



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 climate change adaptation and risk management. The overall objective is to contribute to a 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 experience and enables to find a common approach to challenges in the field of climate change adaptation and risk management.

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 focused 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 in 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 on 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 administration 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, the interest and involvement stem from different angles, while complementing each other.

3. Involvement of the stakeholders

To support the work and improve the results, AG8 collaborates with different stakeholders, such as experts from other disciplines, if necessary, actors from national to local level and international networks. The goal is to work on horizontal integration of common topics and issues, to use synergies and expertise and to include other perspectives and inputs. There exists close exchange and collaboration with the following groups/institutions:

- Alpine Convention, especially the two Working groups Natural Hazard (PLANALP) and the Alpine Climate Board (ACB)
- EFC Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds (WPMWW)
- IUFRO/Unit 8.03.00 - Natural Hazards and Risk Management
- Universities
- Civil society organisations
- Policy makers
- Different municipalities
- Disaster Competence Network Austria (DCNA)
- We4DRR (women exchange for disaster risk reduction) network
- MRI (Mountain Research Initiative)
- Network of National Adaptation Policy Makers of the Alpine Countries
- EEA ETC/CA - European Topic Centre Climate Adaptation and LULUCF of the European Environment Agency
- EPA IG CCA – Interest Group Climate Change and Adaptation of the Network of European Environmental Protection Agencies
- EU Mission „Adaptation to Climate Change, including Societal Transformation”, and its national working bodies
- OECD Task Force on Climate Change Adaptation
- Platforms of the National Strategies for Disaster Risk Reduction under the Sendai Framework in the Alpine countries
- INTERPRAEVENT – International Research Society

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
- National workshop/dialogue on policy recommendations of the EUSALP Action Groups: Discussion of the findings of EUSALP to explore policy recommendations that are important for Austria and identify possible implementation paths.
- 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”

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

As mentioned, 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 macro-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 adaptation to the sustainable and climate-resilient development of Alpine settlement areas.

In this context, it is important to disseminate knowledge, raise awareness and sensitize the population, which is why communication issues and knowledge transfer are vital parts of the work within AG8. Furthermore, close cooperation and dealing with challenges through common approaches are key tasks of the AG8.

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

- Large-scale extreme weather events driven by climate change, compound impacts and cascading risks: gaps and enhancement needs in territorial risk management policies as well as transnational policy options to increase resilience of Alpine communities. On this topic AG8 will closely collaborate with the Alpine Space Project [X-Risk-CC](#), for example, to develop local action plans and transnational guidelines as well as a digital library on past and future weather extremes.
- Enhancing climate risk management and mainstreaming climate change adaptation by strengthening the adaptive capacity of Alpine territories. This includes working towards making risk management and adaptation planning at the local level become more integrated and participatory. AG8 supports the collection of existing adaptation measures and the implementation of climate support services, in collaboration with the Interreg Alpine Space Project [ADAPTNOW](#).
- In the field of climate change adaptation, nature-based solutions are relevant tools to be considered within: hazard and climate risk management; the functions and values of green and open spaces for climate adaptation and natural hazards prevention; knowledge and approaches for considering climate change-related ecosystem services in spatial planning and land use management (preventive spatial planning, non-structural measures); addressing associated emerging issues, such as 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, harmonisation and sharing of data on Alpine climate-related disasters and

trends and to raise awareness among foresters, risk managers, decision-makers and the public through an Alpine network of forest living labs.

- Further topics to be considered are:
 - risk transfer, land management, legal and economic perspective (e.g. ownership of land when it comes to risk).
 - the relationship between sustainable development of rural areas and investment in risk reduction measures, including non-technical and structural measures.

AG8 will work on these issues mainly through its strategic flagship initiative, by collaborating closely with associated projects, by involving its stakeholder network, and by promoting and engaging in the development of new funding projects.

AG8 will collaborate with AG2, 6, 7, and 9 on the topic “Multifunctional Forests and Sustainable Use of Timber”. To ensure the transfer of knowledge and fostering topics related to forest and wood a task force will be established. 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.

2. Strategic flagship initiatives

The flagship initiative of Action Group 8 is the cooperation and the exchange. This is imperative to find sustainable and effective policy and management solutions throughout the EUSALP region. Action Group 8 brings together different countries and institutions and is a focal point for the exchange of knowledge, experiences and latest developments and enables to find a common approach to challenges in the field of climate change adaptation and risk management. To strengthen the work of AG8, the flagship project is the 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 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 networks will contribute new resources and share them with the macro-regional community.

Development of new project(s) ideas: AG8 is committed to promoting, supporting and engaging 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 in the section ‘Priorities’, and it may respond to gaps and knowledge needs identified by previous projects. While a small-scale Alpine space project could be an option, 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.

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 be focusing on the topics of water scarcity and water management (re-use / circular economy, reducing the hydric print, recharged aquifer, creation of small nature-based lake to collect water for multi-usage: fire, agricultural needs). To ensure an effective collaboration two members will be nominated to represent AG8 in the cross-cutting priority.

COMMUNICATION

1. Dissemination and communication activities

The AG8 and its members make use of a portfolio of communication tools and channels. The central 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 by associated projects and flagship initiatives. In addition, the AG8 members 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.

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

AG8 will organise a side event at an international conference (e.g. Interpraevent 2024 in Vienna, etc.).

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

WORK PLAN OUTPUTS AND RESULTS

One of the main results of AG8 is the exchange, cooperation, and improvement in the areas of climate change adaptation and risk management. AG8 will also carry out different awareness-raising and sensitization initiatives.

With the Interreg Alpine Space project ADAPTNOW, AG8 contributes to its goal to improving and enhancing strategies that support the adaptive capacity of Highly Affected and Exposed Territories. The Interreg Alpine Space Project X-RISK-CC focuses on the support of risk managers and policymakers to address the compound impacts and cascading risks of CC-related extremes by developing local actions and transnational guidelines.

Furthermore, AG8 plans to develop and submit a new project proposal (e.g., a small-scale ASP project) developed 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 and support the development of the projects. AG 8 will also try to identify additional European funding programmes and their opportunities and linkages with the topics of AG8.

The dissemination and communication of the work and results of AG8 are constantly ongoing.

Indicators	Target
n. joint political declarations	0
N cross-border/transnational events	11
2 AG8 meetings per year, Participation of AG8 members in a workshop on Extreme weather events in the Alps (collaboration with AS Project X-Risk-CC), Side event or workshop at international conference, Participation of AG8 members at the EUSALP Annual Fora	
n. joint policy recommendation	1
n. project to be submitted on the Alpine Space Programme (incubated in the Action Group)	1
small scale project	
n. project to be submitted on others European Programmes (incubated in the Action Group)	1
n. of papers / research works to be published	4

planned X-Risk-CC manual, digital library, guidebook, replication guide	
budget to be raised with European funding (already accepted)	7.159.042,93 €
From Interreg projects ADAPTNOW, X-Risk-CC, MOSAIC.	
Budget planned to be raised through projects: 750.000 EUR	750.000 €
other: new knowledge items incorporated and published on the CAPA portal	40
please describe if possible	

