

AlpES

Alpine Ecosystem Services – mapping, maintenance and management



The project [“AlpES – Alpine Ecosystem Services – mapping, maintenance and management”](#) has the objectives to introduce a common understanding of ecosystem services as a regional and transnational environmental governance framework and train and support stakeholders in understanding, valuing and managing them. The project started in December 2015 and will run until December 2018. It is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg Alpine Space programme.

AlpES intends, in close collaboration with stakeholders, to (1) develop a shared Alpine ecosystem services (ES) concept, (2) carry out a mapping and assessment of ES for the Alpine Space (AS) cooperation area including testing in selected test regions across the AS, (3) provide stakeholders with the results through an interactive web GIS and (4) ensure a multi-level and cross-sectoral transfer of AlpES results to a maximum number of stakeholders via a suite of innovative, tailored and transferable learning tools and targeted activities (cf. [our work packages](#)).

During the first year of project implementation, AlpES partners were actively working towards the development of a common understanding of ecosystem services and of a harmonised concept of ES mapping and assessment for the Alpine region. (cf. [Digest | Common understanding of Ecosystem Services in the Alps](#)). With the support of national and local stakeholders and project observers, we have developed a frame of reference for the theme of ecosystem services specific to the Alpine context, focusing on ES definitions, classifications, existing studies as well as mapping and assessment approaches. At the moment, we are analysing policy backgrounds from the international to the local scale, in order to identify potentials for implementing the ES concept and ES-based approaches in decision-making processes.

Concurrently, we have selected [eight ES](#) based on their relevance for the Alps and are now working on the development of indicators for mapping and assessing the supply (potential/status), flow and demand of these ES for the entire AS cooperation area.



AlpES partners met in Innsbruck (AT) in December 2016. Eurac Research (IT), lead partner • University of Innsbruck (AT) • Institute for Interdisciplinary Mountain Research, Austrian Academy of Sciences (AT) • Centre For Studies and Expertise on Risks, Environment, Mobility and Urban and Country planning, Cerema (FR) • Safe Mountain Foundation (IT) • Veneto Region (IT) • Piedmont Region (IT) • Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for nature conservation (SI) • Principality of Liechtenstein, Office of Environment (LI) • Institute for Environmental Planning and Spatial Development, ifuplan (DE)

In the coming months, we will test the mapping and assessment approach we are currently developing in [nine different pilot regions](#). The results of the mapping and assessment of ES will be published and constantly updated on an interactive web GIS and will soon be publicly available. We have also launched an updated version of the Alpine wiki [WIKIAlps](#) and we intend to expand its content with the outcomes of our research and relevant entries on ecosystem services and natural capital throughout the duration of the project.

We aim to make all tools developed within AlpES, from the web GIS and WIKIAlps to the capacity-building model, applicable by all interested stakeholders. To this end, key stakeholders are actively involved in their

development. Throughout the current project phase, we have planned three cycles of stakeholder involvement. A specific focus of this involvement is set on identifying the needs of stakeholders and the potential of implementation of discrete AlpES outputs in their work. The first cycle has just been concluded. In the past few months, we have carried out face-to-face meetings with different stakeholders and discussed the first results and main themes of the project's first work package (WP T1), namely the development of a common understanding and a harmonized concept of ES mapping and assessment for the Alpine region, in order to integrate their feedback in the further development of the WP and of the project in general. The second and third cycles of stakeholder involvement, will take place this summer. These cycles will be dedicated to discussions with stakeholders about the choice of our ES indicators and their potential use in reporting and decision-making processes (WP T2), as well as the functionality of the AlpES online tools – the web GIS and WIKIAlps (WP T3).

These discussions will also serve as a basis for the work of partners in the test regions and will lay the groundwork for the development of the AlpES capacity-building model, which will be used to transfer AlpES results to stakeholders in several trainings and transnational workshops in the final year of the project. The overall concept and the detailed design of the individual training units and learning tools that will compose the capacity-building model are currently being drafted.

We would be happy to establish a regular exchange of information on the progress of the project with Euromontana and its members, and we will be happy to answer any questions and provide further information on the project if required!

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The Alpine Space (AS) is an important provider of ecosystem services (ES). These ES are one of the main pillars of a Green Economy in the Alps, a key driver of Alpine development and the focus of the next State of the Alps report. The population and different economic sectors such as tourism, forestry, agriculture, energy and transport in- and outside the AS derive benefits from ES. However, sectoral conflicts are becoming increasingly complex. AlpES builds on and provides testing and implementation opportunities for the ES concept, which is already established at EU level and can help in resolving conflicts among different interests, particularly in transnational contexts.

AlpES lasts from December 2015 to December 2018 and is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg Alpine Space programme.