





PACT FOR THE  
SAFEGUARDING OF THE


# ALPINE FOOD HERITAGE



A programme for  
the safeguarding of the  
Traditional Knowledge,  
practices and values  
of the Alpine communities



**PATRIMONIO  
ALIMENTARE  
COMUNITÀ  
ALPINE**  
CONOSCENZE, CAPACITÀ,  
PRATICHE E VALORI



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## Introduction

The purpose of the Pact is to support current local, regional, national and international processes of safeguarding the Alpine Food Heritage through a shared Programme and its inscription in the Register of Good Practices of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

This Pact is structured to: 1. explain what Alpine Food Heritage is; 2. point out the objectives of the multinational nomination and the proposed safeguarding measures; 3. set 10 Articles for the achievement of the multinational nomination.

In committing to the Pact, signatories share the objectives of the multinational nomination of Alpine Food Heritage and agree with its Articles.

All communities, groups, individuals, organisations and institutions involved in the safeguarding of the Alpine Food Heritage can adhere to the Pact.



Signatories may indicate specific safeguarding measures to which they wish to commit, using the registration form attached to the Pact (annex 1), or alternatively, by providing a written statement at the end of the Pact.






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## Preamble: What is the Alpine Food Heritage, why it is at risk?


- The Alps are a complex system of mountain environments in the heart of Europe, shaped by human activities into a set of productive landscapes through a combination of natural factors - such as climate, soils, altitude, and exposure - and human factors - such as demography, settlements, local economies and agro-silvo-pastoral practices.
  - Alpine Food Heritage is rooted in the everyday life, in the historical experience and in the memory of communities of the Alpine arc. It consists of a set of knowledge, skills, practices and values in permanent evolution, deeply related to the ecosystems with their limits and extraordinary natural resources. This heritage is a connective tissue linking knowledge and practices of nature, oral traditions and languages, social, ritual and festive practices, traditional crafts, providing communities, groups, and individuals with a “sense of identity and continuity” (as defined by Article 2 of the UNESCO Convention for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage - CICH).
  - Based on a food production and consumption system developed in a constant adaptation to the cycle of the seasons and to the diversity of mountain ecosystems, this heritage is the result of subsistence strategies and seasonal mobility, a living legacy of the historical experience of Alpine communities. The system of seasonal mobility makes Alpine society a laboratory of relations between communities, both in the sense of the relations linked to the traditional pastoral circuits of transhumance and in the sense of migrations, and the exchanges and trade that have historically linked up-lands to lowlands and urban centres.
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- The Alpine life system, based on agro-silvo-pastoral practices adapted to the complexity and fragility of ecosystems, produced a set of traditional knowledge, skills, practices and values linked to a natural capital shared from France to Slovenia. This heritage, deeply rooted in the respect for nature and sustainable practices, engendered local production chains and consumption habits of vital importance for the future of Alpine communities shaping the landscape of the Alps and contributed to make the Alpine space a place of rich environmental and cultural values, universally recognised, source of well-being, quality and food balance.
  - The radical political, economic, social and environmental changes of the latest two centuries of the European history have exerted pressures of various kinds on Alpine communities: from the conflicts that accompany the progressive organisation of nation-states, to the political borders that often disrupted the economic and social circuits of the previous centuries; from the processes of industrialisation to migration, massive urbanisation of mountain peoples that caused the depopulation of highland villages; from tourism to globalisation and the challenges of climate change.
  - These pressures have costed Alpine communities, historically marked by a high adaptation ability, a high price in terms of demographic losses, social and cultural crises of traditional models, vulnerable local life perspectives, leading, at the same time, to a commercial and touristic exploitation of alpine resources, often disrespectful of the rights of local communities and their cultural identity.
  - The risks and threats that the transmission of the Alpine Food Heritage today must face require a coordinated and responsible effort by communities and institutions in the Alpine space, increasingly aware of the values of this heritage and in solidarity with the desire of safeguarding its viability (as defined by Article 2.3 of the UNESCO CICH) in order to transmit it on to future generations.
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- The policies of the European Union, in collaboration with the Swiss Confederation, through their strategies, programmes and projects, in particular the cross-border interregional programmes, have made possible in the recent decades to progressively strengthen the historical ties between the territories and communities of the Alps, fostering cooperation processes, revitalising ancient circles of economic and socio-cultural relations and giving new life and perspectives to the values of solidarity and exchange that characterise the history of the Alpine world.
- In this context, the European Parliament Resolution of 15 January 2020 on the Green Deal introduces a fundamental right to a clean and sustainable environment and to a stable climate for all people living in Europe. There are significant cultural dimensions in every aspect of the European Green Deal, from circular economy to biodiversity and to ‘farm to fork’ strategies. Food heritage, and the intangible cultural heritage in general, offers a huge potential to support the right transition towards a low-carbon and climate change resilient future.



## Taking into account this Preamble

- The Interreg Alpine Space Project **AlpFoodway** (2016-19, <https://www.alpine-space.eu/projects/alpfoodway/en/home>) and the sharing of other projects of transnational cooperation - since 2016 started a **safeguarding process of the Alpine food heritage**, inspired by the values of sustainability and looking for concrete solutions in the transmission of the food heritage of Alpine communities. These Projects have been laboratories for communities and institutions, providing, by an intense cross-border and intersectoral dialogue, cooperation activities at all levels: local, regional, national and international.
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- The communities, groups, individuals and institutions active in the AlpFoodway Project expressed their wish to strengthen and extend the network for the protection of the Alpine Food Heritage through a multinational nomination project for inscription in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The nomination is an innovative tool to allow the definition of a long-term programme for the safeguarding and the sharing of benefits coming from this heritage for the future generations.



## The Objective of the Pact

The general objective of the Pact is the consolidation of local, regional, national and international networks and processes of safeguarding the Alpine food heritage, by communities, groups, individuals, organisations, institutions engaged in the multinational nomination for inscription in the the UNESCO Register of Good Safeguarding Practices of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This nomination is a concrete instrument responding to the need of “identity and continuity” of the Alpine communities, to the necessary recognition of their knowledge of nature and food traditions, to their willingness of cooperation for the development of the Alpine territories, supported by the values of environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability.

Some institutions, organisations, communities, groups, and individuals formed networks for the safeguarding and promotion of the Alpine Food Heritage working to the achievement of the general objective of the Pact, which is open in an inclusive way to all actors wishing to contribute, respecting and on the bases of the coordination of the competent institutional bodies.




To the general objective of the Pact corresponds the following specific objectives:



- Raise awareness of the functions and values of Alpine food heritage as an intangible cultural heritage, and promote its safeguarding and protection, consistently with the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and its 12 Ethical Principles, the objectives of sustainability and in a fruitful dialogue with any other international, European, regional and national regulatory instruments;
  - Engage for the inscription of a Programme for the Safeguarding of the Alpine Food Heritage in the UNESCO Register of Good Safeguarding Practices of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, through the process of preparation of the nomination file;
  - Promote collaboration between communities, groups, individuals, organisations and institutions interested in the safeguarding of this heritage, in an inclusive way, contributing to the development, in a spirit of partnership and cooperation, of the safeguarding of the Alpine Food Heritage;
  - Start and develop a system of an inclusive and participatory multi-level governance, of the Alpine Food Heritage, connecting groups, communities and individuals in the Alps with local, regional, national and international institutions and organisations.
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## Measures for the safeguarding of the Alpine Food Heritage

By signing the Pact, individuals, groups, communities, organisations and institutions commit - each one according to its abilities, skills, and capacities - to one or more of the following safeguarding measures, as specified in the registration form. These can correspond to activities already carried out by the signatories or to activities to implement in the future as part of their commitment to the safeguarding of the Alpine Food Heritage.

1. **Raise and promote awareness** on the value of the wealth of knowledge, skills and practices related to the traditional food heritage of Alpine communities, as a tool for creative transmission and innovation in the respect of the environment and the genetic resources, the protection of mountain biodiversity and of the traditional productive landscapes. Disseminate information on the Alpine Food Heritage, respecting its contexts, values and meanings for the involved communities;
  2. **Identify and enhance, through collaborative research and participatory documentation**, the heritage of knowledge, skills and practices of traditional food of Alpine communities, also through tools common to different territories, such as the cross-border platform [www.intangiblesearch.eu](http://www.intangiblesearch.eu), coordinated and managed by the Archive of Ethnography and Social History (AESS) of the Directorate-General for Autonomy and Culture of the Lombardy Region. All research will be conducted ethically, respecting the rights of heritage-bearing communities, groups, and individuals, ensuring transparency and accessibility to all information; encouraging the inclusion and engaging in the respect of the customary practices of the communities;
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- 3. Engage in transmission activities, including through formal and non-formal education**, of the Alpine Food Heritage and more in general of the Alpine intangible cultural heritage in all the richness of its expressions. Intergenerational transmission should be encouraged in all contexts and in schools, integrating intangible cultural heritage into curricular and extracurricular activities. Specific projects should be carried out with “pilot schools” in each Country of the network, including the local associations, producers, and artisans of the involved territories;
- 4. Train and strengthen the capacities of communities, as well as of the institutions and policy makers** of the Alps, through innovative processes of “lifelong learning” and “learning-by-doing” with special attention to the transmission between generations, awareness, promotion tools and legal rights and support processes of “professional training”. Specific capacity building workshops should be linked to the different safeguarding measures listed here;
- 5. Promote the Alpine Food Heritage, and in general the Alpine intangible cultural heritage**, through projects of sustainable tourism and commercial development, heritage-sensitive marketing strategies in the full respect of the rights, customary practices and values of the communities that bear the various expressions of food heritage of the Alpine communities, and with their direct and informed participation and collaboration. Appropriate strategies for the promotion of heritage-based products/itineraries/events and based on the principle of benefit sharing, should promote sustainable socio-economic development of Alpine communities locally and across the borders; all promotion and awareness activities should be accompanied by adequate protective measures, informed by relevant legal frameworks and appropriate ethical standards.
- 6. Design, apply and promote a variety of appropriate legal protection measures** for the benefit of Alpine communi-

ties. One of the aims of these measures should be the support of marketing and promotion of safeguarding measures (see point 5) in the context of the global market while protecting traditional knowledge. A further aim should be to ensure the full protection of the rights of communities that bear and transmit this intangible cultural heritage when they engage in commercial activities related to their heritage, enabling sustainable development in all of its economic, environmental, social and cultural dimensions. These legal protection measures should include, among others, collective intellectual property rights (such as Geographical Indications and trademarks) for the benefit of communities and guidelines for their use, ethical codes, contractual instruments, etc.

- 7. Contribute to design and implement an integrated communication plan**, aimed to encourage the exchange of experiences and the circulation of ideas in relation to all the above-mentioned safeguarding and sustainable development measures. The plan could integrate online communication tools;
- 8. Strengthen cooperation through the establishment of multi-level and intersectoral partnerships**, in order to foster adequate governance of the activities within the nomination network, thus supporting the efforts to safeguard Alpine communities at the local level and the exchanges of good practices, with reference to all the safeguarding measures indicated.



## Organisation of the Nomination and Promotion of the Pact

The Lombardy Region - Archive of Ethnography and Social History (AESS), through the Regional Law 7 October 2015 n. 25, "Regional policies on cultural matters - Regulatory re-organisation", has promoted the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage also through the establishment of the [www.intangiblesearch.eu](http://www.intangiblesearch.eu) online participatory inventory and the aforementioned AlpFoodway project. As a result, it has developed a lively partnership with the Countries of the Alpine arc, actively participating in the work of the European Union Strategy for the Alps (EUSALP) and has proposed to coordinate, as the leading body, the multinational nomination project.

To this end, with Decree no. 8331 of 13 July 2020, "Establishment of the Task Force for the Multinational Nomination of Alpine Food Heritage in the Representative List of the UNESCO Intangible Heritage", the Lombardy Region established an internal coordination body (Task Force), which brings together several regional units in an approach that connects different sectors such as culture and tourism, environment and agriculture, training and education.

The Task Force for the multinational nomination of Alpine Food Heritage will seek dialogue with actors from different sectors and at all levels, making this multinational nomination fully representative of all communities, groups and individuals who are committed to the transmission of the Alpine Food Heritage.

As an integral and substantial part of this Pact, in collaboration with the network of communities, groups and individuals as bearers the Alpine Food Heritage, the Task Force of the Lombardy Region in agreement with the institutions of the Alpine partnership promotes the following Pact, open to the adhesion of any person or body of any nature that shares its objectives.



## Pact for the safeguarding of the Alpine Food Heritage

### Art. 1 Coordination

The Directorate-General for Autonomy and Culture, through the Archive of Ethnography and Social History (AESS), as the lead referent of the Lombardy Region, which has so far followed the application process in all its aspects, in agreement with the Presidency of the Lombardy Region and the Task Force in cooperation with national and international partners and the entire nomination network, promotes the coordination of nomination activities. In order to make the coordination system effective, each signatory undertakes to identify a contact person.

### Art. 2 Signatories and referents

Each signatory of the network can provide contributions of any kind to the implementation of the project. Joining the network is free, without any discrimination, as long as in compliance with current regulations and the objectives of this Agreement. The updated list of signatories is an integral part of this Agreement.

### Art. 3 Steering Committee





The network can set up a project Steering Committee, meeting at least twice a year, made up of its own representative expert consultants.

### Art. 4 Consultative Committee

The network can set up an Advisory Committee to support the pursuit of the objectives set out in this Agreement.

### Art. 5 Respect

The rights of Alpine communities to own and control their cultural heritage, as well as their rights and interests in the way they are represented (images, texts or similar), must always be respected and protected. Appropriate consultation processes with adequate cul-



tural authorities should always be followed and required approvals and authorizations obtained accordingly.

**Art. 6 Confidentiality**

*Responsibility of the signatories*

Each of the signatories recognises and protects the confidentiality of any document, technical or methodological information shared with the other signatories, refraining from using them in any way other than that which motivated the transmission, without prior written authorization.

*Personal privacy*

Privacy and confidentiality relating to the personal affairs of members of Alpine communities should be respected according to the applicable European and national legal framework.

**Art. 7 Attribution**

Alpine communities should receive due credit or adequate recognition for their achievements, contributions and roles in the development of media stories and / or in the use of cultural material. When preparing acknowledgments and attributions, you should ask informants how they want to be described or identified.

**Art. 8 Contributions and support**

Each entity commits itself at the political and institutional level to support the implementation of the safeguarding measures by actively participating.

**Art. 9 Duration**

This Pact is an instrument for the safeguarding the Alpine food heritage pursuant to Art. 2.3 of the Convention, with no limit of duration.

**Art. 10 Change**

This Pact can be modified in any part in accordance with the objectives of the Alpine Food Heritage network.

REGISTRATION FORM FOR SIGNATORIES

## Multinational Nomination of the Alpine Food Heritage A Programme for the safeguarding of the traditional knowledge, practices and values of the Alpine communities

For inscription in the Register of Good Safeguarding practices of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

By means of this act, [Insert name of signatory]

**DECLARE[S]**

To thoroughly know and understand the project to apply for the multinational nomination of the Programme “**Alpine Food Heritage. A programme for the Safeguarding of the traditional knowledge, practices and values of the alpine communities**”

**TO THE**

Register of Good Practices of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage;

**PARTICIPATES**

therefore, to the above-mentioned project, sharing its inspirational principles and objectives, as outlined in the Pact to which this adhesion form is an annex.



**COMMITTS ITSELF**

pursuant to the aforementioned Pact to engage in the following safeguarding activities (please select all that apply):

- Raise awareness on the value and promote the recognition of the wealth of knowledge, skills and practices related to the traditional food heritage of Alpine communities;
- Identify, document and enhance through collaborative research and participatory documentation the vast and articulated heritage of knowledge, skills and practices of traditional food of Alpine communities;
- Engage in transmission activities, including through formal and non-formal education, of the Alpine Food Heritage and more in general the Alpine intangible cultural heritage in all the richness of its expressions;
- Train and strengthen the capacities of the communities and institutions of the Alps, with attention to transmission between generations, awareness of safeguarding and promotional tools and legal rights and support processes of “vocational learning”; Specific capacity building workshops will have to be linked to the different safeguarding measures listed here;
- Promote the Alpine Food Heritage, and more in general the Alpine intangible cultural heritage, through individual and collective heritage-sensitive product, service, experience, attraction, event and tourism development and marketing strategies based on taste education and storytelling approach, with full respect for the rights, customary practices and values of the communities that bear the various elements that make up the food heritage of the Alpine communities, and with their direct and informed participation and collaboration;
- Disseminate insights about the heritage of know-how, knowledge and practices of the Alpine Food Heritage to increase the awareness of the local public on the importance of this intan-

gible cultural heritage and on the risks to be faced to ensure its transmission;

- Design, apply and promote a variety of appropriate legal protection measures for the benefit of Alpine communities;
- Contribute to the design and implementation of an integrated communication plan, capable of encouraging the open exchange of experiences and the circulation of ideas;
- Strengthen cooperation through the formation of multi-level and intersectoral partnerships, to foster adequate governance of the activities within the nomination network, thus strengthening the safeguarding efforts of the Alpine communities at local level and the exchanges of good practices, with reference to all the safeguarding measures indicated.

**ANY OTHER CONTRIBUTION AND/OR COMMITMENT:**

Please specify

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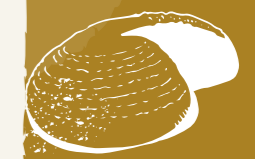
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Place and date:

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Signature



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del patrimonio vivente  
delle regioni alpine su  
[www.intangiblesearch.eu](http://www.intangiblesearch.eu)



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