



MOVING MOUNTAINS

FORUM ECOVILLAGES 2019

PRESS KIT

Press release

THE ECOVILLAGES FORUM BECOMES MOVING MOUNTAINS

Aigle, June 14, 2019 – For its eighth edition, to be held on Friday, September 6, 2019 in Les Diablerets (VD), the Ecovillages Forum has adopted a new identity: Moving Mountains. This name reflects the objectives of the forum:

- **To be an international platform of good practices** for sustainable transition in mountain regions
- **To highlight the challenges facing these regions:** climate change, retreat of glaciers, permafrost and snow, preservation of biodiversity, tourism issues, economic, social and cultural life
- **Bring together the actors of the sustainable transition:** permanent or regular residents, authorities, scientists, entrepreneurs, financiers, cultural and social agents
- **Initiate tangible projects**, support and document their implementation
- **To raise awareness of solutions**, initiatives and efforts to build a sustainable future in mountain regions

The eighth edition will focus on the central theme of "sharing sustainable knowledge". Through round tables, presentations and practical workshops, it will focus on demonstrating how sustainability issues are presented, transmitted and implemented in the fields of energy, circular economy, scientific information and sport. How does the energy transition materialize at altitude? How can sport be a driving force for sustainability? How can tourism fit into a circular economy? What are the best ways to popularize complex scientific issues? Academic experts, economic and political actors, athletes, engineers, financiers, environmental specialists will discuss the best solutions.

"All over the world, mountain regions are in the front line of seismic challenges - whether demographic, social or economic. They are the first witnesses of climate change; they must invent a new future for themselves as tourism and agriculture yield to change; they hollow out as young people move to the cities. Bringing together the best specialists from all over the world, sharing concrete solutions, implementing innovative projects: this is the vocation of the Moving Mountains Forum Ecovillages", summarized Michael Liebreich, founder of the forum.

Moving Mountains Forum Ecovillages is a partner of CE2 - Circular Economy Entrepreneurs, of which it is one of the stages. A specific workshop will be devoted to the circular economy, around the transition to sustainable and viable tourism.

Moving Mountains Forum Ecovillages has joined forces with the Protect Our Winters (POW) movement, which will present its activities and objectives. POW brings together sportsmen and outdoor community actors who are fighting for an environmentally friendly practice.

At the end of the day, the band Wintershome, composed of musicians from Zermatt, will give a special concert. In the evening, the public will be able to attend the screening of the film that won the "Environment" prize of the FIFAD (Festival international du film alpin des Diablerets).

Association

Founded in 2012, under the leadership of Michael Liebreich, former president of Bloomberg New Energy Finance and a regular resident of Les Diablerets, the non-for-profit Ecovillages Association aims to encourage sustainable – economic, ecological and social – development projects in villages, with a particular focus on mountain communities. It focuses on the redevelopment of Alpine villages and valleys and adjacent regions, in harmony with nature, in the light of paradigm shifts (climate, globalisation, competition, access, access, mobility, energy, among others) - so that these regions are alive and attractive to both inhabitants and occasional residents and tourists.

To this end, the Ecovillages Association organizes an annual Forum in Les Diablerets (Vaud Alps, Switzerland). Since 2012, the event has been aimed at a wide audience – business, tourism, academia, politics, the general public, as well as the media.

The association, based in Aigle, is managed by a committee chaired by Thierry Meyer. It has an Advisory Board, chaired by Michael Liebreich, composed of scientific, economic and civil society figures.

History of the Forum

In 2012, with the support of Ormont-Dessus municipality, Michael Liebreich founded the Ecovillages Association and organized the first Forum. Initially called Shift to the Green, it stemmed from Switzerland's decision to free itself from nuclear energy. The idea was to provide a platform for exchange and debate and to present innovative projects for the Alpine valleys, which could inspire the village of Les Diablerets in particular and were also applicable to other regions in Switzerland and around the world.

The first edition was held under the theme "The transition to green energy: mobilizing local and regional resources", with the notable participation of EPFL professor Teddy Püttgen.

The second edition, in 2013, focused on "Eco-innovations for a sustainable future for mountain villages", bringing together SECO Director Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen Fleisch and explorer and psychiatrist Bertrand Piccard, among others.

In 2014, the third edition addressed the theme "Architecture and planning for a sustainable future for villages and small towns". It has seen a collaboration develop with the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Some of the students elected residence in Les Diablerets on the fringes of the Forum, under the direction of architect and professor Toshiko Mori.

The fourth edition, in 2015, focused its discussions on "Sustainable mobility, at the heart of the economic challenges of Alpine villages and valleys", with a collaboration with the ALICE laboratory of EPFL and the ephemeral wooden installation "2055", built at an altitude of 2055 metres, near the Isenau Pass.

The fifth edition, in 2016, chose to discuss "Smart villages, between technologies and mentality change". It also gave rise to a workshop in Leysin, in collaboration with Swisscom and Aigle Région, as well as a Hackathon, organised in advance of the Forum.

In 2017, the sixth edition continued the reflection launched the previous year on the theme of "Smart Villages, sustainable economy for villages". A symbol of the economic life of the Ormonts Valley, Diablobine, a playful reinterpretation of a gondola from the Isenau cable-car, was created by artist Pascal Bettex and then presented to the Commune. It is now located in front of the Tourist Office.

The seventh edition (2017) covered the issues related to the warming of the mountain environment, around the general theme "Sustaining climate change: managing risks and seizing opportunities". Mayors of Alpine resorts, cultural promoters, and actors in sustainable finance shared their experiences. For the first time, the Forum organized a series of practical workshops. The Leysenoud artist LPVDA created a fresco on wood on a barn belonging to the Commune of Ormont-Dessus. Entitled "Future", it represents the face of an ancestor who looks at the new generation.

Association Committee

The operational committee of the Moving Mountains – Ecovillages association is composed of:

Thierry Meyer – President

Michael Liebreich – Vice President

Carole Ansermoz – Delegate of the municipality of Ormont-Dessus, municipal councillor

Eric Liechti – Delegate of the municipality of Ormont-Dessus, municipal councillor

Françoise Dutoit – Secretary

Corinne Feuz – Member

Jean-Marie Schlaubitz – Member

Staff:

Fiona Zimmermann – Project Manager in charge of the workshops

Anne-Sophie Thilo – Media Manager

The Advisory Board is composed of:

Michael Liebreich – Chairman, President of the Liebreich Foundation

Andreas Banholzer – Director of the Tourist Office of the Canton of Vaud (OTV)

Brindusa Burrows – GroundUp project, specialist in sustainable development

Corinne Feuz – Deputy Director of Communication, EPFL

Benjamin Kafri – Global Head of Client Relations, Bloomberg New Energy Finance

Thierry Meyer – President of the Ecovillages association, Partner, Dynamics Group (communication strategy consultant)

Christian Minacci – Former Economic Delegate of Aigle Région

Raphaël Rollier – Head of Process Innovation and Product Management, Federal Office of Topography

Michaël Thémans – Assistant to the Vice President for Innovation (VPI), EPFL

François Vuille – Director of Energy within the Directorate General for the Environment (Vaud)

Summary of the program

Friday, September 6, 2019

Conference from 9:00 am to 5:15 pm

Recreational and cultural part: From 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm

Claude Nicollier Congress Centre, Les Diablerets

SUSTAINABLE KNOWLEDGE SHARING

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAM:

Presentations:

Protect Our Winters, an initiative of the "outdoor community" for a sustainable future.

A solar park on a mountain lake: The floating project of Lake Toules, Switzerland.

CE2, Entrepreneurs in circular economy, first year!

Round tables:

How the energy transition is made possible in mountain regions. Experts from various fields discuss progress, challenges and future solutions.

Simply sharing science in a complex world. Researchers, engineers and science journalists discuss best practices.

Sport as a driver of the sustainable agenda. Activists of "nature" activities, experts in sustainable development and heritage, competition organizers exchange their points of view.

Workshops:

How can tourism become more resource-efficient?

Financial know-how for sustainable development.

Learning from experience – Developing priority conservation areas for biodiversity – from Pro Terra Engiadina to the Vaud Alps.

Changing awareness through co-creation – conceptual poker game.

And also...

Music: Vision to Grow – a concert by the group **Wintershome**.

Film: Screening of the FIFAD **Environmental Prize winning film**.

Among the confirmed speakers to date:

Florence Schmidt (Project Manager, Romande Energie)

Nicholas Bornstein (Founder, Protect Our Winters Switzerland)

Cornelia Giger (Executive Director, CE2),

Philippe Furrer (Independent Expert on Heritage and Sustainability in Sport, InpoweredBy)

Angelika Abderhalden (Director, Pro Terra Engiadina)

Gianni Operto (President, EEA Switzerland)

Pascal Kober (Editor-in-Chief, L'Alpe Magazine)

Adèle Thorens Goumaz (National Councillor, member of the Swiss Parliament)

François Vuille (Head of the Energy Division of the Cantonal Department of the Environment, Vaud)

Etienne Roy (Les Toules park, Romande Energie)

Denis Delbecq (Scientific Journalist, Heidi.News)

Martin Senn (President, SwissWinds)

Frédéric Fournier (Engineer, CSD Ingénieurs, founder of the reforestation site "On a mission")

Partners

Main partners



Institutional partners



Community partners



Media partners



Practical information

Date: Friday, September 6, 2019

Time: from 9am. Forum until 5:30 pm. Concert and film from 6:30 pm

Location: Claude Nicollier Congress Centre, Les Diablerets (VD)

Rates:

Forum and cultural part	CHF 150.-
Forum and cultural part – Early Birds until July, 31	CHF 120.-
Forum and cultural part – Reduced rate (students, residents and holiday residence owners Ormont-Dessus)	CHF 75.-
Cultural part (from 6.30 pm, including 2 raclettes, excluding drinks)	CHF 30.-

Information: info@movingmountainsforum.com

Website: www.movingmountainsforum.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Movingmountainsforum>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/forum_MM

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/movingmountainsforum/>

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