

CIPRA

Schaan Memorandum on the Future in the Alps

Schaan, 9 December 2006

The future belongs to those who shape it. In the Alps countless initiatives involving thousands of activists are working to do just that. Yet many are unaware of the fact that elsewhere other people are working on precisely the same problems as they are. This is where the Future in the Alps, a project launched by CIPRA, the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps, comes into play. The scope of the project is to collect practical experience throughout the Alps, classify it and make it available to those who need it. It consists of a phase of collating knowledge and good projects, called alpKnowhow, a phase of processing and disseminating it, called alpService, and an implementation phase, called alpPerformance.

As part of alpKnowhow, over a period of one year, six international teams of more than 40 scientists, planners and practitioners brought together a wealth of knowledge on six eminently important topics in the Alps: 1. Regional Value Added, 2. Governance Capacity, 3. Protected Areas, 4. Mobility, 5. New Forms of Decision-making, and 6. Policies and Instruments.

The results of this research work are now available in six theme-based reports and a synthesis report as well as an online database (www.cipra.org/future). The database lists 240 excerpts from key theoretical studies and over 160 examples of good practice. Together they form the knowledge base on the Project's six topics.

CIPRA itself is not a research body, nor is it an educational institution; it is a non-governmental organisation, so it is mainly concerned with the questions of what the results of alpKnowhow mean politically and what demands can be derived from these results. To answer these questions CIPRA representatives from seven countries convened in Schaan/Liechtenstein on 8 and 9 December 2006. The demands and political conclusions on all topics are set out in the present Schaan Memorandum on the Future in the Alps.

To complement the in part sectoral questions and answers CIPRA also addressed the cross-cutting issues of relationship between Alpine towns and Alpine countryside, and climate change in the Alpine region at separate major conferences. A resolution was drawn up on each of these two issues. The demands resulting from the two resolutions are introduced at the end of the document.

Other issues addressed in depth by CIPRA in the course of its many years of political work and regarding which there is a great deal of knowledge in research and practice (e.g. transit traffic) have not been discussed further as part of the project and are therefore not part of the Memorandum.

As an umbrella organisation representing more than 100 organisations and institutions throughout the alpine region, CIPRA commits itself to the implementation of the Memorandum in close co-operation and consultation with its member organisations.

Topic 1: Regional Value Added

- The economy in the Alps is increasingly confronted with the global market in which, in CIPRA's view, it can only prevail through high-quality products and services.
CIPRA is calling for the preservation and further development of nature, landscape and cultural traditions as the most important basis for sustainable economic activity in the Alps.
- Functioning regional networks of value added are a key element of sustainable regional development in the Alps. There is no shortage of good ideas; what is lacking is their implementation.
CIPRA promotes and publicises good examples and contributes towards preserving mountain regions as a functioning and sustainable economic area.
- People are one of the most important regional resources. To ensure that regional players are better able to utilise the possibilities available to them, CIPRA supports and encourages education and further capacity building. The motto is: "Brain gain, not brain drain!"

Topic 2: Governance Capacity

- The Alps are characterised by the contrast between the global and the local level as well as that between urban and rural regions.
CIPRA calls for the establishment of cross-regional and cross-sectoral platforms and projects, and promotes the relevant partnerships, extending also beyond the Alps themselves.
- Many regions of the Alps are marked by structural weakness and exodus; others by overuse and exceedance of carrying capacity.
CIPRA calls for an increase of attractiveness of the mountain regions through preservation and improvement of the quality of environment and culture, through greater social integration, through modern regional planning, creation of attractive, decentralised jobs, and maintaining basic services.
- Alpine policy is still dominated by men.
CIPRA calls for an Alpine development in which women are more strongly represented in decision-making roles.

Topic 3: Protected Areas

- Over the past decades many protected areas have been set up in the Alps and many new ones are due to follow in the future. Each of them represents an important support for sustainable regional development and a refuge for biodiversity.
CIPRA calls for a high-quality development programme for protected areas rather than resorting to pseudo policies that juggle with terminology. Binding quality criteria should be introduced throughout the Alps for Alpine protected areas of all categories.
- Lack of continuity of the ecological network is a serious shortcoming in nature conservation in the Alps and surrounding areas.
CIPRA calls for greater regional networking between protected areas and the creation of ecological corridors between key ecological areas. Biodiversity and performance of ecological functions are to be preserved and promoted also outside protected areas and in areas under heavy use.

- In many places protected areas are exemplary regions and platforms for sustainable regional development, with the municipalities assuming an important role.
CIPRA draws attention to the fact that the contribution of protected areas to regional development should not be judged one-dimensionally through value added. It should mainly be justified on the basis of the general social value of protected areas.

Topic 4: Transport

- Social and economic prosperity does not depend solely on accessibility of a region. There are many examples in the Alps where improved accessibility has resulted in companies moving away to urban centres and resulted in further regional polarisation. Likewise there are numerous examples where high levels of prosperity are linked with low levels of accessibility.
CIPRA therefore calls for the promotion of models of economic success that do not require hard development measures while strengthening the research into factors that make such models successful.
- In tourist regions improved accessibility also means shorter average stays of the guests. This results in higher burdens due to the traffic to and from the regions for the same number of overnight stays.
CIPRA calls on Alpine states and on tourism sector to boost the promotion of measures aimed at making longer stays more attractive to guests rather than improving accessibility of the regions themselves.
- Investments in trans-national networks accentuate disparities between regions and entail higher ecological and economic costs.
CIPRA calls for the maintenance and expansion of regional public transport services that generate substantially better effects with fewer resources than with investments into trans-national networks.

Topic 5: New Forms of Decision Making

- The growing complexity of political and economic issues is also affecting the Alps.

CIPRA demands that political decisions of importance for the future in the Alps be subject to the criteria of good governance: democratic legitimacy, effectiveness, transparency, subsidiarity and participation.
- In mountain regions, the process of including minorities in political decision-making is often difficult.
CIPRA expects of the regions and municipalities that forces which are committed to the protection of the Alps and to sustainable regional development be involved to a greater degree in the political decision-making process in Alpine regions.
- In-depth knowledge of the mechanisms and methods of decision-making process is very important for the future development of nature, landscape, culture and the economy in the Alps.
CIPRA calls for the increased use of co-operative planning and development approaches and the promotion of appropriate training for the stakeholders, e.g. in municipalities, small and medium-sized companies and NGOs, in the topic areas of communication, conflict management and process organisation.

Topic 6: Policies and Instruments

- Future developments in the Alps depend greatly on mountain area legislation and on the resulting development programmes and subsidy instruments.
CIPRA calls for development programmes and subsidy instruments to be increasingly based on the findings and practical experience gained from regional development and applied research. Based on the targets set out in the Alpine Convention the focus must be on the orientation towards sustainability, with preference given in particular to integrated and cross-sector strategies. Successful models of sustainable regional development should thus not be just individual cases but a general standard.
- Even the best policy is only as good as its implementation. Involvement of the regional population is an essential prerequisite for bridging the gap between scientific recommendations, policies and practical implementation.
CIPRA calls for the increased and improved involvement of regional and local institutions when implementing policies and scientific recommendations.
- The evaluation and review of political programmes and subsidy instruments as well as their implementation are essential prerequisites for sustainable regional development.
CIPRA therefore calls for the inclusion of the appropriate monitoring and control in these instruments.

Cross-sectional topic 1: Climate Protection and Climate Change Adaptation Strategies

(CIPRA Resolution of 18 May 2006)

The Alpine region is particularly affected by global climate change, which is to a large extent the result of human impact. The Alps are a particularly sensitive region and are vulnerable all the more to the forecast changes such as the rise in annual average temperatures, the increase in extreme meteorological events, summer droughts and melting glaciers.

It is CIPRA's view that climate change represents one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century. It calls upon the European Union, the bodies of the Alpine Convention, all the Alpine states, the federal provinces, regions and cantons as well as all governmental and non-governmental authorities

- to intensify their climate protection efforts in order to reduce the greenhouse effect;
- to draw up sustainable adaptation strategies for dealing with the growing effects of climate change.

Climate Protection:

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- calls for greater use of the vast **energy-saving** potentials that already exist. This requires financial policy measures at the national and European level such as the consistent incorporation of external costs in energy costs, which also include external costs of climate change, regulatory provisions such as minimum standards, and support programmes.

- believes that Alpine countries, with their resources of timber, water, sun, wind and geothermal energy, have the potential of becoming a **model region** capable of largely covering its energy requirements through **renewable energy**, and as a result easily exceeding the targets set out by the Kyoto Protocol. Consistent use of all existing energy-saving potentials means that no further major impacts on nature and the natural landscape are necessary in order to cover the remaining energy requirements from regenerative sources of energy.

Adaptation Strategies:

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- calls for all medium and long-term **tourist investments** to be reviewed from the aspect of climate change.
- doubts that quick-fix measures such as artificial snow, dealing merely with the symptoms, are sustainable adaptation strategies for climate change. Instead it calls for the elaboration of landscape-oriented, nature-compatible **alternatives** especially **for summer, and winter, tourism**.
- considers promotion of **nature's resilience** a priority. This includes preserving and restoring near-natural mountain forests, safeguarding and designating retention areas along rivers and streams, ensuring the return of water courses to near-natural conditions, and restricting the sealing of surfaces.
- calls for the compilation and re-examination of hazard area maps for natural hazards and floods in the Alpine region from the point of view of climate change. The **hazard zones** are to be taken into account in the planning of settlements and traffic routes. Where required, land use zoning plans should be reversed.

Cross-sectional topic 2: The Responsibility of Alpine Towns for the Future of the Alps

(CIPRA Resolution of 22 September 2005)

Two thirds of the population of the Alps live in towns and agglomerations. Alpine towns are the driving force behind the economic, social and cultural development in the alpine region. But although alpine towns will play an important role in the future development of the Alps, the towns' tasks and responsibility for the Alps as a whole are not adequately reflected in the alpine debate, especially within the framework of the Alpine Convention.

Against this backdrop, CIPRA is calling on the Alpine states, federal states, regions, cantons and other governmental and non-governmental authorities to give a higher priority to the sustainable development of the alpine towns in their policies, strategies and measures.

Greater efforts should be made in particular:

- To ensure by government programmes, government declarations and in legislation at national, regional and municipal level that alpine towns are able to assume their own share of responsibility for the rural areas of the Alps, in particular regarding preservation of the high nature and landscape values and an environmentally and socially compatible development.
- To promote existing and new environmentally compatible economic activities with a strong emphasis on value added, while taking into account the strengths

individual regions, guaranteeing social and regional cohesion of alpine towns, their agglomerations and surrounding areas, for example through financial assistance for co-operation between municipalities.

- To support Alpine towns in improving the quality of life, in particular by increasing their attractiveness to the local population, making use of the particular advantages of the alpine environment.
- To encourage Alpine towns to create regional, supra-regional and alpine-wide networks to strengthen their socio-cultural identity and their socio-economic competitiveness, for example also through competitions.
- To strengthen exchange between alpine towns and centres outside the Alps, particularly in the areas of nature and environment, population and culture, science and innovation.