

ONLY CLIMATE-FRIENDLY TOURISM IS SUSTAINABLE

CIPRA's demands for tourism

Climate change is a major challenge to Alpine tourism. It has to adapt to climate change and at the same time become more climate-friendly. There is a particularly large potential for reduction of CO₂ emissions in the key areas of traffic and energy. Tourism is a branch of the economy which is heavily subsidized. Therefore public policy can and must direct developments towards sustainability through the support given to tourism.

The present discussion about developments in the tourism industry is dominated by the large chair lift companies which are essentially fixed on ski tourism and the maintenance of the status quo. But focusing only on snow and skiing means promoting a capital-intensive, highly technological form of Alpine tourism and a monoculture. This is neither climatologically nor environmentally sustainable.

CIPRA has identified five priorities:

1. High time for climate friendly travel options!

Traffic, and in particular the journeys to and from the Alps, is by far the largest source of CO₂ in Alpine tourism. 75% of the CO₂ emissions in tourism are caused by traffic. CIPRA encourages the tourist trade in and outside the Alps finally to market attractive packages that ensure climate-friendly travel to and from the Alps as well as green mobility locally. At the same time travellers are encouraged to use these.

2. Energy-efficient buildings for tourism!

Buildings used in tourism must become more energy efficient. Especially at high altitudes, which are virtually haze-free, the sun can be used passively as a source of heating and actively to produce energy. CIPRA encourages the tourist trade to set an example both in building and renovation, gaining a competitive advantage. Subsidies for buildings with a touristic purpose should only be given on the basis of exemplary standards. The construction of se-

cond homes should be limited, as these are harmful from the point of view of the regional economy, landscape aesthetics and climate policy.

3. New approaches to tourism that are close to nature and environmentally sustainable!

Municipalities and regions cannot close their eyes for reality. Climate change and its consequences require that new approaches to tourism are found, particularly in lower-lying areas, to reduce the dependence on ski and winter tourism. This reorientation must be sustainable and climate friendly.

4. No development of glaciers and unspoiled corners of the Alps!

The rise of the snow line caused by climate change and the reduced snow certainty should not be a reason to develop additional glaciers and unspoiled areas, turning them into new ski resorts. CIPRA demands a ban for the Alps as a whole on all new tourism developments on glaciers or areas that have so far remained untouched. The recent introduction of glacier foils can be a threat to the character of the Alpine landscape. Its use should therefore be limited. CIPRA demands permits for glacier foils and a limited issue of these permits.

5. Subsidies only for tourism activities that are close to nature, sustainable and climate friendly!

Subsidies for tourism decide whether the development of the industry will be based on the principles of sustainability and climate change. Every euro invested in artificial snow, for example, increases the dependence of ski and winter tourism. It has moreover been proved that artificial snow does not automatically result in better business results; but it can very well have negative ecological effects. Therefore CIPRA demands that public authorities refrain from financial support to artificial snow.

Subsidies should instead concentrate on long-term future-oriented measures which support year-round tourism. CIPRA encourages the holders of the public purse to undertake a full review of support to tourism and to award subsidies solely on the basis of strong sustainability criteria. This should include a cost-benefit analysis, proof of regional economic importance and the economic viability of the actors and activities receiving subsidies.

Schaan, February 2011