

Political demands of the Club Arc Alpin with respect to climate change



CAA and its members, committed to environmental protection in the Alps, regard climate change as a major issue for the environment worldwide and especially for the mountains.

Data collected in the Alps since 1960 show that climate change is twice quicker (+2,5 °C) as compared to the average northern hemisphere (+1,1°C during the same period) and even 3 to 4 times quicker above 1800m¹. This prospective is alarming.

As "hot spots" of the diversity of the species and unstable regions in geomorphological terms mountains react intensely to this global warming: melting of glaciers, rising of the snow line, change in water resources, ground instabilities and major rockfalls etc. Mountaineers are every day witness to this swift evolution.

The CAA member associations wish to assume their share in the responsibility to mitigate climate change and adapt to it, one reason being that mountain sports also contribute to climate change, especially through mobility. They have adopted a climate change strategy applying to their own activities, which is progressively implemented.²

CAA demands

At the same time they demand decisive action from politics and society to halt the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG) quickly. The international conventions on climate change, in particular the Paris 2016 agreement, should be thoroughly implemented in Europe. The following demands have been adopted in September 2009 by the member associations of the CAA and renewed in 2018.

1. CO₂ reductions should be achieved in the first place by means of politically triggered but economically effective incentives. The charge for high CO₂ production should be high and those who cut down effectively their CO₂ emissions should be reimbursed from these high charges, in accordance with the polluter pays principle.
2. The dependence on fossil sources of energy (oil, coal and gas) must be reduced as quickly as possible. This shall only occur through intense promotion of saving energy, energy efficiency, low-emission and environmentally-friendly forms of energy until they have reached the critical market sizes. However, Landscape protection requirements must always be taken into account.
3. The CO₂ emissions of the traffic flows must be reduced as quickly as possible. The means for achieving these reductions are incentives for CO₂ low vehicles, the transfer to railroad of a major part of passengers and goods traffic, increased limitation of emission values, speed reductions - initially on motorways- development and promotion of public transport, specific promotion of green mobility. Priority should be given to measures which improve air quality in the alpine valleys as well as reduce GHG emissions.
4. The CAA demands standardized regulation throughout the Alps for a gradual reduction of all motor sport activities, which merely serve the enjoyment of leisure time while emitting CO₂, in particular snow mobiles, offroad motor driving as well as sightseeing flights and helicopter skiing in the mountains.

Resolved by the CAA general assembly in 2009 in Innsbruck and revised in 2018 in Turin/Torino.
Original language German, revision made in English.

¹ See for instance data published by the « Observatoire du changement climatique dans les Alpes du Nord » (Agence alpine des territoires, permanent updating of datas, Chambéry France); Spotlight-on-climate-in-Switzerland, Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences 2017 (www.swiss-academies.ch);

² See Climate change strategy, CAA 2010, revised 2018