09.2009, Zurich, Lugano, Chur, Geneva, Neuchâtel, Bern/CH; languages: de, fr, it, en; organisers: Stiftung Science et Cité.

Information: <http://basecamp09.ch/index> (de/fr/it/r)

International Colloquium: **Large Carnivores - Management, Research and Public Relation Strategies of Protected Areas.** 02-04.07.2009, Nizke Tatry National Park/SK; language: en; organisers: Task Force Protected Areas, Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention.

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

3rd European Biennial Event of Highland Regions. 17-18.09.2009, Plombières-les-Bains/F; languages: en, fr; organisers: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Vosges.

Information: <http://biennale-euro-montagne.eu/-Home-> (en/fr)

2nd DIVERSITAS Open Science Conference – Biodiversity and society: understanding connections, adapting to change. 13-16.10.2009, Cape Town/ZA; language: en; organisers: Diversitas.

Information: <http://www.diversitas-osc.org/> (en)

5th World Conference on Mountain Ungulates. 10-14.11.2009, Granada/ES; languages: es, en; organisers: Junta de Andalucía, IUCN, Species Survival Commission.

Information: <http://www.vworldconferenceungulates.org/news.php> (en/es)

Strange but true!

... so much for equal rights at the Winter Olympics! The International Olympic Committee intends to prohibit women's ski jumping in Vancouver/CA in 2010. The President of the International Ski Federation (FIS), Gian-Franco Kasper, also argued against including women in these events, stating that the hard impact at landing could cause the uterus to rupture. He was subsequently forced to dissociate himself from that statement. The FIS is now campaigning to restrain the 150 active women ski jumpers from 17 nations to compete.

We have a suggestion for an amicable settlement: introduce the new "equality marathon" discipline at the 2012 Summer Olympics in London/UK by way of compensation – an event that should be for everyone...

Source: WOZ Die Wochenzeitung, 19.02.2009 (de)