



3rd Report on the implementation of the EU-Strategy for the Alpine Region

June 2019

80 million people, 7 countries, 48 regions,
mountains and plains addressing together
common challenges and opportunities



Interreg
Alpine Space
AlpGov



The project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.



INDEX

A. EXTRACT OF AGs WORK PLANS

1. PREFACE	4
2. SUMMARIES OF AGs	7
2.1 AG 1 “TO DEVELOP AN EFFECTIVE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM”	7
2.1.1 Executive summary	7
2.2 AG 2 “TO INCREASE THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF STRATEGIC SECTORS”	9
2.2.1 Executive summary	9
2.2.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt	10
2.2.3 Comments on review of Action Plan	10
2.3 AG 3 “TO IMPROVE THE ADEQUACY OF LABOUR MARKET, EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN STRATEGIC SECTORS”	11
2.3.1 Executive summary	11
2.4 AG 4 “TO PROMOTE INTER-MODALITY AND INTEROPERABILITY IN PASSENGER AND FREIGHT TRANSPORT”	14
2.4.1 Executive summary	14
2.4.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt	16
2.4.3 Comments on review of Action Plan	16
2.5 AG 5 “TO CONNECT PEOPLE ELECTRONICALLY AND PROMOTE ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC SERVICES”	17
2.5.1 Executive summary	17
2.5.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt	18
2.6 AG 6 “TO PRESERVE AND VALORIZE NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING WATER AND CULTURAL RESOURCES”	19
2.6.1 Executive summary	19
2.6.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt	20
2.7 AG 7 “TO DEVELOP ECOLOGICAL CONNECTIVITY IN THE WHOLE EUSALP TERRITORY”	22
2.7.1 Executive summary	22
2.7.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt	23
2.7.3 Comments on review of Action Plan	23
2.8 AG 8 “TO IMPROVE RISK MANAGEMENT AND TO BETTER MANAGE CLIMATE CHANGE, INCLUDING MAJOR NATURAL RISKS PREVENTION”	24
2.8.1 Executive summary	24
2.8.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt	25
2.8.3 Comments on review of Action Plan	25



2.9 AG 9 “To MAKE THE TERRITORY A MODEL REGION FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY”	26
2.9.1 Executive summary	26
2.9.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt	27
2.9.3 Comments on review of Action Plan	28

B. ATTACHMENT

A) EXTRACT OF AGs WORK PLANS

1. Preface

According to the Rules of Procedure for Action Groups (AG), the AG leaders (AGL) shall prepare an annual progress report of the past year jointly with the AG members. For reasons of efficiency and as presented to the Executive Board (EB) in 2017, the reporting format is based on the individual work plans of each AG covering the timeframe 2016-2019. The following summary is composed by key parts of the single reports by the AGLs (chapters 1 and 9). As for the complete structure of the single documents, please refer to the 1st report to the EB in 2017.

The single reports of the AG leaders clearly demonstrate that all AGs are very systematically implementing while continuously adjusting their work plans along the topics of the Action Plan and in some cases even taking new topics on board. Continuity is given in terms of AG leaderships, further establishment of subgroups, clear further development of work plans, and regular meetings of both the AGs and the Board of Action Group Leaders (BAGL).

Also with a view to the AlpGov project, all activities and deliverables are being implemented although some delays have to be stated. New inputs and developments in the AGs require revision of time schedules for implementation. Furthermore, the administration of the AlpGov project (eligibilities of costs, First Level Controls, etc.) remains a challenge. Content wise, it turned out that particularly communication work has to be improved. As a consequence, a request for change to insert a new activity in the AlpGov project aiming at creating a series of videos about the implementation activities per AG has been addressed to the Alpine Space Programme (approved in 2019).

As regards the representation of states and regions in the AGs, the picture is (still) quite diverse although in general slightly improving. While some AGs are still lacking a sufficient number of members to even get the necessary country quorum for taking decisions or sometimes are composed of members who do not have appropriate technical expertise or no mandate to take decisions for their representation area, others face the challenge of having even too many participants in the meetings. This makes implementation processes in the AGs and consensual decisions challenging. Therefore, EB members are asked, firstly, to consider nominating representatives for all AGs if possible; and, secondly, to ensure that members with decision making capacity are empowered with a respective mandate. Besides this, a more intense participation of line DGs of the European Commission would be highly welcome.

Beyond these more technical aspects, the following conclusions and developments in 2018 can be highlighted:

- AGs were strongly engaged in the Innsbruck Annual Forum. Thanks to the Tyrolean Presidency, Networking village with AGs stands gave a very viable opportunity to get in contact with stakeholders. AGs recognized an increasing interest of the Forum participants for their topics. Cross sectoral workshops resulted in new ideas for future ARPAF or other projects. These formats should be maintained by future presidencies if possible.
- Revision Action Plan: The current Action Plan is still considered as a valuable basis for AG work. Although AGs are not addressing all aspects of the different actions and sometimes identified new topics, this does not develop enough potential to call for a revision of the Action Plan at the moment.



- Implementation activities: Besides implementing the already approved ARPAF projects, AGs very much welcomed the preparation of a second ARPAF call (launched in 2019) in order to strengthen cross sectoral working and intensify cooperation among AGs. Furthermore, the 2018 call of the Alpine Space Programme proved to be very attractive for AGs to seek funding for concrete implementation of activities. An increasing number of project proposals submitted under the first step application procedure have been developed out of or are at least linked to concrete AG work.
- Internal EUSALP governance: While cooperation among AG leaders goes more and more beyond the pure technical cooperation as AlpGov project partners and develops towards a real cross sectoral cooperation, a better link to the EB would be very much welcomed by the AGs to get better backing from the EB and presidency on priority topics but also to bring concrete outcomes to the EB level for supporting an enhanced and sustainable political capitalization (e.g. within presidency activities).

Cooperation with the Alpine Convention has been continued and further intensified by a joint workshop of AG leaders with leaders of Alpine Convention working groups and platforms, but also related to specific topics like transport (clarification of workshare of EUSALP AG 4 and transport working group of Alpine Convention), natural hazard risk governance (AG 8 members were simultaneously preparing the report on the status of the Alps) and AG 6 preparing the political declaration on sustainable land use and soil protection in close connection with the Alpine Convention.

- External governance: As already mentioned in the 2017 report, political agenda setting has been continued, e. g. by Soil Declaration of AG 6, the 10 Point Plan on dual education of AG 3, the enlargement of Green Infrastructure City network as part of AG 7 work, preparation of a ministerial declaration of AG 5. AG leaders are much more aware of the policy cycle and their role therein. Nevertheless, handling ministerial conferences in the EUSALP context encountered some difficulties. AG members would welcome more guidance of EB members in advance before preparing ministerial decisions. Exchange with other Macroregional strategies has been continued in 2018, e. g. by addressing the topic of communication and Green Infrastructure during the Mediterranean Coast Week in Slovenia and contacts with the EUSBSR on capacity building.
- Embedding: With a view to the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 and the EC's publication of the draft proposals for EU funding instruments, the embedding topic became a major topic in 2018. First reflections of AGs and their needs for future EU funding have been initiated in 2018, AGs specific studies have been tendered as part of AlpGov activities. First results are attached to this report. It is worth mentioning that this document should be seen as an input from the AGs rather than a shopping list the future programmes have to follow. Further support from EB members in discussing these topics in the countries and regions and with the relevant programme managers are of crucial importance.
- AlpGov and AlpGov II: As part of the request for change, the project duration of AlpGov has been extended to December 2019 also to better match with the presidency timelines. It should also give the opportunity to catch up some delays of project implementation. In parallel to this, first reflections on a successor project AlpGov II have been started among the AG leaders and the Alpine Space Programme. Unanimously, the AG leaders saw the need for enhancing skills development, e.g. to improve strategic aspect of communication, and for better addressing the policy level in preparing and implementing cross-sectoral activities.



As a conclusion, it can be stated that AGs further professionalized their work, not only in terms of setting (political) priorities but also according to the methodologies applied. At the same time it is evident that managing the EUSALP Governance on the level of AGs by means of an INTERREG Alpine Space project remains a big challenge and also produces high administrative burdens.

Upon approval of the EB this report will be published on the EUSALP website www.alpine-region.eu.



2. Summaries of AGs

2.1 AG 1 “To develop an effective research and innovation ecosystem”

2.1.1 Executive summary

Based on one of the main drivers of the Europe 2020 agenda, which aims at creating jobs and growth, Action Group 1 focuses on the development of an effective innovation ecosystem in the Alpine Region. It aims to bring together the existing potentials of the Alpine Region to better exploit synergies in the strategic sectors described in the next action and overcome challenges as regards innovation.

At the moment the profile of AG1 is made up by 22 members from 6 EUSALP Countries (IT, SI, AT, DE, CH, FR) – see the composition in Appendix 1.

AG1 Activities and Projects:

The Map of EU, national and regional funding for R&I

Action Group 1 is collecting information about all the programs and calls for funding in the Research and Innovation field and publishing them in the PoK.

- Users can browse programs and calls
- Reports and infographics on EU, national and regional funding programmes for R&I will be available

Discover more: www.alpine-region.eu/p/strategic-funding

The Map of the governance in the research and innovation field

According to the objectives of the AlpGov project, Action Group 1 is working to map the governance concerning the R&I sector at the EU, national and regional level. All collected data, produces analysis, reports and infographics will be available in the Platform of Knowledge.

The research team is going through literature, documents and data in English and all the Alpine languages in order to get the most comprehensive view and support with indications and guidelines the process of harmonization among the 48 Regions.

Thus, the team has addressed three issues: socioeconomic benchmarking, classification of research and innovation strategies for smart specialisation (RIS3) priorities, analysis of the RIS3 in the different socioeconomic context. Building on that, it has been produced a comparative framework that could help policy makers and stakeholders in improving their innovative performance, by learning from other regions (within and beyond the boundaries of MRS), with a specific focus on EUSALP.

RE-SEARCH ALPS: The Map of R&I Centers, Labs and Clusters working in R&I

Re-Search Alps - Research Laboratories in the Alpine Area (RSA), a project funded by EU TELECOM / CEF, coordinated by UNIMORE - University of Modena and Reggio Emilia of which UNIMONT - University of Milan and the Italian Ministry for Education, University and Research

(MIUR) are Italian partners, while the French Ministry for Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI) and SideTrade are the French partners.

The project was born to support the objectives of AG1 and was promoted by it, filling the gap regarding information about R&I processes and the main actors behind them in the Alpine Region. The dataset, which can be integrated in PoK, will fast-track R&I processes by supporting the establishment of new relations and knowledge dissemination in the macro-region.

Re-search Alps has created an impressive database, freely available for consultation and reuse, with information concerning Laboratories and Research Centers located in the 7 EUSALP Countries. The dataset currently contains information on 125.649 Research Centers and Laboratories, 257.248 projects, 110.910 websites, 771.875 publications.

2.2 AG 2 “To increase the economic potential of strategic sectors”

2.2.1 Executive summary

Baden-Württemberg, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Housing, (BW) and Auvergne Rhône-Alpes (AURA) together lead Action Group 2.

Action Group 2 ("To increase the economic potential of strategic sectors") aims at identifying key Alpine economic sectors which would benefit from action at macro-regional level, and to implement concrete measures to improve their economic and social environment. The added value comprises in a better use of Alpine specific resources and potentials in the identified strategic sectors with focus on the improvement of framework conditions and opportunities for SMEs.

Therefore Action Group 2 established Sub-Groups to work on the identified key topics.

2018

Action Group 2 has identified the following thematic priorities and established the respective Sub-Groups:

- Bioeconomy/Cluster development
- Wood
- Health Tourism

One additional Subgroup “Digital Industry” is established.

Within the Sub-Groups, experts from all countries in the Alpine Region identify and discuss common goals and work on their implementation through transnational collaboration.

The Sub-Groups supported the implementation of the 4 projects of the Alpine Region Preparatory Action Fund (ARPAF):

- CirculAlps (Innovation to foster sustainability and circular economy in Alpine forestry value chain)
- TransAlp (Bringing circular economy to the farmers in rural Alpine Region for sustainable growth)
- Triple Wood (triple wood - sustainable wood building culture in the alpine region)
- HEALPS (Alpine Health Tourism – Positioning the Alpine region as globally attractive health promoting place)

In addition, outputs and results of the following Interreg Alpine Space projects have been integrated into the work of the Sub-Group Bioeconomy in order to make use of relevant synergies:

- S3-4AlpClusters (Smart Specialisation Strategies to build an Innovation model for Alp Clusters)
- AlpLinkBioECO (Linking BioBased Industry Value Chains across the Alpine Region)

Action Group 2 participated at the EUSALP Annual Forum in Innsbruck as follows:

- presentation of the work of the Action Group 2 at the exhibition (including the presentation of a spacious model of a wooden construction)
- workshop 9 “Increase, preserve and re-connect...but what about the next 15 years?”



- workshop 10 “Alpine forests seen from a multi-disciplinary perspective”

Two new implementation initiatives were launched:

- "BOOST Alps" - Boosting EUSALP competitiveness through cross fertilization of value chain"; Workshop and Brokerage Event in Milan (IT)
- "Heilkraft der Alpen" - International symposium on evidence based health tourism in the Alps in Bad Gastein (AT)

2.2.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt

Main challenges for the AG are:

- better coordination and cooperation with EB
- stronger ownership and responsibility of regions and EB regards the nomination of appropriate AG members and experts for the Sub-Groups
- improve coordination skills of some Sub-Group Coordinators
- balanced division of labour between AG Co-Leads
- Tracking of (new) strategic sectors without an updated territorial analyses (SWOT-Analyses) and revised Action Plan

2.2.3 Comments on review of Action Plan

In the field of economy, dramatic transformation currently occurs. Due to limited resources a clear focus must be set on the most promising topics for the Alpine region, which should not only be based on the individual backgrounds and interests of members of the AG but also on an updated empirical analyses.



2.3 AG 3 “To improve the adequacy of labour market, education and training in Strategic sectors”

2.3.1 Executive summary

The Action Group 3 started its activity immediately after the launch of the strategy. It is led by the Autonomous Province of Trento in the sign of a commitment to invest in human resources at all levels and to support youngsters facing the labour market.

The group is composed of 17 members from 6 EUSALP countries and of 1 observer. It is committed, as its title says “To improve the adequacy of labour market, education and training in strategic sectors”. This activity is strongly connected to the other two Action Groups of the first thematic policy area of the EUSALP strategy that deal with research & innovation and with the increase of economic potential in strategic sectors.

The Action Group 3 held 11 meetings until End 2018 where the main decisions of the group were taken and the activities of the realization of the Workplan were discussed. The meetings were dislocated in different regions and countries of the EUSALP territory as the objective is a major involvement of regional actors and local stakeholders.

Action Group 3 is concentrating its activities in particular in the field of training as it boosts the capacities of workers and of workers of the future, the youngsters of today. The Action Group's activities concentrate on

- mapping
- networking
- support the creation of new initiatives.

In particular the goal is to establish a Common Alpine space for dual vocational education, through the creation of a knowledge network based on existing systems and identify its strengths, develop further and foster existing – and possibly initiate new - innovative and successful initiatives in this field in order to improve the number and quality of skilled workers, support the transition from school to work and diminish the unemployment rates -where possible- of youngsters in the EUSALP.

The knowledge network is a transdisciplinary EUSALP-wide community of relevant actors and stakeholders as well as organizations and experts from the private and public sector, including centers of expertise, representatives of local communities, schools and training centres as well as different decision makers; meeting on a regular basis to collaboratively generate, manage and share knowledge and information about innovative approaches within the dual vocational education and related in general to the issue of dual education. It is meant to accompany the efforts that are made in order to reach the overall objective.

This collaborative way was exploited by Consultation Round meetings held in the different EUSALP countries. It gave the occasion to the Action Group 3 Lead and members to meet and discuss with practitioners and civil servants active in the field of training and education , innovative project ideas and future collaborations. Further it was an occasion to present the alpine strategy in numerous regions of the Alpine area. The AG3 intends to continue with this networking activity.

The results of the MountErasmus activity, carried out in collaboration with the Bavarian Presidency were published and disseminated.

After the positive collaboration with the Bavarian Presidency for the 2018 the support of the Tyrolean Presidency was ensured to the AG3. The common plan contained fundamental elements for the further implementation of the AG3 Action Plan, such as

- Participation at the Tyrolean Future Days
- the 2nd Forum on Dual Education
- Study on the Dual Systems on the Alpine Regional
- 10 points plan for the Dual systems
- Calendar for communication purposes on the 10 points plan
- Common activities in occasion of the Annual Forum

In 2018 the 2nd Forum on Dual Education in the Alpine Space took place in Telfs, Austria, and it created a good basis for an active collaboration with different stakeholders. It was included in the programme of the Tyrolean presidency. The event saw a strong collaboration, in favour of the in-company trainers, between the AG3 and the Ausbilderforum of Tyrol, the Tyrolean Agency offering training to in-company trainers.

During the event the 10 points plan for a well performing dual system was presented. The abstract of a study dealing with the dual systems in the Alpine Region was discussed with researchers and practitioners.

The Annual Forum on Dual Education in the Alpine Region 2019, event that is included in the list of events supported by the Italian EUSALP Presidency, is already on the way and will deal, in collaboration with the Partnership of the Alpine Space Project of DuALPlus, with the added value of dual education and in particular will discuss questions on the permeability of the dual systems, its capacity to attract youngsters and with the challenges that in-company trainers face. It will be the occasion for the presentation of the new working path of AG3 that deals with Competences.

Several projects saw the involvement of Action Group 3 in these 3 years. All projects have in common the idea of promoting innovation for mutation in the world of training and labour. In the frame of the Alpine Space programme the PlurAlps project asked for support in order to implement the Alpine Pluralism Award, that looked for best practices in the Alpine Space for the integration of migrants. An inspiring ceremony award took place in occasion of the Annual Forum in Tyrol.

A new Alpine Space project was started with the active involvement of the AG3. DuALPlus, deals with the attractiveness of dual education and explores fundamental questions raised by the AG3, such as how to increase the permeability of dual systems, both in horizontal and vertical way, moreover how to recruit youngsters for this system. DuALPlus is in a symbiotic situation with AG3, as the study carried out by AG3 is a working base for the project, whereas the project is carrying out activities that can be directly included in the AG3 workplan.

The Action Group takes part in 3 ARPAF projects, namely AlpJobs, TransAlp and HeAlps, and focuses especially on educational issues. In this frame constant feedbacks and inputs arrived from the project consortiums towards AG3.

The planning for the new AG3 Workplan and for the activities in 2019 has been started. AG3 is a protagonist in the event dedicated to Smart Villages in May 2019 with other 3 AGs.

In all for AG3 2018 was a positive year, as it saw the first scientific and networking results. It will be taken as benchmark for the next years. In order to further develop collaboration was started with the colleagues responsible for similar groups dealing with social issues in the other



Macroregional Strategies. The goal is to join forces and arrive to a higher stage of planning and EUSALP wide implementation. In this direction goes also the preparatory activity that takes the European Social Fund as a possible frame of collaboration within the 48 regions, in order to face, with the support of AG3, common social challenges both in education and labour market.

2.4 AG 4 “To promote inter-modality and interoperability in passenger and freight transport”

2.4.1 Executive summary

Under the 2nd Strategic Objective of EUSALP, the Action Groups 4 and 5 focus on the most important challenges and opportunities concerning mobility and connectivity in the Alpine Region. The EUSALP Action Group 4 (AG4) addresses in particular the need for sustainable mobility solutions by promoting inter-modality and interoperability in passenger and freight transport.

The AG4 currently gathers 30 members meeting three times per year. They are comprised of

- six national states (France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein),
- 17 regions and provinces (Aosta Valley, Bavaria, Burgenland, Carinthia, Central Switzerland, Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, Liguria, Lombardy, Piedmont, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Salzburg, South Tyrol, Styria, Trentino, Tyrol, Veneto, Vorarlberg),
- four members in advisory role (CIPRA International, CIPRA Youth Council, CEI – Central European Initiative, EUROCHAMBRES) as well as
- three observers (European Commission, Joint Secretariat – Interreg Alpine Space, Alpine Convention).

In order to develop cooperation and greater integration between the existing bodies and structures in the Alpine Region as well as to avoid duplication of work, the AG4 coordinates and harmonizes its activities with:

- the work of the formal cooperation platform of the Ministers of Transport of the Alpine countries – the Suivi de Zurich Process;
- iMONITRAFI, a network of seven regions promoting harmonization of toll systems on Alpine transit corridors, for which Tyrol functions as Coordination Point and, therefore enables the AG4 to streamline activities in the frame of its priority topic concerning modal shift policies;
- the Alpine Convention Working Group Transport, where the AG4 acts as official observer since 2018.

In the year 2018, the AG4 continued the implementation of its Work Plan for the period from mid-2016 to mid-2019 as approved in February 2017 and revised in March 2018 by the AG4 members. Its 10 activities are structured along the three priority topics

- Implementation of modal shift policies with a focus on toll systems;
- Infrastructure for sustainable transport;
- Interconnecting public transport systems; plus
- Cross-topic initiatives

Within these, the following activities were carried out in 2018:

- **Project Assessment Methodology (C1, C2, D1):** To identify and label major projects which can be supported on a boarder EUSALP level. To develop such a methodology

including assessment criteria a Task Force consisting of selected AG4 members accompanied by an independent moderator was formed.

- **Interconnecting public transport operation (D1):** The ARPAF project CrossBorder – analyzing cross-border commuter mobility in the Alpine Region – was launched together with AG5. Main hotspots of cross-border commuting were identified in a study on mobility networks including analyses of cross-border commuter traffic and existing networks. At the Annual Forum in November 2018 a workshop to discuss the main challenges of sustainable cross-border mobility with a focus on commuters was organized. A collection of existing cross-border commuter cooperation models including an interactive story map was published.
- **Public acceptance of modal shift (infrastructure and policy instruments) (A3):** The already developed and presented “Conflict Map” was complemented with additional conflicts sent by regions. The ConflictMap will be digitalized and published within the AG4 WebGIS, which is currently under development.
- **From Toll Plus to an integrated incentive system for modal shift (B2):** Existing pricing components for freight transport in the Alpine Region that influence the competitiveness between road and rail were analyzed comprehensively by (1) comparing taxes, charges, and subsidies in the EUSALP countries; (2) comparing policy-induced cost components for relevant Alpine transport relations; and (3) identifying preliminary recommendations to improve modal shift policies. The results of this study giving an overview of the broader pricing framework with recommendations to promote modal shift from road to rail were presented at the EUSALP Annual Forum 2018 and published on the EUSALP AG4 website.
- **Infrastructure for combined transport (terminals) (C2):** The long-term tendency of cargo flows between East Asia and Europe shifting from North Sea to Mediterranean ports leads to considerable economic and ecological pressures and a potential lack of empty containers at terminals because of import-export-imbalances; thus, a preparatory study to investigate and optimize multi-modal logistic chains from and to the Alpine Region was commissioned. Stakeholder workshops will be carried out in 2019.
- **Interconnecting public transport information and ticketing (D2):** The project proposal LinkingAlps with the aim of developing an alpine wide cross-border travel information system was presented at the 4th ASP call in December 2018. Additionally, the AG4 organized a workshop for young students to experience challenges of obtaining cross-border travel information and buying cross-border tickets in the Alpine Region in a virtual game format during the Annual Forum 2018.
- The **discussion paper on Secondary Networks** focuses on the thematic areas of the secondary network’s impacts on (1) accessibility and possible measures to maintain and improve it, with a view to the economy and society and on (2) the environment and climate, including possible measures for improvement, in particular by modal shift and traffic management. Accordingly, **workshops on secondary networks and modal shift and on secondary networks and accessibility** were organized. Thus, the paper was developed and discussed during the 3rd AG4 Mobility Conference June 2018 in Trento, further reviewed and updated subsequently, and published on the AG4 homepage. It serves as basis to identify common transport and mobility challenges in EUSALP and supports the identification of joint actions to be considered for the next AG4 work plan.
- The process of developing the next **AG4 work plan 2019-2022** based on the experiences gained during the collaboration within the Action Group **was launched**: the strategic direction will be reassessed and adapted.

- The AG4 raised awareness for their work also outside the Alpine Region and **deepened the exchange with the EU institutions** as basis for future collaboration for successfully implementing the macro-regional strategy by organizing its Action Group meeting as well as an evening exchange event on AG4 funding opportunities in the upcoming EU Multi-Financial Framework post-2020 in Brussels.

2.4.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt

A major objective of the EUSALP is to face common challenges together; the geographic, spatial, and transport-related diversity in the Alpine Region together with the accompanying diversity in particular requirements and expectations, however, afflict the AG4's ability to position itself coherently and to jointly promote individual projects. The development of a project assessment methodology to remedy this situation has proven to be similar in complexity.

Developing the AG4's new Work Plan, also in parallel to the upcoming next MFF and AlpGov project, are major tasks. Securing a continued successful implementation of the EUSALP by the AG4 will depend on the results of the development of the new Work Plan and positioning within the new MFF.

The AG4 prides itself in the great interest and active participation of stakeholders. To maintain effectivity in the Action Group's work, however, it is necessary to reiterate that members are asked to coordinate positions internally and to send one representative per region/member. To preserve a balanced composition, stability, and effectiveness, the number of participants should remain manageable and the appointed representatives must be mandated by their sending body in order to allow the implementation of the Action Plan.

The role of an Action Group Leader is twofold: on the one hand, the AG4 Leader is representing its proper region, on the other hand, he is required to be objective in case conflicting interest arise within the Action Group. The AGL is "wearing two hats" and mediatory measures or processes are required when the demands of two roles are in conflict.

2.4.3 Comments on review of Action Plan

The content of the Action Plan related to Action 4 provided a very useful framework for the orientation of the AG4 work, thus far. However, in close coordination with the members, the AG4 decides on projects to be considered most relevant, supported, and implemented in the frame of EUSALP.

Currently, the AG4 is developing a new Work Plan including thematic areas with the draft titles "Smart clean logistics and combined transport to support modal shift", "Accessibility on local and regional transport links (Infrastructure and scheduled public transport)", and "Smart and low-carbon mobility & innovative public transport solutions".

2.5 AG 5 “To connect people electronically and promote accessibility to public services”

2.5.1 Executive summary

The overall goal of AG5 is to improve the digital connectivity and accessibility to services of general interest in an integrated, territorial approach.

Therefore, AG5 will

1. Propose a strategic approach to promote ultra broadband connectivity among Alpine regions and to foster digitalization of Public administration (i.e. open data, e-government, etc).
Propose a strategic approach to the accessibility of services of general interest and propose technical solutions with a clear focus on ICT.
2. Install a permanent alpine think tank on the accessibility to services of general interest.
3. Encourage the exchange of experiences in the EUSALP-perimeter through amongst others the cooperation with various alpine-space-program projects and cross-border cooperation projects.
4. Coordinate its work with the other Action Groups of EUSALP and offer technological solutions based on ICT for these Action Groups.

At the actual state (April 2019) AG5 has

- completed the Alpine space program project INTESI which provides an integrated, territorial approach for the delivery of services of general interest.
- started the Alpine space program project “Smart villages” which shows how rural municipalities in the Alpine area can benefit from the advantages of digitalisation and therewith overcome natural handicaps and be forerunners of new developments. The project will end in April 2021.
- implemented more than half of the ARPAF-project “Crossborder mobility”. This project shows for the first time ever the importance of crossborder commuting in the EUSALP-perimeter and provides a collection of good practises to deal with this phenomenon. The project will end in December 2019. A workshop has been organised at the EUSALP Annual Forum 2018 in Innsbruck on this topic.
- launched the feasibility study for an alpine broad band backbone. The results of the study will be available in June 2019.
- submitted a project proposal under the 4th call of the Alpine space program for a 3D-Landscape model in the EUSALP perimeter. This proposal was considered by AG5 as a Lighthouse project, initially proposed by the Bavarian presidency of EUSALP in 2017. Unfortunately, this proposal was not selected.
- started the work of data integration within the PoK. Some of the data is already available on the PoK website. Integration will be completed by June 2019.
- continued its work with the Alpine Think Tank on SGI which met twice in the year 2018.
- elaborated a report on the governance schemes in the field of AG5 and submitted it in November 2018 according to the tasks in AlpGov.

- elaborated a report on the financial schemes and submitted it in November 2018 according to the tasks in AlpGov.
- planned a ministerial conference for October 2018 to give more political relevance to the work of AG5. As not enough participation was achieved, the conference was postponed to an international meeting which will take place on the 23rd and 24th May 2019 in Courmayeur during the Italian Presidency of Eusalp having a subject “Smart Villages as a common perspective through different visions”. The aim of this event is to spread the Smart Villages policies and best practices to the whole Alpine arc.

2.5.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt

AG5 had some difficulties during the starting phase of the AG due to people not joining the meetings. It is important, that people delegated to participate in an AG receive a clear mandate by their authorities and the necessary time to participate in the activities. The other issue reported by the members concerns the problems of obtaining reimbursement for travel and accommodation expenses. These problems affected in part the effectiveness of the AG activities. AG5 therefore brought forward the proposal, that in a future AlpGov II, the staff costs may be reimbursed.

AG5 has launched 3 strategic initiatives, which are now on their way. This gives a clear visibility and profile to the AG. The so called Lighthouse project on 3D mapping initially proposed by the then Bavarian presidency of EUSALP was unfortunately not selected for funding by the Alpine space program. Alternative ways of financing are actually being analyzed, but the project might be skipped.

The planned ministerial conference and signature of a joint declaration on the topics of AG5 had to be cancelled. It would be helpful to have a common approach to the organization of ministerial conferences and the elaboration and adoption of declarations by all AG's backed by the EB.

The ministerial conference and declaration were meant to give more political relevance to the work of AG5. In the same way, this should have eased the dissemination of the findings of AG5 to other territories. We see this as a major challenge / duty for the next AlpGov-project (→capitalization).

2.6 AG 6 “To preserve and valorize natural resources, including water and cultural resources”

2.6.1 Executive summary

The Alpine Region is characterized by a particular wealth of natural and cultural resources. These resources, such as the rich biodiversity of the mountainous habitats and the cultural diversity, which is unique in the EU, are assets of a high-quality living area. The resources of the Alpine Region are widely used and there is strong competition in particular for land and water for several purposes, including energy, households, tourism, agriculture, forestry and industry. Against this background, EUSALP AG 6 aims at providing sustainable and balanced models of resource management and production in order to enable also future generations to enjoy the unique living space of the Alps.

AG 6 gathers a total of 58 representatives of States, Regions, other institutions and civil society organizations, who meet at least twice a year. The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention (PSAC) and the Land Carinthia (KTN) were entrusted with the lead of AG 6. As a general orientation AG 6 ensures strong links with the activities and results of the Alpine Convention, in particular with those of its relevant thematic Working Groups and Platforms.

AG 6 implemented its work program supported by the sub-groups “Spatial development and soil conservation”, “Future oriented farming and forestry” and “Integrated and sustainable water management”. During the period under review AG 6 held his kick-off meeting: 28/29 June 2016, Klagenfurt and six regular meetings: 21/22 November 2016, Innsbruck; 8/9 June 2017, Pörtschach; 29/30 January 2018, Bolzano/Bozen; 3/4 July 2018, Latschach; 23/24 October 2018, Bolzano/Bozen and 13/14 March 2019, Villach.

As regards the activities in the field of spatial development and soil conservation the most important achievement concerned the elaboration of the political Declaration “Sustainable Land Use and Soil Protection”. After the adoption by the members of AG 6 a public consultation to collect the feedback of interested institutions and civil society organizations was carried out. The political coordination process led to the support of the Declaration by 20 Alpine Regions and 6 States. Worth mentioning is also the AG 6 awareness raising initiative on reduced land take and on soil consumption with a series of regional events that took place in Austria, Italy and Slovenia. These events have been organized in cooperation with different partners, such as the Alpine Space project Links4Soils. In addition AG 6 developed the structure and content of a tool box “Less land take” and launched a call for tenders regarding a comparative analysis of different methods for the assessment of functions of agricultural soils in place in the EUSALP. Finally AG 6 published a study on governance mechanisms in the field of spatial development and soil conservation.

To summarize the activities in the field of future oriented farming and forestry AG 6 supported the preparation and implementation of the project “Next Generation – Mountain Farming 2030” on the perspectives of young mountain farmers initiated by the Bavarian EUSALP Presidency 2017. AG 6 provided also valuable inputs to the Alpine Space project AlpFoodway. In view of establishing a knowledge network for the promotion and marketing of food and forest products AG 6 collected information on relevant networks and their actors. The next important step will be a networking meeting on Alpine agro-food territorial brands to be held on 13 and 14 May 2019 at the premises of EURAC in Bolzano/Bozen.

In the field of integrated and sustainable water management AG 6 adopted a collection of good practices and recommendations on green infrastructure solutions. Moreover, AG 6 adopted a report on water demand and supply management in case of droughts. Both documents were developed in close cooperation with the Platform “Water management in the Alps” of the Alpine Convention. In addition, AG 6 published a study on governance mechanisms in the field of water management.

Particularly noteworthy is that AG 6 also made use of the Alpine Region Preparatory Action Fund (ARPAF), an initiative of the European Parliament to support the EUSALP implementation. Two projects with the involvement of AG 6 members were approved. This concerns the project “AlpJobs” aiming at anticipating future jobs in Alpine remote areas and developing corresponding job profiles and the project “CirculAlps” dealing with the potentials of innovative circular and bio economy value chains in the Alpine timber sector.

As far as the contributions of AG 6 to transversal EUSALP events is concerned, AG 6 took part in the EUSALP Action Group Forum on 14/15 February 2017 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, which aimed at fostering the potential interlinkages between the different Action Groups, as well as between the Action Groups and Alpine Space projects. At the first EUSALP Annual Forum on 23/24 November 2017 in Munich AG 6 operated a stand at the market place and presented its activities on the three sub-topics. Moreover AG 6 organized together with AG 2 a public workshop on bio based value chains. On the occasion of the second EUSALP Annual Forum on 20/21 November 2018 in Innsbruck AG 6 was active in multiple ways. The AG 6 market stand highlighted the topic of spatial planning and soil conservation. Students of the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention presented their resolutions on soil and the project “Next Generation 2030” contributed to attracting many visitors. AG 6 also co-organized two successful workshops: one with the AGs 2, 3 and the Interreg Alpine Space Project YOurALPS on future visions for the EUSALP regarding economy, education, nature and culture; the other together with the AGs 2, 7 and 9 on multifunctional Alpine Forests.

The leaders of AG 6 also participated in the first and second exchange workshop between the Alpine Convention and the EUSALP on 5/6 October 2017 in Gmunden and on 10/11 September 2018 in Vienna respectively. At these workshops the chairpersons of all Alpine Convention Working Groups/Platforms and nearly all leaders of EUSALP Action Groups and sub-groups discussed in interactive sessions possible synergies and cooperation fields.

2.6.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt

Main challenges:

- Very short deadlines and continuous reporting to different entities, mostly using different formats, often make difficult a serious fulfilment of the required tasks.
- The commitment of national representatives could be improved through priority setting on national level. Coordinators should encourage participation of national representatives in the Action Groups.
- Expectations of EUSALP EB should be based on a realistic view of the actual work of AGs

Lessons learnt:



- Project should be created only after sound clarification of objectives, instruments and framework conditions such as budget allocation. This seems to be taken into account in the preparation of a potential follow-up AlpGov project.
- Potential difficulties should be faced as soon as possible to avoid negative impacts on the project process and on its outcomes.
- AG 6 has substantially profited from the thematic inputs and experience of civil society representatives. Therefore their participation should be facilitated.
- The exchange between EUSALP AGs and the thematic Working Bodies of the Alpine Convention has considerably benefitted AG 6 and other AGs.

2.7 AG 7 “To develop ecological connectivity in the whole EUSALP territory”

2.7.1 Executive summary

With the first EUSALP Conference of Environmental Ministers held on 2 October 2017 in Munich the political landmarks were set to make the Alpine region a model for implementing the EU Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy. 27 Alpine states and regions adopted the political declaration [“Alpine Green Infrastructure – Joining forces for nature, people and the economy”](#) in the presence of European Commission, European Parliament and Alpine Convention. In cooperation with the “LOS_DAMAI” project, funded by the INTERREG Alpine Space Programme, at the margins of the conference, Mayors of Alpine cities (Munich, Vienna, Torino, Trento, Grenoble) initiated a network on deploying Green Infrastructure in Alpine urban areas by signing a [Memorandum of Understanding](#). Meanwhile further cities joined the MoU letting the network grow to 12 participating cities at the moment. Most recently the City of Innsbruck signed the MoU at the occasion of the Annual Forum in November 2018 in Innsbruck together with the Land Tyrol, represented by Vice-Governor Ingrid Felipe, who signed the MoU at this occasion as supporter. This network gives a first concrete example for implementation activities on municipality level and a viable impression of the inclusive political framework EUSALP provides when explicitly involving Alpine cities into the scope of activities.

Comprehensively to the urban dimension AG 7 organised in 2018 the workshop “EUSALP meets LEADER” in Torino. The idea of community-led local development approach (CLLD) mobilizes and empowers local people and communities for shaping their own future.

Under representation of the European Parliament (Mercedes Bresso) and European Commission (DG AGRI) more than 50 participants from 6 Alpine countries discussed how CLLD and LEADER could match with Green Infrastructure maintenance and developed recommendations for AG 7, LEADER LAGs and the EU level. Regione Piemonte hosted this very successful meeting. One central outcome was the agreement among participants to engage for a closer embedding of GI in the LEADER program in the programming period 2020+. As a further consequence two new members in advisory capacity have been nominated for representing the LEADER network in AG 7. A full documentation is compiled in a [poster](#) which has been presented at the Annual Forum 2018 in Innsbruck to the public.

After bringing GI on the political agenda at the beginning of AG implementation phase in the year 2017, in 2018 the development of a project framework and initiating implementation initiatives was set, accordingly to the AG work plan, in the focus of AG 7 activities. Based on a mapping of AG members` interests and needs for action a list of “GI star initiatives” was developed, their overall objectives described and responsible AG members nominated. By this internal bottom-up approach it was supported to have a maximum overlapping with national and regional interests and usage of synergies. Based on the list of star initiatives especially the second half of the year was used to transfer the identified initiatives into current program calls, mainly the 4th call of the Alpine Space Programme, INTERREG cross-border programme and ARPAF. Also the LIFE programme is still under consideration and interest or potential for Horizon was identified when compiling a matrix of AG 7 funding requirements.

The work of AG 7 is closely connected to other EUSALP Action Groups. Coordination is supported through AlpGov project and joint implementation of some of the activities could be reached. Broader cooperation with other Action Groups was established within 2018 for implementation of the joint workshop on Alpine forests seen from the multi-disciplinary



perspective, on the Annual Forum (Innsbruck, Nov 2018), joining forces of AG 2, 6, 7, 8 and 9. Cooperation will continue within a 'task force' composed by 1-2- members of all involved AGs and a joint proposal for ARPAF II.

Furthermore, close cooperation has been developed with EUSAIR (e.g. Mediterranean Coast and EU MRS Week 2016, 2017 and 2018) and initiated with EUSDR. A joint workshop of all 4 MRS is under preparation with the support of the INTERACT programme aiming at exploring synergies and strengthening coherence for the themes of GI and related governance and financing mechanisms on EU level.

2.7.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt

Raising the political awareness for the GI topic was one of the key issues identified at the very beginning of AG 7 work. Thanks to the great success of the first political conference in October 2017, which was highly supported by Slovenian and Bavarian EUSALP Presidency, this aspect could be successfully addressed. The current challenges lie in keeping up this positive political momentum and ensuring continuity on the policy level e.g. by making best use of formats being provided by the MRS like the Annual Forum. A further central point will be to make the benefits of EUSALP tangible for the citizens by concrete projects also for improved communication.

The implementation of MRS is a long-term process and expectations regarding concrete results are to be managed. This is especially true for issues such as GI where change in governance and implementation needs to happen on many levels (EU, national, regional, local) and involving several sectors (e.g. spatial planning, forestry, agriculture, water management). AG 7 part of EUSALP has progressed well since the launching period and by the engagement of different actors into interactive sessions, working meetings and workshops progress was made. Nevertheless cross-sectoral involvement in a multi-level framework will remain an ongoing challenge for all MRS actors. E.g. representatives from the agriculture and forestry sectors critically commented the political meeting in 2017 and were calling for a more intense involvement of actors on local level. AG 7 therefore entered into a dialogue with these sectors and meanwhile a representative was nominated. One of the challenges is also the fact of Green Infrastructure becoming a "buzz word" in the projects and strategic initiatives of different sectors, so the AG 7 holds a mandate and looks for opportunities for assuring the expert level of debate and coherence with the expert and legislative foundations. In line with AG 7 work plan, in 2019 AG 7 will focus mainly on the following activity lines:

1. Increasing the effects of EUSALP AG 7 "towards the public" by developing of concrete GI projects while enhancing cooperation with other EUSALP AGs (e.g. within AFPAF projects, the forest task-force and joint workshops).
2. Compiling and communicating AG 7 Green Infrastructure funding requirements for 2020+.
3. Developing a joint vision for a trans-Alpine GI network within a design-thinking-jam-session and transfer into an AG 7 work plan for 2020+.
4. Entering into a closer cooperation with other MRS and European mountain ranges.

2.7.3 Comments on review of Action Plan

For AG 7 at the moment no need for review given.

2.8 AG 8 “To improve risk management and to better manage climate change, including major natural risks prevention”

2.8.1 Executive summary

The overall objective of Action Group 8 is to improve and enhance governance mechanisms in the fields of natural hazard risk management and adaptation to climate change, including the interface of these two fields. Therefore Action Group 8 is focusing on the following tasks in the implementation of the EUSALP strategy:

1. Paving the ground for a shared risk governance policy regarding alpine natural hazards, including the survey of risk governance mechanisms, the analysis of management systems considering the connection of metropolitan and Alpine areas, and the exploration of the management of residual risk along all relevant sectors in the EUSALP region.
2. Paving the ground for shared adaptation governance policies, including stocktaking, mapping and comparing adaptation governance systems as well as surveying the status of horizontal integration of climate adaptation in priority sector policies to enhance policy mainstreaming of adaptation in the Alpine macro-region.
3. Supporting the synergies between risk management and climate adaptation by identifying linkages and synergies and exploring shared pathways for closer alignment of the respective governance mechanisms in both policy fields.
4. Contributing to the joint EUSALP Knowledge platform by deploying, advancing and maintaining the Climate Adaptation Platform for the Alps (CAPA) and integrating cross-cutting knowledge about thematic interfaces of climate adaptation and natural hazard management.
5. Identifying potential funding schemes to pave the ground for shared governance policies in the context of risk management and climate adaptation.

AG8 held their 5th Action Group meeting in Piran in April 2018. Further AG8 was present at the Kick-Off meeting of the Tyrolean Presidency 2018, and started planning events in the frame of the Tyrolean Presidency to further enhance discussion on cooperation in natural hazard management and promote the strategy.

Further AG8 commissioned a "Natural Hazard Audit" to raise awareness for natural hazard management and to help implement improved governance on the local level. In July 2018 AG8 participated in the Summer Synergy Brunch in Klagenfurt and the BAGL meeting in Pörschach. AG8 finalized a report and policy paper on mapping and analyzing of governance mechanisms focusing on risk governance in the case of overload and residual risk.

In the second half of 2018 AG8 held their 6th AG meeting in Hinterstoder, the Risk Policy Dialogue 2018 in Hinterstoder, an event in the context of the Tyrolean days of the Forum Alpbach and an event in the context of the ISSW (International Snow Science Workshop) Public Day in Innsbruck and a workshop at the Annual Forum in Innsbruck. The aim of all these events was to enhance the discussion on collaboration in natural hazard management and promote the strategy particularly with regard to the next generation and young people.

Further the AG8 presented their work and AlpGov at the Flussbautagung 2018 in Graz, co-authored an article about the Action Group in the journal of the Swiss group for mountain regions (SAB) "Montagna" and participated in the BAGL meetings in Pörschach in July and in Trento in December.

Contributing to the Platform of Knowledge, AG8 enhanced the implementation process of the Climate Adaption Platform of the Alps which is nearly finished. The implementation process of the Climate Change Adaption Governance study was successfully started and is currently proceeding. The Natural Hazard Risk Governance policy brief is coordinated content wise and the corresponding Natural Hazard Risk Governance report is completed and published on the EUSALP website. In September 2018 a study about forest fire in the alps was commissioned and is currently proceeding.

2.8.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt

The main objectives of Action Group 8 in the AlpGov project concerning risk governance in the Alpine region are being implemented or almost finished. Dissemination activities are in the planning phase or implementation phase. The risk governance mapping was finished in the end of 2018. The finalized policy paper “Beyond the Expected: Dealing with the Case of Overload and Residual Risk of Natural Hazards in the Alpine Region” is currently disseminated. To foster successful risk governance of natural hazards in the context of residual risk and the case of overload, more emphasis should be given to communication strategies. It would also be useful to look further into the ways of cooperation between various actors and to identify potential overlaps of tasks, lack of synergies, responsibility gaps and approaches to develop risk-oriented spatial planning in the Alpine region.

The forest fire risk study was started in autumn 2018. At the moment data is being acquired through literature review as well as through direct requests to experts in the action group. The adaptation governance study is in implementation and will be finished by 06/2019.

2.8.3 Comments on review of Action Plan

AG8 aims at both dimensions of the action plan, climate adaptation and natural hazard risk management. The overall objective of mapping and evaluating the existing governance systems in order to enhance and improve the governance mechanisms for both fields as well as for the respective interfaces is well represented in the action plan. This will provide a solid basis for further targeted actions and projects to further implement the strategy and contribute to the overall objective of sustainable, economic and social prosperity of the Alpine region.

2.9 AG 9 “To make the territory a model region for energy efficiency and renewable energy”

2.9.1 Executive summary

Action Group 9 has the mission to “make the Alpine region a model region for energy efficiency and renewable energy”. The Action Group installed 4 thematic sub-groups that focus on specific energy related issues:

- Energy policy strategies
- Energy efficiency
- Renewable energies
- Smart grids

The Action Group consists of 30 (state May 2019) members (with, and without DMC, also collaborators of members with DMC are counted) representing the states and regions in the EUSALP territory as well as experts from universities, science and research and sectoral environmental and energy agencies. The work of the Action Group is monitored by DG Regio, DG Energy, the Alpine Space programme and the Alpine Convention as observers. In 2019, EUSALP Action Group leader 9 organized 2 Action Group meetings. The 5th Action Group 9 meeting took place on 21.03.2018 in Bolzano and the 6th Action Group 9 meeting was organized on 01.10.2018 in Innsbruck.

Action Group 9 adopted its work plan for the period of June 2016 to June 2019 in March 2017. Since then, Action Group 9 focuses on the implementation of its activities. Emphasis lays on gathering information and expertise that support the thematic subgroups in the implementation and in the development of their activities. Studies, experts’ workshops and input presentations during Action Group meetings accompany the implementation and decision-making process in the Action Group. In concrete terms, in 2018, Action Group 9 published the first EUSALP Energy Survey, which gathered energy data from the entire EUSALP territory, compared energy strategies, set policy goals and their state of implementation. Action Group 9 organized three experts’ workshops on energy data sharing and to further develop the EUSALP Energy Observatory. AGL9 contributed to the JRC study “Identifying key priorities in support to the EU Macro-regional Strategies implementation: An ex-ante assessment for the Adriatic-Ionian and Alpine regions focusing on clean growth in transport and bioenergy”. In addition, Action Group 9 members participated in and, respectively, led, the drafting of two Alpine Space project proposals (Retro+ and Alp_EN_Data) that have passed the first evaluation step in 2019.

Action Group 9 pro-actively engaged in the dialogue with other Action Groups, R&D, science, stakeholders and the interested public. As a main event, AGL 9 organized the 2nd EUSALP Energy Conference “Energy Transition in the Alps” in October 2018 in Innsbruck in collaboration with the Tyrolean EUSALP Presidency to which 120 individuals participated. Action Group 9 participated in the “EUSALP Annual Forum” in November 2018 and co-organized the cross-sectoral workshop “Alpine forests seen from a multi-disciplinary perspective” in collaboration with EUSALP AG 2, 6 and 7 in this context. AGL9 presented the work of the Action Group at several stakeholder conferences in the Alpine region and during ASP project meetings.



Finally, in 2018, AGL9 contributed to the integration process of the MRS by actively engaging in the EUSALP communication workshop in June 2018 organized by DG Regio in Brussels and took part in the EUSALP-Alpine Convention exchange workshop in October 2018 in Vienna to strengthen synergies. EUSALP Action Group 9 leader was present at all BAGL meetings in the year 2018 and contributed to the development of the AlpGov II proposal.

2.9.2 Main challenges and lessons learnt

- Constant political dialogue and awareness raising, commitment for and visibility of the EUSALP on all governance levels are necessary to support its implementation process successfully. A wider consciousness for the potentials of the EUSALP still needs to unfold. This consciousness is however a condition to transfer the work outputs elaborated in the Action Groups (e.g. political recommendations, twinning of good practices) and in order to roll-out and implement strategic projects and initiatives of the Action Groups. In order to raise the awareness for its activities, Action Group 9 seeks to collaborate with the EUSALP presidencies to gain political support and visibility. In 2018, EUSALP Action Group 9 promotes its strategic initiative (EUSALP Energy Observatory) and the annual EUSALP Energy Conference under the Tyrolean EUSALP Presidency.
- EUSALP Action Group 9 is committed to coordinate with and involve EU-DG Regio and EU-DG Energy. AGL9 informs them regularly about its work progress and invites them to their Action Group meetings and events. EUSALP Action Group 9 wishes to strengthen the collaboration with DG Energy in the future. The Action Group favours the regular participation of EU-DG Energy at the annual EUSALP Energy Conference.
- A challenge remains the absence of appointed members at the regular Action Group meetings and the limited number of proactively engaged AG members. The Rules of Procedure do not foresee a monitoring of the participation of the Action Group members. EUSALP Action Group lead 9 favours the integration of a monitoring, e.g. on a 3-yearly basis, aligned with 3-annual work plans. National coordinators may support the steering process and investigate on the activeness and presence of Action Group members in the same timeframe.
- Besides the work amount that comes with the coordination of the Action Group members, EUSALP Action Group leaders progressively take over communication activities, project development exercises as well as political and financial steering for the Action Group and EUSALP in general. Also, Action Group leaders handle the administrative work of the AlpGov project. The costs related to cover for human resources were not predictable beforehand. The integration of staff costs into the basic funding for EUSALP (e.g. AlpGov 2.0) and a stronger coordination between the Action Group leaders and the Executive Board and a strong ownership of the regions for the EUSALP integration process could positively affect burden sharing.
- The selection process of Action Group members does not yet sufficiently take into account an ex-ante profiling of the experts according to the projects/initiatives proposed by the Action Plan and the work plan developed by the Action Groups. The EUSALP Action Groups can only implement the Action Plan if the members come from ministries and administrations that have decision-making competences to change the normative frameworks in their administrations. A challenge of the Action Group is the absence of actors that have de facto decision-making power in different fields of energy policy, e.g. on ministerial levels.

- Key stakeholders of the energy sector, for example grid operators, are not members of the Action Group. Due to the lack of these representatives some activity fields and initiatives foreseen in the Action Plan, could not adopted with the work programme of the Action Group 2017-2019. The following activity of the Action Plan cannot be tackled:

Strengthen transnational cooperation when planning and evaluating energy infrastructure (p. 44)

2.9.3 Comments on review of Action Plan

EUSALP Action Group 9 has adopted its work plan in March 2017 and the implementation for the first projects and initiatives started in the course of 2017. Action Group 9 revises its work plan each year and is thereby monitoring the advancement and implementation process. The EUSALP integration process in the field of energy need further adjustments. In some cases, the Action Plan does not provide for a clear methodology to measure units and targets.

The following indicators and targets of the Action Plan mirror the implementation work achieved so far p.43-44:

Indicator	Unit	Target value	Comment AG9
Establishment of a cluster on Alpine Energy Efficiency	Number of stakeholders in the cluster	At least 200 stakeholders involved	Feasibility study ongoing in AlpGov project
Renewable energy production in the Alps	TWh, in total and by RES source	Increasing RES production in EUSALP territory	EUSALP Energy Survey and Observatory are working on the collection and the monitoring of energy data
"Greening the Alpine infrastructure" through the development and implementation of joint energy efficiency indicators	Set of Alpine-wide indicators is developed or implemented	Administrative procedure per State/Region	Experts Workshop 2017 organized, feasibility study ongoing
Organisation of continuous energy dialogue with the public	Number of participants in dialogue	120 participants involved and all EUSALP countries represented	2017: 120 participants reached but not representation of all EUSALP countries
Development of smart energy monitoring and management systems	Number of smart energy monitoring platforms	Number of municipalities that have shared and adopted smart energy management systems	Project proposal "Smart Villages" was developed, mapping of good practices ongoing



B) ATTACHMENT

- Single reports per AG
- Report on EUSALP Action Groups funding requirements from future EU funding programmes post 2020