

Energy and nature in the Alps: a balancing act
International final conference of the recharge.green project

20-21 May 2015

Haus Oberallgäu, Sonthofen/Germany



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The Alps have great potential for the use of renewable energy, but energy production and use also increases pressures on nature. The recharge.green project looks at the trade-offs between the costs and benefits of renewable energy use. In particular, the project looks at impacts of energy production on ecosystem services. The goal is to achieve sustainably used landscapes where ecosystems and their services to people continue to function, and where energy production is optimised for this purpose.

What are the challenges related to renewable energy use in the Alps? What tools can be used to support decision makers in finding the right balance when planning local or regional energy development? These two questions are at the centre of the final conference of the project. The recharge.green partners have assessed the Alpine potential for biomass, hydropower, solar, and wind energy production, taking into account technical, environmental and social constraints. They will present the tools they have developed to support decision making processes. Representatives from the pilot areas will provide glimpses into their experiences with conflict resolution processes that manage to deal with diverging demands on landscape and nature.

We invite decision makers, representatives of public administrations and authorities, of energy businesses and of NGOs to see how the recharge.green results can make a difference and to discuss with us how renewable energy production and nature conservation in the Alps can be combined. A public evening event, a poster exhibit and an excursion will complete the programme.

Moderation: Heidrun Fammler, Baltic Environmental Forum Group

Wednesday, 20.05.2015

13:00 Welcome coffee and snack, registration

13:30 Nature and energy: challenges of an Alpine town

Christian Wilhelm, Mayor of Sonthofen

13:45 The multiple facets of nature's services to people

Chris Walzer, Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology, University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna

14:00 Two sides of the same coin: the energy transition and its challenges for energy production and nature conservation

Frank Pöhler, Director Hydropower at the Bavarian Electric Power company BEW and Georg Bayerle, mountain and environment specialist at the Bavarian Broadcasting

14:45 Coffee break

15:15 Optimising renewable energy production for continued ecosystem health : main outcomes of recharge.green

Project partners Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology, University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna; European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano; International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis; Triglav National Park

16:45 Listen, read, discuss: recharge.green poster exhibit and aperitif

The aperitif is offered by the town of Sonthofen.

18:00 Dinner for registered participants

At conference venue

20:00-21:30 Podium discussion: Renewable energy and nature protection in the Oberallgäu – a contradiction?

Public event, no registration needed.

Thursday, 21.05.2015

08:30 Welcome coffee

08:45 Introduction to the day

09:00 The balancing act between energy and nature can succeed in the Alps

Astrid Björnsen Gurung, Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research WSL

09:45 Hands-on: how models can help decision makers. Demonstration of the decision support systems developed by recharge.green.

European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (In groups)

10:45 Coffee break

11:15 A journey through Europe's mountain areas: case studies from the Alps, Pyrenees and Carpathians

12:15 Looking ahead: ideas for new initiatives aimed at balancing energy development and nature conservation in the Alpine Space

Eva Stare, Alpine Space Programme

12:30 Beyond recharge.green: open questions (podium discussion with the project observers)

Christoph Pfemeter, Austrian Biomass Association, Bettina Hedden-Dunkhorst, Ecological Network Platform of the Alpine Convention, Matteo Cesca, Veneto Regional Agency for Prevention and Environmental Protection, and Ingrid Fischer, Town of Sonthofen/Alpine Town of the Year Association

13:10 Closing words

Chris Walzer

13:20 Lunch buffet

14:00 Local solutions for energy transition challenges: field trips

1. Hydropower: Ecological optimisation of a hydropower plant at the river Iller. Visit of the recharge.green pilot activity at Altusried (Transfer by bus)

2. It's all in the mix: energy village Wildpoldsried (Transfer by bus)

3. Wood-fired power plant Sonthofen: energy from local wood for commercial, housing, and public facilities (by foot; ends at 16:00)

For more information please visit:

www.recharge-green.eu/finalconference

17:00 End of conference

Further Information

Languages: English, German, with simultaneous translation

Participation at the conference and at the meals mentioned in the program is free of charge

Registration: Please register before: 10.5.2015 following this link:

www.recharge-green.eu/finalconference

Venue

Haus Oberallgäu
Richard-Wagner-Straße 14
87527 Sonthofen, Germany

Information on accommodation and arrival on the conference website:

www.recharge-green.eu/finalconference

Organisation and contact

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