

2024 Alpine Rivers Symposium
Nature, culture and economy in the face of climate change

10 - 11 August 2024
TUM Academy Center Raitenhaslach | Haus der Familie
City of Burghausen, TU Munich, Onewater gUG

The Alps are the water tower of Europe. It is estimated that up to 40% of Europe's freshwater is located there. Thousands of streams, brooks and rivers that originate in the Alps have formed the basis of a traditional cultural landscape and unique biodiversity for centuries. The more than 1000 hydroelectric power stations in the Alpine region provide electricity for millions of people and, in many places, are the basis for trade, agriculture and industry in addition to Alpine tourism.

However, the Alps and their watercourses are changing rapidly. In the next few decades, 90% of the Alpine glaciers will melt completely. The snow and meltwater that is missing from the rivers is also missing from nature and us humans. This has an impact on the economy, especially tourism, electricity production, agriculture, for example in the Italian Po basin, and European inland navigation on the Rhine, Rhone and Danube.

Against this background, the first Alpine River Symposium focuses on the Alpine landscape in a broader sense and poses the following questions: What does a healthy Alpine river actually look like? How will Alpine rivers change in the coming years and how do we deal with this? Which developments can we actively influence, proactively avert, and to which must we learn to adapt?

The 1000-year-old border town of Burghausen, whose prosperity and identity have always been closely linked to the Salzach, is inviting scientists and representatives from the 8 countries bordering the Alps to exchange ideas at a two-day symposium. The symposium will take place in the TUM Academy Centre Raitenhaslach on the banks of the Salzach. In addition to the sessions at the Academy Center, a citizen centre (Haus der Familie) will host an exhibition, movie screenings and booths that are animated by the German Alpine Society, Bund Naturschutz and others. There will also be film screenings and panel discussions on the topic in the Ankerkino cinema, as well as an accompanying programme for children and families.

Participants can present their work and highlight ways in which the Alpine regions can maintain their economic vitality while restoring and preserving healthy rivers and nature. The symposium will provide an opportunity to discuss strategies for effectively addressing the challenges of climate change together with agriculture, industry and nature conservation. The aim is to discuss scenarios that ensure that Alpine rivers - exemplified by the Salzach - continue to flourish as living, species-rich cultural landscapes.



Program Overview

During the whole event, the venue will be opened to the public. In parallel the citizen centre will host a marketplace animated by various partners, like the German Alpine Society or the Bund Naturschutz. Along with an immersive exhibition and movie screenings in a studio, they will offer activities for families and children. Signature talks and presentations for everyone will also be hosted.

TUM Academic Center events - High-level Conference

Time	Segment Title	Person(s)
Day 1 - TUM Academy Center [Presentations, Discussions, Booths, Workshops]		
8:30 – 09:00	Welcoming and Keynote	TBD
9:00 – 10:30	Plenary: presentation & discussion The state of Alpine Rivers: Nature, Economy, Policies	TBD
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break	
11:00 – 12:00	Plenary: presentation & discussion Presentation: Visual journey: What is an Alpine river?	TBD
12:00 – 13:00	3 parallel sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EU LIFE Projects ● Transboundary Water Management ● TBD with scientists 	TBD
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch & Coffee	<i>Local and organic Catering</i>
14:30 - 15:00	<i>The future of Alpine rivers? Theory</i>	TBD
15:00 – 18:00	<i>The future of Alpine rivers? Practice</i> Workshops and field-trips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Field trip 1: EU LIFE projects ● Field trip 2: Hydropower ● Workshop/ Field trip 3: Scientific Workshops: Limnology 	
19:00 - 20:30	Oxford Style Debate <i>Cultural, socio-economic aspects of free-flowing rivers</i> Series of 30 minutes debates with video prompts Motion: This house posits that "Alpine rivers are under threat and traditional approaches are not working"	TBD (2 teams of 3: 1 scientist, 1 other speaker, 1 student each)



Duration (mins)	Segment Title	Person(s)
Day 2 - Raitenhaslach	TUM Academy Center [Presentations, Discussions, Booths, Workshops, Networking sessions]	
8:30 – 09:00	Welcoming and Summary Day 1, Keynote	TBD
9:00 – 10:30	Plenary : presentation & discussion Climate change in the Alps: the impact on rivers and people	TBD
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
11:00 – 12:30	Plenary: presentation & discussion The Salzach River	
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch & coffee</i>	<i>Local and organic Catering</i>
14:00 – 15:30	Plenary: presentation & discussion Giving rights to nature: Legal status of Rivers	TBD
15:30 – 17:00	Idea Space for collaboration - Networking workshops	
18:00 – 18:30	Traditional Boat trip on the River Salzach	TBD
19:00 – 20:00	Reception: Live Music and Food - Anker Cinema	
20:00 – 21:30	Movie evening and discussion	

Bürgerhaus & Haus der Familie Events - General Public
Programme under development.