

Press release

New online information and exchange platform for practitioners and experts in the Alpine region

Natural hazards and disaster protection in mountainous areas: Project AdaptAlp strengthens transnational collaboration

The Alpine region is especially sensitive to climate change and because of the restricted nature of the area available for habitation, people are particularly affected by natural hazards. Increased mobility, more intensive exploitation of permanently inhabited areas and new developments in tourism increase the risk of damage caused by floods, debris flows, landslides and avalanches. Many experts are increasingly of the opinion that climate change is an additional source of uncertainty in this area. The transnational project AdaptAlp in which the European Academy of Bolzano/Bozen (EURAC) is involved as a project partner, is currently exploring possible ways of finding sustainable responses to the effects of climate change in the Alpine region. The internet platform “on_alp_exchange” is the latest initiative which has been set up to allow practitioners, experts and technicians to set up links amongst themselves. This platform can be accessed via the AdaptAlp website (www.adaptalp.org) by clicking on the item in the “Links” section.

“There is already a steady electronic exchange between scientists and researchers via the web. The point of this platform however is to allow practitioners in particular to exchange ideas, to gain an insight into other organisations working in the same area, to gather information as well as to add to their own knowledge. Of course people have wanted to do this for some time, but up to now there hasn’t been any easy way of making contact”, explained Gernot Koboltschnig from the Carinthia Water Management Department, which is also the home of the international research community INTERPRAEVENT. Their web site is also linked to “on_alp_exchange” and will continue to allow access to the platform even after the end of the AdaptAlp project.

The target group for this initiative includes practitioners and experts, and also administrative staff in the fields of flood defence construction, control structures for mountain streams and avalanches, geology, risk prevention and disaster management.

Interested parties are now invited to register on the exchange platform “on_alp_exchange” by clicking on the item in the “Links” section of www.adaptalp.org. The site is in both English and German, and will feature transnational vacancies covering the whole of the Alpine region as well as a list of experts keen on arranging a work exchange. Field reports complete the website, which has been deliberately kept simple to allow ease of navigation. The platform is designed to enhance the international collaboration of experts dealing with the prevention of natural hazards. Constant adaptation to accommodate the consequences of climate change and the long-term protection of lives, areas of habitation and the infrastructure of the Alpine area are the overriding aims of this initiative.