

2. THE ALPINE CONVENTION AND ITS PROTOCOLS IN GENERAL

The Alpine Convention with its 10 protocols as they exist today are the outcome of a long process which started 50 years ago and which is still far from being achieved.

2.1. Chronology

The efforts to conclude a convention covering the whole Alpine area date back to the founding documents of the CIPRA⁹ in 1952. However, it is only in the late 1980s that these efforts began to bear fruit, presumably because human influence on the environment became more visible and people became more aware of the importance of their environment.

In February 1987, the non-governmental CIPRA launched a new initiative for the elaboration of an Alpine Convention¹⁰. This initiative reached the European political floor through an application to the European Parliament asking the Commission to provide a draft of a convention on the protection of the Alps¹¹. On 15 May 1988, the European Parliament accepted the proposal unanimously.

On the intergovernmental political level, the first Alpine Conference, initiated by the then German Environment Minister Klaus Töpfer, took the first decisive step in Berchtesgaden in fall 1989. During this conference, the Alpine countries adopted on 9 October 1989 the so-called "Berchtesgaden Resolution", which served as basis for further negotiations¹².

Two years later, on 7 November 1991, the following parties signed the Alpine Convention at the second Alpine Conference in Salzburg: Austria, France, Germany,

⁹ Commission Internationale pour la Protection des Alpes (=International Commission for the Protection of the Alps), founded on 5th of May 1952. CIPRA regroups actually more than 100 other organisations and institutions and is still strongly involved in the development of the Alpine Convention. More information is available at: <http://www.cipra.org/>.

¹⁰ "Ein Meilenstein in der CIPRA-Geschichte. Die Alpenkonvention", (2002) 64 CIPRA Info 14.

¹¹ The application was submitted by Ursula Schleicher from the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats. See *supra* note 10.

¹² See *supra*, note 10.