

Geography and mountain tourism

Geographical determinism :

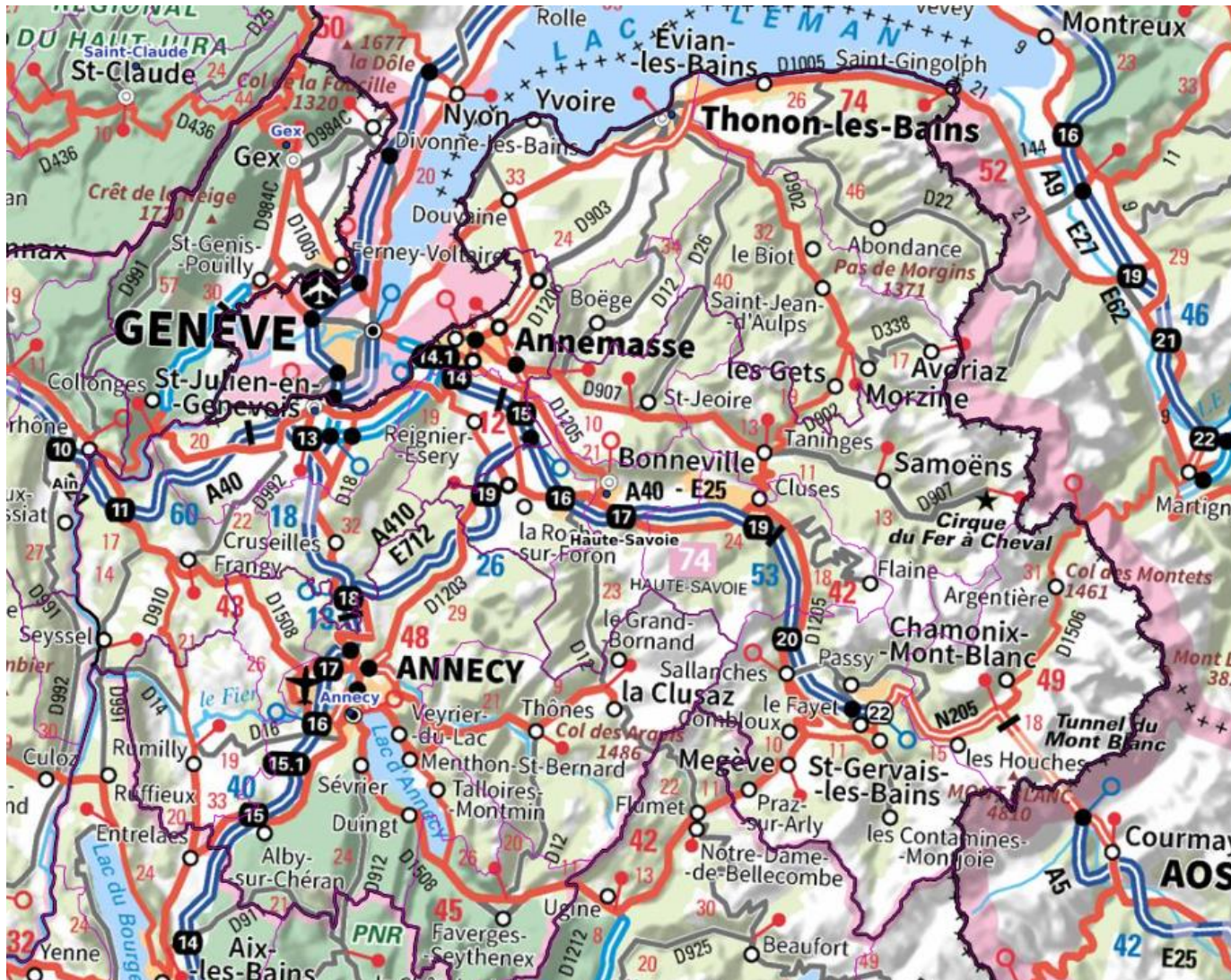
- The modalities of land occupation by human societies would result from natural laws, the physical environment determining types of life

Tourism :

- 8% of national wealth in France
- Number one tourist destination in the world
- Very broad sector of activity

How has geographical determinism influenced tourist activities in the mountains and what are the consequences on the local population and activities?

Our study area :



IGN map of Haute-Savoie

- Department of Haute-Savoie
- Area : 4,388km²
- Number of inhabitants: 835,206 (INSEE 2020)
- Average altitude : 1,160m
- Tourism-related jobs : 230,295

I) Alpine geography

1) Local history

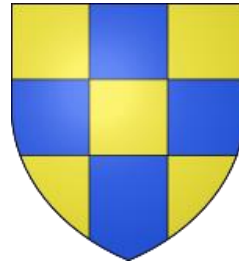
- Cultural historical heritage



« Maison de Savoie »



« Maison de Faucigny »



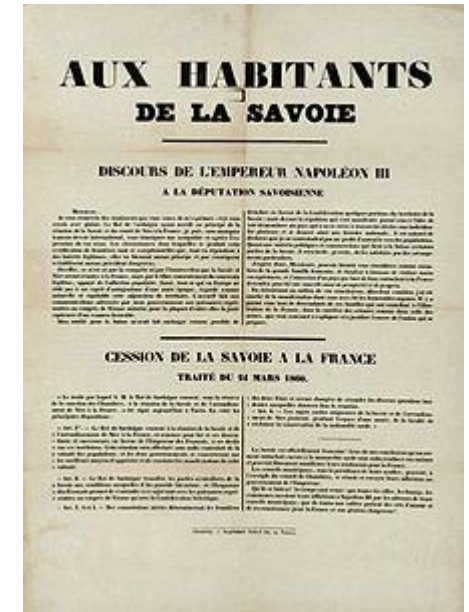
« Maison de Genève »

- war between 3 families during several centuries

- creation of the department of Haute-Savoie following the Treaty of Turin on March 24, 1860



Ripaille Castle, located in the municipality of Thonon-Les-Bains



Extract from Napoleon's communiqué on the Treaty

- the alpine way of life



Chapelle Saint-Bruno, order of the Carthusians



Traditional habitat, here near Lac des Plagnes

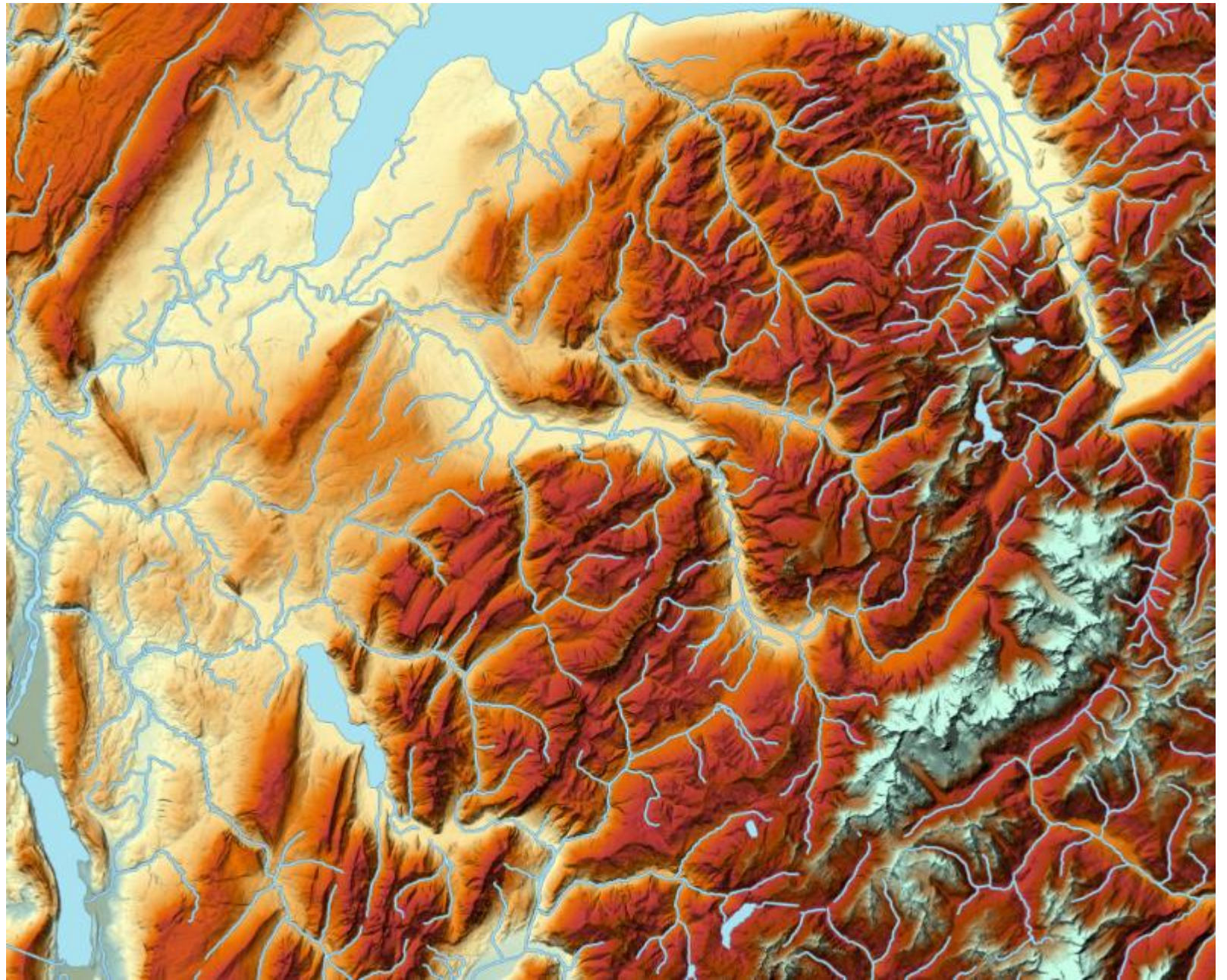


Traditional local trades, here for example the making of Reblochon on the left and artistic carpentry on the right



2) Relief and hydrology

- highest peak : Mont-Blanc 4805.59m
- the area includes 4 massifs, 2 pre-Alpine and 2 central
- includes numerous rivers and lakes



Relief and hydrology map of Haute-Savoie



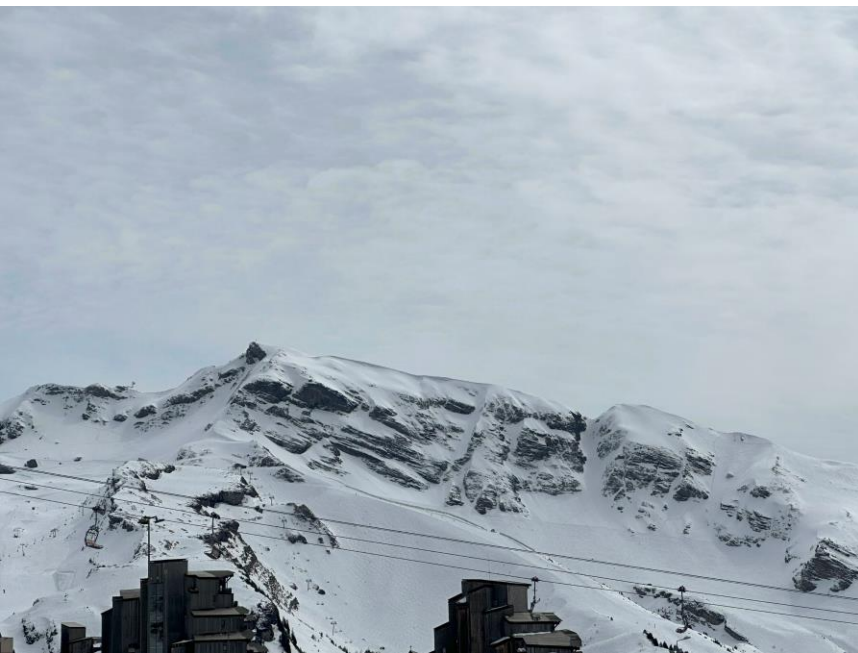
Mont-Blanc, Chamonix



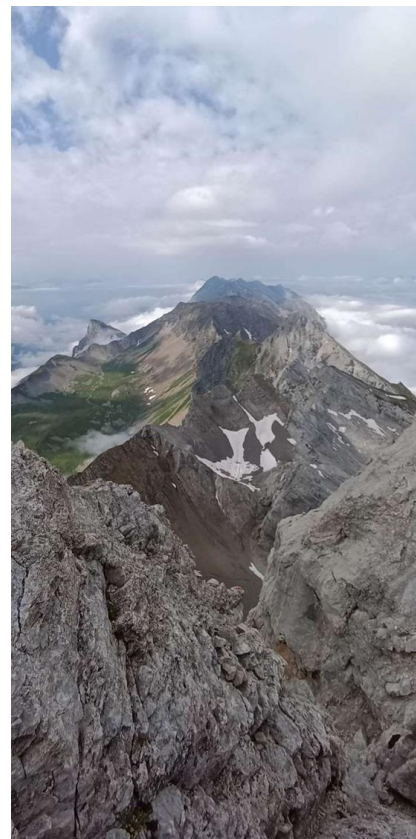
Beginning of the Giffre, Sixt



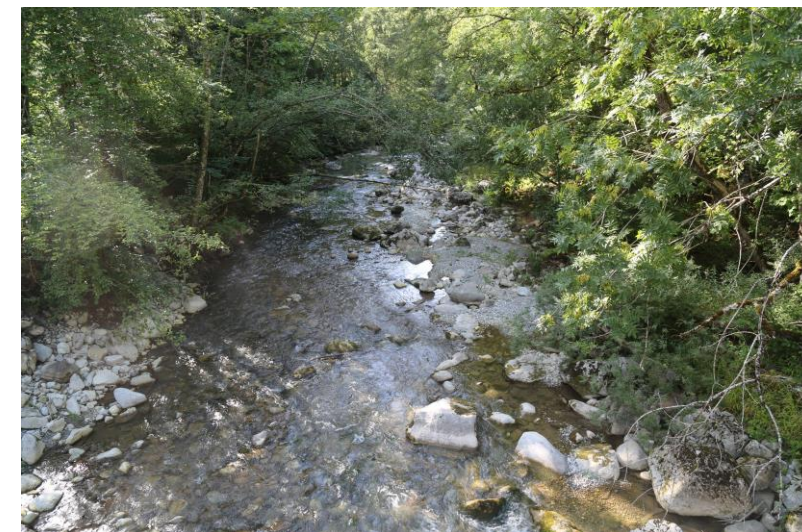
Arve, Chamonix



Hauts-Forts, Avoriaz



Aravis Nord chain, Pointe Percée



Dranse d'Abondance, Val d'Abondance



Geology IGN map of Haute-Savoie

- presence of very rich geology

Cornettes de Bise, Bise-Ubine



3) The climate



Visual example of stratification in Chamonix

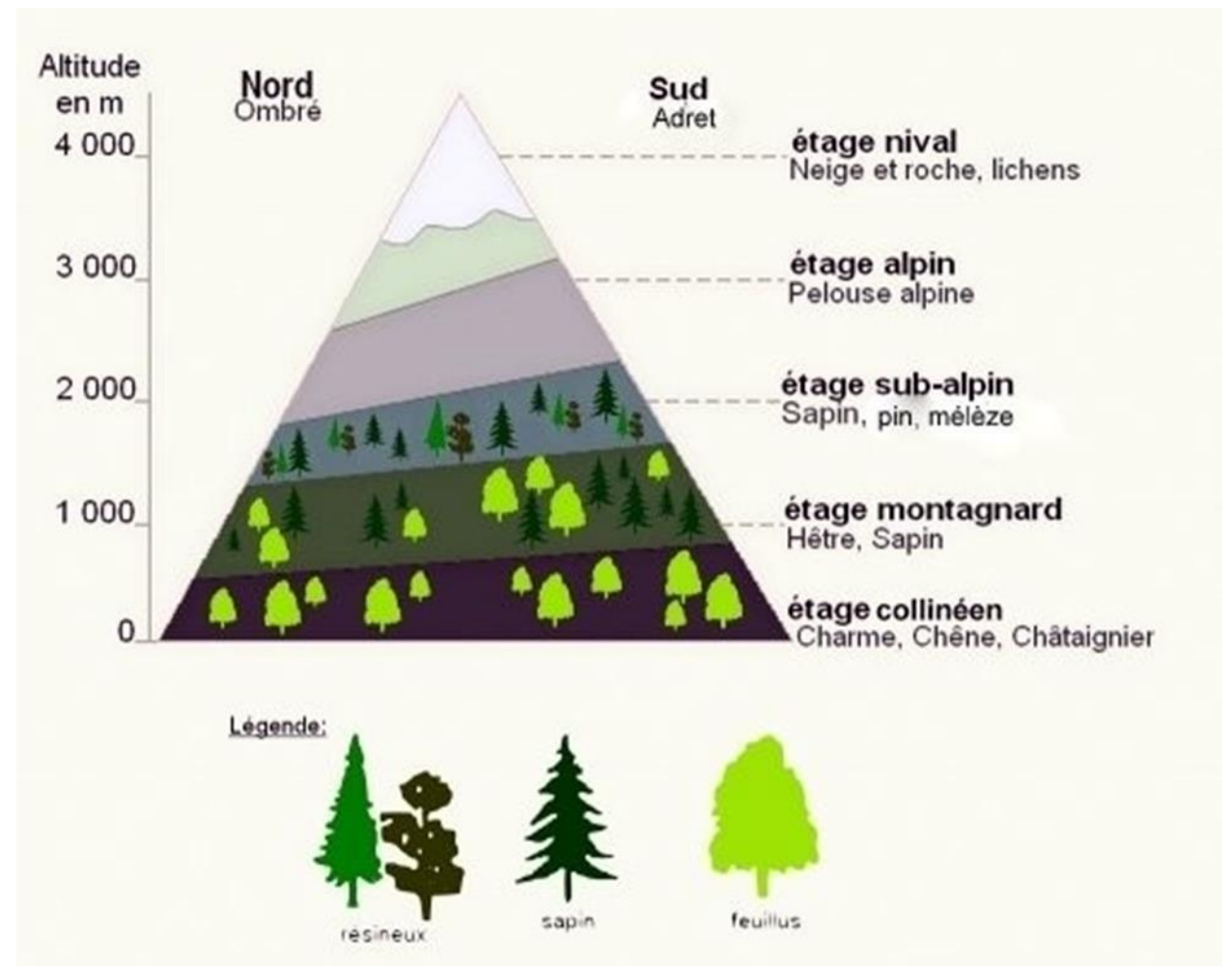
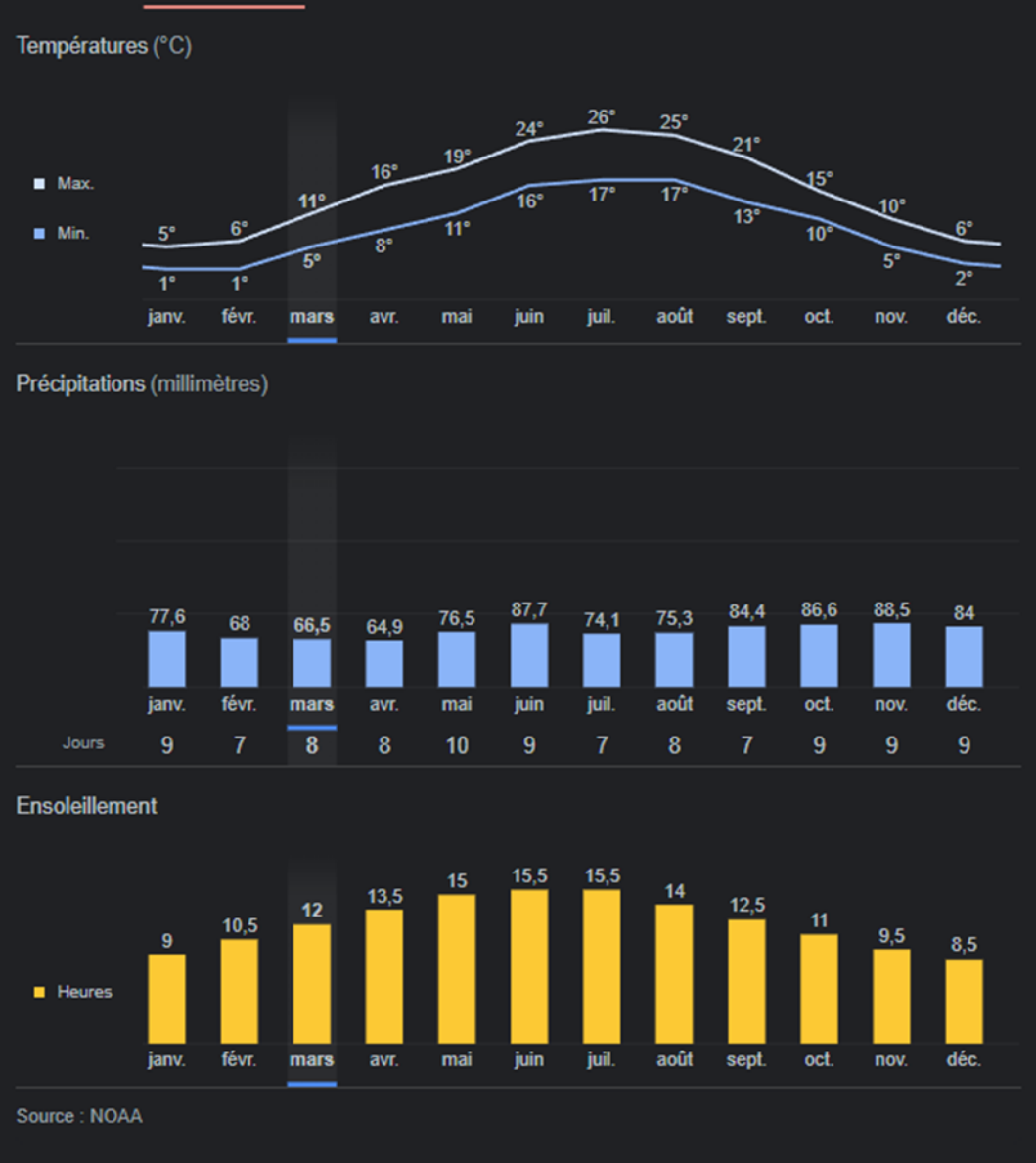


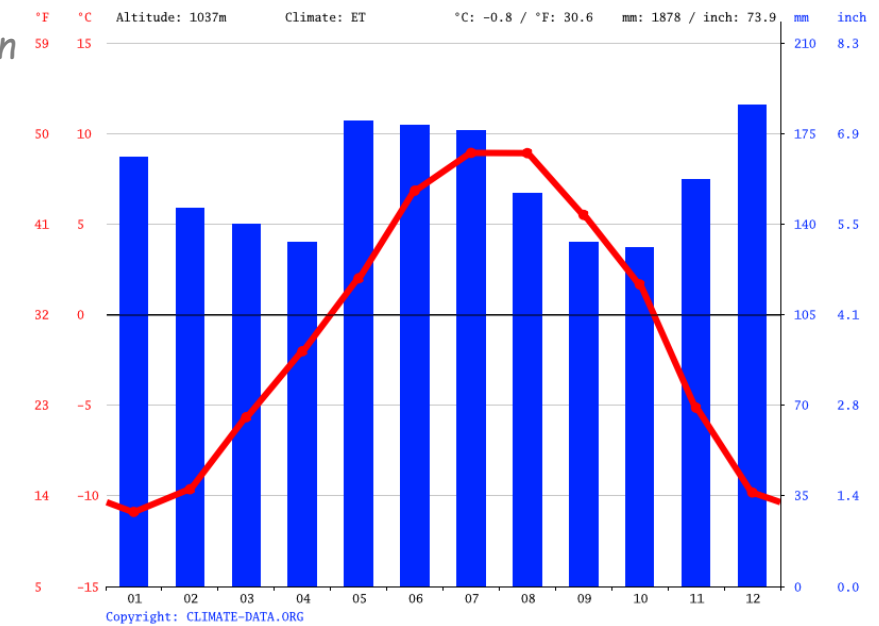
Diagram of the Alpine climate

- climate stratification



Temperatures, rainfall and sunshine in Evian-Les-Bains (400m)

Ombrothermal diagram illustrating the climate in Chamonix (1037m)



- temperate climate in summer,
harsh in winter

Avoriaz (1800m), end of April 2022



4) The fauna and the flora



Pin Sylvestre, Hirmentaz

- Flora linked to climate



Edelweiss, emblematic flower



*Gentiane Alpine, north face
of Hirmentaz*



Bouquetin des Alpes, Aiguilles Rouges



Marmotte

- emblematic animal species of the area



Tetras Lyre



Apollon, an alpine butterfly



Breeding sheep, Bellevaux

II) Tourism activities

1) Historical and cultural activities



Museum of Mechanical Music, Les Gets

- presence of numerous museums testifying to the past and local wealth



Chablais museum, Thonon-Les-Bains



Table of Legendary Medals, Chamonix, Maison de la Montagne



Alpine Museum, Chamonix





Crystal Museum, Chamonix



*Palais Lumière,
Evian-Les-Bains*

*Fauna and Flora
Museum, Bellevaux*





Abbaye d'Abondance, Abondance

- many historical monuments to visit



Yvoire Castle, Yvoire



*Palais de l'Isle, as known as
Vieille Prison, Annecy*

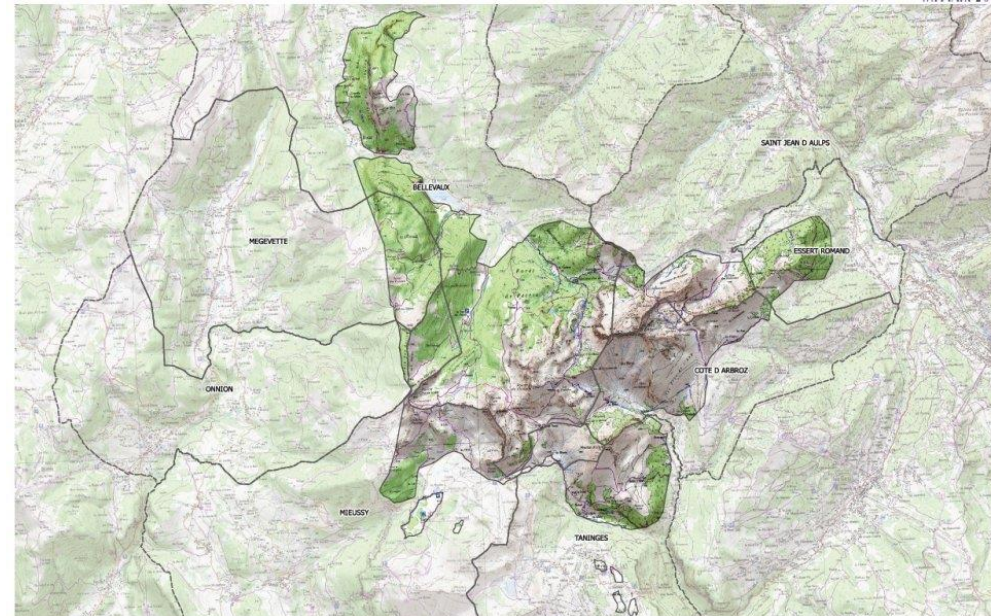
2) Territorial protection and development activities



- the different territorial protection parks, a means of promoting while protecting



Site Natura 2000 Roc d'Enfer

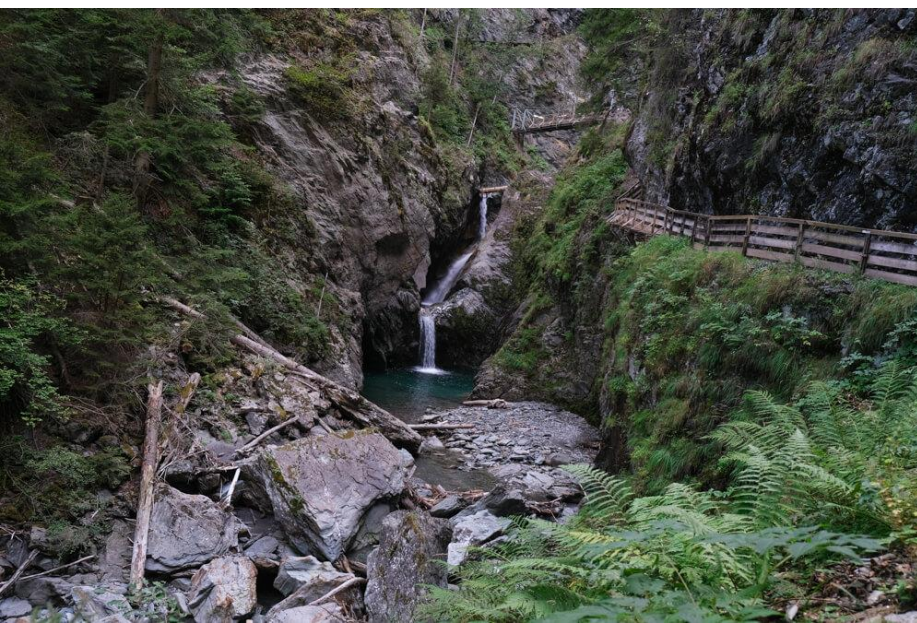




Lac des Mines d'Or and Rouleau de Bostan, Géoparc Chablais, near Morzine



Lac de Vallon, Géoparc Chablais, La Chèvrerie



*Gorges de la Diosaz,
near Servoz*

*Cirque du Fer à Cheval, Réserve Naturelle Sixt-Passy,
Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval*





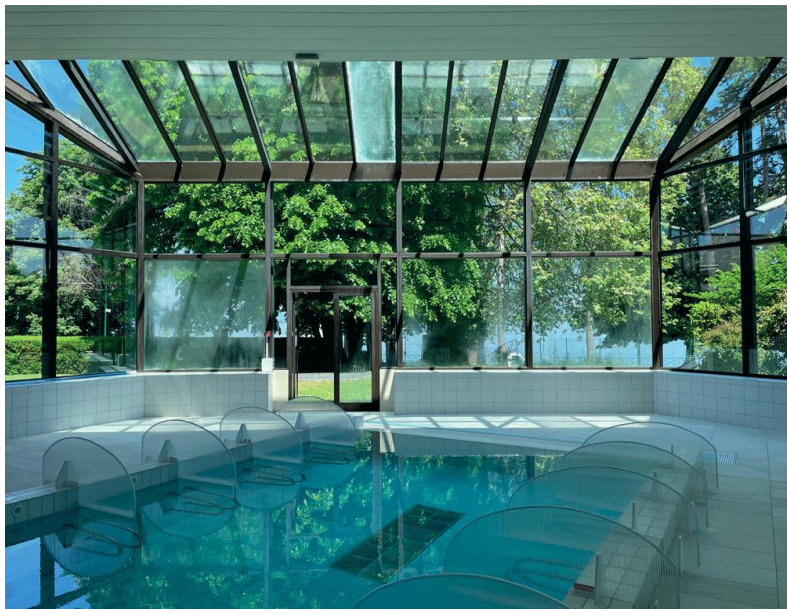
Guides office, Maison de la Montagne, Chamonix

- mountaineering,
the oldest tourist
activity linked to
the territory



Mountain running in the Mont-Blanc Massif

- thermal tourism



*Evian-Les-Bains
thermal baths*

Saint-Gervais-Les-Bains thermal baths



3) Seasonal activities



Bellevaux-Hirmentaz, Chablais

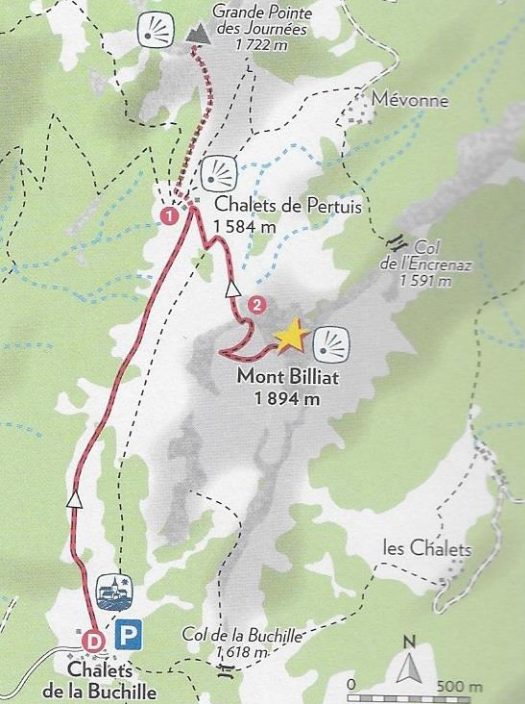


Avoriaz, Portes-du-Soleil, Chablais

- white gold tourism, developed since the 1960s



*Les Contamines-Montjoie,
Espace Mont-Blanc*



Difficult hike of Mont-Billiat, Chablais



Rocher de la Chaux climbing site, Saint-Jean d'Aulps

- summer activities

Mountain biking, Super-Morzine Avoriaz MTB area, Morzine





Tour de France 2022, Bellevaux

UTMB, biggest trail event in the world, Chamonix



Different national ski competitions, Megève, Morzine, Les Contamines-Montjoie, Avoriaz

- event tourism, a major element

Round of the FIS ski world cup in 2023, Les Houches



III) The consequences and the future

1) A local economy linked to these activities



Téléphérique des Prodains, Avoriaz

- territorial planning put in place to guarantee the proper functioning of tourist activities



Avalanche protection on the roads, Montriond



Ski lifts, Hirmentaz



Hotel and Relais-Chateau of Hameau-Albert 1^{er}, Chamonix



Restaurant Le Hameau de Mon Père by chef Marc Veyrat and his daughter, 2 times 3 stars in the Michelin Guide, Manigod



Main street with its shops, Megève

- the fields of hotel, catering and commerce linked to local tourism

- a varied target clientele ranging from small budgets to large fortunes



Hotel Les Moineaux, Bellevaux



Example of Haut-Chablais cheese



Sweet specialty from Haute-Savoie



Example of a specialty from the Arve valley, "Le Farcement"



Example of different local wines, beers, liqueurs and brandies

- gastronomic tourism

Abondance cheese and its factory, Abondance



- sectors of activity indirectly affected by tourism: real estate and construction



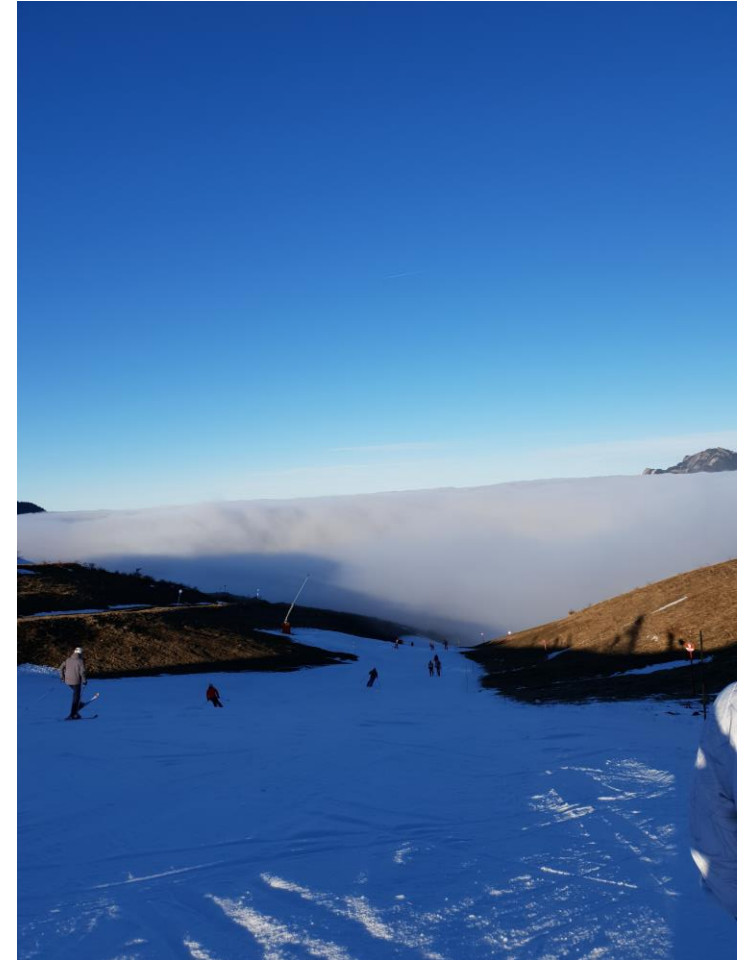
Maintenance and construction of buildings in the off-season, Avoriaz



2) The consequences of climate change



Bellevaux-Hirmentaz, end of December 2022



Bellevaux-Hirmentaz, end of December 2018

- global warming responsible for the lack of snow at medium altitude



Avalanche risk prevention sign

- the local economy risks big if white gold tourism collapses and there is no alternative

- high temperatures increase the risk of avalanches in high mountains



The village of Mont-Saxonnex, near the Bargy chain, a village victim of this situation

3) Adaptation of tourism and land development to climate change

Hill reservoir at the Bellevaux-Hirmentaz station, enlarged in 2022



Example of a snow cannon on the station

- temporary solutions



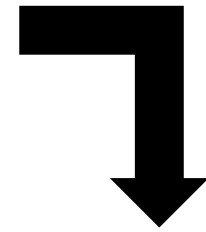
End of December 2022, La Chèvrerie station



Example of the development of electric mountain biking in winter, Les Gets

- objective: replace this type of situation on the left with activities usually outside of snow to continue to survive with the lack of snow

- long term solutions



The Rock the Pistes Festival, a musical event held in winter in the heart of the Portes du Soleil



Conclusion

→ unwavering link between territorial geography and tourism in Haute-Savoie

→ territorial wealth in terms of tourist offerings is very high

→ the economic balance is fragile with climate change

→ the tourism sector will have to adapt to survive

Sources :

<https://www.geoportail.gouv.fr/>

<https://savoie-mont-blanc.com/sites-culturels/musee-du-chablais-163042/>

<https://www.lesgets.com/en/details/musee-de-la-musique-mecanique-191340-Fr/>

<https://www.thermes-saint-gervais.com/spa-thermal/les-bains/>

<https://theotherpaths.com/les-gorges-de-la-diosaz-et-ses-cascades>

<https://lessorsavoyard.lemessager.fr//50078/article/2022-11-09/manigod-un-nouveau-concept-aux-tarifs-plus-abordables-pour-le-restaurant-de-marc>

Bibliography :

Boquet, Yves. *Géographes et géographies : de la connaissance de la terre à la compréhension des territoires*. Dijon : Editions universitaires de Dijon, 2018. 444p.

Dominique et Nicolas Abry, *Le parler des Alpes du Nord le francoprovençal*, Editions le Dauphiné Libéré, 2018

Yves Ballu, *Le Mont-Blanc, Temple de l'alpinisme*, Editions le Dauphiné Libéré, 2018

Activity Guide Summer 2019, documentation Portes du Soleil, 2019

Cédric Cordonier, *Le Chablais à petits pas*, Editions La Fontaine de Siloé, 2022

Faune et Flore de nos montagnes, Editions Glénat, 2021

Géologie & Littérature en Chablais, documentation Géoparc Chablais

Guide pratique, documentation Morzine-Avoriaz Portes du Soleil, 2018

Guide Vélo Haut-Chablais, documentation Communauté de communes du Haut-Chablais, 2018

Catherine Hermann, Mickaël Meynet, Marie-Thérèse Hermann, Marc Bron, Rémi Mogenet, Pierre Préau, Eric Pajeot ; Denis Jordan et Claude

Barbier, *Haute-Savoie Encyclopédie Bonneton*, Editions Bonneton, 2010

Les Trois Chablais du Léman aux Alpes, Editions Glénat, 2011

Wahil Saïd, *Chablais Grimpe*, édition 2017 Chablais Grimpe

Henri Widmer, *Guide du Relief Alpes Françaises du Nord*, éditions GAP, 2022

Jean-Marc Lamory, *Thonon-Evian*, Editions Glénat, 2022

For some photos : all rights reserved to Isaline Bouchard and Sylvain Bouchard, for the Aravis Nord photo : Hugo Socquet-Clerc