

ClimAlpTour: first results from the model regions

The ClimAlpTour project, co-financed by the European Union in the framework of the Alpine Space program, through the European Regional Development Fund, aims at providing a novel, science-based approach to tackle the impacts of climate change on Alpine tourism. First results from the model-regions are now available and pave the way to a successful closure in the next months for this challenging transboundary initiative.

The main outcomes of the field studies carried out by the project partners in their alpine countries until now have been collected in view of the project final conference - which is expected to be held next Spring.

The activities reported in this 1st issue of the Project Newsletter represent a limited selection of the topics and fields that have been carefully examined in the framework of ClimAlpTour.

On the occasion of the next project meeting, scheduled in Vienna on November 25 & 26, the Project Steering Committee will meet, with an expected large participation from the partners participate.

New book on Climate Change, the Economic Crisis and Tourism to be edited as an outcome of the ClimAlpTour Conference (Bolzano, November 20th 21th 2009)



Before the beginning of 2011, a book including the proceedings of the Conference „Facing Climate Change and the Global Economic Crisis: Challenges for the Future of Tourism” will be published.

The publication will be edited by Prof. Emeritus Klaus Weiermair (Innsbruck University), Harald Pechlaner and Marianna Elmi from EURAC – European Academy Bolzano, Andreas Strobl (Innsbruck University), Markus Schuckert (University of Applied Science, Chur) and will be financed by the Alpine Space Programme. Thus, the book will be available free of charge.

The Conference was organized in the framework of the ClimAlpTour project and held on November 20th - 21st, 2009 at the EURAC Accademia Europea in Bolzano / Bozen (I). Aims of the conference were to present the state of the art of the research on climate change and tourism, to create a network of, and to investigate the interrelation of climate change with other factors (such as

the economic system) and their impacts on tourism. Therefore, the conference has proved a unique occasion to bring together, under the common denominator of the ClimAlpTour project, young and senior researchers who have been recently working on the topic of climate change and tourism. During the two-day event, 20 papers have been presented and five keynote speakers from research centers, universities and institutions worldwide have tackled the topic from different perspectives.

Of course, most of the presentation focused on the Alps, but also presentations and papers about Hong Kong and Asia, India and Africa have enriched the program, in order to put the Alps, with their specific economy and ecosystems, in the context of the effects of global climate change.

For more information about the upcoming publication and the conference, information can be requested directly to Marianna Elmi (marianna.elmi@eurac.edu), researcher at EURAC – Accademia Europea di Bolzano.

Common CLISP-ClimAlpTour Midterm Conference successfully held in Acqui Terme, Italy, 26th May 2010



The common Midterm Conference of the CLISP and ClimAlpTour projects was successfully held on the 26th of May in Acqui Terme, Piemonte, Italy. The Conference was hosted by CLISP Project Partner Provincia di Alessandria and organised in cooperation with the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea and UNCEM Piemonte.

The event aimed at enhancing the visibility of the two projects, informing a broader expert and public audience about the ongoing projects' activities and available interim results, and pointing out potential common goals & synergies between the two projects.

For the first time ever, two Alpine Space projects set to closely collaborate in implementing their public conferences. The idea of integrating the two mid-term conferences derived by the fact that both projects focus on climate change impacts and adaptation strategies, with both spatial planning and tourism being strongly affected by the effects of climate change.

By the example of these two key players in climate change adaptation the event aimed at raising awareness on the need of developing new joint and inter-sector strategies in climate change adaptation.

In the first part of the conference, mainly addressed to the general public and mass media, examples have been quoted from the running projects' activities in two CLISP model regions. In the afternoon session, the experts have shared their views in two round table discussions on several topics related to the two projects.

The event, which was attended by an international audience of more than 100 participants from many Alpine Space countries, had also registered a good media coverage, including various national and regional newspapers as well as electronic media, which clearly reflects the growing public interest on climate change related issues.

To get deeper information about the topics discussed during the meeting in Acqui Terme, refer to the presentations of the participants in the conference:

- Welcome and Introduction to the CLISP project (Wolfgang Lexer, Lead Partner, Environment Agency Austria) (<http://bit.ly/bcvkOZ>)
- Welcome and introduction (AS JTS) (<http://bit.ly/90f0la>)
- “Climate change: Impacts on tourism and on spatial development and joint strategies for adaptation” (Felix Kolbeck, Munich University & Pier Carlo Sandei, United Nations Environment Programme UNEP (Regional Office for Europe - Vienna Office) (<http://bit.ly/cGdAJX>)
- CLISP – Introduction of Model Regions and work programme:
 - Province of Alessandria: (Claudio Coffano & Cecilia Mosca, Project Partner Province of Alessandria) (<http://bit.ly/byZ8HS>);
 - Autonomous Province of Bolzano: (Marc Zebisch, European Academy of Bolzano - EURAC) (<http://bit.ly/cUhdLe>)
- ClimAlpTour Round Table: “Make Alps an interesting tourist destination all the year round. ClimAlpTour, innovative tourist strategies as a response to climate change”

ClimAlpTour, WP6 Workshop Training, EURAC Bolzano/Bozen (Italy), 20th September 2010

As decided in the last Steering Committee during the common CLISP-ClimAlpTour Midterm Conference in the city of Acqui Terme, a training was held by EURAC on September the 20th, 2010 in Bolzano \ Bozen in order to share the methodologies for WP6 workshops. The workshop was organised at the EURAC Accademia Europea di Bolzano \ Europäische Akademie Bozen and involved the participants in an excursion in one of the pilot areas of the ClimAlpTour project and in a simulation of a workshop with local actors.



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A sharing experiences event between ClimAlpTour and CLISP projects next Spring near Cuneo

The Acqui Terme CLISP-ClimAlpTour Midterm joint conference has registered a significant public and local stakeholder audience and achieved an innovative breakthrough by analyzing together the overlapping themes and items at stake in both Alpine Space projects.

For this reason, the organizers MATTM e UNCEM intend to promote with own resources and with the support of willing Project Partners, a similar event in the spring of 2011. The event will be held in the nearness of the city of Cuneo, south-west Piedmont. The vicinity of the event location to some of the pilot areas of the ClimAlpTour project will also allow to focus in depth on the issues related to the relation between tourism and climate change in mountain areas.

Expert hearing at the Munich University of Applied Sciences. How climate change is influencing the Alpine region and how can it give wings to innovations.



Palms in the Inn Valley, a looming “alpine Ballermann” and the call for snow and sun guarantee were the most striking issues of the expert hearing at the Munich University of Applied Sciences. The faculty of tourism had invited for an expert hearing with workshops that served to kick off the EU ClimAlpTour project. About 70 experts from the insurance and finance sector, natural landscape

management, NGOs and tourism experienced three top-class lecturers and productive workshops. In the end, they received answers to questions like: “How does climate change influence tourism in the Alps?” The risks and chances for insurance companies and investors became just as apparent as possible strategies for today and the future. In short: Even though climate change promotes innovations, especially with regard to summer products, the overall awareness that adaptation to climate change is absolutely necessary is still not strong enough according to experts.

Read more: <http://bit.ly/cEJdWU>

Read more: <http://bit.ly/9oPzJE>

First solar skilift in the world to be built in Tenna, Graubunden Canton (Switzerland)



The village of Tenna in the Safien Valley (Graubunden Canton, Switzerland) will be soon free to boast of an unprecedented technological wonder: the world's first completely solar ski-lift. In march 2010, in fact, the Tenna's company which runs the old conventional ski-lift decided to replace it with the first solar plant ever built. On the existing plant's track will be realized an electric ski-lift and solar panels will be installed on the cable tow. The panels are adjustable, thus allowing to exploit at maximum

solar beams. Moreover, they can also be folded when snowing without weighing them down and allowing snow to fall over the ski runs below the ski-lift. The solar ski-lift inauguration is scheduled for the 2010-2011 winter season. The solar plant will be functioning during both summers and winters, thus producing some 90.000 Kwh per year in the face of a 22.000 Kwh consumption. Thus, the exceeding solar energy will be also sold, generating profits.

Read More: <http://bit.ly/dzqmgY>

New E- publication: "The role of tour operators in climate change mitigation"

A recent publication by Naturefriends International and respect - Institute for Integrative Tourism and Development - has focused on the critical role of tour operators in climate change mitigation. Andreas Zotz, who is the author of this publication - originally a diploma thesis which was awarded in the final round of the Austrian research contest "Tourissimus 2009" - criticizes the European market leaders in tourism in their attitude of shying away from their climate responsibility. Tour operators are an integral part of the international tourism industry. Nowadays, their role extends far beyond their original wholesaling function. Due to strategic mergers, consistent market expansion and engagement in other business areas along the value chain, such as accommodation, transport or incoming operations, the travel industry is currently dominated by few but strong actors. The strategic decisions of these market leaders will therefore have a tremendous impact on the climate performance of the entire travel industry. Thus, they play a key role in the transformation of tourism into a "green economic sector" – which is a declared goal of the UN World Tourism Organization.

Read More: <http://bit.ly/dIEltx>

A recent article analyses relations on climate change and tourism in the black forest



The tourism potential in mountain areas is mainly based on the attractiveness of natural resources that are climate-sensitive. A recent article appeared on the “International Journal of Biometeorology”, Volume 54, N. 1 focuses on the topic of how tourism can adapt to modified climate conditions and associated changes to the tourism potential in low mountain ranges. In order to provide the scientific audit with good case studies at the local and regional level, the analysis was carried out in three different model areas in the Black Forest (Southwest Germany).

The article analyses the climate tourism potential on a wide series of thermal, physical and aesthetic parameters in a time span going from 1961 to 2050, and the outcomes are presented using the form of Climate-Tourism-Information-Scheme (CTIS). The results which emerged from such an analysis well show how the adaptation of tourism to a changing climate heavily depends on both stakeholders and tourists’ awareness as well as adaptive capability.

“Vertical gradient of climate change and climate tourism conditions in the Black Forest” by C. Endler, K. Oehler and A. Matzarakis, in International Journal of Biometeorology, Volume 54, Number 1, pp. 45-61.

Read More and Download the full article: <http://bit.ly/b4yCyD>

An article on “The Guardian” highlights the flood threats from a glacier on Alpine French village



An article appeared on the British newspaper “The Guardian” on September the 7th 2010, highlights the threats coming from the Tête-Rousse Glacier, which lays down at an altitude of 3200 metres in the French Alps, close to the normal route up to the Mount Blanc, the



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ascent to Aiguille du Goûter. In fact, trapped under the glacier, some 65,000 cubic metre pocket of water – the equivalent of 20 Olympic swimming pools – are laying down, menacing the village of Saint-Gervais, which is settled just below it.

What this can mean is well acknowledged in Saint-Gervais' history: in 1892, 80,000 cubic metres of water that had collected in a sub-glacial cavity burst through the ice "cork" that was holding it in. A torrential flow of water tore down rocks and trees in its path and buried Saint-Gervais in mud and debris, leaving 175 dead. And nowadays, due to climate change impact on glaciers' surface, the danger reached again high levels.

The alarm first appeared in 2007, when the thickness of the ice was measured by radar, and it was confirmed in 2009 after being reckoned with a proton nuclear magnetic resonance. According to the current mayor, Jean-Marc Peilleux, far greater damage would be caused now, "due to urbanisation and the large number of tourists visiting the glacier". As many as 900 houses could be swept away.

This kinds of news well represent how climate change and human-related impacts on natural alpine assets may reveal to be extremely dangerous in its consequences for local populations as well as unaware tourists visiting some of Europe's most amazing mountain landscapes.

Read more: <http://bit.ly/bfav1Y>