



At the 2nd Meeting of ISCAR Partners (27.9.2002 in Alpbach) all partners agreed to extend the ISCAR Convention, signed at the 1st Meeting of ISCAR Partners on 12.10.1999 in Lucerne, until 2004. Based on this agreement, ISCAR continued its activities following the objectives of the Convention.

1. AlpWeek: a new conception of the ForumAlpinum

At the end of 2003, the report of the ForumAlpinum 2002 has been published, with a great effort of Roland Psenner, Christoph Arnold and Gerlinde Schrammel:

Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (ÖAW), 2003: ForumAlpinum 2002 – The Nature of the Alps. ÖAW, Wien

After the ForumAlpinum 2002 in Alpbach, the preparation of the ForumAlpinum 2004 in Kranjska gora, Slovenia started in early 2003. The Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts established a local scientific committee (chair: Prof. Andrej Kranjc) and a local organising committee (chair: Dr. Anton Brancelj). At the 8th meeting (1.2.2003), ISCAR agreed to organise the ForumAlpinum in co-operation with other international NGOs related to the Alp Convention: CIPRA, the Community Network Alliance in the Alps and the Alpine Network of Protected Areas. Therefore, the name of the ForumAlpinum had to be changed into “AlpWeek”. From then on all decisions were taken in common with all listed partners. In May 2004, the main elements of the programme and the online-registration have been published on the Web in 5 languages. Finally, about 250 participants joined the AlpWeek from 22 – 25 September 2004 in Kranjska Gora, organised with excellence by Dr. Anton Brancelj and his collaborators from the National Institute of Biology (Ljubljana) and with the help of CIPRA Slovenia (M. Ogrin) and the Community of Kranjska Gora (J. Cerjav). The feedback from the participants was positive and all in all the conference was a success. From scientific point of view, the AlpWeek was seen as a good dissemination and networking platform. Furthermore, the bodies of the Alp Convention – the German Presidency and the secretariate – and the Slovenian Ministries spent great attention to the AlpWeek and important representatives (like Janez Kopac, Hendrik Vygen or Noel Lebel) were personally present. This type of Conference was an attempt. All partner organisations will now decide in early 2005, if they are willing to organise in common a next AlpWeek.

2. Projects, initiatives

Biodiversity visions for the Alps: To promote the conservation of biodiversity in the Alps – one of 200 WWF-Ecoregions worldwide – WWF, ISCAR, CIPRA and the Alpine Network of Protected Areas (ALPARC) continued its co-operation in preparing the publication summarizing the results since the workshop in Gap in 2002. In January 2004 the brochure has been published in 5 languages:

WWF, CIPRA, ALPARC & ISCAR 2004: The Alps: a unique natural heritage. A common Vision for the Conservation of their Biodiversity. WWF Germany, Frankfurt am Main, 31 pp (also available in German, French, Italian and Slovenian)

Simultaneously all partners began to mobilise active groups and projects in some of the 23 priority areas and WWF and ALPARC started projects to identify corridors between priority areas and between protected areas. The state of the art of these projects was presented and discussed at the Alpweek.

Since the secretariate of the Alpine Convention became operational in 2003, some activities arose, but it was still not possible for ISCAR to initiate concrete actions or co-operations with the bodies of the secretariate. Co-operations As far as SOIA will be operational, co-operations should be established in view of two initiatives of ISCAR, AlpAtlas and CODALP.

AlpAtlas: To promote alpwide available data for Science and for Alpine Convention, especially following the tasks of SOIA, ISCAR proposed in 2000 the elaboration of cartographic information and infrastructure for the whole of the Alps. Since, Prof. Axel Borsdorf initiated the Austrian project RAUMALP (2001 - 2003), which is foreseen to be extended to other data bases and to all alpine countries by an INTERREG project DIAMONT, accepted in 2004

CODALP: The establishment of a co-ordinated data collection and data base on alpine research projects (CODALP) is an important instrument to promote and coordinate research on the Alps. Such an instrument has to be elaborated in close co-operation with SOIA. As soon as SOIA is ready to establish the infrastructure, ISCAR can support to obtain data from scientists.

3. Alp Convention: Meetings of the Standing Committee and SOIA

As an official observer of the Alp Convention (AC), representatives of ISCAR participated on several meetings of bodies of the AC: Horst Hagedorn and Eva Samuel were present at the 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th Meeting of the Standing Committee (in Germany and Innsbruck) and at the Alpine Conference held on 16 November in Garmisch-Partenkirchen (Germany). Thomas Scheurer participated at a meeting of SOIA (17./18.12.2003) in Bolzano and at 2 meetings in Berlin (2./3.9.) and Munich (28./29.10.) dedicated to the preparation of the working programme 2005 - 2010 of the Alpine Conference . Unfortunately, no ISCAR representative could join the meetings concerning the protocol "population and culture".

In January 2004 Ruggero Schleicher-Tappeser joined the secretariat of the AC as vice-general secretary and responsible for SOIA. Within some weeks, he proposed a concept for the future of SOIA, which was presented at the 27th meeting of the Standing Committee. To discuss possible co-operations between SOIA and ISCAR, Ruggero Schleicher-Tappeser visited the ISCAR office on March 3, 2004. It is now up to ISCAR, to propose research activities and implementation projects in the interest of both, AC and scientists. Some activities already have been initiated or proposed (see point 1 and 2).

4. Events, networking, public awareness

Round table 30.9.2003: At the occasion of the 54. *Deutscher Geographentag* in CH-Berne, ISCAR, in co-operation with the Institutes of Geography at the Universities of D-Erlangen and CH-Berne, helped to organise a round table discussion on obstacles and perspectives of the Alp Convention in the different countries (chair: W. Bätzing). The findings have been published as follows:

Bätzing W, Messerli P, Scheurer T 2004: The Alp Convention between international law and federalist implementation: obstacles and perspectives. Proceedings of the podium discussion on the occasion of the 54. Deutscher Geographentag 2003 in Berne (Switzerland). Journal of Alpine Research 92, 2: 107–117 & 118–126

Institutions: Members of ISCAR and its office were regularly in contact with alpine or mountain organisations and institutions as CIPRA, WWF, EUROMONTANA, the Alpine Network of Protected Areas, the Mountain Research Initiative MRI (IGBP/IHDP), and the International Mountain Partnership (FAO).

Promotion: By lack of time, promotion and public awareness rising for ISCAR could not be taken in hand sufficiently. At least, an ISCAR-Website with all available information was created and published in May 2004 (www.alpinestudies.ch/iscar).

Revue de Géographie Alpine: This mainly French journal has changed in 2004 to an international journal on alpine research. All articles will be in English and a second language. ISCAR discussed to use this journal regularly for information (committee, announcements, partners, etc.). A final decision has not been taken yet, while the Swiss and Austrian partners of ISCAR signed such a convention.

Events Calendar: Since 2003, the link to the actual Alpine Events Calendar is sent monthly to all members and guests of ISCAR.

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

Meetings: Under the Presidency of Prof. Ivan Kreft (Ljubljana), the Committee assembled for 4 Meetings: the 8th meeting on 1.2.2003 in Ljubljana, the 9th meeting on 13.9.2003 in Kranjska Gora, the 10th meeting on 18./19.4.2004 in Ljubljana and the 11th meeting on 24.9.2004 in Kranjska gora. The 8th, 9th and 10th meeting were mainly dedicated to the preparation of the ForumAlpinum/AlpWeek 2004, at the 10th and the 11th meeting have been discussed the goals and the working programme for 2005-2006.

Committee: In 2003, Bernard Debarbieux, due to his change from F-Grenoble to CH-Geneva University, was replaced by Philippe Bourdeau (Institute of Geography, University of Grenoble). All other members remained in charge until the end of 2004, but Denis Peter had to retreat from ISCAR, because the EU is no longer willing to keep a status of observer in organisations like ISCAR. At it`s 11th meeting in Kranjska gora, ISCAR elected Prof. Heiz Veit for it`s new president for 2005-2006. Heinz Veit is Professor for Physical Geography and a specialist in geocology of mountain areas at the Institute of Geography, University of Berne (Switzerland).

Partners: In the Austrian contact office at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna, Günter Köck followed Gerlinde Schrammel, who retreated from work in September 2003.

The Office in CH–Berne gave administrative and organisational support to main ISCAR activities (office manager Thomas Scheurer 20%, secretary Vera Kaufmann 20%) and seized opportunities for project co-ordination and co-operation.

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