

Audits performed on the management of natural disasters in the canton of Valais (CH)

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Topics



- ▲ 1. Introduction
- ▲ 2. Challenges State budget 2024
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- ▲ 5. And tomorrow?
- ▲ 6. Misuse of donations

1. Introduction



Matterhorn

Valais



Pyramids of Euseigne



Vineyards in Valais



Grande Dixence dam



Rhône (river)

1. Introduction – Storms in June 2024



Rhône estuary in Le Bouveret



Anniviers



Government Councillor in Saas Grund



Chippis



Highway



Industry (Novelis) in Sierre

1. Introduction – Key figures for the canton of Valais

- 5'442 km² area
- 12'500 km of roads
- 162 km length of the Rhône (main river)
- € 4.2 billion in current expenditure in 2024
- € 141 million in storm damage costs in 2024
 - ❖ *of which € 77 million net to be borne by the canton*
 - *of which € 55 million as provisions*



Rhoneebene zwischen Fully und Riddes

Bild: © Kanton Wallis, Dienststelle für Naturgefahren 2024

2. Challenges for the 2024 state budget

- High costs for security and repairs
- Deviations from standard procedures (including public contracts and expenditure commitments)
- 2 areas:
 - *River of Rhône / roads → responsibility of the canton*
 - *Side watercourses → responsibility of the municipalities with cantonal subsidies*
- Delimitations: Charged to the 2024 and 2025 accounts
- No exact figures, only estimated amounts
- Several authorities involved (*natural hazards, roads, agriculture, economy, etc.*)
- Several sources of funding (*federal government / canton / municipalities*)
- Political challenges



3. Our audits

- Construction specialists, on-site visit
- Analysis of the accounting guidelines of the accounting department
- Interviews with the technical experts who carried out the cost estimates (accountants and engineers)
- Critical assessment of the cost estimation procedures used
- Review of documentation and files
- Comparison of various data from multiple sources

4. What now?

- Further monitoring of costs and estimates by the relevant authorities
- Further analysis and assessment by auditors
- How will the storm damage costs affect the 2025 state budget?



5. And tomorrow?

- A highly political issue
- Establishment of a parliamentary investigation committee (PUK)



“
L'évaluation des risques
est difficilement
compréhensible.”

RAPHAËL MAYORAZ
CHEF DU SERVICE VALAISAN
DES DANGERS NATURELS

ne pas pointer sont nombreux et considérables. Le Conseil d'Etat a donc décidé d'engager une révision du projet Rhône 3 et de son plan d'aménagement. Sont remis en cause plus de vingt ans de travaux et d'analyses validées par les gouvernements de

deux cantons, la Confédération et les Valaisans lors d'une votation populaire en 2015.

Des risques exagérés

Point saillant de la nouvelle analyse, les dangers ont été surestimés. «Rhône 3 a fait le choix de protéger la plaine au-dessus des standards pour éradiquer tout danger lié aux inondations», explique Raphaël Mayoraz, chef du Service des dangers naturels. Certains postulats à la base du projet sont fortement remis en cause. La rupture de toutes les digues en un seul événement semble par exemple «difficilement probable», explique Raphaël Mayoraz: «Si ça lâche à

Rhône 3, un fiasco par orgueil?

RÉACTIONS Alors que le Conseil d'Etat veut revoir le projet de la 3^e correction du Rhône, des députés réagissent au rapport dévoilé mardi.

PAR DIMITRI MATHEY



Les députés valaisans Sonia Tauss-Comut, Blaise Melly, Florian Chappot, Nathan Bender et Emmanuel Revaz ont des interprétations différentes.



5. And tomorrow?

- Increasingly frequent events
 - Proactive action by the administration
 - Experience gained by the authorities



Mudslide in Lourtier (07.2024)



Landslide in Anniviers (03.2024)



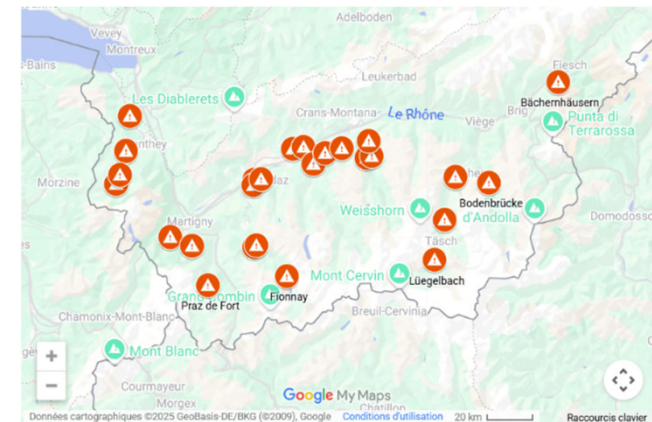
Collapse of a tunnel in Riddes (02.2024)



Blatten before May 2025



Blatten in May 2025



Events resulting in road closures between November 2023 and October 2024 (excluding storms from 29 to 30 June 2024)

6. Misuse of donations

- ▲ Municipality damaged by severe weather
- ▲ Canton finances the costs in advance
- ▲ Municipality receives donations that are unclearly declared and in some cases undeclared
- ▲ € 860'000 is used for properties that were not damaged by storms
- ▲ Report to the judicial authorities
- ▲ Municipality must refund donations



6. Misuse of donations

▲ Consequence: Audit of a further 19 local authorities

▲ Findings:

- *Use of donations for actual storm damage*
- *No double financing (donations and subsidies)*
- *The municipalities had to obtain retrospective approval from the donation organisations to finance two projects*
- *One municipality asked donors to allow its donations to be used for projects not affected by storm damage*



Thank you for your attention



Valais / Wallis – Matterhorn 4478 m