



**Interreg**  
Alpine Space  
GoApply



EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

**GoApply - Multidimensional Governance of Climate Change Adaptation  
in Policy Making and Practice**

# **WP4 - Transnational cooperation for improved Alpine governance of climate adaptation**

## **Documentation of outputs**

**Wolfgang Lexer, Jochen Bürgel (LP Umweltbundesamt)**

**GoApply partners and national observers**

**Vienna, February 2019**

This project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund  
through the Interreg Alpine Space programme





## Table of contents

1	Introduction to the document .....	4
2	Long-term transnational cooperation platform of the national climate adaptation policy owners of the Alpine countries and agreed road map for future cooperation, exchange and implementation activities (O.T4.1) .....	4
2.1	The Alpine Network of the National Adaptation Policy Makers .....	4
2.2	Long-term continuation of the network .....	6
2.2.1	Structure and rules of procedure: <i>modus operandi</i> .....	6
2.2.2	Road map for future cooperation, exchange and implementation activities .....	8
2.2.3	Outlook on next steps.....	11
3	Jointly developed model and mutually agreed mechanisms for regular consultation and information exchange between the national adaptation policy making level and institutional bodies of EUSALP and Alpine Convention (O.T4.2) ...	12
3.1	Thematic working bodies on climate adaptation of the EUSALP and the Alpine Convention .....	12
3.1.1	EUSALP Action Group 8 .....	12
3.1.2	Alpine Climate Board (ACB) of the Alpine Convention.....	13
3.2	Information exchange and cooperation activities within the GoApply project .....	14
3.2.1	Interactions and cooperation with EUSALP AG8.....	14
3.2.2	Interactions and cooperation with the Alpine Climate Board (ACB).....	15
3.2.3	Overview of transnational cooperation meetings.....	15
3.3	Added value of strengthening and sustaining transnational cooperation on climate adaptation .....	16
3.4	Agreements on structured exchange mechanisms.....	16
3.4.1	Exchange mechanisms with EUSALP AG8.....	16
3.4.2	Exchange mechanisms with the Alpine Climate Board (ACB) of the Alpine Convention .....	17
3.5	Outlook on next steps .....	19



## Listing of Tables

Table 1: Planned project outputs of WP4 (as defined in the Application Form) ..... 4

Table 2: The institutions participating in the Alpine Network of National Adaptation Policy Makers ..... 5

Table 3: Institutional meetings of EUSALP AG8 and the ACB of the Alpine Convention, where interactions (information, consultation, exchange, involvement in GoApply output development) with the Alpine adaptation policy maker network and the GoApply project took place. .... 15



## 1 Introduction to the document

WP4 ‘Transnational cooperation for improved Alpine governance of climate adaptation’ of the GoApply project has aimed at the achievement of the following two outputs, which both contribute to the programme indicator ‘Number of supported transnational cooperation structures encompassing multilevel and transnational governance in the Alpine Space’:

*Table 1: Planned project outputs of WP4 (as defined in the Application Form)*

Number	Title	Description	Target value
T4.1	Long-term transnational cooperation platform of the national climate adaptation policy owners of the Alpine countries and agreed road map for future cooperation, exchange and implementation activities	The Alpine national adaptation policy maker network will intensify, deepen and extend the scope of its transnational cooperation activities. A joint work program will set priorities for sustained future cooperation and joint actions.	1
T4.2	Jointly developed interfaces and durable exchange mechanisms between the national adaptation policy makers, the EUSALP and other European macro-regions	Durable liaison formats and procedures for organising two-way information flows and to facilitate coordination of national adaptation policies with EUSALP (AG8), the Alpine Convention and other EU macro-regions.	1

The present report documents the achievement of both outputs and describes in detail their substance and context. The paper at hand intends to serve a threefold purpose: i) to demonstrate output achievement to the funding body; ii) to be used as an internal working document of the ‘Transnational Network of National Adaptation Policy Makers in the Alpine Countries’ (i.e., the GoApply project partners and national observers); and iii) to be shared with the chairs of the other two thematically relevant transnational cooperation bodies that are affected by output number T4.2. With regard to ii) and iii), this paper is meant to be a living document that summarizes the transnational governance framework for climate adaptation in the Alpine Space at the time being, but is subject to further development.

## 2 Long-term transnational cooperation platform of the national climate adaptation policy owners of the Alpine countries and agreed road map for future cooperation, exchange and implementation activities (O.T4.1)

### 2.1 The Alpine Network of the National Adaptation Policy Makers

The Network of the National Adaptation Policy Makers in the Alpine countries is an informal transnational working group that has been initiated and further established from 2012 onwards in the frame of the Interreg Alpine Space 2007-2013 project C3-Alps. Following the inception of climate adaptation as a distinct policy field in the Alpine countries and the adoption or ongoing development of national adaptation strategies and/or action plans in most of them, the initiative was based on the recognition that the countries of the Alpine region may partly be in different stages of the adaptation policy cycle, but yet share



similar challenges as regards their national adaptation strategy processes. The diversity of governance approaches taken, in response to specific national context conditions, on the one hand, as well as shared strengths and weaknesses, on the other hand, offered yet underused potentials for mutual learning and transnational collaboration. The general goal of the network thus was to provide a platform for regular exchange of experiences, knowledge sharing and joint transnational learning regarding the development, coordination and implementation of national adaptation policies.

The members of the network are the national authorities acting as the policy owners and/or agencies tasked with coordinating and supporting the national adaptation strategies in the seven Alpine countries Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland. The following table Table 2 gives an overview per country of the institutions represented in the network.

*Table 2: The institutions participating in the Alpine Network of National Adaptation Policy Makers*

Country	Institution – English name	Institution – domestic name	Acronym
<b>Austria</b>	Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism, Section Coordination Climate Policy	Ministerium für Nachhaltigkeit und Tourismus, Abt. Koordinierung Klimapolitik	BMNT
<b>Austria</b>	Environment Agency Austria	Umweltbundesamt	EAA   UBA-AT
<b>France</b>	Ministry of Ecological and Solidary Transition, National Observatory on the Effects of Global Warming	Ministère de la Transition écologique et solidaire, Observatoire National sur les effets du réchauffement climatique	ONERC
<b>Germany</b>	German Environment Agency, Climate Impacts and Adaptation	Umweltbundesamt, Kompetenzzentrum Klimafolgen und Anpassung	UBA-KomPass
<b>Italy</b>	Ministry of the Environment, Land and Sea	Ministerio dell' Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio e del Mare	MATTM
<b>Italy</b>	Lombardy Foundation for the Environment	Fondazione Lombardia per l'Ambiente	FLA
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	Office of Environment	Amt für Umwelt	AU
<b>Slovenia</b>	Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning	Ministrstvo za okolje in prostor Republike Slovenije	MESP   MOP
<b>Switzerland</b>	Federal Office for the Environment, Climate Reporting and Adaptation Section	Bundesamt für Umwelt, Sektion Klimaberichterstattung und -anpassung	FOEN   BAFU

Starting with the first exchange meeting in May 2012 in Berne / Ittigen (Switzerland) and extending to the most recent meeting in October 2018 in Ljubljana (Slovenia), up to now altogether 10 regular network meetings have already been conducted. Held mostly as one-day events, these meetings covered reports and exchange rounds on the current state of affairs in each country, inputs from external experts and research projects, in-depth discussions on more specific topics of joint interest, such as communication of climate adaptation, institutional settings, mainstreaming, financing, or the use of climate scenarios in adaptation policy making. The informal setting and open atmosphere also allowed pre-aligning positions of countries in more formal EU-wide working bodies and facilitated direct bilateral or multilateral contacts



and consultations on various issues in between meetings. Joint achievements going far beyond transnational exchange include the organisation of an international expert workshop on monitoring and evaluation of adaptation strategies in June 2013, the joint programming and implementation of an international adaptation conference in Switzerland in 2016, and the organisation of two joint Alpine sessions on national climate adaptation policy processes at the ECCA 2017 conference in Glasgow and the ECCA 2019 conference in Lisbon.

An outcome of the first series of transnational network exchange meetings was the recognition that in all countries many of the barriers and challenges that inhibit more effective implementation of cross-cutting adaptation strategies on the ground were closely connected to issues of multi-level, cross-sector and multi-actor governance of adaptation processes, resulting in a wide-spread lack of governance and implementation capacities on all levels. In order to tackle this governance issues, the group of policy makers thus developed and submitted the GoApply project proposal to the Alpine Space programme during 2016. From November 2016 to April 2019, the network members carried out the GoApply project, either in a partner role (Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy) or an observer role (France, Slovenia, Liechtenstein). During this period, the project work plan represented the core of the work program of the network, while the regular transnational exchange formats were continued back-to-back with the partner meetings, feeding also into the development of project outputs.

Sustaining, deepening and leveraging transnational cooperation, knowledge transfer and learning between the national adaptation policy coordinators as well as with other existing transnational cooperation structures in the Alpine region (EUSALP, Alpine Convention) has been one specific project objective, which has been pursued in a distinct work package dedicated to “Transnational cooperation for improved Alpine governance of climate adaptation”. To pave the way for further concrete cooperation activities beyond the project life cycle, the network partners were committed to drafting a joint road map with thematic priorities for the medium-term future. Based on the ideas and inputs gathered during the project implementation and consultations among all network members, the following section of this document presents the road map for future joint activities of the Alpine adaptation policy makers network.

## 2.2 Long-term continuation of the network

All network partners (see list of participating institutions in Table 2) are committed to continue collaborating in the transnational cooperation format and to develop concrete joint cooperation activities based on the ‘road map’ presented in chapter 2.2.2.

### 2.2.1 Structure and rules of procedure: *modus operandi*

During the WP4 sessions and PSG meetings at several GoApply project partner meetings, the network members (in their roles as project partners, plus present national observers) reflected on the experiences made during the previous years, discussed the future work mode of the network and agreed on the following guiderails for sustaining this transnational cooperation format:

- **Principle:**

The network shall be maintained as an informal group and will continue to operate on the basis of joint voluntary agreement and in a peer-to-peer mode. Aiming to keep rules of procedure to a necessary minimum and as simple, clear and straight-forward as possible, the following provisions and guidelines are meant to support the activities of the network.



- **Coordination of the network:**

- The role of the network coordinator ('chair') will rotate among the member institutions in one-year terms. Each term of a coordinator begins and ends at network meetings of two consecutive calendar years.
- Uninterrupted coordination terms that last longer than one year are possible, if there is respective consent among all network members.
- The foreseeable main roles of the coordinator focus on organising and facilitating the joint activities of the network. The main responsibilities of coordinators comprise in particular:
  - Organizing, hosting, chairing and documenting (annual) network meetings
  - Acting as main communication hub between network members during inter-sessional periods
  - If not agreed otherwise, acting as main contact point for communication with other relevant transnational cooperation structures (in particular, EUSALP AG8 and ACB of the Alpine Convention).
- Steering of specific joint activities borne by, or in relation to, the network is not necessarily the responsibility of the network coordinator, but can be done by any interested network member on a flexible and case-dependent basis.

- **Transnational network meetings:**

- Members will hold at least one in-person network meeting per year.
- As far as possible, efforts will be taken to organise in-person network meetings back-to-back with other meetings (e.g. of bodies of other Alpine or European cooperation structures), events (e.g. conferences) or any other occasions where several members of the network are present.
- Travel costs for attending meetings have to be borne by each member on their own accounts.
- Members have approved of the idea that regular network meetings could be enriched and upvalued by including external inputs and/or field trips into the program.
- Additional exchanges in between annual physical meetings should preferably be done by making use of tele-communication tools (e.g., Skype, Adobe Connect or phone conferences)

- **Participants to the network:**

- It is up to the institutions being members of the network to delegate representatives to meetings or any other activities of the network.
- The members, however, recognize that continuity in personal representation is highly beneficial to cooperation and should thus be strived at.
- Case-based invitations of external persons to participate in meetings or other activities of the network are possible and welcome.

- **Supplement:**

- It is up to the joint decision of the network members to suspend or amend any rules and guidelines of their cooperation as well as to agree upon new ones.



## 2.2.2 Road map for future cooperation, exchange and implementation activities

The following topics, themes and potential joint activities have been gathered among GoApply partners and network members during several project and network meetings, enriched with impulses from the on-going development of the next EUSALP AG8 work plan, and linked to relevant targets of the 'Alpine Climate Target System 2050' of the Alpine Convention. The compilation currently presents a pool of pre-selected proposals and ideas that have been developed in consultation with GoApply partners and other network members, but that will still require further discussion, amendments and prioritisation at the next network meeting. Selection and further specification of concrete topics will to some extent also depend on external framework conditions, such as availability of funding, timing of suitable calls for projects, respective terms of reference, etc.

### General goals and directions:

- The **information exchange with updates about national adaptation policy processes** in each country will be maintained as a vital part and obligatory agenda item of transnational network meetings. Relevant information may comprise all stages of the adaptation policy cycle, ranging from the knowledge base (new research highlights, assessment of climate change impacts, vulnerabilities, risks, etc.) to governance frameworks and to monitoring and evaluation of adaptation strategies.  
Increased attention shall be given to the following aspects:
  - setting an additional thematic focus for the exchange at each meeting: in-depth exchange on previously agreed specific issues of joint interest (e.g. following the example of the 10<sup>th</sup> Network Meeting on 8-10 October 2018 in Ljubljana, where the focus was on the use of climate scenarios in adaptation policy making across levels);
  - in order to foster discussion, reflection and transnational learning, putting strong emphasis on experiences and lessons learnt;
  - making use of external inputs (e.g., results of flagship research projects, inputs from practitioners) and field trips in the frame of meetings.
- Adding **specific Alpine focus** to issues that are also covered by **work groups at EU level** (EU WG 6 on adaptation, Interest Group Climate Change Adaptation of the EPA Network) and/or deepening certain issues in an **Alpine (mountain) context**
- **Developing common project proposals** to apply for funding of project-based transnational implementation activities or policy support research
  - possibly in cooperation with EUSALP AG8 and/or the Alpine Climate Board of the Alpine Convention
- Taking into close consideration potential **contributions** to the implementation of the '**Alpine Climate Target System 2050**' of the **Alpine Convention** and aiming for **synergies** with respective implementation processes

### Specific cooperation themes and activities:

- Organizing a **joint science-practice session** together with EUSALP AG8 at the next **ECCA 2019** conference (Lisbon, May 2019)
  - **achieved!**





- **Maintaining and updating the online governance visualization website** (produced by the GoApply project and the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL with support by AG8)<sup>1</sup> and **capitalising** on its strengths and potentials in adaptation policy making, e.g. by:
  - employing the visualisation tool for communication purposes
  - using it in training and capacity-building contexts (e.g., training of new personnel to adaptation coordination units, training of regional adaptation managers, etc.)
  - using it to assist further in-depth analysis and to identify gaps in governance networks
  - *promoting the visualisation tool as a vital knowledge base for implementing the 'Alpine Climate Target System 2050' of the Alpine Convention as well as for implementation processes in the context of EUSALP AG8*
- Organizing a **trans-Alpine award competition on innovative (non-governmental and/or municipal) adaptation measures** in practice (following the German model of 'Blauer Kompass')
  - *Linkages to the 'Alpine Climate Target System 2050': municipal action targets and communication pillar*
- **'Quality assurance' of adaptation measures:** Developing **operational criteria** to assure (*ex-ante* and *ex-post*) that adaptation measures are sustainable, coherent with climate mitigation goals, socially just, and not mal-adaptive
  - Taking into account the potential relevance for financing decisions, upcoming EU reporting obligations under the Energy Union Governance Regulation, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms under the UN SDG process
- **Local climate adaptation / municipal climate action: Empowering and supporting regional and local action on adaptation**
  - *Taking up and pursuing further the transnational lessons and policy recommendations from the GoApply project on the key role of the local level in adaptation*
  - Incl. in the context of existing international and transnational initiatives and networks, such as the Covenant of Mayors and the Alpine Partnership for Local Climate Action (ALPACA)
  - How to achieve more effective agenda-setting, implementation and long-term institutionalisation of climate adaptation in Alpine municipalities?
  - Working on the 'WHATS' and 'HOWS' of communicating adaptation to municipal target groups and related multipliers / change agents: customized information and knowledge for municipal actors; target group-specific communication and interaction formats
  - How to make effective use of external problem pressure (extreme weather events) and related 'policy windows' to initiate durable adaptation processes?
  - How to strengthen local coordination capacities and to establish clear responsibilities for adaptation in municipalities?
  - How to promote inter-municipal networks and peer-to-peer learning?

---

<sup>1</sup> *Mapping Governance of Adaptation to Climate Change in the Alpine Space:* <https://www.wsl.ch/gov-vis-cca/>  
Data mapping and co-design of visualisation by the GoApply partnership and the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL; technical realisation by Mark-Jan Bludau for the IDL – Interaction Design Lab, University of Applied Sciences Potsdam; support for data mapping of France, Slovenia and Liechtenstein as well as for technical implementation by EUSALP AG8; hosted and provided by the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL



- How to anchor (mainstream) climate change and adaptation concerns into municipal planning and development processes, instruments, and projects?
- What to provide in terms of support offers by higher-ranking administrative levels?
- *Linkages to the 'Alpine Climate Target System 2050': municipal action targets T\_MA1 'Municipalities as transition engines' and T\_MA2 'Climate action institutionalised in municipal action'*
- **Moving from reactive and incremental adaptation to **transformative adaptation**, especially in municipalities:**
  - How can synergies between climate adaptation and broader socio-ecological transformation towards the common goal of sustainability be tackled, supported, and generated? How can local adaptation be integrated with other local policies on sustainable development?
  - What could be concrete transformative adaptation pathways and measures in municipalities?
  - Pilot projects on participatory transformative adaptation processes in municipalities.
  - What is needed in terms of multilevel governance to support local transformative adaptation?
  - *Linkages to the 'Alpine Climate Target System 2050': municipal action targets T\_MA1 'Municipalities as transition engines', T\_MA2 'Climate action institutionalised in municipal action' and T\_MA3 'Networks of CO<sub>2</sub>-free municipalities'*
- **Nature-based solutions (NBS) in adaptation and disaster risk reduction:** ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) and ecosystem-based approaches to disaster risk reduction (eco-DRR) in specific Alpine contexts
  - e.g.: How to make effective use of ecosystem services of mountain forests with protective functions for reaching adaptation and risk reduction goals, and how to maintain and restore at the same time functioning of forest ecosystems under conditions of climate change?
  - *Given interest of EUSALP AG8 in the topic, as it is of vital importance for Alpine mountain regions and has good potential to integrate policy making in the fields of climate adaptation and risk management*
  - *Linkages to the 'Alpine Climate Target System 2050': sectoral mountain forest target T\_Fo1 'Potential of protective mountain forests fully used' and sectoral natural hazard target T\_NH1 'Alpine risk management'*
  - *Linkages to UNFCCC, CBD, SFDRR, UN SDG process and forthcoming research focus in the EU HORIZON programme on 'land-based disaster risk reduction'*
- **Transnational transfer and diffusion of field-tested good practice models, tools and approaches to support integrated action on climate adaptation and natural hazard risk management** in Alpine regions and municipalities, including individual adaptation and risk precaution of private actors:
  - Developing a transnational project engaging in actual transfer of existing good practice approaches to other Alpine regions and countries, including, e.g., pilot implementations, teaching and training materials for multipliers, and long-term implementation concepts for broad diffusion
  - The good practice models may include such identified in the GoApply project, in studies by EUSALP AG8 and in the most recent Report on the State of the Alps (RSA7) on risk governance, e.g. the 'Natural Hazards Check Tool Climate Change (Austria), the 'Local Natural Hazard Advisor' concept (Switzerland), or the 'Flood Risk Audit Scheme' (Germany).
  - *Given interest of EUSALP AG8 in developing a respective transnational project*
  - *Linkages to the 'Alpine Climate Target System 2050': municipal action targets and sectoral natural hazard target T\_NH3 'Individual risk precaution'*



- **Climate-resilient infrastructure in Alpine (mountain) regions:** Improving implementation of research results on climate-resilient infrastructure in inter- and trans-disciplinary contexts
  - Linkage to German initiative to develop a network of researchers, infrastructure operators and EPAs, incl. through positioning the topic in the EPA IG CCA.
  - Some other Alpine countries have already signaled interest in such a network; the Alpine adaptation policy maker group could add a specific Alpine and mountain focus to the issue
- Contributing to **content enhancement** of **CAPA – The Climate Adaptation Platform for the Alps** by entering new relevant knowledge resources related to national adaptation policy processes of the Alpine countries into the database (by using a newly developed and convenient online editing tool for registered users)
  - *Linkage to EUSALP AG8*
  - *Linkage to the communication activities accompanying the 'Alpine Climate Target System 2050'*

### 2.2.3 Outlook on next steps

- The Umweltbundesamt (Environment Agency Austria) will continue the role as network coordinator after closure of the GoApply project until the end of 2019.
- It is planned to organise the next transnational network meeting (regular annual meeting 2019) in autumn 2019. An online survey for finding a suitable date during the period from September to December 2019 will be set up by the Environment Agency Austria. As regards the date and location of the meeting, potential opportunities of holding the network meeting back-to-back with other international or transnational meetings and events will be screened and considered.
- Further deliberations on the first future concrete cooperation activities after the closure of the joint GoApply project will be a central item of the next meeting agenda.



---

### **3 Jointly developed model and mutually agreed mechanisms for regular consultation and information exchange between the national adaptation policy making level and institutional bodies of EUSALP and Alpine Convention (O.T4.2)**

---

#### **3.1 Thematic working bodies on climate adaptation of the EUSALP and the Alpine Convention**

##### **3.1.1 EUSALP Action Group 8**

The EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)<sup>2</sup> was officially launched on 25-26 January 2016 and adopted by the European Council on 28 June 2016. The members of the EUSALP are 48 regions in seven Alpine countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Switzerland, Liechtenstein). The EUSALP macro-region encompasses a broader geographical area than the Alpine Convention and the Alpine Space Programme. In addition to the Alpine core areas (mountain areas), also peri-Alpine areas with their metropolitan regions in the surrounding foothills and lowlands are included in the EUSALP perimeter.

According to the EU Action Plan for the EUSALP by the European Commission (EC 2015)<sup>3</sup>, the implementation of the strategy is organised in 3 thematic objectives and 9 thematic Action Groups. Allocated to thematic objective 3 ‘Environment and energy’ of EUSALP and bundled together with risk management, adaptation is one of two core topics within EUSALP AG8 (Action Group on Risk Governance) ‘To improve risk management and to better manage climate change, including major natural risks prevention’<sup>4</sup>. Up to now, AG8 is co-chaired by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism (BMNT), Section Torrent and Avalanche Control and Protection Forest Policy, and by the Bavarian State Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection (StMUV), Dep. Water Management in Rural Areas, Water Ecology and Torrents. The Austrian co-chair of AG8 is at the same time chairing PLANALP, the Platform on Natural Hazards Management of the Alpine Convention.

The common objective of the current medium-term work plan (up to mid-2019) of AG8 is to map, analyse and enhance governance mechanisms in the fields of natural hazard management and adaptation to climate change, including enhanced coherence between both policy fields. As a new topic cutting across the two fields, a study on forest fire risk management is currently in the making. The available outputs are studies, good practice examples and policy recommendations on risk governance, adaptation governance, and mainstreaming of climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction, aiming to pave the way for more effective and better aligned governance approaches in the Alpine macro-region.

The Alpine Space Programme (ASP) is one of the transnational funding instruments for projects in support of implementation of the EUSALP. Project applications are expected to clearly state how they intend to contribute to implementation of EUSALP and of the work plans of its Action Groups. Starting out from the early phases of project development, AG8 has collaborated closely with the Alpine Space project GoApply from 2016 to 2019. The ASP is currently supporting the establishment of the EUSALP governance structure and implementation of the Action Plan by co-funding the project AlpGov – ‘Implementing Alpine

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.alpine-region.eu/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/cooperate/alpine/eusalp\\_action\\_plan.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/alpine/eusalp_action_plan.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.alpine-region.eu/action-group-8>



Governance Mechanisms of the European Strategy for the Alpine Region' (2016-2019)<sup>5</sup>. The project partners are the lead institutions of the EUSALP Action Groups.

### 3.1.2 Alpine Climate Board (ACB) of the Alpine Convention

The Alpine Convention<sup>6</sup> is an international treaty that was signed in 1991 and commits the eight Alpine countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Slovenia and Switzerland) and the European Union to the sustainable development and protection of the Alpine massif. Its legally binding basis is composed of the Framework Convention and eight thematic Protocols<sup>7</sup>, which have been ratified by the national parliaments of most of its Parties, accompanied by four political declarations of the Alpine Conference of Ministers. Although there is not a thematic protocol on climate change, climate change and adaptation have for years been a field of work within the Alpine Convention. The Alpine Conference adopted a Declaration on Climate Change in 2006 (Alpine Convention, 2006), which was specified in the Climate Change Action Plan adopted in 2009 (Alpine Convention, 2009), addressing both mitigation and adaptation. Taking action on climate change is one of six priorities of the multi-annual work programme 2017–2022<sup>8</sup>. The Contracting Parties, the observers, and the thematic working bodies of the Convention<sup>9</sup> regularly work on cross-sectoral aspects of adaptation and have produced a range of specific transnational outputs, including statements and guidelines, workshops, and experimentation projects, often contributing to implementation of actions laid down in the Climate Action Plan.

The Alpine Climate Board (ACB)<sup>10</sup> was established under the Austrian Presidency in 2016. Dealing with climate change mitigation as well as adaptation, the ACB was mandated to bundle together relevant climate change activities carried out in the framework of the Alpine Convention and to elaborate proposals for a concrete system of objectives with regard to the perspective of a 'climate neutral Alpine space'. Starting with a systematic compilation and inventory of recent and current activities on climate change in the Alps within the context of the Convention (Alpine Convention, 2019)<sup>11</sup>, from 2016 to the beginning of 2019 the ACB has developed the 'Alpine Climate Target System 2050' for climate-neutral and climate-resilient Alps<sup>12</sup>. It has been adopted at the XV Alpine Conference on 4 April 2019, where also a political declaration on climate-neutral and climate-resilient Alps 2050<sup>13</sup> has been approved, in which the Alpine Ministers of the Parties emphasize their commitment to implementation. Guided by the overall objectives of the UNFCCC Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the target system is organised in general principles, overarching strategic targets, and 41 sectoral targets in 10 sectoral plus 2 cross-cutting action fields. More than half of the sectoral targets address mainly climate adaptation or both adaptation and mitigation in an integrated way. These sectoral targets are accompanied by a communication pillar with proposals for operational communication activities and supplemented by recommendations for implementation. Among other issues, these recommendations stress that Alpine countries need to strengthen their cooperation and give priority to coordinated Alpine-wide action, and

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.alpine-space.eu/projects/alpgov/en/home>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.alpconv.org/en/convention/default.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.alpconv.org/en/convention/protocols/default.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.alpconv.org/en/convention/workprogramme/default.html>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.alpconv.org/EN/ORGANIZATION/default.html>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.alpconv.org/en/organization/groups/alpineclimateboard/default.html>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.alpconv.org/en/organization/groups/AlpineClimateBoard/Documents/AlpineClimateBoard\\_Stock-taking\\_update1\\_20190219.pdf](http://www.alpconv.org/en/organization/groups/AlpineClimateBoard/Documents/AlpineClimateBoard_Stock-taking_update1_20190219.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.alpconv.org/en/organization/groups/AlpineClimateBoard/Documents/20190404\\_ACB\\_AlpineClimateTargetSystem2050\\_en.pdf](http://www.alpconv.org/en/organization/groups/AlpineClimateBoard/Documents/20190404_ACB_AlpineClimateTargetSystem2050_en.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.alpconv.org/en/convention/protocols/Documents/InnsbruckDeclaration\\_en\\_fin.pdf](http://www.alpconv.org/en/convention/protocols/Documents/InnsbruckDeclaration_en_fin.pdf)



that new forms of cooperation between the ACB and stakeholders, especially other existing Alpine-wide networks, shall be explored, including the possibility to jointly develop pilot action and further implementation initiatives.

The ACB is chaired by the Head of Section Coordination Climate Policy of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism (BMNT). Upon proposal by the current French Presidency of the Alpine Convention, which was welcomed in consent by all members of the ACB, the chair role has thus been prolonged from the previous first mandate period. The current work plan of the ACB 2019-2020 focuses on i) development of an updated Climate Action Plan, ii) operationalisation of the target system, and iii) development of a monitoring tool to track progress in implementation and target achievement. Work on concretising the target system has been kicked off at an implementation workshop with stakeholders in May 2019. A current focus of work is on the development of implementation pathways for the sectoral targets and the communication strategy.

### **3.2 Information exchange and cooperation activities within the GoApply project**

Cooperating, exchanging and engaging with EUSALP governance bodies and with other transnational cooperation structures has been a dedicated project activity within WP4 of the GoApply project. Exchange, mutual consultations and cooperation with the two most relevant thematic working bodies of EUSALP and the Alpine Convention have been well established, practiced and created mutual benefits and added value already during the GoApply project life cycle. This has paved the way for strengthening strategic alignment of future adaptation policy making on transnational and national levels.

#### **3.2.1 Interactions and cooperation with EUSALP AG8**

Via the role of the Environment Agency Austria (UBA-AT) as the project's Lead Partner and WP4 leader, the GoApply project has been developed and designed in close coordination with the co-chairs of EUSALP AG8 from the very beginning. Institutional linkages to AG8 and other EUSALP working bodies relevant to climate adaptation were incorporated in the project design by involving both AG8 co-leaders and the institutions leading other thematically relevant Action Groups (both co-chairs of AG6, German co-chair of AG7) as observers in the project structure. Dating back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> EUSALP AG8 meeting in September 2016, UBA-AT has represented the GoApply partnership and the Alpine adaptation network at institutional meetings of AG8. This allowed aligning development of the AG8 work plan with the GoApply project work plan and implementing the respective activities in a transnational cooperation approach, thereby creating substantial added value. On the one hand, GoApply results satisfied concrete demands of AG8, contributed to implementing its work plan, and have provided a state-of-the-art knowledge base for further implementation processes in the AG8 context, including working towards strengthening of horizontal policy integration between climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction. On the other hand, active involvement of AG8 members in output development has succeeded in strengthening the transnational dimension and impacts of project results by extending their coverage significantly beyond the territories of partner countries (inclusion of France, Slovenia and Liechtenstein in key outputs). Moreover, all results produced by GoApply are being published and made available in structured way on 'CAPA – the Climate Adaptation Platform for the Alps', which has been developed as a main output of the Alpine Space project C3-Alps (2012-2014) and is currently being maintained and further deployed under the umbrella of EUSALP as part of the AG8 process (thereby also demonstrating the long-term use of ASP project outputs).

In detail, GoApply and the Alpine adaptation network were represented at all institutional AG8 meetings during the project runtime (see Table 3), thus facilitating interactions with AG8 members on several levels and in various ways: regular information about work progress and available results; involvement in output development (through workshops at meetings, interviews, brokering of contacts, provision of data and



information, written requests, and reviews and quality assurance of results); dissemination and uptake of GoApply results. At the European Climate Change Adaptation Conference (ECCA 2019) in May 2019 Lisbon, the Alpine adaptation network and AG8 have organised and conducted a successful joint session that has introduced key results on Alpine adaptation and risk governance to researchers and practitioners from across Europe.

### 3.2.2 Interactions and cooperation with the Alpine Climate Board (ACB)

The GoApply project and the Alpine adaptation policy maker network were represented at all institutional work meetings (see Table 3) and have been involved in the respective work process of the ACB up to now. Institutional and actor-based linkages were present in several respects: the responsible climate policy unit of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism is chair of the ACB, founding member of the network and GoApply project partner; the GoApply Lead Partner Environment Agency Austria has supported also the ACB in an expert role and is officially nominated as its member in the new mandate period; the PSAC is an official observer to the GoApply project; and several national members of the network are also members of the ACB. Several of the liaison mechanisms listed in section 3.4.2 of the given document have in fact already been put in place and practiced throughout the GoApply runtime. The members of the ACB have been regularly informed and updated about project activities and available results, were able to consider and benefit from project findings in the development of the Alpine Climate Target System 2050, and are contributing to the dissemination of the final results. The project has also been included in the stocktaking report of recent and ongoing climate change-related activities in the context of the Alpine Convention. The outcomes of GoApply have been highlighted at a recent workshop on the implementation of the target system and have been provided to the ACB as a highly relevant knowledge base for concretising the targets and planning implementation pathways.

### 3.2.3 Overview of transnational cooperation meetings

*Table 3: Institutional meetings of EUSALP AG8 and the ACB of the Alpine Convention, where interactions (information, consultation, exchange, involvement in GoApply output development) with the Alpine adaptation policy maker network and the GoApply project took place.*

EUSALP AG8	Alpine Climate Board
2 <sup>nd</sup> EUSALP AG8 Meeting, 22-23 September 2016, Annecy, France	1st ACB Meeting, 22-23 February 2017, Vienna
3 <sup>rd</sup> EUSALP AG8 Meeting, 15-16 March 2017, Zugspitze, Germany	2nd ACB Meeting, 18-19 September 2017, Vienna
4 <sup>th</sup> EUSALP AG8 Meeting, 19 September 2017, Innsbruck, Austria	3rd ACB Meeting, 30-31 January 2018, Vienna
5 <sup>th</sup> EUSALP AG8 Meeting, 12-13 April 2018, Piran, Slovenia	4th ACB Meeting, 04-05 June 2018, Vienna
6 <sup>th</sup> EUSALP AG8 Meeting, 26 September 2018, Hinterstoder, Austria	5th ACB Meeting, 21-22 January 2019, Vienna
7 <sup>th</sup> EUSALP AG8 Meeting, 25-26 April 2019, Seggau, Austria	Workshop on 'Implementation of the Alpine Climate Target System 2050 of the Alpine Convention', 13-14 May 2019, Salzburg



### 3.3 Added value of strengthening and sustaining transnational cooperation on climate adaptation

The GoApply project has already demonstrated the added value of transnational cooperation on climate adaptation during its runtime (see section 3.2). Sustaining and intensifying information exchange and cooperation with other transnational entities such as the AG8 and the ACB is key to delivering added value as regards, among others, the following general benefits:

- Strengthening transnational networks on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction / risk management in the Alpine macro-region
- Avoiding potential duplications and unwanted overlaps in terms of activities
- Creating the opportunity for complementing mutual efforts and for exploiting synergies
- Enhancing cross-sectoral cooperation and coherence between climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction policies, as called upon by the UN Sendai Framework and EU policies
- Closer strategic alignment of national adaptation policy processes with transnational adaptation strategies and implementation initiatives under the Alpine Convention and with respective AG8 activities on adaptation
- Strengthening the expertise on climate adaptation and its governance in AG8 and the ACB
- Creating the possibility of entering into (further) specific cooperation activities, such as joint projects, events, implementation initiatives, etc.

### 3.4 Agreements on structured exchange mechanisms

Based on the mandate entrusted by the PSG to the GoApply Lead Partner and WP4 leader Environment Agency Austria (UBA-AT) at the 5<sup>th</sup> GoApply partner meeting on 17-18 May 2019 in Berne, UBA-AT has consulted with the chairs of both AG8 and the ACB and put concrete proposals on how to achieve long-term and structured exchange to discussions in meetings of both bodies, resulting in agreements on the procedures and mechanisms described below.

#### 3.4.1 Exchange mechanisms with EUSALP AG8

Based on the mandate entrusted to the Environment Agency Austria (UBA-AT), the concept developed with the GoApply project partners, and on consultations with AG8 co-leaders, UBA-AT has presented and discussed a proposal for establishing structured interfaces between the Alpine adaptation policy maker network and AG8 of EUSALP at the 6<sup>th</sup> AG8 meeting on 26 September 2018 in Hinterstoder, Austria. The following procedures and mechanisms to maintain regular consultations and two-way information exchange have been agreed upon with all AG8 members and documented in the final minutes of the abovementioned AG8 meeting:

- **General principle:** To be effective in practice, mechanisms shall be kept simple, pragmatic, and straight-forward, and additional efforts for both groups shall be kept as low as possible.
- **Actors and roles:** The chairs / coordinators of both groups act as main hubs of information flows. In doing so, they will involve shared members of both groups as agents of information exchange to the extent possible. Extra efforts for other members of both groups shall be avoided or kept to a minimum.





- **Modes and mechanisms of information exchange and liaison:**
  - Via their chairs, both groups will exchange minutes of their respective meetings as well as other important information, such as about work plans, project developments or organisation of public events. As far as relevant communications are concerned, this will be done by including the respective chairs in the email distributors of each group.
  - A regular agenda item with updates about relevant activities of the respective other group will be included in the meeting agendas of both groups.
  - Reciprocal general invitation of the chair persons to group meetings in a guest or observer role. Actual attendance to meetings is optional and may depend on the issues on the agenda as well as on capacities at the given time. Chairs also have the right to delegate other members of their group, e.g. for whom attendance may be more convenient, or who may have membership roles in both bodies.
  - On a mutual and case-dependent basis, members of the respective other group may be invited to meetings to give specific inputs, e.g. if there are concrete results or other important information to be shared.
  - As far as possible and useful, options to organize meetings back-to-back will be considered by the chairs of both groups, especially if concrete synergies can be generated.
  - Both groups are willing to support each other in disseminating relevant work results and information.
- **Content dimension of exchange and cooperation:**
  - The adaptation policy maker network is invited to identify concrete topics or activities of joint interest to both groups and to bring them into the discussion about the next AG8 work plan prior to the next meeting of AG8 on 15-17 October 2019 in Switzerland.
  - The road map with thematic priorities for pro-longed cooperation of the policy maker network has been drafted with the ongoing discussion within AG8 on their future work plan in mind. The road map will be communicated to the AG8, in order to allow its consideration and to facilitate identification of potential interfaces and synergies.
- **Future perspective:** A vital goal of regular information exchange is to create the opportunity for both groups, or for interested members of both groups, to collaborate in more concrete ways on issues of common interest and to enter into specific cooperation activities, which may include project-based collaborations, organisation of joint events, etc. Potential participation of members of both groups in such activities is non-compulsory, i.e. subject to the individual and autonomous decisions of each institutional group member.

### 3.4.2 Exchange mechanisms with the Alpine Climate Board (ACB) of the Alpine Convention

Based on the mandate entrusted to the Environment Agency Austria (UBA-AT) and the concept developed with the GoApply project partners, UBA-AT has consulted with the Chair of the Alpine Climate Board, the Austrian Presidency of the Alpine Convention and the PSAC on how to establish structured interfaces between the Alpine adaptation policy maker network and the Alpine Climate Board in 2018 and 2019. Summing up the outcomes of these consultations, the following procedures and mechanisms to maintain regular consultations and two-way information exchange are welcomed by the Alpine adaptation policy maker network:



- **General principle:** To be effective in practice, mechanisms shall be kept simple, pragmatic, and straight-forward, and additional efforts for both groups shall be kept as low as possible.
- **Actors and roles:** The Alpine adaptation policy maker network and the Alpine Climate Board share a number of common actors, both in terms of institutions and their personal representatives, that are members of both groups. These shared actors represent institutional and personal linkages between both bodies, which significantly facilitates information exchange. Communication between both groups can thus rely largely on these actors acting as the main agents of mutual information flows in an informal and direct way. Beyond such double memberships, mechanisms for sharing information about the ACB with the national institutions responsible for adaptation policy making via 'official' channels are in place in all countries that are parties to the Alpine Convention. Currently, the following actors are represented in both groups:
  - The Head of Section Coordination Climate Policy of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism (BMNT) will continue to chair the Alpine Climate Board during the present mandate period 2019-2020. The same person is also representing the Austrian Ministry in the Alpine adaptation policy maker network since the beginning.
  - Two members of the Environment Agency Austria (UBA-AT), who have initiated the Alpine adaptation network in the frame of the C3-Alps project and have coordinated it in their role as GoApply Lead Partner during the last 2.5 years, have also been nominated as official members of the Alpine Climate Board for the current mandate period 2019-2020.
  - National actors responsible for national adaptation policy making in the countries of Liechtenstein, France, and Italy are members in both the Alpine Climate Board and the Alpine adaptation policy maker network (and have been part of the GoApply project either in a partner or observer role).
- **Modes and mechanisms of information exchange and liaison:**
  - A regular agenda item with updates about relevant activities of the respective other group will be included in the meeting agendas of both groups.
  - On a mutual and case-dependent basis, members of the respective other group may be invited to meetings to give specific inputs, e.g. if there are concrete results or other important information to be shared.
  - As far as possible and useful, options to organize meetings back-to-back will be considered by the chairs of both groups, especially if concrete synergies can be generated.
  - Both groups are willing to support each other in disseminating relevant work results and information.
- **Content dimension of exchange and cooperation:**
  - The road map with thematic priorities for pro-longed cooperation of the policy maker network has been drafted with the Alpine Climate Target System 2050 of the Alpine Convention in mind.
  - The road map will also be communicated to the Alpine Climate Board, in order to facilitate identification of synergy potentials and possible partnerships regarding implementation pathways of the target system.
  - In its roles as Lead Partner of the GoApply project and current coordinator of the Alpine adaptation policy maker network, the Environment Agency Austria (UBA-AT) has been invited by the Alpine Climate Board to share the GoApply work results with the ACB at its stakeholder implementation workshop on 13-14 May 2019 in Salzburg. The state-of-the-art knowledge about climate adaptation



governance in the Alpine countries produced by this project provides an excellent knowledge base for the Alpine Convention to implement its target system across countries, levels, and sectors as well as to mobilize and involve relevant actors and stakeholders.

- **Future perspective:** A vital goal of regular information exchange is to create the opportunity for both groups, or for interested members of both groups, to collaborate in more concrete ways on pathways and initiatives for implementing the Alpine Climate Target System 2050. This includes options related to closer alignment of transnational and national adaptation strategies and initiatives, prioritisation of Alpine-wide approaches in national policy making on adaptation, initiation of pilot actions, or contributions to regular updates of the stock-taking of mitigation and adaptation activities with relevance for the Alpine Convention. Potential participation of members of both groups in such activities is non-compulsory, i.e. subject to the individual and autonomous decisions of each institutional group member.

### 3.5 Outlook on next steps

- Sharing the 'road map' of the Alpine adaptation network with the chairs of EUSALP AG8 and the ACB in order to facilitate identification of synergies and potential cooperation activities.
- Developing proposals for concrete future cooperation topics and activities as inputs to the updated work plan of AG8 and to the implementation of the Alpine Climate Targets System 2050 of the Alpine Convention.
- Participation of the network coordinator (UBA-AT) in the next institutional meetings of AG8 (15-17 October 2019, Vitznau, Switzerland) and the ACB (16-17 September 2019, Lyon, France).
- Invitation of the chair persons of AG8 and the ACB to the next network meeting (tbd, autumn 2019).
- Reporting about ongoing activities and processes of AG8 and the ACB at the next network meeting (tbd, autumn 2019).