

## alpMedia Newsletter now two-monthly

The launch phase of the alpMedia project and its first year of operations were financed by the MAVA Foundation, for which we are very grateful. But now, CIPRA is financially no longer in a position to publish the Newsletter on a weekly basis. With immediate effect the four-language Newsletter is to appear fortnightly, and the English summary version every two months. So unfortunately we are unable to fulfil the request of 51% of our readers to maintain a weekly publication frequency, as expressed in the recent poll. Around one third of our readers were in favour of a fortnightly publication.

## Scenes from two worlds: The Alps & the Himalayas

Tourism expert Patricia East compares everyday life in the Alps fifty years ago with present-day life in the Himalayas. Her exhibition features photographs taken on her travels through Nepal alongside photographs from the Alps fifty years ago: photo pairings of people working in the fields, children at school or playing, etc.

[more on page 2](#)

## Alps: Early-warning system for the global warming

The final meeting of the EU-funded project GLORIA Europe (Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments) was held in Chania on Crete (Greece) from 10 to 12 April. Following a 31-month project period researchers from 18 European mountain regions presented the results of their investigations into biodiversity and soil temperatures along height gradients in high-altitude mountain ranges.

[more on page 3](#)

## 10-points programme for the Alpine Convention

(03.04.03) The Alpine Convention met at Benediktbeuern last week, for the first time under Germany's chairmanship. Hendrik Vygen, chairman of the Standing Committee of high-ranking officials of all Alpine states, tabled a 10-points programme for Germany's 2003/2004 chairmanship.

Besides technical objectives such as setting up a fully operational Permanent Secretariat in Innsbruck/A and an agency in Bolzano/I, the programme also lists a number of specific goals. In the tourism sector the German chairmanship is planning to organise a competition for sustainable tourist areas. Also to be promoted is the creation of cross-border preservation areas in the Alps. The Population and Culture task force is to conceive its work as a bottom-up process and, for example, incorporate the "Alliance in the Alps" municipality network. Co-operation with other mountain regions is another of the programme's mainstays, for which the German chairmanship and a number of countries such as Italy, Switzerland and Liechtenstein have already resolved to provide financial support. At Switzerland's suggestion the next ministerial conference, to be held in November 2004, is to specify a multi-annual programme for the Alpine Convention.

The meeting also saw long discussions, held in part behind closed doors and with no rapporteurs admitted, concerning the salary of the Alpine Convention's Secretary General *ad interim*. The staff employed by the Permanent Secretariat in Innsbruck is still very modest, which is why the activities observable at present remain limited. However, the Alpine Convention has now received new impetus, having spent the best part of the past two years establishing the selection process for the Permanent Secretariat, during which it had little time for progress in terms of content. The aim now is to realise the ambitious objectives set out by the German chairmanship.

10-points programme in German, French, Italian or Slovene, available under:  
[http://www.alpmedia.net/pdf/10punkte\\_alpenkonvention\\_d.pdf](http://www.alpmedia.net/pdf/10punkte_alpenkonvention_d.pdf) (de)

## Contents

alpMedia Newsletter now two-monthly .....	<a href="#">1</a>
10-points programme for the Alpine Convention .....	<a href="#">1</a>
Scenes from two worlds: The Alps & the Himalayas, yesterday and today .....	<a href="#">2</a>
Founding of an Alpine Town of the Year joint venture ..	<a href="#">2</a>
France: Repercussions of artificial snow on water reserves .....	<a href="#">2</a>
Establishment of a network of protected areas across the Carpathians .....	<a href="#">2</a>
Alps: Early-warning system for the global warming ....	<a href="#">3</a>
Informal hearing on EU territorial cohesion policy ..	<a href="#">3</a>
Certification for the largest protected mountain area in the Polish Carpathians ....	<a href="#">3</a>
Land use in Bavaria to be reduced .....	<a href="#">3</a>
Housing development: NGOs eager to prevent unplanned settlements in mountain areas .....	<a href="#">4</a>
Miscellaneous .....	<a href="#">4</a>

## Scenes from two worlds: The Alps & the Himalayas, yesterday and today

(03.04.2003) Tourism expert Patricia East compares everyday life in the Alps fifty years ago with present-day life in the Himalayas. Her exhibition features photographs taken on her travels through Nepal alongside photographs from the Alps fifty years ago: photo pairings of people working in the fields, children at school or playing, etc. The exhibition opens on 30 April at the Tourism Department of the Munich Vocational College/D, and will then go on tour. From September onwards it will be making a guest appearance in the Nepalese capital Kathmandu.

East observes that life in Nepal today is astonishingly similar to the life our grandparents used to lead in the Alps. She believes that travelling around the globe is also a journey through time, and equally that the situation we are now experiencing in the Alps heralds the future on the roof of the world.

Source: *Die Süddeutsche* 26.03.2003, Information: <http://www.tourism-watch.de/dt/29dt/29.himalaya-alpen/content.html> (de), exhibition venues to be posted soon on <http://www.ecohimal.or.at> (de/en)

Pictures of the exhibition...



© Patricia East

## Founding of an Alpine Town of the Year joint venture

(03.04.2003) On Friday, 22 March, the six Alpine Towns of the Year Villach/A, Belluno/I, Maribor/SI, Bad Reichenhall/D, Gap/F and Herisau/CH set up the Alpine Town of the Year joint venture. Its aim: to intensify co-operation between the towns and ensure the project's continued existence.

Colette Patron, deputy mayor of Gap, was elected as the joint venture's first chairperson; Marco Perale, deputy mayor of Belluno, as its second chairperson. CIPRA International has been entrusted with the management. The Alpine Town of the Year Association had developed the project and ran it during its first seven years. It now hands over the responsibility to the Alpine Towns themselves.

The Alpine Town of the Year title is awarded yearly by a jury made up of representatives of organisations operating throughout the Alps, namely ARGE Alpenstädte, Pro Vita Alpina and CIPRA. Alpine Towns of the Year undertake to contribute in a special way towards creating an Alpine identity, improving relations with surrounding regions, and expanding co-operation across the Alps. The Alpine Town of the Year project aims to contribute practically towards implementing the Alpine Convention. The active participation of the towns' citizens, and the involvement of young people is of particular importance.

Source: Alpine Town of the Year Joint Venture 22.03.2003

## France: Repercussions of artificial snow on water reserves



(10.04.2003) The parliamentary office for the evaluation of scientific and technological choices has published a comprehensive report on water quality and water supply in France. One issue it raises concerns conflicts in usage due to artificial snow-making installations (Appendix 30).

The water agency for the Rhone-Mediterranean-Corsica region examined the problems concerned in 162 French winter sports resorts; 80% of the resorts are equipped with snow-making installations. Each year some 10 million m<sup>3</sup> of water are used to create artificial snow, the equivalent of the amount of water consumed by a town of 170,000 inhabitants (based on 60 m<sup>3</sup> per inhabitant per year). This corresponds to a ratio of 4,000 m<sup>3</sup>/hectare, i.e. considerably more than is used in maize crop cultivation for example (1,700 m<sup>3</sup>/hectare in the Isère *département*). The water for artificial snow installations is drawn from waterways, water reservoirs and drinking water supplies (24%).

The water needed is taken essentially over a short period of time during which water supplies are already limited due to the shortage of rainfall during the winter and higher demand due to the on-rush of tourists at the resorts. Drinking-water consumption and the volume of waste water can increase by up to 10 times the normal amount. In many cases the additional burden caused by artificial snow-making installations is minimal and does not result in any usage conflicts. However difficulties with the water supply can occur in the communities located below or downstream from the tourist regions.

Source and information: *Office parlementaire d'évaluation des choix scientifiques et technologiques*, report: [http://www.senat.fr/rap/I02-215-1/I02-215-1\\_mono.html](http://www.senat.fr/rap/I02-215-1/I02-215-1_mono.html) (fr) Appendices: <http://www.senat.fr/rap/I02-215-2/I02-215-2.html> (fr)

## Establishment of a network of protected areas across the Carpathians

(10.04.2003) The Carpathian Convention provides for the establishment of a network of protected areas across the Carpathians (Article 4, Paragraph 5 of the Draft Convention) designed to complement the pan-European ecological network. The French delegation to the Alpine Conference's Standing Committee has given notice that France, Germany and Monaco would be providing financial backing for the establishment of a network of protected areas in the Carpathians.

## Alps: Early-warning system for the consequences of global warming

(25.04.2003) The final meeting of the EU-funded project GLORIA Europe (Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments) was held in Chania on Crete (Greece) from 10 to 12 April. Following a 31-month project period researchers from 18 European mountain regions presented the results of their investigations into bio-diversity and soil temperatures along height gradients in high-altitude mountain ranges. CIPRA is a partner in this project.

A synopsis of the results from a total of 72 experimental areas is to be published over the next few months. The GLORIA network is to act as an early-warning system for biodiversity in high-altitude ecosystems at risk from global warming. A comprehensive comparative database is to be set up to ascertain long-term changes in biodiversity, and to draw up scenarios designed to anticipate the overall trend of these changes.

Information: [http://www.gloria.ac.at/res/gloria\\_europe/final\\_meeting/ko\\_submain.cfm](http://www.gloria.ac.at/res/gloria_europe/final_meeting/ko_submain.cfm) (en)



## Informal hearing on EU territorial cohesion policy

(08.05.2003) At the invitation of the European Parliament's Committee on Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism various organisations had the opportunity to voice their position on the future of the European cohesion policy. The agenda focused on mountain regions, islands and marginal regions. Numerous MEPs were present at the informal hearing held in Brussels on 24 April.

The European Association of Elected Representatives from Mountain Areas (AEM), the *Asociación Cederna-Garalur* (Navarra) and CIPRA were heard on issues relating specifically to mountains. These organisations believe EU policies need to take particular account of mountain regions, which are especially sensitive both socio-economically and environmentally. It was emphasised that the cohesion policy and the policy of equal opportunity in structurally weak marginal regions could conflict with the principles of the EU Directorate-General for Competition. The question of whether these special regions should be taken into account in the text of the European Convention was also discussed. The organisations questioned were in favour.

Source and information: <http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade2?PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+PRESS+NR-20030424-1+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&LEVEL=2&NAV=S> (en)

## Certification for the largest protected mountain area in the Polish Carpathians

(25.04.2003) The Bieszczadzki National Park recently received its PAN Park certification from the WWF. At just under 30,000 hectares it is the largest protected mountain area in Poland, and home to the principal species of large mammals and animals of prey in the region, including bison, brown bears and wolves. 80% of the area is forested.

The PAN Park network (an international network of protected areas or **Protected Area Network**) accepts protected areas that manage to combine the protection of wilderness with sustainable tourism. PAN Parks is to be recognised across Europe as a nature preservation certification. Three national parks in Europe have so far received PAN Park certification, and a further nine protected areas have submitted their candidacy, including the Triglav National Park in the Slovenian Alps.

Source and information: <http://panparks.apd.hu> (en)

## Land use in Bavaria to be reduced

(03.04.2003) Bavaria's towns, municipalities and rural districts are to be more sparing in their use of uncultivated areas. To reduce the enormous use of land areas, the Interior and Environment Ministries have drawn up an agreement to be signed in July. Preparatory talks are under way.

Currently an area the size of forty football pitches (28.4 hectare) is utilised every day in Bavaria for the construction of roads, housing settlements or business and industrial zones – and the trend is upwards. This puts Bavaria at the forefront of all Germany's former federal *länder*. Land use is increasing mainly in marginal areas, regions characterised essentially by poor infrastructure and other rural regions. That includes many areas in the Alpine region. Negative consequences include impaired agriculture and an increased risk of flooding as rainwater is unable to seep through the sealed soil.

To make both the general public and decision makers more aware of these issues, the *Bund Naturschutz in Bayern* has compiled what it calls its Black List. 21 negative examples of land use for commercial and business purposes taken from all the regions are to be contrasted with three positive examples, each documented with photos and current figures.

Sources and information: <http://www.umweltministerium.bayern.de/bereiche/boden/index.htm> (de), Black List: <http://www.bund-naturschutz.de/projekte/flaechenaktion/index.html> (de)



## Housing development: NGOs eager to prevent unplanned settlements in mountain areas

(08.05.2003) In France a legislative bill is set to cause a major upheaval to the regulations governing the development of housing settlements in mountain regions. It provides for changes in the areas of settlement development, house building and the building trade. An amendment bill to the settlement development code in particular is calling into question the principle of coherent settlement development, which was written into the legislation governing mountain areas in 1985: any type of construction work could now become the starting point for new settlements.

In a joint letter nine organisations (including Mountain Wilderness France, CIPRA France, the Alpine Clubs and Ramblers Associations of France) have called upon the prime minister, the relevant ministers and senators to do everything within their power to ensure the bill is defeated. They believe its approval would seriously jeopardise any controlled development of mountain regions and upset the necessary equilibrium between protection and development of mountain regions.

Information under the heading *actualités* 22.04.2003  
<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/mountain.wilderness/index.htm> (fr) and under  
<http://www.senat.fr/dossierleg/pjl02-160.html> (fr)

An isolated alpine dwelling: the starting point for a new settlement?



© Gesellschaft für ökolog. Forschung, Munich

## Miscellaneous

### Summer 2003: International volunteer camps in the Italian Alps

(08.05.2003) The Italian environmental protection association *Legambiente* is once again organising international volunteer camps this summer. Volunteers from all over the world have the opportunity to take part in more than 15 camps held in the Italian Alps. During fortnightly stays at the camps they will be assigned to reforestation and road-building projects. They can also take part in enhancing the cultural and historical heritage of the village in which they are based. The volunteer camps are part of *Legambiente's Retenatura* (nature network) project, the aim of which is to help strengthen the way in which inhabitants identify with their region.

Registration and information: [http://www.legambiente.com/canale8/campi/campi\\_main.html](http://www.legambiente.com/canale8/campi/campi_main.html) (it/en)

### European Soil and Land Alliance on soil protection in urban regions

(25.04.2003) At the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual conference of the Soil and Land Alliance of European Cities and Municipalities (ELSA) held in early April, the Interreg IIIB Project "Soil and Land in Urban Regions" on sustainable settlement development was presented to a wider public for the first time. The Project focuses on developing a procedure for soil protection and land management in the towns and municipalities of Alpine regions, and implementing a method in municipal and regional planning procedures. The conference was held under the motto "Soil Protection vs. Area Use – A Challenge for Municipalities". The March edition of the ELSA information magazine is also dedicated to the topic of "Area Management in Urban Regions". Among other aspects it describes cross-border examples from the Alpine region and surrounding areas.

Source and information: <http://www.bodenbuendnis.org> (de)

### Online web atlas of French mountain areas and the Alps as a whole

(03.04.2003) Multigéo has begun offering an online cartography service on French mountain areas and the Alps as a whole. Multigéo uses a number of digital technologies in the field of geography and specialises in the cartography of mountain regions. The web atlas features different topic areas including vegetation, traffic, infrastructure, relief, administration and waterways. The data is not limited to France's national borders. The web atlas is an ideal tool for anyone working in the areas of research, regional planning, use of resources and cartography.

Source and information: <http://www.multigeo.com/fr/montagnes/mont.html> (fr)

### Italy: Demonstration against heliskiing

(10.04.2003) On Sunday, 6 April, Italian environmental protection associations organised a protest demonstration against the misuse of motorised aircraft in the mountains for tourist purposes. More than 100 people took part in the protest, ascending the summit of Arp Vieille (Aosta Valley) on skis or snow-shoes. The summit itself is a favourite destination for skiers flown in by helicopter. It belongs to the resort of Valgrisenche, which has come to symbolise heliskiing in the Alps. In the afternoon a meeting was held with the local authorities to discuss alternative models for developing tourism. Italy does not have a national set of regulations governing tourist flights. Only the autonomous provinces of Bolzano and Trento have taken precautionary measures to prevent such flights. By contrast legislation in the Aosta Valley provides virtually no restrictions on the number of take-off and landing sites to be registered.

Source: CIPRA Italy, Information: <http://www.mountwild.it> (it)