

Annual report 2012

In 2012 ISCAR continued its activities following the objectives of the ISCAR convention under the presidency of Prof. Anna Giorgi (University of Milan and Mountain University in Edolo, Italy). All partners and delegates of ISCAR see: <http://www.iscar-alpineresearch.org/iscar>

1. AlpWeek 2012

AlpWeek 2012 "Renewable Alps": The third AlpWeek took place on September 5-8, 2012 in Valposchiavo, Switzerland, with app. 450 participants mainly from policy, administration, NGO`s and science. A novelty was the cooperation of the Swiss Presidency of the Alpine Convention and the AlpWeek consortium with CIPRA, ISCAR, ALPARC, Alliance in the Alps, and CAA in the organisation of the AlpWeek. In the frame of the AlpWeek, the XIIth Minister Conference of the Alpine Convention took place as well. Scientists and scientific institutions were well represented in the AlpWeek: ISCAR in collaboration with the University of Geneva (Bernard Debarbieux) organised two sessions on "Renewing Alpine Governance". ISCAR partners and delegates were very active and organised several sessions and excursions, and Anna Giorgi participated in the final podium discussion. The complete programme: <http://www.alpweek.org>

2. Projects, Initiatives

ISCAR-Workshop "New highlanders": Following a decision from 2010, ISCAR is focusing its activities on specific topics of scientific interest as well as of relevance for the Alpine Convention. In 2012 Oliver Bender and Axel Borsdorf organised a second ISCAR workshop on in-migration to the Alps (new highlanders). The topic was oriented to the Working Group "Demography and Employment" of the Alpine Convention, which cooperated in the organisation of the workshop. Based on an synthesis article of Oliver Bender (published in the journal Mountain Research and Development 32 (2), 2012) and five invited scientific inputs, 20 participants discussed on processes and consequences of in-migration in the Alps. The findings of the workshop will be summarised in a report and integrated into the next status report on the Alps on demography.

The Ecological Continuum Initiative: The Continuum Initiative (organised by CIPRA, ALPARC and ISCAR) supported the activities of the Platform Ecological Networks of the Alpine Convention. The publication "The 50 Most Important Questions Relating to the Maintenance and Restoration of an Ecological Continuum in the European Alps" has been accepted by PLoS One and will be published in 2013 (<http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0053139>). This publication is the result of a joint project of the Continuum Initiative, the mentioned Platform and the Alpine Space project ECONNECT (Lead Prof. Chris Walzer).

Research in Alpine Protected Areas (ISCAR-P): The focus of ISCAR-P activities in 2012 was twofold: First the function as editorial board of the journal *eco.mont* (editorial office at the Institute for International Mountain Research IGF in Innsbruck with Axel Borsdorf, Valerie Braun, Brigitte Scott). In 2012 the number of submitted papers increased considerably, mainly a result of the fact, that the journal was taken up into the procedure of the Thomson index and following more attractive for scientists. Second, ISCAR-P supported the National Park Hohe Tauern as scientific board in the preparation of the research symposium in 2013 (10.-12. June) in Mittersill (Austria). The members of ISCAR-P (delegates from the Network of Alpine Protected Areas ALPARC, and ISCAR) met on 29. October in Innsbruck.

3. Alpine Convention: Meetings, contributions of ISCAR

ISCAR enforced its engagement oriented to the Alpine Convention (AC): In a position paper ("Principles of work"), which was translated into German, French and Italian and sent to all

delegations and observers of the AC, ISCAR made evident the principles of its work related to the Alpine Convention, based on established practices of international scientific policy advice, and expressed its interest for cooperation with bodies of the AC. The document was published on the ISCAR homepage: <http://www.iscar-alpineresearch.org/iscar/principles2012/>. Based on this document, ISCAR was mandated to organise a scientific review of the report on the Alps on sustainable tourism by the project group and the Swiss Presidency of the Alpine Convention. In order to provide current scientific knowledge to the AC Working Group "Demography and employment", Oliver Bender and Axel Borsdorf (University of Innsbruck) organised for ISCAR and the Working Group an expert workshop on "New highlanders" (in-migration to the Alps) on September 4th in Poschiavo. The workshop report will be published in 2013. Finally, ISCAR contributed to the common activity report of all observers, which was submitted for the first time to the Minister Conference in Poschiavo.

As an official observer of the Alpine Convention (AC), ISCAR contributed to meetings of the bodies of the AC: Anna Giorgi and Thomas Scheurer participated in the 48th (St. Gallen, CH), the 49th (Poschiavo, CH) and 50th (Milan, I) meeting of the Standing Committee. Anna Giorgi represented ISCAR at the XIIth Minister Conference in Poschiavo (CH). Experts engaged by ISCAR continued their cooperation in working groups and platforms: Leopold Füreder in the working group "Water", Fritz Reimoser in the working group "Wildlife and Society" (until the end of 2012), Oliver Bender in the working group "Demography and Employment", Andrej Udovc in the working group "Agriculture", Thomas Scheurer in the platform "Ecological Networks" and in the working group "Macroregion", and Philippe Bourdeau in the elaboration of the fourth report on the Alps on sustainable tourism (until the end of 2012). Mimi Urbanc represented ISCAR in the jury of the young scientist award of the Secretariat of the Alpine Convention (Regula Imhof).

4. Partners, Meetings of the Committee, Members, Office

Partners: The Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities changed its status within ISCAR and will collaborate in future as a guest organisation.

Committee Meetings: Under the presidency of Prof. Anna Giorgi, the committee assembled for two meetings, the 24th meeting on 1. March in Innsbruck, and the 25th on 7. September in Poschiavo. Decisions were taken, among others, concerning the contributions to the AlpWeek 2012; the nomination of ISCAR delegates in all Working Groups and Platforms of the Alpine Convention; and the elaboration of national lists on mountain scientists.

Changes in the Committee: Dr. Luigi Lorenzetti (Labialp Mendriso, CH) left ISCAR by the end of 2012. The Swiss Academy of Social Sciences and Humanities will elect a delegate in early 2013. Prof. Roland Psenner has been elected as Dean of the University of Innsbruck; Günter Köck will replace him in case of absence.

Contacts: Members of ISCAR and its office were regularly in contact with alpine or mountain organisations and institutions as CIPRA, EUROMONTANA, the Alpine Network of Protected Areas, the Mountain Research Initiative (MRI), the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment (GMBA) and the International Mountain Partnership (FAO).

The office in CH–Berne gave administrative and organisational support to main ISCAR activities (office manager Thomas Scheurer 20%, secretary Marion Regli 20%) and seized opportunities for project coordination and cooperation.

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