

ECONNECT – Improving ecological connectivity in the Alps



ECONNECT

A coherent strategy to global climate change consequences.

- **INTERREG IV** – Alpine Space Programme
- Partnership of 16 partners from 6 Alpine countries
- September 2008 – August 2011

ECONNECT aims at the **enhancement of ecological connectivity** in the Alpine space.

Protection of biodiversity and natural heritage requires an **integrated approach** which beyond protected areas considers **high biodiversity areas** and **corridors** as linking elements of an Alpine ecological network.



Legal basis : the Alpine Convention

Article 12 – Protocol “Nature conservation and landscape planning”

Key elements

- Biodiversity
- Densely populated
- Connection protected areas
- Genetic flow
- **Adaptation** /environmental transformations of **Climate change**.

Ecological networks in the Alps: Needs and concerns

- Preserve and improve ecological connectivity in landscapes
- Contribute to conservation of biodiversity

Relevance of the project

- Alpine-wide approach
- Close cooperation with Alpine convention
- Dynamic elements in nature conservation
- Intensive cooperation with **local stakeholders**
- Communication

Limits and challenges

- natural geographic situation of the Alps
- high potential for conflicts

Financial figures

Total funds all WP: 3 198 240 €

Of which 2 285 120 € ERDF (European Regional Development Fund)

Total funds WP7 TFPA: 296 500 €

Of which 225 340 € ERDF

Expenditures WP 7 september 2008-2009 (staff+ general expenses): about **52 000 €** in 1 year.

Work Packages

WP 1 Project Preparation

WP 2 Project Management

WP 3 Information & Publicity

WP 4 Data Management

WP 5 Barriers and Corridors

WP 6 Legal Barriers

WP 7 Implementation in Pilot Areas

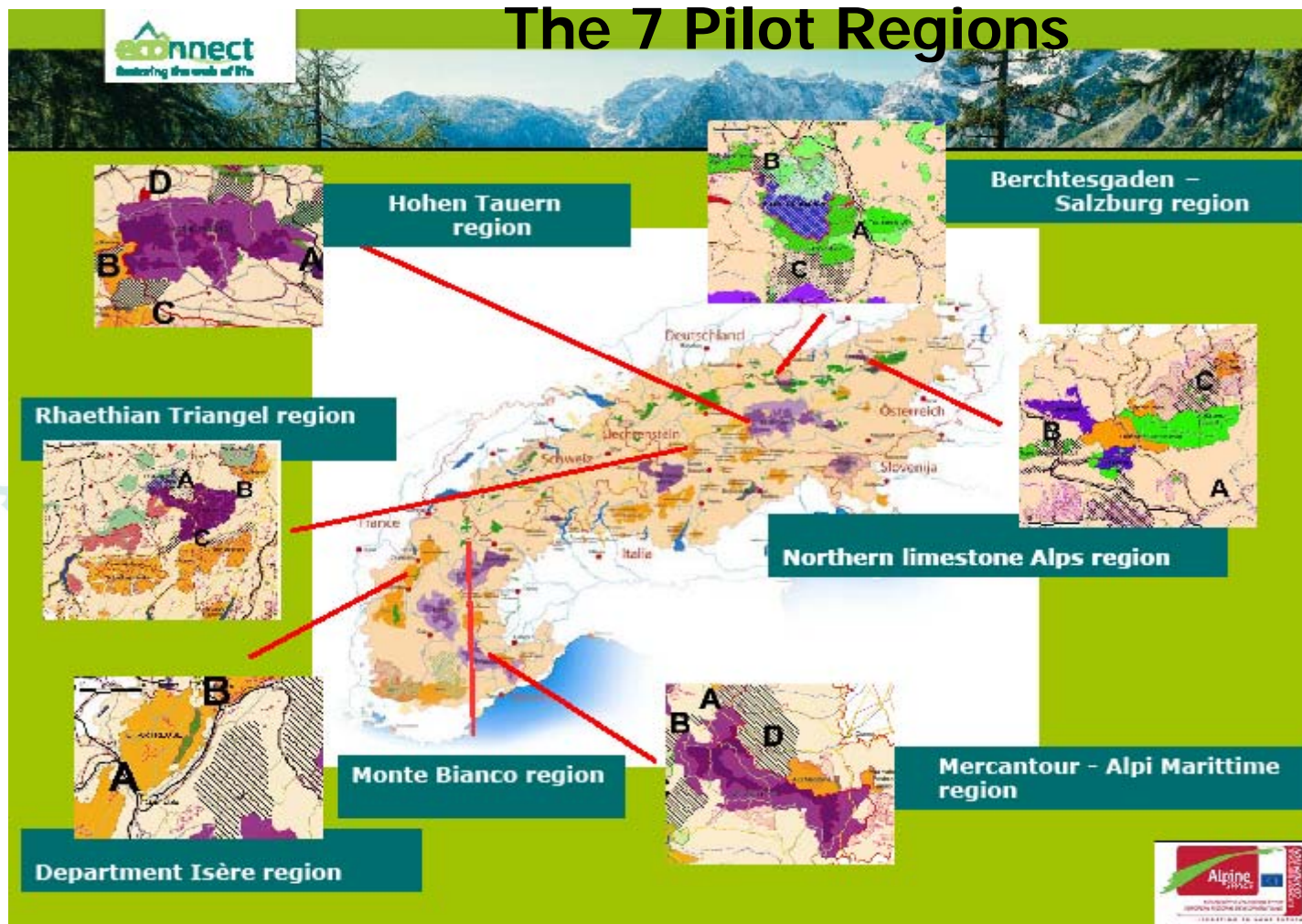
WP 8 Knowledge Transfer

WP 7 – Implementation in 7 Pilot Areas

- Continuum of habitats and reducing fragmentation
- Analyse the situation
- Implement concrete planning on local scale
- Involve stakeholders
- Organization of training sessions, meetings and workshops

WP responsible: TFPA - Task Force Protected Areas (Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention), France

The 7 Pilot Regions



Expected Outputs 1/2

- Report giving an overview about the situation of ecological connectivity
- Map
- A list for each pilot region clearly defining the measures which have to be taken on the ground.

Expected Outputs 2/2

- 1 concrete spatial link
- 3 contractual measures
- 2 international workshops, 1 training session per pilot area, 5 information events for local population and media)

INTERNATIONAL PILOT REGION MEETING

« Coordination and approaches for Pilot regions of Econnect » Zernez (Sw), may 2009

➡ **Choice of species-habitats for the Alps wide approach**
(Alpine wide level chosen):

➡ Each Pilot Region will give a **list** of its selected species and habitats
at **local level**

➡ Establishment of **2 working groups** for the coordination of the pilot project:

- Implementation strategy and data needs
- Information and communication strategy



Working group of indices for connectivity in Pilot Regions, Bern, July 2009

Results:

➔ **Criteria for indices** of potential and lack of connectivity in the regional approach:

Continuum suitability index:

➔ **Definition of the indices with indicators**, some examples:

- Pollution index with air pollution, water, light, noise, soil.
- Population index with number of inhabitants per area, tourist overnights per area winter and summer.

➔ **Next step:** elaborate a protocol of the establishment and the evaluation of indicators

CONCLUSION 1/2

-Pan-alpine strategy

-The **passage** of species displaced by **shifting climatic zones** will help them find **new suitable habitats** and **move their range**, thereby improving their chances of survival.

CONCLUSION 2/2

- **Collaboration** between protected areas
- Involvement and the responsibility of **all the stakeholders**
- Giving positives **examples of adaptation** to the global warming.

Thank you for your attention

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