



European Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)

Annual Forum

SUMMARY

December 10, 2020 : session 13.00 – 15.15

WORKSHOP 1 — Alpine youth commit to a resilient Alpine region in the face of climate change

The youth sequence of the EUSALP annual Forum, built jointly by EUSALP members, AlpWeek, the Alpine Convention, the European Commission, and the French Presidency, made it possible to bring to the attention of a large public (up to 400 connected people). The session covered several topics :

- the results of the competition "Pitch your project" 2020
- the results of the Alpine Convention photo contest
- the "Youth manifesto" developed by young people with the support of the European Commission
- various testimonials from young people on their vision of the main issues related to the mountains and their future.

Then, the audience could discuss in smaller breakout rooms. This allowed an intergenerationally dialogue amongst participants. . Finally, future perspectives were presented by the presidency of the Alpine Convention, the Tyrolean head of the "Youth shaping EUSALP" project and the presidency of EUSALP.

The 2020 edition of the competition « Pitch your project »

Normund Popens, Deputy, Director General of DG REGIO-European Commission introduced the final of the "Pitch your project" competition by reminding that supporting young people and their ideas is a very important objective for the European Commission.

The five finalists of the competition were able to present their respective projects thanks to short videos produced in record time with the help of the Agency '75 Percent' . Each presentation was followed by a short exchange that allowed the young people of the different teams to answer questions from the audience.

The five projects were :

"**Terra preta**" proposes the production and use of "biochar", vegetable charcoal produced from wood from the Alpine region which cannot be sold or which has fallen down due to bad weather. Biochar, which is used to enrich the soil of vegetable gardens and other crops, has many interests, including that of capturing CO2.



"Ski day" presents a multimodal solution to enjoy the mountain and make it accessible. How can you go to the mountains when you don't always have the means to do so and at a better price?

"100% Alps" offers small alpine producers and farmers modular distribution machines, which allow them to sell their products in the villages without having the expenses linked to a trade.

"Bergsohle" offers an environmentally friendly sole made of recyclable materials from the Alpine region.

"ADN Ski" concerns the manufacture of recyclable skis in order to stop generating a large amount of waste.

Following these presentations, the public was able to vote online and the winning projects were: 1.Terra preta, 2.100% Alps and 3.Bergsohle. These projects will therefore benefit from 5000, 3000 and 2000 euros respectively for the realization / implementation of their projects.

Normund Popens, by announcing these results, warmly congratulated the winning teams, and he underlined the high quality of their projects. The *Pitch Your Project* competition has been launched 3 years ago and is financed by the European Commission. Normund Popens highlighted that similar competition should happen in other Macro Regional Strategies, taking example on the EUSALP.

The results of the photo contest of the Alpine Convention

Initiated by the members of the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention four years ago, this photo contest allows to understand the stakes of the protection of the Alps, an exceptional heritage, whether through its landscapes, its biodiversity, etc... The photos of the three winners were presented, and they were able to explain the conditions under which the photos were taken, the meaning they had for them, and their attachment to this mountain range and its protection.

The project "Youth alpine Interrail" (Yoalin) was also presented on this occasion. It is about promoting train travel in the Alps, and all sustainable modes of transport for young people. But beyond that, they also want this type of travel to encourage encounters, sharing and strengthen the identity of the Alps. Stations, for example, should become pleasant and friendly places.

The « Youth manifesto »: presentation of a project realized by and for young people

Young people have their place in European cooperation policy and must be heard by decision-makers. With the European Commission as coordinator, they therefore worked on a policy document, a manifesto with 12 recommendations. These recommendations are very concrete, with practical ideas for decision-makers, and form a guide for them, to enable them to take better account of young people.

One of the recommendations that has been well understood by the policy makers is Rule No. 5, which proposes to include and involve youth in macro-regional strategies. The "Pitch your project" contest is a very good example of this and it would be desirable to replicate it in other macro-regions.

The themes dealt with in this manifesto will be deepened, and all young people who wish to do so can join the group that has carried out this work. The Manifesto is available [here](#). Every young people in Macro Regional Strategies can join the Linkedin core group : <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13908870/>





Testimonies of young people

Six young people intervened to express their observations, ideas and expectations in relation to environmental issues specific to the Alpine massif and its periphery. Biodiversity in danger, the need for more environmentally friendly tourism, strengthening the local economy and short supply chains, questioning the massive urbanization of certain valleys, the importance of associative commitment and small everyday gestures, sustainable transportation, etc.: these are all subjects that must challenge political leaders, but also affect each person.

Following these testimonies, a time of exchange in about fifteen small groups made it possible to react to what had been heard and to come up with ideas and proposals.

The closing of the workshop was an opportunity to thank and warmly congratulate the young people involved in this very rich and energizing sequence, as well as the various organizers. Future prospects were also opened up for all the young people who are expected to work on numerous projects and can get involved in various ways in the Alpine space.

