



European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)

General Assembly

Thursday 10th December • Hôtel de Région Marseille

Statement of findings

The General Assembly of the European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP) brought together, in a hybrid format, high-level representatives from the 7 partner states (France, Italy, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, Germany and Austria) and the 48 Regions, following the guideline “**An Alpine region united and resilient in the face of crises**”.

This event marked the end of the first year of the French EUSALP Presidency 2020, which will continue in 2021, carried out by the State and the three Regions Provence-Côte d'Azur, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and Bourgogne-Franche-Comté.

Like the rest of the continent, the Alpine region has been put to the test during this unprecedented year: global health crisis and climate crisis followed by an economic crisis and then a social crisis. The political representatives underlined the exceptional character of this year, which also showed our capacity to adapt and the strength of EUSALP, which accustoms us to work together and to come up with concrete projects.

Motion on storm Alex and the appeal to the EU Solidarity Fund

Storm Alex hit the cross-borders valleys of the Alpes-Maritimes as well as Liguria and Piedmont on October 2, 2020. The Presidents of Nice Côte d'Azur Métropole, Liguria and Piedmont, with the support of the French EUSALP presidency, seized the President of the European Commission to ask her to activate the European Union Solidarity Fund.

The motion of support to the affected valleys by Storm Alex and to the call for the European Union Solidarity Fund was adopted unanimously.



Mountainous tourism in the Alpine region: from sanitarian crisis management to adaptation to climate change

Political representatives presented the actions undertaken in their countries in favour of tourism in the context of the health crisis and discussed the opening of ski resorts.

Among the initiatives presented we can mention the protocol on tourism developed by the Alpine Convention, or the French program in favour of mountain territories aiming at supporting mountain resorts in the face of climate change for their transition to sustainable year-round tourism, as well as the current initiative to set up a Euro-Alpine network of mountain resorts, in collaboration with the actors of the mountain territories including EUSALP action groups.

Faced with climate, sanitarian and economic crisis, a united, sustainable and resilient Alpine region: from commitments to implementation

The sanitary crisis impacted the work of EUSALP during this year 2020 and actors adapted and cooperated to bring concrete answers, as EUSALP Covid-19 action plan details:

- The elaboration and adoption of the Manifesto for a Sustainable and Resilient Alpine Region
- The mobilization of EUSALP action groups to prioritize activities and projects in favour of the green recovery and the resiliency of the Alpine region.
- Cooperative efforts to promote of the EUSALP priorities embedding in current and 2021-2027 European Union funding programmes.

Camille ÉTIENNE, a young citizen committed to tackle climate change and activist for social and climate justice, and **Nicolas PLAIN, Ambassador of the French EUSALP presidency** took the floor to encourage political representatives to undertake ambitious, radical and rapid actions to be a voice for the transition of Alpine societies.

Keep working together on EUSALP implementation

Political representatives welcomed EUSALP Executive Board work to improve EUSALP Governance, including:

- The establishment process of a Technical Support Structure (TSS) to the governance
- The development of the EUSALP stakeholders' digital platform which aims to further involve civil society in the Alpine macro-regional cooperation
- The work for the EUSALP embedding in the EU funding programmes 2021-2027

The establishment of the EUSALP Youth Council was adopted unanimously.

In 2020, EUSALP French presidency undertook several activities in various fields: sustainable and year-round tourism, the timber industry, health, information sharing and accessibility of services, pastoralism and short circuits, promotion of the hydrogen industry, biodiversity and finally natural risks. These actions are part of the Green Pact for Europe, and open up many prospects for 2021.

A number of events and actions are already planned for 2021: accompanying the ecological transition and the adaptation of mountain tourism through a significant Euro-Alpine cooperation network of mountain resorts committed to their green transition; the finalization of the Alpine region's contribution to the IUCN World Congress on Biodiversity; the deepening and generalization of the integrated natural risk management approach; the promotion of local mountain products; the development of decarbonized everyday mobility; the deployment of hydrogen in the Alpine valleys and mountain resorts; the effective launch of the Youth Council; the prefiguration of the technical support structure.

Two areas of potential cooperation between the Alpine Convention and EUSALP could be strengthened: biodiversity in mountain areas, sustainable mobility, and city-to-valley-mountain cooperation.

