

In June this year, the Petzl and Snowleader foundations launched the 3rd edition of their joint call for projects to support the ecological transition in mountainous regions. This time around, the call was widened to include the mountains of Europe and Switzerland. On 15 October 2024, a jury comprising employees from both companies awarded nine prizes with a total value of €60,000.

These projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, preserve biodiversity and raise awareness of the impact of climate change at high altitudes provide a blueprint for the ecological transition we want to see in mountainous areas. Our ambition is to showcase positive initiatives that encourage a shift in people's habits and a new approach to life in tomorrow's world.

THE JURY'S 3 FAVOURITE PROJECTS

Association: Fund for Wild Flora and Fauna → €9,000
1 Project: Climb to fly with the black vulture → Bulgaria

This Bulgarian NGO focuses on the conservation of nature and endangered species. It is currently working to reintroduce vultures to the mountains of Bulgaria, where they had been extinct since the 1960s. There are now almost 700 individuals in the region.

This project will involve the construction of artificial platforms in trees with the assistance of tree surgeons, the purpose being to help the recently reintroduced vultures to nest and breed. The work will take place in the Rila and Pirin mountains during the course of 2025, with 20 to 30 platforms set to be built.



Association: Mountain Wilderness Suisse
2 Project: Go Wild !

→ €8,000
→ Switzerland

Mountain Wilderness Switzerland is dedicated to preserving the wilderness areas of the Alps and encouraging sports enthusiasts to adopt a respectful approach to their activities in the mountains. The association is taking legal action to put an end to heliskiing, which is still allowed in Switzerland. It also strives to make mountain guides who still partake in this anachronistic pastime more aware of their responsibilities, at a time when climate issues are taking centre stage in the public debate. The goal is to eliminate the carbon emissions generated by recreational helicopter flights, protect wildlife that is sensitive to this form of disturbance and advocate for quiet, unspoilt mountains.



Association: POW France
3 Project: La Voix des Glaciers (The Voice of the Glaciers) – Season 3

→ €7,000

→ Alpine Arc

This association echoes and amplifies the voices of members of the outdoor community who are committed to the climate, the natural world and social justice. The project's goal is to ensure that the 3rd edition of *La Voix des Glaciers* gains exposure across the Alpine Arc – with film screenings in France, Austria, Switzerland and Italy – so as to raise public awareness of the devastating effects of climate change on Alpine glaciers. 2025 will be the International Year of Glacier Preservation. The aim will be to awaken the public consciousness and stimulate dialogue on the measures that need to be taken. The association is also petitioning for European legislation to protect the continent's glaciers. The tour will run from January to April 2025.



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SIX ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES HAVE ALSO BEEN REWARDED**Association: Haute-Savoie association for the protection of natural areas**

→ €8,000

④ Project: Alpine river conservation programme

→ French Alps

The Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Haute-Savoie is committed to improving the protection of wild rivers in the Alps through restoration and education. The project revolves around the certification of Alpine rivers that are considered to be under threat and whose protection is deemed a priority. This will involve the measurement of innovative biological indicators at "sentinel stations". The certification of rivers allows a wide array of stakeholders to be mobilised for their conservation, while making it easier to secure public funding to support their protection. The association is intent on demonstrating, through precise data, that restoring and protecting wild rivers can ensure and improve CO₂ capture by these ecosystems.

Association: Alpes Maritimes Scouts and Guides Association

→ €7,000

⑤ Project: Creation of a biodiversity sanctuary

→ Alpes Maritimes

Scouts et Guides de France Alpes Maritimes is planning to create a "Refuge LPO"-certified biodiversity sanctuary on 3 hectares of land at its Malamaire base, an hour and a half from Nice. A biodiversity assessment will be conducted and recommendations for the sanctuary's management will be put forward to allow plant and wildlife to flourish in the area. Waste reduction will also be on the agenda, with the installation of a general composter for kitchen biowaste and dry toilet waste.

Association: Alpes-Là

→ €6,000

⑥ Project: Co-operative for the loaning of mountain equipment

→ Grenoble

This Grenoble-based association leads initiatives to address challenges specific to Alpine regions, as well as seeking solutions to reduce the carbon footprint of mountain enthusiasts. Initially set up for the city's student population, the association is now keen to expand the co-operative's remit by loaning mountain equipment to as wide a population as possible and at a low cost, the aim being to encourage more people to enjoy the mountains and to reduce the carbon footprint of outdoor activities. Equipment for those who want to try mountaineering for the first time will soon be added to the available stock. The association is planning to launch publicity campaigns and improve access to the service so as to prompt a shift in people's mindsets, with an emphasis on equipment use rather than consumption.

For more information about the co-operative → <https://pret-materiel.alpes-la.org/>

Association: Montagnes et Sciences

→ €5,000

⑦ Project: Mountains & Science Festival

→ Alpes et Massif Central

This association's role is to provide a better understanding of the mountains, their natural areas and their cultures, in a spirit of public education and scientific democratisation. Its showpiece event is the Rencontres Montagnes & Sciences, a travelling films festival held every year from the Alps to the Massif Central. 2025 will see the 12th edition of this science outreach event, which was founded to raise awareness among people of all ages about the importance of preserving natural environments. The intention is to provide free screenings for schoolchildren (primary and secondary) and students, so as to reach 7,500 young people a year.

Association: CIMME Isère (Centre for Mountain and Environmental Career Support)

→ €5,000

⑧ Project: Mountain-based careers in the ecological transition

→ Isère

CIMME Isère supports and trains young people who have dropped out of school or who are seeking to begin a career linked to the ecological transition in the mountains. The association is developing a programme to raise awareness of the impact of climate change on the mountains and to introduce young people to various sectors, including the wood industry, energy and agriculture. The programme lasts 7 weeks and provides 8-10 young people (between the ages of 18 and 30) with qualitative support. The intention is to help these youngsters find employment and to raise environmental awareness.

CIMME Isère is receiving a second round of support this year, having already been among the winners in 2023.

Local Authority: Plateau des Petites Roches

→ €5,000

⑨ Project: A cycle bus on the plateau

→ Isère

Situated in the Isère *département* at an altitude of 1,000m, the commune of Plateau des Petites Roches is keen to embark on its ecological transition, foster a community spirit among its residents, develop citizen participation and make the most of local resources. Having already won funding in 2022 for the creation of a community orchard, the municipality has been rewarded once again for its plan to develop alternative modes of transport for the area. Its flagship project is the launch of a cycle bus to provide a shared, low-carbon, socially-responsible and intergenerational mobility solution. This 6-8 seater electrically-assisted cycle bus will be used to transport schoolchildren and seniors, so as to reduce the carbon footprint of short journeys between the various villages in the municipality.

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