

The Hohe Tauern National Park and the Alpine Network of Protected Areas ALPARC are proud to provide you the conference volume to the Fourth Symposium for Research in Protected Areas being held at the Castle of Kaprun from September 17th to 19th, 2009.

Scientists and nature conservationists use the opportunity to exchange valuable information, new ideas as well as common interests, reaching far beyond boundaries of protected areas, countries and subjects.

Encouraged by the immense success already in 1996, 2001 and 2005 and the positive feedback give us pleasure again to offer sufficient time and space for the presentation and discussion for the numerous areas of interest of current research in protected areas in an extraordinary setting.

## **The Idea**

In close cooperation with ALPARC (Alpine Network of the Protected Areas coordinated by the Task Force Protected Areas, Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, [www.alparc.org](http://www.alparc.org)), ISCAR (International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps, <http://www.alpinestudies.ch/iscar/>) and IGF (Mountain Research: Man and Environment, a Research Unit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, <http://www.uibk.ac.at/>, <http://www.oeaw.ac.at/>), we were looking for input from representatives of protected areas across the entire Alpine Space. ALPARC and ISCAR provided the independent scientific board ISCAR-P, which classified the presentations and established the programme of the symposium according to the received papers.

Scientists were invited to contribute to the Symposium by giving a talk or presenting a poster on any topic dealing with research in, for or on protected areas. The topics could cover scientific questions as well as various aspects of management on the ground and the scientific exploration on the natural and cultural landscapes of protected areas. Nevertheless, the Hohe Tauern National Park and the scientific board proposed to emphasize thematic sessions on the following topics of specific interest:

*History of protected areas in the context of nature conservation*  
*Longterm Monitoring Activities in protected areas*  
*Climate change and landscape change: is there evidence?*  
*Transdisciplinary scientific projects in protected areas*

In addition we asked, to arrange the scientific contribution according to following questions:

*What are the benefits of your research for the management of PAs and/or further research?*  
*Are the results of your research related to the status of protection?*

Such questions aimed to stimulate the choice of contribution. The programme should offer a broad variety of research projects and strategies in protected areas across the entire Alps.

37 speeches and 59 posters from 11 different countries were presented during the conference. Sincere thanks is due to all active participants.

Take much pleasure in reading the conference volume.

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