



AlpPlan - alpine spatial planning network

Alpine Space

PlanToConnect

AlpPlan/PlanToConnect Expert Platform

on Green Infrastructure, Ecological Connectivity and Spatial Planning

What is the Expert Platform about?

The Platform is established in the EUSALP area in the framework of the Alpine Space Project “PlanToConnect”. In line with recent developments in the European policy framework, the project is developing an **“Alpine Planning Strategy for Ecological Connectivity”** that promotes multifunctional Green and Blue Infrastructure networks (GBI) and Nature-based Solutions (NBS) as a reference for the conservation and restoration of ecological connectivity in the Alps.

At alpine level, the planning strategy defines and identifies **“transnational priority connectivity areas for spatial planning”** as areas where specific provisions aimed at preserving or re-establishing ecological connectivity should be included in national and regional spatial plans to avoid the isolation of Alpine biodiversity and enable ecosystem adaptation to climate change.

At the local level, within these areas, specific natural and semi-natural landscape elements will need to be conserved and, if necessary, new artificial ones created as part of a multi-purpose, multifunctional network of GBI to conserve and improve ecological connectivity between “core alpine conservation areas”.

In the planning of such networks, the design and implementation of **“connectivity conservation and restoration areas” outside the protected areas is particularly challenging** and typically includes: the protection of “gateways” still free of infrastructural development, defragmentation actions to overcome existing infrastructural barriers, interventions to improve the quality of habitats and actions to counter the spread of invasive species.

To ensure their long-term implementation, **“conservation and connectivity restoration areas” should then become an integral part of the spatial plans** of the concerned territories as “a clearly defined geographical space, outside protected areas, that is governed and managed in the long term to maintain or restore effective ecological connectivity”. Appropriate Impact Assessment procedures should be applied to all works and plans that may affect the functionality of these areas. The design of “connectivity conservation and restoration areas” in “transnational priority connectivity areas for spatial planning”, their integration in spatial plans of concerned authorities and the definition of appropriate **cross-border governance arrangements** for their implementation is therefore also a topic of the Strategy.

We intend to organize an **open but regular and structured exchange** on key topics of the *Alpine Planning Strategy for Ecological Connectivity*, which are presented and discussed according to the specific thematic focus. These topics and contents are framed within the nexus of green infrastructure, ecological connectivity and spatial planning, **both from a scientific and application-oriented perspective**. The aim of mainstreaming ecological connectivity in spatial

AlpPlan network website:

<https://www.arl-international.com/activities/alpplan-network>

PlanToConnect project website:

<https://www.alpine-space.eu/project/plantoconnect/>



planning systems of the Alpine Space by strengthening the role and GBI is a challenging but important objective that requires **cooperation and exchange in an interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral and innovative way**. Therefore, we invite experts from the entire Alpine Space from different sectors such as spatial planning, nature conservation, landscape planning etc. to be part of this participative process.

What kind of activities does this format entail?

The **meetings and workshops**, will take place **predominantly online**. These will either be held publicly or addressed to a specific external (working) group with which an exchange is foreseen. During the project period 2023-2025, a face-to-face event is planned at least once a year with additional possibility for online participation. When joining the Expert Platform, it is not necessary to take part in every single meeting. Interested stakeholders and experts are however invited to choose those meetings that match their individual research or working focus. The Expert Platform will also work on **application-oriented publications** (e.g. position papers).

Who is invited to participate?

In addition to the project partners and their observer organisations of the *PlanToConnect* project, the Expert Platform is **open to all interested stakeholders and experts** with a thematic connection. In accordance with the working principles of the *AlpPlan* network, **the cooperation of scientific scholars** (e.g. from universities or research institutes) **and practitioners** (e.g. from ministries, administrations or private planning offices) is envisaged. In addition to individual experts, the Expert Platform also intends to address **representatives of relevant transnational working groups or networks**.

How can I get informed regularly about events and updates?

We kindly invite you to **sign up for the mailing list** of the Expert Platform:

[Click here to get to the mailing list form](#)

or scan the QR-Code:

