

# Slovenian Presidency of the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region

January – December 2024

Quality of life for young people in the Alps

Circular economy

Sustainable water management

SAVE THE DATE:

**EUSALP Annual Forum 2024**

14 and 15 November 2024, Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia



# Background

With its unique geographic and natural features, the Alpine macro-region is one of the most prosperous and competitive regions in Europe. Eight years after the establishment of EUSALP, the region's main challenge remains - balancing its wealth and development with nature conservation and adopting innovative approaches to strengthen the area in a sustainable way. However, as Europe undergoes a green and digital transition and faces many other challenges, the Alpine region must adapt and EUSALP has to respond accordingly.

## Presidency priorities 2024

The Slovenian EUSALP Presidency will aim to lead the process of evolution of the Strategy to meet the needs of current and future policies. To this end, the institutional priority of the Presidency will be preparation of a concept paper for the **revision of the EUSALP Action Plan**.

Through its priorities, the Slovenian Presidency will also endeavour to find modern approaches to ensure a sustainable future in the Alpine region. Special attention will be devoted to a meaningful contribution from the generation that has yet to take the lead – **the youth**.

During its term, the Slovenian Presidency will focus on three thematic priorities: the circular economy, a water-smart society and the quality of life of young people in the Alps.

## Circular economy

As a key tool for sustainable development, the circular economy is essential for the transition to a green economy in the Alpine region. The Slovenian Presidency will strive to steer the policies for the transition to a green economy by creating sustainable solutions for more efficient resource management, decarbonisation and promotion of innovation for the sustainable development of the Alpine region.

In particular, the Slovenian Presidency will focus on the following themes: innovation for the transition to a circular economy through advanced digital technologies; green jobs; advanced materials; green power from green hydrogen to increase energy self-sufficiency; and management of water, food and wood resources.

## Sustainable water management

Climate change and extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, increase the need to invest in the management of water-related risks. With the slogan “The Alps are the Water Tower of Europe”, EUSALP countries need to seek smart solutions to protect water resources and take strategic action to manage them.

In order to contribute to the transition towards a water-smart society, Slovenia will put a strong focus on sustainable water management during its EUSALP Presidency in 2024. This will be a horizontal priority promoted through events such as the EUSALP Green Infrastructure Goes Business Award and the activities of the Slovenian Presidency of the Alps-Adriatic Rectors' Conference.

## Quality of life for young people in the Alps

The EUSALP was the first macro-regional strategy to establish a youth council, as the active involvement of young people is crucial to ensure a sustainable future for the Alpine region.

During its Presidency, Slovenia will strive to increase the participation of young people in all substantive discussions within EUSALP. Therefore, the Slovenian EUSALP Presidency seeks to explore the quality of life through the eyes of the other two Presidency priorities – (a) boosting the circular economy and (b) sustainable water management with the ambition to become a water-smart society.

In the context of the EUSALP Presidency, Slovenia will also seek opportunities for cooperation and networking of young people with the Youth Parliament of the Alpine Convention and events in the framework of the Slovenian Presidency of the Alps-Adriatic Rectors' Conference 2024.

# The Slovenian EUSALP Presidency year

The Slovenian EUSALP Presidency will aim for inclusive cooperation with all stakeholders and partners within the Strategy and beyond. To achieve this, special attention will be devoted to the visibility of concrete results of cooperation within EUSALP, highlighting the impact of the Strategy. During the Presidency year, the most impactful EUSALP projects from all Action Groups will be promoted through various social media as **EUSALP success stories**.

**The Presidency programme will be organised through the following main events:**

## **EUSALP Annual Forum (14 – 15 November 2024, Brdo pri Kranju):**

Save the date for the most important event of the year, which also marks the end of each EUSALP presidency and is dedicated to summarising the programme and priorities of the Slovenian Presidency. The EUSALP General Assembly will endorse political guidelines and recommendations for the future implementation of EUSALP.

## **Thematic events**

As part of the Slovenian EUSALP Presidency year, several thematic events will be organised with the support of various Action Groups and other stakeholders:

- ◆ **Quality of life in the Alpine region: EUSALP Youth Council shaping and developing the potential of the future Alpine region (12 – 15 March 2024, Kamnik & Ljubljana)**  
The thematic priority “Quality of life for young people in the Alpine area” will be addressed by the EUSALP Youth Council, who will work on different topics to improve the existing knowledge and make a concrete proposal for the future from their own perspective. On this occasion, the members of the EUSALP Youth Council will also meet for the first time the representatives of the Alpine Convention and discuss together issues that concern all in the Alpine area.
- ◆ **Boosting the circular economy (various events)**  
With the aim of boosting the circular economy within EUSALP, the Action Groups will work on the development of the Circular 4.0 Action Plan through various workshops and networking events throughout 2024. In spring of 2024, a special event will be dedicated to discussing the progress made within EUSALP.
- ◆ **Mediterranean Coast and Macro-regional Strategies Week (16 – 20 September 2024, Slovenian coast)**  
The 9<sup>th</sup> edition of this traditional series of events offers the opportunity to discuss issues of all macro-regional strategies in an informal setting on the Slovenian coast. Numerous EUSALP meetings will be held during this event. A separate event will be dedicated to the circular economy, in cooperation with INTERACT. This will be an opportunity to share experiences and methodologies from different macro-regional strategies, and to explore what is the value of macro-regional strategies in relation to the circular economy.

## Governance meetings

With the support of the EUSALP Technical Secretariat, the Slovenian Presidency will be the organiser of the following meetings:

GOVERNANCE MEETINGS	DATE AND VENUE
BAGL meeting	1 February 2024 (Postojna)
EB meeting	2 February 2024 (Postojna)
BAGL meeting	21 March 2024 (on-line)
EB meeting	23–24 April 2024 (Brdo pri Kranju)
BAGL – YC meeting	3 June 2024 (Bled)
EB-BAGL meeting	3–4 June 2024 (Bled)
EB meeting	16 September 2024 (Portorož)
EB-BAGL meeting	16–17 September 2024 (Portorož)
EUSALP General Assembly	14 November 2024 (Brdo pri Kranju)
EUSALP Annual Forum	14 – 15 November 2024 (Brdo pri Kranju)

## Other meetings

In line with the objective of leading the EUSALP Action Plan revision process, the Slovenian Presidency will continue the meetings of the **Task force on revision**.

In addition, the Presidency will represent EUSALP in all meetings with external stakeholders, in particular the **High Level Group** meeting and the **MRS Four Trio Presidency** meeting in spring 2024.