



Statement by Ambassador Markus Reiterer

Secretary General of the Alpine Convention

To the high-level segment of UNFCCC COP 24 in Katowice, 12 December 2018

Mister President, your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me commence by thanking the Government of Poland for its hospitality here in Katowice. The Alpine Convention indeed entertains a sisterly relationship with Poland and its neighbouring countries, which signed the Carpathian Convention 15 years ago. The Alpine and Carpathian Conventions have the similar goal of protecting the environment of mountain ranges shared by several countries and caring for their sustainable development. Like other mountain regions in the world, we have to face a faster rise in temperature than most areas. Mountains are also particularly at risk from natural hazards and need to mainstream climate change adaptation in all their policies. The Report on the State of the Alps on “Natural Hazard Risk Governance”, to be released at the Alpine Conference in April 2019, will provide helpful guidance in this respect.

Next April, it is also foreseen that the Ministers of the eight Alpine countries and the European Union will approve a Climate Target System for climate-resilient and climate-neutral Alps in 2050. The Alpine Convention’s Target System builds on the close interdependency of human activities, natural resources and the Alpine cultural heritage; it complements European and national targets and highlights pathways towards integrated mitigation and adaptation action. Reaching climate targets requires substantial efforts, but comes with many

benefits. This is what we communicate with the ClimaHost contest, which will shortly reward best practices in climate change mitigation in hotels and restaurants throughout the Alps. Committed managers can testify of the gain in quality for their customers and of the positive economic and social impact of, for instance, a thorough energy management.

Communication is an essential tool in facing climate change and facts matter to help people and governments take the best decisions. But the facts which stick better to minds are those reflecting personal experience, and linked to concrete action proposals. National governments need to create the best framework possible and empower local stakeholders and citizens to enfold their own initiatives. This is also the objective of the Alpine Partnership for Local Climate Action. We need cooperation across borders and between sectors, more than ever and better still!