

**OurAlps - International Network of
Mountain-oriented Education in the Alps**

The charter of the network

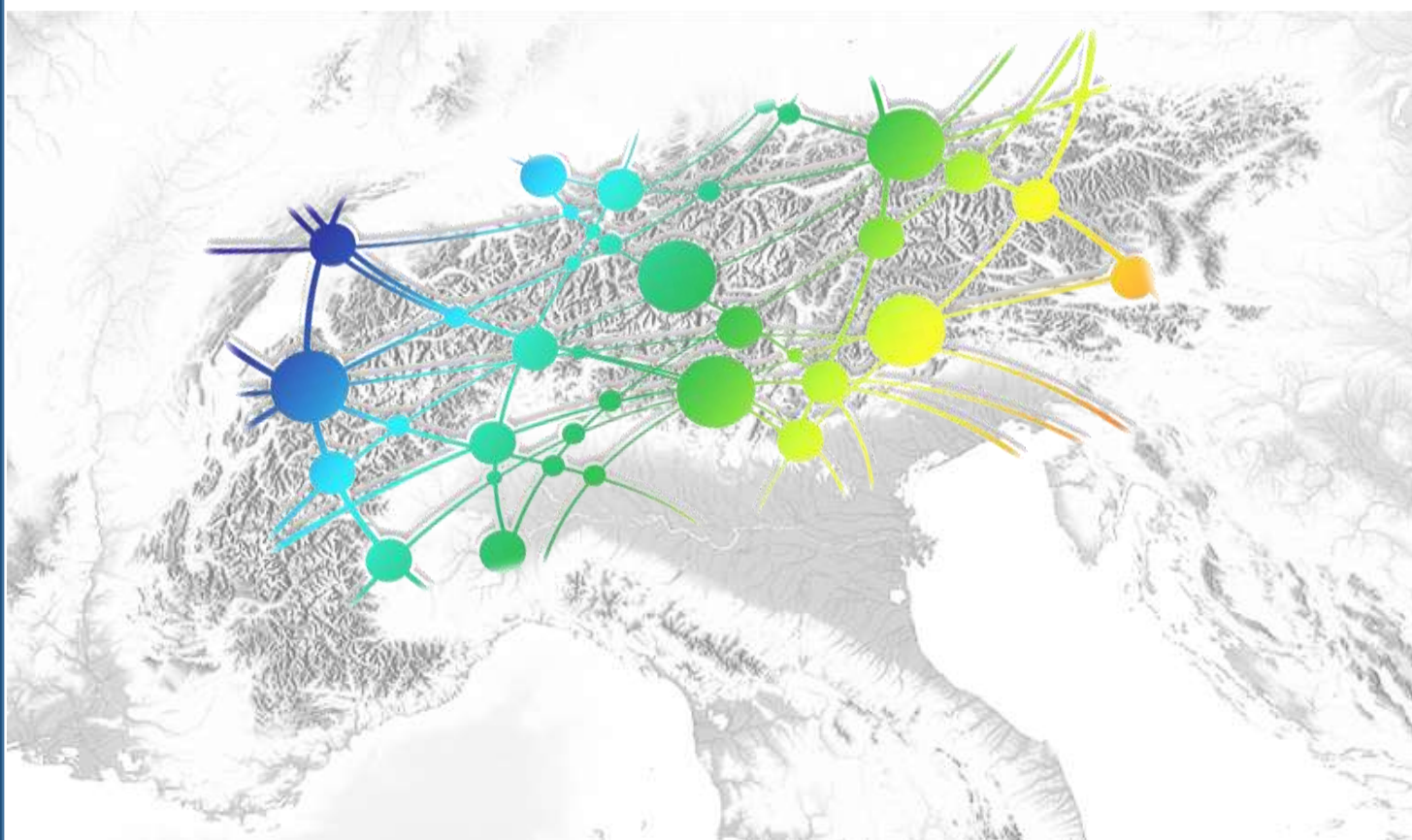


Image : pixabay

The aim of this charter is:

- to define the values shared within the network
- to clarify the aims of the network and its operating procedures
- to be a reference tool for the actors of the network


YOURALPS project partners



Università di Udine



Summary



PART 1 – The General Context /The Alps, Mountain-oriented Education
PART 2 – The Network /What it is, whom it is for, what it is for
PART 3 – The Organisation of the Network / How it runs
PART 4 – Strategic Perspectives / How will the network progress in 2020-25

Comments :

- This is a first operational version of the charter. It is designed to be expanded throughout the duration of the YOURALPS project.
- Graphical elements have to be completed with pictures representing mountain-oriented education and possibly some cartoons.

Memo on the purpose of the WP T1 [2016-12 -> 2019-10]

“To structure an Alpine Network on Mountain Oriented Education (MoE) bringing together actors from formal and non-formal education sharing MOE experiences, resources and projects. To ensure coherence, the network will valorize existing experiences and educational approaches. A joint database and web-platform will be central sustainable tool supporting exchanges between the network actors. WPT1 will be the basis for all further WPs providing basis for communication and knowledge sharing activities.”

DELIVERABLE DOCUMENTS / OUTPUTS

- **1 network charter/presentation** : To promote the network, inform stakeholders/members and clarify the objectives and aims, the practices and the operating procedure of the network, a charter will be edited with all PP and spread in web and print versions.
- **1 network flyer** : Flyer in 5 language versions presenting the network as a promotional communication tool. It will distributed in web and print versions by each PP, especially towards their own memberships.
- **Network’s first official members list** : This list will present all the relevant PP, Observers and stakeholders who officially take part in the MoE network and have signed the charter at the end of the project

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PART 1

The general context

The Alps, Mountain-Oriented Education

1.1. The main challenges for the Alps

“The Alps - The Alps are one of the largest continuous natural areas in Europe and the living environment for more than 14 million people. The Alps as determined by the perimeter of the Alpine Convention cover an area of 190,717 sq km, with a length of around 1,200 kilometers and a maximum width of 300 kilometers. The Alps start at sea level and peak at 4,809 meters, the top of Mont Blanc. The Alps are present in eight countries: Austria (28.7% of the overall area), Italy (27.2%), France (21.4%), Switzerland (13.2%), Germany (5.8%), Slovenia (3.6%), Liechtenstein (0.08%) and Monaco (0.001%).

The Alps are a unique natural area in the middle of continental Europe and are home to around 30,000 animal species and 13,000 plant species. Many of these plant and animal species are endangered, among which some of the Alps' 388 endemic plant species.

Humans have settled in the alpine area for centuries, which is characterised by the presence of cultivated and reclaimed landscapes even at high levels. Its 14 million inhabitants live in more than 5000 municipalities and belong to many linguistic groups and, on a relatively small area, show an unparalleled cultural variety.

For over 150 years, the Alps have been one of the most beloved tourist resorts worldwide, with a growing number of tourists.

Issues and new questions have arisen in recent decades because of a more dynamic economic development in and around the Alps, The solution of which cannot be found at a national level. Among them, there is an increasing mobility with dramatic growth rates in transport for people and goods, a trend towards the urbanisation of many alpine valleys and growing conflicts connected with the limited soil reserves in the Alps. These developments have also placed the protection of nature under pressure, as much as the cultural diversity and identity of the alpine population. “

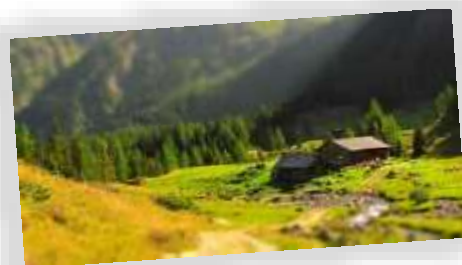
(author : Alpine Convention – “The Alps, Eight countries, one territory” 2nd edition, 2009)

Some major challenges:

- diversity and fragility of the rich heritage of the Alps
- effects of climate change, particularly important in mountain areas
- development of economic activities which respect the mountain environment: agricultural activities (pastoralism, etc), soft tourism, etc.
- prevention of natural hazards in the mountains
- transport management in the Alps
- Preserving a common culture
- ...

⇒ Main international references:

- Alpine Convention : <http://www.alpconv.org/en/convention/default.html?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>
- Alpine Space Program : <http://www.alpine-space.eu/>
- EU Strategy for the Alpine Region – EUSALP : <https://www.alpine-region.eu/>
- 3rd report on the state of the Alps : http://www.cipra.org/de/publikationen/3172?set_language=de (all alpine languages)



1.2. Mountain-Oriented Education in the Alps

Education for sustainable development (ESD) – UNESCO definition “Global Action Program”

Sustainable development cannot be achieved by technological solutions, political regulation or financial instruments alone. We need to change the way we think and act. This requires quality education and learning for sustainable development at all levels and in all social contexts.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is about enabling us to constructively and creatively address present and future global challenges and create more sustainable and resilient societies.

<http://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development>

A shared definition of Mountain-oriented Education (MoE)

Working definition WPT2 YOURALPS – May evolve

“Mountain-oriented Education follows the principles of education for sustainable development and environmental education. It emphasizes the interrelationships of mountain regions in general and the Alps in particular, with society. MOE is about enabling the Alpine youth to face present and future global challenges by means of capacity, competence and resilience building on the basis of the rich cultural and natural heritage of the Alps. Participation, action-orientation, self-determination, life-long learning, identification with the Alpine environment as well as the integration of formal and non-formal education are the main principles which support the transformation of the education system and at the same time of the whole Alpine Space towards sustainability”.

Values for Mountain-oriented Education

Working definition YOURALPS – May evolve

Environmental education in the perspective of sustainable development places values at the forefront. Mountain-oriented education falls within this perspective.

- Mountain-oriented education is based on the principles of sustainable development
- Mountain-oriented education is a life-long educational process for the members of the community
- Mountain-oriented education is based on active and varied teaching methods, on practical field experience, on group work, on transdisciplinarity and on debate
- Mountain-oriented education promotes the awareness of important mountain issues and the active participation of citizens
- Mountain-oriented education aims at the development of a shared mountain culture and identity
- The development of mountain-oriented education actions are based on partnership and the search for quality
- ...

The main challenges for Mountain-oriented Education in the Alps

- Creating a common awareness of the Alps
- Teaching the Alpine natural and cultural heritage
- Reconnecting young people and mountain heritage for an inspiring future in the Alps
- ...

⇒ Main international references :

- UNESCO Global Action Program on Education for Sustainable Development
<http://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development>
- ...

PART 2

The network

What it is, whom it is for, what it is for

2.1 The history of the International Mountain-oriented Education Network

In early 2011, Alparc (the Alpine Network of Protected Areas), CIPRA International (International Commission for the Protection of the Alps) and Educ'alpes (Mountain Education Network / FR) :

“launched a joint reflection for the development of Mountain-Oriented Education throughout the Alpine arc. This close collaboration concerned:

- *the definition of a joint strategy around 2-3 priority themes*
- *the continuation of technical partnerships around emerging projects: programs, editions, ...*
- *the study on the medium-term setting-up of a dynamic for an international Alpine mountain-oriented education network”.*

The 3 networks regularly exchanged and collaborated on several international projects, in particular on the theme of young people in the Alps: Youth Alpine Dialogue, Youth at the Top, etc.

In 2016, The “Educating Youth for the Alps – YOUrALPS” project was selected by the Alpine Space program, offering the possibility of setting up an international multi-partner project*. The project comprises:

- an analysis and actions concerning Alpine Mountain-oriented Education for young people
- the setting-up of an international Mountain-Oriented Network in the Alpine arc for all Alpine stakeholders

During 2017, a first version of the charter of the network will be validated, a name and a logo will be agreed, an Internet platform will be launched and discussion lists will be drawn up.

List of YOUrALPS Partners :

- [ALPARC - Le Réseau Alpin des Espaces Protégés](#) | Alpine Network of Protected Areas
- [Educ'alpes, réseau d'éducation à la montagne alpine](#) | Educ'alpes, network of alpine mountain education
- [Asters, Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Haute-Savoie](#) | Asters, Conservatory of natural areas of Upper-Savoy
- [Etablissement Public Local d'Enseignement et de Formations Professionnelles Agricoles \(EPLEFPA\) de Chambéry](#) – La Motte-Servolex | Local Public Establishment for Agricultural Education and Professional Training of Chambéry – La Motte-Servolex
- [Regione Lombardia - Direzione Generale Ambiente, Energia e Sviluppo Sostenibile](#) | Directorate-General Environment, Energy and Sustainable Development
- [Fondazione Lombardia per l'Ambiente](#) | Lombardy Foundation for the Environment
- [Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH](#) | Regional Management Burgenland
- [Verband der Naturparke Österreichs](#) | Association of Austrian Nature Parks
- [Institut für Geographie, Universität Innsbruck](#) | Institute of Geography, University of Innsbruck
- [Univerza v Ljubljani](#) | University of Ljubljana
- [Biotehniški center Naklo](#) | Biotechnical centre Naklo
- [Nationalparkverwaltung Berchtesgaden](#) | National park administration Berchtesgaden

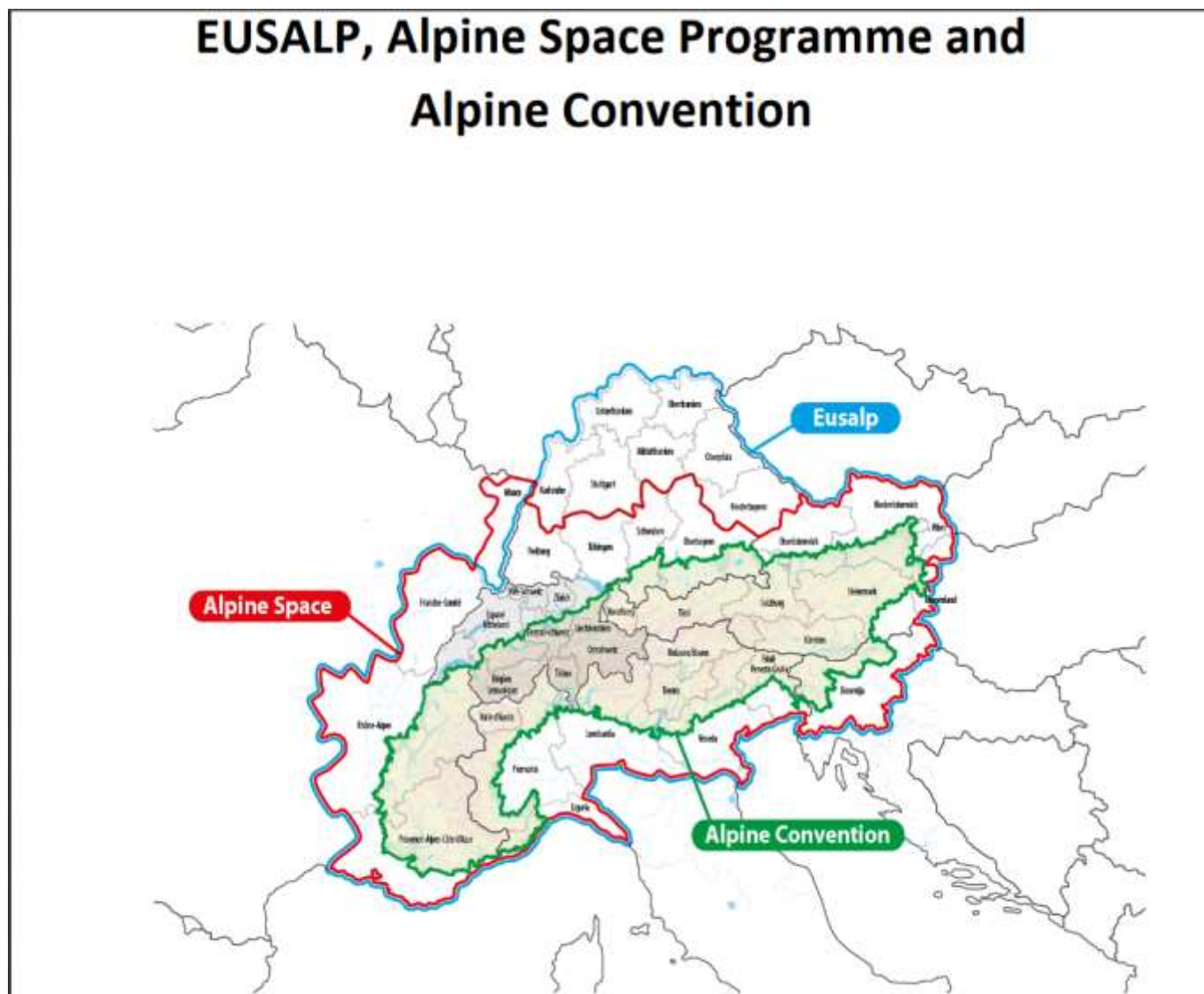


YOUrALPS kick-off meeting,
January, 2017, Chambéry (France)

2.2 The geographical area of the network

Proposition validated by the YOUrALPS partners on 14.02.17

The territory of the network corresponds to the cooperation area of the Alpine Space programme (marked in red below). It is open to additional areas covered by the EUSALP - EU strategy for the Alpine Region.



Source : http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/alpine/eusalp_alpine_space_alpine_convention.pdf



2.3 Network membership

OurAlps, International Mountain-oriented Education Network in the Alps is open to any voluntary individual or organization interested in Mountain-oriented Education in the Alps and sharing the values of the network.



Membership may include specialists on Mountain oriented Education or professionals and volunteers in the field of education, mountain protection, tourism, heritage conservation, ...

The members of the network can thus be: individuals, associations, firms, communities, public administrations, free-lancers, protected areas, local operators, young people, ...

The network's beneficiaries (indirect publics)

The beneficiaries targeted by the network's activities may vary considerably: residents, tourists, elected representatives, mountain and/or teaching professionals/, families, young people, students, etc.

2.4 The network's values

Definition of an environmental education network– Example of a definition in France

"A network is a lean organization on a human scale which has emerged from direct contact between people having a common interest and who appreciate and respect each other. The structuring of a network is characterized by its horizontality and the absence of hierarchy between its members. (...) A network is continually being built and invented. It does not impose a philosophy on its members; it tries to bring philosophies to life on the basis of those of its members. A member of a network is not only a member, but also a stakeholder." (in Charter of national network Ecole & Nature - France)

The values defined by the members of the network

[Almost all of these values were drawn up by the partners of the YOurALPS project-

Source: <http://linoit.com/users/YOurALPS/canvases/Network/>]

- **OPENNESS:** open-minded attitude, promotion of differences, creating common values but also valorizing specificities ...
- **DIALOGUE:** respect, open dialogue, consultation, cohesion, goodwill, free speaking, exchange, ability to understand others ...
- **COOPERATION:** mutual cooperation, active participation, individual and collective responsibility, effective exchange of knowledge and experience, international cooperation, synergy, solidarity, partnerships ...
- **COMMUNITY:** sharing a community, cohesion, a common Alpine identity, shared cultural growth ...
- **OPERATIONALITY:** quality, creativity, efficiency, sustainability, staying connected to the field (concrete and hands-on tools / solutions,...), evaluation, ...
- **NEUTRALITY:** the network is apolitical and non-religious.
- ...

2.5 Purpose and objectives of the network

[Almost all of these objectives were drawn up by the partners of the YOurALPS project - Source : <http://linoit.com/users/YOurALPS/canvases/Network>]

The network fulfils:

- **a technical function:** linking actors, circulating information, advising professionals, building collective projects (events, publications, ...), etc.
- **a strategic function:** to represent, promote, develop the sector, etc.
- **a laboratory function:** exploring, thinking, building common references, spreading experiences and ideas, etc.

Connecting people

- connecting all categories of stakeholders
- getting to know each other better
- creating more synergies
- improving not only cross-border but cross-sectoral cooperation

Sharing and learning together

- sharing: good practices, experiences, ideas, information, data bases, methods
- transferring of knowledge, mutual learning

Thinking, creating and producing together

- openness to new ideas, brain storming
- adding value to pedagogical concepts
- creating common tools
- connecting solution seekers and problem solvers
- finding joint solutions to common problems
- harmonization of good practices
- implementing at least some of the MOE objectives into school curricula



Shaping a collective framework / defining a common 'Alpinity'

- common goals and a clear view of what we are trying to accomplish together
- finding a common framework for MOE: common learning tools, topics...
- the emergence of a common culture / Alpine identity: reflection and discussion
- awareness-raising on Alpine identity towards formal and non-formal education actors

Promoting / Representing

- valorising the existing initiative
- dissemination and promotion of the results through the sub-networks
- provision of all available information and insights
- sharing information for the promotion of joint initiatives
- acting as an interlocutor of local actors and alpine institutions
- empowerment of partnerships to lobby for MoE at the European level.

Others

- approaching young people and supporting them in understanding and enjoying the Alpine region
- *keeping on working also at national level to overcome the language barrier*

2.6 Types of actions

The concrete actions aimed at achieving the goals of the International Network are:

- seminars and meetings
- studies
- training schemes
- internet-based tools (webplatform, lists of discussion, ...)
- publication of practical guides or teaching tools,
- events, international initiatives
- communications
- any other activity in line with the objectives of the network.

These actions:

- are set up with, by and for Alpine actors with a bottom-up logic, based on a joint diagnosis (analysis of needs)
- are inspired by a non-competitive principle with the Alpine actors' own actions.

The actions and contents of the international network must be centered on its object: mountains and the Alps. Any action or contents relating to environmental education in general falls within the traditional networks of environmental education of each country.

Zoom – Lists of discussion for the network

A list of discussion is a system allowing several people to exchange messages through a single e-mail address. They are drawn up to promote the flow of information and exchanges between Alpine actors. They can be general, for working groups, sorted by publics, by topics, etc...

They are open to any interested local actor or can be dedicated to an internal working group. Like any list of discussion, the lists of the Alpine network are based on the common rules of courtesy and mutual benevolence. Each one is responsible for the comments made on one of the lists of the network.

At the moment, the alpine network OurAlps manages 4 external lists of discussion (*and 1 internal*): network-participants@ouralps.org / climat-change@ouralps.org / youth@ouralps.org / alpine-medias@ouralps.org.

2.7 Types of resources

Human and material resources

These resources are currently made available by the partners of the YOurALPS project until 2019.

Financial resources

The setting-up of the network is currently financed by the YOurALPS project and its co-financers. Other funding sources can be mobilized, whether public or private, based on ethical criteria.

Social and environmental coherence

The network ensures that the resources used are coherent with the principles of sustainable development. That concerns the choice of transports, material, food, software, human resources management, but also human rights, non-discrimination and equality, etc.

PART 3

The organisation of the network

How it runs

3.1 Governance

Period 2017-2019

The International Mountain-oriented Education Network will be set-up and its actors gathered throughout this period that corresponds to the time span of YOurALPS. During this period:

- decisions will be taken by YOurALPS project partners, under the coordination of the 3 founding networks (Alparc, CIPRA, Educ'Alpes) and consulting local actors (e.g. the individuals and structures registered on the general list of discussion),
- different scenarios will be created and studied to provide the network with an official, independent status.
- the Alpine actors will be identified and gathered through the website and the lists of discussion.

Period 2020-25

By this period the network will have reached a balanced situation in terms of participants and organization.

It should have an official status with methods of representation validated by the partners from each country.

It should also have a permanent strategy concerning the human resources dedicated to the animation of the network.

3.2 The development of international relations and relations with each country

The International Mountain-oriented Education Network has set the objective to participate as representative or observer for its sector in international or national bodies: working groups, steering committees, other networks, etc. Those can be:

- **Mountain and Alpine policy-makers and bodies :**
 - Alpine Convention / Alpine space / EUSALP
 - Alliance in the Alps [<http://alpenallianz.org/en/about-us>]
 - Alpine town of the year [http://www.alpenstaedte.org/en/the-alpine-town-of-the-year-association?set_language=en]
 - Mountain partnership (<http://www.fao.org/mountain-partnership/en/>)
 - ...
- **Environmental education policy-makers or bodies :**
 - The European environmental education network project : <http://for-eesd-in-europe.org/sites/default/files/manifeste%20EEDD%20-%20English.pdf>
 - World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC) : <http://weecnetwork.org/>
 - ...
- **Policies or bodies related to mountains, the Alps or environmental education in each country of the Alpine Arc.**

PART 4

Strategic perspectives

How the network will progress in 2020-2025

**To be built during YOurALPS project
Deadline mid-2019**

Formal governance,

Project orientations (program),

Financial resources,

Human resources,

Communication,

Etc

