



AlpCity Project International  
Seminar



## A kick-off event

organized by



## PROCEEDINGS

Piedmont Region Congress Hall, Turin

April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007

## Acknowledgements

- ▶ The proceedings of the AlpCity International Seminar “Towards innovation through strategic transfer and networks” were transcribed, translated and desktop-published by Antonella Convertino under the overall direction of Daniela Sena, AlpCity Project Manager. Proof-reading was performed by Daniela Sena and Valentina Scioneri. Original video-recordings are available by the AlpCity Office of Piedmont Region (via Lagrange 24, 10123 Turin, Italy) and also on the project website ([www.alpcity.it](http://www.alpcity.it)).







## Table of contents

**AlpCity towards innovation through strategic transfer and networks**  
**Introduction** ..... 6

### Morning Plenary Session

**Chairperson:** Daniela Garavini, Press Officer attached to  
the Councillorship for Mountains of Piedmont Region ..... 8

#### Opening statements

Bruna Sibille  
Councillor for Mountains, Piedmont Region ..... 10  
Sergio Conti  
Councillor for Spatial Planning, Piedmont Region ..... 13

#### Introduction to the Institutional Session

Daniela Sena  
AlpCity Project Manager, Piedmont Region ..... 16

#### UN Habitat Official Address to the AlpCity International Seminar

Anna Tibaijuka  
UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director  
UN Habitat Director General  
United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) ..... 19

#### The local dimension of the international mountain development – The Mountain Partnership

Rosalaura Romeo  
Programme Officer, Mountain Partnership Secretariat, FAO ..... 22

April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007



## **EuroRegion Alps-Mediterranean**

Giulia Marcon  
Officer in charge of the International and EU Affairs Division,  
Piedmont Region President's Office.....26

## **Reducing the Digital Divide The WI-PIE Programme in mountain areas**

Laura Milone  
Officer in charge of the Telecommunication Division,  
Piedmont Region.....32

## **Mountain between innovation and cohesion**

Lido Riba  
President, UNCEM Piemonte.....37

## **Looking ahead: hypothesis for the future of AlpCity**

Maria Cavallo Perin  
Officer in charge of the AlpCity Project and Deputy Director  
of the Piedmont Regional Division on Budget Planning and  
Statistics.....41

Sergio Foà  
Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Turin.....45

## **Afternoon Plenary Session**

**Moderator:** Marie Christine Fourny-Kober, Director of the  
Alpine Geography Institute Joseph Fourier University,  
Grenoble.....47

## **Introduction to the Strategic Session**

Daniela Sena  
AlpCity Project Manager, Piedmont Region.....49

**A kick-off event**



## Tools for **strategic** transfer and networks

### **Territory and local development. Opportunities and limits of spatial development in fragile areas**

Francesca Governa  
Associate Professor of Economic and Political Geography,  
University of Turin  
EU-polis – Sistemi Urbani Europei Research Institute of the  
Inter-university Department of Territorial Studies and Planning  
of the Polytechnic and University of Turin.....51

### **The UN Habitat process and tools for transferring knowledge, experience and competence**

Jean Bakole  
Officer, UN Habitat Liaison Office with European Union and  
Belgium.....58

### **The Alpine Convention and its implementation in the new programming period (2007-2013)**

Paolo Angelini  
National Focal Point for the Alpine Convention, Italian  
Ministry for Environment.....61

### **Alpi365: the reply of Piedmont Region to the alpine sustainable development challenge**

Rinaldo Bontempi  
Member of the Alpi365 Scientific Committee and Promoter of  
"Torino Città delle Alpi" Association.....66



## Learning from **successful** transfer

### **'Future in the Alps': disseminating practical knowledge and networking people**

Francesco Pastorelli  
Director, CIPRA Italia.....69

### **Facilitating access to European Programmes through 'A.P.E.-net Project'**

Maurizio Di Genova  
Technical Assistance Unit Manager, A.P.E.-net Project  
UNIONCAMERE Bruxelles.....74

### **A partnership to support the common growth: The European Bioalpine Convention**

Fabrizio Conicella  
Director, Bioindustry Park Canavese.....77

### **Open discussion**

Diego Albesano  
Officer, Turin Chamber of Commerce.....83

GianPaolo Torricelli  
Expert, AlpCity Project Scientific Steering Committee.....86

Manfred Perlik  
Expert, AlpCity Project Scientific Steering Committee.....87

### **Conclusions**

Maria Cavallo Perin  
Officer in charge of the AlpCity Project and Deputy Director  
of the Piedmont Regional Division on Budget Planning and  
Statistics.....89



## Introduction

The International Seminar '**AlpCity towards innovation through strategic transfer and networks**', held in Turin on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2007, was organized in the framework of the AlpCity Project – Interreg IIIB Alpine Space.

The initiative was promoted by Piedmont Region as Lead Partner of the **AlpCity Project** (co-financed with European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) and national funds) with the support of the United Nations Habitat. It represented the kick-off event of the new project proposal in view of the new programming period (2007-2013).

The Seminar organization followed up the whole set of activities carried out within the AlpCity Project with the aim at going on along a path of endogenous **sustainable development**, through the promotion of synergies in international and interregional policies and clusters, which favour the dissemination of innovative solutions and policies to common problems.

The International Seminar took place some months before the launch of the new Interreg Alpine Space programme (**2007-2013**), scheduled in June 2007 in St. Johann in Pongau (Austria). It was useful to outline the AlpCity Partnerships' position and composition, together with a range of operating proposals expressed as contributions to the preparatory work for the new call.

The event was conceived in the frame of innovation transfer promotion with the purpose of pursuing the optimal mix of policies and the most effective actions in line with the **Lisbon and Gothenborg Agendas**. It was organized according to two different levels, an institutional one and a strategic one, which can be summarized as follows:

- a) Re-launching the debate on the sustainable development on the basis of a new political, strategic and operational alliance, set up on the sharing of visions and **policies** and on a new project of collaboration at international level;
- b) Promoting a **model** of territorial sustainable integrated development and partnership, which enhances spill over



effects produced by innovative and successful experiences and knowledge.

Moreover, part of the Seminar was devoted to the debate on potential joint actions aimed at promoting an optimal allocation of the resources belonging to the new Alpine Space Programme, through the integration of the main public and private players' (UNCCEM, CIPRA International, Alpine Convention, Alliance in the Alps, UNIONCAMERE Bruxelles just to mention some of them) different initiatives in a unique and **comprehensive project**.

The network created through the AlpCity Project is meant to answer the European Union '**Regions for Economic Change**' Initiative as effective connection and operational tool between the exchange of innovative and original solutions, developed in the framework of the interregional/transnational cooperation, and the European Union Programmes on the urban development networks.

It is necessary to underline that the new strategic alliance has to be extended to a larger framework including **international organizations** like UN Habitat and FAO, which operate in emerging geopolitical areas addressed to become important knots of the innovation transfer network.



## Morning Plenary Session



**Daniela Garavini**

Press Officer  
attached to the  
Councillorship for  
Mountains  
Piedmont Region



Welcome to the International Seminar '**AlpCity towards innovation through strategic transfer and networks**'.

I would like to start from the meaning of the Seminar **logo**, whose upper part recalls the form of mountains, underlining that mountains need innovation in order to plan their sustainable development. The bottom inscription assumes the appearance of an imaginary globe, because strategic transfer and networks cannot be constructed within a limited area (like the Alpine Space), but need to be open to a worldwide dimension. The AlpCity Project is placed in between, like a two-way bridge connecting a regional level to the rest of the world.

This serious role represents the next real challenge of the Project. In this sense I think that this meeting will be very interesting.

As regards the **international aspect** of this event I would like to underline also the participation of two representatives of the United Nations Organization working for UN Habitat and FAO (Mountain Partnership) respectively.

Nowadays we are moving towards a **changing perspective** for what concerns mountain development; mountains are transforming from marginal territory into areas rich of renewable resources.

This topic should be deeply discussed, but this is not my task here. So I invite to speak the **experts** and the **politicians** present at this occasion.

I would like just to add a gloss: for **ecological** reasons there is no paper material regarding the Seminar speeches for distribution. All of them will be available on the AlpCity website.



I shall now ask Mrs Bruna Sibille, Councillor for Mountains, and Mr Sergio Conti, Councillor for Spatial Planning, to address the meeting.  
Thank you.



## Opening statements



**Bruna Sibille**  
Councillor  
for Mountains  
Piedmont Region



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very honoured to open the works of the Seminar '**AlpCity towards innovation through strategic transfer and networks**', organized within the INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space AlpCity Project.

As Councillor for Mountains of Piedmont Region, I welcome all the participants coming from European and extra-European countries, who represent institutions, bodies, organizations and initiatives related to **topics regarding mountains, innovation, network development** for transferring knowledge, experiences and competences.

This event is not meant as ritual celebration of the positive results produced by the co-financed European AlpCity Project, conceived to enhance endogenous local development and regeneration of small alpine towns; on the contrary, it is envisaged as an occasion to think about the **transition** from the conclusion of the initiative in the frame of the 2000-2006 programming period towards the scenarios of the next one (2007-2013).

The **time schedule** of the Seminar is not accidental: it takes place few days after the celebrations of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rome Treaties, which ratified the birth of the European Union and it anticipates the kick-off event of the new EU Alpine Space Programme, which will be held in St. Johann in Pongau (Austria) at the end of June.

According to this interpretation, the AlpCity Project translates current UE President Angela Merkel's words '**The future of Europe is in Europe**': and this Europe in continuous becoming could not exist without the engagement, solidarity and initiative of its members.

In this sense the strengthening of the **AlpCity partnership** constitutes the confirmation of the major conquest in these work years, that is the creation of a new way to work together among public authorities of Austria, France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy.



Moreover, today we have the certainty that **'Europe will exist if it will be able to exist outside its borders'**, or rather if it will be able to face the big challenges of global policies. For this reason AlpCity enlarges at international level by involving and setting up networks of relationships and exchange with some of the most active international organizations. Two of them are represented here and we wish to cooperate with them: United Nations Habitat specialized in human settlements and FAO, the UN organization for food and agriculture.

Personally, I would like to encourage this initiative, which, together with other projects led by Piedmont Region (like for example the WI-PIE Programme), transforms **the mountain image** from an irremediably late area into a territory in the van through the experimentation of innovative solutions in the form of a laboratory working on endogenous sustainable development.

The new programming period 2007-2013 provide us with opportunities and new ways to strengthen the role of mountains, with a special focus on the **integration of the different tools and financial resources**, particularly among EU co-financed policies and national-regional ones.

**Integrated planning** is certainly the most proper tool for public actions and for the governance of EU, national and regional programmes. It is clear that a sector action is not able to make the virtuous circles of local development active. Great attention should be paid to integrated projects, particularly to pilot ones promoted at interregional, trans-national and international level, since mountain systems are characterized by important similarities and interdependence.

AlpCity can give an answer to these needs: through its transversal approach towards endogenous development policies dealing with the social, economic and spatial environment; through its vertical approach towards the formation of strategic alliances involving different hierarchical levels (Regions, Provinces, Municipalities) and different institutional typologies (public authorities, international organizations, research and academic institutes, NGOs, private sector), the

project aims at becoming **a structuring initiative** in the framework of the new Alpine Space INTERREG.

In a scenario of **increasing competitiveness** for the allocation of scarce resources, it is necessary to capitalize the results achieved through the previous experiences; in order to avoid the frustration of efforts and energies spent during the previous programming period we should aim at improving coordination, partnerships setting up, involvement into cooperative actions for creating synergies among projects, development of new participation schemes, design and implementation of innovative experiments.

In this sense **Piedmont Region** does not hesitate to reconfirm its role as **coordinator and catalyst** of an action promoted by some Italian, Austrian, French, German and Swiss public authorities and targeting the debate on **mountain development policies**. At the same time Piedmont Region does its best to involve all alpine Regions, the main actors of the Alpine Space and the most influential international interlocutors for what regards project topics.

With the desire to see a real performance of this brave project of cooperation very soon, I wish a fruitful prosecution of the Seminar works.

Thank you.



Good morning, welcome to this event! Good work!

I think that Mrs. Sibille has already focused the attention on the main issues of this Seminar, on its topics, which will be certainly discussed during this working day.

I am not able to add other things, because she enlightened the most important ones.

For this reason I will just outline few elements by pointing the rhythm of them.

The first is a very trivial remark, everybody knows. Some months ago I recalled the same question in Stresa ('during the Alpine Space Summit', *editor's note*). We live in an economy and in **a society of networks**. Those networks can be classified as long or short. They are short when many subjects ally, interact among themselves within a limited space in order to define a possible **scenario of transformation, competitiveness and resistance**. Particularly for what concerns mountain it is correct to speak about resistance. These communities are named epistemic. Epistemic communities cannot hold out long, cannot act, cannot drive innovative forces, if they are not connected to long networks and don't interact with them by crossing their borders.

Competitiveness, resistance, recovery towards possible horizons: all these things have always to be performed on a **territorial basis**. A closed system has no future.

A second element: experiences like AlpCity reveal to be very interesting, because they allow us to identify structures, to verify and monitoring processes. I think they are important in order to **select successful stories**, but not to imitate them.

I do not think that in our society we should start assuming a reference frame. Too many mistakes have been made during the last 20-30 years by looking for models and trying to imitate them.

**Models are not replicable**, because every system has built its own unique identity in the course of the history.



**Sergio Conti**  
Councillor  
for Spatial Planning  
Piedmont Region



In this sense successful stories are useful just to catch some ideas, some solutions experimented in other environments. In order to be useful in our environment these examples have to be modified according to **territorial specificities and identity**.

Future is built on history: we cannot forget it!

In my opinion the **AlpCity partnership** is important for this reason, just to catch some elements and to vision potential scenarios.

We can identify successful stories and adapt them to our territories by modifying some criteria.

This integration among the main players of the Alpine Space is very important and, as Mrs. Sibille said, also the **integration** with research institutions, public institutions and private sector. A cluster of different subjects, which has to be locally based, but has to overcome the local narrow dimension.

In the new European Programmes (2007-2013) with reference to the Lisbon and Gotenborgh Agendas (knowledge and sustainability) **cooperation and integration** at different levels among subjects, among financial sources, among public and private sectors represent the key-features.

In the current economy and society collusion is less and less important than cooperation. This doesn't mean that players have not to compete, but there is also a reference frame, where cooperation is essential.

In fact also big multinational corporations acting worldwide compete, but at the same time they are able to find some niches to cooperate. Apart from this digression, collaboration allows different subjects to put together and jointly define potential hypotheses, even if this task is quite difficult.

The **role of Piedmont Region**, here represented by Mrs. Sibille and myself, is pivotal for supporting these processes and for defining the feasible strategic solutions.

We cannot forget that Region, as word derives from the Latin word *regere*, means **governing**: these processes have to be governed at regional level. New programming aims at going towards this direction.



The Alpine Space should cross its own **borders**. What are borders? Borders are something invented just to persuade people to believe they exist. History teaches this. The question is that these relationships, these processes of integration are important because we live in an area, where cross-border and interregional contacts are fundamental.

Summing up just two concepts: **networks scenario** and **acquainting with experiences useful for us and our partners**.

Thank you very much.  
Good work!



## Introduction to the Institutional Session

Good morning to all the participants.

My **role** within the AlpCity Project has a managerial nature; I am the Project Manager. I like underlining that the project direction and responsibility is assigned to Mrs Maria Cavallo Perin, Officer in charge of the AlpCity Project.



**Daniela Sena**



I would like to thank all the participants and particularly the **Councillors** here present. Their statements is very important for us together with their presence and contribution, which represent a sort of **acknowledgement** for our work group, for the AlpCity team of Piedmont Region and all the project partners.

This presence assumes an important role for us, because we realize that no projects can succeed without **political support** also according to the new programme's expectations.

We hope that the support expressed today is just the **first step** of the AlpCity further developments.

I thank all the attendance, whose participation is very meaningful for us. In particular I want to mention the partnership of AlpCity, a project involving **11 partners** led by Piedmont Region. Other key-players of the project are the experts of the **Scientific Steering Committee** and all those involved in the **21 case studies** implemented by the partners.

This event is very important: it is organized during the extension period of the project, which officially concluded in October 2006. On the occasion a **Final Conference** was held in Pracatinat. Afterwards an extension was requested to the Alpine Space Programme Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat: it has been admitted for the period from February to April 2007. The **extension** aims at disseminating the project results achieved and at exploring a new partnership and the project future developments.

AlpCity is considered as **successful story** within the Alpine Space Programme; it was also awarded at national level on



the occasion of the 2006 Forum of Public Authorities. In the international environment it received an acknowledgement for the 2006 Dubai Award promoted by UN Habitat and related to the 'Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme'.

This Seminar aims at being a precious occasion for sharing and thinking about **the future**; it mainly involves all those, who took part into the project and are interested to be the main characters of its evolution.

Certainly it is still difficult to get the details of a punctual project proposal, but it is time to share some preliminary proposals and to schedule the work plan for the next months.

In this sense it seems correct to speak about **a kick-off event**, that is a starting point of a new direction resting on the solid base of the previous experience.

Some interesting ideas about the new partnership and the new proposal were already expressed during the AlpCity Final Conference and included into the **AlpCity Project Final Report**.

The works of this Seminar have been divided into two parts: an **institutional morning Session** and a **strategic-operational afternoon Session**.

During the morning we will be able to listen to key-note speakers coming from different levels (international, European, national and regional ones), who can provide us with useful suggestions as regards the new partnership.

In the afternoon we will be informed about some concrete and innovative experimenting initiatives of networking and transfer.

Now I go deeply into a matter concerning with an important presence: Mr. Jean Bakole, representative of the **UN Habitat**, an organization already involved in the AlpCity Project within a Working Package entitled 'Best Practices and future scenarios'. We have tried to start collaborating with this leading Agency, which deals with the development of human settlements. Currently we would like to finalize a **Memorandum of Understanding** in order to formalize the



cooperation through a document with a certain political depth.

I invite Mr Bakole to read the **official address** to the AlpCity International Seminar sent by Mrs **Anna Tibaijuka**, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Habitat and Director General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON).

I wish a fruitful work to all the attendance.

Thank you.





## UN Habitat Official Address to the AlpCity International Seminar from Nairobi (Kenya)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to address this International **Seminar on innovation transfer** held in this beautiful city of Turin.

Allow me first to say how much I would have liked to be here today. Unfortunately, we are in the midst of preparing for our Governing Council to be held in less than two weeks and my presence is therefore required in Nairobi.

This is the **first major event**, organized within the AlpCity Project by Piedmont Region and the European Union, with the support of UN- Habitat. I take this opportunity to welcome the representatives from both these institutions.

Allow me, before telling you more of our objectives here, to thank our host, Mrs. Mercedes Bresso, President of Piedmont Region for her hospitality; to extend my appreciation to all those involved in organising this Seminar; and to thank all of you for participating in this event.

Now let us focus on the reasons for our gathering here.

The European Commission recently proposed a set of **priorities** for its new programming period (2007-2013). I am pleased to learn that supporting sustainable development in disadvantaged areas appears as part of these priorities.

The AlpCity Project has organised this Seminar to make sure that the Commission's proposal takes full account of the input and experience of all key stakeholders with an active interest in ensuring that the sustainable social, economic and environmental development of the **Alpine Space**.

This Seminar provides us the opportunity to assess the implementation of previous **support to the Alps**, to look ahead to future needs and, more importantly, to put forward proposals to address them.



Jean Bakole on behalf of:

### Anna Tibaijuka

UN Under-Secretary-  
General and Executive  
Director UN Habitat  
Director General  
United Nations Office at  
Nairobi (UNON)



It could seem almost bizarre that the opening statement of a Seminar organised within the framework of the European Alpine Space Programme is assigned to the Executive Director of **UN-Habitat**, the lead UN agency for housing and urban development.

My role here is due to the open-minded vision of the Piedmont Region's leadership as regards the challenges posed by sustainable development at the international level.

Indeed, the **concept of sustainable development** cannot be restricted to regional or national borders. For this reason I commend the initiative of the AlpCity Project to build a bridge with UN-Habitat "Best Practices and Local Leadership" Programme and to focus part of its work on creating a Best Practices Database and Best Practices Guidelines, managed by Piedmont Region, in line with UN-Habitat's work at the global level.

I also wish to commend the work of AlpCity in participating actively in the '**2006 Dubai International Award for Best Practices to improve the Living Environment**'. This global award system feeds UN-HABITAT's on-line Best Practices Database, which has become the most important depository of knowledge, expertise and experience on sustainable development initiatives at the local level worldwide.

Today, this database contains over 2,000 initiatives from more than 160 countries. It allows all those interested in sustainable development to access information on what works. It has enabled UN-Habitat and its partners to identify some of the key contributing factors to overcoming the social, economic and environmental challenges facing a rapidly urbanising and globalising world, and to integrate lessons learned in our **policy recommendations** and our **operational projects**.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that this close collaboration between UN-Habitat and Piedmont Region, acting as AlpCity Project Lead Partner, will be officially ratified through the signature of an **Agreement of Cooperation** to pursue the vision: "to contribute to healthier,



safer, more equitable and sustainable cities and communities through more effective partnerships between and the implementation of practical solutions by key stakeholders in the human settlement and development process”.

It is also clear that sustainable development cannot be conceived as a zero-sum game. While we battle on the European front for effective action against climate change and the loss of bio-diversity, we must not forget that **sustainable development** in much of the world today also has **other meanings**. I refer here to the fact that one billion people are currently living in life-threatening slums. And if current trends continue, this number could increase by another 400 million by 2020. The majority of these one billion people has no decent shelter, no access to water and sanitation, has no garbage collection. They live under the constant threat of evictions and are the most vulnerable to natural disasters and the consequences of climate change.

It is therefore necessary for all of us to target a positive-sum game, where the more advanced regions and countries are seriously engaged in filling the gap with less advanced regions. In this sense the **transfer of knowledge, expertise and experience** through effective networks plays a pivotal role as strategically promoted by the AlpCity Project.

I look forward with great anticipation to the **European initiatives** aimed at identifying and transferring innovative solutions for growth and development, namely:

- ‘Regions for Economic Change’, dedicated to discovering best practices and spreading them to all regions in order to foster their regional growth and reducing economic disparities, and
- Infosusta.net, which implies the establishment of a common database of research results and best practices between European Union and UN-Habitat.

With these brief remarks, I wish you a very fruitful outcome.

Thank you for your kind attention



## The local dimension of the international mountain development – The Mountain Partnership



**Rosalaura Romeo**  
Programme Officer,  
Mountain Partnership  
Secretariat, FAO



One of the previous speakers, Mr. Sergio Conti, said that it is necessary to know the past in order to set up the future. I like these words, also because today I am going to give you a rapid survey on the path leading to the current focus on mountains and the **local dimension of the international mountain development**. We will have a quick glance at the last 25 years by enlightening the fundamental steps of this process.

In '82 a Summit on Earth took place in Rio; before it two important works had been published: thanks to them a whole chapter of the Rio Summit was devoted to **mountain sustainable development**. This represented a quite extraordinary event, because before the applied approach had been very different. There was a special focus not on ecosystems, but on **political and local matters**. For the first time the specificity of mountain environment has been acknowledged together with its fragility and the need of proper policies and mechanisms conceived to preserve it.

**Data** available at that time indicated that world mountain surfaces constituted 20% of the earth and 10% of the world population lived in mountain areas or depended on them. This was the situation in 1982.

Another important Chapter of **Agenda 21**, apart from Chapter 13 on mountains, is Chapter 28, which introduced for the first time the concept of **administrative decentralisation**. The important role of local authorities was recognized particularly as regards sustainable development. Local authorities have been encouraged to play a leading role in local populations' involvement and in starting a dialogue targeting a basic sustainable development. This represented another extraordinary element in comparison with the past approach.

A milestone of this process is the recognition of the **climate change problem** and its impact on mountains. This problem



put special emphasis on mountain sustainable development, because of all its implications.

Another milestone was posed in 1998 with the decision of the United Nations to **dedicate a year to mountain sustainable development**; this initiative was promoted by Kyrgyzstan and the resolution was approved by 130 countries. This figure is enormous; the highest one, that has ever approved a year dedication. This allows the idea that mountain topics have a transversal nature, because they involve not only mountain countries, but also all those depending on what mountains preserve, produce and protect.

In 2000 thanks to **measurement improvements** some data were updated: world mountain surface reached 24%; some studies show that populations living in or depending on mountains are about 26% of total population. 12% of it lives in mountain areas defined according to altitude, gradients, etc., but 26% depends on mountain resources to survive.

In 2002 the **International Year of Mountain** was celebrated and 78 national committees were formed in order to promote events and activities, to approve specific rules for mountains. Several activities were put in place during 2002 and some of those committees still exist. In fact in many countries a new awareness emerged: mountain issues are transversal and ask for an enlarged and participative approach, which cannot be delegated to only one Ministry or organization. Many of those committees were transformed into lasting bodies and today group representatives of different Ministries, civil society, Universities. They are able to discuss of mountain problems according to a wider view different from the past simply naturalistic approach.

In 2002 in coincidence with the International Year of Mountain the **Summit in Johannesburg** was held 20 years after the Rio one. Many difficult efforts have been made in order to understand new mechanisms promoting development at each level. Type-2 partnerships have been created, that is voluntary alliances not ratified by Parliaments, like the Convention for climate change and biodiversity protection, in order to fill in the gap between north and south and to promote development in a more local and participative way. During this summit an initiative

has been undertaken by UNEP, FAO, Switzerland and Italy: a **Mountain Partnership** was created among 14 countries with 40 total partners. Today it counts 142 partners.

Another fundamental step of this process is represented by the **Millennium Ecosystem Assessment** (2005), which has continued to work on mountain specificities and has underlined through scientific data the problems of mountain development and the most pivotal areas for intervention.

The Mountain Partnership was established in Johannesburg and it groups 47 countries, 15 intergovernmental organizations and 80 organizations called major groups within the United Nations. They are formed with some representatives of civil society (NGOs, private sector, etc.)

Thanks to Italian and Swiss sponsorships this Mountain Partnership owns a small **Secretariat** with its seat by **FAO**, where I work and try to promote cooperation activities among all these partners.

The **work areas** selected are both thematic and geographical; we consider as initiative any activity involving more than one partner. It refers to whatever cooperation activity, taking place on mountain, which needs support.

A clear element emerging from the dialogue with our partners is the existence of some **key-topics for mountain** development, such as local governance, local authorities' role, mountain communities' problems, stakeholders' involvement into decision-making.

As example, the 'Alliance in the Alps' Association develops a very interesting work in Central Asia. Just Central Asian countries expressed the need to know the **self-governance mechanisms** put in place in Italy after decennial policies. They would like to adapt them to their system, because there is a strong awareness, that mountain problems have to be solved through local tools.

Another interesting mechanism, Europe can make available in order to promote local development is the **decentralized cooperation**. Many European countries now own some tools, which allow Regions and local authorities to promote cooperation activities. Many Italian Regions apply them as some French and Spanish ones do: these experiences are almost relevant and appreciated by hosting countries, when



they are set up on regional strengths and export technologies, practices, governance mechanisms.

It is clear that mountain sustainable development can be performed, only by combining different actions. National level is so important as regional one. We cannot forget that the most of mountain ranges belong to different countries: in this sense the **cross-border dimension** is fundamental. We can say the same for local authorities and base communities.



## EuroRegion Alps-Mediterranean



**Giulia Marcon**  
Officer in charge of the  
International and EU  
Affairs Division, Piedmont  
Region President's Office

Within my office various activities and events are organized on the topics featuring this International Seminar. In particular I had the chance to follow the speech of the FAO representative, who evoked the **decentralized cooperation** theme guiding our engagement in many continents, like Africa and Latin America.



The purpose of my speech here consists in showing a process of **political sharing**, I am the technical referent of.

This morning the theme of mountain **transversal character** has been recalled together with the problems concerning mountain governance and territorial government.

I am going to speak about a political process, formally started on July 10<sup>th</sup> 2006 with a meeting of the 5 Presidents of the **Alps-Mediterranean EuroRegion**. A boundary line is often introduced between mountain and sea. To tell the truth territorial government include two perspectives and the started process considers a community of interests constituted by 5 Regions, the Italian Piedmont, Liguria and Aosta Valley and the French Rhône-Alpes and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. July 10<sup>th</sup> 2006 is the birth date of our EuroRegion, which has a precise objective, not the creation of a body or structure, but the set up of an organized space around the Western Alps, which can play a pivotal role among the European territories with high added value.

Within the European policies a risk has been emerging with the most recent years trends: a risk of **isolation and marginalisation** of the Mediterranean area. The latter refers not only to the maritime area, but it is a space, which has the Mediterranean Sea as centre of gravity with reference to cultural, linguistic and other aspects. This area believes not to have the right weight within the European policies from many points of view. For example for linguistic aspects: you certainly know all the debates within the European Council on the question of the languages equally spoken. In Italy some days ago the International Day of Francophone

areas has been celebrated. In few words there is a great worry to focus the European political attention again on the interest for the Mediterranean area. Several expectations had been placed on the decennial anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration, but this didn't produce the expected echo.

In order to understand the dimension of the community of interests, which is the object of the EuroRegion I can give you some **figures**. This community involves 17 million inhabitants, which corresponds to 3.6% of the European population (with 25 countries). It deals with an extension of 110,000 km<sup>2</sup>. It is at the crossing of important exchange flows between east-west and north-south. Also in this case you know all the debates on the trans-European networks, the corridors and the risk of marginalization of mountain. If some circumstances penalize these territories in the south of the Alps (not only the Italian ones) in some way, some important themes run the risk of being overwhelmed. This area owns **enormous potentialities**; it doesn't want to voluntarily choose the imposed alternation between mountain and sea, but it wants to consider this heritage as a joining element and not as a separating one. This space is very diversified: there are big urban agglomerates like Turin, Lyon and Marseille; but also a lot of very small towns with research and innovation centres, high-quality agricultural niche products, big industrial poles, valuable craftmade production, fairs and other events.

There is a strong will aimed at the creation of a **network system**, which is able to organize a fruitful relationship between the two vocations by transforming them from weak points into strength. Why just these 5 Regions? When you have to make a choice, it is often difficult to impose some limitations. A careful analysis showed that it deals with a coherent spatial grouping characterized by important historical, economic and cultural links, which have been enforced during the recent years also thanks to 3 cycles of INTERREG Programmes and to meaningful political relationships set up at different levels among these communities.

This initiative can be described as an **agreement among territorial bodies** placed in a certain area; but to tell the

truth the tissue representing the real strength of a network system is composed by all the connections between Italian and French mountain communities, between Italian and French metropolitan areas and so on. A solid relations tissue creates a substratum and a fertile ground for the insertion for this process, whose value should be increased and shared.

In order to develop these activities some **thematic priorities** have been selected since the first steps of the EuroRegion. In so doing fundamental and substantial elements for the everyday life of a community have been taken into great consideration:

- ◆ Environment and natural risks
- ◆ Transport and accessibility
- ◆ Research and innovation, growth and employment
- ◆ Culture and tourism
- ◆ Linguistic exchanges
- ◆ Quality of life and sustainable development
- ◆ Collective services, cohesion and solidarity

This represents a wide landscape: for this reason only some of them have been selected as **starting points** of the EuroRegion 2007 Action Plan and as first test-bed. Some topics have been chosen, because they have some similarities among the Regions and are proper to be put into a network. Some **work groups** have been formed with experts coming from the different Regions: they will work on this initiative. The choice of these experts is not an easy task. Within the European programming we often ask for some external experts' contribution. We know that in terms of efficiency this is a good procedure, because the activities development and deadlines are fulfilled. At the same time there is the risk of a sort of un-sticking from the ordinary policies implemented by the public authorities. In this case there is indeed a strong will to get an EuroRegion dimension just in the everyday activities performed by the bodies charged of services and activities programming and of some tasks implementation.

EuroRegion is **not an abstract concept**, but it is conceived inside public authorities' life: this is a big challenge for us. As technicians of the organizational structures we have to think according to an Euroregional dimension. For example, when we take care of transport, environment or culture we have



to be cast on this wider territory, which has to become our programming reference area.

This dimension is quite different from those ones characterizing cross-border and trans-national cooperation within the European initiatives, where activities programming depended on the coherence with operational programmes and resources availability. We don't want to schedule activities by starting from certain resources availability, but we aim at developing initiatives sponsored also with **own resources** of ordinary planning, which are engaged according a different wider dimension.

First of all this is a **cultural challenge**; borders are often only in our minds. In the next months some steps will allow us to perform this complex process, which will take a long time. As first step of this path there will be the opening of a common headquarter of the Alps-Mediterranean EuroRegion in Brussels. The previously existing regional offices in Brussels will be unified: an important phase of the **Action Plan** (which will be drafted during this year) is just this joint action in Brussels. The introduction of this territory and its problems will be showed during the **2007 Open Days** scheduled in Brussels the next October. During this event some territorial partnerships are formed in order to face the main territorial themes together with the Committee of Regions and the European Commission. This year the 5 Regions forming the Alps-Mediterranean EuroRegion will be introduced as a strengthened partnership. A strengthened partnership is not a closed system, but it contains also the other partnerships featuring the 5 member Regions and involving other territories like the Swiss Cantons, with which Piedmont, Aosta Valley and Rhône-Alpes share a lasting tradition of cooperation. The EuroRegion is a sort of hard core carrying out fundamental issues and enhancing the enlargement of this collaboration to other Regions like Lombardy, Catalonia, Baden Württemberg, etc. The Open Days will be the first occasion to express our ideas to the European institutions and to other regions. In the past each Region presented its own requests (often similar) to the European Institutions: from now onwards a **joint approach** will be applied together all the sub-regional declensions of each theme.

One of the fundamental aspects regards the choice of the model and the **legal system** for the EuroRegion. I presume that many of you have followed from the origin the issue of the legal basis for what concerns with the Structural Funds of the current programming period 2007-2013. All of you, who are concerned with cross-border and trans-national cooperation have certainly followed with interest the evolution of EU **Reg.1082** approved in July 2006, which rules the **European Group of Territorial Cooperation** (EGTC). In the first proposal presented by the EU Commissioner Barnier, the same acronym of this juridical regulation had a different declension: it dealt with cross-border cooperation instead of trans-national one. The path towards the approval of Reg.1082 has been quite hard; according to jurists it is a sort of regulation-directive; in fact it is a *sui generis* regulation, because differently from what normally happens with an European regulation, that is the immediate applicability after the publication on the EU Official Gazette, this regulation came into force on August 1<sup>st</sup> 2006 (the day after its publication on the EU Official Gazette on July 31<sup>st</sup> 2006), but it will be applicable only starting on August 1<sup>st</sup> 2007 under various conditions imposed by the Member States. In this sense it is more similar to a directive, which requires the States' action.

A very important question to be solved and which is object of a lively debate, regards the **limits of application** of this new tool. After having circumscribed the issue through the regulation-directive, in this application phase foreseen by art.18 some States try and give a strict representation by limiting the application only to European Funds. Even if this regulation has been conceived within an European rule generation addressed to funds discipline, it should go beyond this limit according to the Alps-Mediterranean EuroRegion members and other EuroRegions (for example the one among Italy, Austria and Slovenia). This is one of the most important matches regarding the application of the **principle of subsidiarity**, the Member States' interpretation according their national constitutions and the future application of EGTC. According to us this tool is really extraordinary and the Presidents of the 5 Regions adopted it as reference point. Waiting for the application details of this tool, it is necessary that the Member States choose the legal system of the EuroRegion. In our case we will decide



between the Italian one and the French one. European authorities asked already for this decision, but since there is still not certainty of law as well as its application modalities, it is impossible to establish the reference legal system. France undertook the procedure foreseen for an ordinary law, which has already been examined by the Senate. Italy hasn't chosen the application tool, maybe a national law. In the meanwhile the 5 Regions started the formalization of the agreement through a **Protocol of Understanding**. It was approved by the Regional Council of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2007. In Italy it should be approved by the national authorities according to what established by Law 131/2003, well-known as 'La Loggia' Law. In our opinion this is only an intermediate step; the final aim is at creating a body for political sharing, which is not like a managing authority. We would like to have a **shared programming and community of interests within our space**, our European citizenship and our path towards the increase of the value of our environment, both mountain and maritime.



## Reducing the Digital Divide The WI-PIE Programme in mountain areas



**Laura Milone**  
Officer in charge of the  
Telecommunication  
Division, Piedmont Region



I am a member of the work group for the **WI-PIE Programme**. This group received the task to implement all the projects included into this programme.

The WI-PIE Programme is an ambitious project promoted by Piedmont Region in order to develop **broad band** connections across all Piedmont territory by 2008.

All the territory will be provided with broad band technologies and infrastructure not only for public authorities (PA), but also for citizens and private sector.

The most important **purposes** of this programme are: competitiveness of the production system, socio-cultural and territorial development, improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of PA actions, set up of a distribution network, organize a unique system to make enterprises, university, research and PA services available.

Different **transmission technologies** will be implemented: traditional ones (through material supports) and innovative ones (essentially wireless).

**The programme origin.** WI-PIE is the result of the evolution of a unitary network of the regional public authorities, which was born in 1998. **RUPAR** was conceived as a private network and precisely as public authorities' intranet; it is still active waiting for the WI-PIE overturn, which will become a public network (internet) starting from 2008. It links 2500 of public authorities (provinces, regional headquarters, municipalities, mountain communities, libraries, museums, consortia, etc).

In 2002 **TOP-IX** was born as the internet exchange of Piedmont as important as the Milan and Rome ones.

In 2003 a **regional plan** was presented; with a regional Council's resolution the work group was constituted in 2004.

In 2005 the **Integrated Programming Document** was formally approved and ratified by the European Commission and in the end of 2005 the implementation of the programme started.

The main **basic principles** of the WI-PIE Programme are: selectivity, that is major model technological and economic efficiency; absence of overlapping among public and market actions; sustainability of the promoted actions; coherence with national and international initiatives.

For what regards the programme government a **Steering Committee** with the task of monitoring all the players and the programme implementation. The work group is formed by the performers: Piedmont Region, CSI Piemonte, TOP-IX Consortium, CSP, IRES Piemonte. There are also some officers in charge of the **7 strategic lines** forming the programme. The **provincial work groups** coordinated by each province are fundamental, because they represent the territorial public and private sectors. In fact WI-PIE is the result of participated planning among different institutional levels and territorial groups of interest.

The programme **budget** is around €100 million; it is composed by regional, provincial, European (DOCUP) and national (CIPE) funds.

### **7 strategic lines of the programme.**

1. The **Observatory** is the programme governance tool. It is fundamental, because it supplies the right indicators to map public authorities', citizens' and enterprises' needs. It is also useful to find available resources within territorial areas. It allows to constantly monitor initiatives and results measurement in order to adjust the programme around its criticalities.
2. The **backbone** made of optic fibres. 900 km of fibres will be set up with a value of € 14 million; it is formed with 11 access knots. It was necessary to implement various steps before making the system operational on November 24<sup>th</sup> 2006. For further details please link to [www.wipie.org](http://www.wipie.org), where you can find all the documentation.
3. **Enhancing access** through the set up of optic fibres provincial backbones. This line includes the support for

completing infrastructure in disadvantaged areas (rural and mountain zones). In order to get all the benefits from the backbone (which is the main objective, because this line is sponsored by DOCUP funds) there are great efforts towards local economic players' development. Within Line 3 there has been a call for tenders with a value of € 7 million in 2006. Infrastructure testing and concession will take place in 2007. The call has been divided into 8 lots, one for each province. The Province of Verbania gave its own contribution to the call. The call results are the following: the pre-selection concluded; administrative envelopes were opened on February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2007 and technical envelopes were opened on March 12<sup>th</sup> 2007. The assessment step is in progress. For what concerns with the pre-selection phase at least two tenders for each lot have been presented. This result is quite satisfactory.

4. Projects of wireless connections in **mountain, rural and hill areas**. Still before the launch of the WI-PIE Programme, Piedmont Region presented a project within a Framework Programme Agreement signed with CNIPA, with the Ministry of Economy and Finance in order to propose calls for tenders aiming at facilities for mountain communities. These facilities included network connections through wireless technologies. CIPE funds have been spent in 2003 and 2004 and all the mountain communities presented projects in both calls. Also in the Province of Novara, Piedmont Region promoted experiments with wireless technologies. It sponsored also pilot projects for other association forms. On 557 municipalities forming 48 mountain communities 337 municipalities will be covered at 100% level through the Telecom Agreement; 398 municipalities in total will get a telephone coverage of the population between 70% and 99%. 179 municipalities have already been sponsored with CIPE funds. Through the following RDD (Reduce Digital Divide) Project entirely sponsored by Piedmont Region 104 municipalities will be covered in the first phase; the remaining 84 municipalities will be covered in the second phase. Moreover Piedmont Region has sponsored some pilot projects in 10 mountain refuges: through a satellite it is possible to get an internet connection inside the refuges or some internet points and outside them if users and tourists own a pocket personal computer. Also projects will be financed this year according to regional resources availability.

5. Projects of **internationalisation**, or rather high-speed interconnections with points characterized by a relevant concentration of operators and resources in Italy and in other European regions. At the moment Piedmont Region takes part into the following international projects: ALCOTRA (Cross-border broad band network) and EURO-IX Association (Internet exchange).
6. **Research, academy and school**. Particular attention is focussed on the Internet 2 development; an innovation and technology transfer network will be set up for new services and innovative applications within the Piedmont school system and the academic and research world. Some project have already been implemented by Piedmont Region: a demonstrator in Orco and Soana Valleys; another one in the Novara wide area; a broad band content and services programme for schools and some activities supporting Line 1 (the Observatory).
7. **Development of services** to use the broad band. Three projects have been sponsored regarding services for enterprises and environmental sustainability; one project supporting technological innovation in Piedmont dies; web-conference services. Within the Protocol of Understanding signed by Piedmont Region and Telecom in June 2006, Piedmont Region undertook to develop projects concerning domiciliary tele-assistance, house and enterprise tele-security, schools, logistic and transport.

The commitment of Piedmont Region within the **Protocol of Understanding** does not imply any money disbursement from Piedmont Region to Telecom, but the development of innovative services.

**Telecom's** commitment consists indeed in the extension of the broad band to 96% of telephone population in the period 2006-2008 with a 900 municipalities coverage.

Some areas are excluded from Telecom's intervention, but they are included into the regional RDD project.

So there are 900 municipalities with Telecom coverage and the other 306 with public regional intervention by 2008.

The **objectives of RDD** regard both infrastructure actions and the set up of a system enhancing users' mobility and nomadism (citizens, public authorities and enterprises).

The **procedure of RDD** implies two calls for tenders: the first one will involve the municipalities excluded by Telecom and the previous CIPE calls. The second one will involve the municipalities excluded from the first one and those included in the CIPE calls, whose telecommunication operators and ICT providers have not extended the service to private users.

For the first call Piedmont Region invests €4,430,000 and the Province of Cuneo €170,000. The second call will be defined on the basis of the first call results.

The call for tenders foresees the provision of network infrastructure to be performed through technologies chosen by the bidders. The **concession of infrastructure** includes three different lots: one for the Province of Cuneo, one for the Province of Asti-Alessandria; the third one for the Province of Biella, Novara, Vercelli, Verbania and Turin. The call was published on March 13<sup>th</sup> 2007 with a deadline in the end of May 2007.

**Bids reductions** are not allowed, but the coverage of a larger number of municipalities above the required threshold (222 municipalities) is a rewarded factor during the bids assessment.

The licensee has to grant two ADSL superior typologies of service. Another important rewarded element is represented by **improved band levels**. Tariffs will be flat ones. The European principle of Open Access will be compulsory. The licensee has to grant services and activation time established through the call. Both phases will conclude in 2008, when the whole Piedmont territory will be able to profit by the broad band.



## Mountain between innovation and cohesion

I am very honoured to take part into this meeting with the representatives of the Regional Planning and to have the chance to express some considerations on the AlpCity Project. I refer also Mr Borghi's, UNCEM National President, reflections.

The title of my speech mentions **cohesion**, a very important topic. We cannot forget that the alpine space is the object of many projects, which select, identify and classify it; unfortunately the alpine space itself considered as formed with mountain communities, municipalities, local authorities, entrepreneurs and citizens, is not able to exploit these projects results.

I would like to pose this problem to Piedmont Region, because it is involved in several projects using different languages, approaches and benchmarks. In so doing they become subject for experts. Even us as sector leaders are not able to transfer operations; some actions, like the broad band one, are developed with extreme diligence and relevant commitment of political and technical means; but then they are classified as differentiating elements, as something exogenous and external. According to my long experience, it is necessary to build a **deep relationship** with users' representatives and to teach them a single language, approach, provision system and above all a relationships system. Otherwise European Programming will fail.

In the 60s in Italy the project concerning the 'Green Plans' was developed: it changed the appearance of agriculture, but only few experts had the decision-making power. So this project remained and **elitarian exercise**; this happened because it was characterized by a top-down approach: it is developed only partially and the true beneficiaries are not reached. The same for the European Programmes: they are born in Europe, then modified in Italy and at regional level, but before they reach their destination... If we ask 48 mountain communities, 538 mayors I am sure that they do not know AlpCity. We should make some efforts in this sense



**Lido Riba**  
President, UNCEM  
Piemonte



, because this is the first result, a project should aim at. I address the experts, Mrs Cavallo Perin, her team, Mr Bairati's team, because I trust them and I am persuaded that they have experiences and knowledge, which can become very satisfactory.

A second remark: there is a **law deficit** at European level in spite of the fact that 25% of world population lives on mountain and Europe preserves two of the world most important mountain ridges (the Alps and the Pyreneans) together with the Carpathian and Hymalaian ones. The European Union has been able to consider mountains only in its Constitution (which has not been approved yet), with **art.154 directive on mountain**. For this reason we are obliged to apply agriculture rules to mountains: there are no proper tools. Communication within mountains is very rare and never conceived for a low density area with a specific geographic characteristics, which feature almost 50% of the globe.

There is another observation regarding cohesion. In Europe geography can be summarized into 4 typologies: metropolitan areas (considered as the real development engines, even if all territories have the right to be developed), coasts, agricultural plains (scattered area, but very rich in terms of production) and mountains. For mountains it is necessary to develop a culture, an acknowledgement and an **adequate approach**.

As Mr. Conti said this morning, and I agree with him, we have to think about and not to copy, because by copying we arrive only after, in a secondary and inferior phase. We cannot think to develop Italian mountains through the replication of other experiences. I would like to recall a recent meeting of the **Association of world mountain populations** chaired by the famous Mr Lasalle, who was obliged to go on an hunger strike in order to solve the problems of French mountains. After 25 days he got all he had required and became also a celebrity. Political means were not sufficient even in France; it seems that subversive actions are necessary also for an important politician like him. Anyway, I participate in the mentioned meeting also because there is a precise intention of our Region and our President Mrs Bresso to think as EuroRegion. I had a lot of

difficulties in explaining to Andean and Himalayan representatives that at a distance of 30-40 km from the world most developed and richest territories there are the poorest European areas (with an income amounting at  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the average one). This is a consequence of our **development models**.

Moreover we made a formidable operation of **human transhumance** from mountains. During Fascism Piedmont Region exported about 1 million people abroad, in order to limit the contradictions of the regime: it could live in a comfortable way only by reducing population. Afterwards almost 500,000 people were obliged to move from Piedmont alpine territories to Turin and abroad. This migration left in Piedmont 15,000 empty hamlets for a total population of 300-400,000 inhabitants. In those places we can see a church, a bakehouse, elements of community life: in the Alps history there are no landowners, but common pastures. This is a space for new settlements, which will be used only with a **proper and specific policy of endogenous development**. As we are discussing with the Regional Planning during these days we should identify the economic generators within the territory. These **economic generators** are quite clear now; environmental realities, which can be transformed into reception activities through a training, cultural and organizational operation. Mountain raw materials are exploited by others, also because they make other economies rich and not the mountain endogenous one. According to some statistics regarding marginal mountain municipalities with 100 inhabitants, the residents' income is about 2-3 billion of Italian Lira. Less than 10% of this income is spent in the village; less than 30% in the valley. The remaining part is spent in metropolitan areas and in the plain systems. Endogenous development has to create a remix of generators and to add what is lacking. There are many potentialities, but organizational element are lacking. Moreover the development factors are represented by enterprises, entrepreneurs, environment, policies and so on. After years of exports there can't be enterprises and entrepreneurs; first of all the best human capital is exported. The public sector has an important responsibility in this sense. If we eliminate the political function in a plain municipalities of 10,000 inhabitants damages can be limited, because natural systems work autonomously (institutions, banks,

chambers of commerce, etc.). On the contrary the same action on mountain would produce a disaster, because everything is led by local authorities. We have human resources from a political point of view together with potentialities (water sources, trees, etc.), which can be exploited in order to create conditions for endogenous development feasible at regional, national and European level. **Opportunities exist and are really great;** cultural conditions are not optimal; UNCEM is persuaded that services can be spread afterwards as a consequence of development. We don't want to be assisted.

AlpCity is not only an opportunity from this point of view, but a cultural occasion for our Region. I think it can be managed with more success, if we go beyond the top mechanisms, which determined its limits. I would like to declare the support of **UNCEM** to this new initiative.



## Looking ahead: hypothesis for the future of AlpCity

We have been working on INTERREG Projects for years. As public servants we have tried to set up networks, but there is **no visibility** for our work on the territory. This is the portrait of AlpCity.

Through AlpCity Piedmont Region accepted an important **challenge** for the first time. The Alpine Space has always been a domain of Eastern Regions, which have great abilities into cooperation. The first idea of this European project was born six years ago and we had lots of difficulties in finding partners among Eastern Regions: Piedmont Region had some problems in linking to them. I remember my visit to Rhône-Alpes: I was advised to work a lot on the shared proposal, because we were still far behind.

This work took three years and today I can say that all the efforts we have done are much more appreciated among our partners than within Piedmont Region. In fact all energies and efforts have been directed towards the set up of this network of 7 Regions in order to take care for the first time of the **small alpine towns' development**, since they are qualified as fundamental asset of the Alps.

Also the set up of the **Scientific Steering Committee** has been a quite complex task: each Region chose an expert and then the group of participants has hardly worked on the search of a common language. Experts are in the habit of working in an international environment, while regional public servants have some communication difficulties due to the different legal and administrative background.

Once this partnership with important alpine Regions is set up, there is now the question on the way to exploit it according to the **new Regional Council's guidance**. In fact AlpCity was born during the previous regional government and has been coordinated by Daniela Sena and her collaborators in a praiseworthy manner. Well, now we have to understand the new addresses of the Piedmont Regional Council



**Maria Cavallo Perin**  
Deputy Director  
Piedmont Region Division  
on Budget Planning and  
Statistics



concerning with mountain policy in order to go on with the project. There are some rumours about a **big regional project on mountains**, where our partnership could be easily inserted, because during these 3 years of common work we understood that our final aim should be at mountain policies sharing. This is a hard work. You have to think that we are public servants coming from different experiences, but as bureaucrats we do not necessarily express our political leaders' will. For this reason the most important aspect at the moment is the identification of the chance to transform a partnership set up through technical and bureaucratic engagement into a political tool for sharing policies. Of course, we should persuade our political leaders that AlpCity is a successful story to be carried on.

The sense of **policy sharing** can be currently interpreted by the light of what Giulia Marcon said about the EuroRegion. Piedmont Region has taken some decisions regarding areas of action, tools and objectives in the field of trans-national and cross-border territorial cooperation. In case the EuroRegion project will be fulfilled, here within the AlpCity Partnership there are the premises for an enlarged dialogue with the eastern alpine Regions.

In this sense I can vision AlpCity as the **link between western Alps and eastern Alps**, because there are relevant differences between them in terms of economic development, policy-making and communication skills. In my opinion AlpCity can be a tool, the new public authorities can implement in order to create a bridge between these two realities by developing synergies and interactions.

There many themes for cooperation; Giulia Marcon listed some of them. Within our partnership we concluded the AlpCity Project by proposing the idea of a **Laboratory on shared mountain policies**. I think this has to be our principal reference point, independently from the chance of taking part into new programmes and getting new financial resources. I am just wondering whether it could be possible to work together for this Laboratory (independently from any resources raising at European level) by adding also a technical assistance activity, like the one Piedmont Region has put in place for mountain areas thanks to the Italian Ministry of Economic Development's support.

The theme of **technical assistance** is maybe a rehashed subject, but we realized that the administrative and territorial fragility in these areas requires a superior guidance and assistance to local authorities. Mountain Communities are not sufficient, because many disparities exist between bigger developed municipalities and small marginalized ones. Mountain policy has to face very different situations. Lido Riba always beats us, because we cannot have the same aptitude towards small alpine hamlets, which are not able to compete against big towns. For this reason we should give these areas more care, tutoring, technical assistance, policies sharing; in other words more dignity. If we visit Austria, Germany and Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region, we can admire territories with small villages economically developed. In the Province of Turin development is absent apart from few occasions like the XX Winter Olympic Games. We can learn from the previously mentioned successful examples. In fact, for example our partner Mr Hildebrandt, Mayor of Grainau (Germany) scolded us as regards tourist development as the only way towards the alpine economic growth. Through this comparison with realities characterized by a superior economic development in marginalized areas, we realized the importance of territorial organization in terms of alliances and networks among small and big municipalities.

On one hand we have to start again from **alliances** between small villages and big urban centres; on the other hand we have to stimulate alliances among alpine Regions in order to share policies allowing Alps to become the centre of Europe.

Alps are localized in the southern Europe: they represent a big basin of knowledge and resources, but they experiment a sort of marginality due to their border position. Let's imagine that nations do not exist and Europe is a big federal state with many municipalities. Well, the Alps are an enormous potential source of development, the **centre of southern Europe**.

We can offer better opportunities to the alpine populations by discussing some topics. To this purpose I propose some themes, which have to be approved also by the other AlpCity partners: for example, networks and relationships

development, technical assistance for ordinary activities. Spatial planning is also a very fascinating subject: I would like to launch the idea of an **Alpine Territorial Plan** to be commonly outlined at least in its general lines. We have knowledge and large amounts of data developed during the most recent years by our universities and spatial research institutes, which could be used to think about this ambitious project. Of course it deals with an idea to be nourished only with the participation of all the partners.

A second proposal concerns with the creation of an **alpine common market for public works and services**. There are all the premises for the specificities of this market (fragile territory and local public authorities): the best enterprises with the required competences have to be able to participate into all the alpine calls for tenders. They can give an important contribution to the building and the improvement of planning and performing public works and services in the Alps.

The third proposal is oriented towards the **improvement of local authorities' skills**. We select young graduates, who will work in the small alpine municipalities for two years. In so doing we export academic competences to small towns, where they need to be enforced. I would like to invite Sergio Foà to express his thought on the subject.



I take care from the legal point of view of the **AlpCity** birth (very partially) and then I collaborate to the **OPLAB** Project, another experience aiming at assisting Piedmont Mountain Communities through legal and technical expertise.



**Sergio Foà**  
Professor  
Faculty of Law  
University of Turin

I agree with Mrs. Cavallo Perin for what regards the **alpine common market for public works and services**. I would like to underline two remarks on the problems to be faced to put in place this idea. **Different rules and languages** continue to be an obstacle, even if there are European rules, which make tenders adjudication homogeneous. There is also a common vocabulary, which should simplify tenders adjudication and execution. It clear that normal differences of legal systems in the phase of institution acknowledgement can represent a relevant impedimental element to **spatial policy conformation**. There is a margin of discretion, which enlarges for the calls for tenders below the established threshold: in this case Italy decided not to say anything. In fact the Contracts Code imposes to follow European rules for the calls for tenders above the established threshold and leaves discretion for those below it.

All the information and policies system aimed at overcoming these problems plays a pivotal role. On this subject **Regions** can give an important contribution: they know their territory better and can improve the value of local realities through their tools. Sometimes technical rules are able to improve markets. Let's think about the European Ecolabel, the environmental management, the EMAS ISO 14,000 rules, etc. For sure Regions have power on the organization; apart from national laws they can bring markets nearer.

Just to conclude after these remarks I would like to ask Region for increasing collaboration with **other functional institutions**, which has already showed to be valuable in the past. I mean a collaboration for example with Unioncamere, Chambers of Commerce, etc. In particular the Chamber of Commerce of Turin supported (together also with Piedmont Region) a project called **ALPPS** in order to give technical assistance to enterprises as regards candidatures to international calls for tenders. Technical tables and specific seminars have been organized together with forms of

partnership among enterprises with difficulties in participating into calls for tenders launched within foreign legal systems.

Another interesting experience on this subject has been promoted through the **OPLAB** (Laboratory on Public Works) Project. University and Polytechnic of Turin have provided Mountain Communities with legal and technical assistance and they try to formulate some best practices on the relationships between Region and local communities as regards calls for tenders. In my opinion this experiment worked well and it could be carried on also within the AlpCity prosecution. It could be extended to international, crossborder, trans-national calls for tenders.

I conclude by recalling that paradoxically at the beginning of the AlpCity Project we had more difficulties to solve differences among the Italian regional bylaws than to harmonize differences between Italy and the other European partners. This is a clear symptom of the **Italian rule stickiness**.



## Afternoon Plenary Session

Let's start the **second session** of this Seminar, which will give us the opportunity to open a debate on the transfer problems and on the AlpCity prosecution.

I would like to tell you that I am very happy to have been invited to this event, because I am honoured to have coordinated the **AlpCity Scientific Steering Committee** and I have also had the chance to appreciate the AlpCity Partners' efforts.

I think it would be a pity if all this work, together the set up of the AlpCity network, couldn't be transferred and improved through other activities.

During these 3-4 work years we realized that the construction of a Laboratory implies a very organized and stable structure.

All our work is a concrete expression of a cultural melting pot. **Results** have taken their form little by little; sometimes we didn't satisfy our expectations, but this experience allowed us to verify the importance of networks in a very pragmatic way.

AlpCity successfully experimented also the **methodologies of transfer through networks** applied in the European and regional programmes. When we speak about the project possible prosecution, we don't simply mean it is a question of convenience.

Even if I have not the power to speak on Piedmont Region's behalf, I would like to remark the importance of the **AlpCity prosecution**, which is the main reason of my presence here today.

During the project evolution we realized the **common aspects** among the partners. The shared starting point within **April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007**



**Marie Christine Fourny Kober**

Director of the Alpine  
Geography Institute  
Joseph Fourier University,  
Grenoble



AlpCity consisted in the mountain shortages and structural difficulties. AlpCity tried to give some answers through the partners' work on the different project themes (issues regarding cultural heritage, housing, services, trade, etc). The most important and evident element of this experiment has been the strong will, expressed by the project participants and local stakeholders, towards a **common claim for endogenous development**, which is much more than a simple reply in terms of financial resources.

**INTERREG** can increase this aptitude towards development, promoted by mountain local communities, through knowledge transfers, mutual exchanges, common initiatives, organizations based on complementarity and not on homogeneity and competitiveness. This **complementarity** requires rules and governance mechanisms.

The resources necessary to mobilize this process have a cultural and **cognitive nature**. In other words local communities own few means; they have ideas, but they are not able to put them into practice, because of the lack of experience, knowledge and expertise. If these elements exist outside, the cultural and cognitive resources of these places can be enriched through information exchange and dissemination. **Knowledge** is probably the only resource, which is not reduced through its sharing, but it is even improved. This is a great difference from other material resources.

This afternoon session allows us to debate on means and tools necessary to define and elaborate resources within **knowledge and competence field**. There will be two parts: the first one is devoted to the process and **tools** for putting in place some transfer mechanisms through networks. The second part presents different **initiatives of transfer** in the Alps. We will speak about the chance to benefit from these exchanges and to verify whether these experiences can contribute to the search of a new placement for the AlpCity Project. In which way it can be inserted into the existent frameworks, be complementary to them or become a part of them.



## Introduction to the Strategic Session

I would like to thank Marie Christine Fourny Kober for her speech and her difficult and important work as coordinator of the Scientific Steering Committee. Her role consisted in the **strategic and scientific guide** of the project. Thank you also because she accepted to be moderator of this afternoon session. We hope to be able to enjoy her collaboration also in the future of AlpCity.



**Daniela Sena**  
AlpCity  
Project Manager  
Piedmont Region



This afternoon session regards mostly the potential **contents** of the future AlpCity proposal. This morning we explored some developments within the **partnership** for the project prosecution. Many players expressed their thoughts at international, European, national and regional level.

Now we want to listen to the **successful stories**, we consider in line with the development of the AlpCity activities. We will focus on **strategic networks**, which are really active and produce positive impacts on the territory, and also on successful initiatives undertaken.

This afternoon will start with a first **theoretical part** and we will be able to hear from the University of Turin, which has already been involved into the AlpCity Project as consultant for the implementation of one of the case studies coordinated by Piedmont Region.

Afterwards **UN Habitat** will describe in detail the transfer activities within the 'Best Practices and Local Leadership' Programme.

Then the Italian National Focal Point for the **Alpine Convention** will speak about this tool, which represents a key initiative within the Alps. To tell the truth in the past we had some difficulties to start a dialogue and collaboration based on effective synergies with the Alpine Convention. For this reason we are curious to understand its concrete developments within the new programming period.



Then **CIPRA International**, an active NGO of the Alpine Space, will explain a very meaningful initiative called 'Future in the Alps' concerning transfer of successful practices. We really hope to collaborate with them in the future.

Mr Bontempi, promoter of 'Torino Città delle Alpi' Association will speak then about a recent initiative: **Alpi365**, which represents the transversal reply of Piedmont Region to the sustainable development challenge in the Alps.

The following speeches are devoted to open a new window for the AlpCity developments: the **private sector** and particularly enterprises. A Work Package within AlpCity was reserved to economic development, led by Lombardy Region together with other project partners. We would like to explore also other potential collaborations, with special focus on enterprises. In fact the new programmes and initiatives, like for example 'Regions for Economic Change', auspicate a public-private partnership.

An **open discussion** will follow as occasion for remarks, questions and observations.



## Territory and local development. Opportunities and limits of spatial development in 'fragile' areas

In this speech I would like to think about the **opportunities and the limits of local development in mountain areas**. I speak in relation to the results of a research-action experience, coordinated by IRER Lombardia about the local development integrated programmes concerning Objective-2 areas in Lombardy Region. In many cases these areas involve declining rural and mountain territories. The objective of my speech consists in thinking about:

- what is the meaning of "enhancing local development" in fragile areas, such as mountain ones;
- what are the opportunities and limits of local development in such areas;
- in which way the local operational skills for these processes can be empowered, developed and consolidated.

Due to the time constraints I am not able to give a complete answer to these questions. I think to start with the key-words I introduced. They are well-known, but I would like to explain what we mean by local spatial development and where we want to enhance it.

Local development indicates a process of enhancing local level, where the idea of a development path to be undertaken comes from local level. This level is conceived as a privileged regulating context in relation to its (presumed or real) capacity to draft projects and strategies. Of course this definition is not exhaustive. The wide international debate on the regional rebirth, on the role of no-economic factors (like knowledge, social capital, confidence, reciprocity) in the development process and on their territoriality, underlines the importance of a territory in supporting or hindering local actions (see Dematteis and Governa, 2005). Local



### Francesca Governa

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EU-polis – Sistemi Urbani Europei Research Institute of the Inter-university Department of Territorial Studies and Planning of the Polytechnic and University of Turin



development is considered a synonym of spatial development, not only because it is a localized process (or rather it is implemented in certain places, Storper, 1997), but also and above all because it is specific of a certain place and anchored to it (Hess, 2004). The development paths conceived for a certain place cannot be simply transferred somewhere else, because they are specific and so locally differentiated. Specificities of places should be praised together with the actors of these processes.

These concepts produce an important influence on policies promoting local development.

Policies devoted to local spatial development promotion are not based on the outside imposition of standard packages of infrastructure and industrial actions, which are independent from specific problems and opportunities of transformation. On the contrary these policies request a detailed and analytical action of acknowledgement and appraisal of territorial (physical-natural, social, cultural, economic, etc.) differences together with the active participation of the widest range of local actors.

Where can this local spatial development be located? Spatial development in mountain areas, but not in the excellent tourist resorts, in marginal mountain areas. Apart from lying in a marginal position of their regions (I refer to Lombardy and Piedmont mountains), they are characterized by small municipalities with weak organizational, institutional and technical structures, few money, not many expectations and scarce competences. Fragile areas, which are also characterized by aged people and depopulation. Looking at data regarding some municipalities of Lombardy alpine valleys, economic indicators do not put in evidence sharp conditions of discomfort and deprivation, but a sort of stalemate. "Sleeping" territories, where local society is often aphasic, with a low-pitched voice or with an incomprehensible voice, which doesn't communicate in the proper way or which cannot be made active (or with effort). I try and summarize: physical marginality; local institutions and society marginality; cultural weakness and as regards social capital; shortage of competences and knowledge; immobility of ideas and of the will of bringing themselves into play.

If we put together spatial development and fragile areas as I described before, problems worsen. Promoting local development in mountain fragile zones, increasing the value of endogenous resources through the setting up of networks among local actors and the activation of their projecting capacity: all this recalls the need to count on hidden territorial resources and on not much active local actors. I will try and list the problems faced by the bet of spatial development in fragile areas:

**1. The weak link between theoretical reflection and dimension of practices.** In front of a wide theoretical literature on the centrality of territory in promoting local development there isn't a comparable acquisition regarding policies and practices. As experts on spatial policies often say (for example Healey, 2001) policies promoting development aim at objectives without any reference to the related territory. In practice situation is not so different. Notwithstanding any declaration of principle, territory is submitted to many and evident trivialities: it is still considered like a simple framework, a neutral display where projects and actions, a container of resources to be exploited, independently from any verification of the (territorial, environmental, etc) outcomes of this exploitation or, still, like a range of binding values, an expert is able to recognize before and outside any process of social interaction (for example: cultural and environmental goods to be preserved).

**2. Is local development a way to promote development in fragile areas?** This question shouldn't seem rhetorical or an invitation to go back towards hetero-directed and centralized policies, or still, with reference to interpretations showing the unavoidability of marginality and fragility, through the acknowledgement of their role in the process of capitalist accumulation. On the contrary, it recalls the need of taking into consideration the debate on local development from the beginning, by examining the following issues:

- what is different in such a development process, its opportunities and its limits;
- in which way it is possible to "play" among the different dimensions of a development defined as multi-dimensional

(of course economic development, but also social, cultural, symbolic, identity development, ...) also in relation to the differences among territories, where the implementation of local development is one of many problems to be faced.

In marginal areas, in the fragile and sleeping mountain territories, a priority is represented by taking care and appropriation of territory together with the reconstruction of social and spatial linkages. In any case all this is not sufficient. Local development is not only but also economic development: the social, environmental, political or identity dimensions of local development are not sufficient by themselves. The local and territorial action can and has probably to be mixed with other relationship forms, by coupling and associating the territory with other and different mediators promoting development (as advised by Rullani, 2005 or Le Galès and Voelzkow, 2001).

### **3. The ambivalent effects of the institutionalisation process.**

Local development promotion based on the increase of value of territorial differences is the starting point to enhance differentiated and specific development paths. Since territory is differentiated according to its definition, also development processes put in place through the valorisation of places potentialities will be differentiated. Looking at what happens practically, we assist to not very specific processes. A trend homogenization emerges from specificities: undifferentiated territories, but stereotyped and anodyne; identical projects; quite similar development path. Just to be a little bit caricatural and to exaggerate the less persuasive aspects of the actions in progress, banalization of specificities seems reinforced by a sort of procedural mechanism leading towards the repetition of 'rituals' and passwords, the uncritical transposition of the conditions (endogenous and exogenous), which grant local development since featuring 'successful stories'. What's the problem? In general terms it can be expressed by considering the chance to transfer, from a place to another, a virtuous development path. This chance represents the origin of local development institutionalisation: the definition of norms, rules, standard and institutionalised procedures, aims at providing basic ways to produce and replicate processes, conditions, development paths everywhere. As underlined by A. Pichierri (2002), institutionalisation processes

have limits and risks together with ambivalent effects. On the one hand they have the merit to provide an action frame, by stimulating and directing local strategies, even only through the bait of funds; on the other hand they can lead to a sort of 'flattening' of project local skills enhancing identical development forms and strategies. Moreover, the institutionalisation of local development processes aims at enhancing the adoption of opportunistic behaviours, that is a simply ritual adaptation to institutional requests (particularly for what regards the set up of partnerships and the performance of participation practices) or even the adoption of corrupted and collusive behaviours. How is it possible to solve the trade-off between institutional rigidity and project flexibility? How is it possible to avoid the only formal adaptation to institutional requests? By institutionalising and so making processes and conditions transferable, stimulating local action, defining development axis and objectives within a frame established *ex ante* by the supra-local public authority. But this frame cannot be imposed to local players and has to be characterised by a simple model of institutionalisation, with few rules and steps, sufficiently shared among the different institutional levels, open and flexible.

4. **Problems of small municipalities.** Public authorities with reduced and minimal personnel meet a lot of difficulties to vision, prepare and manage complex programmes like the ones concerning with strategic promotion of spatial development. These difficulties derive both from time constraints/excess of tasks and from the lack of competences necessary to strategically plan spatial development. In order to avoid these problems, the most adopted solution is outsourcing, but external consultants often draft theoretical development plans, which imply identical development path for different places, without a specific knowledge of the environment and an active involvement of local stakeholders. But we have also to take learning and local capacity building ambiguities into account. Local development policies often try and enhance local learning and capacity building as objective, but competences necessary to promote planning activities sediment within public authorities. In any case it is necessary to consider the personnel quantity and typology together

with the role of external players (public administration, territory, ...).

After a list of the main problems of the spatial development promotion in fragile areas, I am going to briefly indicate some teachings and possible actions.

1. **Enhancing vertical governance, managing and setting up 'long networks'**. Development promotion in fragile areas requests first of all the set up of effective relationships among local players and supra-local processes, the opening of local systems to external dynamics, the hybridisation between local development programmes and spatial development policies and programmes at regional, national and European level. The set up of these long networks asks for the introduction of vertical governance mechanisms, which allow those resources (above all cognitive) to strengthen authorities' skills, to reproduce social capital and to stimulate project making within local societies otherwise unable to express itself.

2. **Providing projects with continuity: the importance of time.** A banal and obvious teaching, but important as well: local development, specifically in weak territories like mountains, asks for a long time to be implemented; it can be delimited by strict time constraints. In spite of all the mentioned limits, risks and aporia, it is necessary to widen time of learning how to enhance local development, to set up awareness and territorial competences, to improve cognitive capacities and know-how, to increase strategic action skills, which emerge as real qualifying element of the most interesting experiences. It is necessary to grant continuity in the long run, to enhance mechanism of taking root and strengthening, also from an organizational point of view; but we should also consider the rapid obsolescence of resources and skills accumulated often very hardly within projects. Nevertheless time can pass in vain: it is possible to learn nothing, to learn using words without modifying the substance. What can we do in order to avoid this?

3. **Strengthening other players' competences, changing roles, setting up a 'community of practices'**. In the luckiest cases a development project can become an extraordinary



occasion to learn doing new things, but also to learn new ways to do traditional things. 'Doing local society', but also and above all promoting cooperation among enterprises, social players and public authorities. All this asks for the implementation of a form of tasks distribution among several players, a role change at all institutional levels, which can be performed, for example, through the set up of a 'community of practices', where players daily interact by exchanging resources, knowledge, competences and experiences.



## The UN Habitat process and tools for transferring knowledge, experience and competence



### Jean Bakole

Officer, UN Habitat Liaison  
Office with European Union  
and Belgium



Before describing the experience of the programme of the United Nations for the habitat let me speak about mountain from a sentimental point of view: I come from a mountain country; for this reason **mountain is part of my life**. I come from the southern-eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is crossed by the biggest ridge of Africa. I had the chance to visit some European mountain countries; I visited Grenoble and I ran on mountain. Running conditions on French mountains are similar to those ones on Congolese ridges. Then I was in Switzerland and today here in Turin, even if I have not still had the chance of running...

Mountain is an absolutely **important resource**, not only for you, but also for many other populations. This morning we heard that world population living on mountain or benefiting from its resources is really large.

I think that the **AlpCity initiative** supported by the European Union seems very interesting from our global perspective. Even with the limitations of this global perspective. In our opinion AlpCity is interesting for two reasons: on one hand it deals with urban issues, which are always relevant for us even if small towns are involved. We appreciate this approach to towns, independently from their dimensions, because each person, who lives wherever, must benefit from the best conditions in his homeland. For this reason we appraise the efforts of the small alpine towns to form a network for exchanges of knowledge and expertise in order to improve their life conditions.

Since we want to consider **globalisation** from its positive point of view as linked to networks development; in fact globalisation is able to put together very different sectors around the world. Today we encourage the exchange of important *atout* among cities and countries.



As UN Habitat we assign great importance to **cooperation among territorial bodies**, since it enhances the exploiting of different competences, knowledge, expertise, applied technologies advantageous for populations.

I was asked to speak about knowledge transfer related to best practices. All necessary information about our programmes and activity are available on our website [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org). There is a special section regarding best practices.

A **best practice** is defined as an innovative initiative, which reveals to be tangible and effective for life quality. In order to be efficient and effective this practice has to involve many players at different levels. According to the project dimension the number of partners has to be an asset to encourage development.

**AlpCity** has been awarded within our programme as a best practice and we are persuaded it should be disseminated together with its results. We think that there should be both public and private partners, also because private sector plays a fundamental role in certain areas. This project should have visibility from the economic, social and environmental point of view. These three levels are part of endogenous development according to a holistic approach. We consider populations' life in their territory in an integrated way. Willing partners are also very important in this sense together with **political support**.

**Transfer of best practices** is a very complex activity; the appropriation of a particular activity is the first step and then an effort is necessary to understand and know potential users interested in that expertise. This implies a long linguistic, cultural and environmental process.

When we speak about **mountains**, we are aware that there are different kinds of mountains; geophysical aspects should facilitate the way to approach problems.

Our procedure of transfer is made up with **4 steps**: first of all the definition of the demand framework. When a body knows a problem and looks for a solution, it defines the

demand framework and also the practice, which could be transferred. Demand and practice have to be coherent. Then there is a call for the demand and the related **transfer**. In order to select adaptations of the practice a dialogue between the expertise owners and the potential beneficiaries should be started in order to find an adequate solution. Once the transfer has been implemented it is necessary a **monitoring** for other modifications and additions.

In our opinion all these initiatives regarding **lasting urban policies** should encourage networking and skills development of towns. All urban settlements are open towards future and should develop by taking care of their populations' needs and projects. For this reason AlpCity should go on as project and Un Habitat is glad to give its contribution and partnership in order to bring this initiative beyond European borders.



## The Alpine Convention and its implementation in the new programming period (2007-2013)

During the last years the **Alpine Convention** has been a very complex issue; its ratification is dated 1999. In 2001 Italy assumed its Presidency, which lasts two years. It was a great responsibility, but we reached many results.

The **Ministry for Environment** is the public authority responsible for the ratification of the Alpine Convention and its implementation.

The Convention is an **international treaty** involving 8 countries and the European Commission. Its final objective is **environment protection** and **sustainable development**. In fact the Ministries of the involved governments are mostly for Environment.

What led to the Alpine Convention? This process took a very long time.

In **geophysical terms**, Italy has a great part of its territory made up with mountains (54%). The rest is characterized by coasts. 17,3% of the territory is constituted by the Alps. In terms of **GDP** an important part of it is produced in this area (€ 74,000 million). In a study sponsored by Bavaria it is shown that this territory is the most populated and productive in the European Union.

Mountain is very important for Italy; it is also mentioned in its **Constitution**: art.44 paragraph 2. In order to implement that article many laws have been approved: the most concrete and oldest one is Law 991 (25<sup>th</sup> July 1952) 'On mountains', which still produces effects on the territory in spite of its revisions. During the previous government there was an advanced law proposal aimed at updating the old one. The current government is working on a more advanced law. This means that great attention is paid to mountain issues.



**Paolo Angelini**

National Focal Point for the Alpine Convention, Italian Ministry for Environment



The western alpine side has been involved in many international treaties for what concerns Italy. In fact the Alpine Convention has inspired to an ancient bilateral agreement between Italy and France for the protection and sustainable development of the **French-Italian Alps**.

A great promoter of the Alpine Convention has been Mr. Barnier, French ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs and ex-Commissioner for Regional Affairs of the European Union. Also many Italians gave important contributions; one of them is Luciano Caveri, president of Aosta Valley and current president of the **Alpine Arc State-Regions Council**.

With the Alpine Convention ratification through Law 403/99 in order to grant a real dialogue between local and central government the lawmaker created a **work table**, which is part of the Italian Unified Conference and is named State-Regions Council of the Alps. It deals with a political table, where local and central government debate on the decisions to be undertaken within the Alpine Convention. We are very proud of this tool, even if its work is not so easy.

The Alpine Convention was ready to be signed in 1991. Italy signed in 1994 and ratified it in 1999 (Law 403). Also the **Principality of Monaco** participates in the Convention; its membership is the result of an added protocol, because it owns a very small portion of the alpine territory. Its participation is however very meaningful, also because it represents one of the most active supporter of sustainable development in the Alps.

As regards the most important **subjects of the Convention**, I want to recall that it is not only on environment, but it is a very international treaty embracing all competences concerning sustainable development. The most important priority is the one on alpine population and culture. Then we have regional planning; prevention of air pollution; soil conservation; water management; conservation of nature and countryside; mountain farming; mountain forests; tourism and recreation; transport; energy.

Many **implementation protocols** have already been approved and signed by many countries. Each protocol implies some deeper engagements to be undertaken to

pursue the Convention objectives. Italy has been promoter of some of these protocols, like the one on population and culture, which represents also one of the most important parts. Due to the complexity of this theme you can imagine the difficulties met in dealing with it. In spite of all the requirements of concrete engagements promoted by Italy and some environmental organizations like CIPRA, the most part of member countries refused to sign it. A political **declaration of interests** was finally signed by the Ministries and the idea of a real protocol has been given up. After 6 years of intense work and talks among local authorities, population and associations. However the final declaration represents a good result; Italy intends to give it visibility and dissemination on the territory.

We are organizing a wide **work programme** with some workshops at trans-national level. We work with Austria and France in this direction.

A serious argument within the Alpine Convention is constituted by the **protocol on transport**. It was ready to be signed in the end of 2000. Differently from other protocols it imposes some constraints by forbidding the chance to build new motorways across the Alps. This prohibition is not absolute, but it represents a voluntary engagement. In case of real need, there will be some talks among members. This protocol has different problems, because of the complexity of this theme and maybe it needed a study in depth. As Ministry for Environment we ask for the Italian ratification of this protocol: in fact within the government law design the Minister for Environment always requires **the ratification of all 9 undersigned protocols together**. Since all the protocols should be ratified together, none of them has been ratified in Italy. During the previous government the Senate proposed the removal of the transport protocol in order to accelerate the ratification of the other ones, but this solution was rejected by the Parliament.

All of you can record the importance of these themes. Apparently there are no evident problems to ratify it. It is a **political issue**. Also other countries meet some difficulties; for example Switzerland: the Low Chamber of Regions blocked the ratification of this protocol and recommended a refusal of all ratifications, because they could limit local autonomy.

France ratified the transport protocol by attaching 2 pages of its own interpretation as regards limitations and exceptions. The Italian Ministry for Environment supports its ratification.

The Alpine Convention is organized as a **conference** of the Ministers for Environment delegated by their governments and the European Commissioner for Environment. The conference is held every two years apart from special sessions. An **Executive Board** is charged of the works preparation. It is formed with the general directors of the competent authorities belonging to each Ministry. During the Italian Presidency (2001-2002) the need for some changes and modifications emerged. The most important one has been the institution of a Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention. Before that time there had been a moving Secretariat; during the Italian Presidency I had the honour to guide it.

Before the conclusion of the Italian Presidency the **Permanent Secretariat** has been constituted with headquarters in Innsbruck and Bolzano and an ad-interim Secretary was elected with the task to start works and to prepare the call for the Secretary General's selection. All this has been fulfilled during 4 years; the first elected Secretary General of the Alpine Convention is Marco Onida coming from the European Union. He has been working at the European Commission for 15 years and he owns all the necessary competences to develop the Convention works and mission.

There are also many specific **work groups** composed with experts coming from the different countries, who help the Executive Board preparing conferences.

Independently from the protocols ratification, Italy made many efforts in order to implement the Alpine Convention principles. We produced a very long (150 pages) questionnaire to survey what each country concretely did in relation to the different protocols contents. As regards Italy a **Report** has been recently published thanks to the hard work of the Ministry for Environment and many Regions. The Report includes 700 law decrees (national, regional and local) and 290 examples of good practices for these laws



implementation. It is evident that each country made a lot of efforts towards the Alpine Convention implementation.

We can say that there are also many excellent poles in the Alps, but there is a **lack of homogeneity in facing problems**. Some countries take care of energy saving, for example, but they do not circulate enough information. The Province of Bolzano approved a law to protect some agricultural areas (the so-called *maso chiuso*), which risk extinction and no other country took this model into consideration.

This **lack of communication** should be solved together with the need of big projects managed by all the members together. INTERREG played an important role in this sense, but its projects are small-scaled and isolated.

In our Report we tried to be clear: each rule is described through an abstract and a reference to the Official Gazette. Another important work in progress is the **Report on the state of the Alps**: its first chapter concerns transport and will be published during next summer. Then there are many good intentions for the future of the Alpine Convention. We hope and work on their realization.



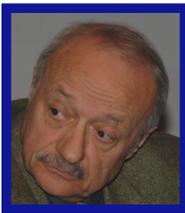
## Alpi365: the reply of Piedmont Region to the alpine sustainable development challenge



### Rinaldo Bontempi

Member of the Alpi365  
Scientific Committee and  
Promoter of "Torino Città  
delle Alpi" Association

I would like to thank Piedmont Region and particularly Mrs. Cavallo Perin for this invitation. We talked about **AlpCity** at the beginning of this project. At that time vision elements were driven also by the will to involve real players into the process.



There is a peculiar vision on the role of mountains and the relationship between mountain and city. Today we have had the chance to listen to **important initiatives**, the Alpine Convention and its Protocols, but also the emerging culture; the work carried on by UN Habitat and FAO, among the biggest UN Agencies.

In my opinion this vision need an enormous **concrete work**. The AlpCity great value consists in the particular focus on the small towns, which are a characteristic of our mountains. I have a long experience in this sense, because I started as Mayor of a mountain municipality with 1,000 inhabitants. This has been a very concrete experience to take care of mountains.

I would like to underline an acknowledgement and a perspective, which appears very modern. Its modernity is due not only to the fundamental environmental question with all the current risks we know. My perspective is almost sociological and political, related to **territorial cohesion**. This is a key-issue to implement governance actions, which are positive and produce a transformation.

From this point of view **AlpCity** has had a vision; Piedmont Region has also performed something very innovative by sending young graduates to work in small mountain municipalities. This is a concrete project work to create opportunities. This action is very honest, but also rare. In fact there are always many words and few concrete initiatives. Small mountain municipalities need support. Mrs. Governa underlined the problem of working in a concrete way on mountain so to perform effective actions.



I would like to speak also about the **'Torino Città delle Alpi'** initiative. I was member of the Organizing Committee for the Turin 2006 Winter Olympic Games and in that period I outlined my great worries about the Olympic legacy and the related problems. In Barcelona a new way to conceive the Olympic legacy has been invented after 1992 through a big transformation. Before 1992 its port couldn't be seen; Barcelona was an industrial city and its sea couldn't be admired. Afterwards it has invented a new identity. Also for Turin the Olympic Games are an occasion to transform its industrial character. Of course positive results for the mountain areas cannot still be enumerated.

The mentioned association would like to reinvent an innovative relationship between the city and the mountain. Instead of feeding a useless opposition between them, it is necessary to characterize a big city like **Turin**, which has a fascinating history with the Reign of Savoy first and then the Reign of Italy. This area has always been a hinge and mountains are a pivotal element. Turin is really not far from mountains.

I know **Grenoble** very well; I think it is a reference point for its ideas: it is member of a network of 'cities of the Alps' together with Trent. Grenoble is very active and Turin could play an important role together with it.

The **association** has had many vicissitudes, but now it is again on the track. Institutions have had difficulties to found the association. We wanted an association, because it could imply a responsibility to bind city and mountains together for development and innovation. Someone wrote some years ago: 'mountain people are not born, but made'. This is very important, because it means the need to have a territorial conception and mentality as strategic elements for the future local development. I believe in this approach, which also adopted by international organizations, like UNDP.

Visions cannot be local, but development performances should have a relevant **local development** character. Local development means local players and competences together with a long-run policy. From this last point of view our situation is not so exciting: I say that politics is losing the

measure of a perspective for objective and subjective reasons. Without perspective we can't go anywhere.

I have been qualified here as member of the Scientific Committee of **Alpi365**: this should be a result of this engagement. I hope it won't be reduced to a fair. To tell the truth many projects have been implemented in Piedmont thanks to the INTERREG Programme: it is a pity that they are not well-known and their results are not disseminated. Much money has been spent for these projects, but they are not driven and coupled with other important side initiatives. For example if a forte is regenerated, it needs also some restorative initiatives around it, otherwise it doesn't work.

Turin has undertaken a strategic path also in international relationships; it is a bridge between north and south. In this phase of transformation from industrial city, it must have a look at its territory and its potentialities through the mountains. The Alps-Mediterranean **EuroRegion** embraces, as you know, Piedmont, Aosta Valley, Liguria, Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Alsace-Côte d'Azur; it has many potential objectives: the most important one is the sharing of territorial policies and an innovating vision of mountain.

In conclusion I would like to remark the importance of the **Alpine Convention**: when I was member of the European Parliament I tried to give my contribution to it.

Apart from INTERREG the point of **internationalisation** is pivotal. A great project can be done only if the community is humble. It is not important who takes the lead, but who is able to change things. In this sense the international partnership is fundamental. The Alpi365 project will be implemented with an international character of this network.

The relationship with the small municipalities remains crucial, because of the attention paid to life quality also through the new technologies. The most important aspect is the need to conceive a **process**, even in the long run, during which we can be the main characters of a necessary change awarding probably more Turin than our mountains.



## 'Future in the Alps': disseminating practical knowledge and networking people

I would like to express all the greetings of **CIPRA International** and the Project Coordinator, Wolfgang Pfefferkorn, I substitute here today.

I will speak about the '**Future in the Alps**' Project, which has the purpose of managing and disseminating knowledge and alpine know-how, apart from networking people and experts.

I agree with some statements heard this morning; we cannot simply copy experiences; we cannot take and **transfer experiments** from a place to another. I think there is no contradiction with the project, I am going to speak of. I am persuaded that a superior analysis level is necessary in order to understand strength and weakness points, the local communities' experiences, the best methods to create boundary conditions, what is needed to grant the implementation of successful stories.

During a preliminary phase of the project 8 themes emerged, but then they were reduced to **6**. This is the result of a trans-alpine work developed by experts from different specializations coordinated by the CIPRA International Steering Committee for the 'Future in the Alps' Project. These 6 themes have been coupled with **6 key-questions** in order to set up an organized project. Then we tried to give effective answers to the key-questions and to select the best experiences and best knowledge of the Alpine Space on the subjects.

The first theme regards the **creation of a regional added value**. I almost agree with Mrs. Francesca Governa's speech on the way to increase the value of endogenous resources through territories and to create local added value chains.



**Francesco Pastorelli**  
Director, CIPRA Italia



The question linked to this first theme is: in which way it is possible to use successfully the endogenous potentialities for creating product and service chains with relevant regional added value. The experts working on this topic had to find above all examples of valorisation of endogenous resources. The concept of valorisation is related to the way of managing them in a sustainable way with positive impacts from the economic, social and environmental point of views. Projects involved in this section regard agriculture, forestry, valorisation of natural resources and the landscape. This topic has a character mainly economic, which allow us to identify endogenous resources and then to set up models increasing their value.

The second theme is quite opposite to the previous one: **development of a capacity of social action**. It deals with the conditions enhancing life in the Alpine Space, independently from economic and environmental situations. The clear question related to this theme is: which elements persuade people to remain or to settle in the Alps and in which way it is possible to strengthen capacity of social action of individuals and communities. In order to work on this concept it is necessary to think about social capital, collective interests and social cohesion. This theme takes care of social and cultural aspects.

The third theme is linked to **protected areas** and the role of environmental preservation within regional development. The related question is about the conditions characterising protected areas as tools of sustainable development and at the same time as tools of biodiversity protection. In order to effectively reply to this question, it is necessary to couple biodiversity with operational sustainable development.

The fourth theme relates to tourist **mobility** and commuter traffic. The relative question regards the connections existing between mobility and the development of territorial infrastructures. We asked about solutions for leisure time and commuter traffic, which is a growing element in the Alpine Space. I don't mean crossing traffic of people and goods in the Alps, but internal traffic generated by working people and tourists, who spend less and less time on alpine mountains. From an environmental point of view the effects

of this mobility are always negative. We would like to understand until when alpine resorts are able to manage mobility issues and whether a difficult access is the main cause of marginality of a certain place. Otherwise it could be increased the value of this access difficulty in order to respect this natural traffic limitation as an asset.

The last two themes concern the mentioned ones in a transversal way; they have a managerial character. The fifth one regards **decision-making processes** aimed at granting alpine populations' participation. The key-question is about the new decision-making forms, which enhance negotiation and demand of territorial exploiting respectful of sustainable development. In the alpine area it is possible to create new laboratories encouraging local populations' participation. This simplifies acceptance and implementation of policies together with adoption of measures otherwise imposed from the top. This kind of participation should be favoured also in the project design in order to follow the local stakeholders' needs.

The sixth theme is about the **effects of policies** and the ways to implement and make them concrete in the Alpine Space. It is necessary to identify new tools of policy implementation and methodologies enabling their performance without resources waste and vanishing entrepreneurship. Local authorities' skills are a very important investment in the Alpine Space, especially to keep a relationship between decision-makers and the institutions charged of the policy implementation. This can grant the policies final success.

The project is sponsored by **MAVA Foundation**. CIPRA International manages the project through a Coordination Group; especially for the technical-scientific contents it has a reference point in the Swiss Federal Research Institute on Forestry and Landscape. There is then an inferior level with 6 trans-national question teams, formed with experts in different fields coming from various alpine countries. Then there are the National Contact Points (for Italy we have CIPRA Italia), which facilitate the research work and its dissemination at national level. As partners we can list local authorities, private enterprises, existing networks and new

ones. The project final users are both institutions and private sector.

This **project idea** derives from the need to organize an action, even if there are various linguistic, cultural, economic and social factors. We wanted to find existing knowledge on the different subjects and to verify what has worked. It is necessary to understand the needs of a territory, a local authority, a population, a special group of interest: then it is possible to look for a solution implemented with success in other place with similar problems.

The project is characterized by **three steps**, which are not isolated and independent, but connected. The first one is called AlpKnow-how and it is a research phase. This research can be used by final users thank to AlpService. At the same time final users can express some requests, which are sent to the research step through AlpService.

Through **AlpKnow-how** knowledge is selected and evaluated as alpine heritage made available to final users. AlpKnow-how is performed essentially through the 6 question teams formed with around 40 multi-disciplinary experts. An investigation step has taken place from 2004 to 2005: in the end 6 reports have been drafted, one for each selected theme; then a concise report and a database on best practices have been published. During this process new questions emerge and they remain object of further research and investigation.

The following step is represented by **AlpService**, which allows supply and demand to be matched. This phase makes knowledge usable and allows them to be managed and kept in order to be always available to final users. Of course it is necessary to know final users' understanding. Within this part of the project a competition was launched to increase the value of concrete and successfully experimented practices. The knowledge and experience transfer is performed through printed material, websites, direct contacts, specific seminars, meetings and missions. I think that a direct contact between operators is much more effective than a top-down transfer realized via internet and publications.



For what concerns the **competition**, there were 6 prizes of €25,000. The winning project should spend this money to improve the project or to go on with it or to develop a new part of it. We received more than 570 project forms; all of them are available on line. 8 of them have been selected as models and are still monitored. They regards the mentioned themes plus two other projects. The prizegiving took place in Brig during a conference on September 29<sup>th</sup> 2005.

The **dissemination** of selected knowledge is in progress. It started in autumn 2006 and it will last for all 2007. Some trans-national conferences will be organized together with some thematic workshops at alpine level planned with different partners. In Italy 3 workshops are scheduled: in the end of May at Chiavenna a workshop on 'Creation of added value in the alpine tourist industry'; in mid-june in Bardonecchia one on 'Management of tourist mobility on mountain' and in autumn in the Belluno Dolomites National Park another one on 'Protected areas and local development'. At the end of this year the third Report on the Alps will be published with a summary of the alpine know-how, the best practices classified, their strengths and some transfer suggestions for their implementation at local level, some guidelines coherent with the Alpine Convention.

We auspicate that these projects can be the concrete application of the Protocols of the Alpine Convention. In fact it is much easier to communicate through a project than by means of a Protocol, which remains necessary at the beginning.

The final step of the project, **AlpPerformance** concerns the final users: knowledge use and application. In this phase all implemented projects can result very useful; also AlpCity for example, or NENA (Network Enterprise Alps) an enterprise network working on energy, renewable resources, wood; or Dynalp 2 with 40 projects designed within the 'Alliance in the Alps' network.

Our website is [www.cipra.org/future/](http://www.cipra.org/future/)



## Facilitating access to European Programmes through 'A.P.E.-net Project'



**Maurizio Di Genova**  
Technical Assistance Unit  
Manager, A.P.E.-net  
Project  
UNIONCAMERE Bruxelles



**UNIONCAMERE** is the union of the 103 Italian Chambers of Commerce; we have a representative office in Bruxelles with relationships with the European Institutions, especially European Commission and Parliament.

I am the officer in charge of the technical assistance to the Italian Chambers and particularly for what regards the **A.P.E.-net Project**, conceived within the Italian Chambers system to provide the network with added value services.

UNIONCAMERE in Bruxelles aims at bringing the Italian Chambers of Commerce to Europe and Europe to the Italian Chambers of Commerce. We would like that the Chambers of Commerce could appear in the pivotal documents of the **European Commission**.

We take care of legal documents monitoring, **technical assistance** to Chambers of Commerce, assistance to missions from Italy, participation in calls for tenders.

In Bruxelles there are also about 10 other Unions of Italian Chambers of Commerce, for example Unioncamere Piemonte. **Joint work tables** as Italian System of the Chambers of Commerce take place in order to share information and solve common problems.

UNIONCAMERE is also member of the European network of Chambers of Commerce, **EUROCHAMBRES**, which include 47 countries and national/trans-national associations.

As regards **A.P.E.-net Project**, it is a way to improve the participation of Chambers of Commerce to European calls of programmes centralised in Bruxelles, which has to be distinguished from decentralised programming. They are programmes with a direct management. As technical table of the Chambers system in Bruxelles, we realised that enterprises don't take part very often to programmes directly managed. For that reason we thought about this project: A.P.E.-net, which means Access to European



Programmes. We have set up a network within the Italian Chambers of Commerce with the purpose of improving quantity and quality of participation of the Italian Chambers of Commerce to European calls. The applied tools consist in a sort of knowledge transfer and detailed and precise information, which are result of a continuous calls monitoring. Also a technical assistance service to direct participation is lent for project presentation and preparation.

The **general objective** concerns the improvement of quality and quantity of projects within the European Commission's programmes. Also the promotion of a network enhancing connections and relationships is very important, above all between the Italian Chambers System and other European Systems, especially those involving the new entrants.

**Specific objectives** promoted through the project are: providing value added services by means of training, information, legal and calls monitoring, technical assistance, organization and promotion at local level of interactions between Chambers of Commerce and local stakeholders.

In each regional area some operative points have been put within a network. **Direct beneficiaries** are Chambers of Commerce, Regional Unions of Chambers of Commerce, Euro-desks, special Agencies and Foreign Office of Italian Regions. **Indirect beneficiaries** of the project are local authorities, trade associations and universities.

Each participating Chamber of Commerce has created an operational point and entitled an **officer in charge** of the project, knowledge are transferred to.

After years of working on the field, we realised that players often speak different languages: the Bruxelles **technical language** is not always understood in the regional territories. For this reason we set up a 10-days training programme: 7 days on the field and 3 days in Bruxelles. Participants have been officers of the Chambers of Commerce and external ones interested in information on European institutions, new European Programming (2007-2013) and European projecting techniques. 3-days in Bruxelles, scheduled on April 16<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> 2007, will encourage networking within A.P.E.-

net and will focus on meetings with other European Chambers of Commerce, which will provide rapid and concrete advice on networking activities in Bruxelles and on strategic partnerships set up.

Other interesting **activities** are: a project intranet within the website [www.unioncamere.eu](http://www.unioncamere.eu); a Coordination Committee.

Other **actions**: assistance to operational points; implementation and management of the project intranet; creation of a training module; organization of training activities in Bruxelles; creation of information tools. Apart from those initiatives there is also: creation of monitoring tools (database on European projects and partners); I&P material on all the Chambers of Commerce participating into the project; launch of a roster of experts in European projects useful for the Chambers of Commerce; specific check-up for each Chamber of Commerce; technical assistance.

23 Chambers of Commerce belonging to 15 Regions have taken part into the project. In order to finance the activities, we proposed the idea to the participating Italian Chambers of Commerce, which received a contribution from the UNIONCAMERE Smoothing Fund, which has the function to reduce disparities among the Italian Chambers of Commerce. Thanks to this Fund 6 Regional Unions and 17 Chambers of Commerce became **participants** in our project.



## A partnership to support the common growth: The European Bioalpine Convention

When I was invited I was really astonished, because I deal with biotechnologies, which are almost distant from territorial development questions. Then I had a look outside the window and I realized that all three partners of my project see the same mountains when they watch outside their windows. To tell the truth Alps represent **our connection**.

I will try and explain what **biotechnologies** are and why they are so important. We should understand our theoretical starting point in order to reach our main conclusion: it is possible to work together even if there 4,000-metres-high mountains between us. Then I will describe what we have done from a concrete point of view.

Life sciences are considered a sector characterized by ones of the **highest growth rate** all over the world; this statement is included in the 2002 Strategic Document of the European Commission, which is annually updated. Around 50% of GDP in Europe directly or indirectly deals with biotechnologies. They are technological platforms; they are a group of technologies embracing each aspect of the everyday life. Pathological aspects like diseases, but also quality checks on food or innovative tissues.

We are particularly involved into **pharmaceutical biotechnologies** research, which has special dynamics within life sciences. First of all they represent a global sector, haven't a local market: they deal with international problems regarding scarce productivity of R&D activities in the big pharmaceutical enterprises. In fact there is a fork between the growth rate of investment in R&D and the quantity of new medicaments put on the market.

Pharmaceutical biotechnologies become the research engine of pharmaceutical multinationals. This means that biotechnologies represent a **global phenomenon**, but they have a very interesting characteristic: they have their roots in **territorial assets** physically localized in particular areas



**Fabrizio Conicella**  
Director  
Bioindustry Park Canavese



(usually near universities or poles with a tradition in the pharmaceutical field). The activation of these local assets allows regional players to operate at international level. They try and identify development solutions immediately proposable worldwide.

It is clear that not all the Regions own the critical dimension sufficient and necessary to allow it. Therefore the need comes out to set up synergies and alliances: in other words common paths, which lead activities towards a critical mass and those territories (sometimes peripheral) can compete internationally by exploiting their differences and complementarities. Some variables crucial for development are usually identified together with processes below their performance. This approach is defined **value network**, a sort of development of the well-known Porter's value chain. It identifies processes and players, which influence variables such as quality life and enterprises or universities competitiveness.

**Clusters** are not a new concept. Many Regions around the Alps have selected autonomous paths of clustering in several sectors during the most recent years: for example in the automotive, pharmaceutical, ICT industries. The new remark is that those clusters tend to specialise, or rather they assume strategic connotations, which differentiate them in a very peculiar way. This path is ambivalent: it can be considered as very autonomous or as an incentive to easily identify complementarities and synergies.

Especially in northern Europe and less in the southern part it is possible to find the so-called **meta-clusters**, or rather mega-agglomerations of several regions, which work at international level in a very innovative field through their complementarities and synergies. They usually act on system variables: the financial environment, the legal system and infrastructures are involved in industries technological areas.

**Biotechnologies** need a scientific background at international level; they require universities able to produce research, innovation, competences and qualified workforce satisfactory not only for local, but also for international needs. Moreover also an initial aggregate of specialized

enterprises. The mix of these two factors allows a continuous birth of extremely innovative enterprises, which are the main ingredient. In Europe the aggregation of biotechnologies enterprises is a very common phenomenon; in Great Britain we can find the main concentration of these enterprises. Even if northern Europe has an inferior population in comparison with southern Europe, it plays a priority role. But also in the Alpine Space there are **excellent agglomerations** especially in the Lyon-Grenoble area, in the Geneva-Zurich-Bern one, near Munich and in Austria. With the exception of Munich, all of them have a minimal dimension, which doesn't allow international competitiveness.

We started from this situation and we run this path; we thought about autonomous territorial development models. We wanted to place our Region at international level. We realised that there are at least two territories very near and around the Alps, with which we could set up a **strategic alliance**: they are Grenoble and Geneva-Losanne. The sum of the assets of these territories depicts an international macro-region with more than 150 specialized enterprises, 600 enterprises in connected industries, 40 research institutes, 1,200 research groups investigating those areas, more than 15,000 employed in specialised enterprises, 6 incubators and 6 scientific parks. There was a premise for a common development, or rather a critical mass of activities, which enhances the design of development strategies at international level. Within the 3 territories there are some excellent centres, especially near Geneva there are some historical poles. For what concerns Piedmont Region the University of Turin has been classified as first university for scientific performance in the Yearly Analysis of the Ministry of University and Scientific Research. As regards Grenoble, it is the second French university centre for the number of students and research infrastructures. The high quality of science represents a second engine factor.

The idea to work together was born within this environment and also the structure of a common path based on the partnership in order to exploit and build new strategies, to enhance knowledge and practices exchanges. But the most important occasion is represented by the opportunity to facilitate the access of each single player to research

assets, enterprises and competences belonging to the other territories. The **objective** consists in considering the three players as parts of only one territorial system, a macro-region specialised in a certain industry, the biotechnologies.

The 3 excellent players have been selected after a careful analysis. **ADEBAG** from Grenoble is a no-profit-making association participated by METRO, which is the Grenoble agglomeration authority. **BIOALPS** is a public association: all the Canton authorities of the francophone Switzerland are members of this association. **BIOINDUSTRY PARK** is a scientific park placed not far from Turin, with a main public ownership; it has been created by Piedmont Region, through European Structural Funds. The idea is to set up a federation of these three actors and to build common enter points within them; the approach is mainly a bottom-up one.

The three players have a technical nature, but not a political one. In fact in our initiative there is a **lack of political commitment**. We don't work for an international, European or regional project explicitly directed towards an international collaboration.

In 2003-04 a similar path called **Euro-Biocluster South** had been started in Rhône-Alpes and particularly in Lyon; it was characterised by a top-down approach and was a public and mainly political initiative, which aimed at the creation of a macro-region focused on biotechnologies from the top. This initiative failed and produced for us a positive impact, because it allowed us to meet ADEBAG through the tutoring the IRC SOFRA of Lyon, which is also IRC of Geneva and covers the francophone Switzerland and Rhône-Alpes.

In 2004 we signed as Bioindustry Park a first agreement of strategic alliance with Adebag. In 2005 the agreement was extended to the Swiss partners. In 2006 the first operational activities and the **BioAlpine Convention** have been started.

A key-factor of this collaboration is certainly the **federative vision**. We realize to be different, to have our autonomy, but also common problems. So we aim at finding common solutions, but respecting the own field of activity and the operational autonomy. We identified very concrete

objectives and the tools to reach them together with some priorities. We use shared tools, which are few at the beginning, but they allow us to start working operatively very soon. We devote also our own resources: this means that we are necessarily interested into the related activities. All of us work to develop our network with an European approach. We propose ourselves as multi-regional international cluster also outside our territories. This activity increases our visibility and allows us to be introduced as territory and to compete against other territorial clusters in northern Europe.

We work essentially on **4 variables**: training through university; industry especially with start-up enterprises; financing, which is particularly important for enterprises; research.

We use different **tools**, not completely new, but their sectorial application is innovative: the exchange of good and bad practices, joint participation in events; an image building common activity of the cluster; organization of events; a range of sectorial networks (for example one on neurosciences); incentive and support activity to training (exchange of interns); set up of Scientific Committees for PhD Schools with members coming from the 3 Regions; knowledge sharing through entrepreneurs' and researchers' exchanges.

The **European Bio-Alpine Convention** is particularly important: the initial idea consisted in the creation of an international event, which could gather enterprises, researchers and technological transfer operators in the same place and at the same time. This is a very ambitious objective. The first one was organized in Grenoble in 2006 and it was focused on neurosciences. More than 200 persons participated into the event: 60% French people, 40% Italian and Swiss people. In 2007 an event on 'Inflammation and Autoimmunity' at our Park; it deals with scientific and sectorial topics. The best perspectives consist in the chance to interact with other territories; some dialogues are in progress with Lombardy Region, European Projects and Côte d'Azur. This network will probably be enlarged: we are open to other partnerships; we know that we are not able to compete on our own at international level. We want to



identify a network of strategic alliances; we focus on biotechnologies. We also realised that technological convergence allows us to propose and analyse other sectors like textile industries and food preservation.



## Open discussion

I am very glad to speak about a project we participate into as **Euro Info-Centre of the Turin Chamber of Commerce**. Our office belongs to a 300-offices network at European level, which provides especially small and medium-sized enterprises with information on EU themes.

Also Piedmont Region took part into this project named **ALPPS (Alpine Public Procurement Services)** conceived to provide information on calls for public tenders.

The environment suggesting the project subject is the following. 16% of GDP in the European Union is represented by **public contracts**: after an economic analysis of this issue we realized that small and medium-sized enterprises have a lot of difficulties in presenting their bids to foreign calls for tenders.

Through an INTERREG Alpine Space Project we have tried to help these enterprises participating into foreign calls. A partnership with 7 members was constituted. The Lead Partner is the Grenoble Euro Info Centre; then there are other Euro Info Centres: Strasbourg, Munich, Leer, Zurich, Turin and Piedmont Region. Then there are two unofficial partners, which take part as well into the project activities: Innsbruck and Lubiana Euro Info Centres. The Project has been financed within the **INTERREG III B Alpine Space Programme**, Priority 1, Measure 2 devoted to competitiveness and sustainable development.

The project **objective** consisted in encouraging small and medium-sized enterprises to participate into public calls for tenders launched within the Alpine Space Regions, after the identification of their difficulties related to this activity.

Following a final analysis of the project, we realized that enterprises often don't participate, because of simple **problems**, such as lack of knowledge of foreign rules and difficulties related to the candidature fill in another language. In other cases there are problems concerning



**Diego Albesano**  
Officer  
Euro Info Centre  
Turin Chamber of  
Commerce



the technical documents required in a foreign call, which have no correspondent ones in the own national rules. Just a very simple example: in order to participate in Italian calls it is necessary to present an 'anti-mafia certificate', which is quite difficult to get by a foreign enterprise. In such a case we have to understand which foreign document can substitute that one, in order to avoid a reject for flaw.

4 main **lines of action** have been developed within the project: several calls have been sent to 90 enterprises selected as pilot ones by the partners. Piedmont Region has taken part into the project, but it did not select. 15 Italian enterprises were selected by Turin Chamber of Commerce. During the project (which lasted 2 years) 12.000 pieces of information about calls for tenders abroad have been collected. They were sent to enterprises (by direct mailing) according to the form they had filled in.

Piedmont Region developed an already existing information tool within the project, the **Regional Observatory on Public Contracts**, where contracting bodies and services contracts were published.

The selected enterprises could find each week information on calls specifically tailor-made for them. In case they decided to present their bid, they could get **direct assistance** by the Info Centres Network, which helped them finding local partners for a joint participation or filling the required documents in.

Moreover a real **help-desk activity** has been performed together with some **technical seminars** on the subject. In Turin 7 technical seminars have been organized and then also a **handbook** on public contracts has been published on the website. It includes an introduction of the European rules (which try and simplify the participation of enterprises) and some specific sections for each participant country with its national rules.

The project lasted from mid-2003 until mid-2005 for 2 years; it got an **extension** for the first three months of this year: during this period a technical seminar has been organized (on March 28<sup>th</sup> 2007) on the new Italian rules for public



contracts (through the legislative decree n.173, which groups all the rules into one Code). Also the French rules have been introduced during that event, since France is the first trade partner of Piedmont and perhaps of the local small and medium-sized enterprises.

The **handbook** is available on line in all the project partners' languages. It will be updated soon first in English and then in Italian.

As Chamber of Commerce the most important **result** consists in the chance of interacting within a well-defined Alpine Space partnership and of exploiting the network-effect of this partnership in order to deepen themes as required by enterprises. The **contribution of Piedmont Region** has been very valuable through the concrete updating of the mentioned information technology tool.



I appreciated this Seminar a lot, even if this afternoon has been very crowded with statements.



GianPaolo Torricelli



I liked particularly Mrs. Francesca Governa's speech, because she brought up a sore point regarding the AlpCity Project. I explain my reasons: I refer to a marginal territory, which is not very reactive and doesn't reply to development spurs. The **Alps are not necessarily marginal territories**: we have the meaningful example of the biotechnologies network, but also other technological networks. Moreover, the most important international events take place in the Alps: let's think about the annual Davos Summit. Even if AlpCity had this focus, we cannot conceive Alps as totally marginal territories. This means that we have to take care of territories, which cannot be defined as marginal. This is an important teaching in my opinion.

Perhaps there is another problem, we didn't take care of: territorial **homologation**. I find difficult to consider a village lying 30 km. far from Turin as marginal. I prefer thinking it is periurbanized, which means that it is colonized by an urban culture eliminating all its information and traditions.

The most important problem of the Alps is maybe this homologation to urban culture, which is able to colonize more and more also **very remote alpine zones**.

This is the disappearance of what Claude Raffestin defines as **ruling information**: the Alps risk of getting only functional information (useful for the working of urban systems) instead of ruling one (necessary during these times of climate changes). Ruling information grants the system perennity: for example a certain kind of wood is not cut in order to avoid avalanches.



I have some observations on this day; first of all I appreciated the opportunity to think about these themes. I liked Mrs. Francesca Governa's speech, because she insisted on the insufficiency of a simple **networking activity**. In fact there are other important factors to put in place for a lasting development.

Not all the Regions have the same problems: we have to investigate on their **differences**, apart from their similarities. Differences are necessary in order to find a position in a rational and globalised environment.

When we think about **small and medium-sized towns**, we cannot think that the set up of a network can be sufficient for their development.

Current development is characterised by **metropolization**, enlargement of metropolitan areas, competitiveness among big metropolises, periurbanization of a fringe surrounding metropolises and neglecting of most remote zones.

We need **strategies** aiming at the evolution of the most disadvantaged places; it is better their homologation than their neglecting. Local systems need to be preserved and developed.

I appreciated also Mr Conicella's speech for the initiative, the meaning of clusters: this is a sign of the Alpine Regions evolution towards a **new trend** of entrepreneurship, trade and industry.

The new programming period (2007-2013) emphasizes territorial development strategies. I like the term **territorial planning** as used by Maria Cavallo Perin in her speech.

The real challenge is represented by the key words of the **Lisbon Agenda**: innovation necessary to be competitive and territorial and social cohesion.

During this phase we have to develop some strategies in order to be everlasting and coherent. It is very important to



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Expert  
AlpCity Project  
Scientific Steering  
Committee





design strategies aimed at keeping and evolving not only alpine populations, but also activities, workplaces and **local production systems**.



## Conclusions

I thank all the participants in this work day. I conclude only with **few remarks**, because our work has to go on through a meeting among the AlpCity Partners. Moreover, the Regional Council must decide whether and in which way this project will be carried on.

This afternoon session provided us with some inputs quite different from the morning one. I find particularly interesting what Francesca Governa said, because she invites us to think about **development conditions**, which are not always the same everywhere.

A Region has to take care of the development of disadvantaged areas. When we think about Piedmont mountains, we know that not all of them are marginal. For this reason Regional institutions have to **differentiate their policies**, with a special focus on the poorest ones.

A second important observation regards the different levels of government. During the last years we paid a great attention to the **principle of subsidiarity**, or rather to give space to competences at local level. For what concerns marginal areas we record lack of local competences, some difficulties and territory fragility: for this reason we have to look for a work method characterised by interactions among different public authority levels (municipalities, provinces, regions, ministries and countries).

We should enhance the improvement of local competences, because we cannot substitute them. But if we do not invest in this kind of improvement, we probably are not able to trigger development conditions. In the case of Piedmont we are aware of an administrative fragility due to the existence of very small municipalities, which are defined **micropolitan areas** by Marie Christine Fourny Kober. They own few resources and we have to invest in order to improve them.

As recalled by Rinaldo Bontempi Piedmont Region sent 50 **young graduates** to work for some small municipalities.



**Maria Cavallo Perin**

Deputy Director  
Piedmont Region Division  
on Budget Planning and  
Statistics



Through a very simple initiative agreed with the Ministry of Economy, Piedmont Region has been able to connect the lowest public authorities level with some important university scientific competences. In any case **a relevant regional public investment** is necessary: also in the case of the Bioindustry Park of Canavese.

When I spoke about the need to develop **urban functions** also in small municipalities, I meant only the functions, which influence development conditions and not everything is done in big urban centres.

The BioIndustry Park case is very positive: its success is due also to the regional investment; Piedmont Region allowed the **territory to be linked to universities**. This is a clear example of the way a mountain area is able to interact and to connect with other international areas for innovative themes. This model has certainly to be developed and replicated, because it shows how a regional policy can modify development in a territory.

The third point I would like to outline is about the future of AlpCity: this 7-regions partnership has a reason to be carried on if and only if there is a shared long-term perspective on **spatial policies**. In order to go on along this direction, all our regional authorities should agree.

A fourth remark: the existence of a **gap between theory and practice** as this debate underlined. There is an enormous scientific literature on the way to strengthen development in the Alps. Alpine local authorities affirm that too many concepts are expressed, but without concrete performances. I can see only a solution: regional policies should be territorial and cross-sector. In other words in order to narrow the gap between theory and practice a long run regional territorial policy has to be developed. The final aim is at reaching policy sharing or at least harmonization.

Thank you to all of you and to the organizers of this event, that is the AlpCity team, Daniela Sena and her collaborators.





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