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CONTINUUM PROJECT

Ongoing commitment for Alps wide connectivity activities

Further financial contribution of the MAVA Foundation for Nature enables the Consortium partners ALPARC, CIP-RA, ISCAR and WWF to further engage themselves in the already started implementation of the Alps-wide ecological network.

The emphasis of the Ecological Continuum Project in the next months will lie on the preparation of awareness raising activities in the UN year of Biodiversity 2010, on the further development and dissemination of already existing instruments and results as well as on the conception for an Alps-wide competence network. Close cooperation with the Platform Ecological Network of the Alpine Convention and with the ECONNECT project will continue playing an important role. The Consortium partners will also integrate with the national initiatives like "Trame verte et bleue" in France or REN in Switzerland.

Until the beginning of the next year approximately 270'000 € are available for these activities.

Catalogue of possible measures for improving ecological connectivity now available

The catalogue of possible measures for improving ecological connectivity in the Alps is now available. It has been elaborated in the frame of the Continuum Project and lists 69 exemplary measures from all Alpine countries that can contribute to the implementation of ecological networks. The measures show how areas or structures can be created, conserved or restored so that they can play a role as connecting elements within an ecological network. A data-



Preparing awareness raising activities for the Year of biodiversity 2010 will be one major activity of the Continuum Project in 2009

base is part of the catalogue and serves to find measures corresponding to different contexts.

The catalogue is available in German language. An English and Italian translation will be made available soon, French presumably in summer. The catalogue can be downloaded on www.alpine-ecological-network.org (Services / Downloads, documents).

Alps insight: Schengen for Flora and Fauna



CIPRA's Alps insight no. 90 "Schengen for Flora and Fauna" is devoted to biotope networking. In the last few years there has been a paradigm shift in the protection of nature and the 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 that integrates the world around.

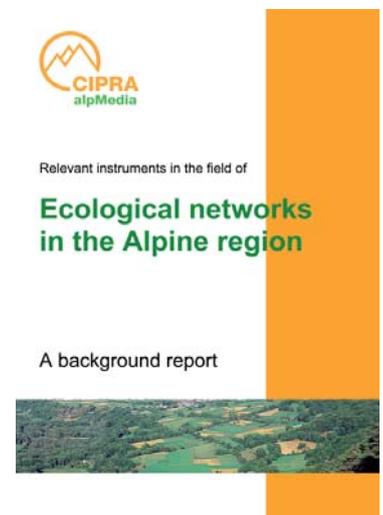
What are the benefits to human beings of a fully functional network? Why are protected areas important and yet not sufficient if the diversity of the Alpine flora and fauna, which is significant for Europe as a whole, is to be preserved. These and other questions are addressed in this issue of Alps insight. Other articles present examples of local activities like the fight for the preservation of the Tagliamento in Italy or the networking activities of the French department of Isère, and there is an interview with Michael Vogel, President of the Alpine Network of Protected Areas. Many of the subjects addressed derive from the three big networking initiatives ECONNECT, Ecological Continuum and Platform Ecological Network of the Alpine Convention.

Alps insight is available in German, French, Italian and Slovene.

Further information and a free download of the publication on www.cipra.org

Updated online information on ecological networks in the Alpine region

CIPRA has recently expanded and updated its online dossier on «Relevant Instruments Relating to Ecological Networks in the Alpine Region». The website <http://www.cipra.org/en/alpmedia/dossiers/13> provides a background report in German, French, Italian, Slovene and English as well as language-related references to more detailed news, publications, links and now also to topical events on the subject. The background report on the dossier provides summary information on key instruments such as conventions, legislation, regulations and programmes relating to ecological networks at national and global level. Particular attention has been paid to updating the information from the Alpine region. The Report also explains why ecological networks are important and how they work. Examples of international, alpine-wide, national and regional projects illustrate what different stakeholders are doing to improve the network situation.



PLATFORM ECOLOGICAL NETWORKS

France takes over as president of the Ecological Network platform

After two years of the presidency of the Alpine Convention, France has just taken over the presidency of the Ecological Network platform, the Alpine Convention working group that supports the creation of an Alpine ecological network, in accordance with the requirements set out in the Protocol on the conservation of nature and the countryside. The platform's role includes overseeing and facilitating practical projects that reflect the spirit of the Convention, such as the ECONNECT project and the Ecological Continuum project.

The president of the platform is Ms. Marie-Odile Guth, Director General for the Environment and Sustainable Development in the French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development.

Nomination of pilot regions

In order to encourage Alpine regions to contribute to the establishment of an ecological network in the Alps, the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation funded a project with the aim to nominate "pilot regions" under the Platform. The project was carried out by CIPRA and

PiU GmbH. The project team, backed by a working group consisting of Platform members, first developed a nomination concept and an ecological based questionnaire. The latter was sent to potential pilot regions. On the basis of the provided information, related to protected areas, species and habitats, etc. regions could demonstrate their ecological potential. And based on further information on production and marketing of regional products, measures against climate change, information to and sensitization of the public, etc. regions could show their efforts for building an ecological network. The final report of the project is available on <http://www.alpine-ecological-network.org/index.php/alpine-convention/pilot-regions>

Reports on ecological situation

A summary of country reports shows the state of the art concerning the ecological situation in the Alp countries. The compilation of the report is based on a standardised questionnaire for the contracting states. It is an annex to the platform's report to the 40th Permanent Committee of the Alpine Convention and is available on <http://www.alpine-ecological-network.org/index.php/alpine-convention/documents>

ECONNECT PROJECT

Events and activities

In the framework of the ECONNECT project its partners frequently organise international and national events.

On April 16th 2009 an international workshop called The Legal Framework of Protected Areas in each Alpine State was held in Domodossola/It. It was organized by the European Academy of Bolzano/Bozen (EURAC research), Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore – Centro Studi Val d'Ossola with the institutional support of Italian Ministry of the Environment, Land and Sea, and was the first of two workshops (the second will be organized by CIPRA in Autumn) to explore the legal barriers to ecological connectivity in the Alps. The workshop was followed by a thematic conference on transboundary cooperation among Alpine protected areas, on April 17th 2009 in Domodossola.



In the ECONNECT pilot regions several activities take place. The first international pilot region meeting “Coordination and approaches for Pilot regions of ECONNECT” was held from May 18– 20th 2009 in Zernezz/CH. The aim of this meeting was to find a coordinated approach for the implementation of the goals of ECONNECT in pilot regions. It was the occasion to draft a general overview of the work done and about ongoing actions in the different pilot regions. In some pilot regions local meetings were organised in order to involve important stakeholders and experts (e.g. several meetings in the Gesäuse region in January/February, a meeting in the Hohe Tauern-Southern Tyrol region on 28 April and a meeting in the Berchtesgaden-Salzburg region on 30 April).

In order to discuss and demonstrate needs and options for action as well as to develop innovative instruments for ecological connectivity, the University of Innsbruck and Cemagref are going to organize a public international meeting in the framework of the Work Package 8 – Knowledge Transfer. The event Sharing knowledge for the implemen-

tation of an ecological continuum within and beyond the Alps will take place in Grenoble from November 4 to 6th 2009. Programme is available on http://www.econnect-project.eu/cms/sites/default/files/Econnect_workshop_Grenoble2009_0.pdf

Furthermore, the ECONNECT website has recently been updated with information on the pilot regions, work packages and ongoing activities: <http://www.econnectproject.eu/>

EVENTS

External Events with participation of the Continuum and ECONNECT projects

Conference: Schutzgebiete und Klimawandel. June 25th 2009, Klagenfurt/A, language: d, organiser: Umweltdachverband

More information: <http://www.netzwerk-land.at/umwelt/veranstaltungen/schutzgebiete-und-klimawandel-neue-herausforderun>

Alpine-Carpathian International Colloquium: “Large carnivores: management, research and public relation strategies of the protected areas”. July 2nd – 4th 2009, Nizke Tatry National Park/SK, language: en, organisers: ALPARC, Slovak State Nature Conservancy, Nizke Tatry National Park.

More information: <http://www.alparc.org/event-calendar/events-of-alparc/large-carnivores-management-research-and-public-relation-strategies-of-the-protected-areas>

Symposium: 4th International Symposium on research in protected areas. September 17th – 19th 2009, Kaprun; Hohe Tauern National Park/A, language: en, Organisers: Hohe Tauern National Park, ALPARC, ISCAR

More information: <http://www.alparc.org/news/news-from-the-network-alparc/4.-internationales-symposium-zur-forschung-in-den-schutzgebieten>

International conference: «Ecological network in the Alps: a response to climate change that will conserve biodiversity?». October 15th –16th 2009, Berchtesgaden National Park/D; language: f, d, i, organisers: Berchtesgaden National Park, ALPARC

More information: <http://de.alparc.org/kalender/die-veranstaltungen-von-alparc/internationale-konferenz-oekologischer-verbund-in-den-alpen>

Further events related to ecological networks as well as publications, news and links are published on <http://www.cipra.org/en/alpmedia/dossiers/13> (different events are listed in each language version of this website).



The Ecological Continuum Project was started in June 2007 by ALPARC (Alpine Network of Protected Areas), CIPRA (International Commission for the Protection of the Alps), ISCAR (International Scientific Committee Alpine Research) and the European Alpine Programme of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) with the aim of maintaining or restoring ecological connectivity between important areas for nature conservation in the Alps. The project is financed by the Swiss MAVA Foundation for Nature.