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Work Plan 2023 – 2025

Action Group 8 – Risk Governance

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Action Group 8 aims at improving and enhancing policies and management strategies in the areas of risk management and climate change adaptation. The overall objective is to contribute to the strategic, sustainable and climate-resilient development of the Alpine macro-region. To reach that goal exchange and cooperation are imperative. Action Group 8 serves as a focal point for the exchange of knowledge and experiences and enables to find a common approach to challenges in the field of risk management and climate change adaptation. The work of AG8 will mainly be carried out through the strategic flagship initiative CAPA (Climate Adaptation Platform for the Alps) as well as by organising events on AG8 topics, collaborating closely with associated projects, involving its stakeholder network, and promoting and engaging in the development of new funding projects.

TARGETS AND COMPOSITION

1. Mission statement of the Action Group

The overall objective of Action Group (AG) 8 is to improve and enhance risk management, including the prevention of risks from natural hazards, and climate change adaptation in the Alpine region. Therefore, AG8 is focussed on the following tasks in the implementation of the EUSALP strategy:

- Stocktaking of relevant actors and interests, mapping and enhancing governance structures and processes in the policy fields of risk/hazard management and climate change adaptation
- Improving risk and adaptation governance mechanisms in the EUSALP region by enhancing, valorising, and leveraging the existing cooperation structures
- Identifying good practice solutions for tackling challenges in natural hazard and climate change adaptation policy
- Promoting, developing, and implementing local, regional, and international pilot projects and programs based on strategic priorities, and exploring funding opportunities on both EU as well as national/regional/private levels.

2. Composition and sub-groups

Action Group 8 has two Co-leaders, one from Austria and one from South Tyrol, Italy. For Austria, the Co-Chair is the head of the Austrian Service for Torrent and Avalanche Control from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management. Its field of expertise lies in natural hazard management. The second Co-Chair is EURAC Research, a research center headquartered in Bolzano (South Tyrol) that has many years of expertise in the field of climate risk assessment, risk governance and climate change adaptation and works in close collaboration with the Autonomous Province of Bolzano.

The members of Action Group 8 are from territorial governments, public administrations and agencies at national and regional levels, research organizations as well as interest groups from the Alpine macro-region. The following countries are represented: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, and Switzerland. The professional backgrounds are varied, broad and include the following fields of responsibilities and expertise: civil protection, natural hazard management, forest management, spatial planning and climate change (adaptation). Accordingly, interest and involvement stem from different angles, while complementing each other.

3. Involvement of the stakeholders

AG8 actively engages and collaborates with different stakeholders, such as policy makers and practitioners from local, regional and national administrations, scientists from universities and research institutions, experts from NGOs, and international networks. The goal is to work on the integration of shared topics and initiatives, to use synergies and expertise, to collect stakeholder needs in terms of risk management and climate change adaptation, and to share and disseminate results.

AG8 will engage and involve different stakeholder groups. The following table gives an overview of the different stakeholders and the types of involvement.

STAKEHOLDER	TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT
Local, regional and national public authorities	Knowledge and experiences sharing, involvement in policy recommendations, planning and organisation of AG8 events; involvement on specific topics and activities (e.g., collection of good practises, needs assessment)
Universities and research organisations	Consultation, knowledge sharing, involvement as technical experts in AG8 events
Non-governmental organisations	Weighing in the perspective of civil society, fostering societal negotiation processes, dissemination of results to people/local communities
International organisations	Cooperation in activities, sharing and dissemination of results
Networks	Sharing and dissemination of results, participation of AG8 in conferences and events

Local, regional and national public stakeholders are institutions and authorities of the respective member countries that work in the field of risk management or climate change adaptation or are important for the implementation. They have different areas of expertise and responsibilities. Universities and research organisations include academic and non-academic scientific institutions present in the AG8 member countries as well as the International Research Society INTERPRAEVENT, which deals with topics closely linked to AG8. Participating NGOs with status observer are currently the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Club Arc Alpin. International organisations include the Alpine Convention, especially the Working Group on Natural Hazards (PLANALP) and the Alpine Climate Board (ACB), the European Topic Centre Climate Adaptation (EEA ETC/CA) and the UN Disaster Risk Reduction Office for Europe and Asia., including the European Environment Agency (EEA). AG8 will engage with existing networks on disaster risk reduction and climate change

adaptation such as the European Network We4DRR (women exchange for disaster risk reduction) the Disaster Competence Network Austria (DCNA) and others, for the dissemination of results and AG8 activities and events.

4. The role of the Youth Council

AG8 will invite interested representatives/members of the Youth Council to its meetings to present them the purpose and activities of AG8 and include them in AG8 activities if they are interested to cooperate.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2020-2022

The key achievements during the last period are:

- Analysis of climate resilient spatial planning in the Alps (CLISP-ALP) to assess the possibilities and necessities of climate-resilient spatial planning.
- CLISP-ALP Video for dissemination of the results of the analysis
- [Climate Change Adaptation Platform for the Alps \(CAPA\)](#): further deployment and quality-assured content enhancement to support the knowledge transfer of existing good practices, knowledge resources, experiences and project results on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in the Alpine region; online editing tool enabling users to share their own resources; package of dissemination materials (flyer, slide sets, offline description).
- Contribution to the EUSALP policy brief to give an overview of the work of AG8 and EUSALP by summarising and presenting the most important results.
- Embedding workshop on policy recommendations of the EUSALP Action Groups: Discussion between AG8 and regional and national policy makers from Austria to identify implementation pathways of the EUSALP results into regional and national policies.
- Embedding Workshop on Natural Risk Prevention and Management at the Macro-Regional Strategy Week to connect interested parties and show funding options.
- EUSALP Roadshow stop “Natural Hazards” for awareness raising of the public, especially children.
- Explain Video “Call to Action: Managing natural risks together” to raise awareness of the issue natural hazard management and personal responsibility and to show the work of EUSALP AG8
- Forest fires in the Alps: State of knowledge, future challenges, and options for an integrated fire management - White Paper for policy makers

- Interreg transnational project [“Hochwasserwissen”](#) (Flood knowledge) from Bavaria-Austria to develop practicable tools for knowledge transfer between key stakeholders with regards to the origin and management of floods
- Study of physical natural hazard models and new prototype of an interactive natural hazard model for risk communication and knowledge transfer
- Support of the Task Force “Multifunctional Forests and Sustainable Use of Timber” (TF)

Further details and project results are available on the EUSALP webpage under: <https://www.alpine-region.eu/action-group-8-Risk-governance>

PRIORITIES 2023-2025

1. Key issues and activities

Action Group 8 aims at improving and enhancing policies and management strategies in the areas of climate change adaptation and risk management.

The overall objective is to contribute to a strategic, sustainable and climate-resilient development of the Alpine region. Therefore, AG8 deals with

- natural hazard management, including extreme events,
- the role and effects of climate change and adaptation,
- the contribution of risk management and climate change adaptation to the sustainable and climate-resilient development of Alpine settlement areas.

In the period 2023 – 2025, AG8 plans to have a strategic focus on the following key issues:

Management of large-scale extreme weather events driven by climate change, compound impacts and cascading risks: On this topic, AG8 will collect and identify the main gaps and needs in the management of extreme and cascading events and the demand for new policies and measures to increase the resilience of Alpine communities.

Enhancement of climate risk management and climate change adaptation by strengthening the adaptive capacity of Alpine territories: AG8 will foster and support the exchange of good practices and processes on climate change adaptation in the Alpine region. This will be carried out during dedicated sessions at AG8 meetings and in the form of a workshop (Autumn 2024) to bridge the gaps between research, practitioners, and policymakers.

The role of nature-based solutions as relevant tools in climate change adaptation, under different aspects: the functions and values of green and open spaces for climate adaptation and natural hazards prevention; the role of protective forests; knowledge and approaches for considering climate change-related ecosystem services in spatial planning and land use management; the distribution of costs and benefits between private actors, social groups, and the public interest. On this topic, AG8 will establish an exchange and a collaboration with the Interreg Alpine Space project MOSAIC to support the collection, harmonization and sharing of data on Alpine climate-related disasters and trends and to raise awareness among foresters, risk managers, decision-makers, and the public.

To increase visibility and the need for actions also on a political level, AG8 will develop policy recommendations on the topics of climate change adaptation and natural hazard management.

AG8 will continue to collaborate with AG 2, 6, 7, and 9 on the Task Force “Multifunctional Forests and Sustainable Use of Timber” (TF). To ensure the transfer of knowledge and foster topics related to forests and wood, the task force was established in September 2019. AG8

will be represented in this TF through two members, which will also ensure the constant information flow between the work of the TF and the AG and participate in meetings and events organized by the TF.

AG8 will work on these issues mainly through its strategic flagship initiative, collaborating closely with associated projects, involving its stakeholder network, organising dedicated events, such as a side event at the International Conference, to advance and transfer knowledge on risk management, climate adaptation and resilience in the Alpine region. Close collaboration with the Alpine Space Projects X-Risk-CC, ADAPTNOW, and MOSAIC will also be promoted.

For all key issues and activities, it is important to transfer and disseminate knowledge, and raise awareness among practitioners, policymakers, and the population. All AG8 results will be integrated into and disseminated through the CAPA platform as well as through various other communication channels (e.g., the EUSALP website, LinkedIn, existing networks and platforms).

Finally, AG8 is committed to promote, support, and engage in the development of at least one new project for application to EU funding programmes. A new project shall contribute to tackling the key issues outlined before. Besides the Interreg Alpine space funding scheme, AG8 will also screen other suitable funding opportunities beyond the transnational and cross-border Interreg programme lines, such as HORIZON Europe (2021-2027 Programme), LIFE, and national funding sources.

2. Strategic flagship initiatives

Action Group 8 brings together different countries and institutions, is a focal point for the exchange of knowledge, experiences and latest developments, and enables to find common approaches to challenges in the field of climate change adaptation and risk management. Cooperation and knowledge exchange are the key for finding sustainable and effective policy and management solutions throughout the EUSALP region. Therefore, the flagship initiative of Action Group 8 is the web platform CAPA (Climate Adaptation Platform for the Alps). CAPA is the central knowledge transfer infrastructure of AG8. It allows adaptation and risk management actors in all Alpine countries to benefit from transnational knowledge sharing, bridging the gap between the generation and the actual use of relevant knowledge and experience. It contains information, findings, and recommendations from thematically relevant projects, national documents and guidelines, and other relevant knowledge resources related to the key issues. Furthermore, it strengthens cross-linkages with other existing regional and thematic online portals. Building on established functionalities for user-driven content enhancement, AG8 members and their stakeholder network will contribute with new resources and knowledge items and share them with the macro-regional community. A

communication roadmap will also be developed on how to make the CAPA platform better known to interested stakeholders in the Alpine region.

3. Cross-cutting priorities

AG 8 will contribute to the cross-cutting priority “Promoting a sustainable management of biodiversity and natural resources, especially water”. The contribution of AG8 will focus on the topics of weather extremes, which include water scarcity, droughts, and heavy precipitation events. AG8 will contribute with the expertise of its members and support the development of policy recommendations for dealing with extreme events. As the development of a portfolio for Nature-based Solutions is planned as part of the activities, AG8 could support this process with its knowledge and experience based on previous AG8 work. Furthermore, AG8 will support the activities of the Taskforce Water in the fields of experience and knowledge exchange, communication, and dissemination and will participate in organized events and meetings as far as possible. To ensure effective collaboration, AG8 will appoint one or two members to act as a point of contact for the Taskforce Water and as an interface between the activities of AG8 and the Taskforce.

COMMUNICATION

1. Dissemination and communication activities

AG8 and its members make use of a portfolio of communication tools and channels. One important platform is the EUSALP website, where the main outcomes of the AG and information are presented and shared. AG8 will employ the CAPA portal as infrastructure for the provision and transfer of knowledge resources generated and identified by associated projects, flagship initiatives, and institutional AG8 members. In addition, the AG8 members will use their institutional communication infrastructures, networks, and the networks of partner organisations to distribute information and results. Moreover, AG8 will be present at relevant national and international events, including all EUSALP events, conferences, and workshops.

2. Events

Action Group 8 holds two regular meetings per year as well as additional interim meetings to discuss progress or developments as needed. Furthermore, AG8 actively participates in the Annual Forum and other EUSALP events, conferences, and workshops.

AG8 will organise a side event at the International Conference Interpraevent 2024 (Vienna) to advance and transfer knowledge on climate risk management and resilience in the Alpine region.

AG8 will organise a workshop (to be held in Autumn 2024) between AG8 members and partners from the Alpine Space project ADAPTNOW to collect good practices on climate change adaptation from different regions and countries and discuss how they could be transferred to other contexts and be upscaled to the EUSALP scale.

Members of AG8 will participate in a workshop (to be held in 2024/2025) together with partners from the Alpine Space project X-Risk-CC to co-develop transalpine guidelines on how to better deal with extreme events.

Action Group 8 will promote and support exchange between different ongoing Interreg Alpine Space projects dealing with topics relevant to the Action Group such as X-RISK-CC, ADAPTNOW, MOSAIC.

WORK PLAN OUTPUTS AND RESULTS

The main outputs of the AG are described in the sections above. All outputs contribute to the envisaged overall result of AG8 that is the exchange, cooperation, knowledge transfer and improvement of policies and practises in the areas of risk management and climate change adaptation. AG8 will carry out different knowledge-transfer, and awareness-raising initiatives and use different communication channels for the dissemination of AG8 activities and results.

Furthermore, AG8 plans to develop and submit a new project proposal (e.g., a small-scale ASP project) initiated during the AG8 meetings until 2025. The meetings will serve as a platform to identify and promote topics for project proposals and put forward policy recommendations. AG8 will screen additional European funding programmes and their opportunities and linkages with the topics of AG8.

Indicators	Target
n. joint political declarations	0
n. cross-border/transnational events	11
2 AG8 meetings per year, AG8 side event at an international conference, 3 EUSALP Annual Fora, science policy workshop on good practices in climate change adaptation, various events related to initiatives and projects related to AG8 topics	
n. joint policy recommendation	2
Based on the results of different projects and the expertise of AG8 members, the AG will develop 2 policy recommendations on the topic of CCA and natural hazard management	
n. project to be submitted to the Alpine Space Programme	1
n. project to be submitted to others European Programmes	0
n. of papers/research works to be published	3

including roadmap for CAPA	
budget to be raised with European funding	tbd
one project submission is planned	

