

Climate strategy and climate measures of the alpine associations grouped in the CAA

As hotspots of biodiversity and geo-morphologically unstable regions, mountains react strongly to climate change: melting of glaciers, disappearance of ice walls, rising snowlines, changes in the water supply, ground instability, etc.

In the Alps climate change is increasingly affecting the alpine sports infrastructure – including alpine paths, climbing routes and mountain huts. On the one hand this presents new natural risks, while on the other hand the adaptation of the infrastructure is very costly. In addition, we are confronted by extensive changes in the high alpine zone which are having a dramatic effect on mountain sports.

Mountain sports are by definition activities close to nature and yet entail a high degree of mobility. Methods of transportation which produce large amounts of greenhouse gases, such as cars and aeroplanes, continue to play a major role. Since the protection of the alpine world is an important concern for us, we feel a great amount of co-responsibility in the area of climate protection. We must therefore act now, and do so with clear and measurable objectives. The CAA strives for coordinated measures on the part of its member associations.

The climate strategy and measures of the CAA are primarily targeted towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions caused by mountain sports. The focus here lies on the mobility required by mountain sports.

In the past, the member associations of the CAA have provided yet substantial contributions to climate protection by switching many of their huts to renewable energy, reducing waste and developing environmentally friendly supply methods. In addition, all associations are actively involved in the subject of "energy efficiency for huts", for example in a project launched by the CAA Hut Commission which is to be implemented by 2012 and is intended to assist the associations in the evaluation and improvement of the energy supply of their huts.

The implementation of the measures is the responsibility of the member associations. The CAA sees itself as being the motivator, coordinator and, above all, the political voice and representative of mountain climbers on a European level.

The strategic climate targets of the CAA and its member associations

The member associations of the CAA have established the following strategic objectives as a contribution to the global requirement for substantial greenhouse gas reductions.

1. The mountain sports enthusiasts organised in the CAA are aware of their co-responsibility for climate change and are prepared to support and/or take specific steps to reduce the amount of CO₂ produced by mountain sports.
2. The first specific and quantifiable measures for the reduction and compensation of the CO₂ produced by mountain sports will be introduced by 2015 and bit by bit implemented. Projects in the Alps are to be the focus in the area of compensation.
3. The CAA and its associations support at least the climate targets and CO₂ reduction requirements of the European Union.

4. The CAA is expanding its influence at the European level (EU and Alpine Convention) in order to introduce a consistent climate policy. The member associations support this initiative at the national level.

Climate policy measures of the CAA and its member associations to reduce the amount of CO2 produced by mountain sports

1. The CAA member associations actively support the education, information and training of their members. The CAA will create an information platform on its internet page with a collection of "best practice" examples from its member associations.
2. The CAA member associations will initiate specific and, where possible, quantifiable measures to reduce the CO2 produced by mountain sports. The focus is the continued increase in the use of public transport for association trips, optimal occupancy of private vehicles, a reduction in total distances travelled, appropriate driving methods and choice of economical vehicles. An important instrument should be incentive systems in which CO2 intensive transportation is made more expensive, and in which methods which produce less CO2 are therefore effectively subsidised.
3. The CAA member associations will launch campaigns aimed at motivating mountaineers to follow "eco-drive" (lower emission) principles when travelling to the mountains (if other means of transportation are not available). This in particular involves adopting a reduced speed on motorways.
4. Multipliers such as tour leaders, mountain guides or section heads of CAA associations will be educated regarding climate questions. Advice to increase use of public transport should play a central role in this.
5. The CAA and its member associations will consider climate policy criteria in their communication, advertisement and sponsorship.

Measures of adaptation to the consequences of climate change in the Alps

In addition to the measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mountaineers and the CAA associations must also confront the necessary adjustments to the effects of global warming in the Alps. This must take place via the member associations. The CAA can serve as a coordination and information platform. The main points are:

1. Verification and improvement of the monitoring and risk management for hut access paths and alpine routes. The goal is to identify new danger areas before accidents cause any human casualties. Experience exchanges and know-how transfers between CAA member associations are to be increased.
2. Verification and planning of water supplies, in particular for high altitude huts which draw their water from ice/firn that may disappear completely within a few years. The abandonment of individual locations must also not be excluded as a possible option.
3. Integration of climate change and its consequences for mountain sports – in particular high altitude and ice climbing – into the associations' alpine training, guidebooks and publications.

Resolved by the CAA general assembly on 11/9/2010 in Munich.



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