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Dear colleagues and friends of the ECONNECT project,



the mid-term of the project has passed, many meetings have been had, and significant tribulations concerning first level control have finally been mastered. Along the way quite a few successes have been noted, but just as many new questions have been raised. The generic questions and goals formulated in the initial proposal have invariably come to heads with reality - a somewhat tense situation has ensued that was not always simple to resolve.

The team from the Swiss National Park (SNP) around Ruedi Haller and Kathrin Renner from EURAC have made great headways in the past months in establishing and implementing measures for data management and analysis. The SNP is developing a fantastic web-based tool for a harmonized approach to defining connectivity suitability in the Alpine arch and the pilot regions. After a bumpy start, data gathering and analysis is up and running and the first models will be available for general discussion at the next pilot region meeting in April.

Similarly you have all surely felt the fresh wind in information and communication work with Riccardo Nigro coming onboard for WWF Italy. Today most procedures are in place and it is now up to each and every partner - especially the pilot regions - to embrace the aims of the project and to become intimately involved. ECONNECT needs the on-going dialogue with all partners in order to avoid a mismatch between the various goals in this large coordinated effort - make sure your voice is heard.

Enjoy learning more about ECONNECT's progresses and plans in this newsletter!

Chris Walzer, Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology, University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, Lead Partner

Maps and data on ECONNECT available online



The GeoPortal is a new interactive tool of the ECONNECT Project.

The "GeoPortal" which is the central project repository for all spatial data and map products of ECONNECT is now online on <http://gis.eurac.edu>. Furthermore, the working group "Implementation strategy and data needs" has met to discuss the data situation at the current stage of the project. The GeoPortal allows browsing, viewing, downloading and uploading data and metadata and also contains an overview map showing all pilot regions in the Alps as well as overview maps for each pilot region showing protected areas and Natura 2000 sites. The maps are available for anyone interested in the ECONNECT Project.

The ECONNECT Working Group "Implementation strategy and data needs" met on 5th February on a workshop in Bolzano/I. The data situation at the current stage of the project was summarised by the work package 4 leader EURAC research, and subsequently discussed by all workshop participants. It has

turned out that the spatial data needed for the analysis in the pilot regions, i.e. the calculation of the Continuum Suitability Index, matches the data collected so far. Gaps still remain in some regions where discussions with the administration are ongoing. During the meeting it was pointed out that to make best use of more detailed data sets, the various regional data sets should not be harmonized in a sense to match them to the smallest common denominator.

Sharing connectivity knowledge within and beyond the Alps and visualising corridors and fragmentation

100 persons from eight European countries followed the invitation to the workshop in Grenoble, France, in November and used this opportunity for active knowledge transfer on ecological networks. The workshop discussions have helped the ECONNECT partners to agree on the appropriate methods which they are now using for modelling habitats and corridors for the whole Alps and for visualizing barriers. In several presentations methodological expertise from various case studies was provided and shared with the participants. Discussion groups were formed to ensure the sharing of knowledge within three important issues of the project methodology and activity: Aquatic corridors, terrestrial corridors and participatory approaches. The workshop as a tool for the active knowledge transfer of the ECONNECT work package 8 profited from the expertise and direct participation of all attendees. Thus, the workshop yielded rich and manifold results for all involved stakeholders, conservation managers, non governmental and governmental organisations, scientists, and opinion leaders. The presentations, conclusions and the summary of the workshop, which was organised in cooperation of the University of Innsbruck, Cemagref Grenoble and the Conseil Général de l'Isère, can be accessed at: <http://www.econnectproject.eu> (en)

Alpine riverine landscapes: connectivity, barriers and fragmentation



The ECONNECT project identifies effective barriers and obstacles within the Alpine riverine landscapes. The way to tackle this task was discussed at the Grenoble workshop.

How strongly is a river landscape fragmented? What are the most important barriers and obstacles in Alpine rivers? These questions are in the focus of the Institute of Ecology from University of Innsbruck within its ECONNECT activities. The results will be visualized with the help of GIS and contacts to regional watershed authorities established for the reduction of barrier impacts and restoration. Riverine landscapes are important habitats, dispersal and migration routes and corridors for aquatic but also for terrestrial animals and plants. In densely populated areas of the Alps and especially in areas surrounding protected areas riverine landscapes were altered intensively and often degraded in various ways. As a consequence, the natural distribution, movements and migration of aquatic and water-bound organisms is highly disturbed or inhibited. Work package 5 aims at improving this situation by analysing the potential to increase connectivity and decrease barrier effects and fragmentation.

In a first step barriers are analysed that are effective in the longitudinal, lateral, vertical and temporal dimensions of river systems. Fragmentation indices are applied for the visualisation of fragmentation. In

parallel, typical habitats and riverine species (brown trout, grayling, bullhead, tamarisk, ...) are identified. Potential barriers that can have an impact on the habitat and movements of these species will be visualised on maps.

In the present project period, work focuses on specific pilot regions. Effective barriers and obstacles within the riverine landscapes will be identified and contacts to regional watershed authorities established for the reduction of barrier impacts and restoration. More details on the method can be found on <http://www.econnectproject.eu>

Ecological Connectivity and the Law: from barriers to instruments



Ecological connectivity cannot be implemented without the process of overcoming legal barriers.

Entering the second year of the ECONNECT project, the activities on legal barriers (Work Package 6) are steadily progressing. The two major fields of action are at the moment a comparative analysis of the legal frameworks of ecological connectivity in the Alps and the analysis of the legal situation in the pilot regions. An important component of the ECONNECT project is that on Legal Barriers (also known as WP6), an effort led by MATTM, the Italian Ministry of the Environment), together with EURAC, Region Valle d'Aosta and CIPRA France.

The main objective of this component is to assess the legal framework for ecological networking in different Alpine countries and to provide examples and propose good practices (such as the EGTC, European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation, a new instrument adopted by the European Union) to establish connections among protected areas across borders, so that the migration and conservation of wildlife is made easier throughout the Alpine space.

For instance, experts from both EURAC, an innovative applied research institute located in the heart of the Alpine arc, and Region Valle d'Aosta are carrying out a comparative analysis on the legal frameworks of ecological connectivity in all Alpine countries, starting from France and Italy in order to assess the present situation and produce a methodology which can be used elsewhere.

Moreover, the partners of the project involved in this component are analyzing the legal situation of the pilot areas of the ECONNECT project, many of which are trans-boundary. A workshop specifically targeted at the pilot regions is being organized by CIPRA, scheduled for May, 6th in Grenoble, France. This is a follow-up to an early workshop on Trans-boundary co-operation between protected areas in the Alps, held on April 19, 2009 by MATTM and EURAC in Domodossola, Italy, and will also provide the opportunity to discuss the tentative results of a survey involving all pilot regions. This workshop will also be an opportunity for the actors involved in the creation of an Alpine Ecological Network to be informed and discuss the legal aspects of this common effort. The results of the workshops and of the ongoing analyses will result in a final report to be presented at the Final Conference on ecological connectivity and the law, scheduled for December 2010 in Aosta, Italy.

Hopefully, by then, this component of the project will have contributed to raising awareness among the actors involved, facilitating the harmonized management of trans-boundary corridors, and ultimately transformed the perception of the law from a barrier to an instrument.

Understandable and visualised ECONNECT website



The ECONNECT website by now also in the alpine languages: it has recently been translated into French, German, Italian and Slovenian.

Pilot Regions.

The ECONNECT website <http://www.econnectproject.eu> has recently been translated into the four project languages (French, German, Italian and Slovenian) and will soon be updated with maps. The work package 3 "Information and Publicity" is furthermore going to launch a photo contest that aims at involving photographers all across the Alps. The contest will start in June and last until the end of December. The theme of the contest and the members of the jury have already been decided. The contest will be based on Flickr social network and on the ECONNECT website. More information will be soon available on www.econnectproject.eu.

Thanks to the "GeoPortal" tool developed in the frame of work package 4, maps of the Pilot Regions will be put online to make people understand where the project is acting and which measures ECONNECT is evaluating and implementing. The GeoPortal will thus make the website more appealing. The maps will be presented using Google Maps. This will allow showing the location of all measures put in place by the

Berchtesgaden - Salzburg: Improving the ecological network of extensive grasslands



The "Tratten" are a regional characteristic of extensive grasslands.

Extensively cultivated grasslands are important landscape elements for ecological connectivity in the pilot region Berchtesgaden - Salzburg. Improving these habitats will help to safeguard species such as butterflies, dragonflies or grasshoppers. This is one of the tasks of the subprojects within ECONNECT which are currently being finalised. According to expert opinions as well as spatial analyses, extensively cultivated grasslands have been identified as one important aspect of connectivity in the region. In order to maintain functional meta-populations of the mentioned insects, open spaces of a certain quality have to be existent in appropriate distances. But in the German-Austrian pilot region more and more cultivated areas are abandoned due to the low potential for profit. ECONNECT intends to support a process to improve the ecological network of extensive grasslands, e.g. by developing and testing innovative management and financing approaches. As a first step, a set of species is currently being identified in

order to investigate the species-specific requirements for an ecological network of extensive grasslands in the pilot region.

The representatives of the pilot region Berchtesgaden - Salzburg furthermore presented their activities at the workshop "Networking diversity", which was organized by the Ecological Continuum Initiative in Berne/CH on February 12th in the frame of the conference NATUR. The presentations and the synthesis report are available on <http://www.alpine-ecological-network.org>

Rhaetian Triangle: new online tools and support for local initiatives

The Swiss National Park (SNP) is currently developing a web based tool to analyze barriers and corridors of the large pilot region Rhaetian Triangle. Furthermore, two local initiatives are concretely acting for the restoration of ecological connectivity. The new map application will allow comparing a freely defined area with other areas in the neighbourhood and identifying the fields with high need of action according to selected indices. The new map application will allow comparing a freely defined area with other areas in the neighbourhood and identifying the fields with high need of action according to selected indices. This tool will help experts to identify the connectivity hot spots and the ecological continuum as well as raising awareness in a wider field of the eco-interested community in the pilot region.

Apart from developing the web tool, the ECONNECT team of the SNP is also supporting two local initiatives in the Swiss-Austrian-Italian pilot region Rhaetian Triangle to restore ecological connectivity.

In the Austrian region around the river Inn, the Environment Advocacy of Tyrol (Landesumweltanwaltschaft) and WWF Tyrol have started a project to improve the connectivity of selected species along the historical route "Via Claudia Augusta". Measures should be implemented to reduce the barrier impact of the heavily used road infrastructures in this area. This should help to measurably improve the migration of the selected species. ECONNECT supports the project team with knowledge concerning the selection of species, defining corridors and barriers and ensures the access to international know how. Moreover, this exemplary project should be promoted towards the Italian and Swiss partners in the pilot region Rhaetian Triangle.

In South-Tyrol, Italy, the nature protection group Vinschgau has submitted a resolution to protect the Rambach stream between the Swiss border and the estuary into the Etsch. The local authorities are planning to implement a small scaled hydropower station in the Rambach with very limited economic value. In the last years, the Swiss part of the Rambach has been restored and is nowadays an outstanding example of a renaturalized stream. The realization of the planned project in South-Tyrol would destroy all efforts in the Swiss Val Müstair concerning connectivity of this water body and reduce the value of the ecological system distinctively. The resolution for the protection of the Rambach is therefore an extraordinary example of the importance of ECONNECT and the international collaboration on ecological connectivity.

Alpi Marittime: Ecological corridors preventing car accidents



Car accidents involving wild animals, whose corridors have been cut through, decrease traffic safety enormously and cause death of many animals.

In the Italian Alpi Marittime Natural Park car crashes which involve ungulates are very common. In most cases those accidents, besides being hazardous for drivers' life, could have been avoided with a better territorial planning, a more careful infrastructure planning and a wariier use of existing technologies. The Alpi Marittime natural park will make use of the new ways to help the passage for animals across busy roads, which have been tested in the Pilot region of Isère. Not only ecological corridors preserve biodiversity, but they are also an effective tool to reduce car crashes on motorways. Wild animals, as ungulates, birds of prey, fishes and amphibians, are always moving on the same routes in order to feed or to reproduce. It may happen that these routes are crossed by motorways; this situation puts a potentially dangerous situation both for drivers and terrestrial species.

According to Alpi Marittime natural park, one of the seven Pilot Regions that constitutes the ECONNECT project, during the last two years car crashes which involved ungulates have been 419 in the Cuneo district (data by Cuneo Provincial Administration, Flora and Fauna Safeguard District). In most cases

those accidents, besides being hazardous for drivers' life, could have been avoided with a better territorial planning, a more careful infrastructure planning and a wariier use of existing technologies. New ways to aid the passage of animals across busy roads are tested in the French department of Isère (an Econnect Pilot Region as well), by placing motion and heat detectors on both sides of a road which, using an intermittent signal, warn the driver of a wild animal oncoming passage.

The Alpi Marittime national park was chosen due to its high biodiversity value and its geographical position, considered as a link among the Alps and Provence, the Mediterranean sea and the Padana plain. Other Italian institutions supporting this project are: Aosta Valley Autonomous Region, the European Academy of Bolzano, the Ministry of the Environment and WWF Italy. The Parc National du Mercantour (France) and the Fluvial Park Gesso and Stura, directly involved by the Alpi Marittime Park with other authorities and institutions which are able to contribute to concretely deal with problems regarding conservation and biodiversity because of their competence, are even involved in this project.

Econnect project aims at creating ecological corridors (natural spaces where spreading of flora and fauna is free and not hampered by artificial barriers) among several Alpine areas, a good way to secure the preservation of genome, that is essential for the survival of species. Moreover, Econnect promotes the creation of a net that, by a common approach to the problems, permits crossing scientific and methodological "frontiers".

Three main plans make the Italian Park deserving attention:

- Aerial connectivity: reducing the danger for alpine galliformes (black grouse, rock ptarmigan and rock partridge) due to hanging cables of ski lifts or power lines. Improvements for safety of migrating birds of prey will be made, particularly all along the Stura Valley course, where wind turbine will be probably installed.
- Water connectivity: considering all the barriers placed on creeks and finding solutions to reduce or eliminate hindrances for the moving of water flora and fauna.
- Terrestrial connectivity: locating infrastructures considered as a problem for most sensitive species.

Northern Limestone Alps: Involving local population

In the three provinces of Upper and Lower Austria and Styria interviews with 170 stakeholders were held. People were asked about their knowledge, experience and ideas concerning the connectivity of habitats and possible barriers by using a questionnaire. These interviews aimed at receiving an overview of opinions on this theme as well as information on planned or ongoing projects dealing with ecological connectivity in the region. In addition, stakeholders have been interviewed about habitats and species, which is important for connectivity in the pilot region, and whether they are interested to participate in the elaboration of projects.

At the same time, it has been created a database with funding possibilities. It includes all funding resources with might fit to projects dealing with ecological connectivity.

On December, 9th the results of these two activities were presented to approx. 45 participants at the visitor centre Ennstal (National Park Kalkalpen, Upper Austria).

The next steps within ECONNECT include the exchange of information and experience with stakeholder groups as well as the elaboration of objectives, themes and projects in the Pilot region, divided into four working groups:

1. Communication - public relations - regional development - tourism
2. Rivers and riverine habitats
3. Natural forests
4. Meadows and alpine pastures

Isère Department: Tearing down the barriers



Before the process of constructing a fish pass on the river Breda, the fish had to be temporarily removed from the river bed.

The French Isère Pilot Region is very active in the field of ecological connectivity. Besides ECONNECT, since February 2009 the region is engaged in another EU Project named "Paths of life". This project will last six years and has a budget of nine million Euro. In the framework of this project several meetings were organized on the field with all concerned stakeholders (mayors, farmers, hunters, naturalists,...) to share the elaborated cartography of the vegetal structures and the knowledge of the territory.

A fish pass is currently under construction. It will enhance the transmissibility at the river Breda, especially for trout. All fish have been temporarily removed from the river bed to protect them from dying during the working process. Furthermore, other construction works are planned, like an underpath or the installation of thermal detectors systems for animals.

Detailed maps showing the planned project activities and further information on the project are available on the website: <http://www.pathsoflife.eu> (en, fr)

Green light for deer and lynx in the Alpine-Carpathian Corridor



The new Alpine-Carpathian Corridor project intends to contribute to the re-establishment of the traditional trekking routes of deer, lynx and other wild animals in the region of Vienna/A - Bratislava/SK - Sopron/H.

In future, wild animals will be able to move more easily between the Alps and the adjoining Carpathian Mountains. That is the objective of the recently initiated cross-border project Alpine-Carpathian Corridor. The EU is providing approximately 2 million Euros for it. Taking into account issues related to nature conservancy, spatial planning, traffic, agriculture, forestry, hunting and tourism, and heavily involving the municipalities concerned, it will define concrete measures to safeguard interconnections among biotopes and realize these in the form of pilot projects. Overpasses with greenery will for example help deer and other animals safely to cross motorways and other large infrastructural works on their treks.

Under the overall responsibility of the Austrian Land Lower Austria, eleven project partners from Austrian and Slovakia in the areas of administration, research, nature conservancy and infrastructure cooperate in the project, which will run until the summer of 2012. It makes an important contribution to the objectives of the Alpine, Carpathian and Biodiversity Conventions.

Sources and information: <http://www.alpenkarpatenkorridor.at> (en), <http://www.wwf.at/de/akk> (de).

Continuum fact sheets help implementing connectivity measures in the Alps



Ten fact sheets help local stakeholders from different fields of work to implement the connectivity measures. The fact sheets will be available in French, Italian and German.

The Ecological Continuum Initiative supports the implementation of ecological connectivity measures on the ground with a new series of fact sheets for local stakeholders in German, French and Italian language. Some fact sheets are already available online. The fact sheets are not only informative printed documents. Their main objective is to move to action. They target stakeholders who are implementing ecological networks (e.g. from the ECONNECT pilot regions). The series of ten fact sheets covers the most important fields of work where connectivity measures should be implemented: agriculture, forestry, water management, hunting and fishing, spatial planning, traffic, nature protection, and tourism. Special fact sheets will also be published for municipalities and other important players in the establishment ecological networks.

Each fact sheet will explain the importance of its respective sector for ecological connectivity and list concrete connectivity measures that stakeholders will be encouraged to implement. Furthermore, good-practice examples from the Alps will be presented in each fact sheet and will show that connectivity

measures really work. These good examples will motivate the stakeholders to imitate them.

The printable pdf version of the fact sheet on nature protection (in German) is already available for download at: www.alpine-ecological-network.org/index.php/services-mainmenu-8/downloads-documents. Italian and French version will follow soon as well as the other fact sheets (d/f/i). The printed fact sheets will be made available to the ECONNECT pilot regions in spring.

An ecological network frame becomes law in Lombardia

Today the Regione Lombardia, Italy, officially approved the Regional Ecological Network (REN), which includes and considers in the regional territorial planning all priority conservation areas defined by the WWF European Alpine Programme and its partners in Gap in 2001. It is an important decision for Italy, for all the Alpine countries and the projects, like the Alpine space project ECONNECT, concerning connectivity; in fact, it is the first time that an ecological network frame acquires force of law in Italy.

This pivotal decision now implies that all provinces have to align to this resolution in all successive planning stages, taking into account the areas included in the REN. The Regione, the Fondazione Lombardia Ambiente and private sponsors will additionally finance a biannual monitoring plan, starting this year.

Further information: <http://www.regione.lombardia.it/cs>

Austria: pressure caused by exploitation rose at the highest altitudes

All across Austria the tendency to build cableways and other skiing infrastructures inside the boundaries of protected areas and other high-value zones can be observed. The Austrian Alpine Club (OeAV) warns against the destruction of landscape and recreational resources in the Alps and demands a framework for a well-balanced territorial planning, in order to preserve the typical Alpine landscape. The psychological block that so far prevented from planning and authorizing projects in sensitive high mountain areas further decreased during 2009. The Austrian Alpine Club (OeAV) warns against the destruction of landscape and recreational resources on the Alps and asks for a framework for a well-balanced territorial planning, in order to preserve the typical Alpine landscape. All across Austria can be observed the tendency to build cableways and other skiing infrastructures inside the boundaries of protected areas and other high-value zones: examples of this inclination are the foreseen construction of a cableway across Warscheneck protected area, an underground cog railway through the central region of the Hohe Tauern National Park from Sportgastein to Schareck or the project of a cableway inside the "peace-zone" of Kalkkogel. In 2010 the OeAV will examine closer all these cases; during a press conference held at the end of 2009, the OeAV urged the Tirol government to define a framework that shouldn't allow the exploitation of protected areas. The Piz Val Gronda represents a very interesting example of this process. For 30 years this peak, which rises between Austria and Switzerland, has been menaced by regular attempts of exploitation. So far, these plans have been rejected thanks to the exceptional richness in flora of this region and because of its exceptional geological and geomorphologic variety. The scientific paper by OeVD named "Piz Val Gronda - a peculiar natural oasis inside the Austrian Alps" is downloadable here: <http://www.alpenverein.at/naturschutz> (in German).

Events you should not miss

Conference / Congress: **Die Vielfalt des Lebens.** 14.4.2010 – 15.4.2010. Mallnitz. Organisation: BIOS Nationalparkzentrum, AT-9822 Mallnitz 36, Österreich.

Info: www.bios-hohetauern.at/de/seminare/programm-2010/details/1-biodiversitaet-in-der-landwirtschaft.html.

Workshop / Seminar: **5th meeting of the Platform "Ecological network" of the Alpine Convention.** 21.4.2010 – 21.4.2010.

Dobbiaco/Toblach. Language: de, fr, it, sl.

Info: www.alpine-ecological-network.org/platform, yann.kohler@alparc.org.

ECONNECT 2nd international pilot region workshop. 22.4.2010 – 22.4.2010. Dobbiaco/Toblach. Language: en. Organisation: ALPARC Netzwerk Alpiner Schutzgebiete, Secrétariat permanent de la Convention alpine, d.maurice@alparc.org

Workshop: **Stakeholder integration.** 23.4.2010 – 23.4.2010. Dobbiaco/Toblach. Organisation: Ecological Continuum Initiative

Info: guido.plassmann@alparc.org

Workshop / Seminar: **The ecological network Natura 2000 and climate change.** 3.5.2010 – 7.5.2010. Insel Vilm/D. Language: en.

Organisation: Bundesamt für Naturschutz (BfN), Konstantinstr. 110, DE-53179 Bonn, Deutschland.

Info: [www.bfn.de/0603_kalender.html?&no_cache=1&tx_blitzcalendar_pi1\[qlist\]=2&tx_blitzcalendar_pi1\[uid\]=13&tx_blitzcalendar_pi1\[cmd\]=single](http://www.bfn.de/0603_kalender.html?&no_cache=1&tx_blitzcalendar_pi1[qlist]=2&tx_blitzcalendar_pi1[uid]=13&tx_blitzcalendar_pi1[cmd]=single).

Workshop / Seminar: **Legal instruments for ecological connectivity in the Alps.** 6.5.2010. Grenoble. Language: en.

Info: www.alparc.org/event-calendar/other-events-in-the-alps/seminar-on-legal-instruments-for-ecological-connectivity-in-the-alps.

Conference / Congress: **7th SER European Conference on Ecological Restoration.** 23.8.2010 – 27.8.2010. Avignon. Language: en, fr.

Info: www.seravignon2010.org/uploads/File/flierSER2010.pdf.

Conference / Congress: **The International Otter Colloquium.** 1.9.2010 – 5.9.2010. Pavia. Language: en.

Info: www.internationalottercolloquium2010.eu/.

Conference / Congress: **2010 IENE International Conference on Ecology and Transportation.** 27.9.2010 – 1.10.2010. Velence/HU.

Organisation: IENE Infra Eco Network Europe, Institute of Nature Conservation, Kliniekstraat 25, BE-1070 Brussels, Belgien.

Info: www.cbm.slu.se/iene/conf2010/conf2010.php.

International workshop in the frame of the think tank of the Ecological Continuum Initiative. 17.11.2010 – 17.11.2010.

Bolzano. Language: en. Organisation: ISCAR, schluechter@scnat.ch

Publications you should consult

Michael Lockwood, Wendy Francis, 2010: **Connectivity Conservation Management.** A Global Guide. 480 pages.

www.earthscan.co.uk/default.aspx?tabid=101775

2010: **Restoring the web of life.** Ecological networks for more biodiversity in the Alps. 12 pages.

www.alpine-ecological-network.org

2010: **The ecological Network in the Alps.** Defining criteria and objectives for pilot regions. 16 pages.

www.alpine-ecological-network.org

ECONNECT Project: Restoring the web of life

Connecting habitats and protected areas all over the Alps is the new conservation frontier: an ambitious international project funded by the EU in the framework of the Alpine Space Programme aims at establishing an Alps-wide ecological network.

The ECONNECT project will bring a major and innovative contribution to the conservation of the Alps' outstanding biodiversity. Sixteen partners from six Alpine countries have come together to promote a dynamic approach to conserving the natural heritage of the Alps.

The project became operational in September 2008 and will run until the end of August 2011.

The activities of ECONNECT contribute to the implementation of the Alpine Convention (Art. 12 Nature Conservation Protocol) which is binding for the signatory states according to international law.

Project Partners

Lead partner: University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna; Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology (FIWI) (A)

Other partners: University of Innsbruck, Institute of Ecology (A) | Umweltbundesamt GmbH (A) | National Park Gesäuse GmbH (A) | National Park Hohe Tauern (A) | Italian Ministry of Environment (I) | European Academy of Bolzano (I) | WWF Italy (I) | Nature Park Alpi Marittime (I) | Autonomous Region Valle d'Aosta (I) | General Council of the Department of Isere (F) | Task Force Protected Areas of the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention (F) | Scientific research centre CEMAGREF (F) | National Park Berchtesgaden (DE) | CIPRA International (LI) | Swiss National Park (CH)

Contact:

University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna

Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology

Savoyenstrasse 1

A - 1160 Wien

www.fiwv.at

CIPRA International

Postfach 142

Im Bletscha 22

FL-9494 Schaan

+423 237 53 04

www.cipra.org

Responsible for the content: [Aurelia Ullrich](#)

