OpenSpaceAlps Strategic Recommendations

Extended version

May 2022

All results of the project see: OpenSpaceAlps-website

OpenSpaceAlps Strategic Recommendations – Extended version (supplementary to WP T4 / D.T4. 4.1)

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OpenSpaceAlps project partners:

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Preface – about the document and elaboration process

What the document is about

Alpine open spaces provide multiple services that sustain human life and the intrinsic values of (near-) natural areas: recreation, provision of food and climate regulation, to name just a few. Increasing human impacts and landscape fragmentation put these precious spaces under pressure. Spatial planning for open spaces – and especially harmonised transnational planning – is, or could be, fundamental for safeguarding these open space functions and "unbuilt opportunity spaces" in the Alps for future generations.

The strategic recommendations comprise technical and content-related aspects, maps and in particular governance aspects relevant to open space management in the Alps, contributing to the more efficient transnational coordination of safeguarding open spaces. This document is intended as a tool to achieve a better understanding of the concept of open spaces and help to implement or improve (spatial) planning processes – from the regional up to the transnational level. To this end, the strategic recommendations upgrade the project outputs (= findings & experiences) of the Interreg Alpine Space project OpenSpaceAlps (2019 - 2022) and make them usable for the project's target groups.

Who are the strategic recommendations for

In order to increase the transferability and applicability of the strategic recommendations, a distinction is made between "policy recommendations / PR" *(see Chap. 2)* and "implementation recommendations / IR" *(see Chap. 3)*, due to the respective target groups:

- As the policy recommendations have a strategy focus, the main target groups are (political and administrative) decision-makers on different levels;
- As the implementation recommendations have a technical focus, the target groups are primarily experts in the field of spatial planning.

About the elaboration process

To ensure the high quality of the strategic recommendations, the project team – including SIR as the work package lead and the respective work package leaders (JMU, EURAC, ALPARC, UIRS) – contributed their expertise in an iterative elaboration process. The process of preparing strategic recommendations further entailed regular communication with project observers and incorporates the experiences of local experts from multiple workshops, conducted in three cross-border case study areas and their six pilot sites *(see Figure 1)*.

Figure 1 Project partners and case study areas OpenSpaceAlps

Project partners: Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing (SIR), Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (UIRS), University of Würzburg (JMU), Eurac Research, ALPARC and the Italian Federation of Parks and Nature Reserves (Federparchi)

In particular the pilot sites provided important insights into the planning gaps, transferable elements and practical applicability of the OpenSpaceAlps results. Thus, the strategic recommendations include a broad range of perspectives gathered throughout the entire project duration.

The strong interactions between project partners, multipliers, relevant actors on policy level and the EUSALP action groups facilitated the elaboration of a practical and applicable document. This ensures the practical use of these recommendations by policymakers, expert networks and practitioners in the field of spatial planning at the regional, national and transnational levels.

Nevertheless, the policy / implementation recommendations are concise and simple so as to communicate the most important findings to the target groups.

Main outputs of the OpenSpaceAlps project

This document is one of **four central outputs** of the **OpenSpaceAlps project**:

- these **strategic recommendations**, to promote the sustainable development of Alpine open spaces (policy recommendations *Chap. 2* and implementation recommendations *Chap. 3*)
- the **Alpine open space planning handbook**, to show planning principles and strategies to support relevant actors in designing / enhancing regionally adapted planning strategies for open spaces *(Chap. 4)*
- the **AlpPlan network**, bringing together representatives of spatial and sectoral planning as well as planning science from all Alpine countries *(Chap. 4)*
- and an **Alps-wide visualisation of open space structures ("**mapping" *see Deliverable D.T3.2.1)*

The comprehensive background documents for the strategic recommendations and further project outputs are published on the OpenSpaceAlps website:

https://www.alpine-space.org/projects/openspacealps/en/home

1 Importance of safeguarding Alpine open spaces

1.1 Challenges – why safeguard Alpine open spaces?

Open spaces in the Alps provide a variety of ecosystem services, which makes them particularly worthy of protection. However, their great sensitivity also makes them very vulnerable to climate change and its consequences (e.g. natural hazards, alteration of habitats for endangered species) and other – mostly anthropogenic – interventions *(see Figure 2)*:

In peripheral areas, structural developments have led to the abandonment of agriculture and resulted in the reforestation of open spaces. On the other hand, the rare valleys experience urban sprawl and intensified use due to population growth and the expansion of urban or settlement areas, thereby displacing already scarce open spaces for either agriculture or recreation. The limited extent of permanent settlement space exacerbates these land use conflicts. Away from the valleys, technologically advanced leisure facilities (esp. ski resorts) encroach on the higher mountain areas, often causing a need for accommodation and additional tourism infrastructure. In certain municipalities, additional building land is required for second homes *(see Meyer et al., 2022)*. Looking ahead – in the context of climate protection, but also as a contribution to energy security – the necessary move towards generating energy from renewable resources (e.g. wind- and solar-energy developments or biomass plants), is also space-consuming.

Figure 2: Challenges for (Alpine) ecosystems
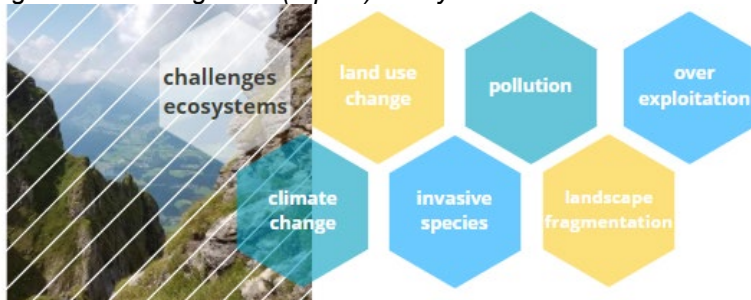
Source: Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing (based on Meyer et al., 2022)

All of these developments are increasing the pressure on the sensitive Alpine ecosystems. Coordinated spatial planning (beyond the local level) provides a tool to safeguard open spaces and their ecosystem services to maintain or restore structural (functional) connectivity in the Alpine region!

1.2 Vision – OpenSpaceAlps

The strategic recommendations are intended to contribute to the achievement of the vision developed by ALPARC as part of the OpenSpaceAlps project:

> *"OpenSpaceAlps strengthens the overall coordinating role of spatial planning with all the components of sustainable territorial development relevant to open spaces for generations to come. In 2030 spatial planners, economists and ecologists will work together to find the best way to use available land and maintain open space on the basis of common criteria and a common understanding. The coming generations will then be able to decide themselves how to use unbuilt space in the future."*

To achieve this vision, the following conditions must apply:

- General agreement on the project definition of open spaces *(see also Chap. 2 / 3)*, as all experts and regional spatial planners involved in the workshop have reached an understanding.
- Soil sealing is the opposite of open space, regardless of the form that it takes. This is an absolute criterion for open spaces. All experts agreed on this statement as a "minimal requirement for open spaces".
- There is a need for a (multifunctional-based) multidisciplinary approach and the involvement of numerous sectors of policymakers and stakeholders to allow the safeguarding of open spaces and thus reduce the development of infrastructures and soil sealing in the long term. In this context, it is essential to use the coordination-function of spatial planning *(see also D.T3.3.1 "Transboundary workshops report")*.

2 Policy Recommendations OpenSpaceAlps

2.1 About the Policy Recommendations

The following policy recommendations are based on the central derived findings of the OpenSpaceAlps project, in line with the definition of open spaces agreed within the project OpenSpaceAlps:

"Open spaces comprise areas that are kept free from infrastructural developments of any kind, which are not predominantly developed (punctual, linear or planar infrastructure), widely free of soil sealing and ideally 'noise-free'. Technical infrastructures not belonging to the landscape structure are either non-existent or hardly existent."

The recommendations aim to provide political guidelines for action to achieve the conservation of existing open spaces for future generations in a reasonable timeline and to ensure a sustainable status for open spaces with all their ecosystem functions and services for humankind.

All policy recommendations are prepared with a consistent structure, have clear and concise goals, must be realistic, realisable and communicable. We favour limiting the number of the recommendations to a few crucial, clear and very concrete central issues as follows.

As these policy recommendations have a (rather) "strategy focus", the main target groups are political and administrative decision-makers on different levels, such as the European Union, national and regional governmental authorities, international agreements and especially the Alpine Convention (e.g. working group "Spatial Planning") and the EU-Strategy for the Alpine Region EUSALP (e.g. working groups 6 & 7), competent ministries in the different Alpine states and further national, federal or regional spatial planning bodies.

2.2 Overview Policy Recommendations / PR

PR_1:   Keep remaining open spaces open for future generations

PR_2:   Safeguard open spaces especially in mid-altitudinal locations and Alpine valleys

PR_3:   Valorise open space functions for the current and future Alpine population

PR_4:   Strengthen interdisciplinary cooperation in safeguarding open spaces by involving experts from all relevant fields

PR_5:   Improve coordination of cross-border cooperation between Alpine countries to safeguard open spaces by harmonising mapping approaches and planning rules

2.3 Policy Recommendations in detail

PR_1: Keep remaining open spaces open for future generations

Objective

To harmonise the overall coordination of spatial planning with all its components and safeguard open spaces for generations to come. With a 2030 horizon, spatial planners, economists and ecologists are working together to find the best way to use available land on the basis of common criteria and a common understanding to keep spaces open for future generations so they can decide themselves how to use open space in the future *(see also "Vision" chap. 1)*.

Need to act

Define, based on an Alps-wide mapping provided by the project OpenSpaceAlps, the areas of the Alps to be kept free from any kind of soil sealing and/or construction. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to find common principles for action:

- Proceed to a common delimitation and evaluation of open spaces in the Alps and the Alpine periphery between Alpine countries and the European Union, including international structures such as the Alpine Convention and the EUSALP approach.
- Achieve an agreement on the same criteria for the identification of open spaces in all countries concerned.
- Criteria − quantitative as well as qualitative − defining open spaces should be limited in number, focusing on the most important aspects of open spaces and ensuring pragmatic planning and an international long-term approach to identify open spaces and their functions.
- Establish formal, harmonised and spatial-planning-specific open spaces for future options ("unbuilt opportunity spaces") on the basis of the uniform definition/identification and the common recognition that such spaces should be preserved (appropriate usage regulations would have to be defined for this).

Timeline

To work in line with a 2030 perspective, preparatory work must begin now and proceed towards a harmonisation of criteria and the identification of open spaces to be conserved by 2025. Further cooperation is necessary to create an international legal agreement for the conservation of these open spaces in all the countries concerned before 2030.

PR_2: Safeguard open spaces especially in mid-altitudinal locations and Alpine valleys

Objective

Open spaces are concentrated at high altitudinal levels or in areas that are relatively uninteresting for economic use (53% of all open spaces in the Alpine Convention perimeter are located above 1500 m.a.s.l). For future land use in subsequent decades, it is of crucial interest to ensure the presence of important areas and open space in lower areas. The OpenSpaceAlps project recommends ensuring that the proportion of open space under 1500 m.a.s.l. does not fall under the current 47%.

Need to act

Beside the protection of high altitudinal landscapes against leisure and other technical infrastructure (e.g. glaciers in relation to new ski resorts as a consequence of climate change), a high proportion of open spaces also has to be ensured in mid-altitudinal areas and Alpine valleys. It is therefore crucial to proceed to a definition of the criteria and essential functions of open spaces according to the focus and future use of these lower locations. Open spaces need to be part of the (spatial) planning instruments of all Alpine countries and ecological and nature protection aspects need to be integrated in all planning procedures and long-term visions. Legal instruments of protection of such spaces need to be harmonised on an international level

Timeline

National and regional planning procedures for the conservation of open spaces should be realised by 2025. Legal instruments and international agreements should be negotiated before 2030 (implementation is then to take place at the responsible planning authorities / levels).

PR_3: Valorise open space functions for the current and future Alpine population

Objective

To identify the functions and ecosystem services of open spaces for the Alpine population and for generations to come. Open spaces need to be valorised on an economic basis. Only if a realistic value is given to spaces which must be conserved for the future is long-term protection realistic. It is thus crucial to establish an international system for the economic valuing of open spaces and their ecosystem services.

Need to act

The ecosystem services and functions of open spaces must be evaluated by international experts. The following functions are crucial to guarantee the long-term functions of open spaces for people and nature and for Alpine landscapes. An evaluation on the basis of a qualitative approach is necessary to complement a pure quantitative evaluation. The intensity and availability of eco-system services vary greatly according to the features and the conservation status of the open spaces.

The following ecosystem services and functions of open spaces should be considered:

- Ecological continuity
- Important ecosystems for endangered (sometimes protected) habitats and species in accordance with habitats and birds directives
- Function for climate change mitigation
- Large scale areas allowing ecological processes
- Ecological agriculture as a reaction to the loss of agricultural land, linking food production and important ecological functions of the spaces
- Importance for the quality of life and sustainable leisure activities of the Alpine population including future generations and visitors

Timeline

The evaluation of the value of ecosystem services can be realised on the basis of an Alps-wide expert team by 2025 and through a possible official mission by the Alpine states. The Alpine Convention could be a clear legal framework for such a mission and the work based on a Ministerial decision by the Alpine Conference 2024.

PR_4: Strengthen interdisciplinary cooperation in safeguarding open spaces by involving experts from all relevant fields

Objective

Spatial planning needs interdisciplinary and international cooperation as planification procedures and territorial levels are different in the various Alpine states, even if all involved regions have regional or territorial planning tools and maps.
Responsibilities and knowledge are distributed differently, and often various authorities or services are involved. For these reasons it is crucial to involve experts from the main fields directly linked to spatial planning besides spatial planners themselves, such as experts from nature and soil protection, tourism, agriculture and social sciences − to enumerate only the most important.

Need to act

An international group of experts needs to be established from different disciplines with the intention of long-term cooperation in order to proceed to international and transdisciplinary evaluations of open spaces and more generally, make proposals for more sustainable Alpine spatial planning. A decisive tool is the recently created network AlpPlan network for spatial planners and partner disciplines.

- To deliver a recognised formal and legal status for the AlpPlan network
- To evaluate the quality of soils by harmonising criteria in all Alpine countries and regions.
- To thoroughly integrate nature protection in the long-term planning of open spaces in the Alps and more generally in Alpine spatial planning

Timeline

Interdisciplinary and international cooperation within the AlpPlan network is now available. The project OpenSpaceAlps promotes this network [created and supported by the ARL] and an initial evaluation of the most urgent needs for the conservation of open spaces for generations to come should be completed by 2023; a full evaluation of the Alpine space − concerning open spaces and local measures and decisions − is needed by 2025.

PR_5: Improve coordination of cross-border cooperation between Alpine countries to safeguard open spaces by harmonising mapping approaches and planning rules

Objective

Foster international cooperation in order to realise open spaces in all Alpine countries on the basis of comparable criteria and to develop pragmatic approaches especially for border regions to ensure continuity for open space policies. Proceed to harmonised mapping approaches to better identify needs and actions.

Need to act

International cooperation is the only realistic way to achieve a long-term and coherent Alps-wide open space structure. This ensures permeable landscapes and guarantees essential ecosystem functions in the long term. Essential elements of this cooperation, which can be realised within an Alps-wide network as presented in PR 4, can include:

- Harmonisation of political procedures and measures concerning spatial planning in Alpine countries by complementing Alpine Convention protocols (e.g. mandatory open space safeguarding particularly in the "spatial planning and sustainable development" protocol of the Alpine Convention).
- Open spaces covered by a long-term legal aspect of planning (guarantee of the permanence of spatial status).
- Elaboration of coherent international Alps-wide mapping of open spaces with quality criteria in the field of nature protection, ecological connectivity and identification of high natural value agricultural areas.
- Signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between experts on an international basis and in the frame of international agreements (Alpine Convention, EUSALP).

Timeline

Principles of international cooperation in this field of practitioners within the AlpPlan network should be proposed by the end of the project OpenSpaceAlps and formalised by 2024 − in close cooperation with the Alpine Convention and the EUSALP strategy.

3 Implementation Recommendations OpenSpaceAlps

3.1 About the Implementation Recommendations

In order to meet the challenges and contribute to the general OpenSpaceAlps vision *(see Chap. 1)*, the following implementation recommendations are intended to identify ways (= implementation guidelines) to improve safeguarding of open spaces in the Alpine region. Only a few, but crucial, concise, realistic, realisable and communicable spatial planning approaches can be shown, to support the preservation of remaining open spaces and ensure the sustainable development of such open spaces for future generations to come.

These implementation recommendations have been prepared according to a uniform structure. Based on key questions (= motivation), the process pursued within the OpenSpaceAlps project is taken up (= project approach: findings & experiences). Consequently, for each recommendation, a direct reference to existing project outputs is possible. For more information you can use the link in the footnote. On that basis, and in a next step, the application of the project findings or their necessary (suggested) further processing are formulated as recommendations. To limit the length of the text and to improve communicability, visualisations are applied (e.g. tables, graphs, maps, photos).

As these implementation recommendations have a (rather) "technical focus", the target groups are primarily experts in the field of spatial planning – such as universities, spatial planning associations / units and professionals, but also political and spatial decision-makers on different levels (e.g. transnational → Alpine Convention / EUSALP, national → ministries, federal or regional → administrations).

3.2 Overview Implementation Recommendations / IR

IR_1: Use a uniform and comprehensible definition as a basis for safeguarding open spaces

IR_2: Offer and continue advanced trainings and exchange on safeguarding open spaces, esp. involving the younger generation

IR_3: Strengthen supra-local spatial planning / administrative levels for safeguarding open spaces

IR_4: Safeguard the most endangered open spaces and/or the most affected open space functions

IR_5: Apply transferable planning instruments for safeguarding open spaces in the Alpine region

IR_6: Develop strategies for open spaces at different levels

IR_7: Include and harmonise quality criteria for the cross-sectoral safeguarding of open spaces

IR_8: Implement a harmonised transnational spatial delimitation of open spaces in the Alpine region

IR _9: Develop common monitoring for open spaces

IR_10: Provide a permanent conference (exchange) of spatial planners esp. in border regions

IR_11: Long-term processing of the pattern language approach to contribute to the preservation and development of green infrastructure (GI) through increased valorisation

IR_12: Use and strengthen networks for safeguarding open spaces in the Alpine region

IR_13: Consider safeguarding open spaces as an essential part of "crosscutting issues"

3.3 Implementation Recommendations in detail

IR_1: Use a uniform and comprehensible definition as a basis for safeguarding open spaces

Question(s) (motivation)

- Which (quantitative) criteria should be used to define open spaces?
- How can the open space concept be applied as a useful basis for spatial planning?

Project approach[1] (findings & experiences)

The OpenSpaceAlps project developed an open space definition that comprises *"areas outside housing/settlement areas, commercial/industrial areas and other special designated areas that are kept free from infrastructural developments of any kind, which are not predominantly developed (punctual, linear or planar infrastructure), widely free of soil sealing and ideally 'noise-free' (especially free of traffic or largely reserved for non-motorised traffic)"*. This analytical definition provided a solid basis for identifying large-scale open spaces with a continuous size of at least 10 ha and near-/semi-natural conditions, which are displayed in the resulting Alps-wide maps *(see e.g. IR 8)*. It has often been a challenge to explain the definition to external stakeholders, therefore additional work on this issue is needed. Moreover, it is also essential to safeguard small-/mid-scale open spaces in proximity to existing settlements (usually located in the valleys of the permanent settlement space), which provide important functions as green corridors. This balance between two schematic types of open spaces is visualised in the *Figure 3* below.

Recommendations (further processing)

Spatial planning authorities and researchers must find a way to develop a practical definition appropriate to the respective legal foundations as well as to practical implementation challenges. Based on common quantitative and qualitative criteria *(see IR 7)*, this definition should be harmonised transnationally in order to support transnational coordination of open space planning. Thematic glossaries could provide an opportunity to facilitate transnational exchange on relevant spatial planning concepts. The search for common criteria should focus on a better operationalisation of the requirements that are introduced by international agreements and strategies, such as the Alpine Convention Protocols, the EU Territorial Agenda or the EU Green Infrastructure Strategy. Several of the consulted experts stressed the need to better harmonise relevant geospatial data as a prerequisite for increased spatial planning cooperation and coordination.

Figure 3: Schematic visualisation of large-scale open spaces (A) and small-/mid-scale open spaces (B)
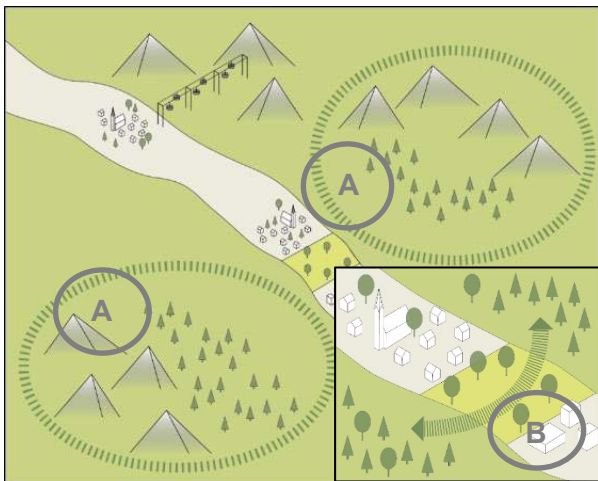
Source: ARL 2022 (design: Ertl & Schindelegger)

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[1] Further information

- Deliverable: D.T1.1.1 "Short report on project specific definition of open spaces".

Offer and continue advanced training and exchange on safeguarding open spaces, esp. involving the younger generation

Question(s) (motivation)

- How can professional exchange on safeguarding open spaces be facilitated?
- How can we sensitise / educate / incorporate young professionals in particular?

Project approach[2] (findings & experiences)

The OpenSpaceAlps project has deliberately placed a strong focus on networking and the inclusion of practical knowledge from spatial planning. In this context, the activities of the AlpPlan network can be mentioned, which organised four interactive events for the exchange of good planning approaches during the OpenSpaceAlps project and will be taken over after the end of the project by the ARL *(see also IR 12)*. In addition, we involved 20 young professionals in the OpenSpaceAlps project with a capacity building seminar lasting several days in order to familiarise them with the project's contents and to incorporate feedback and suggestions from the young generation of researchers and planners *(see Figure 4)*.

Recommendations (further processing)

With the "Alpine Open Space Planning Handbook" *(see Chap. 4)* and other outputs of the OpenSpaceAlps project *(see* OpenSpaceAlps website*)*, well-founded materials are available to sensitise and educate spatial planners for the future-oriented safeguarding of open spaces. It is important to disseminate this information via multipliers such as professional associations, coordination centres or universities. The successful example of the capacity building seminar for young professionals in 2021 demonstrated that this platform for the international exchange of young planners should be continued in the future within the framework of the AlpPlan network *(see Chap. 4)*. Nevertheless, strengthening this issue must be seen as a continuous process that cannot be implemented in a short time. It is therefore of great importance to start with studies and vocational training and to integrate the prepared contents e.g. in university courses and projects. In addition, we generally advocate that spatial planning education and practice should more strongly reflect on transnational comparisons and the search for good practices "abroad".

Figure 4: Field trips, presentations by experts and interactive workshops during the capacity building seminar in 2021

Source: Copyright photos SIR & Constantin Meyer 2021

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[2] Further information

- Deliverable: D.T1.3.1 "Presentation of the capacity building seminar"
- Deliverable: D.T4.1.1 "Presentation of results to main regional, national and transnational players responsible for spatial planning"
- Deliverable: D.T.4.5.2 "Roadmap for operating aspects of the AlpPlan Network"

IR_3: Strengthen supra-local spatial planning for safeguarding open spaces

Question(s) (motivation)

- Are planning systems with stronger competences at the supra-local / regional level more suitable?
- Which administrative level should be strengthened to safeguard open spaces?

Project approach[3] (findings & experiences)

The distribution of competences in spatial planning represents a central object of study in the OpenSpaceAlps project. In the different pilot regions, this was examined and discussed in several rounds of workshops as well as in many expert interviews. As the planning systems in the states and regions of the Alpine Space vary, the question cannot be answered in the same way for all of them (therefore a superordinate legitimisation for safeguarding open spaces – e.g. through the Alpine Convention protocol – could be useful). However, it turns out that concrete supra-local guidelines for open space safeguarding are of great importance. This should be achieved either through stronger regional planning competences or alternatively through specific criteria and requirements for municipal planning in national/regional law *(see Figure 5)*.

Recommendations (further processing)

The regional planning level represents the important interface between state coordination of territorial development and municipal sovereignty over land use. In order to make this interface as effective as possible, various (procedural) criteria are relevant. For example, an acceptance of binding regional planning can be strengthened by actively involving the municipalities in the planning process, particularly as they ultimately vote democratically on the enactment of regional spatial plans. The regional planning level should focus on certain key issues of supra-local relevance, such as interconnected open space networks or the coordination of tourism infrastructures. Coordination between the municipalities within the framework of regional planning procedures can be guided by developing regional concepts for settlement and open space development (= *"Leitbilder" such as "inner development"*). In addition, it is important to promote intermunicipal planning, e.g. through appropriate legal requirements and/or the granting of subsidies for the development of binding intermunicipal land use plans/landscape plans.

Figure 5: Multi-level administrative framework for safeguarding open spaces
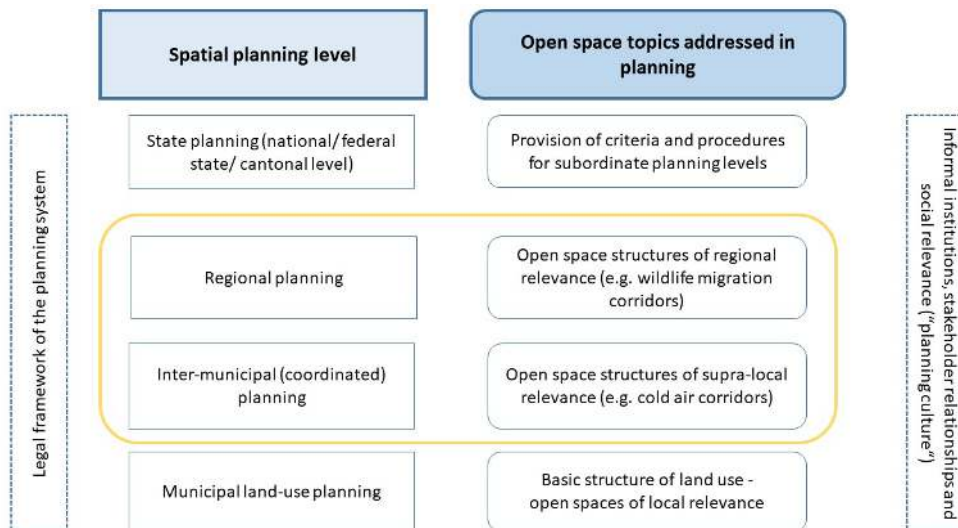
Source: Alpine open spaces planning handbook (Constantin Meyer 2022)

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[3] Further information

- Output: O.T1.2 Alpine Open Spaces Planning Handbook
- Deliverable: D.T1.4.1 "Synopsis of coded contents of the interviews with selected experts in the fields of spatial and sectoral planning"
- Deliverable: D.T1.4.2 "Collection of good/bad practices reflecting the experiences"

IR_4: Safeguard the most endangered open spaces and/or the most affected open space functions

Question(s) (motivation)

- Which open space types are the most endangered ("forgotten") ones?
- Which open space functions should spatial planning and politicians take care of most urgently?

Project approach[4] (findings & experiences)

The main reason(s) open spaces are endangered is related to the altitude level: settlement and urban development strongly affect the valley bottoms *(see Figure 6)*, while touristic infrastructure affects open spaces at high altitudes. The workshops conducted at the pilot sites revealed that the development of transport infrastructure is no longer an important factor. On the other hand, new challenges have arisen, like the expansion of "renewable energy infrastructure" (esp. wind and solar energy developments, but also biomass/gas- or hydropower plants). Spatial planning has to tackle these new developments and to evaluate their impact on open spaces.

The open space types pressured to the largest extent in the pilot sites are natural areas, unique landscapes, agricultural areas and natural touristic places for recreation. While ecological high-quality open spaces are mostly (well) protected by nature conservation, ecological corridors often lack protection status. But above all, the continuity of agricultural areas is highly endangered due to ongoing landscape fragmentation.

Category of open space functions	Well-considered open space functions	Less considered open space functions within spatial planning
Ecological	Natural habitats and protected areas	Unique landscapes and ecological corridors for movements of wildlife species
Economical	Forests	Agricultural land
Social	Retention zones and flooding zones	Recreational areas

Recommendations (further processing)

Considering the project findings, spatial planning should focus more strongly on the implementation of agricultural priority areas in valley bottoms, ecological corridors and large recreational open spaces. In the short term the stakeholders involved in the OpenSpaceAlps pilot regions should build on the project workshops and capitalise on the results (main target groups: mayors, councillors, regional administration in spatial planning offices). In the mid- to long-term regular monitoring *(see also IR 9)* of the quantity, quality and structure of open spaces should be established to facilitate planning decisions.

Figure 6: Settlement development 1953-2017 Oberalm (Tennengau/AT) – caused by the urban sprawl of the city of Salzburg

Source: Salzburger Geografisches Informationssystem (SAGIS)

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[4] Further information

- Deliverable: D.T2.1.1 "Summary of current governance and planning systems for open spaces in pilot sites"

IR_5: Apply transferable planning instruments for safeguarding open spaces in the Alpine region

Question(s) (motivation)

- Which planning approaches and related instruments exist within the Alpine region?
- Which of them are more applicable / transferable within the Alpine region?

Project approach[5] (findings & experiences)

Basically, to keep open spaces free from infrastructural development, a "positive planning" approach FOR open spaces seems to be more accepted by stakeholders than a "negative planning" approach against disruptive infrastructure. Five essential framework conditions were identified for a successful transfer of spatial planning approaches (esp. proven planning instruments) to other regions within the Alpine Space:

- A culture for regional planning and intermunicipal cooperation
- Existing data and studies on the values of open space functions
- Awareness of open space functions and ecosystem services among spatial planners and the wider public
- Existing or pending pressure on open spaces
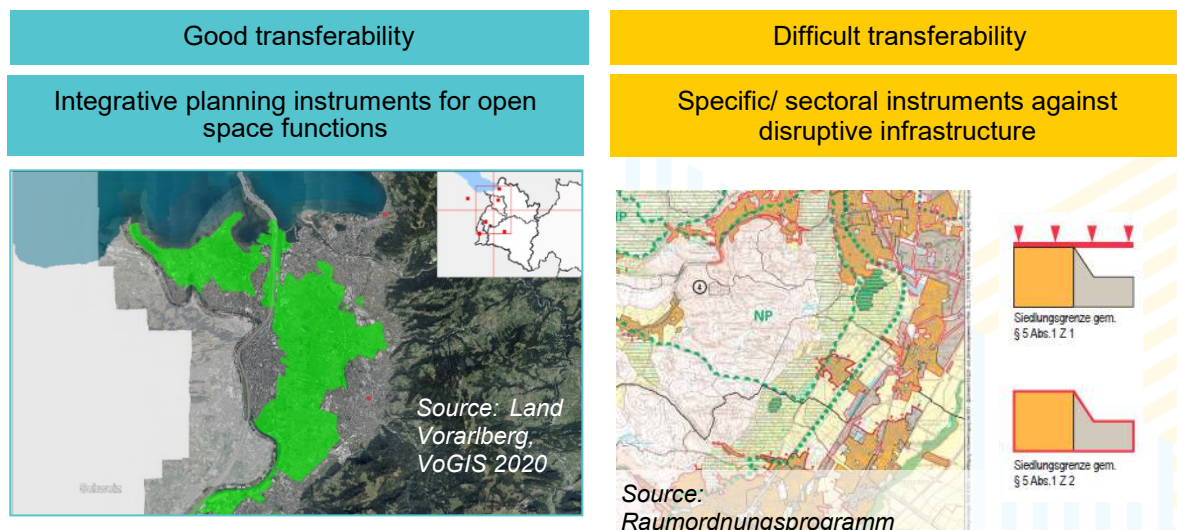- Legal implementation possibilities

Planning instruments with multifunctional approaches (e.g. the Italian Landscape Plans) are particularly transferable. Monothematic instruments, like plans restricting ski area development or determining settlement boundaries, are rather difficult to transfer *(see Figure 7)*.

Recommendations (further processing)

To be able to plan FOR open spaces, it is recommended to focus on various open space functions like highly valuable agricultural soil, ecological corridors and recreational aspects of unique landscapes, and to have related studies to hand *(see IR 7)*. Integrating various open space functions into one planning document or including various indicators in a combined index can raise awareness of the importance of open spaces. Recommended further steps: check the five identified framework conditions in your planning region; make sure to prepare the missing framework conditions for open space planning; the first steps might be to raise awareness and to establish a regional planning culture, before checking legal possibilities *(see IR 3 & IR 6)*.

Figure 7: Transferability of planning instruments (elements) for safeguarding open spaces in the Alpine region

Good transferability	Difficult transferability
Integrative planning instruments for open space functions	Specific/ sectoral instruments against disruptive infrastructure

Source: Land Vorarlberg, VoGIS 2020

Source: Raumordnungsprogramm

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[5] Further information

- Deliverable: D.T1.2.1 "Catalogue of planning approaches and instruments in the Alpine Space (knowledge support)"
- Deliverable: D.T2.4.1 "Conditions for transferring local spatial planning approaches for open spaces to alpine and EUSALP areas"

Question(s) (motivation)

- What could a promising implementation strategy for safeguarding open spaces look like?

Project approach[6] (findings & experiences)

The Alps-wide analysis of open spaces *(see IR 8)* can indicate "roughly" where planning for open spaces is needed. When it comes to legal implementation purposes at a local scale, it is of greater importance to analyse the functions and the quality of open space (agricultural value, natural value, recreation value etc.). It is also important to integrate transnational planning approaches for open spaces in the regional instruments. An analysis of infrastructural pressures, to identify the most endangered open spaces, can be a useful starting point *(see IR 4)*.

Based on the outputs of the workshops conducted in the pilot regions and by taking existing possibilities and difficulties into account, six implementation strategies for safeguarding different types of open spaces were developed within the OpenSpaceAlps project. These include:

- create a data basis
- raise awareness (public relations)
- implement binding planning instruments
- ensure they focus on the future (thus making long-term open space protection/safeguarding possible)

Recommendations (further processing)

- Establish long-term associations for open space planning esp. at regional level.
- Create an implementation strategy for improved safeguarding of open spaces in your region as elaborated in the pilot sites *(see Figure 8)*. This procedure is important to close the gap between the general vision of safeguarding open spaces or reducing soil consumption (cf. "no net land take by 2050 initiative" *– see The European Commission's Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe, 2011*) and the steps needed to get there. Especially municipalities or other lower planning levels need "guidance" during this process, also because of a lack of resources.
- Different timelines and planning levels must be considered, and various stakeholders must be involved (esp. the inclusion of politicians and landowners at an early stage is important).

Figure 8: Exemplary implementation strategy Tennengau (AT) based on workshop results
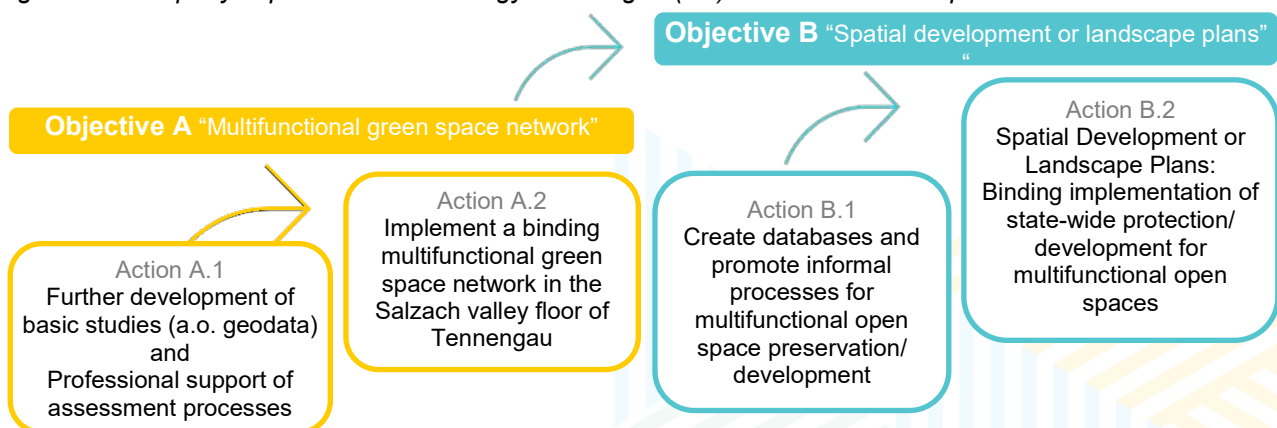
Source: Pilot implementation strategies (Deliverable D.T2.2.1)

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[6] Further information

- Deliverable: D.T2.2.1 "Pilot implementation strategy"
- Deliverable: D.T2.3.1 "Report on cross-border case studies and workshops"

Include and harmonise quality criteria for the cross-sectoral safeguarding of open spaces

Question(s) (motivation)

- Which are the most common quality criteria for intermunicipal / intersectoral open space planning?

Project approach[7] (findings & experiences)

Applying analytical criteria for open spaces and modelling them by computer-aided software can make the quality of open spaces visible in a virtual way. Expert opinions, e.g. from landscape planners, are always needed to cross-check the criteria-based analysis in the field.

Beside sectoral protected areas, such as forests, natural habitats and risk areas for natural hazards, the most common criteria for planning a regional open space network are:

- Criteria for landscape permeability and ecological connectivity:
- Starting points could be natural habitats and protected areas. Mostly, a distinction between artificial and natural land use is made, which can be combined with human disturbance or fragmentation, as well as topographic indicators like altitude and slope.
- Criteria for agricultural areas *(see Figure 9)*:
- The starting point is the productivity of agricultural soil and the natural yield conditions (soil composition, terrain, climatic conditions, water conditions), which can be combined with continuous size of the area, slope or concentration of pollutants.
- Criteria for recreation and near natural areas:
- Exclusion of and distance from disruptive infrastructure, definition of non-disruptive infrastructure and a maximum noise level.

Recommendations (further processing)

Initial problem situations in open space planning and approaches to safeguarding open spaces are primarily seen from a sectoral point of view (agriculture, tourism, nature conservation etc.). By using the coordination function of spatial planning, forces can be combined (multiplied) to achieve the objective of protecting open spaces in an intersectoral and pro-active way. Normative quality criteria – as a basis for implementation – must be pragmatic and simple to apply. This could reduce harmonisation issues especially in border regions and facilitate transnational open space planning.
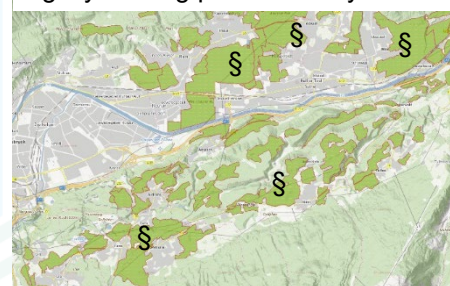
Therefore, we recommend gathering inspiration from the priority criteria list *(see Deliverable D.T2.5.1)* and developing appropriate quality criteria for your region by taking specific needs into account.

Figure 9: From analysis to legal implementation "Agricultural Precautionary Areas"

Delimitation criteria for agricultural precautionary areas

Criterion	Threshold value
Soil climate index Inn valley	> 30 points
Soil climate index in special cases	> 25 points
Area size and type of use	> 4 hectares of fields and multi-cut meadows
slope	< approx. 35

Source: Office of the Tyrolean Provincial Government,
Dept. of Agriculture, Hunting and Fishing,
Sg. Spatial planning, Tiris

Legally binding precautionary areas

Source: TirisMaps Tirol. https://maps.tirol.gv.at

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[7] Further information

- Deliverable: D.T2.5.1 "Priority criteria list for the preservation and safeguarding of open spaces in the Alps and EUSALP

IR_8: Implement a harmonised transnational spatial delimitation of open spaces in the Alpine region

Question(s) (motivation)

- The delimitation and identification of open spaces should be based on a common definition *(see IR 1)* adapted to a cartographic representation through a set of comparable data and indicators on an international level.
- Data should be based on a watershed approach to ensure a focus on the natural environment in this spatial analysis.
- Data should be compatible with international shape file formats and based on available EU datasets completed by national information on lower levels.

Project approach[8] (findings & experiences)

The identification of areas less disturbed by the presence of infrastructure *(see Figures 10 & 11)* constitutes a baseline that should be complemented by a set of qualitative and quantitative criteria expressed in key indicators to provide an improved planning instrument. This work will allow a more precise delimitation and identification of the ecological potential of the remaining Alpine open spaces to be elaborated.

There are major challenges of data uniformity, precision and availability concerning the selection of infrastructures; the approach integrated alternative, open-source data to conduct the analysis that resulted in the spatial development indicator.

Recommendations (further processing)

- The Alps-wide mapping provides a general delimitation of spaces with little or no infrastructure on an Alpine scale. A more detailed delimitation applicable to the local level will require improvements in the availability, comparability and precision of data.
- The definition of pertinent, clear and easily monitorable quantitative and qualitative criteria allows the elaboration of appropriate strategies to safeguard the remaining open spaces.
- A common framework on nature protection and spatial planning for the safeguarding of open spaces should include analyses based on the status of the territory and the transformation of the land uses, the ecological services and the functions of open spaces.
- Data collection concerning the presence of infrastructure should be based on open-source data and complemented with local datasets.
- The long-term evolution and future prospects of open spaces should be supported by the monitoring of commonly defined key indicators *(see IR 9)*.

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[8] Further information
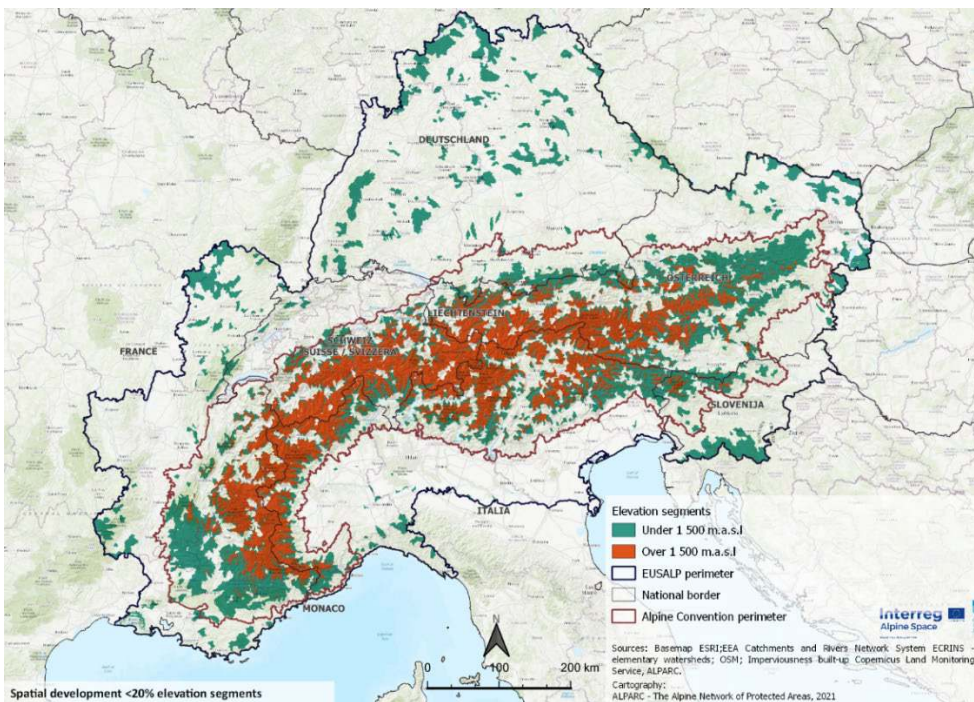
- Deliverable: D.T2.3.1 "Report on cross-border case studies and workshops"
- Deliverable: D.T3.2.1 "Basic maps on relevant and potential open spaces in the Alps"
- Deliverable: D.T3.3.1 "Workshop report of the three regional expert exchanges"

Figure 10: Spatial development in the EUSALP space
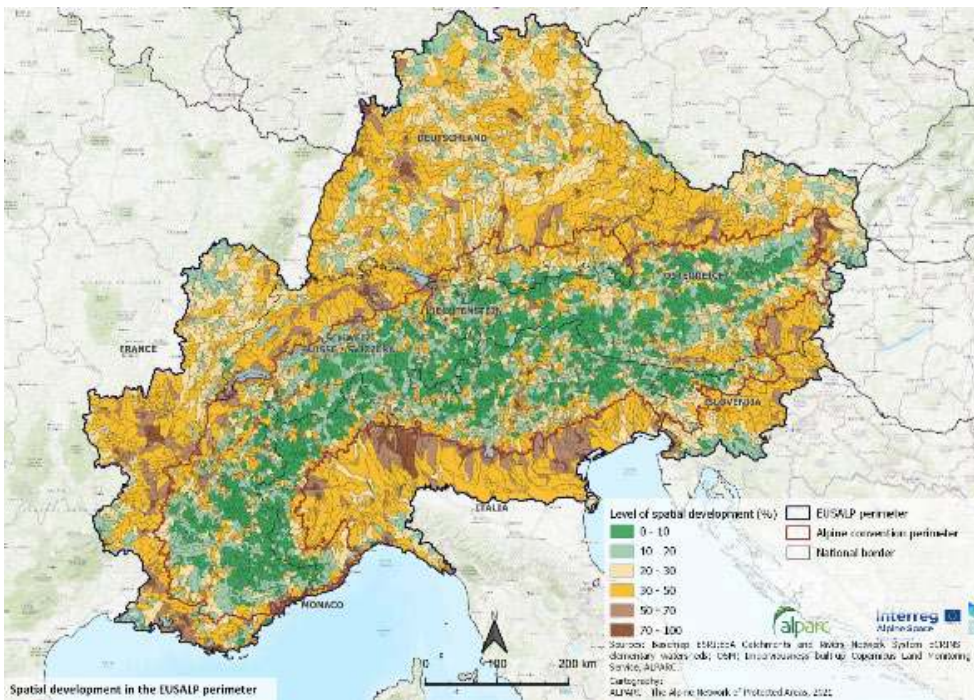
Source: Basic maps on relevant and potential open spaces in the Alps (Deliverable D.T3.2.1)

Figure 11: Common framework of key indicators to guide the strategy to safeguard open spaces (Spatial development under 20% elevation segments)

Source: Basic maps on relevant and potential open spaces in the Alps (Deliverable D.T3.2.1)

IR_9: Develop common monitoring for open spaces

Question(s) (motivation)

- To ensure the goal of long-term sustainable development and efficient nature protection of the Alpine Space, a common monitoring of open spaces is crucial to avoid further fragmentation and loss of valuable spaces for generations to come.
- Such a permanent Alps-wide monitoring system needs to be implemented to observe and identify the evolution and modifications of open spaces by quantitative and qualitative impacts. Monitoring needs to be based on national or regional Alpine datasets delivered by competent authorities, ensuring a common format and gathered in an Alps-wide monitoring system.
- The goal is to maintain a high proportion of open spaces especially in lower areas and Alpine valleys; it is crucial to observe the evolution in areas of these regions where the pressure of land use is very high.

Project approach[9] (findings & experiences)

- The monitoring system for open spaces within the Alps should cover the Alpine Space according to the delimitation of the Alpine Convention (sensitive natural space) and within a belt surrounding the Alps and extending approximately 50 km, to include directly linked developments and impacts generated from the Alpine periphery.
- A common dataset needs to be agreed between Alpine spatial planning institutions based on Corine-Land-Cover data and the 11 infrastructure components defined in the OpenSpaceAlps project*.
- Specific hotspots of spatial planning will be defined to ensure close and continuous observation. Such hotspots concern the densely populated and economically utilised inner Alpine valleys, main tourist areas, regions with a high natural and aesthetic value − like areas around lakes − and suburban regions exposed to strong settlement pressure in the upcoming years *(see Figures 12 & 13)*.

Recommendations (further processing)

- An expert commission of spatial planners from all Alpine countries needs to define the above-mentioned procedures and formats.
- A central data-gathering point (server) needs to be defined, allowing the data and observations to be concentrated and enabling professional access to the monitoring results.
- The system needs to make sure that future developments and new trends in the use of space can be detected at an early stage.
- Further development of the system may be part of future projects, integrating the issues of spatial planning, ecological connectivity and international cooperation.
- Concrete responsibilities for monitoring must also be defined subsequently with the competent institutions and competent authorities of the different Alpine countries or, in the case of a regional approach, with the corresponding regions.

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[9] Further information

- Deliverable: D.T2.3.1 "Report on cross-border case studies and workshops"
- Deliverable: D.T3.2.1 "Basic maps on relevant and potential open spaces in the Alps"
- Deliverable: D.T3.3.1 "Workshop report of the three regional expert exchanges"

Option for concrete implementations of open-space monitoring:

- ESPON Macro-regional Territorial Monitoring Tool for the Alpine region (https://mrs.espon.eu/EUSALP/index.html)
- JECAMI 2.0 with integrated data of open spaces.

Figure 12: Demographic scenario
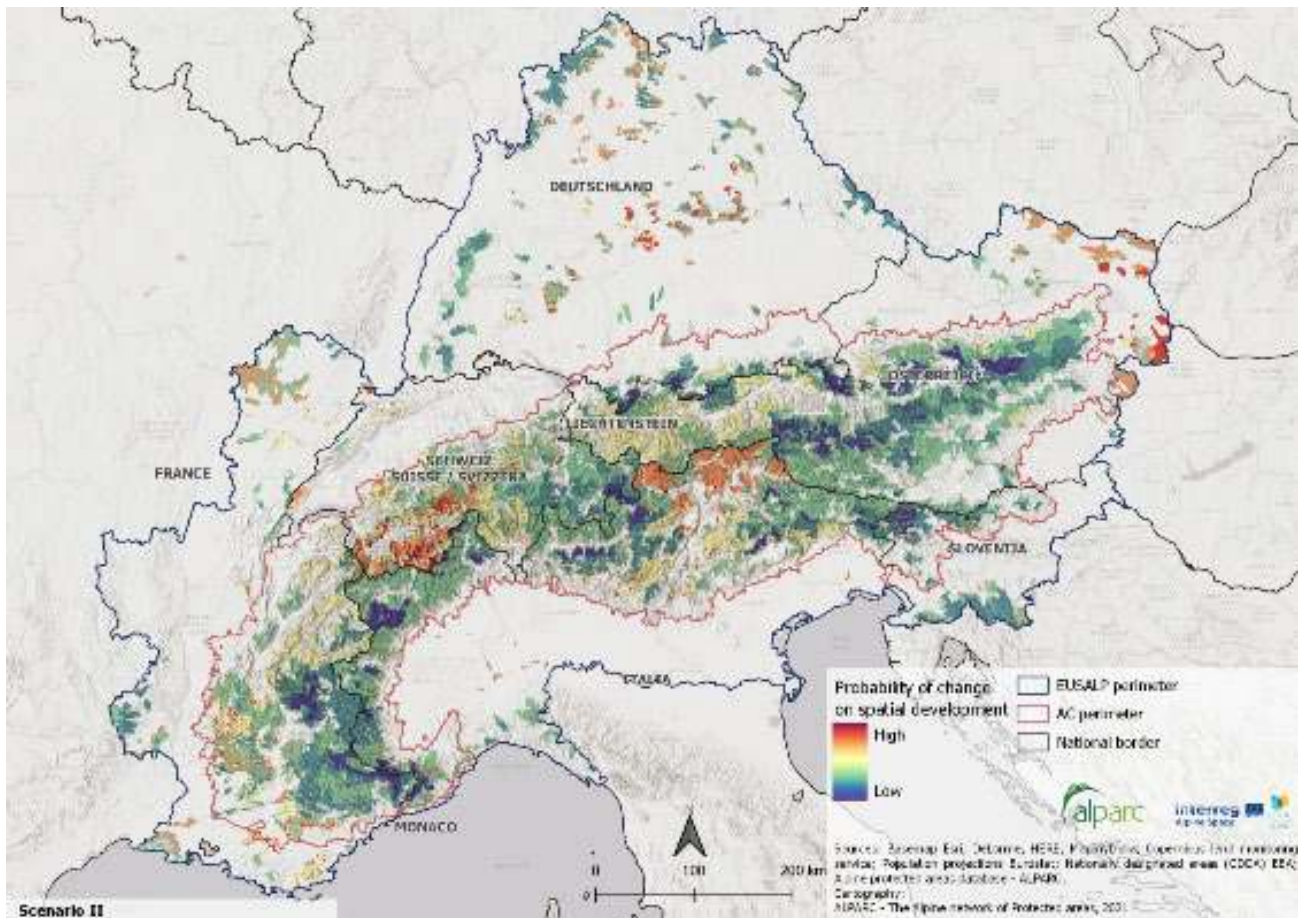
Source: An attempt at mapping open spaces in the Alps and the EUSALP area (Activity: A.T3.2)

Infrastructure components of OpenSpaceAlps – mapping of open spaces:

- Buildings
- Roads
- Railways
- Cable cars, Ropeways, Ski lifts (Linear Infrastructure Provision)
- Airport/ Airfield
- Mine, Stone Quarry, Raw Material Extraction Site
- Artificial Leisure Areas (Golf Course, Amusement Park, Campsites, Swimming Pools, etc.)
- (High-voltage) Power Supply Lines
- Dams, Hydropower Facilities
- Landfill/ Waste Deposit Sites
- Power Plants, Waste Incineration Plants etc. (High Emission Facilities)

Source: Adapted from NISCHIK & PÜTZ, 2018

Figure 13: Changes in the demographic scenario caused by protecting zones with spatial development under 10%
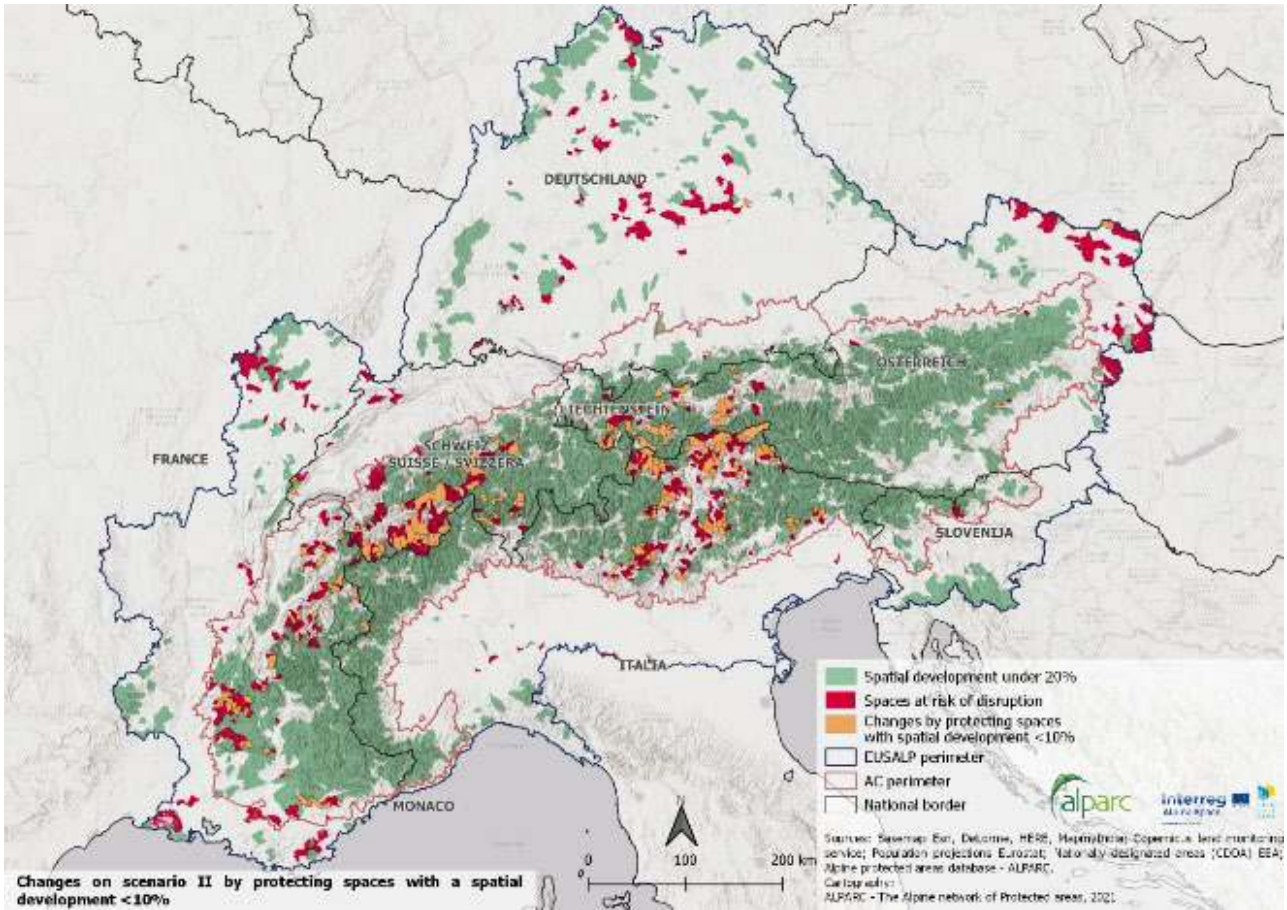
Source: An attempt at mapping open spaces in the Alps and EUSALP area (Activity: A.T3.2)

IR_10: Provide a permanent conference (exchange) of spatial planners esp. in border regions

Question(s) (motivation)

- Border regions have great interest in close cooperation between spatial planners in order to ensure the long-term harmonious evolution of Alpine transboundary regions, landscapes and infrastructure. The aspect of open spaces is crucial in this context. Spatial planners in border regions should work closely together and have a permanent mechanism of information exchange in such regions.

Project approach[10] (findings & experiences)

- Identify border regions with a priority for transnational cooperation in spatial planning.
- Define transboundary working groups of spatial planners and nature protection experts. If there are protected areas, their representatives should be involved.
- Exchange information about all planned infrastructure projects and legal aspects of future development in the concerned area. It is recommended to ensure close cooperation in a region of at least 25 km each side of a national border in the defined areas.
- Organise regular meetings to ensure information and exchange, especially about infrastructure projects that impact both sides of a national border.

Recommendations (further processing)

- Define the institutions and representatives of spatial planning in the Alpine border regions (A-D / D-CH / A-I / A-CH / A-LI / A-SI / I-F / I-CH / I-SI / F-CH / CH-FL).
- Propose an initial exchange in order to establish a permanent series of consultations about spatial planning in border regions.
- Examine the possibility to proceed to a permanent exchange (regular spatial planning conference in border regions) within the framework of the Alpine Convention (spatial planning working group).
- Integrate the proposal of a permanent exchange in border regions in the MoC to ensure cooperation between spatial planners and associated thematic experts, especially those involved in nature protection.
- The establishment of this permanent exchange may be part of future projects integrating the issues of spatial planning, ecological connectivity and international cooperation.
- A permanent mechanism of exchange between spatial planners on both sides of a national border would help to identify trends at an early stage and facilitate appropriate reactions to safeguard open spaces especially in sensitive regions.

Figure 14: Exchange on the safeguarding of open spaces

Source: Koblar, 2022

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[10] Further information

- Deliverable: D.T2.3.1 "Report on cross-border case studies and workshops"
- Deliverable: D.T3.2.1 "Basic maps on relevant and potential open spaces in the Alps"
- Deliverable: D.T3.3.1 "Workshop report of the three regional expert exchanges"

Question(s) (motivation)

- How can the importance of green infrastructure (GI) be broadly communicated?

Project approach[11] (findings & experiences)

The importance and interaction of seemingly insignificant GI-elements may be complex to grasp and to understand. The GI-pattern-language is a concept to make GI and their interactions concise and easily understandable. In the frame of the OpenSpaceAlps project we collected and grouped multiple elements that characterise the Alpine Space *(see Figure 15)*. Based on existing project results (e.g. LUIGI, EUSALP) on GI, we prepared brief descriptions of the importance and challenges of the individual elements. Furthermore, we also provided solutions to tackle the challenges involved in maintaining or strengthening the individual elements. This activity also provided an opportunity to take up past project results again and put them to use.

Recommendations (further processing)

A broadly accessible online tool (i.e. DokuWiki) that includes these pattern descriptions – e.g. on Alpine pastures, peatlands or orchard meadows – and graphical visualisations could be set up. The further elaboration of the individual GI components should be handed over to the experts in the different fields and regions. Within the project we will define a broad expert network who feels responsible for further processing. This will ensure proper guidance but also continuous elaboration of the GI-pattern-language and its online tools. This activity should ultimately succeed in strengthening understanding of GI, the importance of each element and their interactions among society and decision-makers so that they pay more attention to its protection in their practical work.

Figure 15: Exemplary illustration of the "Green-infrastructure-pattern-language-hierarchy" / GI-elements
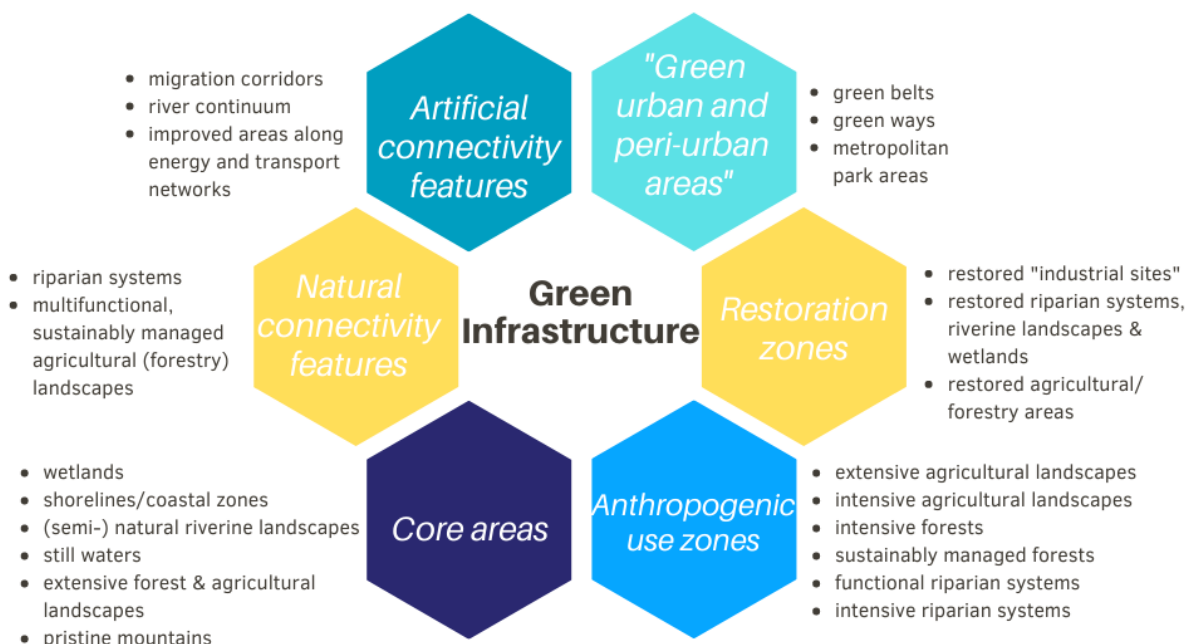
Source: Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing (SIR), 2021

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[11] <u>Further information</u> (= available output OpenSpaceAlps-project)

- [Mindmap](#) / [Draft - Pattern Language Wiki](#)/ [Draft Pattern_Peatlands](#)

Use and strengthen networks for safeguarding open spaces in the Alpine region

Question(s) (motivation)

- What is the potential of networks for safeguarding open spaces and sustainable territorial development?

Project approach[12] (findings & experiences)

An important component of the OpenSpaceAlps project is the establishment of an Alpine spatial planning network that brings together planning professionals and scientists from all states and regions of the Alpine Space. The so-called AlpPlan network is organised in cooperation with the Academy for Territorial Development in the Leibniz Association (ARL) and will continue to be funded/coordinated by the ARL after the end of the OpenSpaceAlps project lifetime. The purpose of the AlpPlan network is to promote a regular exchange of experience on spatial planning approaches (currently focused on open space planning, but also open to other issues) and to provide a common platform for the development and formulation of transnational positions and strategies.

Recommendations (further processing)

Due to its long history of transnational cooperation and political relations, the Alpine Space has a large number of existing networks: ArgeAlp, Alpine Convention working groups, EUSALP action groups, Alpine Soil Partnership etc. *(see Figure 16)*. In the future, it will therefore be most important to better link networks with each other in order to avoid parallel work and to generate inter-sectoral synergies. The new AlpPlan network can take on a role below the level of political cooperation and instead focus more on issues of planning implementation of transnational spatial development strategies. Above all, the respective network can contribute to strengthening professional exchange between different disciplines (e.g. spatial planning, urban development, nature conservation, water management, etc.) and thus promote the development of cross-sectoral approaches. To enable this exchange, the ARL will continue to organise regular transnational workshops and seminars *(see also Chap. 4)*.

Figure 16: Existing networks for the protection of open spaces in the Alpine region
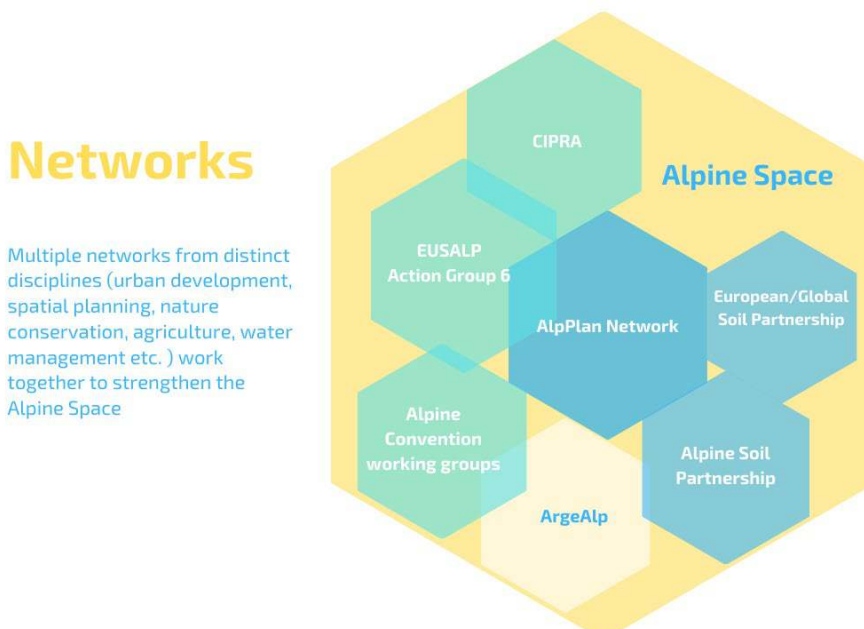
Source: Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing (SIR), 2021

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[12] Further information

- Deliverable: D.T4.5.2 "Roadmap for operating aspects of the AlpPlan Network"
- Deliverable: D.T4.6.1 "Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) for a better cooperation in spatial planning"

IR_13: Consider safeguarding open spaces as an essential part of "crosscutting issues"

Question(s) (motivation)

- How can we raise awareness that safeguarding open spaces is a key to solve "crosscutting issues"?

Project approach[13] (findings & experiences)

Analysing the (political) motivation behind existing planning approaches for open spaces was an essential part of the project activities, e.g. through stakeholder interviews or document analysis. We can summarise that the existing planning motivations comprise mostly "classical" arguments for a pro-active safeguarding of open spaces in the context of an integrative, multifunctional spatial planning approach. On the one hand, the preservation of open spaces opens up decision-making scope for upcoming generations. On the other hand, it embraces what has so far appeared in debates on existing instruments such as "regional green corridors" (D) or "quiet areas" (A) etc. as a traditional basis for argumentation (e.g. settlement caesura, recreational provision and soft tourism, landscape aesthetics).

Recommendations (further processing)

Without diminishing the importance of these existing argumentations, stakeholders should strive to link the topic of open space planning more strongly to future key challenges in order to raise awareness and to stimulate the enhancement of legal guidelines and concrete planning specifications. In times of global change, there are new crosscutting challenges ahead, for which open space protection is an important key to solving associated problems: e.g. climate protection (from fresh air supply for urban areas to carbon storage), groundwater and flood protection (securing drinking water quality and retention areas for flooding), soil protection (erosion control, food production and food security are among the arguments for this) to species and biotope protection (preservation of biodiversity). In other words, open space protection affects all essential ecosystem service functions *(see Figure 17)*.

Figure 17: Open spaces combining various ecosystem services

Source: Salzburg Institute for Regional Planning and Housing, 2022

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[13] Further information
- Events: e.g. D.C.5.1 #Spatial planners for open spaces in the Alps

4 Outlook – what is left after the OpenSpaceAlps project lifetime

4.1 The Alpine Open Spaces Planning Handbook

The Alpine Open Spaces Planning Handbook[14] was developed taking into account the existing diversity of spatial planning instruments in the Alpine Space relevant to the safeguarding of open spaces. Based on the comparative study of spatial planning practice in the Alpine Space, planning principles and integrated planning strategies are elaborated and presented. The specific instruments of spatial planning differ between the states and regions in the Alpine region. However, commonalities can be identified in the form of "principles" according to which spatial planning decisions are made. The handbook compares the most important planning principles on the basis of which areas are deliberately kept free from building and infrastructure development, and thus safeguarded for certain open space functions. The principles presented should not be interpreted individually, but in combination and taking into account different overlapping open space functions. The following three examples (out of 11 presented planning principles) can be mentioned here:

- Planning for the prevention of natural hazards
- Planning to secure/ restore ecological connectivity
- Planning to safeguard agricultural production
- ...

Besides comparing relevant planning principles, the handbook also presents integrated planning strategies for the following schematic landscape types in the Alpine Space:

- Low fragmented (high) mountain areas
- Technically/touristically modified (high) mountain areas
- Valley areas with a low level of fragmentation
- Valley areas with a high level of fragmentation
- Transitional spaces
- Pre-Alpine areas and agglomerations

The handbook is intended to support relevant actors in designing or enhancing regionally/locally adapted planning strategies, also taking into account important framework conditions for successful planning interventions. The aim is to increase the quality of planning by more consistently integrating the specific functions of open spaces as well as their location and structure into planning practice.

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[14] <u>Available project outputs OSA</u>

- Main Output: Alpine Open Spaces Planning Handbook
- D.T1.1.2 "„Catalogue on current planning approaches"
- D.T1.4.1 "Synopsis of coded contents of the interviews with selected experts in the fields of spatial and sectoral planning"
- D.T1.4.2 "Collection of good/bad practices reflecting the experiences"

4.2 The AlpPlan network incl. Memorandum of Cooperation[15]

In addition to the written outputs, the AlpPlan network is intended as a long-term platform for spatial/sectoral planners and scientific experts that further develops and implements the objectives of OpenSpaceAlps. Within the framework of the project, the foundation stone for the AlpPlan network has already been laid and several relevant stakeholders have been won over for further work.

For the time being, the AlpPlan network will be continued by the Academy for Territorial Development in the Leibniz Association (ARL), and with it the financing of the workshops and the coverage of travel and accommodation costs for members of the AlpPlan network.

In the medium term, however, it is intended to formalise the AlpPlan network as an independent legal entity. Formalisation will enable the network to pursue goals beyond the working group format, participate independently and actively in projects for the protection of Alpine open spaces (e.g. as an independent partner in EU projects) and submit financial requests. A Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) is to clearly define the common goals and cooperation of all members.

In detail, these objectives include:

1. Short-term objectives
- The network of spatial planners (AlpPlan network) shall be provided with democratic structures (board, general assembly, president) to become rapidly operational.
- A initial inventory of concerned structures and institutions has been elaborated on an Alps-wide scale within the project OpenSpaceAlps, all potential partners should be contacted within the year 2022 to propose active participation within the network.
- A first overview of the Alpine situation of spatial planning can be delivered by the project results of OpenSpaceAlps. A close cooperation of the network with the working group "Spatial planning" of the Alpine Convention shall be formalised.

2. Medium-term objectives
- The formalisation of the network of spatial planners (AlpPlan network) is an objective to allow the submission of projects and financial requests for international Alps-wide cooperation. A legal entity is essential for this purpose.
- Elaboration of a plan for activities and projects on an international basis.
- Establish partnerships with most of the relevant agencies and institutions for spatial planning in the Alps.
- Establish an operational monitoring system of spatial planning with the most relevant data and maps for the Alps, both on an Alps-wide and a regional scale.
- Promote and formalise partnerships with experts from other disciplines and especially from the field of nature protection.
- Start collaboration based on information exchange with relevant EU institutions.

3. Long-term objectives
- Establishment of permanent and close cooperation and knowledge exchange linked to a performant monitoring system with the goal of identifying trends and developments in space consumption at an early stage.
- Possible interventions on an expert basis in governance processes for Alpine spatial planning.
- Identify and evaluate land use trends and contribute common concepts and strategy on an Alps-wide scale.

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[15] Further information

- D.T4.2.1 "Event with another AS project (planned with LUIGI) in cooperation with EUSALP AG 6 & 7"
- D.T4.2.2 "Documentation on bilateral meetings and participation in strategic events at policy level"
- D.T4.5.1 "List of members of AlpPlan Network"
- D.T4.5.2 "Roadmap for operating apsects of the AlpPlan Network"

- Propose a competent expert structure for the evaluation of spatial planning concerns, equipped with performant tools (monitoring, Web-GIS, …) to represent a competence pool for the future evolution of land use in the Alps.

The network is aimed at public and private institutions in charge of local, regional or national spatial planning in the Alpine countries and research linked to the topic of spatial planning and sustainable development. Moreover, the Alpine Convention, national governments and selected NGOs − as representatives of civil society − may contribute.

Together members will work – among many other activities – primarily on:

- Exchange on activities about spatial planning in different partner countries/regions
- Definition of pilot regions to demonstrate the need and the efficiency of harmonised planning activities
- Elaboration of a common monitoring system for spatial planning and current land use, based on the results of OpenSpaceAlps
- Use and improvement of common tools for landscape and connectivity planning such as developed by several European projects
- Identification of financial and political resources on different levels, for the implementation of conservation measures, the enlargement and creation of open spaces and ecological networks
- Communication activities directed towards the large public and specific stakeholders to strengthen the visibility of the AlpPlan network
- Capacity development and education activities for professionals in spatial planning institutions