

CAA Climate change strategy



CAA and its members, committed to environmental protection in the Alps, regard climate change as a major issue for the environment worldwide, especially for the mountains and notably the Alps.¹

Implications of climate change for CAA, its member associations and their activities

Climate change will have severe effects on the living conditions of the alpine population, nature and on the economy - especially in terms of livelihood, tourism and agriculture.

It has also a dramatic effect on mountain sports. Glaciers are increasingly making way for rocks, debris and lakes. Many classical alpine routes have already become too dangerous or too difficult. It affects mountaineering practice and mountain guides activities.

Infrastructure – including alpine paths and mountain huts- have to be adapted to increased natural risks and changing conditions. This adaptation is very costly.

Mountain sports are by definition activities close to nature and yet imply a high degree of mobility. Methods of transportation, which produce large amounts of greenhouse gasses, such as cars and aeroplanes, continue to play a major role.

The strategic climate targets of the CAA and its member associations

We feel a great amount of co-responsibility in the area of climate change prevention and adaptation. We must therefore act now, and do so with clear and measurable objectives. The member associations of the CAA have established the following strategic targets as a contribution to the global requirement for substantial greenhouse gas reductions:

1. The present climate strategy of the CAA is primarily targeted towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions caused by mountain sports. The focus lies on the mobility required by mountain sports.
2. In recent years, 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. These measures must be continued and reinforced.
3. The implementation of the present strategy measures is the responsibility of the member associations. The CAA sees itself as the motivator, coordinator and, above all, the political voice and representative of mountaineers on an alpine-wide level.
4. The CAA will make use of its influence at the level of the Alpine Convention to support a consistent climate policy. The member associations support the same objective at the national level.

¹ See "Political demands of the CAA with respect to climate change", CAA 2009, revised 2018

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

1. The CAA member associations actively support the education, information and training of their members.
2. Each CAA member association will initiate a set of specific and, where possible, quantifiable measures to reduce the CO₂ produced by mountain sports, and implement them progressively, according to a timetable.
3. The associations shall take measures to increase the use of public transport for association trips, the optimal occupancy of private vehicles, the reduction in total distances travelled.
4. The CAA member associations will launch campaigns aimed at motivating mountaineers to use public transport when travelling to the mountains and "eco- drive" practice when using private vehicles (if other means of transportation are not available). This in particular involves adopting a reduced speed on motorways. An appropriate ratio of travel distance to length of stay should be sought.
5. 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.
6. 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

The CAA associations must also confront the necessary adjustments to the effects of global warming in the Alps. The main points are:

1. Verification and improvement of the monitoring and risk management for hut access and paths. The objective is to identify new danger areas before accidents cause any human casualties. Experience exchanges and knowhow transfers between CAA member associations are to be increased.
2. Verification and planning of future water supplies, in particular for high altitude huts, which draw their water supply from ice that may disappear completely within a few years.
3. The abandonment of individual hut locations must also not be excluded as a possible option.
4. 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 in 2010 in Munich and revised in 2018 in Turin/Torino.
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