



Sustainable development of the mountain regions

The entire area of Liechtenstein lies in the Alpine region. The Alps are of existential and formative importance for Liechtenstein and the identity of its population. The area is a living, economic, and cultural area. The ecologically sensitive Alpine area is, however, increasingly threatened by the growing demands of humans.

A balance between protection and use as well as cross-border cooperation in the Alpine region, with the participation and inclusion of the local population, are of central importance for the future sustainable development of the Alpine countries. Taking these principles into account, Liechtenstein has from the very beginning participated in the process of cooperation within the Alpine region and in the elaboration of the Convention on the Protection of the Alps (Alpine Convention) and its protocols.

Liechtenstein has been a State Party to the Alpine Convention since 1994 and a State Party to its protocols on land-use planning and sustainable development, mountain farming, conservation of nature and countryside, mountain forests, tourism, soil conservation, energy, transport, and the protocol on dispute settlement. The Alpine Process was decisively driven by the International Commission for the Protection of the Alps, CIPRA, an international non-governmental organization (NGO) headquartered in Liechtenstein. It plays an important role in the further development and implementation of the Alpine Convention and its protocols. The Liechtenstein Government makes substantial annual contributions to CIPRA.

The International Year of Mountains in 2002 has helped focus public attention on the importance, endangerment, and potential of the mountain regions. Due to the special significance of the mountains for Liechtenstein, the country launched its own campaign in 2002. Liechtenstein activities in this international year were summarized in a 132-page volume that can be accessed at www.berge2002.li.

The 2002 World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg reaffirmed the concept of sustainable development of mountain regions. In his Johannesburg speech, Liechtenstein Minister of the Environment Dr. Alois Ospelt emphasized that Liechtenstein particularly welcomes the international partnerships on the sustainable development of the mountain regions and regional mountain partnerships. He declared that Liechtenstein is willing to be actively engaged in this process and to contribute its experiences as an Alpine State (full text of the speech). Since then, Liechtenstein has been engaged in promoting sustainable development of mountain regions in the Carpathians, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, both financially and by making experts available.



Useful links:

- Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention (www.alpenkonvention.org)
- *Information on the States Parties and the status of ratifications, as well as decision-making organs and working groups. Interested persons can download the texts of the Alpine Convention and its protocols.*
- International Commission for the Protection of the Alps CIPRA (www.cipra.org)
- Municipality network "Alliance in the Alps" (www.alpenallianz.org):
- *The municipality network is a union of almost 150 municipalities in the entire Alpine region from France to Slovenia. The member municipalities have joined forces to achieve a concrete implementation of the goals of the Alpine Convention for sustainable development in the Alpine region.*