

Back to Wilderness

An exhibition of ALPARC, the Alpine Network of Protected Areas

PRESENTATION DOCUMENT

RETOUR DE LA VIE SAUVAGE
IL RITORNO DELLA VITA SELVATICA
RÜCKKEHR DER WILDNIS
NARAVA SE OBNAVLJA
VRNITEV NEOKRNJENE NARAVE
THE WILDERNESS IS BACK



Table of content

Table of content.....	- 3 -
Presentation of the exhibition	- 5 -
Content of the exhibition	- 7 -
Ötzi time	- 7 -
High mountain pasture time.....	- 8 -
Machines Time.....	- 9 -
The time of concrete... and parks.....	- 10 -
Action Time	- 12 -
Visuals of the Exhibition	- 13 -
Phase 1 – Le temps d’Ötzi	- 14 -
Phase 2 – Le temps des alpages	- 15 -
Phase 3 – Le temps des machines.....	- 16 -
Phase 4 – Le temps du béton... et des parcs	- 17 -
Phase 5 – Le temps de l’action.....	- 18 -
Focus 1	- 19 -
Focus 2	- 20 -
Focus 3	- 21 -
Laize 2	- 23 -
Laize 2	- 24 -
Some photos of the exhibition.....	- 25 -

Presentation of the exhibition

L'exposition « **le retour de la vie sauvage** » est une réalisation d'ALPARC (Réseau Alpin des Espaces Protégés) dans le cadre du projet ALPENCOM (ALPine ENVironmental COMMunication, Work Package 4) du programme européen INTERREG IIIB ALPINE SPACE, et en collaboration avec les régions Rhône-Alpes et PACA.

Le message principal de l'exposition est le retour de la « vie sauvage » (Wilderness) dans les Alpes que l'on observe depuis quelques décennies, et sa cohabitation avec les activités humaines. Le public cible est un public familial.

L'exposition amène le visiteur dans un voyage dans le temps, depuis l'arrivée de l'Homme dans les Alpes jusqu'à un futur proche. Le fil rouge de cette exposition est un paysage alpin en évolution avec tous ses éléments naturels et humains. La « vie sauvage » qui était dominante au début est repoussée peu à peu dans des « îlots » et disparaît complètement par endroits à cause des activités humaines pour faire un début de retour depuis la fin du XX^{ème} siècle, notamment grâce aux premières mesures de conservation de la nature et à la création progressive d'espaces protégés dans les Alpes. Mais l'Homme saura-t-il cohabiter avec la vie sauvage dans le futur ?

Pour mieux structurer le message, le temps est divisé **en 5 grandes « phases »** temporelles, selon le type d'activité humaine dominante. Pour chaque phase des mots clés ont été choisis.

La première phase marque l'arrivée de l'Homme dans les Alpes ; elle s'étend de la fin des glaciations jusqu'à vers l'an 1000 et ses mots clés sont **survie et pureté**.

Dans la phase 2 l'Homme s'installe et développe les savoir-faire, les échanges s'intensifient et l'Homme se met au centre (au cœur) de la vie sauvage. Les mots clés sont **respect et adaptation**.

L'exploitation des ressources s'accélère ensuite dangereusement en raison des progrès techniques. Nous sommes dans la phase 3. L'Homme a perdu la crainte et le respect de la nature et pense que ses ressources sont inépuisables. La vie sauvage perd du terrain, les extinctions d'espèces et les dégradations des milieux augmentent. Les mots clés sont **menace et domination**.

Suit ensuite la phase 4, qui correspond plus ou moins au XX^{ème} siècle, pendant lequel l'exploitation irréfléchie s'accélère encore plus, ainsi que les extinctions et la perte de place pour la nature, et où l'on commence à voir naître une prise de conscience ; c'est dans cette phase que la vie sauvage commence à faire un premier et timide retour. Les mots clés sont **surexploitation et paradoxe**.

La forme en spirale de l'exposition (figure 1) permet au spectateur de suivre l'évolution du paysage pour chaque phase sur une paroi, tandis que sur l'autre il pourra approfondir certains détails grâce à des focus. La grande taille des visuels et des paysages représentés et l'espace limité plongent le visiteur dans un univers alpin particulier.

Une fois le premier tour de la spirale effectué, le spectateur peut entrer dans le centre de l'exposition (la dernière phase), où sont représentés le présent et le futur, sous forme de questionnement sur le comportement de chacun vis à vis de la vie sauvage. Les pratiques durables et le destin commun de l'Homme et de la nature sont mis en avant. Au centre de cet espace central, un « sablier » avec une animation projetée sur ses parois symbolise le temps qui passe. Les mots clés sont **équilibre et partage**.

Cette exposition est accompagnée d'une partie audio, sous forme de conte, qui accompagne la partie visuelle dans chaque période historique traversée par le spectateur. Le visiteur peut suivre cette partie grâce à un **audio-guide**.

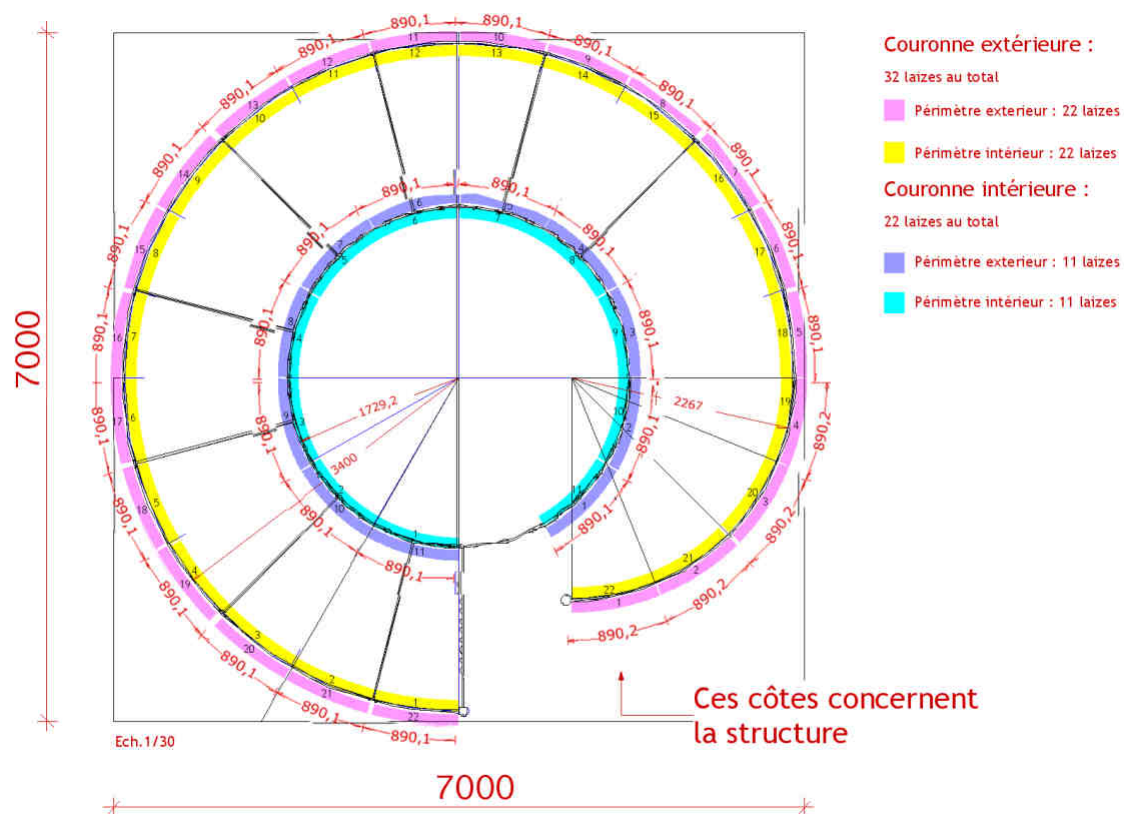


Figure 1 – Forme de l'exposition.



Figure 2 – Vue d'ensemble de la structure

Content of the exhibition

Covering the history of the relations between human specie and the wilderness, the exhibition proposes an evolving alpine landscape, taking the visitor along a temporal trip. The spiral, symbol of the time advancement, is the shape on which the exhibition rest on to guide you trough different epoch, each of them having his own kind of connection between the Humans and the Wilderness.

This trip in 5 times, finish in our future; Are we ready to welcome the Wilderness which is coming back?

Will our behaviours make it possible for the Wilderness to come back and install herself with us?

Note: The following text is the transcription of the audio guided trip.

Ötzi time

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a wonderful place on our beautiful planet Earth. A place where Mother Nature decided to create a miniature paradise: the Alps.

Let me tell you the fascinating story of how it happened.

If you had lived all those many years ago, you wouldn't have recognised much, because Mother Nature took her time forming the Alpine landscape – or rather all the Alpine landscapes. For example, 18,000 years ago, most of these lands were, covered in snow and ice. It sounds fairly inhospitable, doesn't it? But wildlife, which is the collective term for fauna and flora in their natural, original state, still managed to establish itself in some places. There weren't that many mountain dwellers, but a few species were able to survive in the harsh conditions.

Around 12,000 years ago, the climate became warmer, marking the end of what is known as the Würm glaciation period. And so began the great adventure of life.

Mother Nature endowed the Alps with riches and found rest in contemplating the extraordinary diversity found in the Alps. As you know, the Alps bring together a vast selection of scenery, as do other ranges such as the Carpathians, Apennines and Pyrenees. The Alps are the largest mountain system on the continent we now call Europe.

There was no shortage of space, and Mother Nature surpassed herself with a remarkable profusion of life throughout the lands, from the low valleys to the snowy peaks. Massive areas covered with primary forests were home to populations of bison, aurochs, chamois, deer and many predators. Birds of all shapes and sizes criss-crossed the lofty heights above the many different landscapes. Tell me: would you recognise an eagle, a bearded vulture, the woodpecker which nests in tree trunks, or the viper hiding amidst the rocks? Clear water flowed and babbled along rock faces to form mighty rivers full of fish.

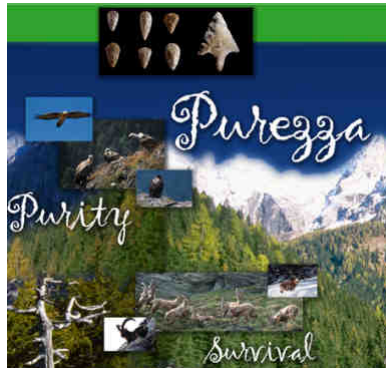
Enchanted by Mother Nature's handiwork, the goddess of humanity came to share in the enjoyment of these Alpine charms. The ever-generous Mother Nature suggested that humanity should settle wherever a place could be found, The goddess was delighted, thanking her benefactress and eager to take up the offer. That was more than 7,000 years ago.

A few small groups of men decided to seek their fortune in these lofty and wild lands. Of course, they did not settle on the snow-covered peaks at over 4000m, nor in the marshy valleys so conducive to diseases like malaria. These early inhabitants settled in sites with more favourable conditions, which



were not subject to flooding and with access to all the resources necessary for survival.

We have a reconstruction of one of those settlers: Ötzi, who lived with a few dozen others like him, moving with their flocks from one pasture to the next.



Mother Nature provided these brave inhabitants with everything they needed to eat, clothe themselves and build shelter. Life was good – but don't be fooled into thinking it was easy. The settlers had to survive in a sometimes very cold climate. Harvests were far from plentiful and famine was often a reality. Ötzi also had to get used to the presence of various animals which were fascinated by their new neighbours. Mankind took up very little space. Everything in this new natural world was a source of fear.

A new link had been added to the chain of Alpine life.

High mountain pasture time

The settlers slowly adapted. At first fearful of this unfamiliar world, humans learnt how to tame their new environment and to make use of all the supplies provided by Mother Nature.

They cleared sections of forest to build homes and collect wood, which was an essential part of life. Don't forget that wood was the only way of keeping warm. Wood from the forests was also used to build houses and create furniture: chairs, tables, beds, plates and bowls, etc. It really was vital.

The forests were replaced by grasslands which soon became home to species suited to living in those conditions: birds like the whinchat, the wheatear and lark, grasses, and meadow and grassland plants. Mother Nature welcomed all newcomers.

Meanwhile, humankind was managing the environment. The inhabitants favoured certain types of tree, and worked with Mother Nature to create new landscapes like the whole forests of chestnut trees in certain Alpine regions. Humans also introduced a range of cereals which evolved to cope with the Alpine conditions.

Mother Nature had filled the Alps with a wide variety of animals suited to living at all altitudes and in all climates. Man successfully developed techniques for keeping certain animals: sheep, cows, goats, bees and rabbits.

Everything was useful and everything was used: meat and milk provided food; skins were used to create clothes and covers – the list goes on.

Certain animals such as horses and cattle were even used to pull agricultural implements to work the fields.

From the Middle Ages onwards, mankind had a system that also respected nature.



The flourishing plant life was also used for clothing, as in the case of flax and hemp, for food and for its medicinal properties. Botanical knowledge was well-established and passed on because recognising the different plants and knowing their properties made life much easier.

There was plenty of water for all living beings and its power was harnessed to drive water mills.

Transport routes multiplied: tracks linked the different valleys to make it easier to travel and transport goods. Those goods included coal and other minerals mined in the mountains. Open quarries and long

underground galleries were used to access the precious veins in the rock.

Of course, all of these activities left their mark.

Ecosystems changed and the lifestyles of many species evolved. Certain animals were unable to adapt to the changes in the Alps and either fled or died out.



Mother Nature noticed all these changes. She was pleased with the human presence, which represented another form of life, but was wary of the consequences of human activities. Mother Nature populated the new man-made habitats but shied away from certain human practices. So, although different species lived side by side, man's attitude was no longer shaped by fear. The inhabitants viewed the Alpine spaces differently, aware that their power over their environment was growing.

Machines Time

As a result of technical progress, some humans become less aware of their environment and stopped respecting Mother Nature. The general attitude was that Mother Nature's bounty could never be exhausted: a serious miscalculation. In certain parts of the Alps, the damage spread rapidly.

Humans used the incredible wealth of the Alps to increase their power and influence over their environment. They were increasingly unwilling to bow to the forces of nature and climatic conditions. Technical progress during the industrial age made life easier and more comfortable. The situation had improved dramatically since the first settlers arrived in the Alps. Hygiene, health, schools and agricultural technologies had developed and spread, allowing the human population to increase.

Man was not aware of just how powerful he was, nor of the repercussions for Mother Nature and himself.

At the time, mankind was obsessed with productivity, and the Alps were seen in terms of potential profit. There were no limits to the unbridled exploitation of the Alpine riches, and no regard for the impact on wildlife. Progress allowed men to compete with Mother Nature.

The delicate balance that had allowed mankind to find a place was ruined: Mother Nature was to pay dearly for her unthinking generosity.

Deforestation continued apace, leaving great scars in the once verdant landscapes. Wood was essential for profitable industry – more was always needed. Thousands of hectares disappeared in the space of a century, leaving behind the odd scanty forest in between farmed fields. These ravaged forests no longer formed a natural protective barrier for humans, so there were now numerous landslides, floods and avalanches which destroyed everything in their path. The animal and plant life suffered terribly as their natural environment was exploited: their habitats and ecosystems were threatened and survival was tough.



Hunting became very popular and thousands of animals were hunted and slaughtered with no thought for the survival of certain species. As hunting boomed, the ibex, deer and many other animal populations were decimated.

Mankind also decided to get rid of the symbols of his nightmares and fears. The wolf, lynx and bear

became prime targets until they vanished from the Alps.

Hunting was no longer simply a means of getting food. Once again, technical progress made things easy for humans which in turn led to excessive behaviour. On the other hand, the hunters also contributed to the protection of certain species and ecosystems. By restricting hunting in large areas for their own use, some hunters successfully sustained the vitality of the wild animals and plants in their preserves.

Many species chose to flee to escape this new threat. Some left the Alps for areas where humans had not yet obliterated all the fruits of Mother Nature's labour. Other animals moved to parts of the Alps where altitude and climate still formed a natural barrier that kept the humans out. Take the chamois, for example. Before human settlers arrived, the chamois mainly lived in the forests and meadows. Around 1900, the chamois fled to the mountain heights, sometimes moving as much as 1200m closer to the summits.

Coal and mineral mining expanded. The mountains were being drained by humans who wanted to get their hands on everything. Vast quantities of goods were transported on the ever-growing number of tracks and railways. The summits were conquered one by one, and mountains forced to bow to allow men and their goods to be transported. The needs of people who didn't live in the Alps also had to be met.

True nature-lovers still existed, but were not yet aware of the dangers to which mankind was exposing Mother Nature. They were interested in studying the fauna and flora. The notion of conservation was limited to creating collections of stuffed animals in museums. The desire to protect wildlife was expressed in rare outbursts linked to the protection of certain landscapes.

The time of concrete... and parks

In the early 20th century, the future looked far from rosy. The outlook was pretty gloomy, in fact. All the signs were alarming. Mother Nature cowered in hidden corners to escape human exploitation and mourn the lost species.

Formerly carefree and exuberant, all living things now hid.

It must be said that there was no real reason for optimism. Noise pollution shattered the peace of the Alps: gun shots, the noise of saws cutting up huge tree trunks, locomotives labouring to pull wagons through the mountains.

Towns with several hundred thousand inhabitants grew up in the valleys but also at mid-altitude, and continued to expand. Dykes and dams were built to protect certain sites and watercourses were diverted. Dams designed for generating hydroelectric power tend to be impassable for many species including salmon and many other fish. The flood protection walls have led to the disappearance of many riverside forests.

Pollution from pesticides, fertilisers and detergents was discharged into the rivers and has eradicated many species and caused others to retreat.

It became easier to transport both people and goods as the number of transport routes expanded. Road traffic increased dramatically from 1960 onwards. The expansion of the towns and infrastructure was another threat: animals found their habitats intersected by roads, and with them came the risk of being run over.



The space allowed to Mother Nature was gradually reduced in favour of human buildings and mile after mile of road. Surrounded, often in very small areas, Mother Nature's future looked bleak as each individual habitat was cut off from the others with no possibility of exchanges. This isolation destabilised the flora and fauna populations by depriving them of certain essential resources. Many species were at great risk: the ibex, chamois, deer, and also the otter as the rivers became polluted.

Intensive farming practices evolved. Mother Nature was abused in order to artificially recreate the conditions needed for a lifestyle that was completely at odds with the Alpine environment. Mankind wanted to be able to have seasonal produce all year round, even if that meant bringing it from the other side of the world. A dangerous whim.

Entire ecosystems were jeopardised as traditional farming practices were abandoned in favour of more efficient methods. The wildlife also suffered, with grasslands falling into disuse after human management had become essential for certain species.

In addition to farming, the Alps also became a leisure venue. This new form of exploitation reached its peak in the latter half of the 20th century, with hundreds of ski resorts, leisure facilities and roads built to accommodate the demands of millions of visitors. Of course, space had to be made to accommodate this influx: habitats were devastated and with them the wealth of animal and plant species they sheltered. Farmlands gave way to new accommodation, again driving out the Alpine fauna and flora.

There was no respite for Mother Nature. Spring, summer, autumn and winter all brought human demands, and those demands grew every year. The last spark of life would soon be extinguished.

Having realised the danger threatening the natural resources in the Alps, certain individuals decided to take action.

Public awareness had to be raised in order to salvage what could still be saved and halt the exponential growth of land use. But it was no easy task.

Observers, scientists and later on politicians took stock of the situation. A few protected areas had been created at the beginning of the 20th century, but they had served as havens of nature and natural beauty. This was not enough: the circumstances and our knowledge had changed. A new generation of protected areas was created in order to provide areas where man and nature could live together in harmony by enforcing certain traditional and sustainable practices. Often local Alpine communities were the initiators and driving force behind the efforts to protect their way of life and their surroundings.

There were now several different kinds of protected area: nature reserves, national and regional parks with certain areas where all human activity was prohibited, and so on.

There were two priorities

The first task was to inform the general public about the alarming situation of nature in the Alps, to make people accept that human activities were to blame, and convince them to change their behaviour. To sound the alarm, in other words. More than purely ethical issues were at stake. Mother Nature is of great assistance to humankind, providing sources of energy, drinking water and valuable ecosystems. Human survival depends on maintaining a balance which respects the natural world. Genuine environmental education had become essential: teaching people how certain simple actions can benefit the natural world – including human beings.

The second task was to protect those areas which were still largely under the rule of Mother Nature so as to limit damage whilst waiting for changes in behaviour to take effect.

Protected areas were created and cooperation programmes set up between states and between protected areas. Many species were



reintroduced including the lynx and the bearded vulture, an extremely endangered bird of prey. These protected species are now helping to improve scientific knowledge and education in relation to environmentally viable practices. The concept of biodiversity was the brainchild of this scientific approach. It refers to the range of wildlife assets, or the variety present in the living world.

These measures proved effective but their impact was not enough to halt the decline. Some species are no longer found in the Alps, but precautionary measures and conservation activities have made it possible for certain wild animals to return, as in the case of the wolf. The wolves came back naturally and of their own accord, largely because of the growth in the deer populations (their favourite food). Of course, it has not always been easy. Humans and certain animals had forgotten how to coexist, and had to get used to one another again.

Action Time

The situation today remains critical. Biodiversity continues to decline apace, although the reappearance of these animals provides a glimmer of hope.

The conflicting pressures of continued unchecked human activity and a genuine desire for conservation means that the fate of biodiversity in the Alps is still in the balance.

Has mankind gone too far? How can we create a harmonious balance between man and nature?

There are solutions: it is up to humankind to make the right choices.

You can make that choice.

From now on, you can determine the future of the natural world, of mankind – your future.

There are many ways of taking action, but also many risks.

In order to conserve Mother Nature's bounty, we need to give her space.

Respect for the Alpine landscapes means giving nature room to breathe and go on to create new riches.

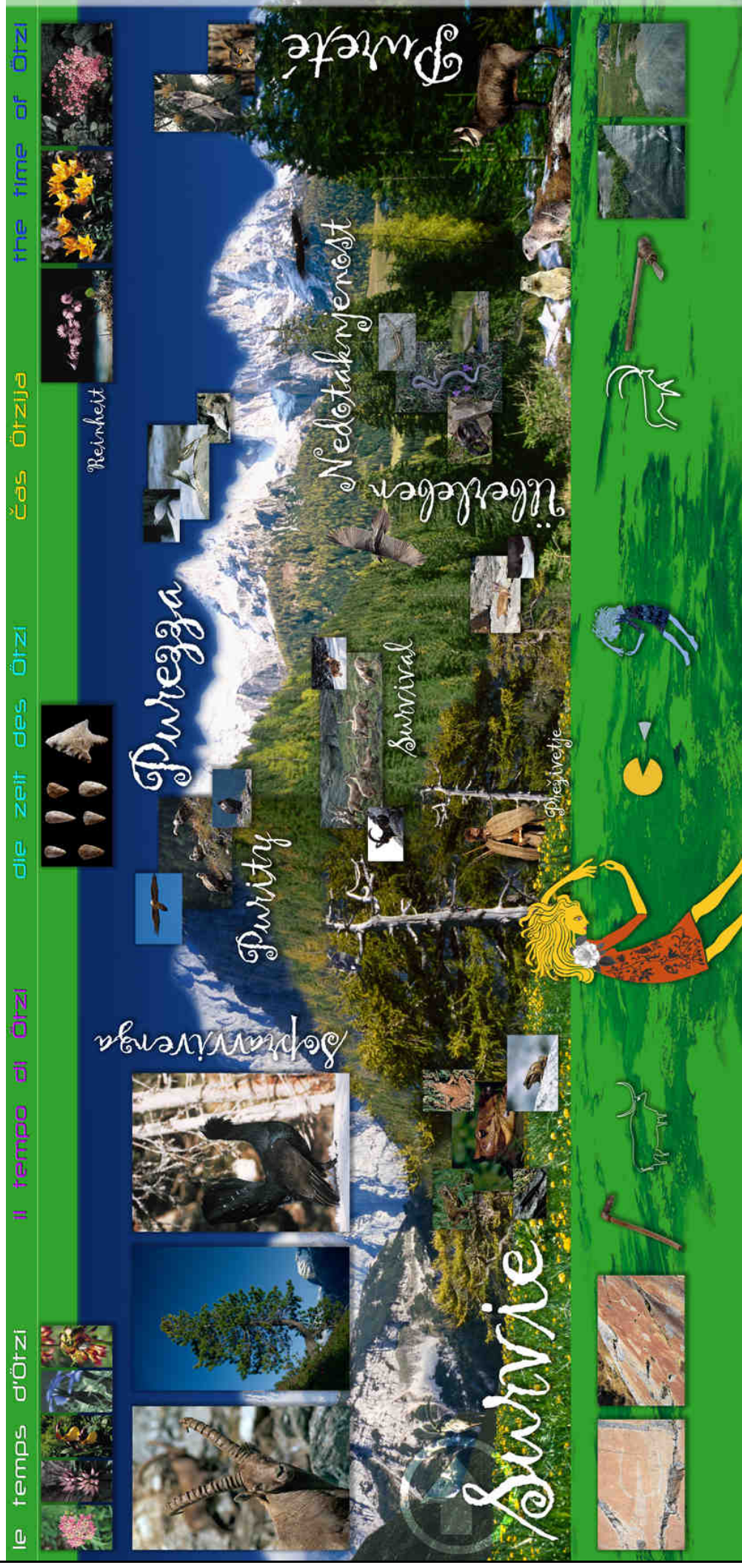
The return of wild plants and animals symbolises the return of life.

By encouraging the return of wildlife, we can make sure mankind has a future.



Visuals of the Exhibition

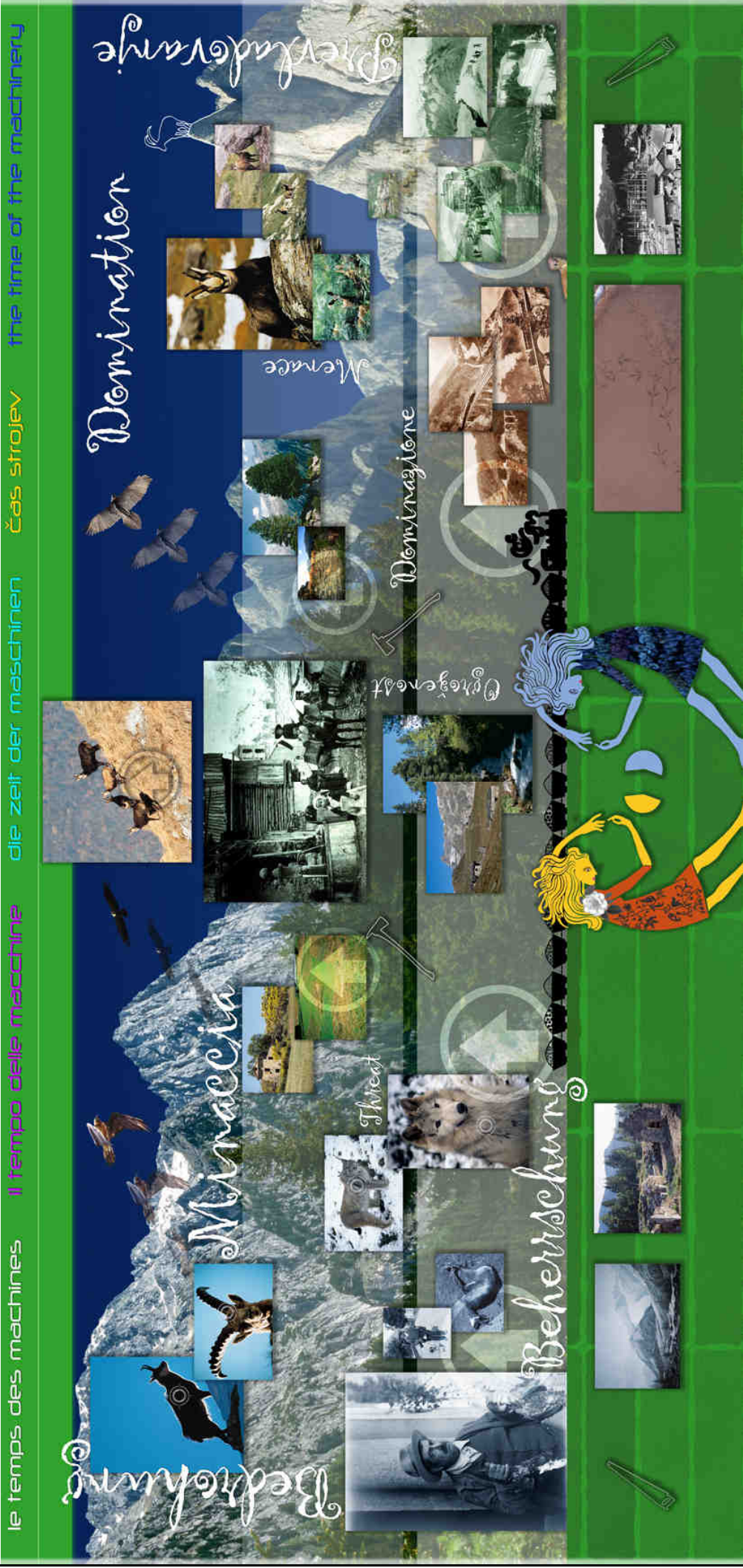
Phase 1 – Ötzi Time



Phase 2 – High mountain pasture time



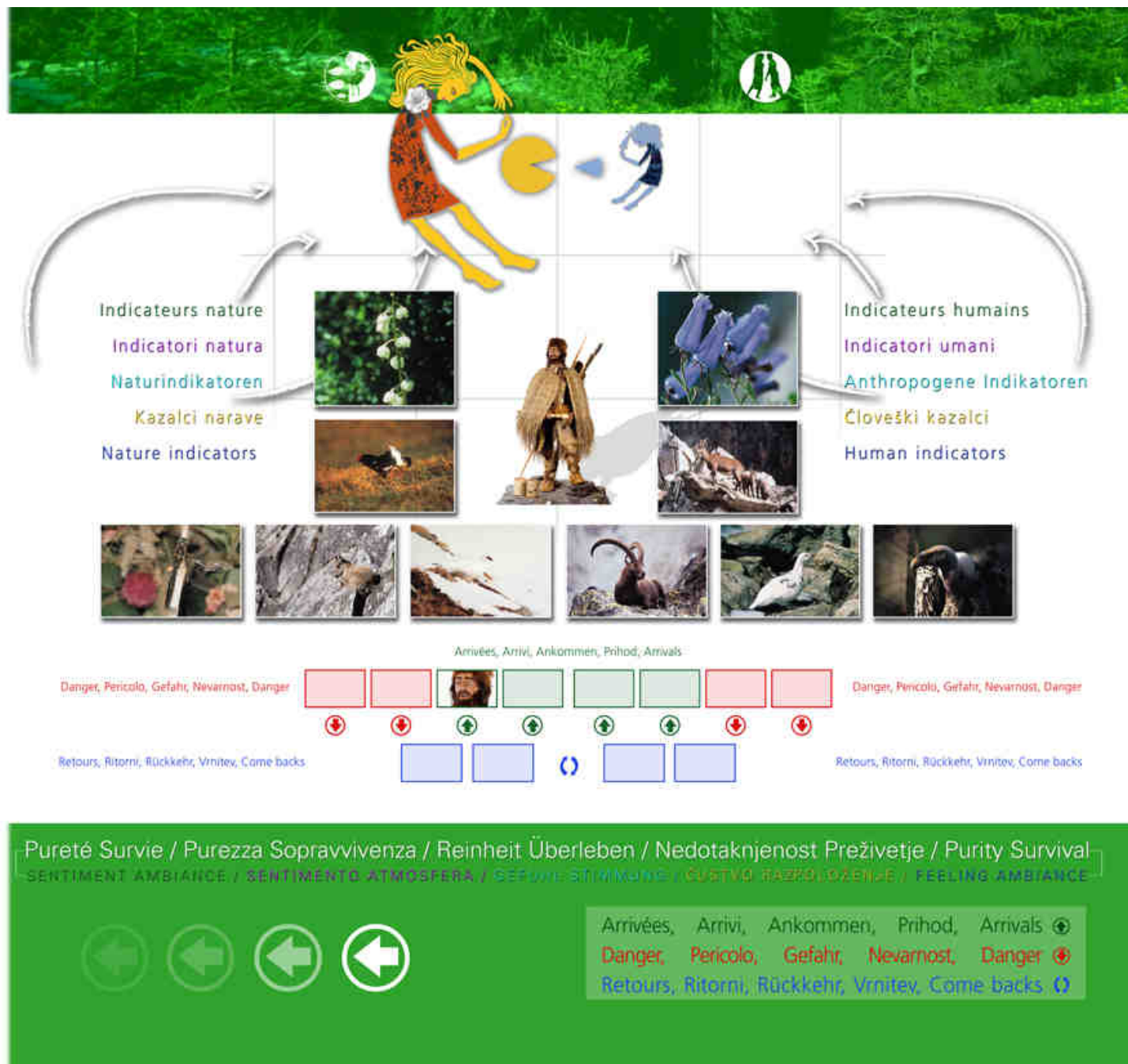
Phase 3 – Machines Time



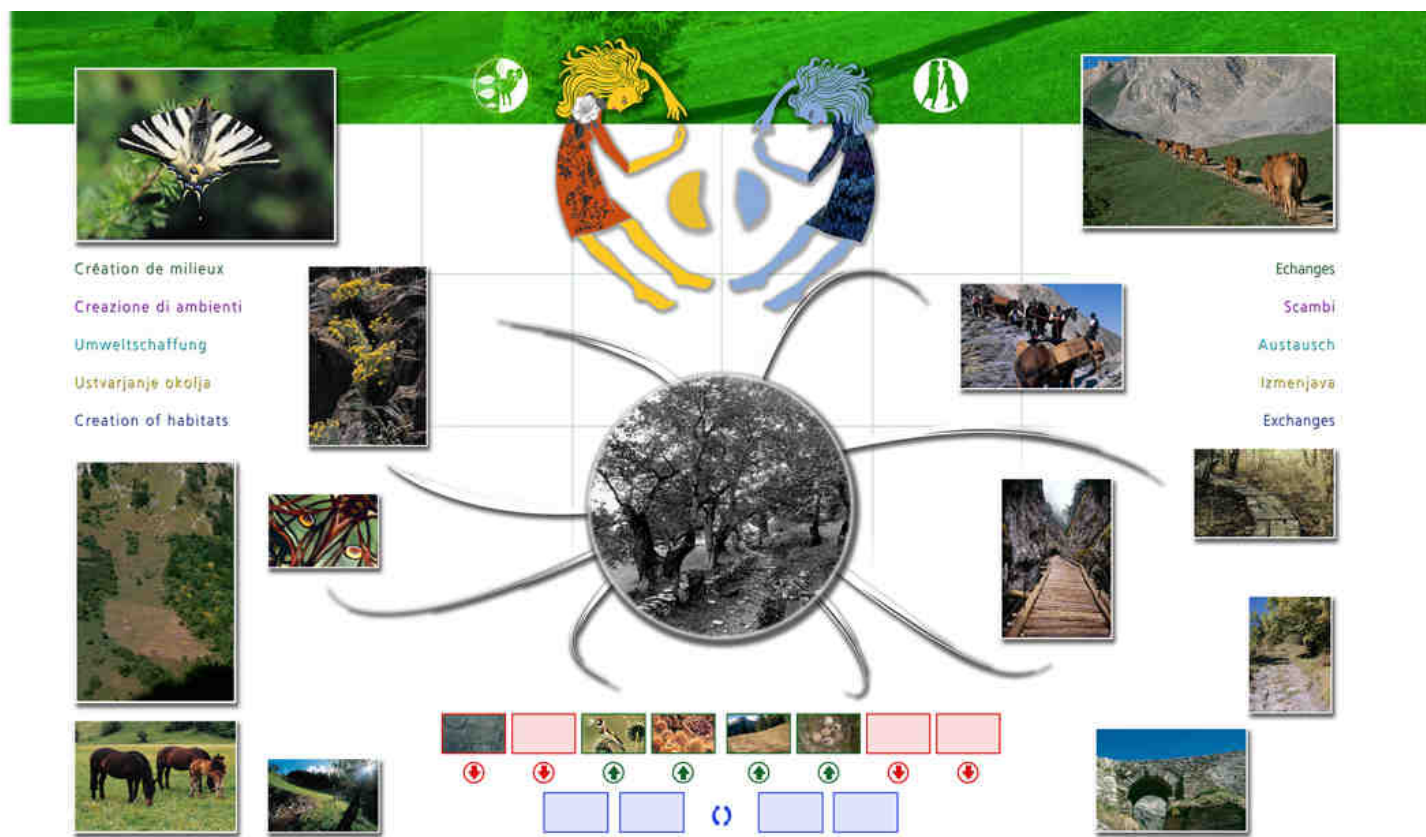
Phase 5 – Action Time



Focus 1



Focus 2

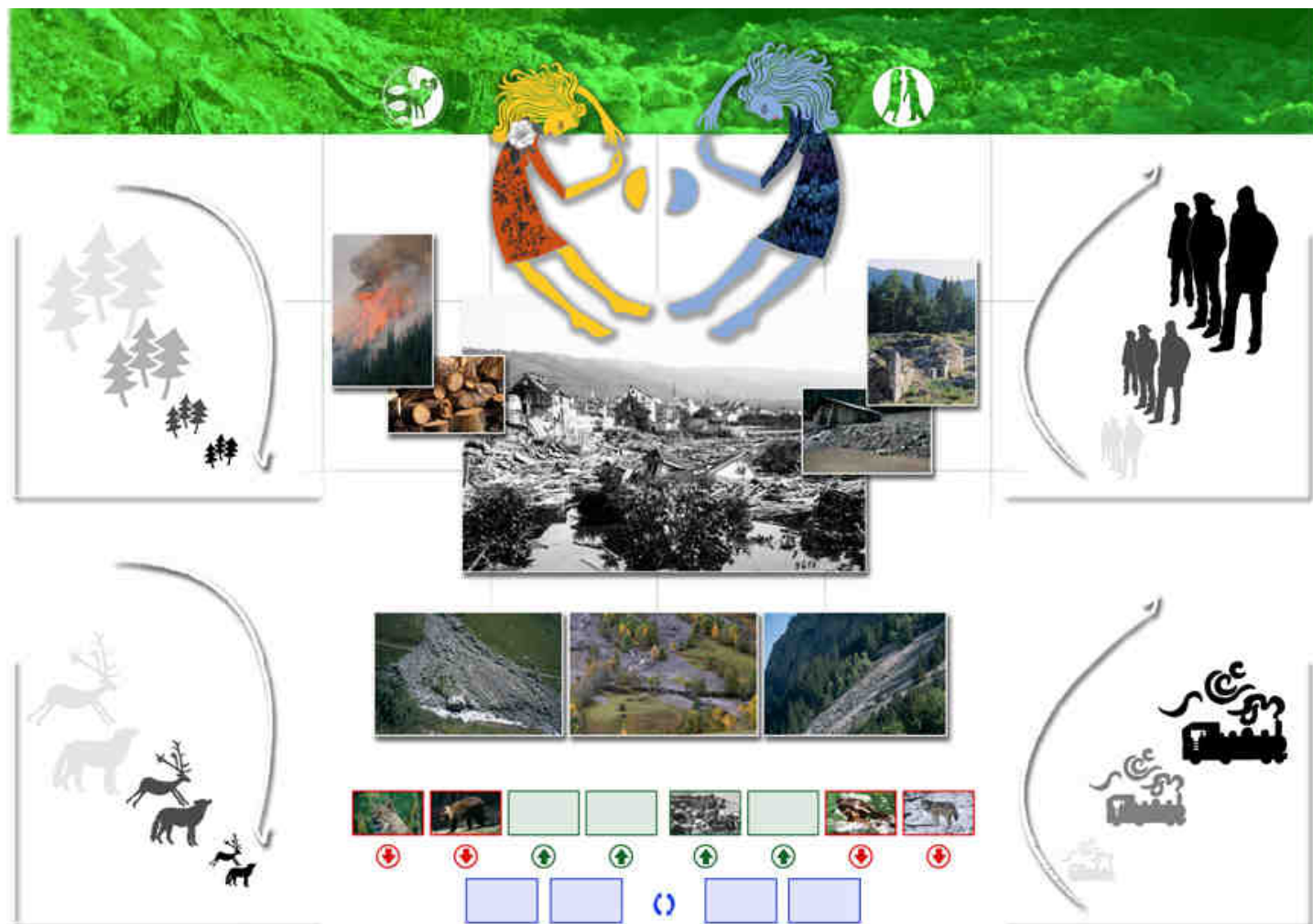


Respect Adaptation / Rispetto Adattamento / Respekt Anpassung / Spoštovanje Prilagajanje / Respect Adaptation



Arrivées, Arrivi, Ankommen, Prihod, Arrivals
Danger, Pericolo, Gefahr, Nevarnost, Danger
Retours, Ritorni, Rückkehr, Vrnitev, Come backs

Focus 3

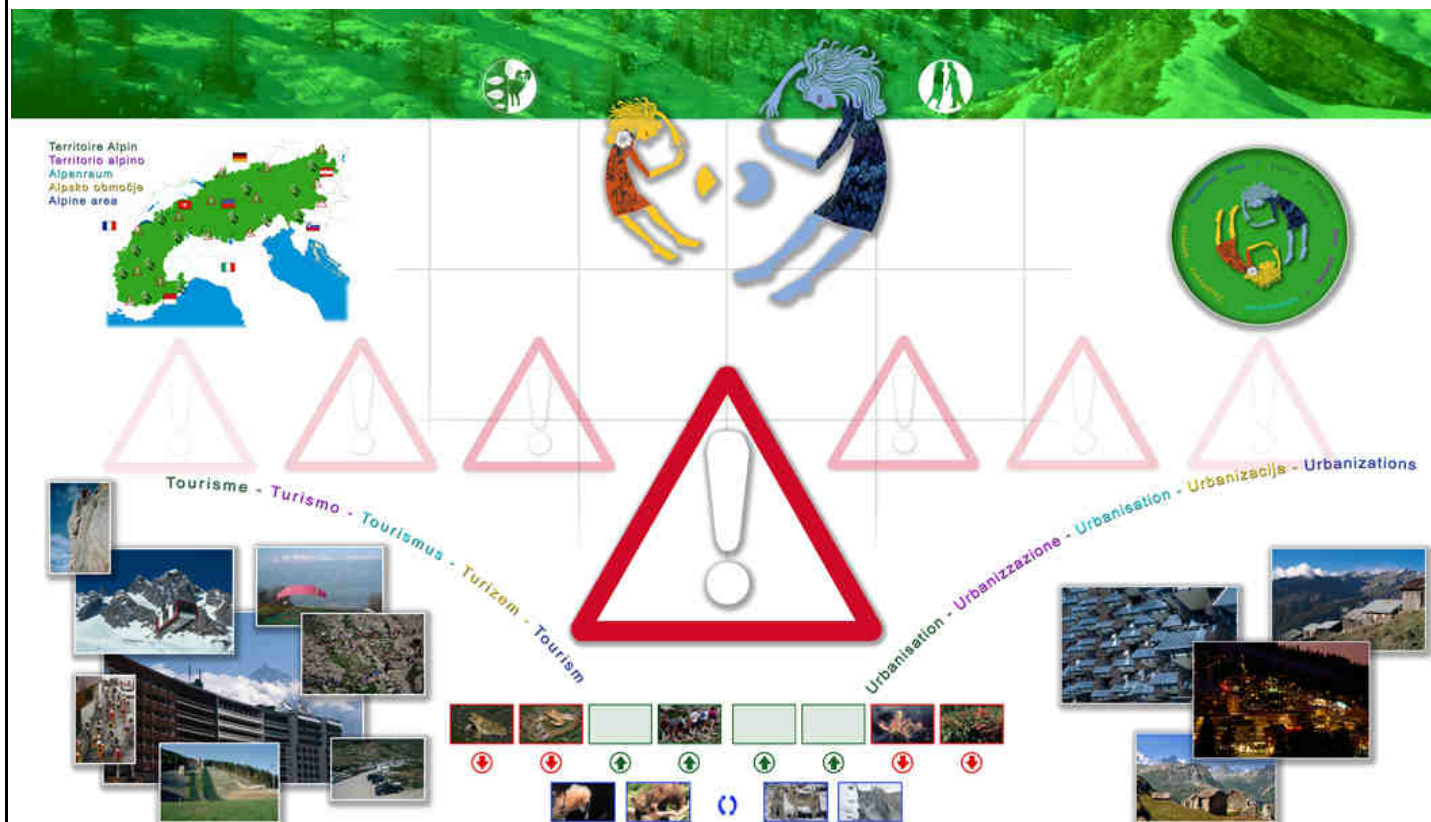


Domination Menace / Dominazione Minaccia / Beherrschung Bedrohung / Prevladovanje Ogroženost / Domination Threat



Arrivées, Arrivi, Ankommen, Prihod, Arrivals Ⓢ
 Danger, Pericolo, Gefahr, Nevarnost, Danger Ⓢ
 Retours, Ritorni, Rückkehr, Vrnitev, Come backs Ⓢ

Focus 4



Surexploitation Paradoxe / Sfruttamento Paradosso / Übernutzung Paradox / Prekomerna izraba Paradoks / Overexploitation Paradox



Arrivées, Arrivi, Ankommen, Prihod, Arrivals ☺
 Danger, Pericolo, Gefahr, Nevarnost, Danger ☹
 Retours, Ritorni, Rückkehr, Vrnitev, Come backs ☺

Laize 1

Recycling et diminution des déchets
Limitation des émissions de gaz nocifs
Énergies durables
Riciclaggio e diminuzione dei rifiuti
Limitazione delle emissioni di gas inquinanti
Energie sostenibili
Recycling und Verringerung der Abfälle
Begrenzung der Luftverschmutzung
Nachhaltige Energie
Rekiranje in zmanjšanje odpadkov
Omejevanje emisij škodljivih plinov
Trajnostne energije
Recycling and reducing litter
Limiting the emission of harmful gases
Sustainable energies



A vertical image of a forest fire. The words "Few", "Fires", "Fence", "Every", and "Fire" are stacked vertically in the center. Each word is a different color: "Few" is green, "Fires" is purple, "Fence" is orange, "Every" is yellow, and "Fire" is blue. The background shows a large fire with thick smoke rising from a line of trees.

Trop de déchets
Trop d'énergies fossiles utilisées (pétrole, gaz, charbon)
Trop de matériaux polluants
Trop de matériaux inquinanti
Toppo utilizzo di energie fossili (petrolio, gas, carbone)
Troppi rifiuti
Zu viele verschmutzende Materialien
Zu großer Verbrauch fossiler Energien
Zu viel Abfall
Preveč onesčiženih materialov
Preveč poraba fosilne energije (petrol, plin, premog)
Preveč odpadkov
Too many polluting materials
Too much fossil fuel used (oil, gas, coal)
Too much litter

Redonner la diversité aux milieux naturels
Partager les ressources

Proteggere diversità agli ambienti naturali
Condividere le risorse

Den natürlichen Milieus ihre Vielfalt zurückgeben. Die Ressourcen gemeinsam benutzen

Viniti raznovrstnost naravnim habitatom
Vise skupno uparabljati

Giving back the diversity to natural habitats
Sharing resources

Economizzare l'acqua
Mantenere – rinaturalizzazione dei corsi d'acqua
Agricoltura estensiva, marchi biologici
Economizzare l'acqua
Mantenimento – rinaturalizzazione dei corsi d'acqua
Agricoltura estensiva, marchi biologici



Trop de gaspillage
Trop de dénaturation de cours d'eau
Trop de pollution par substances chimiques
Troppo spreco
Troppa denaturazione dei corsi d'acqua
Troppo inquinamento a causa di sostanze chimiche

Laize 2

Trop de mauvaises isolations domestiques
Trop d'énergies fossiles utilisées (pétrole, gaz, charbon)
Trop de trafic routier
Troppe isolazioni domestiche insufficienti
Toppo utilizzo di energie fossili (petrolio, gas, carbone)
Troppò traffico su strada
Zu schlechte Isolation der Haushalte
Zu großer Verbrauch fossiler Energien
Zuviel Straßenverkehr
Prešlabo izolacija gospodinjstev
Prevelika poraba fosilne energije
Preveč cestnega prometa
Too many inadequate housing isolation
Too much fossil fuel used (oil, gas, coal)
Too much road traffic



Constructions écologiques
Transports collectifs, Transports non polluants
Energies durables
Costruzioni ecologiche
Trasporti collettivi, Trasporti non inquinanti
Energie sostenibili
Ökologisches Bauen
Öffentlicher Nahverkehr, Umweltfreundlicher Verkehr
Dauerhafte Energien
Ekološka gradnja
Javni prevoz, ekološki prevoz
Trajnostne energije
Ecological constructions
Public transport, non-polluting transport
Sustainable energies

*Laisser la Nature respirer
Diminuer la pollution*

Die Natur atmen lassen. Die Verschmutzung verringern

*Spustiti naravo dihati
Zmanjšati onesnetenje*

*Lasciar respirare la Natura
Diminuire l'inquinamento*

*Allowing Nature to breathe
Reducing pollution*

Trop de place pour l'urbanisation
Trop de pollution par métaux lourds, hydrocarbures
Trop d'agriculture intensive
Troppe spazio per l'urbanizzazione
Troppe inquinamento da metalli pesanti e idrocarburi
Troppa agricoltura intensiva
Za malo prostora za urbanizacijo
Preveč onesnetosti s težkimi kovinami in ogljikovodikom
Preveč intenzivne kmetijske dejavnosti
Too much space for urbanisations
Too much pollution by heavy metals and hydrocarbons
Too much intensive agriculture



Urbanisation réfléchie
Contrôle des risques de pollution
Agriculture extensive, labels biologiques
Urbanizzazione riflessuta
Controllo dei rischi d'inquinamento
Agricoltura estensiva, marchi biologici
Previdljiva urbanizacija
Kontrola tveganj za onesnetost
Intenzivna kmetijska dejavnost
Well thought-out urbanisations
Pollution risk control
Extensive agriculture, organic labels



Some photos of the exhibition



