



alpenverein
österreich



ALPINE GLACIERS UNDER ATTACK

FACTS ABOUT THE MEGAPROJECT PITZTAL-ÖTZTAL

”Europe’s largest contiguous glacier ski resort” – That is the attention grabbing title that motivates two Ski areas Tyrol/Austria to fuse. The ski resorts Pitztal Glacier and Ötztal Glacier/Sölden are planning on an enormous construction project that would connect the two areas. The construction would dramatically change the natural landscape, some of it would have to happen directly on glacier terrain. The planned expansion would stretch from Mittelberg in Pitztal over Griestal up to the Linker Fernerkogel, a pristine mountain with three glaciers. Only seven percent of Austria’s national territory are still in a natural state and free from technical infrastructure. The megaproject Pitztal-Ötztal threatens to further reduce the area that remains in its natural state.

35.000 m³
of concrete used

Blasting and ablation of
750.000 m³
of Rocks, Soil and Ice

More Than
116 Foot-
ball fields
of permanent land
consumption

Amongst the planned construction projects are:

- Three new ski lifts
- A three storey ropeway station (more than 15.000 m² usable area)
- Restaurants and bars (for up to 1600 guests)
- A tunnel (600 m length, 7 m diameter)
- An asphalted water reservoir (104.000 m³)
- Additional artificial snow systems
- More than four kilometers of roads and paths
- Levelling and removal of ice on 72 ha of glacier terrain
- Grinding down of a mountain ridge on the left Fernerkogel by 40m and 120.000 m³

A Disaster for Conservation

The construction of the ski resort would destroy a natural glacier landscape beyond repair. The severe intrusions would cause the total loss of many habitats. A unique environment and popular hiking and climbing region would be lost forever.

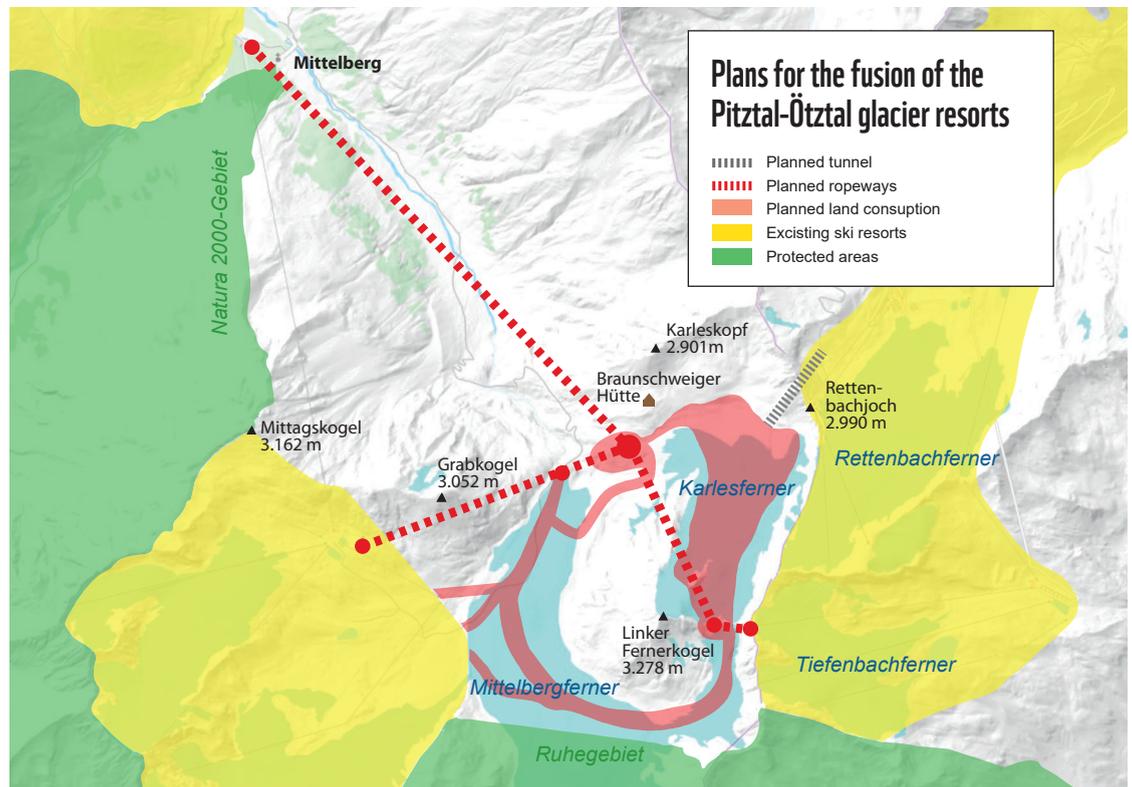
The Linker Fernerkogel with its three glaciers, the Karlesferner, the Hängender Ferner and the Mittelbergferner form an alpine landscape not yet impacted by infrastructure and technical developments. The area is home to rare glacier landscapes and alpine turfs and forests, many of which are endangered habitats, protected by EU regulations. An abundance of alpine species such as the ibex, the snow- and the black grouse, the bearded vulture, the golden eagle, the snow hare and the groundhog need those habitats as their refuge. The springs, streams and rivers in the area remain completely natural and need to be protected.

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Current situation

The project “Ski area extension and fusion Pitztal-Ötztal“ was first submitted in May 2016. However, due to insufficient documents provided by the operators and a wait for supplementation of the remaining documents, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) started only in May 2019. Should the Tyrolian authorities grant approval, six-year construction works are set to begin in autumn 2020.



(c)Allianz für die Seele der Alpen

Alliance for the preservation of ,The Soul of the Alps‘

Through the “Alliance for the Soul of the Alps”, founded in 2017, the WWF, the Austrian Alpine Association (Österreichischer Alpenverein) and Naturefriends Austria (Naturfreunde Österreich) want to raise awareness of the rapid decline in natural landscapes in the Alps. The three organizations joined forces to demand the protection of the last remaining “Alpine open spaces” from exploitation by landscape-degrading infrastructure and the immediate implementation of a strategic and sustainable landscape management policy for Alpine open spaces. The Alliance requests the Tyrolian authorities to put an immediate stop to the EIA process of the Pitztal-Ötztal project and all further construction plans for the glaciers. The area should instead be included into the neighbouring quiet zones ‘Ötztaler Alps’. Quiet zones are a Tyrolian model of protected areas that prohibit construction, destruction and loud noise.

DATA: EIA Documents

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