Dear reader,

On behalf of the AlpES partnership we would like to warmly welcome you to the first AlpES newsletter! We would like to seize this opportunity to introduce you to the AlpES project, its ongoing activities and the partners behind the efforts.

We breathe, eat, drink, enjoy, experience… nature provides us with a variety of services. We usually do not think about it, but all we need for life depends on a healthy natural environment and the services it provides. With the AlpES project we want to achieve a common understanding of the concept of ecosystem services in the Alpine Space and equip public bodies, interest groups, researchers and economic players with tools that can help them identify, assess and manage ecosystems services on a transnational basis.
To achieve this goal, we will
- develop an Alpine ecosystem services concept
- carry out a mapping and assessment of ecosystem services for the Alpine Space area including testing in selected study regions across the Alpine Space
- provide stakeholders with the results through an interactive web GIS and
- 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

In this newsletter, we will provide you with an overview of what has happened so far. Our colleagues from CIPRA International, who participate in AlpES on behalf of the Principality of Liechtenstein – Office of Environment, have compiled a set of interesting topics to bring the AlpES project home to you.

Happy reading!

Caroline Pecher, Erich Tasser, Thomas Marsoner, Lukas Egarter Vigl, Alice Labadini and Chiara Maria Stella - EURAC research (lead partner AlpES)

What have the AlpES partners been up to so far?

The AlpES project is well underway! After our Kick-off meeting in February in Bozen/Bolzano, our Slovenian partner IRSNC hosted our 1st AlpES Project Meeting in Ljubljana. After a successful day of project partner presentations of the current status of their workpackages, we had the great pleasure of being invited to a reception at the Ljuljana City Hall, hosted by the Mayor of Ljubljana, Mr. Zoran Janković.

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Ecosystem Services – Alpine Concept

Throughout the past decade, the topic of ecosystem services (ES) has become extremely popular in research, resulting in a huge variety of definitions and terms. For example, ES are defined as benefits people obtain from ecosystems (MEA, 2005); or the direct and indirect contributions of ecosystems to human well-being (TEEB 2010), among others.

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Introducing the AlpES Test regions

Our partners from EURAC in Bozen/Bolzano will be developing ecosystem services and sustainability indicators in order to map and assess ecosystem services for the Alpine Space. In order to make the AlpES project a truly Alpine-wide collaboration, we are planning
to test the indicators in our newly appointed test regions.

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WIKIAlps – the Alpine WIKI

Spatial development is a crucial issue in the Alpine Space where economy, society and environment have to coexist in a very confined space. Any small action taken in any of these fields can trigger big alterations in the others. In the same way, actions taken at local, regional or national level have consequences that affect other countries within the Alpine Space. A balanced and shared territorial development in all the Alpine Space countries needs appropriate, current and manageable information for a sound decision-making. Nowadays, the large and diverse amount of information available complicates the search for correct and useful pieces.

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