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[more on page 1](#)

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[more on page 2](#)

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[more on page 3](#)

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NENA focuses on the two areas of renewable resources with emphasis on the timber value-added chain, energy from renewable resources and energy savings in passive buildings, as well as innovation and technology with emphasis on innovation management, further training, process optimisation and certification, and interface management. The NENA network is to facilitate the exchange of know-how for the enterprises involved, encourage the creation of cooperation ventures, develop further training programmes and contribute towards a better image. Synergetic effects are to be tapped both within the individual branches of industry and between the branches themselves. NENA promotes sustainable development in the Alpine region by taking account of social, ecological and economic issues. By involving businesses from urban and rural regions NENA is helping to bridge the gap between large agglomerations and disadvantaged regions.

The lead partner is *Entwicklungsverein Natur- und Kulturerbe Vorarlberg/A*. Other project partners include umbrella organisations, research institutes and government and non-government organisations from various specialist fields.

Source: CIPRA-International

Contents

Alpine Enterprise network to promote sustainability-oriented enterprises [1](#)

Skiers: a species on the verge of extinction? [2](#)

Sustainable Winter Olympics in Turin? [2](#)

International event on the management of protected areas [2](#)

New publication on regional development and landscape change in the Alps [2](#)

Trucks nose-to-tail on the Brenner, with or without rail tunnel [3](#)

Piedmont mountain population demands its rights [3](#)

Perception of the Alps in European cultural history. [3](#)

Cesana Torinese/It: first community with environment and ethics certification [3](#)

Miscellaneous [4](#)

Agenda [4](#)

Oh!... [4](#)

Skiers: a species on the verge of extinction?

(23.03.2006) A new study by WWF Italy shows that snowfall in the Italian Alps has decreased by 20% over the past thirty years and looks at the consequences. The tourism industry, which has been a cash cow for many alpine regions, has come to rely exclusively on artificial snow installations in many cases. More than half the slopes are now covered with artificial snow, at an average cost of €136,000 per hectare per year.

The study also reveals that the traditional skier or snowboarder is becoming rarer; indeed 48% of winter guests practise neither of these sports. WWF Italy believes that the most drastic consequence of providing an artificial snow cover is the increase in water consumption. In the Province of Bolzano, where artificial snow is used on two thirds of slopes, water consumption has doubled within five years through the use of snow guns. Protected areas such as the Stilfser Joch National Park, already affected by hydraulic power plants and recessive glaciers, have been hard hit.

Information and to download the study: http://www.wwf.it/ambiente/dossier/Alpi_e_turismo.pdf (it)
http://www.wwf.it/news/alpiArticolo.asp?Articolo=632006_9177.tmp&nArgomento=46 (it)

A cross-country ski run made from artificial snow: Is this the future of winter landscapes in the Alps?



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Andreas Walker

Sustainable Winter Olympics in Turin?

(09.02.2006) Back when Turin was running as a candidate to host the Winter Olympics, Piedmont representatives of environmental associations criticised the candidature for its lack of environment-related issues. Alongside the Green Card environmental action plan drawn up for the candidature, EU instruments such as EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) were used as "proof" of the Games' environmental compatibility. Clearly the environmental sins committed in the past by previous large-scale events have triggered a major controversy and given rise to the first signs of a reorientation towards a more sustainable approach compatible with the environment and the Alps.

Ahead of the event WWF Italy conceded the Olympics a satisfactory assessment with regard to environmental aspects, despite a number of negative issues. A concluding analysis has yet to be made. The economic aspect has already tainted the sustainability claim and called into question the reference to the Games as "green". The overall costs of €3.4 billion, to be borne essentially by the public sector, are in sharp contrast with the contribution of around €500 million budgeted prior to the Games.

Sources and information: <http://www.agenziatorino2006.it> (it/en), <http://www.wwf.it> (it/en)

International event on the management of protected areas

(09.02.2006) The Third International Conference on Monitoring and Management of Visitor Flows in Recreational and Protected Areas is to be held in Rapperswil/CH from September 13th to 17th. Besides the management of visitor flows and monitoring methods the emphasis will also be on the economic, social and ecological impact of leisure and nature tourism. The Conference is also to provide an opportunity for discussions on the causes of leisure mobility, visitor/user conflicts, sustainability studies, park tourism and reducing poverty.

Besides three days of symposia with paper presentations, discussions, workshops and poster exhibitions the programme also includes two days of excursions to the Swiss National Park and the Sihlwald forest reserve. The Conference, which is to be held in English, is aimed at scientists and managers. The deadline for registration is the end of July.

Information and registration: <http://www.wsl.ch/mmv-3> (en)

New publication on regional development and landscape change in the Alps

(09.02.2006) The publication "Regional Development and Cultural Landscape Change in the Alps" features results from the completed REGALP research project, which was funded by the European Commission under the 5th Framework Programme. The overall aim of REGALP is to investigate the interrelation between regional development and cultural landscape change and to examine the requirements for change of existing policy instruments to meet future challenges.

The recommendations based on the research findings focus on an improved regional adaptation of policy instruments, on greater orientation according to future trends, greater horizontal and vertical co-operation between the local authorities and the private sector, and a greater opinion-shaping effort on landscape issues. The publication in English contains abstracts in German, French, Italian and Slovenian.

Bibliography and information: Pfefferkorn, W., Egli, H.-R., Massarutto, A. (publishers) (2005): Regional Development and Cultural Landscape Change in the Alps. The Challenge of Polarisation. ISBN 3-906151-84-0; <http://www.regalp.at> (de/fr/it/sl/en)

Trucks nose-to-tail on the Brenner, with or without rail tunnel

(09.03.2006) A study by the Swiss traffic research institute *prograns* on plans for a Brenner railway tunnel has called into question the purpose of the project. Even if the base tunnel were to be completed by 2015, the number of trucks on the Brenner would increase by 2,000 a day by 2025. In terms of annual volume the forecast predicts a rise in truck haulage from 27 million tonnes to 39 million tonnes by 2025 – with or without the tunnel.

These findings are not new; the results of the study did the rounds of the media last year already. However politicians are once again battling it out over the financing of the 64 km tunnel; the amount of possible co-funding from the EU in particular is a contentious issue. While Austrian Transport Minister Hubert Gorbach still cites total costs of €4.5 billion, traffic planner Max Herry Kosten is predicting a bill of €15 billion. The key argument fielded in favour of building a tunnel is that it will take goods haulage off the roads and onto the rails, an effect which, according to the study, is negligible.

Sources and information: <http://www.trend.at/?/articles/0608/580/134109.shtml> (de), <http://www.prograns.com> (de)

Forecasts indicate that some 6,500 lorries will cross the Brenner every day by 2025.



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Piedmont mountain population demands its rights

(23.02.2006) In Turin/I on 22 February representatives of civilian society from the mountain regions of the Piedmont presented their signed Piemonte Alpine Treaty. The document is the result of intensive debate and discussions, and denounces the political, economic and cultural discrimination of the Piedmont mountain regions compared with the power centres in the pre-Alps and cities. It claims that discrimination and alienation have played a key part in depopulating the mountain regions and in developing non-sustainable models for tourism and regional planning.

The mountain regions are calling for a critical review of the "liberal" approach, a stronger presence on their part in the power structures, a guaranteed basic provision of services, and equality of opportunity with lowland regions. It also criticises the delays in implementing the Alpine Convention and the lack of a specific Protocol on population and culture.

Information and download: http://www.paratge.it/valadas/politica/patto_conf_stmp.htm (it/en)

Perception of the Alps in European cultural history

(09.03.2006) As a research report the book *Die Alpen! Les Alpes!* published by Jon Mathieu and Simona Boscani Leoni looks at the way in which the Alps have been perceived in European cultural history since the Renaissance. The research project comprises a Swiss and an international section and proceeds from the assumption that the Alpine discourse differs more from one country to the next than was previously thought.

How did the mountain population deal with the various types of discourse brought to them from the towns and cities? Did they acquire identities that repressed or emphasised their specifically Alpine nature? The contributions in German, French and Italian (with abstracts also in English) try to provide answers to these and similar questions.

Bibliography: Mathieu, J.; Boscani Leoni, S. (publishers) (2005): *Die Alpen! Les Alpes! - Zur europäischen Wahrnehmungsgeschichte seit der Renaissance*; Peter Lang AG, Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, Berne; ISBN 3-03910-774-7; 451 pages; to order: <http://www.peterlang.net> (de/fr/en)

Cesana Torinese/I: first community with environment and ethics certification

(09.02.2006) The Italian mountain community of Cesana Torinese, near Sestriere, has received an award for its efforts aimed at improving the quality of life of its citizens. The community's ethics programme, which it developed specially, has been certified in accordance with the guidelines of international standard SA 8000 (Social Accountability). Cesana already obtained the European environment certificate EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) in 2004.

Cesana's ethics programme comprises projects and activities in the following four main areas: youth policy, social and welfare policy, local authority organisation and relations with residents. The SA standard was originally drawn up for businesses and enterprises, which is why the Cesana community and the certifying body had to develop specific applications to establish an innovative precedent at the international level.

Information: <http://www.comune.cesana.to.it> (it), <http://www.sa-intl.org> (en)

Miscellaneous

Two new publications on the subject of climate change

(23.02.2006) The Mountain Research Initiative has published two new English publications on the subject of climate change. The GLOCHAMORE Research Strategy is the product of two years of negotiations between global change experts and managers of UNESCO-MAB Mountain Biosphere Reserves, and is available online. The publication "Global Change and Mountain Regions – An Overview of Current Knowledge" contains numerous contributions by renowned scientists on global change and its impact on mountain regions.

Information and download: <http://mri.scnatweb.ch/content/view/74/31> (en),
<http://mri.scnatweb.ch/content/view/14/42> (en)

Montagnalibri – The mountain book exhibition of the Trento Film Festival

(09.03.2006) The *Montagnalibri* mountain book fair is being held in Trento/I between 29 April and 7 May for the 20th time. Book presentations and meetings, discussions and round tables with authors, mountaineers and connoisseurs of Alpine history are to be held daily. The programme also features exhibitions on topical mountain issues and a fair of antique mountain books. *Montagnilandia* is a separate children's section with books all about mountains and lots of other entertainment.

Information: <http://www.mountainfilmfestival.trento.it/index-I.htm> (it/en)

Signing of the Apennines Convention

(09.03.2006) On 24 February the Italian Apennine mountain range was endowed with a new protection and management instrument following the signing of the Apennines Convention at the political level. The Convention was signed in L'Aquila by representatives of the Ministry of the Environment, the 15 regions concerned, the local authorities (Anci, Uncem, Upi), the Italian Association of Nature Parks, and the *Legambiente* environmental organisation. According to its initiators the Apennines Convention is the first convention worldwide to focus fully on the role of protected areas.

Information: <http://www.parks.it/federparchi/ape/conv.appennini.2006.html> (it)

Agenda

TUSEC-IP Final Conference: **Soil evaluation in Spatial Planning – Results and Prospects**; 04-05.05.2006, Tutzing/D; conference languages: German, Italian, English; organisers: Interreg IIIB Project TUSEC-IP, State Capital of Munich, Department for Health and Environment;

Information: <http://www.tusec-ip.org> (de/it/en)

CIPRA Yearly Symposium 2006: **Tourism and Regional Planning in Weather Stress**, 18-20.05.2006, Bad Hindelang/D; symposium languages: German, French, Italian, Slovenian; organisers: CIPRA

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

International Workshop: **Integrated Management of Protected Areas. Alpine-Carpathian Cooperation Programme**, 01-03.06.2006, Mala Fatra National Park/Slovakia; workshop languages: English; organisers: Alpine Network of Protected Areas, Narodny Park Mala Fatra, Štátna Ochrana Prírody, Slovakia,

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

International Conference: **Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Forest Management: The Role of Traditional Knowledge**, 08-10.06.2006, Florence/I; conference languages: English, Italian; organisers: Italian Academy of Forestry Science,

Information: http://www.forestlandscape.unifi.it/CHSFM_2006/english/index.asp (it/en)

Alpine Space Programme's Peak Event (presentation of the various Alpine Space projects and the progress of the Programme as a whole); 19-20.06.2006, Stresa/I; languages: German, French, Italian, Slovenian, English; organisers: Interreg IIIB Alpine Space;

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

Oh!...

... If summer tourism in the Alps runs out of steam, it's probably due first and foremost to its lack of adequate surfing facilities. At least that would appear to be the case in Ischgl/A, where hotelier Günther Aloys is planning to build a quarry pond complete with waves and surfing. 10,000 m² of beach-lined waters with artificial waves up to five metres high are to recreate that Hawaii feeling and attract tourists. Since the climate is unlikely to turn tropical overnight, regardless of climate change, geothermal and solar energy are to be used to heat the water up to 40 °C. The project costs are estimated at around three million Euros; red sunsets against palm fronds are not included.

Source: Allgäuer Zeitung
09.02.2006