



Austria's "Information Portal Climate Change" – Getting well-founded climate science across

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The need to prepare complex, scattered and conflicting climate science results in a comprehensible, standardised and consistent way in order to reach and be useful for a broader public has been recognised at Austria's national meteorological service in 2010. Therefore, by the end of last year a comprehensive new part of Central Institute for Meteorology and Geodynamics' (ZAMG) website has been activated in terms of a climate service application focussing on Austria and the Alps: At www.zamg.ac.at/klimawandel the German-speaking "Information Portal Klimawandel" (Information Portal Climate Change) is accessible.

In the first working phase of 2010, the focus was on the information aspect. The staff of the Department for Climate Research compiled about 90 articles in six sections: (1) The introductory section "Standpoint" holds general comments on climate science's contribution and role in the climate change debate. (2) Section "Climate Research" presents reconstruction, observation and modelling methods as well as glaciological techniques. (3) Section "Climate System" identifies the mechanisms driving climate change on different time scales. (4) Section "Climate Past" traces the development of paleoclimate in geological times as well as recent changes during the instrumental period. (5) Section "Climate Future" discusses model results on global, continental and national scales. (6) Finally, section "Climate Impact" demonstrates the consequences of climate change on environment and society as basis for mitigation and adaption strategies.

The articles are featured by figures, strongly linked among each other and completed by external links, references and contact details. All articles underwent an internal cross-checking by the colleagues within the department. Additionally, current climatological, media and editorial issues are commented in terms of a news ticker.

In the ongoing second phase of 2011, the information portal is supplemented by the presentation of spatial data. Research results from different reanalysis, interpolation and modelling projects are integrated and visualised in a web map tool. By doing so, the development of 30-year-means of temperature and precipitation across Austria from 1790–2090 is traceable. Details on data generation, preparation and interpretability are provided.

The information portal aims to support a broad public with independent, easily understandable and well-founded research facts. Objectification of the climate change discussion will make irrational argumentations by both alarmists and sceptics difficult and is the sole basis for all reasonable decision making.