

Letter of Intent

between the

**Federal Minister for Science and Research
Republic of Austria**

the

**Minister of Education, Science and Sport
Republic of Slovenia**

the

**State Secretary
for Education, Research and Innovation
in the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research
Swiss Confederation**

and the

**Governor
Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen**

concerning

**The Enhancement of Multilateral Research Co-operation in Sustainable Use of
Resources in Mountain Areas**

The Federal Minister for Science and Research of the Republic of Austria, the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia, the State Secretary for Education, Research and Innovation in the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research of the Swiss Confederation and the Governor of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen hereinafter referred to as "Sides",

DESIRING to further promote the close and friendly relations in higher education, science and research among their countries,

ENDEAVOURING to pool common activities in mountain research and to ensure and expand the international position in this field,

ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of the principles of sovereignty, equality and mutuality in terms of developing science and research in their respective countries,

ACKNOWLEDGING the achievements already made,

CONVINCED of the mutual benefit of this co-operation,

PURSUANT to the prevailing international agreements, laws and regulations as well as scientific and technical cooperation policies and procedures in their respective countries

have reached an understanding as follows:

Purpose

The purpose of this Letter of Intent is to enhance the multilateral research collaboration in the field of sustainable use of resources in European mountain areas, taking into consideration the protection of the ecosystem and the prevention of natural hazards.

Goals

1. All Sides encourage multilateral research co-operation in the following fields:
 - a) natural and socio-cultural basis of sustainable use of resources with special emphasis on (the effects of) climate change, cryosphere, water systems, ecosystem services, biodiversity, land use change and mountain agriculture, on society and demographic change, quality of life, health and regional economies; providing also a basis for monitoring activities;
 - b) the sustainable use of the natural raw material timber with special emphasis on developing concepts for sustainable use of mountain forests and sustainable use of mountain timber including the necessary socio-economic and technological innovation;
 - c) the sustainable supply and use of mineral resources with special emphasis on sustainable supply and use of construction minerals;
2. All Sides encourage the development of thematic networks consisting of universities and other research institutions.
3. All Sides encourage the coordination of thematic research activities.
4. All Sides welcome the common use of European, international and regional strategies, initiatives and programmes enabling research in the field of sustainable use of resources.
5. All Sides encourage the collaboration of research and non-scientific sectors, e. g. politics, administration, business and industry, civil society and making use of existing framework cooperation such as the Alpine Convention.

Implementation

In order to implement this Letter of Intent successfully all sides nominate a contact person who will coordinate the implementation (see annex).

All sides welcome direct institutional links and bottom-up cooperation between higher education and research institutions, and therefore welcome the use of existing national and international funding instruments as well as existing Alpine networks for the implementation of this Letter of Intent.

Final provisions

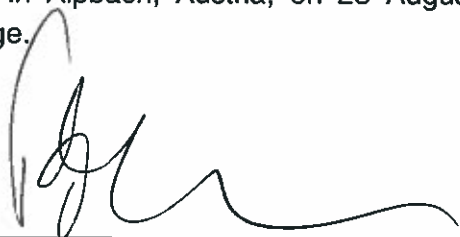
This Letter of Intent takes effect from the date of signing and will remain effective for an initial period of 3 (three) years. Its effectiveness may be prolonged by mutual understanding of all Sides in written form.

Each Side may cancel this Letter of Intent by written notification; such notification will become effective 6 (six) months after its receipt by the respective other Sides.

The present Letter of Intent does not result in the creation of any new obligations regarding international law nor will it have any effect on existing legislation.

Any differences arising out of the interpretation or implementation of this Letter of Intent will be settled amicably through negotiation or consultation between the respective Sides.

Signed in Alpbach, Austria, on 23 August 2013. Done in four original copies in English language.



Federal Minister for Science and Research
Republic of Austria

Prof. Dr. Karlheinz TÖCHTERLE



Minister for Education, Science and Sport
Republic of Slovenia

Dr. Jernej PIKALO

State Secretary for Education, Research and
Innovation in the Federal Department of
Economic Affairs, Education and Research
Swiss Confederation



Dr. Mauro DELL'AMBROGIO

Governor
Autonomous Province of Bolzano-Bozen



Dr. Luis DURNWALDER

ANNEX (see 3)

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