



EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)

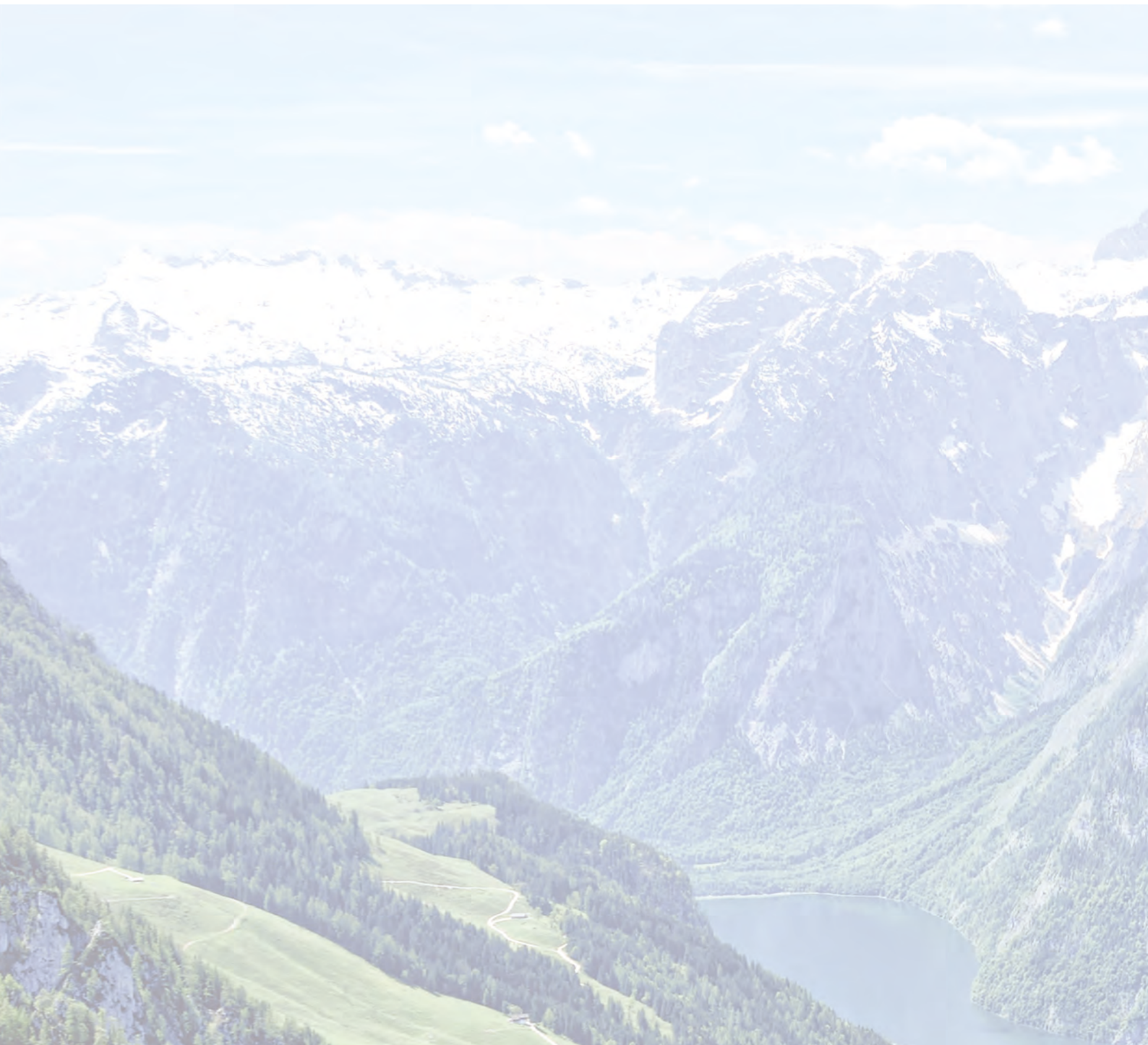
Bavarian Presidency 2017





"Mountain does not meet mountain, but a face meets another face."







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Corina Crețu

EU Commissioner for Regional Policy

Foreword by the EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Corina Crețu

The European Union is facing unprecedented challenges. I am deeply convinced that in current circumstances, more than ever, the EU shall be able to respond to the expectations of its citizens reinforcing trust, cooperation and solidarity between our countries. We need to bring the EU closer to the citizens. In this respect, the macro-regional framework can be very helpful as it builds on an inclusive approach to common challenges and opportunities and on a permanent dialogue between all levels of governments. It meets people's concerns, creates ownership and fosters a sense of common identity.

At the beginning of this new EUSALP presidency, I would like to thank the outgoing Slovenian EUSALP presidency. In 2016, the landmarks for the implementation of the Strategy were laid down and significant progress has been made in launching the work of the nine action groups. This was all in all a very good start. However, the quick start of the EUSALP has raised high expectations. This must be kept in mind, especially with regard to the crucial challenges that still lie ahead and need to be addressed without further delays to unlock the full potential of the EU Alpine Strategy. This means that the 2017 EUSALP presidency is a task of great responsibility.

In this respect, I am delighted to witness the breadth and ambition of the “Bavarian EUSALP Presidency Work Programme”. This is a true sign of EUSALP enthusiasm and commitment. I very much welcome that you want to focus on specific topics for each action and that you also have in mind that the macro-regional strategies are, above all, a policy framework with a strategic dimension.

In this respect, you can be assured of the support of the European Commission, which will continue to play an active role in steering the implementation of the Strategy and facilitate decision-making wherever it brings

genuine added value. I wish the EU Alpine Strategy as such and of course the Bavarian EUSALP presidency all possible success!



Dr. Beate Merk, MdB

Bavarian State Minister of European Affairs and International Relations



Ulrike Scharf, MdB

Bavarian State Minister of the Environment and Consumer Protection

Preface by Bavarian State Ministers Dr. Beate Merk and Ulrike Scharf

In 2017, Bavaria will assume the presidency over the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region. It is our special honour and pleasure to present our work programme for the presidency to you.

In 2017, Bavaria wishes to emphasise the added value which the EU Alpine Strategy brings to the Alpine Region and its citizens. Long-term political objectives in key policy areas shall be identified and implemented by concrete measures, serving as a role model throughout the Region. As an example, one of our long-term goals

is to establish the Alpine Region as a model region for green infrastructure. This goal shall be achieved during the Bavarian presidency 2017 by developing a respective network between the major cities of the Alpine Region. Due to the nature of macro-regional strategies, progress in the implementation of the EU Alpine Strategy relies on the broad involvement of and cooperation between all concerned stakeholders and citizens within the Alpine Region. Apart from policy-makers from the European down to the local level, this also includes associations of economic

and social actors as well as non-governmental organisations. Among other events, we want to implement these principles for the Bavarian presidency 2017 in an Action Group Forum on 14 and 15 February 2017 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and a Citizens' Forum during the First Annual Forum of the Alpine Strategy on 23 and 24 November 2017 in Munich. We would be pleased to welcome you to these events.

As one of the 48 member regions participating in the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region, we see the Strategy as

a great opportunity to tackle some of the considerable challenges of the 21st century in the areas of business, energy, infrastructure and traffic, as well as environmental and resource protection – together with our partners in the Alpine Region – and to strengthen the economic, political and social cohesion in the heart of Europe. Thus, the Bavarian presidency will be guided by the motto: “EU Alpine Strategy – joint action for the benefit of the Region”. To accomplish all this, we rely on your support.

I. The EU Alpine Strategy

1. The Alpine Region – unique in Europe

The Alpine Region is among the largest natural, economic and productive areas in Europe, with over 80 million inhabitants, and among the most attractive tourist regions, welcoming millions of guests per year. While trade, businesses and industry in the Alpine Region are concentrated in the main areas of settlement on the outskirts of the Alps and in the large Alpine valleys along the major traffic routes, over 40 % of the Region is not or not permanently inhabited.

Due to the Alpine Region's unique geographic and natural characteristics, it is particularly affected by several of the challenges arising in the 21st century:

- Economic globalisation requires sustainable and continuously high competitiveness as well as the capacity to innovate.
- Demographic change leads to an ageing population and outward migration of highly qualified labour.
- Global climate change already has noticeable effects on the environment, biodiversity and living conditions for the inhabitants of the Alpine Region.
- A reliable and sustainable energy supply must be ensured in the parts of the Region which are difficult to access.
- As a transit region in the heart of Europe and due to its geographic features, the Alpine Region requires sustainable and custom-fit traffic concepts.
- The Alpine Region is to be preserved as a unique natural and cultural environment.



2. The EU Alpine Strategy: Approach

The EU Alpine Strategy tackles these challenges with innovative actions in the fields of economy, energy, infrastructure and traffic, as well as environmental and resource protection, implemented in close cooperation between the states and regions of the Alpine Region. It thus strengthens economic, political, territorial and social cohesion in the heart of Europe. The Strategy builds on a targeted and concerted approach, the use of synergy effects and an effective use of existing EU funds and other financial instruments. Its added value consists in jointly identified priorities and in a new mutually beneficial relationship between metropolitan, mountain-side and mountainous areas, involving all actors within the Region.

The Communication¹ and the Action Plan² on the EU Alpine Strategy were adopted by the European Commission on 28 July 2015 and formally confirmed by the European Council on 28 June 2016.³ The Strategy concerns seven states (Austria, Germany, France, Liechtenstein, Italy, Slovenia and Switzerland) and 48 Alpine regions within these states.



The territory covered by the EU Alpine Strategy in comparison with the funding area of the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme and the Alpine Convention.⁴

¹ COM(2015) 366

² SWD(2015) 147 final

³ Council Minutes EUCO 27/16

⁴ Image source: European Commission. Further information on the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme is available at www.alpine-space.eu, on the Alpine Convention at www.alpconv.org

I. The EU Alpine Strategy

3. Objectives of the EU Alpine Strategy

In accordance with the Grenoble political resolution of the Alpine states and regions of October 2013, the EU Alpine Strategy encompasses three thematic focuses: competitiveness and innovation, environment-friendly mobility, as well as sustainable use of energy, natural and cultural resources.

The Action Plan for the EU Alpine Strategy divides these three focuses into nine concrete actions, in addition to the horizontal objective of governance, which aims to improve the cooperation between institutions in the Alpine Region and the coordination of actions.

4. Bavaria's role in the EU Alpine Strategy

Bavaria has been a strong advocate for a European Alpine strategy since 2011 and has substantially contributed to the conceptual design of the Strategy.

Bavaria is an active member of all nine actions of the Strategy and leads the implementation of Action 7 (ecological connectivity) together with the Slovenian Institute for Nature Conservation as well as Action 8 (to improve risk management and to better manage climate change, including major natural risks prevention) together with Austria.

From 1 January until 31 December 2017, Bavaria will assume the presidency over the implementation of the Strategy.

1. Thematic Policy Area Economic growth and innovation			2. Thematic Policy Area Mobility and connectivity		3. Thematic Policy Area Environment and energy			
Objective 1: Fair access to job opportunities, building on the high competitiveness of the Region			Objective 2: Sustainable internal and external accessibility to all		Objective 3: A more inclusive environmental framework for all and renewable and reliable energy solutions for the future			
AG 1	AG 2	AG 3	AG 4	AG 5	AG 6	AG 7	AG 8	AG 9
Action 1: To develop an effective research and innovation ecosystem	Action 2: To increase the economic potential of strategic sectors	Action 3: To improve the economic and the social environment of economic operators in these strategic sectors with focus on labour market, education and training	Action 4: To promote intermodality and interoperability in passenger and freight transport	Action 5: To e-connect people and promote accessibility to public services	Action 6: To preserve and valorise natural resources, including water and cultural resources	Action 7: To develop ecological connectivity in the whole territory of the EUSALP	Action 8: To improve risk management and to better manage climate change, including major natural risks prevention	Action 9: To make the territory a model region for energy efficiency and renewable energy
Cross-Cutting Policy Area Governance, including institutional capacity								
Objective 4: A sound macro-regional governance model for the Region (to improve cooperation and the coordination of action)								

The objectives of the European Alpine Strategy.⁵

⁵ Image source: European Commission



II. The Bavarian presidency 2017 – General objectives

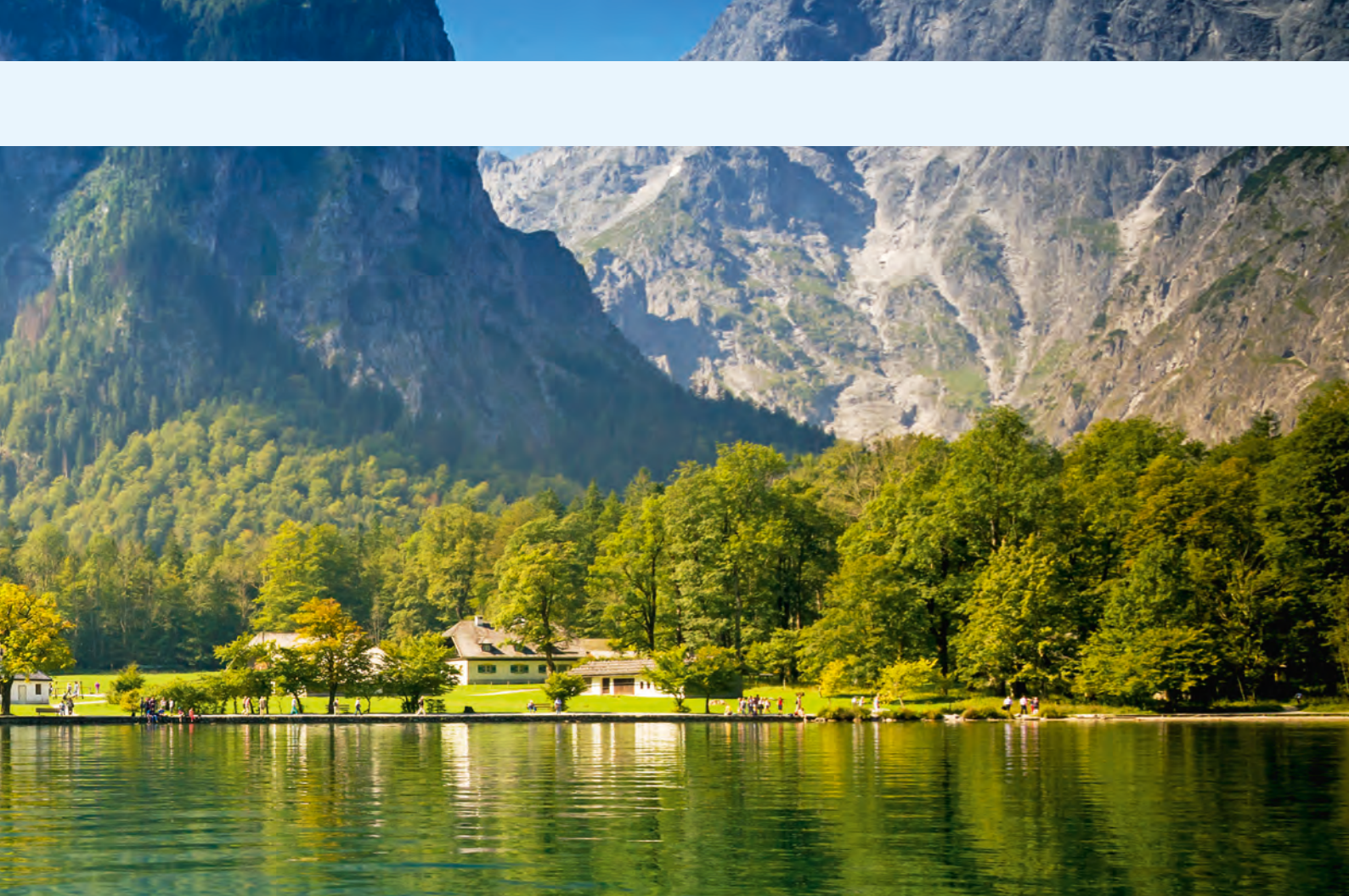


1. The Slovenian presidency 2016: Constitution and set-up of the implementation structure

Under the Slovenian presidency 2016, first landmarks for the implementation of the Strategy were set and put into operation. Apart from the constituting policy decisions by the European institutions, the governance structure of the Strategy,

- the General Assembly (political leadership and steering)
- the Executive Board (coordination of implementation) and
- the action groups (implementation of specific actions as set out in the Action Plan),

has been constituted, guiding principles adopted (in a joint statement by the General Assembly), working procedures established, and implementation support assured (AlpGov project). By the mid of the Slovenian presidency in July 2016, the Strategy has thus become fully operational, assuring the necessary preconditions for an effective EUSALP implementation. By the end of the Slovenian presidency, recommendations for improved EUSALP governance have already been presented, feeding into the plans for the Bavarian presidency 2017.



2. The Bavarian presidency 2017: Innovation – Action – Cooperation

The Bavarian presidency builds on these achievements and aims to establish the emergent EU Alpine Strategy as a recognised player on the European level and demonstrate its added value for all parties concerned. The EU Alpine Strategy enables a new quality of cross-border cooperation between Alpine states and regions. All actions of the Strategy hold great potential for politically important activities achievable in the long term, which address concrete concerns of citizens and affected parties in the Alpine Region, tackle them actively in a consensual collaboration between all relevant actors in the Region and achieve concrete results, visible beyond the Region. However, this also requires the active involvement of local actors. Thus, Bavaria will embrace the “bottom-up” principle, which has guided the design of the Strategy itself. The Bavarian presidency 2017 will follow the motto: “EU Alpine Strategy – joint action for the benefit of the Region”.

During its presidency, Bavaria intends

- to determine and prioritise the thematic focuses of all actions together with its partners in the Alpine Region
- to achieve a political commitment of the EUSALP General Assembly to these thematic objectives, together with a respective implementation mandate to the action groups
- to underpin the specified thematic objectives with concrete actions by initiating first steps for the implementation of the defined objectives and, if possible, completing them by the end of the Bavarian presidency 2017
- to continuously involve citizens, businesses, associations, institutions and municipalities in the implementation of the Strategy and enter into dialogue with further partners in the Alpine Region

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

During its presidency and in cooperation with the other member states and regions of the EU Alpine Strategy, Bavaria intends to pursue the following focus topics in each of the nine actions of the Strategy with special priority.⁶

For reasons of visibility and public acceptance, Bavaria believes that it is important to achieve quick results which can be accomplished without major financial expenses or time-consuming preparation and thus promote the entire action. For this purpose, Bavaria will advocate, together with its partners in the Alpine Region, that a concrete implementation measure is initiated for every focus topic during the Bavarian presidency 2017.

However, the focus topics and implementation measures described in the following do not represent the entirety of issues and projects which the respective action group is working on. Instead, they constitute exemplary flagship initiatives.

1. Objective 1: Fair access to job opportunities, building on the high competitiveness of the Region

Action 1: To develop an effective research and innovation ecosystem

Focus topic: Establishing a cross-border research network in the Alpine Region

The aim of action 1 is to establish a cross-border research network in the Alpine Region. While there are many cross-border collaborations between universities in the form of dual degrees and exchange programs as well as closely linked research networks in the Alpine Region, it is nevertheless important to sustain the momentum in many areas of research and technology and to improve the application of research findings across national borders. It is a question of political responsibility not to limit national interests to borders, but to expand and strengthen existing commonalities between Alpine regions. Supporting transnational collaborations and cross-border impulses for science and research can further increase the innovative capacity of a strong Alpine Region at the heart of Europe. A targeted implementation of findings in cooperation with industrial partners strengthens the Region's competitiveness and consolidates long-term cooperation in effective networks. In a broader context, cross-border research cooperation in the Alpine Region is an essential prerequisite for a leading position of the Alpine states in global competition.

⁶ For detailed descriptions on the individual projects and their planned implementation, see also the respective project sheets available at <http://bayern.de/politik/politikthemen/europapolitik-2/eu-strategie-fuer-den-alpenraum-bayerischer-vorsitz-2017/bavarian-presidency-2017-political-priorities>



Schneeferner glacier at the Zugspitze (September 2009) – Glacier melt and slope movements due to permafrost thawing affect tourism infrastructure.⁷

Implementation 2017: “AlpSense” – Monitoring climate-induced natural hazards in Alpine regions by means of remote sensing data

The research project “AlpSense” is a concrete building block for a long-term cross-border network between research institutes in the Alpine Region. Innovative high-resolution remote sensing and 3D visualisation methods to monitor climate-induced natural hazards in the Alpine Region will be developed and tested within “AlpSense”. Alpine natural hazards pose great challenges to municipalities, infrastructure and businesses; tackling them and warding them off are thus key responsibilities for Alpine states. The aim of the project “AlpSense” is to observe mass movements of permafrost and glacier areas in the entire Alpine Region by means of continuous monitoring and change detection analysis and thus to detect natural hazards and potential natural disasters at an early stage. The research activities take place in selected investigation areas in the Alps, which are all key tourist regions and in which major adjustment processes caused by climate change can be observed. Therefore, these areas have a high risk potential for natural hazards.

“AlpSense” partners are universities, research institutions, businesses, distributors of remote sensing data and administrations in Bavaria, Austria and Italy. We envisage to intensify the cross-border scientific exchange in the entire Alpine Region by strengthening and extending the collaboration with research institutes, universities and administrations in Italy, France, Switzerland and other Alpine countries to define common scientific goals for Alpine hazard anticipation.

Thus, “AlpSense” is an important element in the long-term network between research institutes and administrations in the entire Alpine Region and contributes significantly to the further development of the research and innovation ecosystem of the Alpine Region.

Contact:

Anke Evertz
Bavarian State Ministry of Economic Affairs and Media, Energy and Technology, Unit 45, Prinzregentenstraße 28, 80538 Munich
anke.evertz@stmwi.bayern.de

⁷ Photo: Christoph Mayer

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

Action 2: To increase the economic potential of strategic sectors

Focus topic: Master plan bioeconomy in the Alpine Region

The fundamental challenges of the 21st century include climate protection, conserving biodiversity, using resources more efficiently and securing the international competitiveness of the Alpine Region as a business location. Possible solutions for the complex issues may be provided by a “bio-based economy”, also called “bioeconomy”, which helps open up new market potential by the increased use of renewable bio-based resources and products and at the same time promotes sustainability. The Alpine Region has excellent starting conditions for developing new business models by improving the necessary cross-sector and transnational value chains, which also include sectors such as the timber and forest industry. As a result, small and medium-sized businesses as well as cluster organisations will be strengthened sustainably and new market potential opened up.

The aim is to improve the framework conditions for bio-based products and production processes and to expand and better connect the value chains in the Alpine Region across industries. The improved national and international interaction of value-creation chains and processes is crucial for the success of an Alpine-specific bioeconomy strategy, where, network partners and cluster organisations as well as science and businesses play a key role. These considerations form the starting point for a “master plan bioeconomy in the Alpine Region”, which shall be developed within the framework of the EUSALP.

Implementation 2017: Matching of Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) in the Alpine Region regarding their potential for the development of a bioeconomy

As a concrete first step to implement and further develop a master plan bioeconomy in the Alpine Region, the key areas of regional innovation strategies (S3) will be matched in order to identify transnational potential for the improvement of the framework conditions for the bioeconomy. Concrete proposals of bio-based value chains, for example based on “polyamide-based biopolymers”, shall be put forward, looking for wood residuals and other possible waste materials for the chain supply. Exemplary initiatives and flagship projects in the Alpine Region which have already dealt with this issue are to be further developed and communicated to multipliers.

Furthermore, principles of green economy will inspire the implementation

of other AG 2 topics during 2017 as well, e.g., with the focus on wood, the networking on Alpine wooden structure building initiatives will be implemented in order to provide evidence of their validity from a technical, environmental and economic point of view.

Contact:

Christian Wild
Bavarian State Ministry of
Food, Agriculture and Forestry
Ludwigstraße 2, 80539 Munich
christian.wild@stmelf.bayern.de

Robert Morigl
Bavarian State Ministry of
Food, Agriculture and Forestry
Ludwigstraße 2, 80539 Munich
robert.morigl@stmelf.bayern.de

Dr. Werner Ortinger
Bavarian State Ministry of
Food, Agriculture and Forestry
Ludwigstraße 2, 80539 Munich
werner.ortinger@stmelf.bayern.de



On steep slopes, trunks are transported with the help of a rope crane.⁸

⁸ Photo: Bavarian State Forestry

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

Action 3: To improve the economic and social environment of economic operators in these strategic sectors with focus on labour market, education and training

Focus topic: Establishing a cross-border educational space for dual vocational training in the Alpine Region

Action group 3, headed by the Autonomous Province of Trento, focuses on the field of vocational education and in particular on dual vocational training. In a demographic situation in which over-ageing and the abandoning of mountainous territories are important challenges, youngsters' active involvement in the labour market is a fundamental issue. The European countries with low unemployment rates among young generations are typically countries that have adopted active labour market policies as well as a form of dual vocational training as a transition from school to work and as a base of their economic system. Dual vocational training offers young people opportunities to work and rise through the ranks and also continuously provides the labour market with skilled workers.

The dual vocational training systems of the Alpine states are very diverse concerning their actors, task distributions, stakeholders' involvement as well as the contents and structures of vocational training. By means of cross-border cooperation, the exchange of experience and joint projects by the Alpine states, the strengths of the respective systems shall be identified and, where appropriate, applied to other systems. The long-term aim is to establish a common macro-regional educational space in which vocational professions and related certificates are mutually recognised.

Implementation 2017: First steps for the networking in dual vocational training – by the example of mountErasmus

Mountain farmers and pasture workers cultivate the unique Alpine landscape and create the basis for thriving tourism. They produce high-grade food specialties of outstanding quality and variety and cultivate habitats for many animals and plants which can only be found in the Alps. A profound education is the indispensable foundation for a modern and economically successful management of farms under the particular conditions of mountain agriculture.

As a concrete application project, we want to launch a joint education network for young farmers in the Alpine Region under the title “mountErasmus”. In this project, education partners in agriculture shall be connected and new cross-border educational opportunities for farmers in the Alpine Region created. Establishing new and consolidating

present educational networks shall give young farmers new insights and open up solutions – in terms of “learning from one’s neighbour”. The aim is to establish a cross-border information platform for internships and training positions together with selected agricultural training institutions and organisations. A possible first step could be to develop respective networking opportunities by means of expert workshops.

Contact:

Dr. Florian Zormaier
Bavarian State Ministry of
Food, Agriculture and Forestry
Ludwigstraße 2, 80539 Munich
florian.zormaier@stmelf.bayern.de

Christian Wild
Bavarian State Ministry of
Food, Agriculture and Forestry
Ludwigstraße 2, 80539 Munich
christian.wild@stmelf.bayern.de



Agricultural trainees cultivating a mountain pasture.⁹

⁹ Photo: Bavarian State Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

2. Objective 2: Sustainable internal and external accessibility to all

Action 4: To promote intermodality and interoperability in passenger and freight transport

Focus topic: Improving cross-border connectivity in passenger transport

Travelling through Europe using inter-modal sustainable mobility is becoming increasingly popular. In the Alpine Region, efficient public transport across regional and state borders can become a viable, environmentally friendly alternative to the polluting private car. In order to promote sustainable mobility, public transport needs to be expanded and interlinked across borders, connecting remote areas to major routes. Currently, public transport systems in neighbouring regions tend to co-exist side by side – often without any inter-connection. This does not only pertain to infrastructure, but also to passenger information, tariffs and ticketing. Travelers want to be as flexible as possible and thus require reliable information on sustainable door-to-door transport offers, including real-time information, fares, and the possibility to buy tickets. Insufficient information on international connections, including the last mile, constitutes a substantial obstacle to using public transport for cross-border travel.

Implementation 2017: Developing “AlpInfoNet” into a cross-border travel information system

The initiative aims at harmonising, across regional and national borders, the existing but in many cases not interoperable information systems, facilitating door-to-door travel and making public transport and sustainable mobility more attractive. The result should be a comprehensive travel information system for the Alpine Region, providing real-time information that includes last-mile solutions (public transport, walking and cycling, bike rentals, taxis, on-demand transport etc.) and, if possible, also touristic information.

As a first step, success factors and barriers concerning the availability and quality of data, the cooperation between different tariff zones, diverse operators and administrative borders, language barriers etc. shall be identified and collected from existing best practices such as AlpInfoNet.¹⁰

A particular challenge in interlinking passenger information exists at the level of data rights, which are dispersed among many owners, as well as the usage rights for data.



Project AlpInfoNet.¹¹

In a first implementation step, the various existing local, regional and national information platforms and the metadata of the various operators in public transport and tourism shall be connected.

Creating an integrated travel information system in the Alpine Region can serve as a pilot project for a larger EU-wide standard for cross-border, multimodal door-to-door solutions.

Contact:

Harry Seybert
Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Transport
PO box 22 12 53, 80502 Munich
harry.seybert@stmi.bayern.de

¹¹ Image source: AlpInfoNet, Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior, for Building and Transport, <http://www.alpinfonet.eu>

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

Action 5: To e-connect people and promote accessibility to public services

Focus topic: Supporting public services with a three-dimensional landscape model of the entire Alpine Region

Public services face exceptional challenges within the Alpine Region. The topography and ongoing climate change necessitate well-developed strategies to prevent and cope with natural hazards. In some areas, long and mountainous routes complicate the access to administrative services or pose special challenges to supplying the population with broadband internet, electricity and water, or rescue services.

Action group 5 has thus set itself the objective to transform the opportunities of progressive digitalisation into concrete benefits in the field of public service for citizens and administrations of the Alpine Region by creating a common digital foundation for the future cooperation between Alpine states.

For this purpose, a detailed, cross-border and seamless digital 3D landscape model of the Alpine Region shall be created. Such a model contains precise information on inclines, valley depths and mountain gorges, slopes and clearance heights and thus enables a precise three-dimensional mapping of the terrain. This facilitates planning infrastructure projects such as roads and routes, conducting rescue and disaster control services, as well as computing environmental impacts as more precise predictions on the probable course of rock falls or avalanches become possible. The data contained in a cross-border 3D landscape model allow for a higher degree of automatisisation in planning processes as computers can better take into account the three-dimensionality of landscapes and buildings and contribute to speeding up cross-border projects as all parties involved can work on a common data basis.

Implementation 2017: Developing the technological foundations

For the launch of the project on 14 February 2017, a joint workshop of the surveying authorities of the participating regions shall take place during the Action Group Forum in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The aim of the workshop is to discuss the technological foundations and to pave the way for a cross-border network between the project participants. By the end of 2017, the technological foundations shall be developed, which will allow the creation of a 3D landscape model from the already existing 2D landscape model and digital terrain models. Subsequently, a common 3D landscape model of the Alpine Region shall be created from the geo-data of the entire EUSALP Region.

Contact:

Ulrike Strauß
Bavarian State Ministry of
Finance, Regional Development and
Regional Identity; Odeonsplatz 5,
80539 Munich
ulrike.strauss@stmflh.bayern.de

Carolin Stimmelmayer
Bavarian State Ministry of
Finance, Regional Development and
Regional Identity; Odeonsplatz 5,
80539 Munich
carolin.stimmelmayer@stmflh.
bayern.de



A three-dimensional landscape model combines information on landscape, buildings and infrastructure.¹²

¹² Image source: Chair of Geoinformatics, Technical University of Munich; Data from LVG Vorarlberg

3. Objective 3: A more inclusive environmental framework for all and renewable and reliable energy solutions for the future

Action 6: To preserve and valorise natural resources, including water and cultural resources

Focus topic: “Next Generation” – Addressing the needs and ideas of the young generation for a good future of Alpine farming

The mountain landscape needs a young generation which is interested, motivated, informed, creative and modern. Only well-educated and motivated farm successors can recognise development opportunities in the Alpine Region, for themselves and their businesses. Thus, the young generation shall be encouraged to contribute its own ideas and thus help secure the future of mountain farming. For example, digitalisation in the Alpine Region makes entirely new cross-sector life and working models possible. These include, e.g., producer-consumer collaborations 2.0, “caring community”, crowd-funding

and digital farm shops. A systematic dialogue with the young generation in the Alpine Region shall thus be initiated during which requirements and solution approaches for future-proof mountain agriculture shall be formulated. This process shall lead to political recommendations which, in the long term, will help lead a systematic dialogue with the young generation of pasture and mountain farmers in the Alpine Region and will be fed into political processes.

Implementation 2017: Future workshop for young upland farmers

As a first implementation step for 2017, a preparatory workshop shall take place in Bavaria. It shall serve to develop, together with representatives of young mountain farmers and further experts from different countries, how the young generation in the mountains can best be reached considering the multitude of natural and cultural starting points in the Alpine Region. Furthermore, it shall be discussed how suitable dialogue processes can be designed, which professional (e.g. innovative value chains for mountain products) or other topics (e.g. digitalisation, education, family) will be addressed, and for which agricultural policy processes the results could be useful.

Contact:

Anton Dippold
Bavarian State Ministry of
Food, Agriculture and Forestry;
Ludwigstraße 2, 80539 Munich
anton.dippold@stmelf.bayern.de

Raimund Becher
Bavarian State Ministry of
Food, Agriculture and Forestry;
Ludwigstraße 2, 80539 Munich
raimund.becher@stmelf.bayern.de

Michaela Künzl
Bavarian State Ministry of the
Environment and Consumer
Protection; Rosenkavalierplatz 2,
81925 Munich
michaela.kuenzl@stmuv.bayern.de



Mountain farming needs young people who tackle challenges and contribute their ideas.¹³

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

Action 7: To develop ecological connectivity in the whole territory of the EUSALP

Focus topic: Establishing the Alpine Region as a model region for the development of a European Network for Green Infrastructure (TEN-G)

The development and maintenance of living space and the establishment of infrastructure know no national or regional borders, but require a cross-border approach. Since 1993, the European Union aims to establish trans-European networks in the Grey Infrastructure fields of “transport” (TEN-T) and “energy” (TEN-E). Current efforts to establish a comparable instrument for creating “green” networks (TEN-G) on a European level open up new opportunities for Europe in general and the Alpine Region in particular, due to its prominent ecological significance.

The underlying intention of establishing a “Green Infrastructure” (TEN-G) is to develop a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas, including features in rural and urban areas, which together – functionally interconnected – not only contribute to preserving biodiversity but also to providing diverse environmental, economic and social benefits for humans and nature. In addition to Grey Infrastructure such as roads and power lines, in future, green corridors of life shall contribute to a balance between human usage and environmental aspects and thus secure sustainable livelihoods. The individual elements of a Green Infrastructure include, e.g., naturalised river courses, sus-

tainably managed forests and agricultural lands, as well as green areas in urban spaces or artificial features that can assist several functions, for example recreational needs of the population or wildlife movement.

Under Bavarian co-lead, action group 7 has set itself the objective of implementing the European concept of “Green Infrastructure” in the Alpine Region and actively contributing to the design of a future TEN-G instrument and its adaption to concerns specific to the Alpine Region. Furthermore, funding opportunities for Green Infrastructure shall be improved and linked with concrete implementation projects. As a first step hereto, the political landmarks shall be set during a conference of the environment ministers of the states and regions on 5 October 2017.

Implementation 2017: “LOS_DAMA!” – Establishing an Alpine urban network for Green Infrastructure

Apart from naturalised and sustainably managed landscapes, Green Infrastructure explicitly also includes settlement areas as elements of an overall network. In this context, the Strategy opens up significant innovative potential for the Alpine Region as it also encompasses the Alpine metropolises and thus calls for a closer cooperation between rural areas and urban spaces. Therefore, a concrete implementation measure for 2017 will be to lay the foundation for a



Possible components of a Green Infrastructure.¹⁴

permanent issue-related urban network on establishing Green Infrastructure. In a joint workshop planned for summer 2017, building on a cooperation with the project “LOS_DAMA!” funded by the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme, the network’s framework, (Alpine-specific) functional requirements as well as concrete fields of action will be discussed and recorded in a cooperation agreement between Alpine municipalities. The signing of the cooperation agreement is planned for autumn 2017. The network will not be limited to “LOS_DAMA!” project partners, but aims to grow continuously.

Contact:

Michaela Künzl
Bavarian State Ministry of the
Environment and Consumer
Protection; Rosenkavalierplatz 2,
81925 Munich
michaela.kuenzl@stmuv.bayern.de

Raimund Becher
Bavarian State Ministry of
Food, Agriculture and Forestry;
Ludwigstraße 2, 80539 Munich
raimund.becher@stmelf.bayern.de

¹⁴ Image source: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/docs/green_infrastructure_broc.pdf

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

Action 8: To improve risk management and to better manage climate change, including major natural risks prevention

Focus topic: Further development of integral natural hazard management to an Alpine risk governance for the entire Region

New challenges, caused by climate change and demographic developments, require new approaches in the field of risk management. As many people are affected by natural hazards in the Alpine Region, participatory approaches in natural hazard risk management are especially important. This is where the concept of "risk governance" as an extension of integral natural hazard management sets in. Its aim is to reduce risks and thus decrease the economic costs of natural hazards by closing gaps in risk policy. The most important principle of risk governance is the involvement of all affected parties: The systematic approach aims to make decision-making processes more effective by means of participation, cooperation, transparency and sustainability. This so-called multi-stakeholder process shall achieve a rethinking of simple protection to public and personal provision. An objective of action group 8, co-headed by Bavaria, is thus to develop recommendations for an Alpine-wide joint governance strategy in dealing with natural hazards and risks.

Implementation 2017: Flood protection by means of Alpine protection forests

During the Bavarian presidency 2017, a symposium on protection forests and flood protection as well as heavy rain will be organised together with the Bavarian State Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry and the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection and serve as an important landmark in compiling governance examples. The symposium will elaborate on the aspect of flood protection by protection forests in conjunction with other measures. Multifunctional mountain forests are an indispensable safeguard for human lives and enormous asset values in the entire Alpine Region. At the same time, they have a multitude of other important functions such as utilisation of wood, securing jobs in rural Alpine regions, recreation and habitat functions. During the symposium in the Bavarian Alps, parties affected by natural hazards will come together with experts from Bavaria and other EUSALP states and regions to exchange their experiences with heavy rain, flood protection by forests, as well as governance processes and identify good practice examples.

Bavaria can assume a pioneering role in this project with examples of successful governance and also benefit from ideas of other states. In Bavaria, for example, there has been a close and particularly fruitful cooperation in the sector of protection forest restoration and flood protection. Through this cooperation, the forest administration and the environmental administration (water management) work together with the Bavarian State Forest Enterprise as well as private forest owners. A prime example for governance is the “mountain forest initiative”. The mountain forest initiative is a programme to adapt mountain forests, which provide protection from natural hazards, to climate change.

During the process, all affected parties are involved and become participants. The project paves ways into the future, strengthens the public visibility of

protection forests and leads to new ideas by means of an improved Alpine-wide exchange. The participation of various institutions and affected parties in the symposium follows the idea of governance – in this case in the field of “protection forests and flood protection”.

Contact:

Christian Wanger
Bavarian State Ministry of the
Environment and Consumer
Protection; Rosenkavalierplatz 2,
81925 Munich
christian.wanger@stmuv.bayern.de

Dr. Sebastian Höllerl
Bavarian State Ministry of
Food, Agriculture and Forestry;
Ludwigstraße 2, 80539 Munich
sebastian.hoellerl@stmelf.bayern.de



Restoration of an Alpine protection forest.¹⁵

¹⁵ Image source: Lothar Poltmann, Department for Protection Forest Management, Kempten

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

Action 9: To make the territory a model region for energy efficiency and renewable energy

Focus topic: Energetic optimisation of buildings in the Alpine Region

In order to achieve a climate-neutral building stock by 2050, the building sector needs to be taken into consideration as well. In particular, measures to reduce heating needs are necessary – by means of energetic modernisation of buildings as well as in new buildings. However, environmental damage and CO₂ emissions do not only occur during the usage phase, but also in the production phase and in disposal ("grey" energy). Together with its partners in the Alpine Region, Bavaria thus intends to develop recommendations and suggestions for an energetic, ecological and economical cost optimisation of various buildings over their entire life cycle and to successively put these suggestions into practice. This makes an important contribution to a closer cooperation between cities and rural areas, opens up innovative potential for the environmental sector and sets economic incentives.

Implementation 2017: Life-cycle analysis of buildings with particular focus on Alpine construction material

As a concrete implementation measure under the Bavarian presidency 2017 over the EU Alpine Strategy, the Bavarian State Ministry of Economic Affairs and Media, Energy and Technology has commissioned a study on the overall environmental effects and the energy balance of various construction methods during the entire life cycle of a building. The results of the study are expected for spring 2017. The findings of the study shall contribute to an optimisation of buildings over their entire life cycle, to the minimisation of energy and resource consumption, to a reduction of environmental burdens and to the improvement of overall cost-effectiveness. In the study, lightweight and massive construction will both be taken into account and the advantages and drawbacks of both construction methods compared. The results will be presented on the basis of the scientific findings and made accessible to the target groups (planners, architects, citizens). Actors will thus receive information on the environmental impacts of various construction methods, assisting them in taking informed decisions on the energetic and ecological life-cycle optimisation



Energy-efficient house.¹⁶

of a building, taking cost-effectiveness into account. In a second step, the findings of the study shall then be discussed intensively in a joint professional workshop organised by the Bavarian Environmental Protection Agency and the Bavarian Research Alliance, and cooperation networks between various actors in the Alpine states (chambers, associations, institutions, NGOs, government representatives) shall be established. Building on this, steps

shall be taken to establish research collaborations and proposals with the aim of attracting EU research grants to the Alpine Region.

Contact:

Dr. Rupert Pritzl
Bavarian State Ministry of Economic Affairs and Media, Energy and Technology, Prinzregentenstraße 28, 80539 Munich
rupert.pritzl@stmwi.bayern.de

¹⁶ Image source: Bavarian Energy Atlas

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

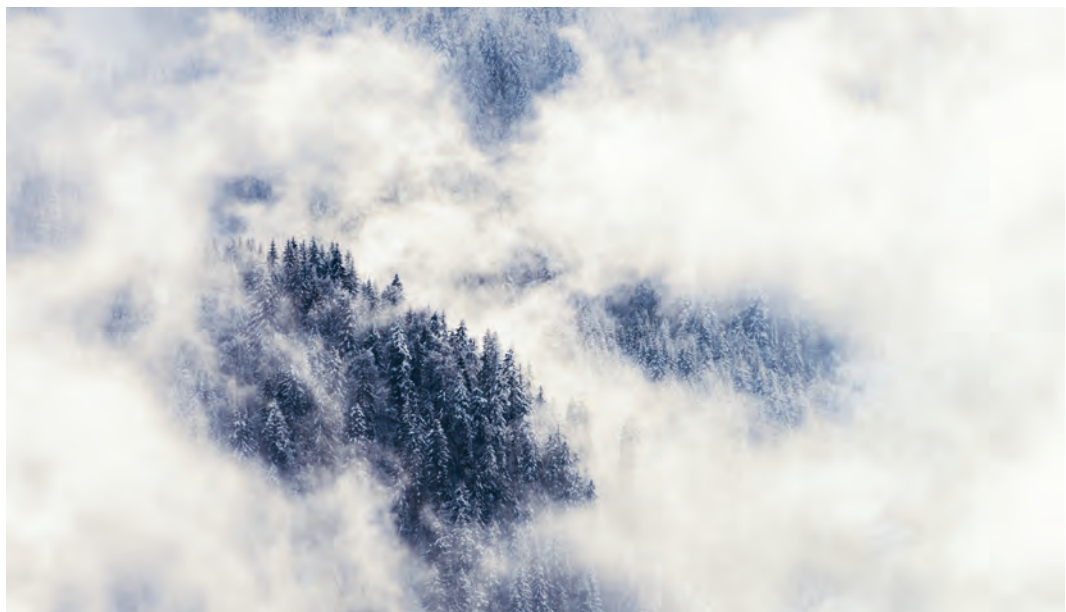
Overarching topics

a. Collecting digital data to prevent natural hazards

An essential aim of the EU Alpine Strategy, apart from cross-border cooperation, is to promote the interlinking of various projects. Bavaria is represented in all action groups of the EU Alpine Strategy. We want to use this prominent role to bring the individual actors across the action groups of the Strategy closer together. Thus, synergies can be created and collaborations initiated.

Initial synergy effects can be envisaged in the issues of digital data collection and precautions against natural hazards. Action group 5 intends to establish a three-dimensional digital landscape model for the entire Alpine Region as a digital basis for the future cooperation between the Alpine states. Based on such a 3D landscape model, e.g.

environmental impacts on uneven terrain can be computed more precisely, and the course of avalanches and rock falls can be predicted more accurately. Along the same lines, action group 1's research project "AlpSense" aims to identify areas in the Alpine Region which are potentially in danger of natural disasters at an early stage by means of innovative high-resolution remote-sensing techniques and 3D visualisations. Both projects can thus serve as a basis and complement for action group 8, which focuses on tackling natural hazards caused by climate change and aims to further develop integral natural hazard management into an Alpine risk governance for the entire Region. By way of cooperation, the three action groups can support each other and thus achieve their objectives even more effectively.



Mountain forest in the fog.¹⁷

¹⁷ Image source: iStock

b. Interactions between metropolitan and mountainous regions

The EU Alpine Strategy is the first integrated Alpine policy to incorporate Alpine metropolises. This offers significant innovative potential for addressing Alpine-specific future issues. There are a number of interrelations between Alpine mountainous areas and the metropolises in various policy areas (e.g. traffic, environment, energy, demography, training opportunities, or labour market), which have been hitherto neither described comprehensively nor systematically included in integrated policy objectives.

Under the Bavarian presidency 2017, an analysis of this issue shall be undertaken, identifying the existing interactions between Alpine metropolises and mountainous areas, including regional

particularities, for all nine actions of the Strategy and characterising their need for political action with a view to enhance mutually beneficial relationships. This analysis shall then be discussed and completed by representatives of the mountainous areas as well as the metropolises. The results of the dialogue with the concerned parties will be presented on the occasion of the Annual Forum 2017 and thus contribute to a new Alpine awareness of problems and their possible solutions and serve the action groups of the Strategy as a basis for the implementation of a common Alpine policy.



Munich, Bavaria, with a view of the Alps.¹⁸

¹⁸ Image source: iStock

III. Thematic priorities of the Bavarian presidency 2017

4. Objective 4: Alpine Governance

As a particular feature among the macro-regional strategies, the Action Plan for the Strategy also includes objective 4 “A sound macro-regional governance model for the Region (to improve cooperation and the coordination of action)”. It aims at good governance in the cooperation between all states and regions of the EU Alpine Strategy.

For this purpose, the first step is to consolidate the implementation structures of the EUSALP, which have been established under the Slovenian presidency, in particular the work within the action groups.

Bavarian leads the three-year AlpGov project of the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme since 2016. With the help of this project, financed by national and EU funds, the work in the action groups shall be consolidated under the Bavarian presidency, a lean monitoring system developed, and cross-action work intensified. A further part of the project is to identify suitable sources of funding for implementation measures. Against the background of the ongoing preparations for the future EU Multiannual Financial Framework, the Bavarian presidency offers a favourable opportunity to promote a linkage between the EU Alpine Strategy and European structural and investment funding.¹⁹ For this purpose, a joint workshop with the European Commission is planned for January 2017, during which the opportunities for a better embedding of the macro-regional strategies into the EU Multiannual Financial Framework from 2021 shall be discussed.

Headed by the EUSALP partner region Lombardy, a knowledge platform as well as a communication strategy for the EU

Alpine Strategy as a whole is being developed within the AlpGov project. The aim of these two measures is, on the one hand, to bring about a continuous exchange between all participants in the implementation of the Strategy as well as a sustainable knowledge management, and, on the other hand, to inform external actors such as citizens, municipalities, associations and businesses in the Alpine Region about the Strategy in a targeted manner and to facilitate their involvement in its implementation. In coordination with Lombardy, Bavaria will seek to ensure that fully functional instruments can be created until the end of the Bavarian presidency and that a communication strategy for the EUSALP can be adopted.

A close cooperation between all concerned actors is of vital importance for the successful implementation of the Strategy. Bavaria will thus use its presidency to connect the action groups of the Strategy as well as the institutional actors and political decision-makers on the regional, national and European level even more closely:

- An exchange between action groups of the Strategy and projects approved by the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme is foreseen during the Action Group Forum in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in February 2017 in order to benefit from corresponding synergies.
- In April 2017, Bavaria will invite to a Meeting of the “Friends of the EUSALP” group in Brussels in order to intensify the contacts with the European Institutions and promote the causes of the Strategy.

¹⁹ See also “Report on an EU Strategy for the Alpine region” from 13 July 2016; Rapporteur: MEP Mercedes Bresso, <http://bit.ly/2hsy1r4>

- For October 2017, a conference of the environment ministers of the member states and regions of the Strategy is planned in order to initiate the establishment of the Alpine Region as a model region for Green Infrastructure on the political level, co-headed by Bavaria.
- During the First Annual Forum of the Strategy, a close involvement of youths as well as a Citizens' Forum with a variety of information and participation opportunities, which will be open to the general public, are planned.

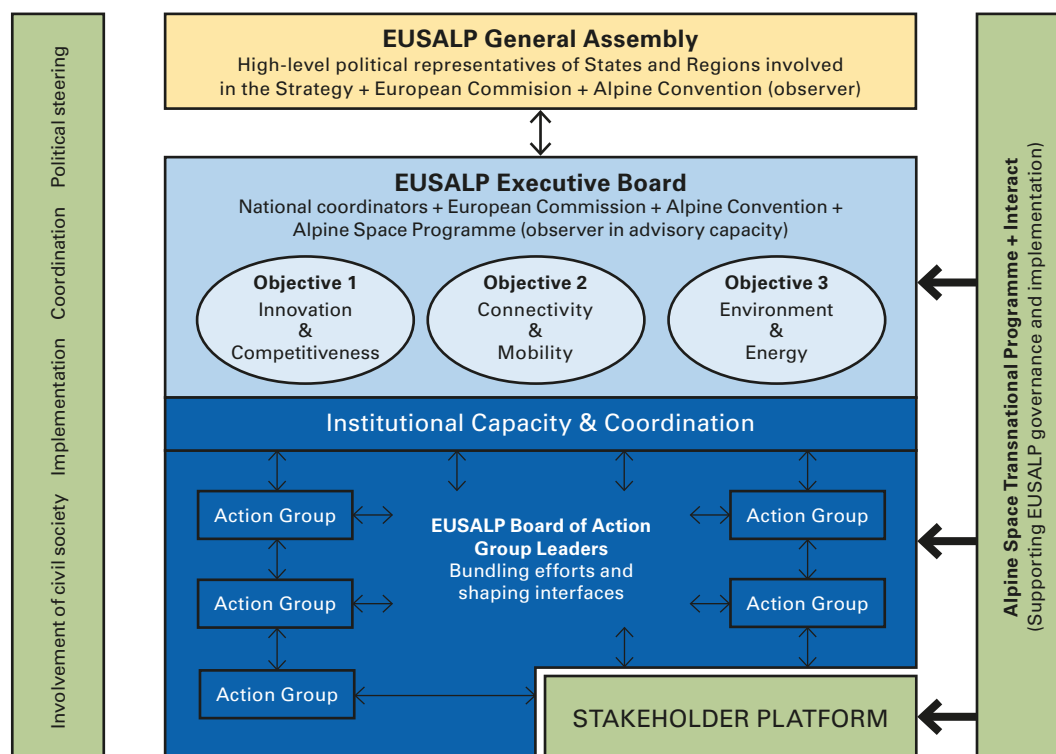
Finally, a EUSALP trio presidency shall be firmly established along the lines of the Council of the European Union's rotating presidency to secure the political continuity of the work within the EU Alpine Strategy. Building on a meeting of the trio presidency 2016–2018 under the Slovenian presidency in November 2016, a similar meeting of the trio presidency 2017–2019 shall be held in Ramsau in December 2017.

Contact:

Dr. Katharina Hellmann
Bavarian State Chancellery;
Franz-Josef-Strauß-Ring 1,
80539 Munich
katharina.hellmann@stk.bayern.de

Dr. Peter Eggensberger
Bavarian State Ministry of the
Environment and Consumer
Protection; Rosenkavalierplatz 2,
81925 Munich
peter.eggensberger@stmuv.
bayern.de

Michaela Künzl
Bavarian State Ministry of the
Environment and Consumer
Protection; Rosenkavalierplatz 2,
81925 Munich
michaela.kuenzl@stmuv.bayern.de
(AlpGov project)



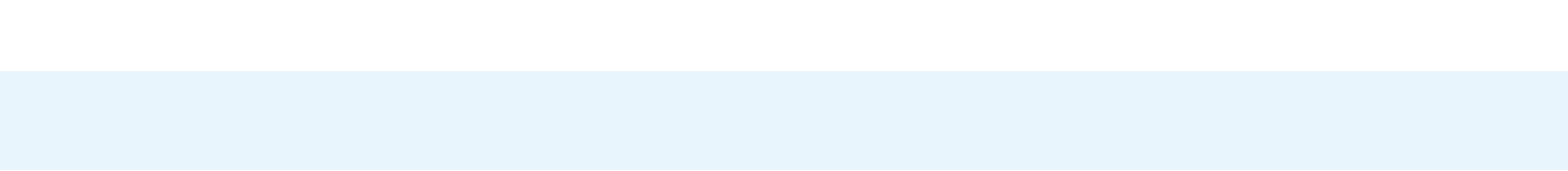
The governance model of the EU Alpine Strategy.²⁰

²⁰ Image source: European Commission

Events

Date	Event	Location
29 November 2016	"A Strategy for the Citizens – The work programme for the Bavarian presidency 2017 over the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)"	Representation of the Free State of Bavaria to the EU, Brussels
25 January 2017	Workshop "Embedding the macro-regional strategies into the post-2020 EU Multiannual Financial Framework"	European Commission, Centre Albert Borschette, Brussels
13 February 2017	EUSALP General Assembly I	Althoff Seehotel Überfahrt, Rottach-Egern am Tegernsee, Bavaria
14/15 February 2017	Action Group Forum Executive Board Meeting I	Congress Centre Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Bavaria
16 February 2017	AlpGov Project Meeting I	Congress Centre Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Bavaria
27 April 2017	Friends of the EUSALP Meeting	Representation of the Free State of Bavaria to the EU, Brussels
3/4 July 2017	Executive Board Meeting II	Representation of the Free State of Bavaria to the EU, Brussels
5 October 2017	Meeting of the Environment Ministers of the EUSALP Member States and Regions	Munich, Bavaria
22 November 2017	AlpGov Project Meeting II Executive Board Meeting III (optional)	Bavarian State Chancellery, Munich, Bavaria
23/24 November 2017	EUSALP General Assembly II First EUSALP Annual Forum	BMW Welt, Munich, Bavaria
14/15 December 2017	Trio Presidency Meeting Bavaria 2017 – Tyrol 2018 – Italy 2019	Ramsau, Bavaria

Events with political participation are marked in **bold**. Participation is by personal invitation only.





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