

Wuppertal Institut
für Klima, Umwelt, Energie
GmbH

INTERREG Project

**Climate Neutral Alps 2050. Make
Best Practice Minimum Standard!**

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Project Outline-

0 Editorial note

The pressing need to address climate issues in the Alpine region led to a decision at the Xth Alpine Conference to draw up a study on "how the Alps can become climate neutral by 2050".

Based on a pre-study by the Wuppertal Institute in 2009, involving numerous experts from the Alpine region, an INTERREG project "Climate Neutral Alps 2050. Make Best Practice Minimum Standard!" will be developed and the application submitted in autumn 2010.

The following outline begins by describing the background (section 1) and presenting initial key data of such a concept (section 2) and subsequently briefly outlines the framework for potential INTERREG funding (section 3).

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1 Background "Climate Neutral Alps"

1.1 Reason for the project

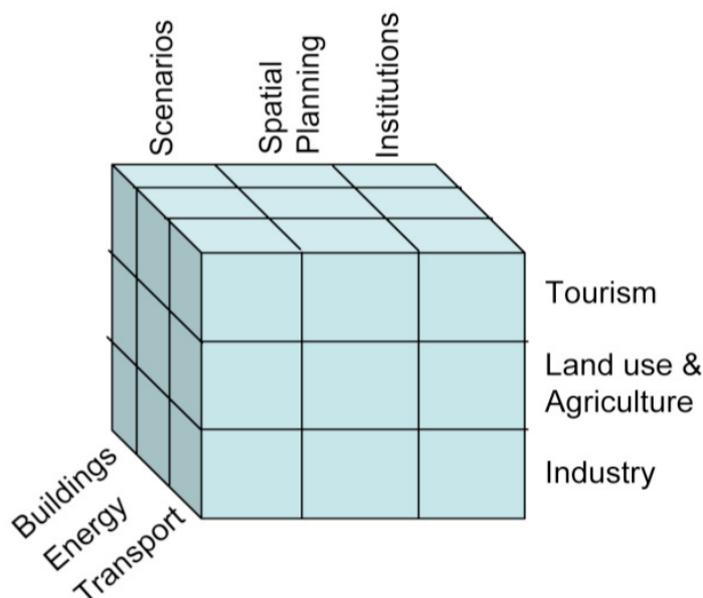
Managing climate change and reducing climate-damaging emissions will be one of the main challenges for our society over the coming decades. As a unique and highly sensitive habitat and due to their diverse ecosystems and the vulnerability of their important infrastructures to changes in the natural environment, the Alps are particularly threatened by climate change. Furthermore, the latest findings of climate research indicate that the Alps are likely to experience significantly higher temperature increases than other parts of Europe.

At present no detailed data is available on greenhouse gas emissions or the resulting climate balance for the Alpine region. Estimates point to a current level of around 100 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually. In terms of the population in the Alps, this represents a per capita level of around 7.4 tonnes a year. Factoring in the energy needed for the manufacture and transport of goods brought into the Alpine region from outside could put the figure significantly higher. More recent research findings have made it plain that greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced to a global mean of less than 2 tonnes per capita by the middle of this century, if global warming is to be stabilised at 2 degrees. The faster this reduction is achieved, the more likely it is that warming can be limited to this level.

Against this background, the Xth Alpine Conference adopted its climate action plan, which aims to make the Alps a model region for mitigating and adapting to climate change. At the same time, the Conference decided to conduct a study into "how the Alps can become climate neutral by 2050".

1.2 Areas of action and thematic clusters for climate neutral Alps

A pre-study financed by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety further operationalised this issue. It identified three in part overlapping areas of action which can be used to study implementation options for climate neutrality. The areas of action each cover three thematic clusters and are structured as follows:



Areas of action on climate neutrality in the Alpine region

Source: Wuppertal Institute 2009

The *first area of action* comprises the three main energy consuming and GHG emitting sectors:

- Buildings and construction
- Energy
- Transport

The *second area of action* comprises the main business sectors and activities responsible for a large share of greenhouse gas emissions:

- Tourism
- Land use and agriculture
- Other industries, services and trade

The *third area of action* covers the cross-cutting clusters:

- Scenarios and visions for future energy uses and emissions
- Spatial planning
- Institutions

1.3 Definition of climate neutrality and scope of inventory

The preparatory work on the definition of the term "climate neutrality" and defining the scope and boundaries of the emissions inventory formed the main content of the pre-study. The following sums up the results of this preliminary work. A final definition for the Alpine region is still pending.

In order to fulfil the requirements of an innovative approach, the definition of climate neutrality should meet certain criteria in each of the nine thematic clusters named under 1.2. At the same time, a certain flexibility is needed with regard to specific circumstances in the Alpine region, data availability and local stakeholders' powers to act.

- The GHG inventory should be as comprehensive as possible (incorporating, as far as practicable, all relevant greenhouse gases and all relevant emission sources).
The procedure for emissions accounting will be specified and coordinated between the partners in the course of the project development (probably cluster-based), as an inventory can be calculated in widely different ways¹.
- The inventory should transparently and comprehensively illustrate the planned measures and their reduction potential so that target-oriented recommendations for action can be derived from it.
Offsetting measures – through emission reductions outside the area of the GHG inventory - should be avoided and should not be used to justify business as usual.

1.4 Aim of the project

The aim of the proposed project is to show how existing know-how in methods of reducing CO₂ emissions, many of which have already been implemented in pilot studies, can be applied throughout the Alpine region. Individual measures are known and have frequently been evaluated with regard to their reduction potential. However, there is insufficient knowledge on how the different reduction measures can be combined to achieve a high level of climate neutrality throughout the region, and how these combined uses can be drawn together in a uniform standard.

This approach will be piloted in various partner regions based on thematic clusters. A second step will further develop the regional and thematic approaches so that they can be combined and implemented throughout the region, leading to climate neutrality in the Alps.

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- a) Under the territory principle: all greenhouse gas emissions and sinks located in the area being studied are included in the inventory.
- b) Under the consumer responsibility principle: emissions are assigned to the triggering demand; the place where the emissions arise is not decisive. This method would also allow the GHG footprint of imported and exported goods and services to be included. This may make the inventory very complex, but for some areas applying the principle of consumer responsibility seems appropriate.
- c) Methods which include other aspects, e.g. extra-Alpine emissions arising from travel to the holiday destination.

This should be achieved by:

1. creating different pilot regions in the Alpine states for each of the thematic clusters of climate neutrality. In these pilot regions thematic, sectoral or local approaches to achieving climate neutrality will be optimally linked to have the broadest possible impact. This can be done via suitable local pilot projects run by the partners and/or other actors involved in the project.
2. summarising and communicating the results from the pilot regions in an integrative overall strategy. By optimally interlinking pilot activities and their dissemination in the entire Alpine region, the project aims to encourage others to imitate the "pioneer" regions.

Thus the project makes an important and innovative contribution to initiating and accelerating the necessary transformation to climate neutral business and energy structures in the pilot regions and beyond.

2 Structure of the Project "Climate Neutral Alps"

A general project leader will be in charge of content for the overall project. The regional project partners will nominate persons responsible for the individual themes or regions. They will have the task of managing project development and implementation in the different regions in close cooperation with the general project leader. The persons with regional responsibility have a decisive role in the progress of the project as they act both as regional driving force and as a contact point for the implementation of best practice, playing an essential role in linking and disseminating best practice examples. In addition, an overarching project advisory board will be set up at the highest level, composed of a stakeholder from each pilot region, as well as representatives of the project partners working in the cross-cutting areas.



Structure of project "Climate Neutral Alps"

Source: Wuppertal Institute

The number of pilot regions must be selected to ensure that all members of the Alpine Convention are represented and all thematic clusters under 1.2 are covered. The aim is to select between 5 and a maximum of 7 pilot regions, also striving to designate transboundary pilot regions. As a rule, each pilot region will focus on a specific content area, although it is possible that several clusters will be dealt with in one pilot region. However, duplication of the thematic focus must be avoided.

An additional task of the pilot regions with regard to implementing mitigation measures is to bear in mind the transferability of these measures to other regions. To this end, it would be appropriate to observe and document supporting and hindering factors, processes and framework conditions of the implementation process.

While the activation, concept development and (trial) implementation of the CO₂ reduction potential in the different thematic clusters will take place mainly under the leadership of the pilot regions, communication and dissemination activities are to be classed as cross-cutting activities. Concept developments will be pooled and disseminated by the general project leader, enabling the findings from the pilot regions to be transferred to the entire Alpine region.

In this process, the pilot regions will cooperate closely with the sub-project "dissemination", which has the key function of creating a corresponding dissemination network throughout the Alps and at the same time developing and making available appropriate dissemination instruments in the pilot regions and the Alps as a whole.

Overall, the first phase of the project will focus on the activities within the pilot regions. The second phase will then deal more with interlinking and disseminating the climate protection solutions throughout the Alps.

During the project development phase (before autumn 2010) suitable pilot regions and potential project partners will be put forward and designated. This should take particular account of existing approaches to the nine thematic clusters under 1.2.

2.1 Typical tasks within the pilot regions

The following steps will be carried out in all the pilot regions. While each pilot region will be distinguished through its thematic and regional features, inter-linking will ensure that these are harmonised within the overall project.

2.1.1 Inventory

An inventory of greenhouse gas emissions will be drawn up for the thematic cluster which forms the focus of each region. This data describes the starting situation for calculating the saving effects achievable through best practice, and for facilitating a target-oriented evaluation. Consistency and transparency in the data are especially important to ensure that the results from the different pilot regions can be compared and transferred. These goals will be achieved by clearly defining the boundaries of the emissions accounting to neighbouring thematic clusters. It is proposed that project steering group agrees on a uniform procedure for selecting the principle for assigning GHG emissions (territory principle and/or polluter principle).

The compilation of the GHG inventory will also include an evaluation of how useful current political and legal or support-related framework conditions are for supporting the implementation of best practice in the respective thematic clusters. This will identify weaknesses and areas needing improvement which will be taken into account in the elaboration of recommendations for action.

2.1.2 Establishing a contact point for implementing best practice in the pilot region

In every pilot region the participating project partners will appoint, or themselves act as, a contact point for "making best practice minimum standard". The role of the contact point, in close cooperation with other regional actors, is

- to merge the results of the research into best practice examples with the GHG inventory, in particular the political and legal framework conditions
- to use this to develop a regional thematic concept on implementing the strategy "making best practice minimum standard". This should involve working with key actors and the public to elaborate a concept on how different examples of best practice can be combined in a strategy in order to achieve climate neutrality in selected sectors in the respective pilot region

- on this basis, the contact point will initiate and monitor the implementation of the concept. To this end, individual pilot projects will be specifically implemented as best practice in the pilot regions and within the duration the project. The aim is for each project to focus on one of the thematic clusters named in chapter 1.2
- communication work within the region is also an essential basis for exchanging experience gained in the different regions in phase two of the project.

2.1.3 Inventory and projections for CO₂ emissions

The emissions inventory will be calculated on the basis of the selected best practice examples, by comparing the previously established starting situation (see 2.1.1) with the reduction potential or achievements of the individual measures.

These accompanying analyses ensure that the selected measures achieve the goals set and that the concepts developed at regional level are constructively incorporated into the overall concept "Climate Neutral Alps", making use of synergy effects. The results of the analyses are also a basic tool for calculating an emissions inventory which can be transferred to other regions and the entire Alpine region.

2.1.4 Deriving recommendations for action to transfer results

Recommendations for action to facilitate the transfer of developed and, in some cases, tested concepts will be elaborated by the regional contact points or sub-project leaders.

This includes proposals to eliminate deficiencies in the political and legal framework conditions highlighted by the GHG inventory (2.1.1). If necessary, the specific wishes and needs of the participating stakeholders will be outlined.

2.2 Disseminating the results within the pilot regions and across the entire Alps

The dissemination and communication of the results plays a key role in the project. The first steps, taking place in the pilot regions, are aimed at implementing good practice examples in these regions to an extent which ensures climate-neutral CO₂ emissions for the thematic cluster addressed in each pilot region.

However, it must also be shown how these results can be transferred to the project's other pilot regions and the Alpine region in general. The goal of best

practice as a minimum standard must not be restricted to the pilot regions, but must ultimately lead to the whole of the Alps becoming climate neutral.

The results of the GHG inventory must be operationalised in such a way as to ensure their transferability. To this end, a comprehensive communication concept is needed which incorporates the relevant multipliers both within the pilot regions and the entire Alpine region.

3 Drawing up an INTERREG application "climate neutral Alps"

An application for funding for the project outlined above will be made under the support structures of the Alpine Space Programme of the European Territorial Cooperation 2007-2013.

The planned project is linked in various ways to the priorities designated in the programme:

The development of good practice examples in CO₂ emissions reduction into a region-wide minimum standard conforms with Priority 1 *knowledge exchange and common perspectives*, which should be elaborated for the entire region, and to Priority 3 *careful management of nature, landscape and cultural heritage*. The optimisation of transport also envisaged in the project complies with a requirement of Priority 2 *development of sustainable transport systems*.

Translation table page 7

Projektsteuerung	Project management
Inhaltliche Gesamt-Projektleitung	General project leader (content)
- Teilprojektleitung (Pilotregionen)	- Sub-project leaders (pilot regions)
- Beirat (Stakeholder & Projektpartner)	- Advisory board (stakeholders & project partners)
Formale Projektabwicklung	Formal project execution
Pilotregionen (thematisch und regional verteilt) Region 1, Region 2...	Pilot regions (thematic and regional) Region 1, Region 2...
Vernetzung und Verbreitung	Interlinking and dissemination
Ausweitung der regionalen und thematischen Erfahrungen auf den gesamten Alpenraum	Broader application of regional and thematic experiences to entire Alpine region