

# The Continuum Project

July '08 Newsletter

## Pilot Regions Workshop 14-15 April '08, Chambéry (F)

The pilot regions workshop gave representatives of all four pilot areas of the project as well as from other key areas the opportunity to meet each other personally and to discuss the first results which were achieved by the consortium of the Continuum project. Among those results was the methodological procedure proposed for the realisation of ecological networks in the pilot regions: after an intensive test all representatives of the pilot regions agreed on the feasibility and coherence of this approach.

Key element of the workshop was nevertheless the catalogue of measures, a document outlining the measures existing in the different Alpine countries and that can contribute to the creation of ecological networks. A first draft of the document as well as some examples of possible measures were presented and discussed by the participants. The catalogue of measures will be revised, adapted following the suggestions formulated at the workshop and presented to the pilot regions again in autumn.

Finally, a field trip accompanied by Agnes BIAU from the nature protection association FRAPNA

offered the possibility to experience some examples of concrete actions in favour of ecological connectivity. FRAPNA is working on a connectivity project between the two mountain ranges and Nature Parks Massif des Bauges and Massif de Chartreuse.

The workshop was followed by the second official meeting of the Platform "Ecological Network" of the Alpine Convention. The representatives of the pilot regions had the opportunity to participate at this meeting and to present the activities of their region to the platform members.



## Pilot Regions get active

### Teamwork between pilot regions of the Eastern Alps, 8 May '08, Windischgarsten (A)

The project partners went to visit the pilot regions of the Eastern Alps. A meeting with colleagues from the National Parks Gesäuse and Kalkalpen, but as well from Berchtesgaden and Hohe Tauern, Wildnisgebiet Dürrenstein, Nature

Park Weissbach and Nature Parks Südtirol was held in Windischgarsten/Austria. It was the opportunity to discuss more in detail the activities planned in the pilot regions. The participants agreed on a proposal listing 9 methodological steps on how to proceed in the pilot regions to create ecological networks. Until the end of the year different initiatives will take place in all pilot regions to inform and sensitise other stakeholder group about the project and actively involve them in the process.

# Side Event "The Alpine Ecological Network"

## 9th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity, 29 May '08, Bonn (DE)

The German presidency of the Alpine Conventions Platform „Ecological Network“ (Silvia Reppe, German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and Bettina Hedden-Dunkhorst, German Agency for Nature Protection) took the initiative to organise a side event within COP 9 for discussing on alpine ecological networks. Introducing the topic, Thomas Scheurer (ISCAR) underlined the needs for establishing ecological networks to overcome and anticipate ongoing fragmentation in landscapes and highlighted, that lots of concepts have been developed while implementation is lacking.

In this context the Continuum Project has been mentioned as one of the promising projects to advance towards implementation, and Claude Martin (MAVA Foundation) confirmed the disposition of the MAVA-Foundation for supporting such efforts in the Alps. A range of important statements by the Bavarian Minister Dr. Otmar Bernhard, by the Presidency of the Alpine Convention (Ambassador Laurent Stefanini), by the Carpathian Convention (Heorhi Heorhijowytsch Filip-

## New online and printed information

The website [www.alpine-ecological-network.org](http://www.alpine-ecological-network.org) is online now! Information on initiatives dealing with the creation of ecological networks in the Alps, in particular on the Ecological Continuum project and on the Platform “Ecological Network”, is made available to the interested public. In addition, a category with “Latest news” as well as a lot of services like a research tool on projects and experts, a link to relevant publications (in different languages) and the opportunity to download interesting work results in relation to ecological networks are offered. The Consortium of the Continuum Project and the Platform “Ecological Network” also use a reserved section of the web site



Signatories of the Memorandum of Cooperation

tshuk, Ministry for Nature Protection Ukraine), by the Convention of Biological Diversity (Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaf) and by the German Agency for Nature Protection (Prof. Beate Jessel) accentuated, that ecological networks will play an important role in future strategies in nature conservation, which have to go far beyond protected areas and the protection of endangered species.

At the end of this side event another type of network has been established: The presidents from the Alpine Convention, the Carpathian Convention and the CBD signed a Memorandum of Cooperation concerning nature protection and the establishment of ecological networks in and between these neighbouring mountain ranges. Let us hope that this international agreement will have an impact on the support of existing and new initiatives!

as a working platform, to assure a consistent exchange of information.

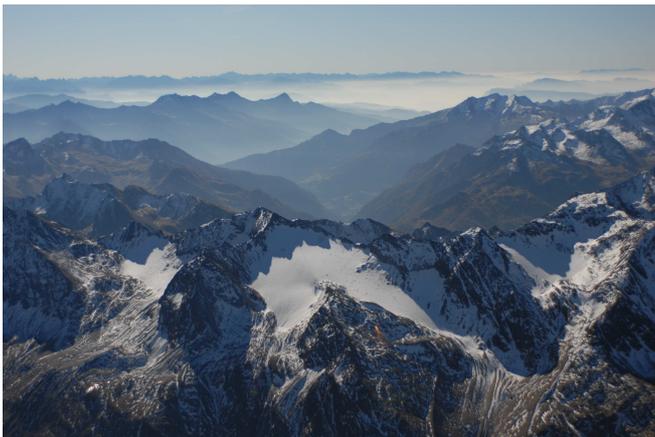
The common brochure “Ecological networks in the Alps” is now available in English, German, French, Italian and Slovenian! It is explaining issues and initiatives regarding ecological networks and connectivity aspects to all concerned stakeholders and interested persons. An online version is available for download on the project’s website <http://www.alpine-ecological-network.org/index.php/services-mainmenu-8/downloads-documents>. A printed version can be delivered on request. In this case, please get in contact with one of the responsible organisations.

# Alpine Space 2007-2013

## **The Alpine Space Programme of the EU approved a three year project for improving ecological connectivity in the Alps (ECONNECT)**

The ECONNECT project has just been approved by the Alpine Space Programme of the EU. 3,2 million Euro of public funding (shared between the EU and national or regional authorities) are at the disposal for improving ecological connectivity in the Alps during the next three years. Sixteen partners (the Consortium, together with institutional, scientific and administrative partners from all over the Alps, led by the Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology Vienna, Austria) will initiate and support the implementation of ecological networks in the Alps.

The project will enable pilot regions to cooperate using harmonised methods and data. Ecological and anthropogenic barriers will be identified for defined groups of species and recommendations for reducing migration obstacles will be made. Increasing the compatibility of the legal framework for cross-boundary cooperation of regions and of protected areas is another important field of activities within ECONNECT. In seven pilot regions concrete actions will be started to improve, create or restore ecological connectivity. Furthermore much attention will be paid to make the project idea and goals known to decision makers, stakeholders and the broad public and to improve networking and the flow of information between the partners and co-partners of ECONNECT.



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*“The ECONNECT project is providing an Alps-wide institutional frame”*



The Ecological Continuum Project was started in June 2007 by ALPARC (Alpine Network of Protected Areas), CIPRA (International Commission for the Protection of the Alps), ISCAR (International Scientific Committee Alpine Research) and the European Alpine Programme of the WWF with the aim of maintaining or restoring ecological connectivity between important areas for nature conservation in the Alps. The project is financed by the Swiss MAVA Foundation for Nature.