Policy recommendations for Alpine Convention, EUSALP & EU

Output 3.2 – 2025

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Abbreviations

CAP 2.0: Climate Action Plan 2.0 (Alpine Convention)

PR: Policy recommendation (BeyondSnow project)

PWA: Pilot Working Area (BeyondSnow project)

SF-MST: Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism (UN)

STD: Snow tourism destination (BeyondSnow project)

1 Executive Summary

This document presents policy recommendations to support the climate-resilient transition of small- and medium-altitude snow tourism destinations (STDs) in the Alpine region. It builds on the Interreg Alpine Space project "BeyondSnow" (2022–2025), which combined scientific analysis, vulnerability assessment, pilot actions in ten Pilot Working Areas (PWAs), institutional feedback and structured stakeholder dialogue to explore how destinations can respond to declining snow reliability and wider socio-ecological change. The voluntary and non-binding recommendations aim to support existing strategies and working agendas under the Alpine Convention, the EUSALP and other EU-level policies and institutions, while also providing orientation for national, regional and local actors.

Scientific evidence shows that climate change is already reshaping the conditions for snow-based tourism in the Alps, with decreasing snow depth, rising zero-degree levels and shorter natural snow seasons. These developments particularly affect small- and medium-altitude STDs, increasing economic uncertainty, operational costs and exposure to natural hazards, while challenging the social and ecological foundations of Alpine communities. Against this background, the document promotes a shift from incremental adjustment to long-term transition: from snow-dependent winter tourism towards diversified and resilient territorial development.

The recommendations draw on several pillars of the BeyondSnow project: a comprehensive analysis of climate impacts and vulnerabilities of Alpine STDs; the development of a Resilience Adaptation Model (RAM) and its digital version, the Resilience Decision-Making Digital Tool (RDMDT); the elaboration of transition strategies and pilot actions in the PWAs; and capitalisation and consultation activities with key institutions. Together, these elements provide a robust evidence base and practical examples that inform the proposed recommendations. To ensure usability for different governance levels and sectors, the recommendations are organised into five thematic clusters (Strategy & Governance; Data, Knowledge & Exchange; Finance & Skills; Diversification & Economy; Infrastructure & Safety) that reflect key dimensions of climate resilience in STDs. The final chapter reflects openly on the limitations of the current work and outlines perspectives for further development.

Overall, the BeyondSnow policy recommendations represent a contribution to an ongoing process rather than a definitive endpoint. By translating project results and local experiences into macroregional and European policy language, they aim to support a shared vision: Alpine snow tourism destinations that are less dependent on snow, more resilient to climate change, and capable of offering high-quality living environments for residents and meaningful experiences for visitors in a changing world.

2 Climate Change and the Need for Adaptation in Alpine Snow Tourism Destinations

Snow tourism has long been a defining feature of the Alpine economy and identity. Yet climate change is reshaping the environmental and socio-economic conditions that underpin its viability. Scientific evidence shows that snow depth in the Alps has decreased by an average of 8.4 % per decade since the 1970s (Matiu, et al, 2021), while the zero-degree level has risen by about 250 meters over the last fifty years and could climb another 400–650 meters by 2060 under unmitigated warming (MeteoSwiss). Warmer winters shorten natural snow seasons, increase the reliance on technical snowmaking, and heighten competition for water and energy resources.

These climatic trends place particular pressure on small- and medium-altitude snow tourism destinations (hereinafter STDs), where snow reliability can no longer be guaranteed. Beyond the ecological implications, the consequences extend to local economies, employment, and community viability. Destinations historically relying also on winter sports face rising operational costs, fluctuating tourism numbers, and growing exposure to natural hazards such as avalanches, floods, and landslides. The interplay of environmental stress and economic uncertainty demands proactive, systemic adaptation.

Adaptation for STDs is not limited to incremental adjustments but oftentimes entails transformational change in how tourism is planned, managed, and integrated into wider territorial development. Destinations must diversify tourism offers, embrace low-carbon mobility, protect ecosystem services upon which also their attractiveness heavily relies, and strengthen risk governance. Equally, adaptation strategies should be grounded in robust climate data, participatory governance, and cross-sector coordination to ensure that adaptations in tourism align with spatial planning, energy transition, and biodiversity goals.

Given the shared challenges across the Alpine arc, no single destination can navigate this transition alone. Cooperation at regional, national, and macroregional levels is essential to harmonise knowledge, align investments, and exchange good practices.

In response to these growing challenges, the Interreg Alpine Space project BeyondSnow was launched to support STDs in designing transition strategies, developing practical tools, and fostering knowledge exchange across the Alpine region. The following chapter introduces the project's objectives, structure, and role in shaping the policy recommendations presented in this document.

3 The BeyondSnow Project and its Policy Relevance

The Interreg Alpine Space project "BeyondSnow" was conceived as a coordinated response to the accelerating impacts of climate change on Alpine STDs. Recognising that conventional, short-term measures are insufficient, the project promotes long-term transition toward climate-resilient and sustainable tourism models. Its overarching goal is to enhance the socio-ecological resilience of STDs so they can retain—or even increase—their attractiveness for both residents and tourists under changing climatic conditions.

Running from 1 November 2022 to 31 October 2025, BeyondSnow brought together 13 partners (Table 1) and 10 Pilot Working Areas (hereinafter PWAs) spanning several Alpine countries (Figure 1). These PWAs served as real-world laboratories where new approaches were co-designed, tested, and refined in collaboration with local stakeholders. Citizens, destination managers, and decision-makers at municipal, regional, and national levels formed the project's core community of practice.

Key activities include[1]:

- Developing a Climate Resilience Tool to assess vulnerability, monitor change, and support evidence-based planning (O2.1);
- Facilitating participatory processes that engage public, private, and civil-society actors aimed at the development of climate change transition strategies (O2.2), including pilot actions (O2.3);
- Generating data (D1.3.1), models (O1.1), and guidelines that inform adaptive governance and diversification strategies (D.2.3.1; O3.1);
- Producing a coherent set of policy recommendations for the Alpine Convention, EUSALP, and the EU, ensuring that local experiences inform macroregional and European strategies (the current document O3.2).

By combining scientific evidence, local engagement, and macroregional coordination, BeyondSnow aims to offer practical pathways for destinations to anticipate change and seize new opportunities. The following policy recommendations in the subsequent chapter emerged from this process and aim at providing guidance for institutions at all levels to support coordinated, forward-looking adaptation in Alpine STDs.

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[1] For a detailed overview with direct links to all deliverables and outputs of the BeyondSnow project, please refer to the annex of this document.

Nr.	ACRONYM	COUNTRY	NAME	TIPOLOGY	PWA
LP	EURAC	IT	Eurac Research Institute for Regional Development	Research Institute	-
PP02	LEGAMBIENTE	IT	Legambiente Lombardy Aps/Onlus	Environmental Association - NGO	Piani d'Erna
PP03	POLITO	IT	Polytechnic University of Turin	University	Monesi
PP04	CMTO	IT	Metropolitan City of Turin	Public Authority	Ala di Stura & Balme
PP05	CARNIAMOUNT	IT	Mountain Community of Carnia	Public Authority	Pradibosco
PP06	PEARLS	AT	EGTC Alpine Pearls	EGTC	Werfenweng
PP07	RAGOR	SI	Development Agency for Upper Gorenjska	Non-profit public institution	Bohinj
PP08	ARCTUR	SI	Arctur Computer Engineering d.o.o.	Private Company	-
PP09	DIT	DE	Deggendorf Institute of Technology	University	Grosser Arber
PP10	METABIEF	FR	METABIEF Ski Resort	Non-profit public institution	Métabief
PP11	SAB	CH	Swiss Center for Mountain Regions	Association	Sattel-Hochstuckli
PP12	AidA	DE	Community Network "Alliance in the Alps"	Association	Balderschwang
PP13	FABTRA	FR	Fabrique de Transitions	Association	-

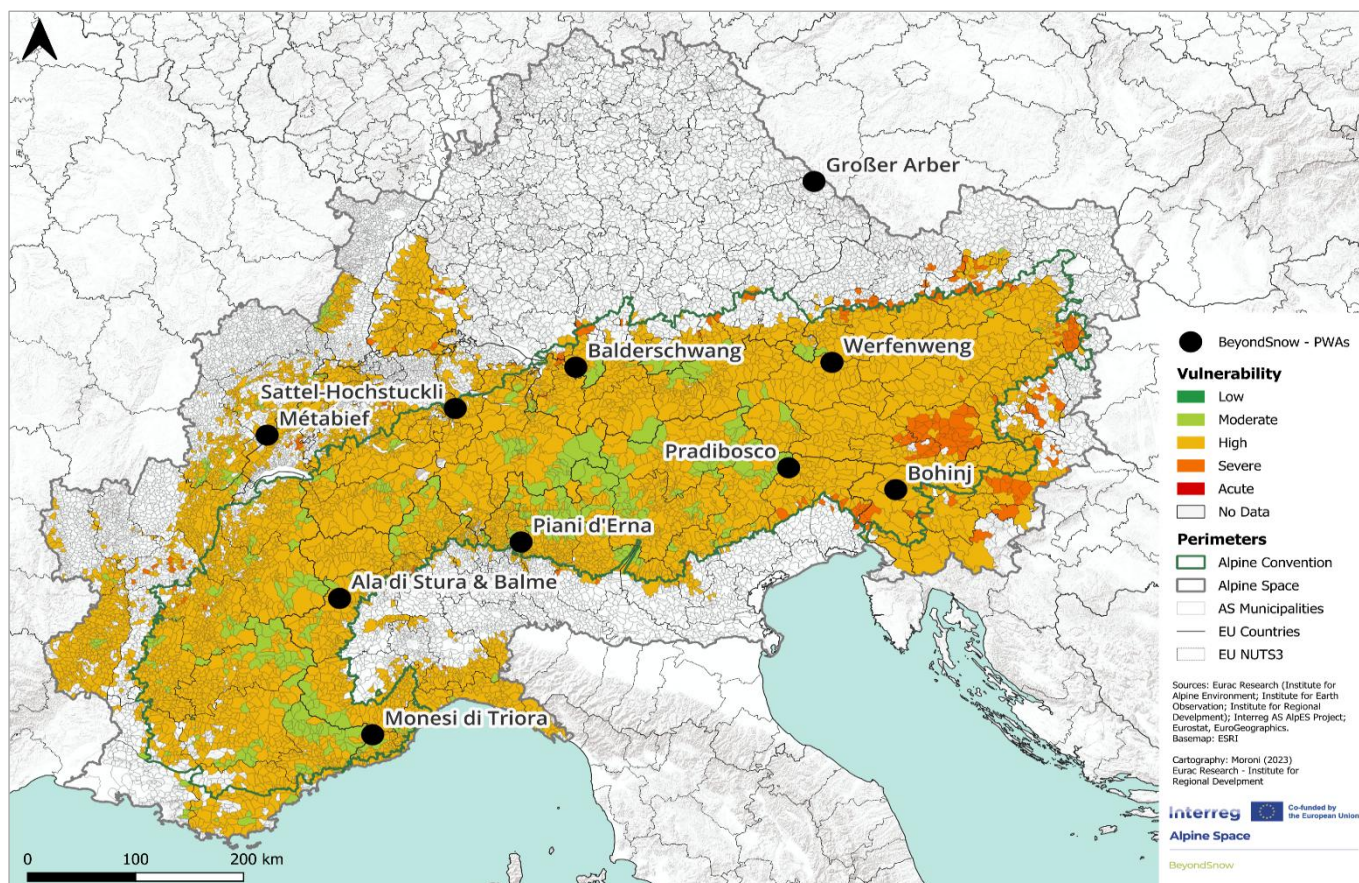Table 1: Project Partners and Pilot Working Areas (PWAs)

Figure 1: Vulnerability map with PWAs (Eurac Research)

4 Structure and Approach of the Policy Recommendations

The following subchapters present the policy recommendations developed within the framework of the BeyondSnow project. They build upon the project's analytical findings, pilot experiences and actions, feedback from relevant institutions and organizations, as well as stakeholder dialogues conducted within the co-design laboratories of the 10 PWAs, translating them into strategic suggestions that may support Alpine STDs in their ongoing adaptation processes. Rather than proposing new frameworks, these recommendations aim to complement and align with existing strategies and working agendas also under the Alpine Convention, EUSALP, and relevant EU initiatives. Recognising the complexity and diversity of governance contexts within the Alps, the recommendations should be understood as voluntary guidance and inspirational inputs. They offer possible pathways to integrate STD-related climate adaptation more strongly into existing frameworks, while respecting the mandates, priorities, and institutional processes already in place. Their purpose is to highlight opportunities for synergy, coordination, and mutual learning between different policy levels and thematic areas.

To ensure clarity and usability, the recommendations are grouped into five thematic clusters, each representing a key dimension for STD climate resilience:

1. **Strategy & Governance:** guiding principles and institutional conditions for adaptive, inclusive, and multi-level decision-making;
2. **Data, Knowledge & Exchange:** evidence, learning, and capacity-building as foundations for informed action;
3. **Finance & Skills:** enabling conditions for transition, combining financial resources and human capital;
4. **Diversification & Economy:** sustainable adaptation pathways that expand tourism models and strengthen local value creation;
5. **Infrastructure & Safety:** climate-compatible accessibility and risk governance to secure long-term viability.

Each cluster begins with a contextual introduction, summarising the strategic relevance of the theme and outlining its contribution to the broader objectives of climate adaptation and territorial sustainability. The subsequent Policy Recommendations (hereinafter PRs) provide targeted, non-binding suggestions directed to different governance levels — from macroregional coordination to destination management — and

indicate alignment with existing frameworks such as the Climate Action Plan 2.0 (hereinafter CAP 2.0) and EUSALP Action Groups (hereinafter AGs).

Together, the clusters form a comprehensive yet flexible support framework, enabling institutions and stakeholders to identify entry points for action, foster synergies, and strengthen the collective capacity of the Alpine region to adapt its snow tourism systems under changing climatic conditions.

4.1   Cluster 1: Strategy & Governance

STDs are highly sensitive to the accelerating impacts of climate change, from declining snow reliability and changing tourism flows to the growing frequency of natural hazards. These challenges reveal the structural vulnerability of existing development models and the urgent need for coordinated transitions toward more resilient, adaptive, and sustainable forms of tourism. Strategic planning and governance can serve as the guiding architecture in this endeavour, defining long-term visions, aligning diverse actors, and ensuring that decisions taken today remain viable under future climatic and socio-economic conditions.

Because STDs function as complex socio-ecological systems, effective governance must recognise and manage interdependencies across sectors such as transport, energy, housing, and ecosystem management. Addressing one dimension of tourism resilience in isolation risks oftentimes shifting vulnerabilities elsewhere. Systemic strategies instead can enable coherence between adaptation, mitigation, and territorial development. This requires decision-making processes that are flexible, evidence-based, and informed by evolving knowledge. Strategic frameworks should therefore act as adaptive "living documents," continuously updated as new data, risks, and opportunities emerge.

Good governance also depends on inclusiveness and shared ownership. Climate adaptation involves difficult trade-offs that affect residents, businesses, and tourists alike. Transparent, participatory processes help build trust, legitimacy, and commitment, while bringing together local knowledge, scientific insights, and community priorities. Such collaboration transforms adaptation from a technical exercise into a collective learning process, strengthening social cohesion and innovation capacity.

At the same time, the integration of climate resilience across all policy fields is essential. Mainstreaming adaptation into tourism, mobility, energy, and spatial planning prevents fragmented approaches and supports synergies, such as low-carbon transport systems that improve accessibility and ecosystem-based measures that reduce risk and enhance landscape quality. Strategic coordination also requires robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, allowing continuous feedback between implementation and policy refinement.

Finally, resilience in the Alpine region depends on coherent action across governance levels. Macroregional frameworks such as EUSALP and international treaties such as the Alpine Convention can provide orientation, shared objectives, and spaces for knowledge exchange. National and regional authorities can translate these principles into supportive regulations and funding schemes, while destinations operationalise them through local strategies and partnerships. Cross-border cooperation further ensures that adaptation reflects the ecological and socio-economic realities that transcend administrative boundaries. Together, these layers of governance form the foundation for forward-looking, climate-resilient STD systems.

Policy Recommendation	Description	Target levels	Alignment
PR1: Strategic Long-Term Tourism Transition Frameworks	Climate change calls for a shift from short-term adaptation to long-term transition planning in STDs. EUSALP and the Alpine Convention could cooperate to facilitate the development of adaptive frameworks that integrate climate scenarios, tourism trends, and spatial planning objectives across governance levels. These frameworks may encourage destinations to prepare flexible "living documents" that evolve alongside changing climatic and socio-economic conditions. They can also promote participatory and evidence-based planning, fostering inclusion of public, private, and civil society stakeholders and strengthening trust and legitimacy. Cross-level coordination can ensure coherence between macroregional guidance and local implementation. National and regional authorities could draw on this support to create instruments and funding programmes that operationalise transition pathways at the destination level.	Alpine Convention, EUSALP, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Tourism, spatial planning, natural hazards. **EUSALP:** AG2, AG6. **EU:** Resilience, climate-proofing.
PR2: Institutionalizing Participatory Transformation Processes	Climate-resilient tourism strategies benefit from broad participation, trust, and shared ownership. EUSALP could promote participatory governance approaches by offering guidance on inclusive planning and consultation methods. The Alpine Convention may embed participation principles within adaptation frameworks, fostering social learning across territories. Engaging residents, businesses, civil-society organisations, and local authorities can build legitimacy and ensure diverse knowledge informs decision-making. National and regional levels could institutionalise these practices through regulations and programmes that encourage destinations to co-design adaptive strategies with their communities.	EUSALP, Alpine Convention, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Municipal action. **EUSALP:** AG2, AG6. **EU:** Governance innovation, participation.
PR3: Social Innovation & Reduced Barriers	Innovative social and governance models can help Alpine destinations navigate transformation. EUSALP may encourage experimentation through networks that connect tourism, research, finance, and civil-society actors, while sharing successful practices. The Alpine Convention could acknowledge social innovation as a key driver of climate adaptation within its policy tools. Reducing administrative and financial barriers can enable testing of new collaboration forms, services, and funding schemes. National and regional authorities may provide flexible frameworks and support mechanisms, empowering destinations to trial and upscale socially innovative solutions that strengthen community resilience.	EUSALP, Alpine Convention, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Governance, partnerships. **EUSALP:** AG2. **EU:** Social innovation, governance.

Policy Recommendation	Description	Target levels	Alignment
PR4: Mainstreaming Climate Resilience	Integrating climate resilience across tourism-related policies can enhance coherence and effectiveness. EUSALP and the Alpine Convention could both promote alignment of adaptation objectives with sectoral strategies in energy, mobility, land use, and regional development, consistent with CAP 2.0 principles. Their cooperation can guide harmonised policy design and capacity-building. National and regional authorities may translate this guidance into legal frameworks, incentives, and investment schemes that embed resilience standards, ensuring that local planning and tourism operations reflect shared adaptation goals.	Alpine Convention, EUSALP, National, Regional	**CAP 2.0:** Tourism, transport, energy, ecosystems. **EUSALP:** AG6, AG2. **EU:** Green Deal, Sustainable Tourism.
PR5: Monitoring & Adaptive Management	Robust monitoring supports learning and adjustment in tourism adaptation. The Alpine Convention could coordinate common indicators capturing climate impacts, tourism trends, and socio-economic shifts. EUSALP may complement this by facilitating interoperable, open-access data platforms enabling comparison across regions. Collaborative monitoring helps avoid duplication and ensures consistent evaluation. National and regional authorities can integrate these systems into planning routines, while destinations collect and share data to inform iterative policy improvements and evidence-based decisions.	Alpine Convention, EUSALP, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Monitoring, evaluation. **EUSALP:** AG6. **EU:** SF-MST, monitoring.
PR6: Systemic Integration of Adaptation	Effective adaptation requires recognising tourism as part of broader territorial systems. EUSALP and the Alpine Convention could foster integrated approaches linking tourism with spatial planning, mobility, energy, and ecosystem management. By encouraging cross-sector dialogue, they can highlight synergies and trade-offs that support sustainable resource use and ecosystem-service protection. National and regional authorities may adopt these principles within planning guidelines and sectoral legislation, enabling destinations to coordinate actions across departments and address climate challenges holistically.	Alpine Convention, EUSALP, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Cross-sectoral approaches. **EUSALP:** AG6, AG2. **EU:** Green Deal, Sustainable Tourism Strategy.
PR7: Cross-Border Cooperation for Climate-Resilient Tourism	Climate impacts often extend beyond administrative borders, demanding shared responses. The Alpine Convention and EUSALP could establish platforms that strengthen cross-border cooperation on adaptation, facilitating strategies, data exchange, and coordinated risk management. They may support partnerships through guidance and access to cooperation programmes. National and regional authorities can participate in bilateral and/or multilateral initiatives, while neighbouring destinations collaborate on shared tourism flow management, hazard preparedness, and resource conservation, reinforcing resilience across the Alpine space.	Alpine Convention, EUSALP, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Integrated approaches, transboundary cooperation. **EUSALP:** AG2, AG6. **EU:** Territorial cooperation (Interreg), Sustainable Tourism Strategy.

4.2 Cluster 2: Data, Knowledge & Exchange

Building climate resilience in STDs depends on the capacity of decision-makers to act on robust, comparable, and up-to-date evidence. Climate change multiplies uncertainty, and informed adaptation requires not only scientific data, but also practical knowledge derived from local experience and cross-regional learning. Strengthening data systems and knowledge exchange mechanisms is therefore essential to anticipate risks, design tailored interventions and monitor the effectiveness of implemented measures over time.

Data provide the factual backbone for adaptive management, yet their fragmentation remains a key barrier in the Alpine region. Climate observations, snow-cover projections, tourism flows, socio-economic indicators, and hazard maps are often collected separately, using different methodologies and spatial scales. Without harmonisation, it becomes difficult to compare vulnerabilities, assess trends, or coordinate responses across destinations and administrative boundaries. Shared standards, interoperability, and open access are crucial steps toward a coherent evidence base that supports collective action.

Equally important is recognising that adaptation relies not only on what data exist, but on how they are interpreted and used. Translating complex datasets into actionable insights requires capacity building, interdisciplinary understanding, and trust between information providers and end-users. Institutions or networks capable of mediating between research, policy, and practice play a decisive role in transforming raw data into planning guidance and investment decisions.

Beyond technical data, experiential knowledge accumulated through pilot projects, community initiatives, and local experimentation offers invaluable lessons. Facilitating peer learning, structured exchanges, and collaborative platforms allows destinations to learn from each other's successes and avoid repeating past mistakes. When complemented by twinning schemes or macroregional workshops, such exchange accelerates innovation and diffusion of good practices, enabling smaller destinations to benefit from more advanced peers.

To make these processes work, cooperation across governance levels is indispensable. Macroregional frameworks can support interoperability, coherence, and visibility, while national and regional authorities align monitoring and reporting obligations. Local actors contribute contextual data and insights, ensuring that aggregated information reflects on-the-ground realities. Ultimately, a well-connected knowledge ecosystem—combining quantitative evidence, qualitative understanding, and mutual learning—enables adaptive decision-making, supports policy coherence, and empowers STDs to navigate uncertainty with confidence.

Policy Recommendation	Description	Target levels	Alignment
PR8: Strengthening Data Availability and Accessibility	Sound decision-making in climate adaptation depends on reliable, comparable, and accessible data. EUSALP and the Alpine Convention could cooperate to foster the expansion of the availability of harmonised datasets on climate trends, tourism flows, socio-economic indicators, and natural hazards. They may also support the creation of interoperable systems that allow integration across sectors and governance levels. Open data standards and transparent methodologies can enhance trust and usability. National and regional authorities could ensure alignment with these systems by improving data collection capacities, while destinations contribute local insights and benefit from tools enabling evidence-based tourism planning and investment.	Alpine Convention, EUSALP, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Monitoring, R&D. **EUSALP:** AG2, AG6. **EU:** SF-MST, Transition Pathway.
PR9: Enhancing Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Building	Sharing knowledge across Alpine territories accelerates climate adaptation in tourism. EUSALP could strengthen macroregional networks and peer-learning programmes linking destinations, research institutions, and public authorities. The Alpine Convention may complement this by curating knowledge platforms that collect and disseminate practices from pilot projects and local initiatives. Cross-border exchange supports mutual learning and diffusion of innovation, helping stakeholders avoid duplication and scale effective solutions. National and regional authorities could embed such learning mechanisms within training schemes, while destinations engage through twinning, mentoring, and participation in transnational workshops to co-develop adaptive strategies.	EUSALP, Alpine Convention, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Communication. **EUSALP:** AG2, AG6. **EU:** Best practice, benchmarking.

4.3 Cluster 3: Finance & Skills

Transitioning STDs toward climate resilience and sustainability requires more than technical innovation or strategic planning—it depends on two core enabling conditions: adequate financing and a skilled, adaptable workforce. Financial and human resources together determine whether destinations can move from short-term adaptation to long-term transformation. They shape the ability to diversify tourism offers, modernise infrastructure, and embed low-carbon and nature-based solutions, while ensuring that communities remain economically viable and socially cohesive throughout the transition.

However, access to funding and skilled labour is uneven across the Alpine region. Many STDs face fiscal constraints, fragmented funding sources, or limited capacity to apply for complex programmes. Likewise, seasonal employment patterns, labour shortages, and limited training opportunities challenge the availability of a qualified workforce. Addressing these gaps requires coordinated policies that connect investment priorities with capacity-building efforts, ensuring that financial resources and skills development reinforce one another rather than evolve in isolation.

In the financial domain, aligning public and private instruments with climate adaptation objectives can unlock investment in diversification, low-carbon mobility, energy-efficient buildings, and ecological restoration. Blended finance models, revolving funds, or climate-oriented tourism grants can foster innovation and encourage destinations to pursue transformative projects. At the same time, clear sustainability criteria are needed to avoid maladaptive investments that perpetuate high emissions, overreliance on technical snowmaking and risk increasing path dependencies in STDs.

Human capital development is equally critical. As STDs potentially shift toward year-round, experience-based, and environmentally responsible tourism, new skill sets are required—ranging from sustainable hospitality and outdoor guiding to circular economy practices, digital services, and community engagement. Training systems must evolve to equip workers with both technical competencies and adaptive mindsets. Lifelong learning opportunities, professional requalification schemes, and partnerships between education providers and destination managers can ensure that local labour markets remain dynamic and resilient.

Finally, equitable access must be central to both financing and training. Support is especially needed in smaller destinations, remote areas, and for vulnerable groups, fostering territorial cohesion and social inclusion. Coordinated actions across macroregional, national, and local levels can help STDs mobilise resources, retain talent, and generate shared benefits also from the green and digital transitions. When combined, finance and skills form the cornerstone of transformative capacity—enabling STDs not only to adapt to climate change but to thrive in a rapidly evolving tourism landscape.

Policy Recommendation	Description	Target levels	Alignment
PR10: Strengthening Financial Mechanisms for Transition	Climate change adaptation of STDs requires targeted and accessible financial support. EUSALP could facilitate coordination among funding instruments and identify synergies between EU, national, and regional programmes, fostering investment ideally in diversification, low-carbon infrastructure, and nature-based solutions. The Alpine Convention may promote principles ensuring that financing aligns with sustainability and adaptation goals. Financial mechanisms could prioritise inclusive and long-term benefits, avoiding lock-in to outdated models. National and regional authorities can translate this guidance into grant schemes, revolving funds, or incentive structures that help destinations invest in resilient and innovative solutions tailored to local conditions.	EUSALP, Alpine Convention, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Financing streams. **EUSALP:** AG2, AG6. **EU:** Cohesion funds, Transition Pathway finance.
PR11: Developing Skills for Climate-Resilient Tourism	Adapting STDs demands a skilled workforce able to design and deliver attractive and sustainable experiences. EUSALP could encourage macroregional training frameworks linking education providers, businesses, and research institutions to address emerging needs in green transition, digitalisation, and inclusive service design. The Alpine Convention may foster integration of climate resilience and sustainability into vocational standards and professional development initiatives. National and regional authorities could promote requalification, continuous learning, and attractive employment conditions, while destinations collaborate with training centres to enhance workforce capacities. Investing in skills development supports local adaptation, strengthens social cohesion, and increases the economic resilience of destinations.	EUSALP, Alpine Convention, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Training and capacity building, municipal action. **EUSALP:** AG2, AG3. **EU:** Skills agenda, workforce upskilling.

4.4 Cluster 4: Diversification & Economy

Diversification lies at the heart of adapting Alpine tourism to a rapidly changing climate. As snow reliability declines, STDs that rely predominantly on snow activities face growing operational, economic, and environmental risks. Extending tourism beyond snow-based activities is no longer an option but a prerequisite for resilience. Diversification allows destinations to distribute tourism flows more evenly throughout the year, reduce vulnerability to climate variability, and develop a richer set of experiences ideally reflecting local identity, landscape, and culture. It can transform adaptation from a reactive response into an opportunity to pursue sustainable development and strengthen territorial cohesion.

Effective diversification must be strategic, inclusive, and sustainable. Rather than simply replacing one dominant product with another, destinations should build portfolios of complementary offers—ranging from outdoor recreation, cultural and heritage tourism, and gastronomy to health, wellness, and nature-based experiences. These should be grounded in the unique natural and cultural assets of each area, ensuring authenticity while respecting ecological limits. By connecting tourism development to environmental stewardship, diversification supports not only economic resilience but also conservation outcomes, reinforcing the long-term attractiveness of Alpine landscapes.

To succeed, diversification strategies must align with climate mitigation and adaptation objectives. Pursuing new offers without regard for carbon intensity, land use, or social inclusion risks reproducing unsustainable patterns with maladaptive traits. Aiming at a sustainable adaptation approach potentially results in new tourism models that are low-carbon, resource-efficient, and equitable. This includes integrating renewable energy, promoting sustainable mobility, and encouraging circular economy practices across tourism value chains. Such alignment also enhances access to climate finance and EU green transition programmes.

Beyond tourism products, diversification requires embedding tourism more deeply in local and regional economies. Strengthening synergies with agriculture, forestry, crafts, and cultural industries can foster circular value chains that retain and redistribute benefits locally and reduce dependency on volatile global markets. Public procurement, regional branding, and cooperative business models can amplify these linkages, creating diversified livelihoods and supporting social innovation.

Finally, diversification thrives in an enabling policy environment. Macroregional frameworks can provide guidance and facilitate knowledge exchange on successful transition models.

National and regional authorities can align funding, spatial planning, and training by

- earmarking calls that prioritise diversified, low-carbon products and the reuse of obsolete ski assets;

- updating spatial plans to designate year-round recreation corridors, nature-restoration/retention zones, and mobility hubs using hazard and water-stress maps;
- financing VET modules and certifications (e.g., sustainable guiding, circular hospitality, digital product design) so destinations have the skills to implement and scale good practices.

At the destination level, participatory approaches involving residents, entrepreneurs, and civil society ensure that new pathways are socially accepted and rooted in community aspirations. In this way, diversification becomes not merely an economic adjustment, but a comprehensive strategy to future-proof STDs within sustainable territorial systems.

Policy Recommendation	Description	Target levels	Alignment
PR12: Fostering Sustainable Diversification of Tourism Offers	Diversification is essential for reducing dependency on snow-based activities and enhancing resilience to climate change. EUSALP could promote macroregional strategies supporting destinations in developing year-round, low-carbon, and experience-based tourism offers, including outdoor, cultural, health, and ecosystem-related activities. The Alpine Convention may complement this by providing guidance on sustainable adaptation pathways that integrate environmental limits and ecosystem services. National and regional authorities could align funding and spatial planning instruments[2] to encourage diversification consistent with sustainability principles, while destinations engage local actors to co-create products that reflect territorial identity and strengthen socio-economic vitality.	EUSALP, Alpine Convention, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Tourism diversification. **EUSALP:** AG2, AG3, AG6. **EU:** Transition Pathway (resilient offers).
PR13: Strengthening Local Economies through Tourism Linkages	Climate-resilient tourism should contribute to robust and diversified local economies. EUSALP could facilitate knowledge exchange to further the integration of tourism with agriculture, forestry, crafts, and cultural sectors, fostering circular value chains and local sourcing. The Alpine Convention may provide policy guidance promoting low-carbon production and sustainable resource management. National and regional authorities can design incentives and regulatory frameworks that strengthen synergies between tourism and other economic activities. At destination level, collaboration with local producers and communities can generate shared benefits, reinforce territorial identity, and enhance economic stability under changing climatic conditions.	EUSALP, Alpine Convention, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Intersectoral cooperation. **EUSALP:** AG2, AG3, AG6. **EU:** Local value creation, Sustainable Tourism.

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[2] For spatial planning, this may include integrating diversification criteria into regional plans and municipal zoning—e.g., enabling the reuse of lift stations and service buildings as cultural, educational, or wellness facilities; reserving land for trailheads, cycling routes, and public-transport nodes; setting caps or phasing for new beds where carrying capacity is exceeded; and requiring nature-based buffers and erosion-control measures in riverine or steep-slope areas, guided by hazard and water-availability maps.

4.5 Cluster 5: Infrastructure & Safety

The long-term resilience of STDs depends on infrastructure systems that are both climate-compatible and safety-oriented. As rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, and more frequent extreme events reshape Alpine environments, destinations must rethink how accessibility, mobility, and protective infrastructure are designed, managed, and integrated into broader territorial strategies. Infrastructure that once enabled tourism can become a source of vulnerability if it locks destinations into high emissions or exposes them to new hazards. Conversely, sustainable and adaptive infrastructure can serve as a catalyst for transformation, enhancing connectivity, reducing risk, and improving quality of life for residents and tourists alike.

Tourism-related transport is among the largest contributors to the carbon footprint of Alpine destinations. Reducing these emissions is essential to align tourism with climate goals and maintain the ecological integrity that underpins destination appeal. Low-carbon mobility systems—such as rail connections, coordinated public transport, active mobility routes, and shared or on-demand services—can simultaneously improve accessibility and reduce congestion and pollution. Going beyond the geographical scope of STDs, integrating these solutions requires cooperation across borders and sectors, linking tourism planning with regional transport strategies and land-use policies. Improved last-mile connectivity and multimodal hubs ensure that tourists can reach destinations efficiently without reliance on private vehicles, while also serving residents year-round.

At the same time, climate change heightens exposure to natural hazards including avalanches, floods, landslides, and droughts, which pose direct threats to tourists, communities, and infrastructure. Enhancing safety and risk preparedness demands a shift from reactive protection to proactive, ecosystem-based management. Nature-based solutions, such as forest and slope stabilisation, wetland restoration, or sustainable land use, can complement engineered measures, offering cost-effective protection while supporting biodiversity and landscape quality. Integrating hazard assessments into spatial and tourism planning ensures that development avoids high-risk zones and that emergency preparedness protocols are embedded in destination management.

A holistic approach to infrastructure and safety also brings socio-economic benefits. Investments in sustainable mobility and risk mitigation create local employment, stimulate innovation, and improve territorial cohesion. Ensuring accessibility strengthens social inclusion, enabling equitable participation in tourism and mobility. Co-benefits extend to residents, who gain from safer, cleaner, and more connected living environments.

Realising these ambitions requires coherent action across governance levels. Macroregional frameworks can coordinate standards, facilitate knowledge exchange, and align funding streams for sustainable transport and risk management. National and regional authorities play a key role in embedding resilience criteria in infrastructure planning, regulatory frameworks, and financing instruments. Local actors such as municipalities, transport providers, and destination managers translate these principles into context-specific solutions. When designed through collaboration and guided by sustainability, infrastructure and safety become mutually reinforcing pillars of adaptive capacity for STDs under climate change.

Policy Recommendation	Description	Target levels	Alignment
PR14: Promoting Sustainable Mobility and Accessibility	Tourism-related transport is a major contributor to emissions and pressure on Alpine ecosystems. EUSALP could advance macroregional cooperation on sustainable mobility by coordinating integrated transport planning, multimodal accessibility, and cross-border connectivity of STDs. The Alpine Convention may reinforce this through policy frameworks linking mobility, climate targets, and landscape protection[3]. National and regional authorities could align investments and incentives with low-carbon transport systems, including public transit, shared mobility, and last-mile solutions. Destinations can work with transport providers to improve accessibility while reducing environmental footprints, ensuring mobility systems contribute to climate-compatible tourism and equitable access for residents and tourists alike.	EUSALP, Alpine Convention, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Transport pathways. **EUSALP:** AG4, AG2, AG6. **EU:** Transport decarbonisation, smart mobility.
PR15: Strengthening Safety and Risk Preparedness	Climate change intensifies natural hazards such as avalanches, floods, droughts, and landslides, directly affecting tourism and local communities. The Alpine Convention could provide frameworks for integrating risk management and ecosystem-based adaptation into tourism planning. EUSALP may complement this through macroregional coordination on joint risk assessment, data sharing, and capacity-building across borders. National and regional authorities could align civil protection, spatial planning, and tourism policies, ensuring preparedness and prevention measures are consistent. Destinations may integrate hazard monitoring, safety protocols, and ecosystem-based solutions that enhance biodiversity and reduce vulnerability, strengthening the overall resilience of STD systems.	Alpine Convention, EUSALP, National, Regional, Local/Destination	**CAP 2.0:** Natural hazards, water, ecosystems. **EUSALP:** AG8, AG6. **EU:** Adaptation Strategy, Green Deal resilience.

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[3] Also considering the already-existing AC protocols: https://www.alpconv.org/en/home/convention/protocols-declarations/

5 Limitations and Outlook

The policy recommendations presented in this document reflect the findings and experiences gathered within the BeyondSnow project and are tailored to the specific context of STDs. They aim to offer constructive support to ongoing adaptation efforts rather than comprehensive solutions. As such, they represent a snapshot in time, shaped by the knowledge, resources, and partnerships available during the project period (2022–2025). Several factors define the scope and limitations of these recommendations:

First, their focus is closely linked to the BeyondSnow objectives, which concentrate on small- and medium-altitude STDs. Consequently, broader aspects of Alpine tourism or sectoral adaptation — such as large-scale infrastructure planning, legislative reforms, or market regulation — could only be addressed indirectly, where relevant to destination-level transitions.

Second, the project's timeframe and resources did not allow for exhaustive coverage of all dimensions of climate adaptation. While the project has generated valuable insights into strategic planning, governance, and diversification, some thematic areas, which are also connected to tourism could only be explored in a preliminary way. These include, for example:

- **Tourism–water governance:** Only lightly covered. Key tensions around snowmaking, permafrost-dependent sources, ecological flows and household use remain underexplored across destinations. Further development can align with the Alpine Convention's Water Platform and ACB, and with EUSALP AG6 on natural resources and ecosystem services.
- **Land use & soil:** Spatial planning is treated, but land-take reduction, soil sealing, flood/heat risk, and brownfield reuse received limited attention. Further work can connect with the Alpine Convention's Spatial Planning & Sustainable Development community and Platform on Ecological Connectivity, and with EUSALP AG6 (natural resources) and AG4 (mobility–land use interfaces).
- **Circular economy & heritage branding:** Circular value chains (e.g. textiles, wood, food), territorial brands, and cultural heritage are noted only indirectly as diversification levers. Refinement can draw on the Alpine Convention's ACB and thematic work on sustainable tourism/cultural heritage, and on EUSALP AG2 (economic transformation), AG1 (innovation) and AG3 (skills).
- **Mountain forests & timber chains:** The role of protective forests and forest-based solutions, plus trade-offs with tourism and timber value chains, are addressed only briefly. Further work can interface with the Alpine Convention's Mountain Forests working body and ACB, and with EUSALP AG6 (bioeconomy/natural resources) and AG2 (value chains).
- **Youth & just transition:** Youth participation, seasonal job precarity, re-/up-skilling needs, housing pressure, and fair benefit sharing in transitioning destinations are not fully elaborated. Refinement

can connect to Alpine Convention youth participation formats (e.g., YPAC) and ACB social strands, and to EUSALP AG3 (labour market, education) with links to AG2 (entrepreneurship and SMEs).

- **Safety and risk preparedness:** Addressed only at a strategic level; an in-depth treatment of multi-hazard safety, early-warning and evacuation protocols, risk communication, and operational preparedness for STDs was beyond the project's scope. Future refinement can build on ongoing work by the Alpine Convention's PLANALP Working Group and EUSALP AG8.

Third, the diversity of the Alpine region means that the applicability of individual recommendations may vary depending on institutional settings, legal frameworks, and socio-economic conditions. The recommendations are therefore intended as flexible guidance to be interpreted and adapted by relevant authorities and stakeholders.

Looking ahead, the BeyondSnow partnership envisions these policy recommendations as a foundation for continued exchange between the Alpine Convention, EUSALP, and other European initiatives. The feedback collected through the current consultation will help refine their relevance and identify opportunities for further collaboration.

Building on these insights, future efforts could deepen specific aspects of STD adaptation — including long-term investment models, skills development, cross-border cooperation, and ecosystem-based approaches — thereby reinforcing the shared objective of a climate-resilient, sustainable Alpine region.

Annex: All BeyondSnow deliverables at one glance

The following deliverables of the BeyondSnow project can provide background information and evidence for the recommendations in this document.

WP	DELIVERABLE	TITLE	DESCRIPTION
WP1	D.1.1.1	Report on the effects of climate change on the AS STDs	A report from BeyondSnow project that provides an overview on the main effects of climate change on the Alpine Space small Snow Tourism Destinations currently affected or that will be affected in the future by lack of snow coverage.
	D.1.1.2	Vulnerability Map of Alpine Snow Tourism Destinations	Discover the Vulnerability Map, developed within the BeyondSnow project, and how it aims to explore the complexity of vulnerabilities in Alpine territories to climate change and provide a comprehensive overview that integrates both biophysical and socio-ecological and economic dimensions.
	D.1.2.1	Conceptual document on AS STD vulnerability and resilience assessment	A BeyondSnow (activity A1.2) that aims at providing the partnership with a solid knowledge base regarding vulnerability and resilience in the context of tourism destinations. The report encompasses key vulnerability indicators of STDs used in the BeyondSnow project, theoretical definitions, and approaches of resilience of tourism destinations.
	D.1.2.2	STD Adaptation Report	Analysis of models, approaches, and innovations to help STDs adapt to climate change, reducing vulnerability and boosting resilience.
	D.1.3.1	Report and database of PWAs tourism system with a special focus on ecosystem-based solutions	This report offers an in-depth analysis of the tourism systems of the Pilot Working Areas of the Interreg - Alpine Space Project "BeyondSnow".
	D.1.4.1	Resilience Adaptation Model compendium in reference to STD CC resilience	Compendium illustrating the methodological basis of the RAM, its development, and its potential for positively influencing the socio-ecological CC resilience of Alpine STDs.
	O1.1	Final version of the Resilience Adaptation Model (RAM)	Based on data collected and results of WP1 actions, specific in-depth analyses of each PWA, and collected scientific literature, the final version of the RAM encompasses the theoretical, methodological, and practice-oriented basis for the assessment, development and strengthening of Alpine STD resilience to CC. Its primary objective is to function as a STD resilience guideline for PWA and AS practitioners, its secondary is to serve as the conceptual basis for the RDMDT in WP2.
WP2	D.2.1.1	RDMDT long-lasting sustainability agreement & plan	Memorandum of Understanding on long-term use, rights and obligations of RDMDT utilization during and after the project. Plan for implementation activities, fundings, political and technical support.
	D.2.2.1	PWA transition strategies and scenario analysis regarding their potential long-term impacts	Transition strategies created within each PWA based on the activities and outcomes of co-design laboratories. Illustration of pathways their potential long-term impacts, and possible future scenarios.

	D.2.3.1	Capitalisation Report for the post-project sustainability of the pilot implementations	Solid knowledge basis on pilot implementations, making recommendations for maintaining and multiplying the positive results achieved, facilitating their sustainability beyond the project conclusion.
	O2.1	Resilience Decision-Making Digital Tool (RDMDT)	The RDMDT is the digitalized version of the RAM. It represents an automated assessment tool for aware decision-making of local and regional authorities, development agencies & local stakeholders. It enables tourism stakeholders to gain an initial understanding of their destination's local characteristics, data and resources in relation to climate change, which are essential for the development of future options and scenarios as well as climate change transition strategies and adaptation measures.
	O2.2	PWA Transition Strategies	The PWA Transition Strategies serve as blueprints for the initiation and continuation of the transition processes within PWAs for decreasing the snow-dependency of their respective tourism systems, strengthening their resilience regarding CC-induced ecologic & socioeconomic effects. This output includes an overview of the CC adaptation measures developed in each PWA as well as a summary of the processes undertaken for their development.
	O2.3	Pilot Actions for RDMDT implementation and resilience enhancement of the PWAs	By involving local communities & stakeholders, the PAs aim at field-testing and fine-tuning the RDMDT, as well as developing transition strategies and implementing concrete actions on experimental basis in 10 PWAs. Each PWA is managed by a PP. PAs will be developed and implemented jointly with the aid of all PPs and the supervision of Observers.
WP3	D.3.1.1	Visual storytelling report on national/regional capacity building events	Using infographics, videos, photos and data visuals, the visual storytelling report will illustrate details and highlights of the in-person capacity building events and recommendations.
	D.3.3.1	Visual storytelling report on the roadshow experience, impacts, and results	Collection of the key milestones of the roadshow, selected to highlight the main experiences, positive impacts, and results of the active involvement of the project's main target groups.
	O3.1	Resilience-oriented policy guidelines for AS STDs	Based on the theoretical and practical findings (WP1) and experiences gained within the PWAs (WP2), BeyondSnow delivers specific CC adaptation and resilience-oriented policy guidelines for AS STDs, targeting tourism actors and decision-makers such as e.g., DMOs and regional development agencies. The guidelines also consider the introduction and utilization of the RDMDT (WP2 & WP3) within the decision-making processes of these TGs.
	O3.2	Policy recommendations for Alpine Convention, EUSALP & EU	The policy recommendations meet the Alpine Convention working group results on CC strategies including Alpine Convention ACB working group and Climate Action Plan 2.0. The recommendations guarantee a result transfer towards EUSALP, especially towards AGs 2, 3 and 6, as well as contributing to the further development of the EUSALP action plan. On the EU-level policy recommendations are developed in the light of the EU strategy for Sustainable Tourism.

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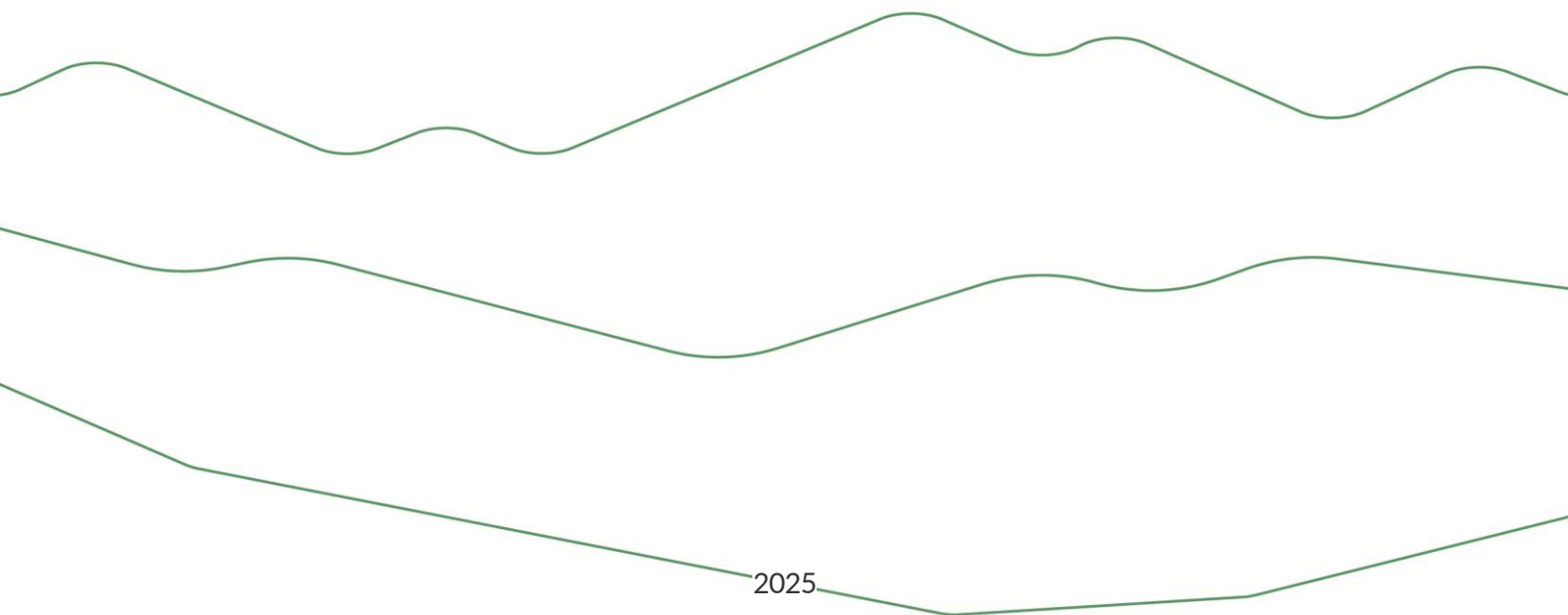
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