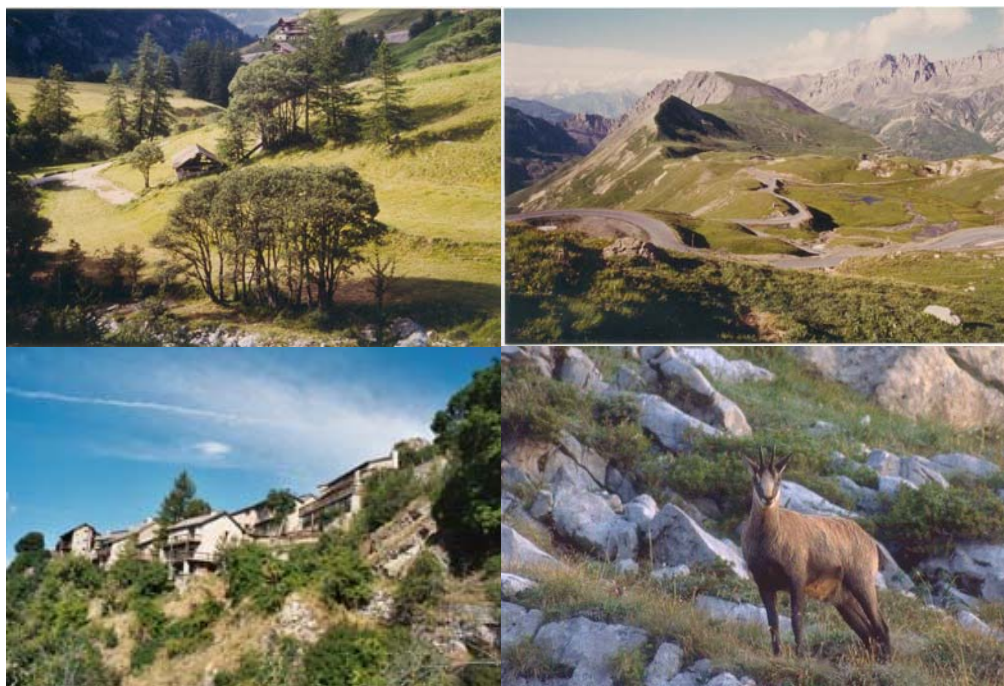


Seventh Framework Programme 2007-2013

Contract for:  
Cooperation Programme  
**Annex I – “Description of Work”**

Theme: “Environment (including climate change)”



Project acronym: VASA

Project full title:

**Reducing Regional Vulnerability in the Alps –  
Developing Sustainable Adaptation Strategies and Managing  
Biodiversity in a Climate of Change**

Start date of Project: 1 September 2007

Proposal/Contract no.: 2007-9-67-789

Date of Preparation of Annex I: 26 August 2007, Dagmar Schröter

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## Project Summary

The Alps, though geologically a young mountain range, are culturally among the oldest mountains in the world. In this extremely heterogeneous environment, people and nature have evolved over centuries to form a diverse entity that is famous for its cultural and natural richness. However, starting around the turn of the previous century, the influence of people on landscapes and biological diversity in the Alps has changed. What was previously seen by most as a ‘relationship enriching both natural and cultural diversity’ started to turn into impoverishing exploitation. New trends in agriculture (intensification as well as abandonment) and fragmentation of landscapes are among the most important factors decreasing diversity within the Alpine human-environment system. More recently, climate change has been recognized as an additional important driver. In the Alps climate change has occurred more rapidly than elsewhere. At the same time climate is particularly difficult to foresee in this heterogeneous environment. Taking into account these various global change drivers, the Alps have recently been estimated to be among the most vulnerable regions in Europe. People living in the Alps worry about their immediate future and their long term prospects. Lowland regions are concerned about the Alps as principal sources of water and recreation opportunities.

In this research project – *Reducing Regional Vulnerability in the Alps – Developing Sustainable Adaptation Strategies and Managing Biodiversity in a Climate of Change* (VASA) – we assess the vulnerability of four sectors to medium term changes in socio-economic conditions, land use and climate with a focus on the Var Catchment in Southern France. On the catchment scale we aim at developing adaptation strategies for water, agriculture, nature and tourism management, in order to sustain livelihoods and biodiversity in the region. What are the possible futures of people making a living in the Alps? What are the main challenges and opportunities they face? How can they adapt to a rapidly changing environment? How will downstream areas be affected by changes in the Alpine environment? Together with stakeholders from the region we will develop an understanding of the main relevant impacts expected for each of these sectors, accounting for possible interactions between them. We will then develop a number of adaptation strategies as a starting point of discussion for all parties with an interest in the Alpine region.

## Project Objectives

The ultimate objective of the VASA project is to reduce regional vulnerability in the Alps by developing sustainable adaptation strategies for the sectors water, agriculture, nature conservation and tourism, taking into account interactions between these sectors and the drivers that influence them.

For this purpose VASA will focus on a single catchment as the main study region, namely the Var Catchment in Southern France. For this region, VASA will elaborate

and partially quantify multiple future scenarios of socio-economic, land use and climate change based on state-of-the-art global scenarios (e.g. the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change Special Report on Emissions Scenarios (SRES), or the scenarios developed by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment). Then VASA will study the main impacts these changes are likely to cause in the sectors water, agriculture, nature conservation and tourism. The most relevant impacts will be identified and discussed with the help of stakeholders from these sectors operating in the study area. Based on an understanding of these potential impacts, VASA will finally develop adaptation strategies to manage the regional Alpine human-environment system in a way that will sustain livelihoods and biodiversity.

## Detailed Implementation Plan

### *Work Packages*

<b>Work Package</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Non-scientific Expert (name to be announced)</b>	<b>Scientific Advisor</b>
1	Trends in the water sector – how to manage sustainable water supply to all users, safeguarding livelihoods and biodiversity?	Municipal water manager from Nice	Uta Fritsch
2	Trends in agriculture – how to manage the regional agriculture sustainably, i.e. sustain livelihoods and biodiversity?	Sheep farmer	Bill Bealey
3	Trends in nature conservation – how to conserve what for whom?	Representative of an environmental NGO	Franz Badeck
4	Trends in regional tourism – how to develop tourism sustainably, safeguarding local livelihoods and biodiversity?	Builder/planner of wellness and family tourism resorts in the region	Alexander Popp
5	Synthesis for Policy Makers: Trends in the Var Catchment – Vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies for the coming decades	EU scientific officer	Dagmar Schröter

*Milestones and Deliverables*

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Due (days from start of project)</b>	<b>Nature</b>
Del 1	VASA Kick-off Meeting.	5 (14:00 – 16:00 h)	Meeting
Del 2	Kick-off meeting of the synthesis working group.	5 (17:00-18:00 h)	Meeting
Del 3	VASA mid-term meeting – presentation of progress thus far.	9 (14:00 – 16:00 h)	Meeting
Del 4	VASA final meeting – presentation of final results.	13 (exact time to be announced)	Meeting
Del 5 a	Draft of VASA final project report including a chapter from each work package summarising main trends, relevant impacts and suggested adaptation strategies, as well as a synthesis chapter in the form of a <i>summary for policy makers</i> , including statements of interactions between the sectors.	13	Draft Report
Del 5 b	Final Version: VASA final project report.	29 (exact time to be announced)	Report