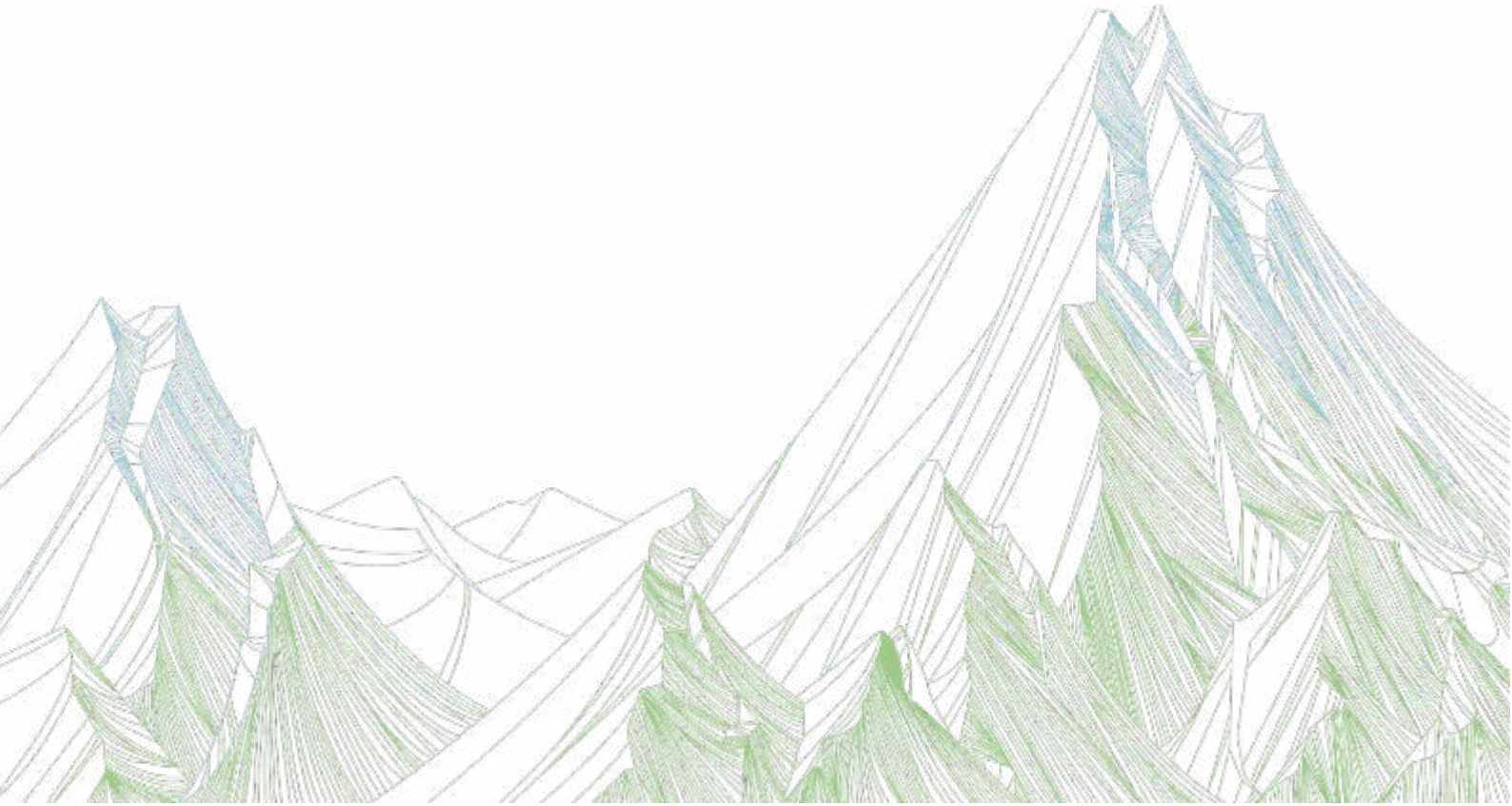
ASTER | Press release



This project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg Alpine Space programme.

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GLOBAL CONTEXT

Global plastic waste generation more than doubled from 2000 to 2019 to **353 million tonnes.** Nearly two-thirds of plastic waste comes from plastics with lifetimes of under five years, with **40% coming from packaging, 12% from consumer goods and 11% from clothing and textiles.**

Reducing pollution from plastics **will require action**, and **international co-operation**, to reduce plastic production, including through **innovation,** better **product design** and **developing environmentally friendly alternatives,** as well as efforts **to improve waste management** and **increase recycling.**

Source: Plastic pollution is growing relentlessly as waste management and recycling fall short, says OECD | OECD

EUROPEAN CONTEXT

The Alpine textile and plastic industries count **major producing regions**. They also share a reliance on common raw materials (polymers), and applications in identical sectors like **mountain products and equipment**, which are essential items **in the economic development of mountain areas.**

These industries have accelerated their **green transition,** thanks to significant efforts in **innovation and regulations.** Yet, there is consequent room for improvement:

- In filling the gap to reach carbon neutrality, with a share in worldwide greenhouse gases emissions of **3,4% for plastics and 10% for textiles.**
- In **improving resource sensitivity**, regarding raw materials (vastly imported) and **industrial impact on the environment** (local production and its upstream and downstream activities).

Waste mitigation is a major lever for improvement: waste avoidance and performant waste management reduce the environmental impacts such **as microplastic pollution or non-biodegradable rejects.** Efficient waste mitigation generates positive economic impact with the creation of activities (e.g. repair shops) and induces an improved resource sensitivity (e.g. raw materials from recycling).

ASTER'S PROJECT

ASTER is **an interreg Alpine Space project** that gathers **textile and plastic ecosystems** to promote the **transition to a circular and resource efficient economy.**

The 11 partners from Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia **evaluate the current framework and solutions for waste prevention and management.**

They then develop **common practices, policies, and regulations tailored for the Alps.**

By mobilising stakeholders with a shared goal, ASTER **aims to improve the prevention and management of textile and plastic waste in the Alps** by providing pathways to harmonise policies and regulations across the region.

The **36-month project** is organized around **3 groups of activities** designed to ensure its operational deployment :

1. **CHARACTERIZING WASTE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT**

   This work package aims is **to build knowledge** by understanding the geographical, legal, technical, and political framework of textile and plastic waste prevention and management in the Alps.

2. **ALPINE PATHWAYS TO BETTER PREVENT AND MANAGE WASTE**

   This work package aims **is to prototyp and test the circular principles** (5R) including eco-design for mountain products to avoid waste. Analysis of feasible secondary raw materials based on waste management (WP1), recycling, new business models (reuse, repair, PaaS, take-back).

3. **SOLUTIONS TRANSFER TO THE ECOSYSTEM**

   This work package aims is **to provide by developing and disseminating solutions** for the implementation of 5R strategies and the establishment of circular & resource efficient value chains for textile and plastic products, especially for applications in mountain products.