

Global warming poses threat to winter sports everywhere

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Promoting produce from mountain regions

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UNO confirms global warming poses threat to winter sports everywhere

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The study forecasts for instance that over the next thirty to fifty years the snow limit in Austria will rise by up to 300 m. This would mean that Kitzbühel, which lies at an altitude of only 760 m, would be one of the most prominent victims of the change in climate. One of the main countries affected besides Austria would be Germany, where many ski resorts are situated at medium altitude. If the unfavourable trend were to continue, in fifty years' time only 44% of ski regions in Switzerland would be able to guarantee snow, compared with 85% at present. Experts estimate that annual losses to the Swiss tourist industry could amount to as much as US\$ 1.6 bn. Ski regions on other continents such as North America and Australia will also have to contend with similar problems.

In view of the rising costs of artificial snow installations low-lying ski resorts are already finding it hard to make ends meet. What's more, the higher the temperatures the more inefficient, expensive or even impossible it becomes to produce artificial snow. The study also addresses other consequences of global warming such as recessive glaciers or the increased risk of natural hazards.

Source and information: <http://www.unep.org> (en)

First International Mountain Day on December 11



(04.12.2003) International Mountain Day is to be held worldwide for the first time on December 11. Its motto this year is "Mountains, Source of Freshwater". The UN decided to set up this special day following the resounding success of the International Year of Mountains in 2002.

This year's motto was chosen as part of the International Year of Freshwater 2003 to draw attention to the significance of mountains for the water supply. More than half the world's population depends on water from mountain regions to grow its food, produce electricity, maintain its industries and – first and foremost – obtain drinking water.

Information and advertising material in different languages (including English and French) can be downloaded from the official Mountain Day web site.

Source and information: <http://www.mountains2002.org/imd/imd.html> (en)

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Promoting produce from mountain regions

(04.12.2003) The "Mountain Group" of the Forestry Department at the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has announced a new research project. Between September 2003 and March 2004 examples of good practice from all over the world are to be collated and evaluated, focusing on instances where quality products from mountain regions contribute to strengthening the local economy without impacting on the environment. The study is to examine the conditions that contribute to the success of such produce in terms of both marketing (e.g. certification and labelling) and technological, institutional, environmental and socio-cultural policy requirements. The evaluation is to provide an insight into the potential promotion and protection of such local produce as a means of sustainable development in mountain regions.

Aline Faucher of the FORC Mountain Group is collating information on such produce: aline.faucher@fao.org.

Source: <http://www.save-foundation.net/english/actual.htm> (en)

Second international conference on interdisciplinary research into mountain areas

(18.12.2003) Young scientists now have an opportunity to take part in the second international conference on interdisciplinary research into mountain areas. The conference is to be held at the National Park Centre Stilfserjoch in Stilfs/Trafoi (I) from 29 September to 2 October 2004 and is organised jointly by the Stilfserjoch National Park, the European Academy in Bolzano and Innsbruck University.

The first topic of the conference is interdisciplinary research in protected areas. It is to address economic, natural and social science issues pertaining to the protection of endangered species and their habitats. The second topic concerns the interactions between economic and ecological systems in mountain regions. The aim is to develop analytical approaches that take account of the way in which economic and ecological systems are mutually dependent.

Source and information:

<http://www.eurac.edu/Org/AlpineEnvironment/youngconference/index.htm> (en)



Conference of Regions in Kranjska Gora/SI

(06.11.2003) On 24 October 2003 representatives of the seven pilot regions of the EU research project REGALP convened at the Conference of Regions for an exchange of experience at Kranjska Gora/SI.

The agenda included the following questions among others: How have the alpine habitat and the alpine cultural landscape changed over the past thirty years? What trends can we expect until the year 2020? What can the inhabitants of the alpine regions themselves do to help prevent undesirable developments and encourage positive trends?

The results of the one-day conference comprised the following areas of action in which future priorities are to be set: The increasing polarisation between favoured and disadvantaged regions is to be neutralised since unequally distributed jobs and polarised growth represent an ever widening gap between the regions. Ways in tourism are to be found that do not have negative repercussions on nature and the environment. It is also important to tap into the existing potential, to embrace change and strengthen joint ventures.

Information: <http://www.regalp.at> (de/fr/it/si/en).

New study on the development of alpine national parks

(06.11.2003) Volume 43 of the *Münchner Studien zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeographie* [Munich Studies on Social and Economic Geography] features the findings of a research project on the regional economic significance of alpine national parks. The first section of the work, which is published in German, compares how six alpine national parks from six countries are developed to advantage, in other words how the status of national park alone can serve to enhance their status. The second part of the publication contains a quantitative evaluation of the regional economic repercussions of the Berchtesgaden Alpine Park. The study focused on analysing income and job effects and on developing ways in which they could be used for tourism, without causing any damage to the natural foundation of the national park.

To order: *Inwertsetzung alpiner Nationalparks. Eine regionalwirtschaftliche Analyse des Tourismus im Alpenpark Berchtesgaden*, H. Job, D. Metzler and L. Vogt, published by Buchdruckerei Michael Laßleben, Tel.: +49 (0)9473 205

Kailash: World heritage, not a destination for tourist convoys?

(04.12.2003) China is planning to build a road around the sacred Kailash mountain in Tibet in spring 2004. Surveyor's marks were already placed along the traditional pilgrimage route during the summer. Supporters of the Kailash initiative believe the Kailash mountain can only be genuinely protected if it is officially declared as a site on UNESCO's World Heritage List. To this end a petition has been started, supported by organisations such as the German Alpine Association, Mountain Wilderness or the Association for Swiss-Tibetan Friendship. Participation in the petition is possible until the end of the year: <http://www.kailash.info> (de/en).

On the subject of events an international convention on the protection of the Himalayas is being held in Kathmandu from 12 to 15 January 2004. It is to address issues such as climate, health, ecology and nature conservation.

International Conference on The Great Himalayas: Climate, Health, Ecology, Management and Conservation, Information: <http://www.aehms.org/hima01.html> (en)

The Kailash, a mountain sacred to five religions



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Nepal: Sports event in aid of the local population

(18.12.2003) The Friendship Everest Skyrace was held for the first time in Nepal's Khumbu valley on 18 November. The event's main objective was to support the school in the remote village of Thame, and it attracted 150 competitors from Nepal and all over the world.

A two-year agreement was signed which will enable the community to employ new teachers and to support the schoolchildren's families. The race was sponsored by the organisation "Travel of the Others".

Information: [http://www.montagnard.net/HTML3/Promo%20Everest%20\(6\).pdf](http://www.montagnard.net/HTML3/Promo%20Everest%20(6).pdf) (it)

52nd International Mountain Film Festival

(18.12.2003) The 52nd International Film Festival on the subject of mountains, research and adventure is to be held in Trento/I, the 2004 Alpine Town of the Year, from 29 April to 9 May. Countries from all over the world are invited to submit films in the following categories: mountain films, films on alpinism, alpine landscape films, research films, sports and adventure films. The First Prize worth €5,000 will be awarded to the best film overall, with five other prizes worth between €1500 and €3000 to be presented to the best film in each category.

The Festival is being organised by the cultural association *Festival Internazionale Film della Montagna e dell'Esplorazione Città di Trento* with the support of the Italian Alpine Association and the towns of Trento and Bolzano. The closing deadline for participation in the Festival is 31 January 2004.

Information and registration: <http://www.mountainfilmfestival.trento.it> (de/it/fr/en)



International conference on matriarchy and mountains

(18.12.2003) On 13 and 14 December 2003 the *Centro Multipolare per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile* (multipolar centre for sustainable development) in Sardinia/I organised the 5th International Mountain Conference, with the theme of "Matriarchy and Mountains". Half the mountain communities in the alpine region are at risk from depopulation. Survival depends heavily on the non-remunerated work of many women who thus contribute significantly to the preservation of the traditional culture and to current development processes in these mountain regions. And yet they are often sidelined in scientific discussions and decisions on future developments.

The conference fielded papers on the following topics: women and voluntary work - an international comparison (Tibet and Afghanistan); women and mountain sports; feminine symbols, excavations and archaeology; Nature and the Feminine; perception, duty and suffering in high-altitude regions; housewife or gainful employment? new forms of rural tourism; women farmers, entrepreneurs and guardians of the past.

Information: <http://www.centromultipolare.it> (it)

Miscellaneous

The Alps are becoming more and more of a theme park

(04.12.2003) On 29 November Coca-Cola AG inaugurated its *Alpen Club Micky Maus* in the ski resort of Arosa/CH. The facility is to accommodate and entertain children in a village comprising four heated igloos. The igloo village's main sponsor is the children's drink *Micky's Abenteuer* [Mickey's Adventure], developed specially by Coca-Cola and The Walt Disney Company.

Source: Coca Cola AG 29.11.2003 http://www.coca-cola.ch/company/com_new_pre.asp?year=2003&lang=d (de)

Printed version of the monitoring study *Agricultural Genetic Resources in the Alps* now available

(04.12.2003) The Monitoring Institute for Rare Breeds and Seeds in Europe has just issued the printed version of its publication *Agricultural Genetic Resources in the Alps*. The 178-page book contains the synthesis in five languages. The full text of the study (approx. 530 pages) is available on an enclosed CD-ROM in English and German. The study describes the situation of endangered livestock breeds and cultivated plants in Alpine countries in 2000/2001.

Haupt Verlag, ISBN 3-258-06669-8; source and information: <http://www.monitoring-inst.de/projects.htm> (en)

Extensive documentation of the Earth's ground cover and vegetation

(04.12.2003) An extensive database of the Earth's ground cover and vegetation in 2000 is now available on the Internet (Global Landcover 2000). It contains data extracted from daily satellite observations made between 1 November 1999 and 31 December 2000. The database is designed to facilitate studies of ecosystems, biological diversity and climate change, and to prevent natural catastrophes.

Source and information: <http://www.gvm.jrc.it/glc2000/defaultGLC2000.htm> (en),

http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=qt&doc=IP/03/1601|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display (en)

Poland ratifies Carpathian Convention

(18.12.2003) Poland ratified the framework convention for the protection and sustainable development of the Carpathians on 25 November. This means that all seven Carpathian states have now completed this step. The other Carpathian states had already signed the Carpathian Convention at the Conference of Environmental Ministers held in Kiev at the end of May.

Source: UNEP http://www.alpmedia.net/pdf/Carpathian_Convention_info.pdf (en)

A brochure on "nature-compatible winter tours"

(04.12.2003) Over the past few years nature-based winter activities have increased throughout the Alps. More and more these activities are spilling into regions which have hitherto been spared the impact of leisure tourism. In its new brochure entitled "Nature-compatible Winter Tours" the Club Arc Alpin (CAA), the umbrella organisation of the eight alpine associations operating throughout the Alps, offers simple, easy-to-apply tips for winter sports enthusiasts on how to adopt a proactive approach and prevent a negative impact on nature and the landscape. The brochure is published in the Alpine Convention's four languages, i.e. German, Italian, French and Slovenian, and is available free of charge from national alpine associations.

Information: http://www.alpenverein.at/naturschutz/naturvertraegliche_wintertouren.asp (de)

Agenda

International Workshop: **Holocene climate in the Alps: Toward a common framework?**; 15-18.01.2004; Aix-les-Bains/F; organisers: Institut de la Montagne, Université de Savoie; Information: <http://www.univ-savoie.fr/ufr/cism/actua/climalp/bienvenue.html> (en)

International Forum for Socially Responsible and Environmentally Acceptable Tourism: **14. Travel Pavilion – Market Place for a Different Type of Travel**; 06-08.02.2004; Hanover Trade Fair/D; Information: <http://www.reisepavillon-online.de> (de/en)

International Congress: **Toward a History of Winter Sports**; 20-21.02.2004; Lugano/CH; organisers: Istituto di Storia delle Alpi ISAlp; Information: http://www.isalp.unisi.ch/eng/kongresse/winter_sport.htm (en)

Exhibition: **Herbs, Goitre, Mountain Cures: The Alps in Medicine - Medicine in the Alps**; until 31.03.2004; Museum on the History of Medicine at Zurich University/CH; Information: <http://www.medin-museum.unizh.ch/Alpen.html> (de)

3rd NCCR Climate Summer School: Climate Variability: From Observation to Prediction; 29.08 – 03.09.2004, *Centro Stefano Franscini*, Monte Verità, Tessin/CH. Organisers: National Centres of Competence in Research NCCR, Climate University of Berne. The international Summer School will address issues such as climate physics, climate phenomena and processes, and forecasting.

Information: <http://www.nccr-climate.unibe.ch> (en)