

Annual report 2013

In 2013 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://iscar-alpineresearch.org/iscar>

1. Preparation of the ForumAlpinum 2014

The programme framework of the ForumAlpinum has been defined during two ISCAR meetings until June. Following, main work focused on assuring the financial support and starting organisation. Thanks to DARTS, the Department of Regional Affairs, Tourism and Sport of the Italian Consiglio dei Ministri, and the Regione Lombardia, the funding of the ForumAlpinum has been assured, and organisation could start with the support of the association Valtemo (Edolo). A first meeting gathered the local organising committee on 3rd October, and following a couple of work, as the web site, has been offered and mandated. By the end of November, the call for workshops was launched.

2. Projects, Initiatives

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 and met in Vaduz for planning further activities. The article "The 50 Most Important Questions Relating to the Maintenance and Restoration of an Ecological Continuum in the European Alps", the result of a joint project of the Continuum Initiative, the mentioned Platform and the Alpine Space project ECONNECT (Lead Prof. Chris Walzer), has been published by PLoS One (<http://dx.plos.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0053139>). ISCAR and the Platform Ecological Networks started the planning for a follow-up workshop in 2014 focusing on some key questions from this publication.

Research in Alpine Protected Areas (ISCAR-P): The focus of ISCAR-P activities 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). The Editorial Board met on 13th June in Mittersill. In 2013 the number of submitted papers continued increasing due to the Thomson index accorded in 2012. Second, ISCAR-P supported the National Park Hohe Tauern as part of the scientific board (together with National Parks Austria) in the preparation of the research symposium and therefore met on 31st January in Innsbruck. The symposium held on 10th – 12th June in Mittersill (Austria) was an outstanding success, in terms of quality and participants.

3. Alpine Convention: Meetings, contributions of ISCAR

ISCAR continued its engagement oriented to the Alpine Convention (AC) based on the position paper ("Principles of work") published in 2012. As an official observer of the Alpine Convention (AC), ISCAR contributed to meetings of the bodies of the AC: Thomas Scheurer participated in the 54th meeting of the Standing Committee (St. Vincent, Aosta, Italy). Experts engaged by ISCAR continued their cooperation in working groups and platforms: Leopold Füreder in the working group "Water", Chris Walzer in the working group "Wildlife and Society", Günter Köck in the "UNESCO World Heritage" working group, Oliver Bender in the working group "Demography and Employment" and in the elaboration of the fifth report on the Alps on demography, Andrej Udovc and Anna Giorgi in the working group "Agriculture", Thomas Scheurer in the platform "Ecological Networks" and in the working groups "Energy" and "Macroregion". Mimi Urbanc represented ISCAR in the jury of the Young Scientist Award of the Secretariat of the Alpine Convention.

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

Partners: No changes.

Committee Meetings: Under the presidency of Prof. Anna Giorgi, the committee assembled for two meetings: the 26th meeting was organised as a telephone conference on 4th February and the 27th meeting took place on 5th June in Milan. Decisions were taken, among others, concerning the programme and the organisation of the ForumAlpinum.

Changes in the Committee: The Swiss Academy of Social Sciences and Humanities elected PD Dr. Patrick Kupper as delegate in early 2013, while Prof. Heinz Veit left ISCAR by the end of 2013. He will be replaced in 2014 by the Swiss Academy of Sciences.

Contacts: Members of ISCAR and its office were regularly in contact with alpine or mountain institutions and networks as CIPRA, the Alpine Network of Protected Areas, the Mountain Research Initiative (MRI), the Swiss-Austrian Alliance for mountain research, 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.

Milan/Berne, January 2014 / Anna Giorgi, Thomas Scheurer