



The **SIVOM** of the Haute Vallée de l'Arve

TOGETHER LET'S DESIGN TOMORROW'S VALLEY

Vallorcine | Chamonix Mont-Blanc | Les Houches | Servoz

A word from the editor

“Tomorrow’s valley” is an operation led by the SIVOM HVA to raise awareness and explain the environmental actions and projects of the Haute Vallée de l’Arve, based on the principles of the Espace Mont Blanc sustainable development scheme.

Its aim is to motivate local inhabitants and visitors to react on a day-to-day basis and to preserve in the long term all the assets of this exceptional valley.



The planet is overheating and our valley is no exception. There are a number of alarming indicators in environmental, social and economic fields. There is still time to act individually and collectively to progressively change the course of events.

Thanks to its wide-spread participative approach, the Transfrontier Mont Blanc Conference has drawn up a Sustainable Development Scheme that has been approved and signed by, among others, Vallorcine, Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, Les Houches and Servoz. The task now in hand is to transform principles into concrete actions.

It is on this basis that the SIVOM of the Haute Vallée de l’Arve is committed to a programme to raise awareness so that its inhabitants and visitors can envisage a brighter future in the exceptional site of the Haute Vallée de l’Arve.

This is long-term task that calls for social awareness and day-to-day commitment. Some programmes are already up and running, initiated by local authorities, companies, associations and inhabitants and taken over here by the SIVOM of the Haute Vallée de l’Arve. In all areas, whether energy or water, the landscape, waste, consumption, housing or transport, progress is underway.

If we continue these efforts, we stand a historic chance of proving that, in this day and age, we can be responsible, live in harmony without prejudicing future generations and make this region into a successful alliance between economic development and heritage conservation.

Together, let’s design tomorrow’s valley.

Be aware - Understand - Value - Act

The SIVOM HVA (Haute Vallée de l’Arve Intermunicipal Multivocational Association) groups together 4 municipalities from the canton (Chamonix Mont-Blanc, Les Houches, Servoz and Vallorcine). Located at the foot of Mont Blanc, they have chosen to entrust the management of certain services (urban transport, sanitation, youth projects, natural hazards, etc.) or the steering of common interest projects to an intermunicipal structure.



Espace Mont Blanc,
A project for the future that depends
on our ability to act

In 2006, after fifteen years of dialogue, mediation and reflection, the Sustainable Development Scheme was drawn up and it now acts as a basis for the Haute Vallée de l’Arve to share and make known its commitments. 150 programmes have already been launched on either side of the border. **Tomorrow’s valley** is one of them and draws on the 10 focus points of the Sustainable Development Scheme.



The Haute Vallée de l'Arve



Map created for Alposcope by Pi-r-carré sarl

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LET'S DESIGN
TOMORROW'S
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Vallorcine | Chamonix Mont-Blanc | Les Houches | Servoz



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For more information

www.chamonix-mont-blanc.fr/
www.leshouches.fr
www.vallorcine.com
www.espace-mont-blanc.com
www.servoz.com



The landscape

Taking measures to preserve the quality of the landscape and to gain recognition from the local community.

- ▶ The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme

A town in the mountains?

We live in the heart of an exceptional landscape that has been shaped over the centuries.

Pictures from the beginning of the 20th century show a valley that was largely natural, rural and scattered with hamlets.

These days, it has become more and more urban, with a high number of visitors who have a considerable impact not only on the valley floor, but also at forest level and at higher altitudes.

The implementation of substantial tourist facilities and the opening of motorways to ease access to the valley and the Mont Blanc tunnel have led to a very high level of visitors and transit. The impact of these infrastructures on the landscape is clear to see.

In the space of a few decades, the mountain hamlets and villages have been turned into urban and suburban areas. Resident and tourist populations have adapted their life-styles to this change.

Action

In urban areas, the 4 municipalities are putting a variety of schemes into operation:

- ▶ making the notion of “landscape preservation” (woods or groves, glades, etc.) an integral part of the 4 Local Town Planning Schemes,
- ▶ the burying of networks underground,
- ▶ urban development (wooden signposts, roundabouts, pedestrian areas, flowers, etc.),
- ▶ the renovation and preservation of local heritage (churches, chapels, oratories, basins, bread ovens, etc.) and of architectural quality,
- ▶ the preservation of wetlands and peat bogs.

Higher up, efforts are underway to minimise the impact of skiing areas on the landscape. Once the work to create or modify ski slopes has been completed, ski lift companies will carry out replanting programmes and integrate the building into the landscape.

Forest management, the maintenance and way-marking of mountain paths and trails, together with river cleaning provide seasonal employment.

For more information

www.caue74.fr



What action can I take?

- ✓ Become aware of the nature of the landscape, observe and understand.
- ✓ In their own way, everyone can contribute to making the valley beautiful (flowers, cleanliness, planting local species of hedges and plants, etc.)

Nature & biodiversity

Preserving and promoting
the historic, cultural, natural and
landscaped heritage.

► The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme



A living land shaped over
generations

In 1986, a new word appeared to designate the extraordinary variety of species living on earth: biodiversity.

In the Mont Blanc massif, which varies in altitude from 800m to 4,808m, it has taken millions of years to sculpt these lands of such differing geological nature and exposition. Shaped by glaciers, they have a unique, symbolic nature and bring together a particularly rich diversity of wildlife and plant life. All the symbolic species of the Alps can be found there, including golden eagles, lammergeyers, ibex and marmots.

But the massif is not just a landscape! It is a living and developing environment that people have been respecting, maintaining and managing for generations.

Through their work and ingenuity, the inhabitants of these valleys have managed to develop the land without upsetting its balance and organise

their lives so that they can make the most of the somewhat limited agricultural potential. This heritage is now our responsibility.

🔄 Action

The preservation of selected areas via the Natura 2000 network is an efficient means of protection, as exemplified by Les Houches, which signed the first Natura 2000 forest contract in order to study, preserve and develop the forest environment, restore areas favourable to black and hazel grouse and protect and restore peat bogs.

Nature preserves enable the valley to continually develop its educational resources. This is carried on locally by initiatives such as the school at Servoz that follows plant life and climate change with its “Phénoclim” station, which was set up with the help of the Altitude Ecosystem Research Centre (CREA) of Chamonix-Mont-Blanc.

As regards the ski slopes, animal wintering areas have been created and, in sensitive areas, ski lift

What about me?

I promise to:

- ✓ Keep silent when in sensitive areas.
- ✓ Follow the recommendations of nature specialists.
- ✓ Be aware of, recognise and respect animal and plant life.
- ✓ Take my rubbish home.

cables are fitted with a system to protect birds (grouse and ptarmigan).

The request of Mont Blanc to be classed as a UNESCO World Heritage site, initiated by Espace Mont Blanc and supported by the association Pro Mont Blanc, can be seen as a further asset to enhance this unique region. Note, also, the creation of an interactive atlas of Mont Blanc at the Vallot Observatory.

Over 1,000 plant species have been recorded in the massif at an altitude of between 500 and 3,800 metres.

Over a 50 year period, a 300-metre rise in the ecosystems has already been measured!

For more information

www.crea.hautesavoie.net
www.pro-mont-blanc.org
www.asters.asso.fr/

Tourism & the landscape

Redirecting our tourism towards one that is sustainable, diversified and respectful of the land and its inhabitants.

► The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme



For more information

www.sommets-tourisme.org

www.alposcope.com

www.riviere-arve.org



Mont Blanc faces increasingly complex economic pressure

The primary motivation of our visitors is to look at the landscape, the attraction of which lies in its natural and unspoilt character. They want to stay in a natural mountain environment, but also seek to enjoy modern facilities. We have responded to this by increasing the number of infrastructures.

Pressure on towns, extended skiing areas, road infrastructures and over-visited sites... tourist development has many impacts that call for serious reflection and major changes.

As both a living environment and an economic resource, the exceptional landscape of the Haute Vallée de l'Arve requires commitments that live up to its heights.

What values are our visitors looking for today? Are we ready to call into question the develop-

ment methods dating from the 60s and the 70s? These are the questions we will have to ask ourselves.

🔄 Action

Discussions by local authorities, economic policymakers and professionals involved in tourism, energy and transport have resulted in potential collective solutions regarding the change to be envisaged.

Municipalities in the valley have implemented Local Town Planning Schemes that include a firm willingness to preserve long-lasting agricultural activity and to develop eco-tourism. In Servoz, the municipality has turned down the installation of ski lifts leading from the village to Plaine-Joux.

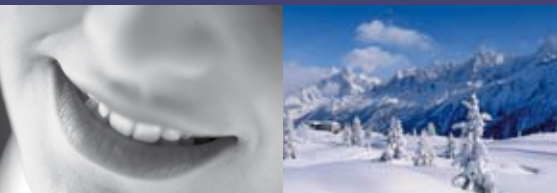
Les Houches and Servoz have forbidden water sports in the Gorges de la Diosaz for safety reasons, but also to preserve the unspoilt area. Chamonix-Mont-Blanc has just agreed to open

the subject of development of sustainable tourism to consultation. The wheels are now turning and the management of change has become a key issue.

Furthermore, the Sivom of the Haute Vallée de l'Arve is working together with the SM3A (a PPP development association for the Arve and surrounding area) on an eco-tourism development project, renovating the rural Léman-Mont Blanc path.

What about us?

- ✓ Changing your mindset also involves changing how you spend your leisure time and choosing activities that are kind to the natural environment.

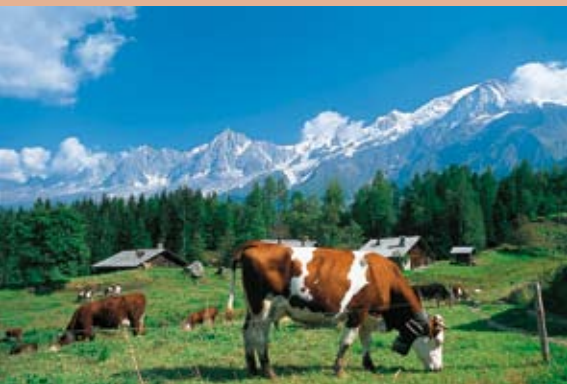




Is the local economy overheating?

With its 15,000 year-round inhabitants, 120,000 resident holidaymakers and a high number of day-trippers, requirements in terms of shops, services and accommodation are substantial. Tourism is the most important economic sector of the valley, leading the way for services, shops and craft industries.

Farming, the original activity, has practically disappeared in the 4 municipalities, having also fallen victim to the pressure of rising demand for land. Land-use conflicts between agricultural activity and urbanisation restrict farm expansion.



Action

In the face of a sharp increase in population movement that adds to imbalance and reinforces loss of identity, the creation of local jobs could be a first step. Yet this is not so easy today, given housing problems. What can be done to keep young people in the valley and how can we take advantage of their enthusiasm and skills? Ideas for marketing tourist services are currently being considered. One option is to give a new boost to off-peak periods to make some of the seasonal jobs permanent.

As regards farming, the Local Town Planning Schemes are valuable assets in the fight against agricultural depopulation. The renovation and development of mountain pastures is underway (with the support of private partnerships). Putting sheep and goats to graze on pastures threatened by reforestation or abandonment, developing farm tourism and local produce, and harmonizing tourist and agricultural developments while

supporting local projects, are among the options being considered by municipalities, which are all committed to projects to help farmers settle in the area.

Over 90% of jobs are in the tertiary sector (of which 40% are in hotels / restaurants, 15.5% in retail and 9.3% in ski lifts)

For more information

www.maisondelalpage.net
www.reseau-empreintes.com



What about us?

- ✓ Eat local produce, use locally-made products and shop in the valley, thus reducing the number of goods transported by lorry.
- ✓ When walking and hiking, respect the work of farmers. Close gates when crossing grazing areas, do not frighten the animals and take your rubbish home with you.

Solidarity

Implementing measures
that strengthen social cohesion
in the area.

► The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme



Complex life choices

Solidarity is one of the key avenues in sustainable development. Indeed, it's difficult to imagine that a region can care about protecting its environment without taking into account social cohesion in the area involved.

It is increasingly difficult to live or settle in the Haute Vallée de l'Arve. With rising property prices, high rents and consumer prices, together with ever-longer driving distances, daily life for the inhabitants is often difficult.

🕒 Action

The municipalities are currently involved in an in-depth review of the options, aware that the domino effect of economic impact leads to inhabitants moving further away and increases the risk of the area losing its identity and of the social fabric unravelling. As well as the subject of social housing that concerns both permanent and seasonal workers, there are other opportunities

to introduce measures that recreate social ties, such as the building programme in Chamonix that will house single mothers together with the elderly.

As a sign of the times, the SIVOM HVA is working to set up a grocery store for low-income families. In line with the emergency accommodation already in place in the Presbytery at Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, and in association with the Secours Populaire and the Secours Catholique, the municipality is working to maintain links with the homeless by organizing meetings and discussions. Furthermore, a local safety-crime prevention contract has led to the creation of a solidarity network to support young people in need.

Access to sports and leisure activities for young people is encouraged by municipalities and ski lift operators who have implemented programmes such as "Boardsports for all" (Ça glisse pour tous) or the "Child and youth contract" (contrat Enfance jeunesse) in partnership with the Family Allowance Office (CAF), which aims to help young people realise their projects in their spare time.

Some of the ski resorts are now accessible to disabled visitors. Ski lifts, hotels, shops, places of cultural interest and leisure facilities are gradually being adapted to meet the needs of disabled visitors who are justifiably expressing their determination not to be left at the side of the slopes. But there's still a lot to be done!

Associations are working daily to rebuild links between worlds separated by economic pressures or accidents of life. "An Everest for everyone"

(A chacun son Everest) led by Christine Janin, "Via the mountains" (En passant par la Montagne) created by the mountaineer Marc Batard or "A field of summits" (Champ des Cimes) aim to allow individuals, often young people, who live in difficult situations of social exclusion, who have dropped out of school or who are ill or disabled, to find motivation in the mountains to overcome the situation. Working with these associations, the municipalities of the valley give these people in need the opportunity to take part in integration workshops.

For more information

www.montagne.org
www.achacunsoneverest.com
www.humatem.org
www.ifremmont.com
www.champdescimes.com
www.loisirs-assis-evasion.com

How can I help?

- ✓ By being attentive to vulnerable people and their requirements, clearing snow from an elderly person's house or helping them with daily tasks, for example.
- ✓ A shopkeeper in Les Houches donates a percentage from each mountain-bike sold to a local environmental association. An example we could perhaps all follow.
- ✓ Favour year-round, rather than seasonal rentals.

Water

Improving the management of environmental resources and limiting pollution to water and air caused by noise, waste and energy.

► The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme



For more information

www.riviere-arve.org

www.cieau.com

Mountain water, a complex resource

From waterfalls to neve, glaciers to mountain streams, and avalanches to torrential rivers, water is everywhere, shaping the mountains as it flows. It has made the Mont Blanc massif a veritable water tower for human use... not only locals of the valley, but also inhabitants of the entire region, from both the Savoy departments to the Valais and the Aosta valley.

Water has any number of uses, ranging from hydroelectricity, agriculture, artificial snow and domestic consumption to the needs of industry and local communities...

Snow coverage methods are changing and a review is in progress regarding water in the mountains. With snow cannons and lakes built to supply the water for them, how can the resource be protected and managed, whilst preserving the quality of the water?

Higher up in the mountains, guides and mountaineers see the effects of pollution on the ice and snow on a daily basis.

🔄 Action

Whether the water is at the highest altitudes, in the rivers or in their taps, the inhabitants of the Haute Vallée de l'Arve are very attentive to water quality. Using grit instead of salt on the roads, as well as cleaning rivers and preserving streams in partnership with fishing associations, helps to protect this natural resource. This is an instinctive reaction for mountain-dwellers!

Following the installation of a state-of-the-art water treatment plant in Les Trabets, the municipalities of the Haute Vallée de l'Arve have carried out a number of projects, including connecting the skiing area and hamlets to the waste water treatment system, protecting the water catchment area and limiting activity around this area.

The SIVOM HVA has introduced measures to protect underground water tables and rivers.

The SM3A has undertaken significant work at the source of the Arve at Les Posettes, where the shale was plugging the water, endangering wildlife and affecting its clarity.

How can we take action?

- ✓ Avoid flushing cleaning or DIY products down the sink or drain... this will help the running of the water treatment station all the more! The right place for them is the local waste reception centre!
- ✓ In the height of summer, avoid using water when not completely necessary, such as for pools and watering the garden. You can manage without... and reduce your daily consumption, as well as collecting rain water.

As regards ski lift installations, water used for artificial snow mainly comes from an EDF pressure pipe (water from the Argentière and Le Tour glaciers) without harnessing rivers or streams. The water is then returned to its natural environment on the same side of the mountain from which it was taken, without any transformation that could harm the environment.

The higher mountain regions are also involved in improvement programmes with the introduction of "clean" amenities at refuges and mountain sites.

At the 16th Eco Action Trophy organised by the association 'Les Ecomaires de France', the SM3A, together with the 40 municipalities that form the association, including Servoz, Les Houches, Chamonix-Mont-Blanc and Vallorcine, won the 1st national prize in the autumn of 2006 in the 'Development' category.

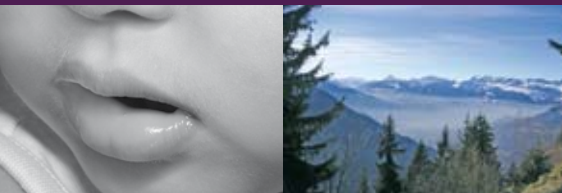
This prize was awarded to all the elected members, mayors and representatives of SM3A for their intermunicipal commitment and their 11-year involvement in the realisation and the implementation of exemplary environmental policies for the management of the Arve through its River Contract.



Air

Improving the management of environmental resources and limiting pollution to water and air caused by noise, waste and energy.

► The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme



What air do you breathe?

We breathe in 15 to 20 thousand litres per day. We only have to be deprived of air for a few seconds for it to have an effect on us.

So taking care of it means taking care of ourselves.

The Haute Vallée de l'Arve is one of the most exposed sites of the Alps. The fact that it is hemmed in makes it difficult for all the pollutants to be evacuated, especially in winter. International road traffic, a considerable source of pollution, is the first to be blamed, with the area surrounding the Route Blanche suffering from the consequences. Yet central heating, car journeys and the burning of different kinds of waste also contribute to poorer air quality. This issue, which greatly concerns both public health and the protection of natural sites, is of major concern to the inhabitants of the Haute Vallée de l'Arve.

Action

Elected representatives, professionals and associations have been joining forces for several years to limit the transport of goods by road, which has a huge impact on local pollution levels. This long-term programme, however, has not prevented a wide range of local projects from being drawn up.

To improve transport coordination in the valley, an Urban Transport Plan has been launched. In addition, clean energy buses and vehicles are becoming more widespread, public transport is free and accessible to everyone and the network of cycle paths is gradually being expanded.

The arrival of natural gas means that our central heating now pollutes less. In Les Houches, a variety of incentives are offered to residents who wish to use renewable energy. Generators have been replaced by solar installations to supply electricity to all the mountain tourist sites and refuges. The incineration of waste from the valley meets the strictest standards imposed on inter-municipal equipment. Local by-laws are increasingly forbidding garden bonfires and the burning of branches in forests, which goes hand in hand with the development of garden refuse collection at waste reception centres.

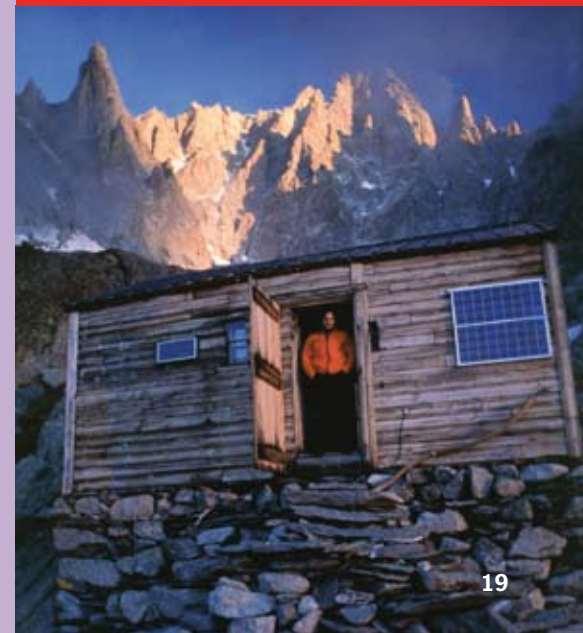
For more information

www.atmo-rhonealpes.org

What about us?

To move into the new “air age”, it's up to each and every one of us to act as a responsible citizen:

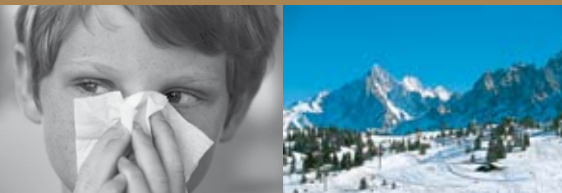
- ✓ Walk, cycle or take public transport, rather than drive.
- ✓ Choose a non-polluting form of central heating.
- ✓ Drive more slowly and more gently. Choose clean cars that use less fuel.
- ✓ Don't burn garden waste: start a compost bin or take it to the local waste reception centre.



Waste

Improving the management of environmental resources and limiting pollution to water and air caused by noise, waste and energy.

► The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme



Ever more waste!

In France, we each produce 440 kilos of waste per year (1.2 kilos per day).

Packaging makes up 30% of this waste. We are producing more and more waste, + 30% in 15 years!

This waste needs to be taken away, sorted, recovered or incinerated.

The SITOM of the Mont Blanc valleys processes the household waste of 20 municipalities. This covers 60,000 year-round residents and up to 200,000 at the height of the tourist season. The total waste from this area (glass, packaging, household waste and waste taken to waste reception centres) reached 65,245 tons in 2006, of which 30,000 tons came from the 7 waste reception centres. Even though there is still progress to be made, recycling is now part of the daily lives of the inhabitants of the Haute Vallée de l'Arve.

A little higher up, on the ski slopes, walking trails and even on the glaciers, traces of disrespectful behaviour can still be seen.

Refuges without wardens and glaciers are scattered with junk of all sorts, showing that protecting the environment is not necessarily a priority for mountain-lovers.

🔗 Action

The more you sort your waste, the better we recycle... This message is now well understood and more and more inhabitants in the valley sort their waste... as do the shopkeepers, whose cardboard boxes are sent directly to waste reception centres, instead of piling up on the pavements. At the end of the chain, sludge from the water treatment plants is either burnt or mixed with compost to produce highly effective fertilizer.

Higher up in the mountains, ski lift companies, associations and users are trying as best they can to remove all traces of old installations, such as concrete foundations, pylons and cables.

What about me?

- ✓ As an organizer of cultural or sports events, I'll introduce recycling into my planning.
- ✓ Before leaving for the mountains, I'll always slip a bin bag into my rucksack... and bring down my rubbish!
- ✓ I'll eat local produce... that means less packaging and more pleasure... I'll favour regional fair-trade!

Altitude waste, from restaurants, refuges and ski lifts, are increasingly sorted and, once they are brought down, they are processed by specialised companies. Awareness campaigns are becoming more common in the mountains. It is now essential for both casual walkers and experienced mountaineers bring their waste back down with them.

The Guides of Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, ski lift companies, ski schools and clubs, the CREA, the Club Alpin Français, "Via the Mountains", associations, professionals and locals all join forces each year to carry out large-scale projects to clean mountain sites and areas surrounding refuges ...with the hope each time that it won't be needed the following year!

For more information

www.ademe.fr
www.ecologie.gouv.fr
www.cniid.org
www.mountain-riders.org
www.novergie.fr

Energy

Improving the management of environmental resources and limiting pollution to water and air caused by noise, waste and energy.

▶ The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme



Things are hotting up!

Over two centuries, mankind has drawn heavily on the planet's fossil fuel reserves, which had been built up over millions of years. Our lifestyles mean that we consume 3 times more than the planet's resources can offer.

Owing to its mountainous position and the high number of tourists visiting the valley, we use up a lot of energy on heating, lighting, transport, etc. This consumption has an effect on the environment and on the quality of life within the valley.

Traditional fuels, such as electricity, oil and gas are among those most used. Wood, a renewable energy source, is still used for individual heating. The use of solar or geothermal energy is being developed, but is still very limited. Individual awareness is progressing, but has not yet resulted in the widespread use of alternative energy sources and means of transport.

Action

The municipalities are looking at cleaner heating systems and are considering using renewable energy for all municipal buildings. The Local Town Planning Scheme of Les Houches allows the plot ratio (COS) to be increased by 20% for new buildings that fulfil energy performance criteria or that are fitted with renewable energy equipment. A municipal wood-fired boiler can use wood from its forests that is difficult to sell.

An increasing number of individual houses are taking advantage of this offer and the number of houses heated by geothermal or solar power, supported by local authorities, is on the increase. Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, Les Houches and soon Servoz are extending their gas network and are encouraging its use to lower dust and CO₂ emissions.

As an alternative to generators, high mountain refuges are finding a variety of solutions, including a micro-power station at the Lac Blanc, connection to the Aiguille du Midi electrical network for the Refuge des Cosmiques and the development of solar power at Albert 1er. And let's not forget the snack bar chalets, with their gradual installation of solar panels.

Ski lift companies have decided to progressively equip their machinery with systems that can run using organic oils.

In terms of energy and money, the savings for both individuals and municipalities are pretty obvious.

How can I help?

- ✓ Examples to follow: Météo France-Chamonix has cut its electricity bill by 30% by applying three rules: lowering the air conditioning, replacing cathode-ray computer screen with flat screens and limiting the number of lights switched on.
- ✓ Hunters in Servoz have fitted solar panels on the roofs of their hunting cabins.
- ✓ You can also reasonably lower the heating, switch off electrical appliances instead of leaving them on stand-by and fit low-energy light bulbs.

For more information

www.ademe.fr

<http://energie-montagne.org>

www.prioriterre.org



Transport

Making communication easier
between the valleys whilst reducing
motor transport pollution.

▶ The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme



Did you really say 6.5 million vehicles?

18,000 vehicles per day (over 6.5 million per year) use the RN 205 between Le Fayet and Chamonix-Mont-Blanc (with 31,000 on the busiest days). 13% of these are heavy goods vehicles.

5,100 vehicles use the Mont Blanc tunnel every day (with 9,895 on the busiest days), 33% of which are heavy goods vehicles.

Every day, thousands of journeys, essential links between the four municipalities and other valleys, are organised in the Vallée de l'Arve.

Internal traffic accounts for 75,000 to 85,000 vehicle journeys per day in the summer, 10 to 15% more than in the winter. Between 80 and 90 delivery trucks drive into the centre of Chamonix-Mont-Blanc every day.

90% of journeys within the Haute Vallée de l'Arve are made by private cars, despite the provision of free and easily accessible public transport.

🔄 Action

The voluntary realisation of an urban transport plan in 2004 (normally compulsory for cities of over 100,000 inhabitants) has resulted in the setting of targets to be reached by 2015. The main aim is to predominantly favour the development of public rail transport. The backbone project, which has been baptised the "snow tramway" is a plan to eventually provide a train service every 20 minutes

between Les Bossons and Vallorcine, and later to Les Houches and Servoz. Public bus transport is to be adapted so as to provide a link between the proposed rail transport and the main tourist areas.

Measures are already underway to reduce individual car traffic, including free access to buses and trains for valley residents (and for tourists during their holiday, using the "carte d'hôte") and adding an extra 4 trains per day to the SNCF line.

The cost of these measures is borne by the four municipalities, with the support of the Rhône Alpes Region and the ski lift companies who cover 2/3 of bus transport costs during the winter season.

At the same time, the expansion of car-sharing with the local organisation of meeting points, together with the creation of cycle lanes and footpaths add to the development of eco-travel.

To encourage people to stop using their cars for town centre travel, Chamonix-Mont-Blanc has introduced a free shuttle service using green buses fitted with particle filters. An on-demand transport project is also running on a trial basis to link valley hamlets over the 4 municipalities. In addition, a system has been introduced to limit the number of helicopter and plane flights over the massif and professional helicopter use is kept to a strict minimum.

For more information

www.transbus.org

www.empreinte-ecologique.com

Use less, spend less

If I drive at 100km/h, instead of at 130km/h, over a 30km stretch of the Autoroute Blanche, I cut my emissions by around 30% and my journey time increases by only 4 minutes.

As a result, my fuel bill is cut by 30% and I'm helping to make the road a safer place.

How can I help?

- ✓ Use public transport as much as possible.
- ✓ If you use your car, drive carefully and keep to the speed limit.
- ✓ Choose clean cars that use less petrol... and turn off the engine, even if you only stop for a few seconds!

Town planning & housing

Managing land space, urban planning and housing for community-orientated and harmonious socio-economic development.

► The Espace Mont-Blanc Sustainable Development Scheme



With its blocks of flats, new chalet developments, access roads and the standardization of the “mountain-style” model, the traditional landscape has been lost to an urban mountain showcase, ever more distant from the local identity.

Modernising the past

The last-remaining authentic villages and hamlets are trying to preserve the mountain-style culture of their housing. Long gone is the time when each person had their own design regarding architecture and choice of materials. Our life choices are evolving and the valley is changing. Pressure on land use is set to continue for a few years yet, as land requirement for permanent and tourist housing is very high. How can we dissuade speculative property development and encourage land purchases by permanent residents? How can we develop social housing? These questions lie at the heart of the debate on the economic vitality of the valley.

Action

In 2006, the National Mountain Council was given the task of drawing up a “review of the land development pressure and its consequences on the economic vitality of the massifs”. In the meantime, in the Haute Vallée de l’Arve, the municipalities are following the recommendations of the department by investing in social housing, making this issue part of the Local Town Planning Schemes.

The municipality of Chamonix-Mont-Blanc and several local employers (including ski lift companies, hotel owners, sports shopkeepers and urban transport companies) have joined together to form a public-private partnership and have created a residential building in the village of Les Praz, with 56 flats enabling seasonal workers on low-income to benefit from housing allowances. Other projects are being studied, such as in Les Houches, where a building is being converted to lodgings for seasonal workers and low-rent flats. Hotel and restaurant owners are now aware of these difficulties: the Accor group has created accommodation for its staff within its own hotels.

In its Local Town Planning Scheme, Servoz has stated its intention to reserve 30% of all building projects carried out by property developers for social housing.

For more information

www.haute-savoie.pref.gouv.fr

An example to follow?

- ✓ An inhabitant of Servoz has chosen to let out the chalet he has renovated year-round to an employee working in the valley.



TOGETHER LET'S DESIGN TOMORROW'S VALLEY

Educating and raising awareness

Today, municipalities, social and professional representatives, youth workers, primary and secondary school teachers, associations and local residents are working towards educating and raising awareness of environmental issues.

A few examples...

The municipality of Les Houches has created a geological footpath. A Nature Club organises events and everyone gets together for the annual World Earth Festival (Festival mondial de la terre), not forgetting the Intermunicipal Festival "Rencontres et Nature" organised each year by Les Houches and Servoz.

Chamonix-Mont-Blanc and its partners support the Aiguilles Rouges Natural Preserve, a symbolic place for discovering the mountain environment.

The Compagnie du Mont Blanc organises a number of exhibitions at Montenvers that give everyone a chance to find out more about the largest glacier in France (7km long!) and Alpine nature.

Vallorcine, the SIVOM HVA and the community centre (MJC) offer environmental workshops and programmes to raise awareness about the cleaning of sites.



The SITOM and its coordinators organise lessons on recycling to local primary schools, whilst the SIVOM HVA organises visits to the water treatment station at Les Trabets.

The school at Servoz regularly takes part in the "clean up our paths" day. Walks and workshops on the subject of water are held regularly.

Visits to farms in the valley, such as that of Pascal Payot in Les Houches or the 3 Ours farm in Vallorcine, lead to a better understanding of what is involved in running a mountain farm, a real guarantee of the quality of our food.

The National Ski and Mountaineering School (ENSA) has started to review environmental matters in both the training and the practical activity of mountain professionals.

An increasing amount of information is available from Tourist Offices, hotels, B & B and from shopkeepers. Read this information carefully and pass it on to those around you. It is by introducing concrete measures and taking into account issues of sustainable development in our daily lives that we can measure our ability to make lasting changes in our behaviour.

Other links...

www.defipourlaterre.org

www.greenpeace.fr/impactsclimatiques

www.climatecrisis.net

www.agir21.org/

www.empreinte-ecologique.com

www.respectthemountain.com