



# Progress Report 2009 – 2011 National Natural Landscapes

Nationale  
Naturlandschaften





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# Progress Report 2009 – 2011

## National Natural Landscapes

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# Preface



The Third EUROPARC Progress Report on the National Natural Landscapes of Germany clearly shows the successful development of the German protected area system. Recognition of Swabian Alb and Bliesgau as UNESCO biosphere reserves, extension of the biosphere reserve Berchtesgadener Land to include the whole district of that name and the inscription of the Wadden Sea on UNESCO's World Natural Heritage list were special highlights of a positive development in all of the around 130 National Natural Landscapes. These were very gratifying achievements in 2010, the year of Germany's presidency of the CBD and the International Year of Biological Diversity.

However Germany too, has failed to meet the international target to stop the decline in biological diversity by 2010. Not only coral reefs in the Caribbean and mangroves in the Pacific are under imminent threat, but also more than two thirds of all habitats in our own country. 35% of native animal species and 26% of native plant species are considered as threatened. By implementing the Nagoya decisions we will make an effective contribution to the conservation of biodiversity at the global level as well as in Germany.

National Natural Landscapes, which are protected areas of outstanding importance, will have a special role to play. They have to become much stronger drivers of sustainable living and management and of biodiversity conservation throughout Germany, and they must communicate this idea to the general public. It is necessary to improve effectiveness of management and strengthen cooperation among national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks. Part of that mission is to develop the use of the National Natural Landscape umbrella brand as a marketing platform and to enhance its impact. It is especially important to show that unspoiled nature and the conservation of biological diversity contribute to the value-added of the region and to the prosperity of those who live within the National Natural Landscapes.

The latest developments following the nuclear disaster in Fukushima also have repercussions for Germany's National Natural Landscapes. The images from Japan have made it obvious that Germany must press ahead with expanding energy generation from wind, solar and biomass sources. We must make sure, however, that biodiversity in Germany does not suffer from this development. A number of protected areas – especially biosphere reserves as model regions for sustainable development – have long since taken up the causes of climate protection and renewable energies. They have done so successfully and in harmony with nature.

I am firmly convinced that it is possible to reconcile an accelerated deployment of renewable energy sources and the conservation of biodiversity. Success in both areas will take us a huge step forward towards a sustainable Germany.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Norbert Röttgen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

DR. NORBERT RÖTTGEN

FEDERAL MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, NATURE CONSERVATION  
AND NUCLEAR SAFETY

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# Our concern ... vision & trends

## Introduction

This Fourth Progress Report on National Natural Landscapes<sup>1)</sup> in particular provides an insight for European colleagues into the work of EUROPARC Germany as the national umbrella organisation for national parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves. Therefore topics of previous progress reports have been revived.

Changing global framework conditions force us to face new challenges. The ultimate MCA (maximum credible accident) in Japan, caused by the earthquake on 11 March 2011 and the subsequent tsunami, once again drastically revealed the potential risk involved in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. For contemporary Germany this catastrophic event has prompted a rapid change in energy policy – with foreseeable but manageable consequences for our landscape. Two years ago we were troubled by other constraints: uncontrolled financial markets led the world economy to the brink of disaster. An ecologically compatible economy seemed to deteriorate to a footnote. But growth and profit alone are long since insufficient to shape our future.

In the “post-growth-society”, growth rates will decline in industrialised countries. Sustainable economic practices are also based on social and ecological components, which include climate protection and conservation of biological diversity. These

have to be incorporated into the regulatory framework of our global social and economic systems in the future without the (still) prevailing requirement for growth. We have to critically scrutinise whether the emerging upswing will

- result in a more just distribution of wealth in terms of the equitable or fair participation of all, as well as
- promote a healthy environment and conserve natural resources.

In that sustainable development is called for: “Quality counts – a benefit for nature and man”. This is also the motto for this year’s European Protected Areas Conference EUROPARC 2011.

At the Protected Areas Conference EUROPARC 2009, banker Pavan Sukhdev talked to the European leaders of large protected areas about the value of services of nature and especially large parks (the so-called TEEB-study<sup>2)</sup> of the UN (see also p. 61) – a plea from an economist to protect these areas. The economically relevant ecosystem services of nature are (so far) provided for free.

The “business” called nature has been operating for millions of years, achieving incredible results for the benefit of mankind, and has never gone bankrupt! Natural growth is compatible with man and nature – more than economic systems focused

<sup>1)</sup> National Natural Landscapes = System of large protected areas of German national parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves

<sup>2)</sup> TEEB = The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity;

*Bark beetle infestation on the Lusen mountain in the Bavarian Forest*



*Bark beetle with feeding traces*





only on quantitative growth and short term profit maximisation! No system can grow indefinitely.

Thus we can learn the rules for our global future from nature: the “wisdom of nature” is downright brilliant.

Basically climate change and conservation of biological diversity remain the most important challenges that protected areas in particular have to take into account.

How climate issues and efforts to protect the natural diversity of the earth will continue remains to be seen (see pp. 53). Some progress was made during the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010. However the World Climate Conferences (Copenhagen 2009 and Cancún, Mexico December 2010) were rather disillusioning, as climate protection requires immediate and drastic action.

### The situation in Germany

The motivated team in the Berlin office of EUROPARC Germany, as well as the members of the National Natural Landscapes and nature conservation associations, accomplished a lot despite the economic and financial crises.

In this context it is gratifying that Chancellor Angela Merkel passed on the Midori Award she received from Japan (endowed with \$ 500,000) to our volunteer programme “Pride in Nature”.



*Former Federal President Horst Köhler (middle) and his wife visited the biosphere reserves stand at the Federal Garden Show in Schwerin. They were accompanied by the Prime Minister and the Minister for the Environment of the State of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania as well as Dr. Eberhard Henne (ED).*

At that time nobody could anticipate that only three months later “Fukushima” would change the world. This ultimate MCA changed the attitude from critical of nuclear power to a consensus – ultimately supported by all parties – on restructuring energy systems towards renewable energies. The accelerated development of renewable energies will have an effect on nature and landscape. The transmission of electricity from planned offshore wind parks into industrial centres (the routes for the high voltage networks onto and over- land) alone will probably fragment many areas (see also ED 2009 b, p. 20). However resource saving “eco-innovations” with economic, efficient use of energy is considered the key to change in energy politics. Studies show that a quarter of electricity can be saved intelligently (e.g. Wuppertal Institut 2011; Hennicke & Fischedick 2007). At the same time this will help to reduce greenhouse gases, harmful to the climate, and the extent of new infrastructure.

Large protected areas in Germany play an important role as part of the “National Strategy for Biological Diversity” (NBS). For this purpose a screening of the NBS goals relevant to National Natural Landscapes will soon be completed by EUROPARC Germany, subsidised by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN). We plan to develop recommendations for protected areas with consistent parameters. It will provide an overall readable view of development and change

(including spectrum of species) in National Natural Landscapes nationwide. This is because these large protected areas are the pillars for conservation of biological diversity.

Nature conservation in Germany is the responsibility of the states (Bundesländer). But it cannot forge ahead in any state budget; on the contrary, attempts at savings in terms of reduction of personnel are daily occurrences. In the last ten years, funds for nature conservation have been reduced by 30 per cent overall. Almost everywhere there is a lack of personnel, especially of a professional (ranger) system for support services – even in some national parks. The federal association “Naturwacht” (nature watch) can say a thing or two about it.

Given this situation, the commitment to promote our common concern for National Natural Landscapes by the staff in parks, the branch offices and the nature conservation associations is especially admirable. 2009 was the year of biosphere reserves – a successful campaign that even attracted the highest political representatives during the National Garden Show in Schwerin. (see also Third Progress Report pp. 26, cf. Second Progress Report pp. 18/19 and 32 – 34).

It is rather pleasing and encouraging that Germans are more and more interested in nature and the environment – also against the background of the climate debate and the new energy concept of the federal government. The reduction of greenhouse gases is climate protection and nature conservation at the same time! By no means do the “climate pick-up-sticks” of the international climate conferences fit this. The general disappointment about the slow action of the world community, however, does not help at all. Convinced by our arguments we have to keep on track and move forward, especially in Germany. This will most likely win over hesitant countries and fellow comrade-in-arms for global climate protection. We need them, because without climate protection even large protected areas will remain a piecemeal approach fighting the loss of species.

We also need allies for the other major goal: to finally stop the dramatic worldwide loss of species. This (still) continues unabated, although the international community committed to reduce the loss of species and biological diversity significantly by 2010. This goal was missed significantly, as even EU environmental ministers recognised in March 2010. The human race is working effectively to destroy the foundations of its own existence. We Germans contribute as well. For example, when



*Above: Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel (middle) and Federal Minister for the Environment Norbert Röttgen (left) opened the International Year of Biological Diversity in the Museum of Natural History in Berlin, to the right executive director of the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) Achim Steiner*

*Below: Participants of the European Conference of protected areas 2009 in Strömstad, Sweden*



we continuously deepen the lower reaches and estuaries of rivers along the sensitive coastal region of the southern North Sea (e.g. Elbe River) and interfere so drastically that the adjacent Wadden Seas may be endangered (recently acknowledged as a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site).

To preserve creation we need personalities that will change course to protect the diversity of life – our natural basis of existence – in all its facets. It is our most valuable resource, but (still) not appreciated adequately! We have to explain better and continue the quality offensive started with National Natural Landscapes in Germany (see also Third Progress Report pp. 40).

The Chancellor and the Federal Minister of the Environment solemnly introduced the International Year of Biological Diversity 2010 in Berlin in January 2010. Now it shall be extended to a decade. The EU and in particular Germany have to continuously set a good example. For example, the EU will hold on to the goal of stopping species loss but postpone it for ten years. The Federal Minister of the Environment decided upon a federal “biological diversity” programme, which will provide € 15 million annually for nature conservation measures. This may have a positive effect on nature and on social awareness, especially when it is supported by the states (responsible for nature conservation), NGOs and important interest groups.

In the meantime we become more and more aware of which services nature and our National Natural Landscapes in particular provide for society. This even applies to the storage of carbon dioxide. These so-called ecosystem services cover a wide range and are not only proven concerning climate protection. The UN study TEEB<sup>1)</sup> strongly emphasises the function and value of nature (cf. pp. 61). Bogs, wilderness and forests, for example, contribute in particular to climate protection. This topic will be worked on intensively during the coming years and be supported by respective public relations, not only in the UN Year of Forests 2011. An innovative project was started “appraising” the value of nature at EUROPARC Germany in early 2011 (see p. 58).

<sup>1)</sup> TEEB appraises ecosystem services that have been provided for free up to now.

## Goals, tasks and visions for National Natural Landscapes

In the First Progress Report 2008 we illustrated our vision. In summary:

National Natural Landscapes will play an outstanding role in Germany's future. They shall develop as a social force that will protect the natural diversity of life permanently and be inspiring locations for teaching and learning. They are easily accessible by public transport, are open to the entire population and enable children and the handicapped to experience nature.

Majestic animals such as white-tailed eagle and wolf will live in natural habitats as well as blue mussel or grey seal. Managed forests will turn into woods where the beech reclaims its place. Elk and perhaps brown bear will find space to live in Germany again. We comprehend that the nationally (and wrongly) condemned bark beetle represents a key species for the conservation of biological diversity; because it guides managed forests to natural forests. This can already be observed and experienced in various German national parks. In view of the International Year of Forests (proclaimed by the UN for 2011), it is worthwhile fighting for this “forest change” (see p. 73). Genetically modified organisms will be kept away from national natural landscapes.

All National Natural Landscapes are subject to continuous optimisation; they will be comprehensively evaluated at least every ten years.

The achievement of this vision will require the commitment of many people. Whether national partners, supporters and organisations such as Allianz Environment Foundation, Bionade, Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), Commerzbank, German Federal Foundation for Environment (DBU), Honda, L'Oréal, National Geographic, Skoda, TUI and WWF, nature conservation organisations such as BUND, NABU, the Heinz Sielmann Foundation or the Wadden Sea Protection Station, and a great number of supporting societies, or more than 2,500 volunteers in the parks, they are all asked to support the tasks of national natural landscapes. An era of public-private-partnerships will further support the parks.

### Which path do we take?

We at EUROPARC Germany are convinced that the path towards a nationwide park service, similar to the ones in Canada or the USA, will be an integral part of the future. The first and most important prerequisites are fulfilled. The federal government and many states participate in and/or have supported the development of the umbrella brand “National Natural Landscapes” – such as the BfN (Bundesamt für Naturschutz / Federal Agency for Nature Conservation) or the DBU (Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt / German Environmental Foundation). These outstanding landscapes in Germany can and will rate highly in society. Federally owned natural areas shall be left

*Virgin beech forest in Müritz National Park, Serrahn*



to nature and handed over to the trusteeship of states, the DBU and many other nature conservation organisations from BUND, NABU, or Heinz Sielmann Foundation to WWF. These efforts will complement the national natural heritage (see pp. 74), as National Natural Landscapes have already done for some time.

In a world of rapid change and global crises, national natural landscapes symbolise stable model regions for conservation and adaptation. They represent a wholehearted confession of the federal government, states and communities to assume responsibility and maintain the areas in their various forms for the long-term and develop them sustainably. German and Dutch conservation efforts received specific appreciation in 2009 when the Wadden Seas were designated as a World Natural Heritage Site by UNESCO. The entire coastal region carries a huge responsibility and obligation to do everything necessary for its conservation (see pp. 66). Several states, with support of the BMU, initiated another nomination dossier – “old beech forests Germany”. At the end of June 2011 these valuable forest relics were also added to the UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site list (see p. 70).

In 2007 the federal government adopted the “National Strategy for Biological Diversity” (NBS). This made an important contribution to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CDB, Rio 1992) and was acknowledged internationally (cf. Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD in Bonn, 2008). Thus the foundation stone was laid to implement the principle of sustainable development: economic and social development have to be permanently compatible with the capacities of the natural ecosystems. Where better can sustainable development start, if not in National Natural Landscapes that cover more than a quarter of the country’s area?! A positive comment is necessary as the federal government wants to pay even more attention to its responsibility for national and international nature conservation, reaching beyond the responsibility of the states. The federal “Biological Diversity” programme has been adopted to implement the NBS. Starting in 2011 funds will be issued for activities to realise concrete goals and measures of the NBS.

Here National Natural Landscapes have to play an important role and help support or implement respective (usually comprehensive) nature conservation measures. Our 'Research & Monitoring' working group creates opportunities to create programmes for the conservation of biological diversity or for the support of respective measures, where appropriate in combination with the Federal Ministry of Education. Large research institutes and various universities show increasing interest in National Natural Landscapes, too (cf. pp. 51).

In the context of this development it should be mentioned that EUROPARC Germany published a German version of the booklet on the IUCN<sup>1)</sup> – "Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories" – thanks to the support of the BfN<sup>2)</sup> with funds from the Federal Ministry of the Environment (BMU – Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit). This publication is available for the nature conservation administrations of the states and all members on our homepage ([www.europarc-deutschland.de](http://www.europarc-deutschland.de) or [www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de](http://www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de)) and as a printed version upon request.

Also relevant is the approach to increase the knowledge of the CBD work programme on protected areas in their own country and to further improve it. As part of another project, also funded by the BfN<sup>2)</sup>, EUROPARC Germany submitted several suggestions to further optimise the work programme on protected areas in March 2010 in the run-up to COP 10 of the CBD. The EUROPARC Federation and the national branches supported this approach, which has proved to be successful. Three of the four suggestions were incorporated into this international work programme during the COP 10.



*Tinder fungus on beech tree trunk*

## Encouragement

In 2009 the first national parks in Europe celebrated their 100th anniversary. The German nature park movement is now over 50 years old. The oldest German National Park, the Bavarian Forest, turned 40 and the ground-breaking national park programme of the former GDR, now the east of a united Germany, is 20 years old. All this was duly celebrated during German Nature Conservation Day in Stralsund. The development of the oldest German National Park in particular shows that it takes a long time to make more room for nature in Germany. To admit natural development or wilderness presents a huge challenge in Central Europe as well as Germany, although it can be achieved quite inexpensively. Just like the Wadden Seas, the Bavarian Forest National Park is increasingly valued for its beneficial effect on nature and many people in the region. Here the "wild heart of Europe" developed together with the neighbouring region of Šumava, the Bohemian Forest: a large continuous woodland that is more and more left to natural development.

<sup>1)</sup> IUCN = International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

<sup>2)</sup> Bundesamt für Naturschutz (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation)



“Forest-wilderness” develops here – an encouraging example in the centre of Europe. There will be more of these along the European Green Belt. Adjacent nature parks contribute to the protection of this cross-border forest region. In general, closer cooperation is advisable for the three categories of large protected areas. BfN <sup>1)</sup> granted a research and development project that has been initiated by EUROPARC Germany and has started with the participation of 18 National Natural Landscapes of different categories.

But other examples also encourage. In the Second Progress Report (see pp. 22 – 25 therein) we informed in detail about the volunteer programme originated ten years ago. It has been extended onto the European level as “Pride in Nature” (see pp. 41). In 2008 we started a nationwide Junior Ranger programme together with the WWF. The reception by participating parks and the youth surpassed all expectations (see pp. 34); a programme expandable on a European level with the EUROPARC Federation. It is not only TV, computers, and the internet that dominate the social life of the young: nature finds its place again too.

If all social groups, no matter what age, stand up for nature, we will anchor nature conservation more firmly in our society. It is crucial to sustainably foster National Natural Landscapes with combined forces, to protect achievements and cautiously improve and provide direction. Crises or not, EUROPARC will promote National Natural Landscapes as a contribution to the European and worldwide network of protected areas and strengthen them by strategic management. We are doing this with the support of many and with the exchange of experiences under the umbrella of EUROPARC Federation.

With pleasure we organise this year’s meeting of European protected areas with the EUROPARC Conference 2011 in the Swabian Alps Biosphere Reserve. The State of Baden-Wuerttemberg as the host, together with the region, welcomes guests from protected areas. All are cordially invited to be there in Germany and witness how we want to guide our most beautiful and most valuable landscapes into a secure future together!

THE PUBLISHER

<sup>1)</sup> Bundesamt für Naturschutz (Federal Agency for Nature Conservation)

*Forest restoration*



*Forest wilderness*



# Aims & key Aspects

## An overview of National Natural Landscapes of Germany

GABRIELE NICLAS AND HOLGER WESEMÜLLER

In Germany, the categories of national park (NLP), biosphere reserve (BR) and nature park (NRP) are often, by reason of their large area, grouped together under the term “large protected areas”. Alongside these there are a variety of large and small protected areas, for example nature conservation areas (Naturschutzgebiete – NSG) and landscape protection areas (Landschaftsschutzgebiete – LSG). These are, in general, integrated into the European NATURA 2000 network. In relation to the three large protected areas, various objectives are being pursued. Together they form the system of National Natural Landscapes.

BNatSchG (Bundesnaturschutzgesetz / Federal Environmental Protection Law, 2010) and the state conservation laws form the national legal framework. Legal designation of the 14 national parks, 16 biosphere reserves – of which 15 are UNESCO accredited – and the current 100 nature parks is the responsibility of the federal states.

The total number of protected areas has risen over the last 15 years from almost 40 to the 132 of today. At the same time, the individual protected area categories sometimes overlap, and in some cases are actually identical. A comparison of their total area shows a doubling of the area under protection up to now (see tab. 1).



*As in previous centuries, the heathlands of Lüneburg Heath Nature Reserve are grazed today by German Grey Heath sheep.*

To give one example, the only German alpine national park, Berchtesgaden, is at the same time the core of the biosphere reserve of the same name. The Palatinate Forest Nature Park was the twelfth biosphere reserve in Germany to be accredited by UNESCO in 1992, on account of it being a model for other reserves (cf. tab. 3, p. 18).

All three protected area categories consist predominantly of (in different ratios) NSG and/or LSG or a similar zonation system. All told, around 30% of the area of Germany is covered by these large protected areas, in the main by nature parks (see map of National Natural Landscapes in the appendix). National Natural Landscapes have admittedly not been truly linked

Tab. 1: Development of large protected areas in Germany

	National parks (NLP)			Biosphere reserves (BR)			Nature parks (NRP) <sup>3)</sup>		
Year	1996	2004	2011	1996	2004	2011	1996	2004	2011
Number	12	15	14	13	14	16	68	87	102
Area (ha) <sup>1)</sup>	726,502	962,048	1,029,316	1,249,141	1,579,828	1,846,904	5,678,766	7,985,511	9,573,027
Proportion of the state area in % <sup>2)</sup>	0.5	0.54	0.54	2.0	3.0	3.7	15.9	22.4	26.8

<sup>1)</sup> including the mudflats and wetlands of the North Sea and Baltic Sea.

<sup>2)</sup> excluding the mudflats and wetlands of the North Sea and Baltic Sea.

<sup>3)</sup> The total number of NRP is based on the counting methods of the BfN, which only lists NRPs, which were officially reported in the context of a national-state agreement with data exchange from the federal states.

Source: Combined from BfN 1997, 2004, BfN 2010, 2010 a and 2010 b ( March 2010 )

together in this way (see p. 14), even if their clear hallmarks, which have the same appearance, contribute to their apparent unity.

### National parks

Since the unification of the Harz and Upper Harz National Parks in 2006, Germany has 14 national parks, which cover 1,029,316 hectares, including the mudflats and wetlands of the North Sea and Baltic Sea (0.54% of National territory, excluding mudflats and wetlands).

In accordance with BNatSchG (§ 24), national parks are legally binding, specified areas which are largely natural and which are predominantly found to be free from major human influence on their landscape and environment. Ideally there are undisturbed, and should further develop their own natural environmental dynamic. In so far as they are compatible with conservation activities, they should also be places of scientific environmental observation, natural history education, as well as offering the experience of that environment to people. Due to their clear commitment to “process protection” (Prozessschutz<sup>1)</sup>) and the concept of wilderness, national parks in Germany represent the strictest state protected area category.

The term national park refers to protected, attractively scenic large scale natural landscapes of national and international importance. They are predominantly classified as nature conservation areas (NSG). Their designation as such comes through the federal states in consultation with the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development (BMBV). With the exception of Rhineland-Palatinate and Baden-Wuerttemberg, there is at least one national park in each federal state. In principle, some other areas of German countryside lend themselves to designation as national parks. EUROPARC Germany welcomes further additions as a general rule, so long as the technical criteria, international preconditions and long-term target achievement plans are met and sufficient personnel and resources are at their disposal. This gives particular endorsement to the findings of the BfN requested research and development project (R&D)

on The Development of Quality Criteria and Standards for German National Parks (cf. ED 2008b and 2008c).

In 2010, Steigerwald National Park was again under discussion as to whether it should become the third Bavarian national park. In fact, Steigerwald has considerable “nature potential” in this regard. As soon as an objective discussion occurs in situ, the functional political aspects in Bavaria should cooperate and clarify this. At Siebengebirge in North Rhine-Westfalia, the planning of a national park is underway. Here it is possible that the new legal category created by BNatSchG § 24, national nature monument (Nationales Naturmonument) will be employed. At the same time, again in North Rhine-Westfalia, the idea of a national park at Teutoburger Forest / Senne is on the agenda. In Thuringia the coalition partners have agreed to extend the Vessertal-Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve within the next 20 years and to develop the central area into a national park. In relation to this, a moderated discussion and consultation process will be conducted until 2012. In Rhineland-Palatinate and in Baden-Wuerttemberg discussions continue to rage as to the establishment of national parks, but they have not yet been fully completed.

In terms of the smaller national parks (< 10,000 ha), in order to minimise negative external influences, these parks are, as a

View of Eifel National Park



<sup>1)</sup> “Prozessschutz” is an environmental protection strategy, which is based in essence on non-intervention in the natural processes of the ecosystem.



Tab. 2: National parks in Germany

National park (federal state <sup>1)</sup> )	Founded	Area <sup>2)</sup> in ha. (including mudflats)	Formative landscape elements	Unique features
Bavarian Forest (BY)	1970	24,217	Floodplain spruce forest, montane mixed forest, upland spruce forest	Wild forest without borders
Berchtesgaden (BY)	1978	20,804	Evergreen, montane mixed and pine forests, dwarf pine scrub, mountain pastures, alpine grassland, dwarf shrub moorland, rocky areas, bogs, streams and lakes	Vertical wilderness
Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea (SH)	1985	441,500 (97.7%)	Mud flats, islands, Halligen, dunes, sand banks, tidal creeks, salt marshes and the sea	Seabed meets horizon
Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony (NI)	1986	345,000 (93%)	Mud flats, sand banks, tidal creeks and the sea, islands with dunes and beaches, salt marshes, geest cliffs, bogs, heaths	Seabed meets horizon
Wadden Sea of Hamburg (HH)	1990	13,750 (97.1%)	Mud flats inundated by Elbe freshwater with sand islands, salt marshes and dunes, tidal creeks, sand banks and fens	Seabed meets horizon
Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft (MV)	1990	80,500 (84%)	Steep and flat coasts, beaches, wind mudflats, dunes, Halligen, dry grass plains, reed beds, salt marshes, pine and beech forests, alder carr	Bodden – The Lagoon of the Baltic
Jasmund (MV)	1990	3,003 (22%)	Chalk cliffs, pebble beaches and the shallows of the Baltic Sea, beech forest, lakes, fens, streams	Chalk cliffs by the sea
Müritz (MV)	1990	32,200	Lakes, reed beds, fens, forests, meadows	Land of a thousand lakes
Saxonian Switzerland (SN)	1990	9,350	Sandstone rocks, scree pine forests, ravine forests, beech forest domes on basalt	Bizarre rocks - wild ravines
Harz (ST/ NI)	Upper Harz 1990 Harz 1994 unification 2006	24,732	Upland spruce, mixed and Beech forests, sub-alpine dwarf shrub heath, bogs, watercourses and rock habitats	Legendary mountain wilderness
Lower Oder Valley (BB)	1995	10,323	Flood plain landscape with marsh areas, sedge marshes, reed beds, oxbow lakes and the remains of alluvial forest, evergreen broadleaf forest, meadow steppe	Countryside in flood
Hainich (TH)	1997	7,513	Species and structure rich mixed beech forest with a high proportion of dead wood; large areas of reforestation	Ancient forest in the heart of Germany
Kellerwald-Edersee (HE)	2004	5,724	Acidic Luzula-Beech forest, Edellaubholzwald, block- and slope forests, dry-oak forest	In the realm of the unspoilt beech
Eifel (NW)	2004	10,700	Beech forests, lakes, rocky and dry steep, bogs, forest pasture	Forest, water, wilderness
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,029,316</b>		

<sup>1)</sup> Federal state abbreviations: BB Brandenburg, BE Berlin, BW Baden-Wuerttemberg, BY Bavaria, HB Bremen, HE Hesse, HH Hamburg, MV Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania, NI Lower Saxony, NW North Rhine-Westphalia, RP Rhineland-Palatinate, SH Schleswig-Holstein, SL The Saarland, SN Saxony, ST Saxony-Anhalt, TH Thuringia

<sup>2)</sup> Compliance with the strict protection objectives in small-scale NLP is supported by their imbedding into a system of surrounding larger protected areas (BR, NRP), which function as buffers against negative external influences.

Source: Collation of BfN as of March 2011, ED 2006a.



*Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft National Park, passage migrant birds in Udarser Wiek, Rügen*

rule, surrounded by and contained within other protected areas (buffer zones). Kellerwald-Edersee, Hainich and Saxonian Switzerland National Parks can be numbered here. The latter, as well as Bavarian Forest, Berchtesgaden, Lower Oder Valley and Wadden Sea National Parks, form protected areas shared with other countries.

In the case of the Wadden Sea National Parks (and Biosphere Reserves!), the international dimension plays a specific role. The Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein, together with the neighbouring Dutch areas, were listed as a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site on 26th June 2009. Hamburg followed in June 2011 with its National Park.

National parks are unique areas of wilderness which allow landscapes to evolve within their own natural cycle, repair damage to themselves and also protect the environment for future generations. Thus, national parks deliberately do not exclude people, but rather offer visitors numerous opportunities to experience the landscape and be witness to these exciting natural processes. This also helps to increase the attractiveness of the region to tourists.

National park regions are developing more and more into desirable tourist destinations. In some parks, tourism is actually the most important economic factor (cf. The Second Progress Report, p.55 ff, see also p. 104 ff.).

### **Biosphere reserves**

The 16 German biosphere reserves cover a total area of 1,846,904 hectares; including the mud flats and wetlands of the North Sea and Baltic Sea this comprises around 3.7% of the territorial area of Germany. Some of the biosphere reserves overlap with national parks (e.g. Wadden Sea National Park and Berchtesgaden National Park) or with nature parks (e.g. Palatinate Forest and Rhön Nature Parks).

Biosphere reserves incorporate totally state owned representative sections of the biogeographical regions of Germany. Alongside the protection of natural or semi-natural habitats through natural regeneration in a core zone, they act in particular to ensure the preservation, development or reestablishment of cultural landscapes enlarged by human use over the years. To this end, traditional ways of living and working as well as more environmentally and socially compatible forms should be developed and tested to provide examples (cf. BNatSchG 2010 § 25).

Biosphere reserves in Germany are identified by the federal states on the basis of BNatSchG and particular state laws. The federal states must guarantee that biosphere reserves will be subdivided with due consideration to their diverse goals and functions into core zones, management zones and development zones and will be protected as nature conservation and landscape protection areas.

UNESCO accreditation forms the basis of binding international guidelines and nationally enforceable criteria.

So far, 15 biosphere reserves in Germany have received UNESCO accreditation (see tab. 3). In terms of the South Harz Karst Landscape Biosphere Reserve in Saxony-Anhalt, which was designated in February 2009, the UNESCO accreditation process should begin in 2012. A final decision on accreditation is expected in summer 2013 at the earliest.

Not all German natural areas are to be found in biosphere reserves, the most notable exceptions being the alpine foothills (pre-Alps), the geest of northwest Germany and the slate hills of the Rhine. Thus, according to the level of demand from representatives, further biosphere reserves could be judged by the criteria of UNESCO in Germany.

Biosphere reserves act as model regions for sustainable development, in which people can make an active contribution to the preservation, maintenance and development of the biosphere reserve through the practice of sustainable subsistence strategies. In light of the growing global challenges of the 21st century, in particular the sustained attrition of biological and cultural diversity, accelerating climate change and the consequences for the ecological system and their benefit to humanity, the worldwide network of biosphere reserves takes on a great deal of importance for the future security of people and society.



*Above: A flash flood in Lower Saxonian  
Elbe Valley Biosphere Reserve*

*Middle: The Elbe floodplain near Dessau*

*Below: Former land reclamation in the Schleswig-Holstein  
Wadden Sea Biosphere Reserve*



Tab. 3: Biosphere reserves in Germany

Biosphere reserve (federal state <sup>1)</sup> )	Total area in ha.	Formative landscape elements	Unique features	UNESCO accreditation
Vessertal-Thuringian Forest (TH)	17,081	Montane mixed forest, montane meadows, montane streams, raised bogs	Resting forest with babbling brooks	1979
Schorfheide-Chorin (BB)	129,160	Hilly open country, forests, outwash plains, ancient river valleys, bogs, lakes and kettle holes	Land of cranes with broad horizons	1990
Berchtesgadener Land (BY)	84,000	Evergreen and mixed forest, alpine pastures, alpine meadows and dwarf shrub moorland, rocky areas, bogs, alluvial forests, settlements and rural cultivated landscapes	Experience alpine nature – feel healthy	1990
Wadden Sea and Halligen Islands of Schleswig-Holstein (SH)	443,100	Mud flats, islands, Halligen, dunes, sand banks, tidal creeks, salt marshes and the sea	Seabed meets horizon	1990
Rhön (BY, HE, TH)	185,262	Low mountain ranges with interesting cones and domes, wide floodplains, raised bogs, meadows and pastures, semi-natural forests	Land of open distance	1991
Spree Forest (BB)	47,509	Carr, bog and alluvial forest, bogs, marshes and reed beds, semi-natural marshes and wet meadows	Where gondolas carry gherkins	1991
South-East Rügen (MV)	22,900	Coastal landscape with long sand beaches, deep cut jagged inlets, steep coast, dry grassland, salt marshes, beech forests, fields and pastures	Where the sand martins feed on herring	1991
Palatinate Forest - Northern Vosges (RP)	177,842	Very fragmented and compact wooded gently sloping hills, intensively used wine growing areas.	Where the forest kisses the vines	1992
Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony (NI)	240,000	Mud flats, islands with dunes, beaches and salt marshes, bogs, heather moorland, sand banks, tidal creeks and the sea	Seabed meets horizon	1992
Wadden Sea of Hamburg (HH)	11,700	Mud flats inundated by freshwater from the Elbe with sand islands, salt marshes and dunes	Seabed meets horizon	1992
Upper Lausitz Heath and Pond Landscape (SN)	30,102	Dune forests, flood meadows, watercourses, reed beds, fresh water and wet meadows, fields, bogs, dry grassland, wet and dry heath as well as 345 Lakes	Carp lakes in heathland	1996
Elbe River Landscape (BB, MV, NI, SH, ST) incl. Middle Elbe (ST) since 1979	275,893	Water meadows, wetland, remains of alluvial forest, dried up channels, valley sand inland dunes, historic cultivated landscapes	Global culture on wild shores	1997
Schaalsee (MV)	30,900	Deep lakes, chalk rich fens, alder and ash forests, carr forest, bogs, dry grassland, grassland	Resting place for migratory birds	2000
Bliesgau (SL)	36,152	Orchards, species-rich pastures, extensive beech forests, water meadow landscape crossed by the Blies	Town – country – river	2009
Swabian Alb (BW)	85,269	Low hills countryside with the steep, towering Albtrauf, hanging beech forest, gorge and block forests, juniper heath, former Military training area at Münsingen and orchards of the Alb floodplain	A varied cultivated landscape linked to a metropolitan region	2009
South Harz Karst Landscape (ST)	30,034	Varied, typical karst elements, such as depressions, sinkholes, broken cliffs, karst springs and caves; extensive, semi-natural beech and evergreen mixed forest and the important remains of a cultivated landscape based on small family farms with large areas of dry grassland and orchards		Accreditation applied for
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,846,904</b>			

<sup>1)</sup> Federal state abbreviations: BB Brandenburg, BE Berlin, BW Baden-Wuerttemberg, BY Bavaria, HB Bremen, HE Hesse, HH Hamburg, MV Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania, NI Lower Saxony, NW North Rhine-Westphalia, RP Rhineland-Palatinate, SH Schleswig-Holstein, SL The Saarland, SN Saxony, ST Saxony-Anhalt, TH Thuringia

Source: Collation of BfN 2011a (as of March 2011), ED 2005b



*Arber-Gipfelriegel with hikers in Bavarian Forest Nature Park*

## Nature parks

At present there are a total of 102 nature parks<sup>1)</sup>, which cover approximately 26.8% of Germany. Here we are referring to large scale, diverse man-made environments, which in particular offer the chance to experience the countryside as it really is, not least because of the aesthetic beauty of the landscape.

BNatSchG (§ 27) allocates a dual function to nature parks. They should make a contribution to the protection and maintenance of the landscape and environment, but at the same time also offer a close-to-nature, sustainable experience for people.

<sup>1)</sup> This figure is based on the data of the BfN, which lists the NRP according to state declarations.

In order to specify the primary role and aims of National Natural Landscapes, EUROPARC has developed nationwide guiding principles for the three large protected area categories in Germany.

According to these, nature parks should both offer a sustainable form of regional development and develop proposals for public relations and environmental education (cf. ED 2005a).

The provisions of § 27 BNatSchG are complemented by federal environmental protection laws concerning competence, process and form (§ 22 (2) BNatSchG). The basis for identification as a nature park is mainly provided by a statutory law, in which the various functions of nature parks are defined.

A variety of concepts of the main task focus of the nature parks exist, at least at times, which helps to explain their historical development.

Tab. 4: Nature parks in federal states

Federal state	Area (ha)	No. of NRP	NRP Area (ha)	Proportion of the state (%)
Baden-Wuerttemberg	3,575,147	7	1,147,074	32.1
Bavaria	7,055,157	18	2,244,456	31.8
Berlin	89,102	1	4,008	4.5
Brandenburg	2,947,973	11	711,220	24.1
Hanseatic City of Bremen	40,428	0	0	0.0
Hanseatic City of Hamburg	75,516	0	0	0.0
Hesse	2,111,469	11	871,704	41.3
Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania	2,318,238	7	365,682	15.8
Lower Saxony	4,764,110	13	929,851	19.5
North Rhine-Westphalia	3,408,597	14	1,296,700	38.0
Rhineland-Palatinate	1,985,336	8	632,751	31.9
The Saarland	256,840	1	103,346	40.2
Saxony	1,841,710	3	198,837	10.8
Saxony-Anhalt	2,044,631	6	460,808	22.5
Schleswig-Holstein	1,579,957	6	258,390	16.4
Thuringia	1,617,214	4	348,200	21.5
Nationally:	35,711,425	110 <sup>1)</sup>	9,573,027	26.8

<sup>1)</sup> Total number of nature parks according to state declarations: 102; another 8 cross the boundaries of federal states.

Source: Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) 2011b (as of January 2011)

The initial absence of general frameworks and standard criteria caused the development of various types of nature park with a diverging emphasis on conservation and regeneration. Due to the ongoing discussion about basic general principles (renewed since 1990 and focussed on giving equal weight to conservation and regeneration), the Federation of German Nature Parks (Verband Deutscher Naturparke e. V. – VDN) – founded in 1963 – sought in 2001 to meet this challenge with the publication of a unified catalogue of tasks, which was published in an updated third edition in 2009. The discussion about the form of the remit and future development of nature parks is not closed.

The broad spectrum of nature park activities is currently to be praised and where possible unified and harmonised. The current Nature Park Quality Drive (see p. 47) offers an important means of performance review and optimisation of nature park activities proposals in this context.

Nature parks exist in the main as part of legally binding protected landscape areas (around 51% of the total area of nature parks) but only rarely occupy exactly the same area as protected landscapes (as little as 5% of the total area of nature parks is congruent), since the remaining area of nature parks has, in general, no restriction on its redevelopment or use. Above all, they possess important functions in terms of open space and recreation.



Increasingly we are seeing a convergence of the three large protected area categories. Thus we find national parks, which form part of nature parks and which embrace, or try to embrace, a unifying concept of environmental protection (for instance, the



*Kyffhäuser Nature Park –  
Ochsenburg, a Mecca for botanists*

Hainich and Harz regions, Kellerwald or the Wadden Sea regions), as well as biosphere reserves, which are to a great extent congruent with nature parks (for example Palatinate Forest and Rhön).

By fulfilling their intended function, nature parks offer a unique opportunity, to develop more than a quarter of the area of Germany as examples of landscapes suitable for both man and nature, and though awareness of the concept of biosphere reserves as model regions for the sustainable development of country areas, thus supporting an idea which we could seek to transfer to even wider areas.

## The National Natural Landscapes umbrella brand

VIVIAN KREFT AND PETER SCHNEIDER

Evidence from other countries indicates that a good communicative presence is a key factor in promoting a positive image of protected areas and ensuring their long-term success. Over the past few years, many large protected areas in Germany have optimised and professionalised their communication. Up until this point, though, there were no innovative or overarching communication strategies. That Germany's large protected areas needed a coherent presence and unified image was undisputed; however, due to the federal structure and the states' responsibilities for the protected areas, implementing it was not as straightforward. In 2003, EUROPARC Germany took the first steps toward establishing a unified presence for all of the country's large protected areas.

Following on from a number of workshops, a project proposal was approved in 2004 which aimed to make the building of communication strategies for the German national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks a unified national responsibility. In addition to the central concept of conservation, the project endeavoured to familiarise the German people with protected areas as fascinating regions in a natural and cultural landscape worthy of preservation. An additional medium-term objective of the communication strategy was establishing new sources of financing in the form of donations, sponsorships and proceeds from the sale of merchandise, which would enable the further development of the large protected areas. Financial support for this ambitious project was provided by the German Federal Foundation for Environment (DBU – Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt), the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN – Bundesamt für Naturschutz). In Berlin in November 2005, the new umbrella label for the German national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks was presented to the public: National Natural Landscapes. The organisation's own website, [www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de](http://www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de), was set up as its primary forum for communication.

Across state borders and party lines, the initiative to unite the three types of protected areas under a single label was very enthusiastically received. A deciding factor in the growing acceptance and advancement of the label was the successful motivation of eight German states, seven of which became involved in the project through additional funding and individual state pilot projects. It was precisely this voluntary participation and commitment on the part of the states and their parks which prompted increased awareness of the strength and effectiveness of uniting all of the large protected areas as a single presence. Above all, the staunch political backing which National Natural Landscapes enjoy at the state and federal levels – underpinned not least by a ground-breaking Bundestag resolution of March 2007 titled “National Natural Landscapes – Opportunities for Tourism, Environmental Education and Sustainable Regional Development” (cf. German Bundestag 2007) – provides extremely strong support for the cause today. During the process it was not always easy to navigate the necessary legislative pathways. However, by building on the conviction that Germany’s most beautiful and precious landscapes represent a national natural heritage shared by all the states, it was ultimately possible to use federal structures to create a unified presence for the German national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks. A significant contributing factor in this success was the efforts and ingenuity shown by the parks in identifying a multitude of ways to integrate and apply the new branding.

At the end of 2010 Saxony was pushed towards creating a unifying brand. Not only had the circle of licence holders increased. The unifying brand itself evolved into different areas: here we can include internet branding, as well as the emergence of sub-brands (see p. 73) and campaign logos, for example “Wir sind Wald” (We are forest). The application of the unifying brand will be extensive.

### **The development of the brand**

The family of partners continues to grow, with even non-members being added as licence holders. A communications handbook provides the general framework for all future presentations. Through this the cornerstone principle has been laid, not merely to see the brand logo as decorative, as a seal of quality and knowledge, but also to use it to make a statement. The brand should clearly and demonstrably tell people what differentiates the National Natural Landscapes brand from other protected areas or activities in natural conservation.

This distinction lies at the heart of the particular features of the National Natural Landscapes brand. Its reach (in terms of area) and the accompanying extraordinary diversity of its regions are unique – which can be experienced in national parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves. Thus the National Natural Landscapes brand can clearly demonstrate its mission: Here you can experience nature, people can learn about it, and society can find the basis for a new awareness of sustainability and natural diversity. This means National Natural Landscapes develops a basis for the ethical, ecological and sustainable development of society.

### *Holidays in nature*

More and more Germans are booking “Holidays at home” and discovering the beauty of their own country. So in the 2011 holiday season the “Holidays in Nature” brochure appeared. Within this 62 page brochure, attractive travel options within National Natural Landscapes were offered. Perhaps taking a canoe and following the trail of the Elbe beaver, guided by a ranger through Brockengarten or hiking accompanied by a donkey to carry your necessary supplies – within the brochure there are suggestions which make undreamed of perspectives accessible and are as varied as nature itself is.

The partners of the National Natural Landscapes brand are of course welcoming hosts. Currently there are over 450 partner organisations which, as tourist service providers, care for their guests and their sense of well being on holiday and which, through their partner logo, also seek to spread the brand (see p. 78). Here it is hoped that all members and license holders unite under the same logo, to guarantee a unified image which will demonstrate to visitors around the country that in these places they will find environmentally friendly hospitality.

### *Photo pool*

Thanks to the creation of an online photo pool, it is now possible to access appropriate photos in just a few steps. There are currently more than 1,300 photos stored in the archive. Within the archive there is a selection from the portfolio of slides, which EUROPARC Germany acquired from the estate of the wildlife photographer Bruno Dittrich. Now this treasure trove of images is finally available for use. The archive offers some texts in print or online alongside some of the illustrations, although journalists are also available who can report on events in National Natural Landscapes.

### *Cooperation*

“The Most Beautiful Natural Wonders of Germany” was founded in 2010 in cooperation with the Heinz Sielmann Foundation. In 2011 the partner also wants to demonstrate known and less well known natural phenomenon, both on our doorstep and in the holiday regions of Germany through this project. In 2010 the “Year of the Forests” was the winning theme after online voting. The hit rate was high and the event was very well advertised online. “Water Landscapes” is the theme of the competition in 2011.

### *Shop system*

Information and visitors centres are often gateways to National Natural Landscapes. Lots of visitors take information from them about a particular protected landscape or else are much more careful once they know that there are in one. Therefore it is important to the success of the National Natural Landscapes brand that they implement the imagery within visitor centres. Information centres should be included in the implementation of the unifying brand so that through various methods (e.g. display cards, banners, flags) they will indicate their affiliation with the logo and the brand.

Therefore, it was decided to develop a communications system for the information centres with pro agro in Brandenburg. Pro agro, the alliance for the advancement of the country regions of Brandenburg State e. V., has the aim of further developing countryside tourism in Brandenburg through cooperation with farmers, direct marketing, process industries, country guest houses and stables and through this to make a state-wide and

intersectoral contribution to the development of the countryside.

Using only the funds of Brandenburg Federal Environmental Office (LUA), pro agro has been commissioned to implement a unified image for Visitor Information Centres (BIZ) in Brandenburg National Natural Landscapes, as well as a standardisation of their types. In Brandenburg we find that all information centres are combined under the control of Brandenburg’s Federal Environmental Office in National Natural Landscapes. Pro agro has abandoned its own nationally recognised image and has adopted the design of the National Natural Landscapes brand.

Through a shop system the brand has been presented systematically in three dimensional space for the first time. A design concept, a blueprint for shop layout and a qualification concept as well as a proposal to certify the information centres has been developed. From this the recommended design for all future information centre shops within the ambit of National Natural Landscapes was created. For many information centres, which are newly build or rebuilt, this cooperation can initiate the desired focus on the brand image of National Natural Landscapes, and thus one of the most effective and credible advertising spaces for the brand can be gained.

### **The AveNATURA special programme**

HOLGER WESEMÜLLER

Three years ago, EUROPARC Germany entered into an exclusive partnership with AveNATURA. It relates to the concept of making burial in and for the countryside possible. More and more people now wish to find their last resting place in the most natural or primordial landscape they possibly can. Burial in a natural burial ground is an alternative to traditional forms of interment. Apart from the burial location, there is almost no difference to traditional urn burial. However, nature alone provides the grave decorations and maintains the grave. Biodegradable urns are placed, exclusively by AveNATURA, in grave sites in the open countryside, which can be personally selected.



A variety of innovative contractors have approached the owners of various areas in order to establish, for instance, “Forest cemeteries, Forests of mourning, Peaceful forests or Burial groves”. We generally approve of this trend of “pro nature” in burial culture, as long as specific ethical and environmental conservation constraints are accepted.

To this effect, EUROPARC has started an initiative to make the development of “natural burials” both possible and useful for environmental protection and the preservation of National Natural Landscapes. The AveNATURA concept has persuaded the executive board. The basic element of the concept here is the exclusive obligation to the protection of the environment and the countryside. This arose with our partners not only from a rational awareness of the situation, but also on the basis of our deep bond with nature.

The habitats, in which AveNATURA cemeteries will be set up will be selected on the basis of ecological factors, and professionally developed in natural ways. If this happens then the protection of nature and species are promoted. Across the country, EUROPARC Germany will support the initiative as the umbrella organisation of National Natural Landscapes, so that it will be able to achieve its long term aim of comprehensive, state wide protection.

Against this background, the concept was presented at the General Meeting in Bad Frankenhausen in Thuringen and discussed at the working groups of EUROPARC Germany. Biosphere reserves and nature parks are particularly suited to the allocation of these particular areas. The first cemetery is being constructed on the fringes of Eggegebirge Nature Park near Holzhausen (Information on the internet: [www.avenatura-holsterberg.de](http://www.avenatura-holsterberg.de)), others are planned.

We recommend that our members who wish to learn more about the offers and opportunities provided by AveNATURA, either in terms of specific pre-existing locations or to contact us about creating a new location, simply express an interest with one of our partners (further information: [www.avenatura.de](http://www.avenatura.de)). Everything else will be dealt with by AveNATURA.



*Above: Memorial at the “Am Holsterberg” cemetery in Eggegebirge Nature Park*

*Below: Coming and going in the countryside*

## Baden-Wuerttemberg and its landscape

DR. GERHARD ALBINGER

Baden-Wuerttemberg is the host region for the 2011 EURO-PARC Conference, this article presents it together with its scenic riches.

With around 300 residents per km<sup>2</sup>, Baden-Wuerttemberg is a comparatively densely populated federal state. Around a third of its total area comprises urban settlement and suburb, while some two thirds is made up of countryside. Despite this, the region can offer a broad palette of special scenic and natural features, thanks to an eventful geological history (which contributed to interesting geology and geomorphology), climatic conditions, as well as its cultural history. It can be roughly divided into six major regions.

**The Upper Rhine Plain** in the west of the region is a fracture zone filled with sediment which has flowed through from the Rhine. The Rhine forms the border with France and Rhineland-Palatinate. The upper Rhine plain is primarily used for agriculture, but also features (in areas close to the bank of the Rhine) extensive areas of floodplain forest with oxbow lakes and old water courses, while in dyked areas there are fields and sparse hay meadows, forests are also present. One of the treasures of the so-called high terraces, which are not flooded by the Rhine, is the inland dune area at Sandhausen near Heidelberg. Plain mat grassland occurs on drift sand areas in the Hardtebene. Northwest of Freiburg, the Kaiserstuhl rises from the Upper Rhine Plain. It is of volcanic origin. Partly covered with metres-high loess layers, the most impressive gullies in the country developed here. Thermophile plant communities frequently occur on Kaiserstuhl which is particularly characterised by viticulture. In particular, semi-dry grassland and forests of dry and warm sites can be found.

**The Black Forest and Odenwald** lie east of the Upper Rhine Plain. They are siliceous low mountain ranges characterized by woodland and a high level of precipitation. In particular in the Black Forest there are many small raised bogs on slow draining depressions. Beside nutrient-poor hay meadows, particularly in the south Black Forest, there are a lot of mat grassland and *Chamaespartium sagittale* pastures, mainly on common land. This is also the case on the Feldberg – at 1,493 m the highest mountain in the state. The north Black Forest is characterized

by the treeless wet heathlands with their *Trichophorum* moorland and the light pine moorland. Although frequently covered with spruce, different types of broad-leaved forests can also be found in the Black Forest and Odenwald, mainly woodrush-beech forests.

**Gäu plateaus** run across the central region of Baden-Wuerttemberg from north to south. Due to the prevailing good soils, this region is mainly used for agriculture. However, on the margins of the productive areas a lot of traditional orchards and hedgerow structures can be found. Highlights in the landscape are unspoilt parts of valleys of medium-sized rivers such as the Tauber, Jagst, Kocher, Oberer Neckar or Wutach. The latter is a perfect example for river capture, once flowing into the Danube and now into the Rhine. Its ravine provides an interesting view of the geological layering of Baden-Wuerttemberg.

**The Swabian Alb**, a Weißjura bedrock sill sloping to the southeast, runs from the northeast to the southwest. It separates the regions Keuper-Lias-Land in the north from the pre-Alps in the south. The lack of surface waters is characteristic for the karst region. Fields and meadows dominate on the Alb plateau, woods on the slopes – wood barley-beech forests if they are semi-natural. Slope and ravine forests occur in particular on the Alb escarpment. The most impressive feature of the open areas here are the juniper heathlands which developed as a result of wandering sheep herds. The largest areas of juniper heathlands of Germany are situated in Baden-Wuerttemberg. Also, semi-dry grassland and nutrient-poor grassland occur here relatively often. Europe's largest connected belt of traditional orchards lies on the lower slope of the Alb escarpment and in the adjacent Alb foothills. Particularly impressive landscape can be found in the valley of the Upper Danube with its craggy Jurassic rocks. The richness of caves – characteristic of karst areas – should also be noted.



*Black Forest Middle/North Nature Park is the number one mountain bike region, with a 5,500 km comprehensive sign-posted network.*

**The hilly Keuper-Lias-Land**, with many beautiful valleys, lies north of the Swabian Alb. A large part of it is covered with forest, agriculture only dominates in the Alb foothills. The open areas impress with their alternating dry meadows and large traditional orchards. Interesting from the point of natural history are the numerous fossil finds of sea creatures in the Schwarzzjura. They are displayed in Holzmaden. The very east of the region touches the Nördlinger Ries which, similar to the Steinheimer Becken in the Swabian Alb, is the result of an asteroid impact about 15 million years ago. The Jagst has its source in the region and the Kocher its upper reaches. A noticeable occurrence in the landscape of the Keuper-Lias-Land are the Zeugenberge (buttes) – remains of volcanoes which were situated in the Swabian Alb in the past and resisted the erosion of the Alb escarpment to the south.

An important feature of the **pre-Alps**, located south of the Swabian Alb, is the abundance of lakes and moorland. The region is mainly used for agriculture, pastures dominate in the Allgäu foothills. The Bodensee is striking due to its size. Its longest shore areas are in Baden-Wuerttemberg. Because of flood dynamics, the so-called Bodensee beach grassland (an endemic plant community) has developed on the gravel

shores which are flooded in summer. Muddier shore areas are occupied by large reed stands and alluvial forests. Moorland and most of the lakes (unless established artificially) originate from the Ice Age. Examples are the Federsee, which has shrunk significantly due to anthropogenic lowering or the Wurzacher Ried, which comprises raised bog and low moor in equal parts, as well as former peat extraction areas.

#### **The working groups of Baden-Wuerttemberg's nature parks**

Until 1972 there wasn't a nature park in Baden-Wuerttemberg – the whole region was generally understood to be a large-scale recreational landscape. The turning point and also the conversion in thinking about nature parks initially happened with the designation of Schönbuch as the first nature park in the region. Today Baden-Wuerttemberg has a total of seven nature parks, which encompass around 30% of the state.

For many visitors, the southwest of Germany is known for sound scientific standards, as a culture-rich region of Germany, as the birthplace of the car or as the home of numerous culinary indulgences. What is often forgotten is the fascinating mosaic of landscapes which forms an important location factor for the federal state of Baden-Wuerttemberg. Here you can find many opportunities for adding value to the region through



experiencing the countryside of Baden-Wuerttemberg, mainly through green tourism, which offers rich potential for sustainable development.

Baden-Wuerttemberg's nature parks are among the most beautiful regions in Germany, and are man-made and natural landscapes with great wealth. It is a landscape with a soul, engraved over the centuries by the sensitive relationship between people and nature, forming its unique character.

Baden-Wuerttemberg's nature parks are not just beautiful holiday destinations, they are something more: they are a valuable instrument in the sustainable development of the countryside. In this context it is helpful that Baden-Wuerttemberg put in place its own nature park subsidies, which parks can thus develop as funding instruments. They are invested in sustainable tourism projects, landscape conservation and management, public relations and the preservation of heritage sites. Financial support for this comes from the federal state and from the Glücksspirale lottery. This is complemented by financial support from the EU in most cases. This is exemplified in terms of nature park development by the intensive inclusion of regional stakeholders, involved in many volunteer activities.

In 2010 alone, some 408 funded projects were completed, run by over 200 applicants. 2,460,000 Euro in subsidies were made available to preserve the scenic diversity of the nature parks and to develop countryside areas in an ecologically sound manner.

As a legally demarcated large protected area, a nature park has a special duty to bring people closer to nature and therefore to offer an attractive recreation and education programme. In total around 1,000 activities a year are available in the nature parks, allowing people to actively live through and experience the countryside. 236 nature park guides escort people through the countryside of Baden-Wuerttemberg and allow the diversity of the cultivated landscape to be discovered. Of these guides, 190 hold BANU certificates (Bundesweiter Arbeitskreis der staatlich getragenen Umweltbildungsstätten - a national network group for state supported environmental education).

In the seven nature park information centres, visitors can get really involved with the nature parks and find lots of information about their countryside, culture and history; an opportunity which over 100,000 visitors a year are happy to accept.

Nature parks in Baden-Wuerttemberg

	Founded by Federal Law	Total area
Neckartal-Odenwald Nature Park	1980	152,000 ha
Stromberg-Heuchelberg Nature Park	1980	32,800 ha
Schwäbisch-Fränkischer Wald Nature Park	1979	91,600 ha
Schönbuch Nature Park	1972	15,600 ha
Upper Danube Nature Park	1980	135,000 ha
Black Forest North/Middle Nature Park	2000	375,000 ha
Southern Black Forest Nature Park	1999	370,000 ha
		1,172,000 ha = 33% of the total area of the region

The nature parks do not just talk about the idea of regionalism, they actually implement specific projects. Across the region in the first week of August of every year a nature park brunch takes place at farmsteads. 2010 saw 75 farms take part with 11,000 visitors.

Likewise, some 40 – 50 nature park markets take place across the region, attended by more than 100,000 visitors. They can buy regional products from the nature parks.

In the two Black Forest nature parks alone there are 75 nature park hosts, who entertain their guests with regional dishes. Similarly, in the Black Forest the two nature parks have brought to life the brand The Real Black Forest, which caters for the history and preservation of the countryside, in order to add value to the region.

Reaching from the Black Forest tourism region to the small Schönbuch, the nature parks of Baden-Wuerttemberg are heterogeneous, but follow the same goals. That this is the case is in good part derived from the working groups of the nature parks, which were set up by the nature parks themselves and which formulate the strategic content of their own goals.

Jointly appearances at fairs, the magazine “Echtzeit” (developed in cooperation with the Federal Tourist Organisation), joint markets in all the nature parks and several other projects are the signs which sets the nature parks apart.

### The Swabian Alb – a landscape between Albtrauf and the Danube

PETRA BERNERT

The Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve lies about 50 km south-east of Stuttgart, between Weilheim an der Teck in the north, Zwiefalten in the south, Reutlingen in the west and Schelklingen in the east. With an area of around 85,000 ha the protected landscape stretches from Vorland through part of the karst landscape of the Swabian Alb and incorporates, in the form of the former military training area at Münsingen, one of the largest contiguous forest areas in Baden-Wuerttemberg. The Albtrauf, a striking and very steep terrain edge, which runs through the Alb floodplain from the Alb plateau, is of particular interest. From here on the land falls away bit by bit in the direction of the Danube. Although the Alb flood plain is relatively densely populated and features urban settlements, the Alb plateau is characterised mainly by typical country dwellings

and in places is very sparsely populated. Thus, the contrast between town and country, between the European metropolitan region of Stuttgart and the countryside demonstrates both the charm and good fortune of the Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve.

The diversity of landscape with its constant change between forest and open land is greater here than in any other biosphere reserve in Germany. The largely contiguous and comparatively well-preserved traditional orchards of the Alb flood plain are rather impressive – a great number of old varieties of fruit are represented here. The ecologically valuable and unique elements of the region are the hillside beech forests on Albtrauf, the gorge and block forests as well as the steppe heather forests on the scarp of the Albtrauf and the broad valley of the Danube. The open country of the plateau originated because of unrestricted wandering sheep flocks, and partially due to the extensive juniper heath with its great diversity of species, offers something special. It is thus its diversity which best characterises the Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve.

For some years before it became a biosphere reserve, there were strong initiatives in the direction of creating regional development which respected the environment and was orientated towards the protection of the countryside. The boost from the acceptance and designation of the region as a protected landscape created expectations as to the future development of the region. We are already on the way to meeting these expectations through marketing projects like “Albkorn” (of which 40 farmers, one mill and nine bakers are part of), projects aimed at advancements in the marketing of regional wild fruit products and heartwood. Innovative eco-friendly products like Alb-Mozzarella, Alb juniper products, spelt and emmer pasta and Alb snails have established themselves on the market. And there are more products to come from the Biosphere Reserve. These include meat and sausage products made of Angus beef or Zebus, clothing made from regional wool and new juices and distilled products.

#### Facts and dates

Federal Region :	Baden-Wuerttemberg
Founded :	2008 (under Federal Law) 2009 (UNESCO-Accreditation)
Location :	The middle of Swabian Alb with the Alb flood plain in the south of the European metropolitan region of Stuttgart
Area :	85,269 ha
Landscape :	A very diverse cultivated landscape with structurally rich areas of forest and plains. A close interlocking of natural and urban living spaces. The forest includes the following of particular note: hillside beech forests, gorge and block forest and steppe heather forests. The plains are formed of juniper heath, nutrient-poor calcareous pasture and a large concentration of traditional orchards
Contact :	Geschäftsstelle Biosphärengebiet Schwäbische Alb Von der Osten Str. 4, 6 (Altes Lager) 72525 Münsingen-Auingen Telephone: (0 73 81) 93 29 38 10 E-mail : biosphaerengebiet@rpt.bwl.de www.biosphaerengebiet-alb.de



*Typical landscape of the Swabian Alb*

The creation of sustainable tourism under the motto “Destination Nature” forms another key aim of the Swabian Alb Biosphere reserve. Diverse tourist attraction such as the former military training area at Münsingen, the largest Celtic town in Europe, scores of valleys and peaks, the Outlet City at Metzingen, a historic steam train as well as relaxing thermal springs offer visitors a great variety of experiences. The cycle tour route “Albhof tour” already existed, featuring 16 clearly marked routes and a network of 19 resting points. Museums and information centres were also established, with a programme and function to further support the development of sustainable education and training in the region.

A network consisting of 15 local information boards and the Swabian Alb Biosphere Centre provide information on the large protected areas and their various activities. Since 2009 Biosphere Buses and the Biosphere Train have transported visitors and locals through the region. Specially trained nature and landscape guides, known as “biosphere ambassadors”, offer very special trips to the Alb plateau and flood plain.

Since August 2010 the Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve has been a member of the Partner Initiative of National Natural Landscapes. With as many as 60 partners in place, the region is already well on the way to ensuring high environmental quality standards so that a visit to Swabian Alb makes a lasting impression.

This year, the still relatively new Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve will be the host of the European protected landscape EUROPARC Conference 2011, run by the EUROPARC Federation. From 21st to 25th September 2011 representative of European protected landscapes will meet in Bad Urach and debate the current issues in nature and environmental protection. This year’s conference will meet under the motto: “Quality Counts – Benefits for Nature and People”. Along with Prof. Dr. Klaus Töpfer, former Federal Environment Minister, other guests will include Prof. Dr. Beate Jessel, President of the Federal Office for Nature Conservation, the President of the EUROPARC Federation, Erika Stanciu, and the Minister President of Baden-Wuerttemberg, Winfried Kretschmann.



## Socio-economic monitoring in protected areas in Germany – what do local people and their mayors think about their biosphere reserve?

SUSANNE STOLL-KLEEMANN, CLARA BUER,  
FRANZISKA SOLBRIG

### The role of a socio-economic monitoring system

In addition to protecting biodiversity in natural and cultural landscapes, UNESCO biosphere reserves seek to act as a model for sustainable development. UNESCO's Seville Strategy (1996) and, more recently, the Madrid Action Plan (2008) call for integrated, sustainable monitoring to enable sustained observation of the biospheres reserves' development. Within this framework, a University of Greifswald research project "Societal Processes in Four UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in Germany" (short title, 2009 – 2012) designed and tested a socio-economic monitoring system focusing on social, cultural and political processes in the reserves. This project is supported by funding from the German Environment Foundation (DBU – Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt).

Socio-economic monitoring systems help biosphere reserves to manage more successfully: the systematic identification and analysis of social processes provides decision makers with a sound basis on which they can take action that is appropriate to the local situation and adjusted to its needs. Apart from this, the monitoring's output enhances the visibility of the biosphere reserve administration's work in the public sphere, legitimising its presence to politicians and critics alike.

### Four biosphere reserves and five monitoring instruments

The development of the monitoring system has involved close cooperation with the administrations of four UNESCO biosphere reserves: Middle Elbe (Saxony-Anhalt), Schaalsee and Southeast Rügen (both in Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania) and Schorfheide-Chorin (Brandenburg). Updates on the project's progress are provided at accompanying workshops and at meetings of the Working Group of German Biosphere Reserves (AGBR) as well as EUROPARC Germany's Research and Monitoring Working Group.

Five instruments have been developed, which are at various stages of testing:

1. Stakeholder analysis
2. Workshop on management effectiveness in the biosphere reserves
3. Quantitative local attitude survey
4. Interviews with representatives of local authorities
5. Key socio-demographic and socio-economic data (STOLL-KLEEMANN ET AL. 2010)

The following sections describe a sample of results from interviews with representatives of local authorities and local people.

### What do representatives of local authorities think about their local biosphere reserve?

A comprehensive understanding of how representatives of local authorities view biosphere reserves can help a biosphere reserve's administration to better anticipate how the local authorities will respond to its activities. In order to make the vision of a model region for sustainable development a reality, concepts must be supported and implemented by local people. This makes local authorities important partners: in addition to their own experiences, elected representatives also understand the local population's views on a given biosphere reserve. Thus interviews with representatives of local authorities during each local legislative period can be used to examine public opinion of the protected area's regional bonding.

The following results relate to 55 semi-structured interviews with local authorities in the Schaalsee, Schorfheide-Chorin and Southeast Rügen Biospheres; the outcomes of the interviews in the Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve are still undergoing analysis. Full-time and voluntary mayors, administrative representatives<sup>1)</sup> and district administrators discussed their views of their local biosphere reserve for an average of 43 minutes. Overall, opinion on the part of the mayors was split over the question of whether the advantages of their local biosphere outweighed the disadvantages, or vice versa. In Schaalsee and Schorfheide-Chorin, the majority of mayors felt that their biosphere reserves presented an advantage, and viewed them as shield in nature preservation efforts. On the island of Rügen, meanwhile, a greater number of mayors viewed their biosphere reserve as a disadvantage; the dominant aspect for them was the restrictions associated with the area's protected status. In each of the areas, however, more than a third of the mayors remained undecided due to the fact that they rarely witness the effects of their biosphere reserve.

Among the representatives of local authorities, a majority believed that the primary task of their biosphere reserve should be to balance the interests of humans and nature. Considerably fewer saw nature conservation as the biosphere reserves' sole task. However, in Schorfheide-Chorin, a third of the representatives of local authorities interviewed did not know the task of the biosphere reserves.

Points of contact between local authorities and the biosphere reserves develop primarily when the autonomy of municipalities is affected, as in the case of infrastructure projects. Questions regarding nature conservation were also frequently addressed; topics ranged from access restrictions in the biosphere reserves' core zones to concrete conservation measures. The Biosphere Reserves on Southeast Rügen and Schorfheide-Chorin are more frequently regarded as a general impediment to economic development. On the other hand, some representatives of local authorities at Schaalsee and in Schorfheide-Chorin emphasised the role played by the biosphere reserves in attracting tourists to the area. Detailed information about the points of contact between local authorities and the biosphere reserves could also

serve as an early warning system for the administrations of the protected areas. Potential conflicts can be identified as such early on, and opportunities for cooperation can be realised as joint projects.

### **What do local people think about their biosphere reserve?**

During the autumn of 2010, local people in the four UNESCO biosphere reserves mentioned above were interviewed by telephone. The random selection of those interviewed, as well as the subsequent weighting of data (primarily by age and sex), enables the drawing of representative conclusions about local people in the various biosphere reserves. In addition to capturing social parameters, the primary objective of the survey was to gain an overview of how the local people perceived their biosphere reserve and its surrounding region, as well as the value they placed on the biosphere reserve and the natural life contained therein.

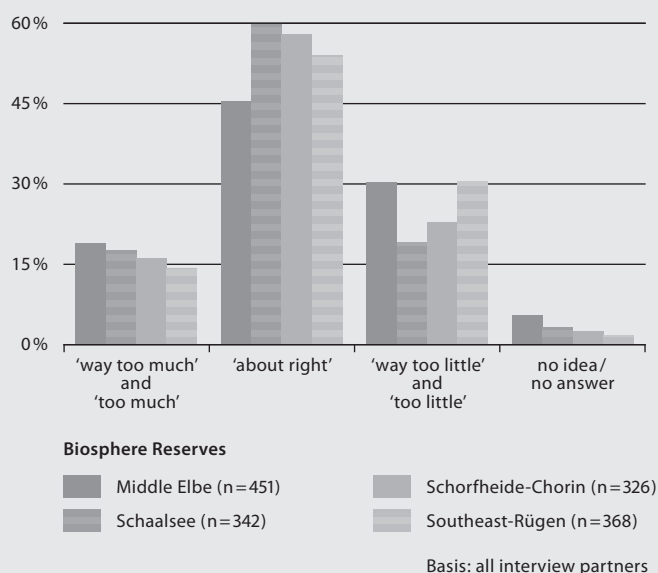
#### *Some local people want further measures for the nature and landscapes in their region*

Participants in the survey were asked to respond to the question, "Do you think enough is being done for the nature and landscapes in your region?" on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating "way too much", 5 "way too little" and 3 "about right". A summary of the results can be seen in Figure 1, in which the two categories of response on either end of the scale are combined. The majority of local people interviewed were of the opinion that "the right amount" was being done for the nature and landscapes in their region. Only in the Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve were less than 50% of respondents of this opinion. It is further worth noting that at 19% to 30%, the portion of respondents who thought too little was being done for nature and landscapes was considerably larger than the number who believed that on the whole too much was being done (14% to 19%). This stands in clear opposition to the commonly held perception that most people believe no further action is necessary to protect the nature and landscapes in their region.

<sup>1)</sup> In the states of Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania, small municipalities are grouped together under administrative bodies which carry out administrative activities within the municipalities. These bodies are led either by a full-time Administrative Director or a voluntary Administrative Head, as well as a full-time executive Administrative Officer; these representatives are hereafter collectively referred to as "Administrative Representatives".

*“Do you think enough is being done for the nature and landscape in your region?”*

**Fig. 1: Evaluation of regional measures for nature and landscapes**



*The majority of local people are familiar with their biosphere reserve*

Between 57% and 67% of respondents knew their local biosphere reserve (see fig. 2). The comparatively limited awareness in the Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve can be largely attributed to the 300km-long stretch of river which passes through it. Local people were also familiar with the various information centres located in the protected areas. In the Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve, 49% of participants who had been at least somewhat aware of their biosphere reserve had also heard about the information centres, at Schaalsee this was 83%, in Schorfheide-Chorin 63% and on Southeast Rügen 66%.

*The biosphere reserves enjoy a high approval rating*

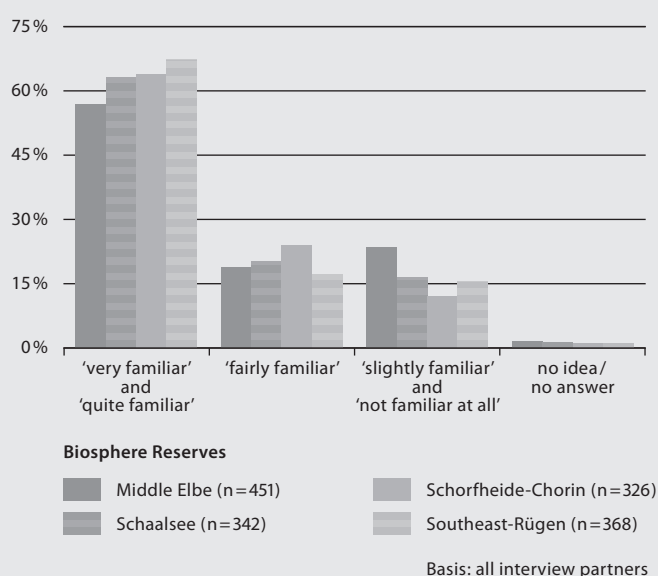
The biosphere reserves received a high approval rating among respondents who were at least somewhat aware of their local biosphere reserve. Results showed that 62% to 77% supported the continued existence of the biosphere reserves (see fig. 3).

In cases where local people indicated that a certain condition would need to be met in order for them to cast a positive vote, this was openly queried. When categorised, these conditions most frequently include:

- Greater local people involvement in matters relating to the biosphere reserves
- Fewer restrictions on recreational use and wider access to nature areas
- Fewer restraints in the economic sector and to construction

To a large extent, the restrictions mentioned by local people relate to applicable conservation regulations. While opinions will not result in the repealing of conservation laws, it would be worthwhile for the administrations of the biosphere reserves to create further opportunities for community participation. From 18% to 23% of all participants indicated interest in becoming actively involved in their local area as way of representing their interests.

**Fig. 2: Awareness of the biosphere reserves designation**



*“Are you familiar with the name ‘biosphere reserve Mittelbe/Schaalsee/Schorfheide-Chorin/ Südost-Rügen?’”*



### *Conservation is particularly important*

In an open question, local people were invited to identify what they saw as the biosphere reserves' primary task. Receiving a share of 60% to 70% of all responses, the overall conservation of nature and species as well as renaturalisation and the re-establishment of ecological balance were the tasks most frequently mentioned in all four biosphere reserves. Only a maximum of 6% described "promoting harmony between humans and nature" as the most important task, as opposed to a majority of the representatives of local authorities. Other tasks of biosphere reserves, such as sustainable use and education for sustainable development were rarely mentioned. Nature conservation was therefore deemed to be of highest importance.

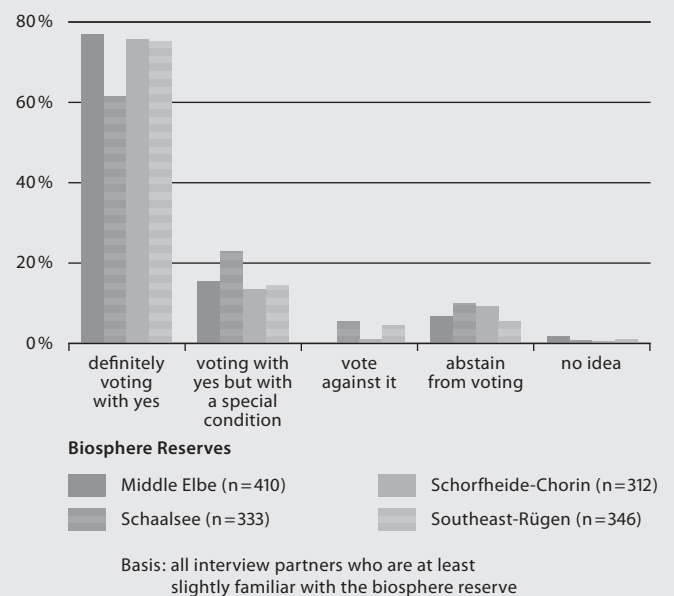
### *Biosphere reserves attract visitors*

An interesting picture emerged from responses to the statement "The biosphere reserve has increased interest in our region among people who would never otherwise come here".

In the Schorfheide-Chorin and Schaalsee Biosphere Reserves, 82% and 85% of respondents agreed with this assertion, respectively. This supports the conclusion drawn by the representatives of local authorities in these two biosphere reserves, i.e. that the biosphere reserve designation supports the development of tourism in the region. In the Southeast Rügen and Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserves, 56% and 65% of respondents agreed with this statement. Both Rügen and the Elbe with its Elbe Cycle Route are already well-known tourist destinations; thus, the biosphere reserve designation provided less of an additional boost for tourism than in the other regions.

On the whole, the results show that apart from local people' high level of approval of the biosphere reserves, nature conservation is viewed as the most important task for these areas, and they are recognised for the role they play in attracting visitors to the region. These assessments can be used by the administrations of the biosphere reserves as an argument for moving the development of tourism in their region in a sustainable direction.

**Fig. 3: Support for the continued existence of the biosphere reserves**



"If there would be elections for or against the biosphere reserve next Sunday, what would be your decision?"

The efforts which have been undertaken in the areas of regional development and education for sustainable development have so far gone largely unnoticed, indicating that successes in these areas of emphasis should be more clearly conveyed to the area's local people. Overall, measures which build on the outcomes of a socio-economic monitoring system, such as enhanced information campaigns, opportunities for involvement or the initiation of joint projects, can help to enhance the role of the biosphere reserves in society.

# Our parks ...

## protected area management

HOLGER WESEMÜLLER

The management of protected areas is multifaceted. This chapter will give you an insight into how different programmes are run in German parks – either individually or at a national level.

For example, with the Junior Ranger Programme it is apparent that young people themselves are excited by the programme (recommended and backed by EUROPARC Germany) at a national level and thus more and more parks are taking part in it. WWF Germany is our strongest partner in this regard. Close observation of the work with children and young people shows the significance of this target group. It is pleasing that children flock to this youth programme: The national meeting of Junior Rangers in June 2011 on Langeoog island in Wadden Sea National Park was fully subscribed with 350 children in attendance.

The progress of the volunteer programme also promises further success. It has gained a strong European element from the new “Pride in Nature” brand (see p. 41).

It is important for the future development of our protected areas that we take the opportunity to continually improve protected area management. The Quality Initiative programme, considered in the 2004 Action Plan of EUROPARC Germany for all three large protected area categories and recently begun in terms of National Natural Landscapes, is now being completed in protected areas with the evaluation of national parks. To begin with, criteria and standards were developed (cf. Second Progress Report, p. 27 ff)), which the inspection of parks should follow. LANA<sup>1)</sup> then appointed experts to a National Evaluation Committee, with the assistance of the Federal Environment Ministry. Implementation was begun in 2009 by the federal government and has since been coordinated by EUROPARC Germany. It is already evident that parks reviewed by the committee all speak of the process as being very useful. Even at higher political levels we are already seeing good resonance in more and more regions and the first improvements are now being introduced. The evaluation process requires time and effort from all parties involved – it will last until the end of

March 2012 in the case of national parks. We will report on the aims and status of this evaluation process at a later date.

Of course, our drive to improve quality is in process in UNESCO biosphere reserves (s. pp 45 ff) and in nature parks (s. pp. 47) as well. In nature parks the current Quality Initiative will be readjusted on the basis of decision made by the VDN (Verband deutscher Naturparke e. V. / Association of German Nature Parks) together with EUROPARC Germany. Here the first accredited Quality Nature Parks – an award valid for five years – will be renewed after inspection.

The park's activities with regard to research and monitoring are tied to EUROPARC Germany's activities under the identically named public company (AG). The successor to spokesperson Heiner Rall (who is leaving in autumn 2011) will be committed to this project. A lot is already happening in terms of developing biodiversity. Universities and major research institutes are showing serious interest in National Natural Landscapes. The first evidence of this is the “Research for Sustainable Development” programme, created in February 2010 by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and for which more than two billion Euro has been allocated until 2015, which can also be used for research into environmental protection. But now in the course of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) initiated federal programme for biological diversity, which is backed to the amount of 15 million Euro annually from 2011, the expertise of our specialists in the parks will certainly be helpful and may even be required in relation to regionally based projects.

## Junior Rangers – young ambassadors in National Natural Landscapes

GUDRUN BATEK AND JAN WILDEFELD

### From the starter's gun to a national programme

The introduction of children and young people to the values of nature, to its beauty and sensitivity, but also to solutions to the problems it poses, is one of the challenges facing modern education. Today, thanks to rapid environmental change, it is more necessary than ever. The knowledge level of primary school children has remained at the same low level for the last

<sup>1)</sup> LANA = Bund / Länder-Arbeitsgemeinschaft Naturschutz, Landschaftspflege und Erholung (National / Federal Union for Conservation, Land Management and Recreation) (cf. pg. 42)





### Everyone is welcome – the Four Pillars Programme

In Germany, children and young people are introduced to sport or culture under guidance, which later enables them to take responsibility for their interests in the wider world. In relation to nature (and conservation) such opportunities have not previously existed.

A nationwide working group, established in September 2008, developed standards for the educational work of Junior Rangers in the following period. In order to reach the target group of children as comprehensively as possible, a programme was developed based on four pillars:

- Region: for children who live in the vicinity of protected areas
- Discovery tours: for family trips
- Web: an E-learning portal with online learning games
- School: for school classes

The aim is to get children to see the activity and educational offers in protected landscapes, to enthuse them about our National Natural Landscapes and, as Junior Rangers, to make them ambassadors for it. In order to make that possible, rangers and environmental educators work closely together in working groups for three of the four pillars.

The “Region” working group sets itself questions about field-work among the regional Junior Rangers groups and creates working material for children and their carers. Above all, the creation of guidelines and quality criteria for working with Junior Rangers is an essential goal. A gentle introduction to the world of the Junior Rangers is made possible by the “Discovery Tour” working group for those children who don’t live close to National Natural Landscapes. Here, for the first time, educational opportunities working on the principle of education for sustainable development are being tied to sustainable tourism. The new concept of “Discovery booklets” links formal and informal learning opportunities and, from summer 2011, appeals to children and their families who visit National Natural Landscapes during their holidays. The first four booklets have been created for the Wadden Sea, Rhön, Drömling and Saxon Switzerland regions in close cooperation with these National Natural Landscapes.

The third working group, “Web”, transports children and young people from their computers into the countryside and the world of National Natural Landscapes. The internet and computer games increasingly affect the lives of adolescents. Even at younger ages they have command over particular skills and a deep affinity with digital media. At the same time, new media perhaps lacks serious didactic value and an accompanying motivating educational offer. This necessitates a rethink of the medium of learning content. Through a knowledge portal on the internet the first online access to national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks will be created from the second half of 2012. The content of the so-called “Serious Games” is designed such that they both transmit knowledge, and also motivate and thus empower people to become active themselves in the countryside and ideally in National Natural Landscapes.

### National cooperation has produced clear results

#### *Working groups and networks*

Tying the expertise and experience of National Natural Landscapes into a living network and creating and collecting innovative ideas is a key premise of the Education Department of EUROPARC Germany. The surge in excitement about a national Junior Ranger Programme at the first workshop in September 2008 brought about three themed working groups and the national working group. This creative, technically accomplished, engaged, but also critical cooperation has developed worthwhile initiatives and is the cornerstone of an extremely profitable process of networking.

The ground rules for cooperation are contained in a special agreement between EUROPARC and the members of National Natural Landscapes.

#### *Upbeat activities in Harz National Park*

After a year of networking, cornerstones were set in place to bring the national Junior Ranger Programme into being. In June 2009, around 300 Junior Rangers came together from 19 large protected areas for a weekend in Harz National Park. The 2011 meeting in the Wadden Sea National Park of Lower Saxony was attended by 350 children and young people from 25 National Natural Landscapes. Hainich National Park is the



*Vision at the National Meeting of the Junior Rangers*



*Here, the little ones make it big.*

host for 2012. With further increasing awareness, increased participation is to be expected.

#### *The national Junior Ranger Logo*

Alongside the development of content, having an identical external image is a key aim of this national programme. The Junior Ranger Logo, both brand and patent declared in Germany, is already found in many parks and is one kind of Seal



of Quality – it stands for the qualitative excellence of the National Natural Landscapes Education Programme.

#### *Information and knowledge platform on the internet*

The national Junior Rangers website provides information about the programme presents the themes of National Natural Landscapes in a child-friendly and innovative way as well as making the programme of the parks clear ([www.juniorranger.de](http://www.juniorranger.de)).

#### *Educational and other authentic material*

The authentic experience of nature is accompanied by pedagogical-didactic education material suitable for children and young people. Together with the members of National Natural Landscapes, “Activity books for Junior Rangers”, child-friendly maps, T-shirts, certificates and much more has been created.

#### *Conservation needs openness*

In order to communicate the activities, value and uniqueness of National Natural Landscapes and the Junior Ranger initiative, a media partnership could be established with the journal GEOLino, which is known across Europe and which is the biggest selling Childrens Science magazine in Germany and which also contains the “Eagle Eye” competition. Alongside this there is cooperation with partners from regional radio and television.

#### Goals of the Junior Rangers Programme:

- Qualification as a Junior Ranger and the establishment of “Free Swimmers”(Freischwimmer) for conservation
- Access for all children and young people to the Four Pillars Programme, even for disadvantaged groups (people with disabilities, migrants)
- Raise awareness of nature and environmental protection, in particular the value, activities and uniqueness of National Natural Landscapes
- Create enthusiasm for green professions

# Case Study

## A success story from the Bavarian Forest National Park

The Junior Ranger environmental education project has developed into a real money spinner. Starting in 1998 with just twelve children, it has now seen more than 1,600 boys and girls from the area around the National Park go through the course and become Junior Rangers. Every year around 160 children come forward and are allowed to take part in this attractive programme.

The goal is to enthuse children about the National Park. Over the course of four days children get to know the Park alongside a ranger and experience the wild forest up close, with its unique landscape and attractive features for visitors.

### Procedure

Every year rangers visit all the high schools in the region of the National Park after the Easter holiday and present the Junior Ranger project to the fifth class. Interested pupils receive a Junior Ranger booklet. The information contained within gives the young people details about signing up to the programme in the Whitsun and summer holidays.

The cost of Junior Ranger enrolment is 10 Euro. This entitles a child to a Junior Ranger cap, a name tag, a button and a meal during the graduation ceremony.

At the end of the holidays a large graduation ceremony takes place at the National Park Visitor Centre at Hans

Eisenmann House. Children receive a certificate of participation from the National Park Director.

In order to tie the enthusiastic children to the National Park long-term, an accredited, non-profit club "Junior Ranger e. V." (a registered society) was set up in 2004. It supports the management of the National Park through the considerable financial assistance and voluntary engagement of parents.

Since 2008, the Junior Ranger project has been successfully expanded into a national programme by EUROPARC Germany and the 30 member National Natural Landscapes. Thanks to the four pillars (Junior Ranger Region, Junior Rangers on Discovery Tours, Junior

Ranger Web and Junior Ranger School) as well as the exclusive partnership with the WWF and GEOLino, all the requirements have been met in order to make the Junior Ranger Programme a real youth movement for German National Natural Landscapes.

JOSEF ERHARD

*Exploring the wild forest with a ranger*





# Case Study

## The Junior Ranger Programme of the Brandenburg Rangers

The Brandenburg Ranger service represents full-time rangers in all 15 National Natural Landscapes in the region. The Junior Ranger Programme developed out of work with children's groups which started in 1993. Since 2006 it has been orientated by the impulse of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development programme and was accredited in 2007 and 2009 as an official Decade Project.

Currently there are 15 Junior Ranger groups with 150 members. The support of the children who come from the region of National Natural Landscapes continues in many cases for several years. They are initially introduced to plants, animals and habitats and gain an insight into the activities of adult rangers.

Armed with this experience, they work together to develop a project for a future worth living in. One such project might be, for example, tending a wild fruit meadow. Children are encouraged to develop their own ideas. Through the development and implementation of a project, they discover that their ideas are effective. In order to be successful it is important that as many people in the group as possible are informed. In many cases the level of success increases if partners are included. Through working on the project, the children acquire organisational competence.

At regional and national camps the Junior Rangers are themselves responsible for the creation of an attractive programme and its smooth running. In addition they arrange binding rules for this amongst themselves,

The work with children is overseen by the working group for environmental communication. There the experience comes together, concepts continue to develop and further training for group leaders is planned.

The national Junior Ranger Programme of EUROPARC Germany is a valuable enrichment. It aims at the shared development of high quality support system for Junior Rangers, which should communicate an understanding of the

importance of sustainable development to them. The exchange of experience between working groups provides important momentum to this process.

Information: [www.naturwacht.de](http://www.naturwacht.de)

MANFRED LÜTKEPOHL

*Junior Rangers building a raft.*



# Case Study

## WWF Germany inspires children to conservation

The preservation of nature with all its diversity of animals, plants and habitats has always been the central concern of the work of the WWF. One of the most important instruments in achieving this is the designation of areas as protected landscapes. Through decades of engagement by the WWF and many NGOs, the protected landscape system has spread worldwide – but even in Germany it is constantly growing.

Conservation needs competent and active new blood! Children are inquisitive, always ready for expeditions and fascinated by everything that lives. They feel themselves to be at one with nature and instinctively want to protect and sustain it. Nourishing this sensitivity to nature amongst children is the goal of the educational work of WWF Germany. For this the WWF has exciting ideas for every age-group. When young people are first introduced to the theme of nature through games they are able to be more demanding as adults, for example by getting involved in campaigns.

The desired effect is of course always the same: to awake the interest of children and young people in conservation, to enable the experience of nature and thereby to strengthen their respect of and responsibility towards nature and the environment - since you only love and protect what you know and understand well.



In addition to their own children and youth programmes, the WWF has a vision, along with EUROPARC Germany, to gain young, engaged ambassadors for National Natural Landscapes through the potential nationwide qualification of children as Junior Rangers. The long-term goal is that this training will become a natural ingredient of adolescence – being a kind of “swimming badge” in conservation.

ASTRID PASCHKOWSKI

*Junior Ranger Lennart, EUROPARC, WWF and Harz National Park inaugurate the national Junior Ranger Programme in 2009.*



## Volunteering in parks – the success continues

ANNE SCHIERENBERG AND KERSTIN EMONDS

Since the start of the volunteer programme in National Natural Landscapes in 2003, year by year more people are engaging as park volunteers (cf. pp. 22 – 25 in the Second Progress Report). In 2009, there were more than 2,900 volunteers in the 42 National Natural Landscapes which are members of the programme. Together they provide more than 107,000 unpaid hours of work. Since February 2009 five new partner parks have become members of the volunteer programme, with two more joining in February 2011. One result of the previous project year was the booklet “Park volunteers are welcome! – Volunteer Management: Experience and Ideas”. It combines expertise in volunteer management with rich experience and examples from six years of good practice, particularly in relation to the themes of education for sustainable development, school partnerships, international volunteering, corporate engagement and equal opportunities in the volunteer programme.

In 2009, a new nationwide form of cooperation was agreed between National Natural Landscapes and the national Lebenshilfe association for people with serious disabilities. So far regional partnerships have been developed in 15 parks, in which more than 100 volunteers with serious disabilities have been engaged. What began with the first joint Action Day in May 2009 will in many places be continued by regular activities. A booklet produced by EUROPARC Germany and Lebenshilfe provides information on their cooperation and requests the participation of those responsible at National Natural Landscapes and Lebenshilfe facilities. Both umbrella organisations are, for instance, assisting in building regional contacts. A second combined Action Day took place in September 2010, and a third is planned for autumn 2011.

International activities will also be expanded. Following the GRUNDTVIG Learning Partnership “European Volunteers in Parks” (2008 – 10), since November 2010 ten European conservation organisations have been working together under the control of EUROPARC Germany on a three-year, multilateral project called “Volunteer Management in European Parks”. Volunteer coordinators exchange their experiences and further develop the profession of volunteer management. This three-



*Above: Volunteers from Lebenshilfe Northeim working hard in the Harz National Park.*

*Below: A volunteer activity in Iceland as part of the GRUNDTVIG Learning Partnership: A test of hiking trails by wheelchair users.*

year project, created by the EU, also enables volunteers to work together in foreign parks.

In order to exchange special “Volunteers in Parks” across Europe, EUROPARC Germany makes use of the European Voluntary Service, as do individual National Natural Landscapes. EUROPARC Germany has, amongst other things, created a checklist for the scheduling and execution of international volunteer activities.



Under the new name of “Pride in Nature”, alongside the usual activities, the following key points have been set for the future and will be developed further:

- The society of “Volunteers in Parks” should be strengthened.
- Engagement with older volunteers will be undertaken and extended.
- Engagement with people with disabilities will be promoted and opportunities for activity will be created.
- Cooperation with business and activities with their employees should be developed.
- Education for volunteers should be expanded.
- European cooperation will be developed and made more intensive.

In December 2010, the federal government agreed, at the suggestion of the federal Chancellor, to support “Pride in Nature” with 500,000 US Dollars. The background to this amazing development is the endowment of the Midori Biodiversity Prize this summer, which was awarded to Chancellor Angela Merkel by the Japanese Environmental Foundation AEON for her commitment to the worldwide protection of species and habitats. With this award in 2011 (the European Year of the Volunteer) unpaid cooperation in National Natural Landscapes should be strengthened.

*In autumn 2009 the Evaluation Committee examined the area of Nothafen Darßer in the core zone of Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft National Park - by shifting the harbour and stopping digging, an acceptable solution was found.*



## National evaluation of all German national parks by 2012

ANDREA HOFFMANN AND KARL FRIEDRICH SINNER

### Background

After the conclusion of the research and development plan “The Development of Quality Criteria and Standards for German National Parks” (October 2005 – May 2008), the results and developed evaluation questionnaires were published in the booklet of the same name by EUROPARC Germany in summer 2008 (online at [www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de/infothek](http://www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de/infothek)). The resulting aim, designed to further the process of maintaining and improving the quality of German national parks through effective management, is thus to successfully develop methods, criteria, standards and indicators as well as procedures for the inspection of management in German national parks.

Basic principles for our national parks were created on the basis of existing quality criteria and standards – which conformed to international guidelines – so as to create comprehensive quality of management for national parks in Germany.

Evaluation processes and quality initiatives have now been established for all three large protected area categories – national parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves – on the basis of exacting quality standards. Along with Finland, Germany is one of the very few countries worldwide which has implemented evaluation of all of its national parks.

As early as March 2008 Länder-Arbeitsgemeinschaft Naturschutz (LANA<sup>1)</sup>) had favoured and welcomed the development of criteria and standards for national parks as an important contribution by Germany to the implementation of the Protected Area Work Programme (CBD VII/28), created as the BMU (Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit / Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety) wanted to enable

<sup>1)</sup> Bund / Länder-Arbeitsgemeinschaft Naturschutz, Landschaftspflege und Erholung (The National / Federal Union for Conservation, Land Management and Recreation) LANA is a body at which representatives of top-level conservation organisations advise the government and the states on the core themes of conservation policy.

voluntary evaluation of national parks and implement quality criteria. This has happened since June 2009 through the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) assisted R&D Project “The Implementation of Quality Criteria and Standards in the Evaluation of German National Parks” under the coordination of EUROPARC Germany.

On 23rd April 2009 the call for members of the Committee which advised during the evaluation process was made through LANA. Representatives of the states, the scientific community, the government, the National Park Working Group, NGOs and EUROPARC Germany were included.

The following were appointed as members of the Evaluation Committee: for the government Gertrud Sahler<sup>1)</sup> (BMU) and Dr. Volker Scherfose (BfN), for LANA Josef Seidenschwarz (Bavaria), Sylvia Wagner (North Rhine-Westphalia), Vera Knoke (Schleswig-Holstein) and Rainer Schrader (Thuringia). Science was represented by: Prof. Dr. Peter Schmidt (TU Dresden), Prof. Dr. Kai Tobias (Kaiserslautern University), Prof. Dr. Ludwig Ellenberg (Humboldt University Berlin) and Prof. Dr. Stefan Heiland (TU Berlin). From the National Park Working Group Manfred Bauer (Kellerwald-Edersee National Park) and Ulrich Meßner (Müritznational Park) supported the initiative. NGOs were represented by Arnd Winkelbrand (BBN – Bundesverband Beruflicher Naturschutz / Professional Association of Nature Conservation), Dr. Christof Schenck and Wolfgang Fremuth (ZGF – Frankfurt Zoological Society). EUROPARC Germany was represented by Holger Wesemüller.



*In January 2010 the Evaluation Committee examined the management strategies in the Lower Oder Valley National Park*

### In practice

The fundamentals of every national park evaluation develop initially from a self-assessment of current park activities through the help of an online evaluation questionnaire. The recommended procedures and standards of the questionnaire clarify the current situation of the parks against the fundamental elements of management process referred to by the WCPA (World Commission on Protected Areas) Framework Plan (see fig. 4).

The questionnaire was evaluated by an independent technical office working in line with the evaluation process and was complemented by an analysis of strengths and weaknesses and by recommended procedures which indicated how to move from the current status of standards to what the standards should ideally be. In the course of the appraisal the technical office came to an agreement with the respective national park administrators.

<sup>1)</sup> For BMU, Martin Waldhausen succeeded Mrs Sahler in March 2010, who for her part had run the steering committee of the Ministry and had assumed the chair of the Department of Conservation as BMU.

In the analysis of these work guidelines the committee ultimately prepared goal-oriented recommendations after a tour of each national park. Within the framework of a two-day tour committee members review the area, speak to the administration as well as to important regional stakeholders, ask open questions and clarifying ambiguities which have been produced by the work guidelines, and inspect different management strategies and critical points in the region on an excursion. Thus the Evaluation Committee are provided with their own independent picture of the current situation in the national park under evaluation, through a combination of questionnaires, office records and the results of the tour.

With the help of recommended procedures and their standards, the independent final report of the committee describes the current state of the park and its own standards, evaluated in terms of its own strengths and weaknesses, and then essential procedural recommendations are formulated.

In connection with the evaluation, the results and recommendations are transferred to the park, the appropriate federal ministry and the government. The goal is to offer both the park and the federal and national governments specific proposals

and advice to further the optimisation and active support of the successful work in the national park through the procedural recommendations which it formulates. Having been provided with these instruments, it should be possible for the park to more effectively achieve their aims, including conservation, development and education, as well as environmentally-friendly regional development, and thereby to secure and boost the quality of management in the long-term.

### Evaluated parks

The trailblazers of the National Quality Evaluation were the Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft and Jasmund National Parks, assessed in October 2009; by May 2011 Lower Oder Valley, Eifel, Berchtesgaden, Kellerwald-Edersee, Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea, Harz, Lower Saxony Wadden Sea and Saxonian Switzerland National Parks will have been evaluated.

The national parks at Müritzz, Hamburg Wadden Sea, Hainich and Bavarian Forest will be evaluated by the end of 2011. From April 2012, the committee reports for all the national parks should be available.

The reports will be immediately transferred to the ministry and the administration of Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft, Jasmund, Eifel and Lower Oder Valley National Parks, so that both reports on the latter two parks are also published. The first immediate result of the recommendations of the committee is that the Brandenburg Ministry of the Environment has agreed to create an independent national park office in Lower Oder Valley National Park, and to increase staff levels there. We can expect further positive outcomes of this type.

A repeat of the voluntary evaluation of the national parks based on a unified standard of online questionnaires under the supervision of an independent committee is scheduled on a ten-year cycle.

Fig. 4: Framework for the evaluation of management effectiveness in protected areas (Source: HOCKINGS et. al. 2006)





## Appraisal

For the national parks the evaluation offers a form of quality certificate, and is thus a seal of approval, which can also be used as a form of positive advertising. The evaluation also delivers a good image of the current state of the national parks from the point of view of independent expert committees and highlights through specific recommended procedures how the work of the national parks can be optimised still further in line with defined standards. The particular “blind spots” of a national park are illuminated thanks to this critical view from outside; through this a realistic picture of where the park stands in terms of their own field of operations, if defined goals are realistic and achievable, the quality of work, and if resources are being used correctly. Through this there is no reason for competition between the parks for the title “The Best in the Whole Country”, but rather very specific support for the work of every single protected area, through a critical examination and thorough investigation of the current situation from an external perspective. The repeat evaluation will show if each of the national parks can improve its situation – this is also thanks to corresponding setting of courses and goals on the part of those responsible in the national and federal governments.

The first evaluation of German national parks will be supported by the BfN with the assistance of the BMU in cooperation with the states and EUROPARC Germany.

## UNESCO Biosphere Reserves – an overview of events

DANIEL WOLF, JÖRG BRUKER, GABRIELE NICLAS

In 2009 the world network of biosphere reserves was enriched by two more German inclusions, Bliesgau and the Schwabian Alb (see page 28 ff). In Germany there are thus currently 15 biosphere reserves which are accredited by UNESCO. In relation to both new biosphere reserves, the wide and inclusive Nomination Process in particular was seen as exemplary by UNESCO.

For the first time in Germany, the International Coordinating Council (ICC) of the MAB-Programme met in 2011. At the 23rd ICC Meeting, held in Radebeul near Dresden, the world network of biosphere reserves was extended by the inclusion of 18 new areas. In total the network now covers 580 areas in 114 countries (as of June 2011). At the forefront of the ICC meeting in Radebeul, to mark the occasion of the 40 year anniversary of the MAB-Programme, there was an expert symposium, “For Life, For the Future – Biosphere Reserves and Climate Change” concentrating on an explanation of biosphere reserves and climate change. Via its members at the conference, member states requested that biosphere reserves become stronger than before in anchoring their strategy towards climate change and climate adaptation and correspondingly to transfer approaches successfully tested in biosphere reserves to other regions more forcefully (<http://www.unesco.de/5838.html>).

Through this symposium, conducted at the invitation of the government, Germany continues its engagement with the modernisation and international reassessment of the MAB-Programme. During the 35th UNESCO General Conference in 2009 a resolution on the contribution of the MAB-Programme and the world network of biosphere reserves to sustainable development was adopted. This resolution was proposed and adopted as a result of a German initiative. It underlines the importance of biosphere reserves in dealing with the major challenges of our time, including climate change, the provision of environmental system services and urbanisation and stressed their great potential for future sustainable development as well as pointing to the necessity of allocating adequate resources to biosphere reserves.



*Getrud Sabler with Natarajan Ishwaran, Secretary of the MAB Programme, at the Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA) in Schwerin*

The coherence of the world network is sustained by regional networks. The European Network (EuroMAB) which incorporates 54 countries - together with Israel, the USA and Canada as well as numerous East European, Baltic and Caucasian states - met in 2011 in the Swedish biosphere reserve at Lake Vanern Archipelago and Mount Kinnekulle. Alongside exchanging national experiences and examples of best-practice, which stand at the heart of the network, the future key aims of the work of EuroMAB were discussed. Some of these include education for sustainable development, the use of biosphere reserves to explore concepts of climate protection and climate adjustment, as well as strengthening the ties between the EuroMAB-Network and other MAB-Networks.

In relation to climate change, and within the framework of a government created development report, since 2008 eight German biosphere reserves have been supported in developing their model function in this context, which is now a major aim. The scope of work themes ranges from technical climate protection through renewable energy to measures for climate adaptation. Through this project the German biosphere reserves are

continuing their particular engagement with the challenge of climate change.

Between 2008 and 2010 a cross-border biosphere reserve was evaluated for the first time, in the form of the Franco-German Vosges du Nord and Palatinate Forest Transfrontier Biosphere Reserve. Together with UNESCO, both national committees drew up a special questionnaire. The edited report will be passed to UNESCO by the National Committees at the end of September. In terms of the ICC meeting in June 2011, UNESCO credited the engagement of all parties involved in this evaluation, in particular the German and French National Committees, as well as the quality of the joint Evaluation Report. The experience gained during this evaluation process should be incorporated into future evaluations of cross-border biosphere reserves.

By September 2011 UNESCO must present their reports on the inspection of the Vessertal-Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve as well as the first scheduled evaluation of the Schaalsee Biosphere. At the completion of this process all the German UNESCO biosphere reserves will have been evaluated at least once – apart from the new regions at Bliesgau and Schwabian Alb. The expertise connected to this should also be integrated into the UNESCO planned revision of the internationally valid nomination and evaluation forms; the supplemented and updated evaluation forms should be adopted at the 24th ICC-Meeting in July 2012.

Regular data collection is essential, not only in terms of external evaluations but also for the current evaluation and development of the work in the biosphere reserves. An Evaluation and Development Plan with proposals for appropriate indicators will be prepared together with representatives of the large protected areas, the application of which should be tested by a further study in selected areas (2011 – 2013).



*In some locations there are near-natural areas of forest: beech forest at Liepnitzsee*



*A view of Ebbegebirge Nature Park*

## Nature parks – the Quality Initiative will continue

RALF FORST

Nature parks have over recent decades achieved a considerable profile, not least through the engaging assignments of both VDN and EUROPARC Germany. Thus, for the purposes of further qualitative development of nature parks, and in line with a BfN Research and Development Project carried out by VDN (Verband deutscher Natuparke e. V./Association of German Nature Parks) and EUROPARC Germany<sup>1)</sup> between 2003 and 2005, a catalogue of quality criteria was developed (cf. VDN 2006 b) which helped to measure the quality of nature parks (cf. also ED 2008 a). The official start of the Quality Initiative came in October 2005.

In the meantime, the “Nature Park Quality Initiative” has entered its fifth year of existence under the general management of VDN. For nature parks which joined right at the start of the Initiative, the accreditation as a “Quality Nature Park” or “Partner of the Nature Park Quality Initiative”, which is limited to a maximum of five years, will expire; renewed evaluations will be required.

<sup>1)</sup> The project was promoted as an R&D Plan by BfN with the assistance of the BMU.

With the present engagement of almost two thirds of all nature parks, this Quality Initiative has clearly started successfully. Of the current 102 nature parks in Germany (cf. fig. 5, p. 48), as of spring 2010 some 65 nature parks are involved in the Quality Initiative, of which 60 are accredited as “Quality Nature Parks”.

Membership has been taken up at different rates in individual federal regions. Perhaps this is also an indication of how highly nature parks are valued in each of the federal regions. Thus, for example, in Thuringia, where the nature park administration is largely run by state agencies, all four nature parks have successfully joined the project. In this context it is also worth mentioning that all of the nature parks organised by EUROPARC Germany are successful members of the Quality Initiative.

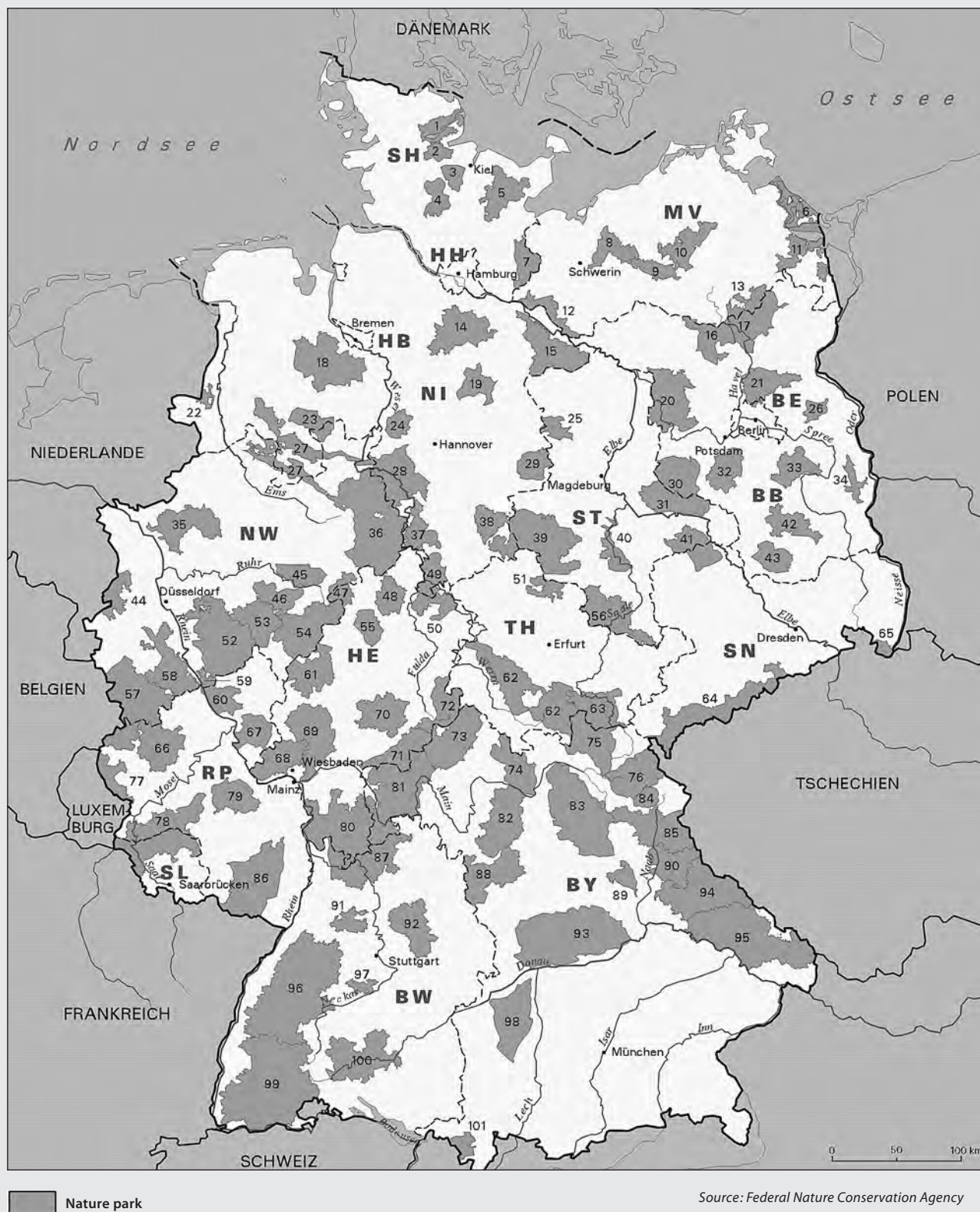
The required time for the evaluation process on the part of the member nature parks is relatively high, even allowing for the fact the accompanying aims are assessed predominantly as justifiable and useful. The number of nature parks which are new participants in the Quality Initiative had somewhat reduced some two years after the start of the initiative, but there are always more nature parks which are keen to join.

From the point of view of the nature park authorities it is therefore suggested that the initial time investment in project management has been underestimated. Thus, as a consequence, the agreed methods cannot always be strictly used. In addition,



Fig. 5: Location of nature parks in Germany

As at: 1.7.2010



Source: Federal Nature Conservation Agency (BfN), 2010; according to state declarations



*Agriculture in Eichsfeld-Hainich-Werratal Nature Park*

initial software problem mean that the evaluation of digitally updated data is in part distorted. Unsurprisingly, this means that in the course of the first procedural trial the questionnaire and also the system are modified at certain points.

A new project group, formed in September 2008, which should see through the further proceedings of the Quality Initiative from now on, will therefore be authorised to submit proposals in this context. Within the VDN coordinated working group, alongside representatives of BMU / BfN, representatives of various federal ministries, science, management and tourism, several nature park directors and a deputy from EUROPARC Germany all work together.

This project group had analysed the current results and experiences – those which existed in relation to questionnaire activities and a statistical analysis of the VDN – and above all the numerous pieces of evidence from individual nature parks and scouts; together with the branch offices of VDN, proposals on the decided modification of the criteria catalogue and on the optimisation of practices were prepared by summer 2009. These were unanimously accepted by an assembly in October 2009.

These new criteria and questionnaire catalogue (probably valid as of 1st July 2010), along with the accompanying evaluation summary, will be released in the booklet “Nature Park Quality Initiative” (VDN 2010). There are presently five areas of operation, namely Management and Organisation, Conserva-

tion and Landscape Management, Regeneration and Sustainable Tourism, Environmental Education and Communication, and Sustainable Regional Development. At any one time, with a maximum of 100 points to achieve (cf. published evaluation summary), they will be held on the basis of comparisons with the results achieved so far. Individual issues, however, are to be advanced or dropped based on current developments, experiences and, where applicable, their lack of significance.

In addition to the new criteria catalogue, the booklet also contains the results of the completed status seminar and workshop “The Nature Park Quality Initiative – On route to the optimal nature park”, held between 23rd and 26th February 2010 at INA Vilm (Internationale Naturschutzakademie / International Academy for Nature Conservation). This event was also supported by BfN with the assistance of the BMU on the basis of the Environmental Development Plan of 2010. Alongside a detailed treatment of the benefits which participation could bring for nature parks, a checklist for participants for the purposes of scheduling will also be created. This will ideally create a smooth arrangement of procedures and adequate follow-up procedures, in order to be able to use the results in the best possible way for the work of nature parks.

**Tab. 5: Participation of nature parks at the Quality Initiative<sup>1)</sup>**

Federal state	Participation	Total number
Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania	7	7
Saarland	1	1
Thuringia	4	4
Saxony-Anhalt	5	6
Hesse	8	11
Saxony	2	3
North Rhine-Westfalia	10	14
Bayern	11	18
Baden-Wuerttemberg	4	7
Lower Saxony	7	13
Brandenburg	6	11
Rhineland-Palatinate	3	8
Schleswig-Holstein	2	5

Source: Association of German Nature Parks (VDN)

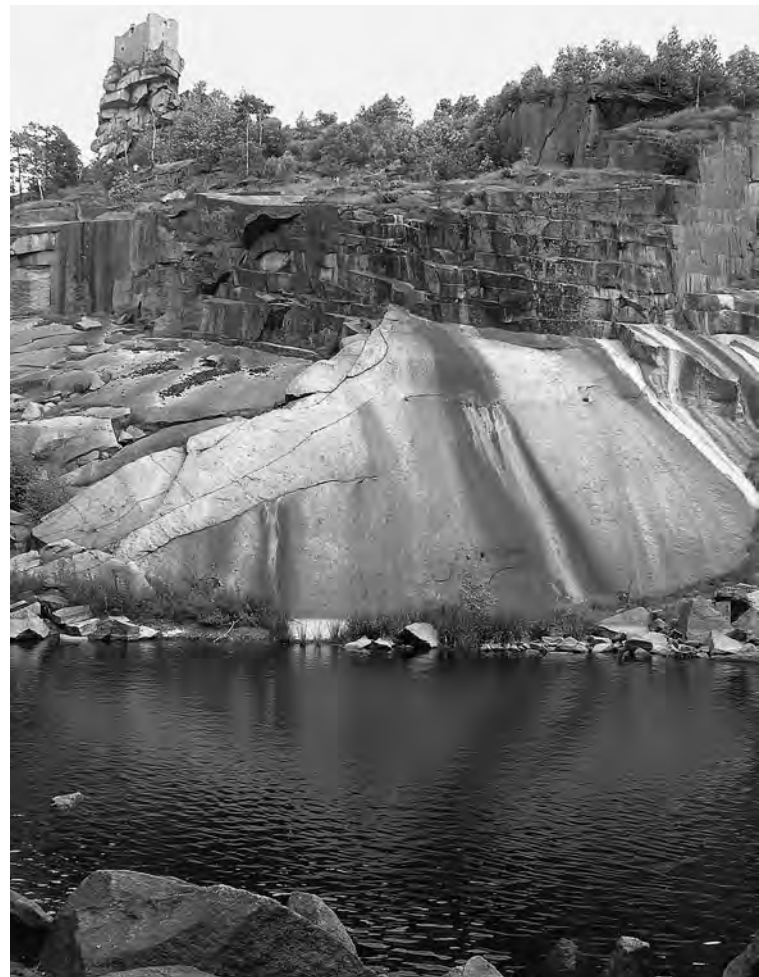
<sup>1)</sup> Cross-border nature parks are included for both federal states concerned and are thus counted more than once



The strategic considerations for strengthening and further developing the Nature Park Quality Initiative, developed at the status seminar, have been gathered together in seven points. What is decisive for the application of these recommendations is the actual circumstances of each park, given that currently the earliest accredited nature parks are seeking to renew their evaluation, while over a third of nature parks have so far not taken part in the Quality Initiative at all. The federal regions also have a role to play here, as they could link their financial support (as far as possible) for nature parks even more closely to membership of the Quality Initiative.

The federally backed Nature Park Quality Initiative thus offers the nature park support organisations an instrument for self-assessment, resource management and uninterrupted improvement of the quality of their work. It establishes a basis for understanding both supporting and limiting factors. For the long-term success of these methods of evaluation, which are important to the government, it is admittedly desirable to have a future collective and improved participation rate as well as the continued participation of nature parks (over a five-year period and beyond). In order to be able to achieve this in the new evaluation period, further accompanying tools (checklists) and improvements to the work of scouts will be carried out (above all to “expense allowances”, the optimisation of on-site appointments, and the further development of scouting into coaching).

Compared to the first evaluation period, it is intended that from now on nature parks will receive their detailed results quicker, so that they are able to draw conclusions for their future work easily. Furthermore, the consultancy services for nature parks which are taking part in the Quality Initiative should also be strengthened through a variety of proposals.



*Above: Water courses in Nuthe-Nieplitz Nature Park  
Below: Imposing rock formations are emblems of  
Northern Upper Palatinate Forest Nature Park*



## From the research and monitoring working group

HEINER RALL AND CORNELIA BAESSLER

After the inaugural meeting of the Research & Monitoring Working Group (the WG) in Kellerwald-Edersee National Park in 2007 the WG could successfully carry out their work, supported by annual meetings – the most recent being in Minsen (Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park) in 2010.

Fortunately the number of members from the sphere of National Natural Landscapes has grown. The majority of national parks (including coastal national parks) and some biosphere reserves are already bringing their questions, experience and also their definitions of the problem areas and their views on possible solutions to the WG. Among the most welcome and regular guests of the WG is the new DBU-founded Naturerbe GmbH (Natural Heritage Ltd), which administers nationally significant areas for conservation (above all former army training camps) as a large protected area with a total of 46,000 hectares (cf. p. 74 f). Their responsibilities also include documenting the natural environment of these areas and development by means of monitoring, research and scientific observation.

In order to improve communication, EUROPARC Germany provided the WG members with their own pages on the EUROPARC Germany website. Along with current WG information, there are protocols for the annual meeting, folios of relevant PowerPoint presentations as well as photos to download.



*Comparison of methods to measure tree diameter*

### Connection to the LTER research network

Of great benefit to the WG is its organisational and material alliance with the LTER-D Network (Long Term Ecological Research – Netzwerk für Ökologische Langzeitforschung Deutschlands). A representative of EUROPARC-WG took part in the consultation and decision making processes of the LTER-D Steering Group after the formation of LTER-D. The social scientific area within LTER-D will be strengthened through the admission (in March 2010) of the Chair of Sustainability and Practical Geography at the University of Greifswald in conjunction with the Society for Biosphere Reserve Research and Communication C-BRA (see below). With the interlinking of LTER-D and the European network LTER-Europe, as well as the global network ILTER, a European and worldwide umbrella organisation based on ecological and social sciences will be created and secured.

In terms of content, the collaboration between the WG and LTER on the implementation and testing of the “Metadata-bank” tool will be a major step forward: In the meantime, several protected areas are testing the LTER-Europe synchronised Databank module with their own data. In the near future, data will be able to be imported with only a little adjustment and that data, along with that of other European research institutes with similar structures, will be easily accessed.

Every member will be able to access themes, methods, scale levels, institutional information, authors and other information on ecological and social scientific research and monitoring programmes using their own access code.

Another great help to large protected areas is also to be expected in the form of the ENVEurope Project (Life+; 2010 – 2013), of which LTER-D is a member, along with several other research institutes and universities. The goal of the project is the standardisation and development of parameters and methods, which are applicable to environmental monitoring and the development of ecosystems, both in terms of their applicability to projects covering different areas and using different timescales, as well as to projects which encompass the whole ecosystem.

### **Towards an extended research network**

Working together with LTER-D and with the support of the WG over the last few years, contact with more biological and social-science research networks could be established. At one of the first conventions, senior representatives of LTER-D, DIVERSITAS-D, C-BRA and the WG met at Helmholtz-Zentrum UFZ Halle (Zentrum für Umweltforschung / Centre for Environmental Research), and the basic framework for cooperation was agreed, as was a move to inform one another about activities which are of particular importance to protected landscapes.

Advancements in gaining knowledge will be achieved through participation in research networks. Numbered among these are non-university research institutes, which are organised in Germany under familiar names such as Fraunhofer, Leibniz, Helmholtz and Max Planck.

The newest visible association with the EU initiative called LifeWatch arises from a similar background. One main aim of the initiative is to collate information on sources, incidence characteristics and so on of each species which occurs in Europe. This comes after the decision of the European Commission (in June 2009) to create a centralised databank for this information. Here, expert partners are to be found above all in the German natural history museums, with their great experience of taxonomy. An even more serious official engagement by Germany with the LifeWatch programme would be welcomed by all research organisations.

New associations also exist as members of the long-term research project BIOLOG, which will be brought to a conclusion with the participation of several major research facilities, coordinated by the BMBF (Bundesamt für Bildung und Forschung / Federal Ministry of Education and Research).

Through the creation of networks, research and monitoring offers National Natural Landscapes the opportunity to find solutions to problems, which in part relate to opportunities for cooperation with nearby research institutes. Among these in particular is the availability or intervention of specialists (e.g. soil biology) or the development and implementation of new analytical techniques (e.g. new remote sensors; neutron radiography, for instance in small scale demonstrations of water distribution in the areas around plant roots). Such processes call for a lot of technical equipment, the construction and operation of which generally remains beyond the staffing and financial grasp of small research units.

Raising the level of knowledge about our natural resources and ecosystems through the creation of networks is certainly of benefit to both parties, for protected area administrations and for science. For the management of our large protected areas, but also for other landscapes, this is of particular importance.

# In nature – climate protection and biological diversity

## International Year of Biodiversity and COP 10 in Nagoyaw

HOLGER WESEMÜLLER

In 2010 the worldwide focus of nature conservation was on biological biodiversity. For this purpose the UN proclaimed the International Year of Biological Diversity to call attention to the significance to natural diversity. It encourages everybody to engage in careful and responsible handling of creation. The loss of natural and especially biological diversity even endangers human livelihood. Each year countless animal and plant species disappear irretrievably worldwide as a result of human activities.

Natural events are joined by man-made ones: the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, bog and forest fires of enormous extent in Russia, terrible flooding in Australia, earthquakes in New Zealand and in Japan in March 2011 – followed by a devastating tsunami and nuclear catastrophe around Fukushima. Mankind struggles heavily with these rigours. Even in Europe landscapes are destroyed or significantly degraded for agriculture, production of raw materials, settlements, road and traffic. This development is visible to everybody, even in Germany, and it is not only a question of aesthetics. The federal cabinet enacted the “National Strategy on Biological Diversity” (NBS), which was developed under auspices of Federal Environmental Ministry (BMU – Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit). This encompassing and challenging strategy to implement the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) represents the core of federal nature conservation policy<sup>1)</sup>. It comprises about 330 goals and about 430 measures that should be realised by 2020.

As the Federal Chancellor pointed out during the opening of the International Year of Biological Diversity under German presidency in January 2010, we need effective protection of nature and sustainable economic systems everywhere. Conservation of biological diversity has “the same dimension and significance as climate protection”. According to a nationwide survey in 2009, conservation of nature has a “high social importance and nature conservation measures have broad public support” (BMU 2010). Conservation of biological diversity is considered

a task of high social priority and according to the study the public “expressed a high willingness to individually contribute to the conservation of biological diversity.” However this is obviously not reflected in real action. The dramatic worldwide loss of species and biological diversity continues undamped even in Germany, although the international community had determined to reduce this negative trend significantly by 2010. This goal was missed by a long way, also within the EU, and has now been postponed until 2020 (see below).

### Climate change and biological diversity – two sides of the same coin

Ultimately climate change calls for current adaptation strategies concerning nature conservation and our protected areas. Already in 2008 the IUCN prompted to “plan for climate change” with regard to the system of protected areas (quoted according to EUROPARC 2010, pp. 59). They pointed out the manifold variables that can, when triggered by climate change, lead to change in natural features and the distribution of ecosystems on earth. Global climate change increases the threat of negative effects, especially on species and habitats at the edge of their range of distribution. On the other hand, protected areas may play an important role in reducing these effects and act as a buffer against extreme climate events (Stolton et al., 2008).

Protected area managers are already concerned with possible changes in their areas. The Dutch-German-Danish Wadden Sea region presents a European example of addressing this issue: three countries deal, amongst other things, with possible consequences of a sea level rise for the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site. “A vision for a climate robust Wadden Sea region” was sketched during the Wadden Sea Dialog, which was sponsored by the federal government (Michael Otto Foundation 2010). In the course of a trilateral intergovernmental conference on the island of Sylt in March 2010 the three adjacent states agreed to develop the Wadden Sea as carbon neutral region (see also p. 68)

### Progress in Nagoya

Despite pessimistic predictions, COP 10 in Nagoya/Japan achieved some important progress in autumn 2010. This COP 10 marked the highlight of the International Year of Biological Diversity 2010, where the world community negotiated measures against the continuing destruction of nature. According

<sup>1)</sup> In Germany nature conservation for areas is the responsibility of the states. However the federal government has authority on the high seas and could independently establish an ocean national park within the EEZ, for example.



to the assessment of the BMU and various NGOs the international community initiated the overdue trend reversal to stop the continuous overexploitation of nature. The thematic focal points of the COP included, amongst others:

- Access to genetic resources and equitable benefit sharing (ABS-protocol)
- New global goal and strategic plan by 2020
- Mobilisation of resources
- Biodiversity of oceans and coasts
- Global network for protected areas
- Biodiversity and climate change
- Biofuel
- Science policy platform on biodiversity IPBES

### Importance for National Natural Landscapes

The adoption of a new strategic plan of the CBD and its funding are of particular importance to our protected areas. A new time frame was agreed upon for the global goal of conservation of biological diversity: By 2020 all states shall have implemented effective measures to stop the loss of biological diversity. Twenty concrete objectives were defined to reach this goal. An ambitious plan should be developed within two years to mobilise the necessary financial resources. The course has thus been set for international policy to protect biological diversity for the next ten years. It is worth keeping an eye on whether implementation succeeds! Germany is in a good position concerning international nature conservation due to its financial commitment during COP 9 in 2008. However nationally it looks different. In addition to the federal stimulus the states have to increase pulling their weight, although their budgets are not in such good condition. COP 10 also emphasises the importance of protected areas for the conservation of world-wide biodiversity. Adequate funding has to be ensured for this. Further steps have been agreed upon to enlarge the global network of marine protected areas. In addition measures have been resolved on to fight the reasons for loss of biodiversity (such as subsidies harmful to the environment, non-sustainable production and consumption, overfishing and destructive fishing practices, pollutant input, and climate change). Also goals have been defined for species protection and conservation of genetic diversity as

well as considering and integrating the value of biodiversity and its services into national planning processes, national accounts and reporting systems.

### News on the cross cutting initiative for protected areas

In Nagoya it was also time to review the ambitious CBD cross cutting initiative for protected areas. In preparation of COP 10 EUROPARC Germany contributed various recommendations to improve the implementation of thematic programmes and cross cutting initiatives on national and international level in the committees. The federation fully supported these during a meeting of the EUROPARC divisions. Thus they were incorporated to a large extent into the decision process of COP 10 to improve the implementation of the cross cutting initiative for protected areas. The following requirements demand increased attention and activities for the work in National Natural Landscapes in the future<sup>1)</sup>:

1. Sustainable financing of protected areas (including the utilisation of the LifeWeb-Initiative of the CBD)
2. Handling the effects of climate change on protected areas
3. Improving the effectiveness of management (including an increase in protected area evaluations)
4. Improving the management of invasive species
5. Increased designation of marine protected areas, also in areas beyond national jurisdiction
6. Increase the coverage, quality, representativeness and connectivity of inland water ecosystems
7. Restoration of ecosystems and habitats
8. Valuing ecosystem services of protected areas
9. Protected areas management/governance
10. Participation and equitable benefit sharing
11. Reporting

Following COP 10 the federal government is providing € 15 million annually open-ended for the “Federal Programme Biological Diversity”, which was adopted in spring 2010 to implement the NBS. Projects reaching across regions and states can be funded in four focus areas. This programme is just starting.

<sup>1)</sup> Decisions have been made on various additional topics. In-depth information is available using the link (exclusively in English) [www.cbd.int/nagoya/outcomes](http://www.cbd.int/nagoya/outcomes).

## Climate protection and climate summit

HORST KORN AND HOLGER WESEMÜLLER

In 2006, economist Nicholas Stern published his report on climate protection and the results of inactivity, together with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. His message alarmed governments all around the world. The costs of global warming have been estimated at € 5.5 trillion. Experts warn that climate risks are higher than imagined. Temperatures are increasing world-wide. Not only the intensity, but also the number of natural disasters is increasing.

According to the largest reinsurer world-wide, the Munich Re Group, the number of meteorological events and floods has tripled. As is well-known we do not pay the price for the costs we cause today. The extensive peat fires in Russia, or the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and all other disasters, which are caused by the principle of unrestrained exploitation of resources, have been outdone by the dreadful earthquake in Japan. The tsunami overrunning the island coast destroyed whole cities. By causing the ultimate MCA (maximum credible accident) at Fukushima it also destroyed the “devilish dream”, assuming insatiable hunger for energy could be satisfied by nuclear power free of risk. Now renewable resources have to be look into even further (compare ED 2009b). The German capital Berlin announced on March 23rd, 2011, that it plans to “provide its energy supply completely from renewable sources” by 2050 (JACOBS 2011). This conversion will not be easy in practice. But climate protection is foresight and protection of living conditions and not a costly burden (Korn & Epple 2006; IPCC 2007). Concerning climate protection it is more than high time to reset the international framework and finally settle on an effective climate agreement, but not at the expense of biological diversity.

Progress on this road remains difficult. In December 2009 in Copenhagen and 2010 in Cancún, Mexico, (COP 16) only very little was achieved by the World Climate Conferences. The results are only recommendations and not binding. So far many negotiating partners have not realised yet that in many cases effective nature conservation presents an effective and cost-efficient climate protection measure. One of the driving forces in climate negotiations is the prospect of financial profit from emissions trading. Therefore measures are pursued that promise the largest profits and not those that are most cost-effective.



Above: Prof. Dr. Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, Director Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, at the Potsdam Climate Conference 2010, in the permanent representation of Brandenburg.

Below: Opening meeting of the World Climate Conference, December 2009, Copenhagen.

The lowest common denominator in Copenhagen 2009 consisted of promising voluntary measures and confirming financial support to developing countries (e.g. by the EU). One year later in Cancún, again no global master plan was drafted to replace the Kyoto protocol expiring in 2012. However a few decisions were made, binding to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, but vague in content. Thus not only all EU member states but all countries support the goal to limit global warming to two degrees. All threats related to climate change are explicitly acknowledged. It is also stated that the increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere results from human activities. Next to rather general goals on emission

## "Greenhouse gases and climate protection – challenge for economy and politics"

The goals of the Kyoto-Protocol address six greenhouse gases (GHG), including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated hydrocarbons. Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is considered the most important climate killer. It supposedly adds 60 per cent to the disturbance of the Earth's radiation budget. Furthermore it remains in the atmosphere for a very long time. It is important to know that the CO<sub>2</sub>-concentration increased more than 30 per cent over 200 years. CO<sub>2</sub> mainly results from incineration of crude oil, natural gas, and coal, moreover from deforestation and slash-and-burn land clearance. Since 2005 politicians have increased pressure on the economy by emissions trading, especially in Europe. Thus emissions shall be prevented in a most cost-effective way.

By 2020 CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions in Germany will be reduced by 40 per cent, by the middle of the century even by 80 per cent. This causes the economy to rethink. So far the atmosphere could be used for free. Negative consequences had been ignored. Entering the third phase of the EU emissions system in 2013 will make it very expensive for many businesses. Until now the companies received portions of the emission permits for free. From then on the permits have to be bid for. As long as GHG-emissions didn't have a price tag, hardly anybody was listening. Today CO<sub>2</sub>-management plays a major role in large companies. Energy is becoming more and more expensive. Saving energy is hip. Emissions are turning into a crucial cost factor: They say the German economy could reduce its energy

costs by € 10 billion by 2020. Converted, that is 60,000,000 tons of greenhouse gases, ideally an additional profit of 10,000,000,000 Euro. Scientists – for example from the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research – predict that new climate regulations and increasing energy prices could thus bring about structural change. Global warming and further population growth force political economies to rethink, even to "restructure". This will probably help nature. Next to technical solutions such as CCS<sup>1)</sup>, ecosystem services from nature will be taken more into account – a result achieved in Copenhagen.

<sup>1)</sup> CCS = "Carbon (Dioxide) Capture and Storage" is the technology from which many actors expect a high contribution to climate protection.

reduction, it has been declared to adapt to the consequences of climate change, as well as to finance them and to practise technology transfer. In addition a substantial reduction of worldwide greenhouse gas emission is requested until the distant year 2050. A concrete goal shall be determined during the next climate change conference in Durban, South Africa, at the end of 2011. Until then information is collected on voluntary goals and measures in industrial as well as developing countries.

A "Green Climate Fund" will be established to finance climate protection and adaptation. Public and private sources shall provide \$ 100 billion annually by 2020. International support shall enable developing countries to reduce the consequences of the effects of climate change with adaptation measures. A new institution, the "Cancún Adaptation Framework", shall be established for this purpose. Another decision asks developing countries to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions from deforestation and forest destruction and reverse them if possible, with adequate

support from industrial countries. The decision also addresses the interests of indigenous people as well as the conservation of biodiversity. It is not intended to include these topics into emission trading. Thus dealing with these topics rather counts as lip service than implementing a serious measure. One further decision emphasises that the members of the Kyoto-Protocol, which do not include the USA, shall reduce their CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions in a range of 25 – 40 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020.

A lot remains open even after Cancún, especially how to continue after the expiry of the Kyoto-Protocol in 2012. As a lot of money is involved, high risks are taken.

What could we learn? Climate politics is like playing jack-straws: whoever moves the sticks first loses. Everybody waits for somebody else makes an offer to reduce emissions. Therefore nobody wants to move or hides behind someone else. Somebody has to go first, until now the Europeans did that. They want to reduce emissions by 30 per cent by 2020, if others



also commit to ambitious goals. So far this offer has achieved nothing. Putting it off to the following climate summit, now the one in Durban, South Africa, 2011, is just a delaying tactic.

The haggling will take longer, as it not only concerns mere environmental politics, but also energy costs and growth opportunities and thus billion dollar interest (see adjoining information). Apparently even German businesses make dubious transactions with emission permits, as WWF found out for a climate damaging waste product resulting from coolant production – the halocarbon HFC 231<sup>1)</sup>.

After all, some interesting messages concerning nature conservation even rang out from Copenhagen. See below for the evaluation of an expert: She sees an increase in the importance of nature conservation for climate protection due to the world climate summit 2009. In this context, nature conservation is to be viewed as climate relevant service of nature, e.g. storing carbon dioxide. Thus climate protection and nature conservation politics have to ensure that a large portion of fossil energy deposits have to remain underground and are not used. In addition, bogs serve as true “carbon dioxide graves”, very effectively withdrawing the greenhouse gas CO<sub>2</sub>. Therefore it makes sense to supply water to bogs instead of draining them (compare p. 59).

Banker Pavan Sukhdev has been made available by Deutsche Bank to prepare the UN-study “The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity” – in short TEEB (see p. 61). In protected areas we talk increasingly about the value of nature and the services it renders for free. We also talk about national and global loss caused by undamped decline of biological diversity. The realization matured that precaution is better and cheaper than repairing. In 2006 the Stern report on climate politics (already mentioned) highlighted the economics of climate change. It illustrated that economy’s early change towards low-carbon technologies and production techniques would be much cheaper for man-kind than follow-up costs of global warming. Nature conservation pays off. You can learn a lot on how difficult it is to estimate the value of something that is not for sale. You can also learn the effects of unrestrained exploitation of nature, for



Marabá, Pará, Brazil: charcoal burning to produce charcoal for iron smelting. In spite of the law, there are many illegal facilities

instance the overfishing of the oceans, or the deforestation and slash-and-burn land clearance. And you can learn how much this resource consumption will or may cost us.

## Protected areas realise climate protection

KATRIN VOHLAND

Most of you surely remember COP 15 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen in December 2009 as a diplomatic disaster. The results of the negotiations were limited to the “Copenhagen Accord” and the official final documents of two working groups on a post-Kyoto-agreement and joint long term activities. The “Copenhagen Accord” is considered the framework for future conventions. It emphasises the significance of forests and bogs for climate protection, although it is within the more traditional than technical focused Framework Convention on Climate Change. Copenhagen thus enforces the importance of nature conservation by climate protection.

<sup>1)</sup> A company promotes the production of a specific coolant that is still permitted in developing countries. At the same time, they receive credit for the disposal of harmful trifluoromethane as climate protection effort. This is rewarded with emission permits. This procedure questions the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

### Forests become important for climate protection

A series of financial mechanisms are discussed as REDD (Reduced Emissions from Avoided Deforestation and Degradation) to strengthen forest protection in developing countries. Deforestation (especially of tropical rainforests) and drainage of bogs contribute considerably to greenhouse gas emissions caused by humans. On the other hand it has been proven empirically that tropical forests in Africa and South America transformed the increased proportion of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere into biomass. This carbon storage and sink function of tropical forests shall be strengthened by industrial countries financing forest protection programmes in developing countries. The industrial countries consider this the most economical option to prevent greenhouse gases. It is economically advantageous to invest in climate protection now then to remedy the subsequent damages later (compare STERN Report).

Nevertheless various things have to be considered when implementing the forest protection programmes. It is not enough to fence the forest in. Protection of forests has to be integrated into sustainable development of a region. This includes strengthening the (democratic) institutions involved, also called “governance”. The population in and around the forest needs alternative means of income. These should not be tied to changing forests into agricultural area or to overexploitation of forests. Thus some projects support marketing of products – e.g. rainforest coffee, fruit for perfume production, or seeds for plantations. Additional sources of income such as voluntary emission trading could be incorporated into the management of individual areas.

### Perspective

The sustainable implementation of forest protection programmes requires a regional as well as a global approach to integrate diverging interests and perspectives. Regionally this concerns the interests of farmers, oil mills, and indigenous people, internationally the demand for tropical timber, meat, and “bioenergy”. The increasing economical acceptance of forest functions must be welcomed. Nevertheless functions beyond carbon sequestration have to be considered, which are more difficult to quantify or impossible to estimate. This includes the wealth of genetic resources, the opportunity to hunt, or the enjoyment of forest beauty.

## Innovative forms of compensation at the interface of biodiversity and climate change

DR. KATJA ARZT

Emission permits provide information on storage capacity of greenhouse gases in biomass or soil. Their trade is increasing world-wide. Until now no permits could be received for land use projects in Germany that could be traded on the mandatory market. However a voluntary market is developing progressively.

In 2000 the “Bog Protection Concept” was adopted in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania. It was extended to “Bog Futures” in 2009. “Bog Futures” created a trading platform with unique bog standards. “Forest Share” is another example for innovative compensation products in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania. “Forest Share” enables visitors to Mecklenburg-West Pomerania to compensate for their CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions.

EUROPARC Germany initiated a development and testing project that is financed by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN – Bundesamt für Naturschutz) with funds from the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. Based on scientific expertise it shall discuss opportunities for “new” financing options. Nature conservation projects relevant to climate and biodiversity are proposed for forest, bog or grassland locations in cooperation with scientists. Permits shall then inform on the resulting climate services of these nature conservation projects. The permits may then be put on the market for “climate-conscious” companies and organisations. EUROPARC Germany will provide the trading platform.

These projects aim to generate new and innovative financing models for nature conservation projects. Market oriented payment mechanisms could create another incentive to increase the provision of ecological goods and services. The image of protected areas will be improved as monetary value can be attributed to them. This “image improvement” will contribute to many communities no longer considering protected areas as an obstacle for economic development of regions, as National Natural Landscapes provide a valuable ecological contribution to society.



*The rewetted fen at the Große Rosin polder on Kummerower Lake  
(view of the former Mahlbusen)*

## Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania's moor bonds and forest shares

THORSTEN PERMIEN

Our living and working habits contribute significantly to the increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. While many measures aim to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) to a minimum, a complete elimination is possible only in the rarest cases. For this reason, environmental compensation projects, in which payments are used to compensate for emissions produced at different locations, are becoming increasingly important.

The number of innovative environmental protection projects is set to grow in the coming years. A main impetus for this is the "2-degree limit" for global warming which calls for very ambitious GHG reduction goals, especially for industrialised nations. In accordance with the 2-degree limit, countries commit themselves to a GHG reduction of up to up to 95% by 2050, based on their 1990 levels.

Given the scale of these reductions, topics relating to climate protection which were not previously discussed are now being eagerly considered – even by industrialised nations. Although related goals often focus on reduction rather than compensation, well thought out compensation projects are also set to become increasingly important. This includes established forest projects as well as the GHG savings represented by the rewetting of fens. Let's take a look at just one greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide.

Before compensation projects can be financed, the resulting output needs to be put in financial terms. Put plainly, a price has to be put on the carbon (in other words, the wood and peat). This is already a familiar approach within agriculture. To quote Johann Heinrich von Thünen, "The farmer who has made a profit of 1,000 thaler from his land, but has thereby reduced the value of the humus in the soil by 2,000 thaler, is not richer, but poorer." (PERMIEN 2007) Fens and moors still cover large areas of northern Germany, with approximately 300,000 hectares of moorland in Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania alone. Could it be that these areas, which were seen as wasted space in the past, could today be a blessing in disguise?

Von Thünen's approach raises a number of questions: What value do humus assets (the moor's peat) have for climate





*Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania's climate dice*

protection? What is the moor's value in terms of attaining biodiversity goals? What value do the moors have for the implementation of the Water Framework Directive? What value do the moors have for broader sustainable water management practices in the context of climate change? ...and how much do technical solutions with comparable results cost?

#### *Moor carbon stores and moor bonds*

A brochure called "The basis of landscape ecology and goals for moorland protection in Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania" serves as a theoretical basis for efforts relating to moorland protection<sup>1)</sup>. The brochure emphasises the importance of the moors as carbon sinks: they are able to absorb carbon and nutrients from the corresponding natural cycles and store them for long periods as peat. It also describes the moors' capacity for water retention and their potential as a reservoir, along with their positive contribution to the region's water balance. Additional topics include biodiversity as well as the unique and diverse beauty which the moors bring to the landscapes of Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania. Much of the brochure's information also applies to other areas in northern Germany.

<sup>1)</sup> Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania's first climate protection plan, published in 1997, discussed the moors' climatic relevance and emphasised their rewetting as a specific climate protection measure for the state (Ministry for Building, Development and Environment of Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania 1997)

The "Plan for Safeguarding the Moors of Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania" was published in 2000. Following this, the Natura 2000 networking programme and the Water Framework Directive were adopted. Due to continuing changes in the economic conditions affecting agriculture, plan revisions and a clarification of the environmental objectives became necessary.

As awareness of climate change grew, the moors' climatic relevance was pushed to the centre of academic and political discourse. In order to place a credible value on this relevance, Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania's Ministry of Agriculture, the Environment and Consumer Protection contracted the University of Greifswald to develop a coherent and easy-to-use model for this purpose. The result was the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Location Types (TreibhausGasEmissionsStandort Typen, or GEST) concept. This model is based on the finding that the GHG level of moor sites is directly related to the annual mean water level and the corresponding 'water category'. The 'water category' can be determined by means of the vegetation. It is possible to determine the characteristics of GHG emissions using the concept of "vegetation forms" as an identifying indicator. On this basis, the flux in the climatic relevance of the moorlands can be measured according to mean water levels. The results show that the rewetting of moors could potentially offset the equivalent of 10 to over 30 tonnes of carbon dioxide per hectare each year!

This makes rewetting projects particularly well-suited to compensation projects. The profits of rewetting are given financial value as environmental bonds and advertised as "moor bonds", especially to companies in the carbon market. Further information can be found in the August 2009 publication "Plan for the Use and Protection of the Moors"<sup>2)</sup>.

#### *Forest carbon stores and forest shares*

Another environmental bond, the "forest share", places a value on forests' carbon-sinking ability.<sup>3)</sup> The tourism sector is extremely important to Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania's economy, and even when efforts are made to reduce its environmental impact, emissions cannot be completely eliminated. At the

<sup>2)</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, the Environment and Consumer Protection of Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania (2009): Konzept zum Schutz und zur Nutzung der Moore (Plan for the Use and Protection of the Moors), Schwerin

<sup>3)</sup> [www.waldaktie.de](http://www.waldaktie.de)

same time, reduction (fewer tourists in the state) and substitution (tourists instead visit other states) simply equal carbon leakage and do not offer any actual economic or climate policy solutions. Thus, the answer must lie in the implementation of more effective compensation projects.

The focal point of these efforts is afforestation projects in which native species of trees are planted to offset the GHG released by visitors' travel, accommodation and activities. An analysis of existing data (number of nights, type of accommodation, distance travelled) revealed that a family of four generates an average of 850 kg of carbon dioxide over the course of a holiday lasting two weeks (including travel). Taking different species into account, the average fully-grown tree absorbs around 900 kg of carbon dioxide. According to forestry calculations, the management and protection of each tree costs € 10 – 15. This equals an avoidance cost of € 11 – 17 per tonne of carbon dioxide.

The bottom line is that if a visiting family of four pays 10 Euro for afforestation in Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania, they will be able to offset the carbon dioxide generated by their holiday. However, as is the case with unspoiled moorland, the value of forests is not limited to their ability to absorb GHGs. They also fulfil a wide variety of other ecological functions in the areas of biodiversity, water management, and so on.

Over the course of two years, approximately 11,000 forest shares have been sold. Planting is currently taking place in eight climate scheme forests across the state. Two public planting campaigns held each year have been very well received by forest shareholders. All of this makes the project meaningful, accessible and hands-on. An increasing number of companies also use forest shares to make their production climate neutral or integrate the concept into their marketing strategies.

In order to illustrate the concept of using forests to reabsorb carbon dioxide, Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania developed the "climate dice". Carved from beech wood, the dice's 9.3 cm dimensions represent exactly one kilo of reabsorbed carbon dioxide. Not only due to these features, the forest share has been awarded several recognitions, including an official project of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and official landmark within the innovation campaign "Germany – Land of Ideas".

## Nature's ecosystem services and their economic value

CARSTEN NESSHÖVER

Human well-being depends on intact ecosystems and the preservation of biodiversity: forests provide humans with life-sustaining oxygen, and by acting as carbon stores they simultaneously provide a natural solution to climate change. Pollination by bees and other insects contributes approximately 30% of the agricultural yields required to feed the seven billion people now living on Earth. Mangrove forests and coral reefs provide protection from tsunamis, often saving the lives of thousands of people. Nonetheless, if we do not understand the value of these treasures called "ecosystem services", we run the risk of losing them.

### The value of ecosystem services studied for the first time

With the aim of estimating the value of ecosystem services, EU Commissioner Stavros Dimas and Germany's Minister for the Environment, Sigmar Gabriel, initiated the study "The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity" (TEEB) at the G 8 + 5 Environment Ministers Meeting 2007 in Potsdam. The study aims to examine the economic benefits of ecological systems and biodiversity on the one hand, and to raise awareness of biodiversity and the on-going destruction of ecosystems on the other hand.

Its objective is to develop recommendations for action, incentives and tools which will actively contribute to the preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity. Because this task requires involvement at every level of society, the TEEB report has been tailored for a variety of target audiences: in addition to information detailing TEEB's scientific basis, individual reports also address international and local policymakers, businesses and, not least, citizens and consumers.

### Findings provide additional arguments for conservation

TEEB aims to support a global change in thinking; therefore, in addition to sustainability, it has devoted itself to causes such as fighting poverty and equal rights. Currently, our social models reward and encourage increased rather than better



*Reef in Ras Muhammad Nature Park*

consumption, personal rather than social well-being and man-made rather than natural capital. Scientists contributing to the TEEB study are working intensively on opportunities for combatting this “market failure” and finding ways to represent nature’s wealth in terms of national and business accounts. TEEB aims to provide tools and guidelines which will help policymakers, business leaders and consumers take action and enable them to convert their change in attitude into practice. It is important to emphasise that TEEB provides additional arguments for conservation, but should not replace our ethical responsibility to the preservation of species and ecosystems.

### **The economic significance of protected areas**

An important finding of the TEEB study thus far is the high significance of protected areas for economic services: an annual investment of approximately \$ 45 billion into an optimised global network of protected areas (the current investment is between \$ 6 – 10 billion) would yield an estimated return of \$ 4.4 trillion in ecosystem services each year. And this added value would be evident at the local level, too – not just in terms of public assets such as the storage of carbon in forests

or the water-retaining function of upland regions and floodplains – but also directly via recreational opportunities and the increased tourism they bring. It is of central importance that further ways to capitalise on these assets are developed. The TEEB study provides important starting points for these efforts.

For further information, please see: [www.ufz.de/teeb](http://www.ufz.de/teeb).

## **Bioenergy and conservation – an opportunity for development?**

HOLGER WESEMÜLLER

Today, more than half of all plant and animal species in Germany have been placed on the Red List of endangered species and classified as threatened. Nonetheless, species continue to disappear, and the unsustainable use of resources is a continual source of new threat.

The utilisation of biomass plays a central role in reaching national and European climate protection goals. The EU has pledged to source 20% of the energy it consumes from renewable energy sources by 2020. The vigorous use of biomass currently accounts for approximately two thirds of the energy consumed. However, the expanding use of biomass for energy production is also the cause of undesirable developments in terms of climate protection and the preservation of biodiversity in Germany.

At first, the production and extraction of biomass for energy was seen by some as the cure-all solution for problems faced by climate policy. It seemed that flourishing landscapes and renewable energy could be completely compatible. Financial support and subsidisation accelerated the production of biomass. The criticisms raised by conservationists regarding the negative side effects of using biomass for fuel were disregarded for a time.

The topic was discussed early on in EUROPARC Germany’s Second Progress Report on National Natural Landscapes (see below). The report discussed global examples of bioenergy sources and biofuels made from palm oil and sugar cane as well as the large-scale production of bioethanol. And, whether involving palm oil plantations in the tropics or the large-scale farming of rye for ethanol production – the conclusion in both



cases was that the extensive cultivation of monocultures across large areas led to the destruction of habitat and the impoverishment of landscapes' diverse life forms.

The use of biomass as source of fuel developed rapidly. As recently as the 1990's, the German public still regarded renewable energy and particularly biofuel as a somewhat far-fetched notion, a "schnapps idea". Growing awareness of climate change and rising oil prices, however, made plant-derived fuels an increasingly attractive prospect. Environmental organisations were naturally quick to denounce biodiesels and maize monoculture. Competition for land use (Schütz & Bringezu 2006) and the increasing cost of agricultural land were discussed. However, it was primarily the competition between biofuels and food / feed production, which resulted in the raising of food prices despite criticism from the UN that brought the food-versus-fuel debate to the forefront. After all, biomass is a scarce resource which can be converted to fuel, electricity and heat. The poor climate balance of many types of biofuels was also pushed to the centre of attention<sup>1)</sup>.

Nevertheless, in 2009 the EU adopted the Renewable Energy Directive (RL 2009/28/EG<sup>2)</sup>), which lays down sustainability criteria for biofuels and bioliquids – criteria which also have relevance for nature conservation.

### **Yes to biomass – just not at the expense of climate protection and biodiversity**

In principle, EUROPARC Germany supports the sustainable use of biomass, as long as it does not come at the cost of biodiversity and climate protection. In other words: the utilisation of bioenergy can only be justified if it does not harm the environment and generates considerably fewer greenhouse gases than fossil fuels. This was the unanimous conclusion reached in a Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) position paper published in February 2010 and the summary of results of a Federal Environment Office (UBA – Umweltbundesamt) research project (cf. BfN 2010, UBA 2010). The Wuppertal Institute began research into the production of bioenergy in organic farming systems in 1999. In 2008 / 2009, the institute introduced the "cascading" of renewable resources as a concept



*Maize harvest in Schorfheide-Chorin Biosphere Reserve*

for increased raw materials efficiency and optimal land use: resources would first be used as material for making products (e.g., producing furniture from wood); thereafter, the waste and residual materials could be exploited for energy production.

Taking this concept for the multiple use of biomasses into account, the cultivation of renewable resources should primarily take place in areas which,

- are degraded,
- are either entirely unsuitable or have limited suitability for feed / food production, and
- do not qualify as areas worthy of protection.

From an environmental standpoint, it is important that energy crops are cultivated as extensively as possible and without negative consequences for the water balance or soil, as emphasised by UBA (2010). To this end, UBA recommended a "bioenergy certification" and called for the integration of global sustainability standards into the corresponding biomass guidelines.

<sup>1)</sup> Concerns regarding the biofuel E10 cannot yet be credibly eliminated. It tends to be viewed as more of an "ecological/political commodity" than a normal fuel.

<sup>2)</sup> Member states were required to comply with the Directive by 5/12/2010.

### Biofuels at the tenth session of the conference of parties (COP 10)

Pursuant to the CBD's initial recommendations relating to biological diversity and biofuels at the 9th Conference of Parties in Bonn in 2008, the following Conference of Parties (COP 10) held in Nagoya in 2010 took up the task of drafting and adopting sustainability requirements for biofuels. These include, for example, guidelines for the production of biofuels. The adopted biofuels decision aims to promote the positive impacts of biofuels and minimise the negative.<sup>1)</sup>

From the German perspective, it is particularly important that the COP's signatory states are called upon to compile inventories of land areas containing high biodiversity and critical ecosystems which are not to be used in the production of biofuels, as well as to identify areas of land which are particularly well-suited for biofuel production.

A publication by the BfN (2010) provides a systematic overview of the principles of sustainable biomass provision. Bioenergy needs more diversity than just maize. "The sustainable production and extraction of biomass provides the opportunity to realise climate protection as well as conservation objectives," the President of the BfN confidently reported (JESSEL in BfN 2010). If the interdependence of climate protection and biodiversity preservation are properly accounted for, it should also be possible to retain or even further a variety of ecosystem services (cf. S. TEEB). This goal is also included in Germany's National Biodiversity Strategy.

In 2007/08, EUROPARC Germany studied intensely the effects of renewable energy on nature, specifically in the context of National Natural Landscapes. The following updated excerpt summarises the key points of an article<sup>2)</sup> on bioenergy published by the German section in our 2008/09 Progress Report:

### Bioenergy – an opportunity for development or potential cause of conflict?

In light of climate change, the use of renewable energy is becoming increasingly important. Over time, a single sector – biomass utilisation – has been so heavily favoured and subsidised that large-scale industrial facilities consisting of thirty or more individual plants have been constructed in rural areas. In some cases these are in close proximity to protected areas.

A prime example is biogas manufactured from biomass in large-scale facilities, and the massive fields of maize they bring with them. Maize monocultures that act as ecological deserts and plant varieties which sap even more water from soil already receiving less precipitation due to climate change are just two examples of many catastrophic consequences caused by maize monocultures. We therefore have good reason carefully consider how we use our German landscapes. A more efficient use of our resources is a pressing concern; sustainable material cycles and methods for land use are additional basic conditions that must be met in order to better care for our biological diversity. The models used to protect biodiversity vary between individual large protected areas. They are based on models for sustainable land use, such as organic farming, but also include the rigorous protection of natural diversity – such as that found in the biosphere reserves and above all in national parks. And they are starting to show results.

The task of using energy effectively and producing it responsibly should be considered within the context of climate protection in the 21st century. According to former Environmental Minister Sigmar Gabriel, the German Renewable Energy Act (EEG) is the driving force behind the development of renewable sources of electricity.

<sup>1)</sup> A principle objective of the Nagoya conference was to keep the topic of biofuels on the CBD's agenda, thus ensuring that opportunities to exercise influence remained: the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) and the WTO are key figures in this discussion. The potential impact of biofuels on socio-economic conditions such as land tenure, food security as well as access to water was also identified.

<sup>2)</sup> Authors: Eberhard Henne and Andrea Hoffmann

This is of course correct from a statistical standpoint when you read that 17% of Germany's gross energy consumption is covered by alternative energy sources. The federal government's original target of producing a 12.5% share of energy from renewable sources by 2010 was already achieved in 2007.

In practice, however, these statistics cloud the real situation. The implementation of climate protection goals has made it evident that even some business circles find it difficult to think and act in complex and interdisciplinary ways. Far too frequently, the focus of economic activities is turning a quick profit, and ecology and social justice are often relegated to the position of accessories in the mindsets of some managers.

Our livelihood and the diversity of the animal and plant worlds can only be preserved in the long-term if energy production complies with sustainability criteria. When it comes to on-going developments in the use of renewable resources and the extraction of energy from the biomass they produce, this is almost never the case.

The structures on large-scale industrial facilities alone detract from the landscape's appearance. Because of the large quantities of biomass required, the plants generally exercise considerable influence on the land use systems in their regional vicinity. Within the agricultural sector, this usually results in the less frequent rotation of crops and the large-scale cultivation of monocultures. Taking into account the fact that a biogas plant with an output of 500 kW requires at least 250 hectares of maize to operate, it is quite easy to imagine the consequences this has for the landscape's appearance, regional water balance and biodiversity.

In Germany the area cultivated with "energy maize" doubled from 2005 to 2006; a further 120,000 hectares of maize were planted in 2007 to support the predicted 250 MW growth in output from biogas plants. This demand for land is met by ploughing up grassland, cultivating set-aside land or reducing agricultural production of food and feed.

In ecologically sensitive areas, the competition for land often clashes with conservation efforts and organic agriculture. This situation leads to food shortages, rising food prices and social conflicts not only in Germany, but in the entire world.

Large-scale industrial facilities obtain the required biomass from a wide catchment area; thus, the support of an extensive transportation network is necessary. Because the combined heat and power generated by such plants is frequently inadequate, their overall energy balance is inefficient and the sum of their outputs is a negative climate balance.

In some regions of Germany, undesirable developments caused by bioenergy production, particularly biomass utilisation, have already negatively impacted National Natural Landscapes.

Climate change is even now prompting protected area administrations to consider new protection concepts and strategies.

If conflicts also arise as a result of one-sided changes to land use concepts, many areas targeted for protection will be placed at risk. This would make meeting the demands of climate change while preserving species and habitat diversity nearly impossible.

In order to provide a clearer picture of the situation across Germany, as well as to assess it and propose solutions from the perspective of National Natural Landscapes, EUROPARC Germany hosted a workshop called "Bioenergy – a blessing or curse for National Natural Landscapes?" from 10th – 12th November 2008 in Berlin. The workshop took place within the context of the project "Developing a transnational strategy for strengthening large protected areas, and implementation activities" and was supported by the BfN using funds provided by the BMU.

Participants developed a position paper detailing the results of the workshop, which EUROPARC Germany provided to National Natural Landscapes as a guide for their work and which is used by the board for policy work within the association (see also ED 2009 b, p. 32).



## The Wadden Sea – now a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site!

JENS ENEMARK

*The inclusion of the German-Dutch Wadden Sea in UNESCO's World Heritage List in June 2009 is the culmination of trilateral cooperation. But it also opens new perspectives for nature conservation in the Wadden Sea.*

The Netherlands and Germany had already been pursuing the inclusion of the Wadden Sea in UNESCO's World Heritage List during the trilateral intergovernmental conference 1991 in Esbjerg, Denmark. In previous years it became apparent that only one petition comprising the whole Wadden Sea had a chance of success.

Announcement according to three criteria of World Heritage Convention:

- Geology criteria: geological processes as well as geomorphological and physiographic features
- Ecology criteria: ecological and biological processes and the evolution of ecosystems
- Biodiversity criteria: significance of the conservation of biological diversity and threatened species worldwide

During the Schiermonnikoog conference in 2005 it was finally agreed to prepare nominating the Netherlands and the German part of the Wattenmeer as a World Heritage Site, including the local population and relevant representatives. Denmark was invited to follow as soon as the designation of the Danish Wadden Sea as a national park was carried out in 2010 and thus the required legal framework was set. During the intergovernmental conference on Sylt in March 2010 it was agreed to begin potential nomination of the Danish Wadden Sea in the following period under Danish leadership.

In 2006 the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) was commissioned to coordinate the preparation of the nomination dossier. The basis for the dossier was the "Wadden Sea Quality Status Report 2005". Additionally several appraisals

– such as geomorphology appraisals – were consulted in order to allow a sound evaluation of the Wadden Sea compared to other mudflat areas around the world. From June 2007 broad consultations on a regional level took place and were the basis for the petition. In January 2008 the petition dossier could be submitted for review to UNESCO. Just before submission the state of Hamburg withdrew its participation in the application procedure as, according to the senate at the time, an influence of the planned deepening of the Elbe could not be eliminated. In March 2010 the new senate agreed with the nomination of the Hamburg National Park, which would get to work within the next three years.

The announced site comprises the area between both the Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Parks as well as the Dutch nature reserve – together almost 10,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The Wadden Sea was declared a World Natural Heritage Site taking three criteria into account (see adjacent information).

In their official role as an advisory body for World Natural Heritage Site nominations, the experts of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) reviewed and assessed the dossier with regard to the fulfilment of the World Heritage Convention's requirements. As a part of this evaluation, an eleven day tour to the nominated area was undertaken by an IUCN expert in September 2008; they had talks with biologists, mudflat guides, fishermen, NGOs and representatives of regional authorities. EUROPARC Germany was also repre-

*Dunlin in the mudflats. Will it become a breeding bird here again?*





*Dune on Trischen bird island*

sented. It became clear that the local people strongly supported this process. On the basis of this expert examination the IUCN sent a positive recommendation to the World Heritage Committee in May 2009.

The World Heritage Committee of UNESCO thereupon included the Wadden Sea in UNESCO's World Heritage Site List in June 2009. It was possible to convincingly demonstrate that the Wadden Sea is the largest contiguous mudflat area worldwide which is characterized by undisturbed natural processes. The World Heritage Site area is fully protected and includes all of the habitats, species and processes typical for a natural and dynamic Wadden Sea; and it is large enough to maintain all the essential ecological processes and values. At the same time it is one of the most important places worldwide for migratory bird protection and a wetland of international importance.

#### **New perspectives for nature conservation?**

Designation as a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site is a reward for the Wadden Sea as a worldwide unique area and for almost one generation of the population, NGO's like WWF and the governments' of the Wadden Sea states who struggled for its protection and sustainable economic opportunities – including traditional use of its resources. At the same time this excellent raising of profile for the region opens up new perspectives for the protection of the Wadden Sea by underlining the joint responsibility of all partners for the whole area between



*The Grey Seal has recolonized the Wadden Sea.*

Texel and Sylt. The status of a World Heritage Site does not add any regulations, but it creates joint responsibility for the preservation of the Wadden Sea in order to fulfil the criteria of the World Heritage Convention. The World Natural Heritage Site receives outstanding positive support from the regional population which is proud of the award and identifies with the Wadden Sea as a whole and promotes a new awareness. Nature conservation significantly benefits from this increased commitment.

The status as a World Natural Heritage Site plays an important role as a tourist destination and thus for the regional economy. This opens up new perspectives for better integration of nature conservation in regional development and an increase in the acceptance of protective measures at a local level. The development of a joint tourism strategy, as demanded by the World Heritage committee, is a first step for the agreement of specific targets and measures with the collaboration of the tourist industry. In particular, the supervision of the German Wadden Sea area through a well equipped ranger service (in terms of staff) has to be guaranteed.

The World Natural Heritage Site will also strengthen trans-regional cooperation in the protection of the Wadden Sea. This comprises improved support options of trans-regional and transboundary nature conservation projects, the improvement of monitoring (especially regarding the distribution of alien species) and the strengthening of international cooperation (especially for the protection and management of migratory birds).

## The German Wadden Sea area: award, responsibility and opportunity

DETLEF HANSEN, KLAUS JANKE, PETER SÜDBECK

Since June 26th 2009 the Wadden Sea has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. This was the culmination of many years of intensive and coordinated protection efforts between the Wadden Sea partners, ending with a deserved crown for this unique area. This award was an outstanding appreciation of the nature conservation efforts of many and the successful conclusion to an elaborate application and voting procedure.

From the beginning, the whole region from Sylt to the Dollart was, and still is, proud and happy about this recognition. Two images reflect this: “Wir sind Weltnaturerbe” – We are World Heritage – was the motto of the ceremony at Westerhever lighthouse. More than 300 children created the world “UNESCO” in the Wurster Watt near Dorum-Neufeld. Much has happened since and the theme of World Heritage is continuously filled with meaning and lived within the region. The level of awareness of the World Heritage site has increased, as socio-economic surveys from Schleswig-Holstein reveal.

But how to design, establish and finance the marketing which will on the one hand lead to better utilisation as well as value creation in tourism (if possible even from abroad) and on the other hand to fulfil the needs for protection of this highly sensitive natural landscape?

Even before recognition, close cooperation between nature conservation and tourism was established under the control of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) and paid close attention to this potential conflict. The Tourism Strategy Group will focus on and substantiate this. For sustainable tourism it is now beyond doubt that the impressive fauna and flora of the Wadden Sea National Park landscape must survive intact. Together with protection of the landscape and bringing nature closer to the people, the objectives of national parks include the development and the implementation of education and information ideas, as well as cooperation with a tourist industry which is committed to the principles of nature conservation, ecological compatibility and sustainability. If nothing else, recognition by UNESCO demands that a transnational tourism strategy should be developed.

Important wide-ranging issues are discussed in the Tourism Strategy Group and the stakeholder workshops: the development of a joint strategy for sustainable tourism, the development of a common logo and design (compatible to the corporate design of National Natural Landscapes) are almost completed, the creation of the World Heritage homepage, complementary education and information modules and many more. Regional working groups were founded in Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony in which nature conservation, tourism and the municipalities cooperate; closely linked with the guidelines of the trilateral workshop, this is where things are really implemented. Five topics are dealt with: market research, qualifications, education, infrastructure and marketing. Joint campaigns such as “A place where Heaven and Earth share the same stage” or the “Story-Hunter Campaign” shall focus the public on the World Heritage Site and make it more well-known, even internationally.

In Lower Saxony the first key activity was targeted at the qualifications of tourism disseminators. The core elements of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site were presented in over seventy lectures across the National Park and the development opportunities for nature conservation and tourism resulting from designation were pointed out to participants. An important point is that the quality policy given by the designation of a unique natural landscape is also fulfilled by tourism offers. A regional audience of almost 3,000 has been contacted so far.

Within the states Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site receives strong political support and interest, reflected in various information and lecture requests at all political levels. In the run-up to designation, important work was carried out at state and federal levels to make suitable subsidies available. In particular, since 2010 the Federal Minister of Transport, Building and Urban Development has made available project funds of around two million Euros for the development of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site. This has enabled projects such as the setting-up of a completely new National Park office Land Wursten in Dorum-Neufeld, the partial reconstruction of the National Park Multimar Wattforum centre in Tönning and the construction of high quality information posts about the World Heritage Site in National Park communities, health resort offices and National Park offices. In addition the budget situation in Lower Saxony has improved considerably with regard to nature conservation, nature





*The Environment Minister Heinrich Sander (Lower Saxony) and Dr. Christjan von Beotticher (Schleswig-Holstein) in a Strandkorb ('beach chair') together with, on the left, Enak Ferlemann, State Secretary of BMV (Federal Ministry of Transport) with National Park head Peter Südbeck (Lower Saxony) and Holger Wesemüller (ED) on the day of the designation of the Wadden Sea as a UNESCO World Heritage Site at the celebration at Sahlburger Strand/Cuxhaven*

experience and public relations. In terms of regional tourism, a joint marketing project was created between Lower Saxony and the Netherlands concerning the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site.

In Schleswig-Holstein, two-year cooperation was permitted with the partner Nordsee-Tourismus-Service for tourism marketing, co-financed by the Zukunftsprogramm Wirtschaft (Business development Programme of the federal state of Schleswig-Holstein). Recently an application was made under the INTERREG IV A programme for the project "Natur und Tourismus an der deutsch-dänischen Nordseeküste – Schwerpunkt Nationalparks Wattenmeer" (Nature and tourism on the German-Danish North Sea coast – focus on Wadden Sea National Parks), with a volume of just under € 1.9 million at a funding-quota of 65%. Participants are the Nordsee-Tourismus-Service GmbH, the Business Development Corporation of North Frisia (WFG NF), the National Park offices of Schleswig-Holstein and Danish Wadden Sea as well as South-

Danish tourism partners. For the disseminators in nature conservation and educational work, as well as the service staff in tourism, an extensive qualification programme is planned on the topic of nature conservation, plus English courses.

Further plans within the region are suggestions ranging from simple signs to construction plans for interactive exhibits, multimedia exhibition elements or for the construction arrangements of the larger information centres. As a pilot project the 16 National Park information facilities and education partners of Lower Saxony are – funded by "Natur Erleben Niedersachsen" (Experiencing nature Lower Saxony) – equipped with multimedia information modules whose concept and design happened in close cooperation with the partners of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. School offers exist as indoor and outdoor events with several partners. The demand might be too high to be able to be managed. The successfully started partner project shall be enlarged in a target-oriented way during World Heritage Site discussion; the certified nature experience offers in the National Park shall be extended with further modules under the heading of "Wege der Einzigartigkeit" – Unique Ways.

The topic of "Wadden Sea World Heritage Site" has also had good exposure in the media. The ARD-Morgenmagazin (Morning Show) for example showed several live reports from all parts of the World Heritage site. Amongst others, during a mudflat walk the "Small Five" were presented (a term related to the "Big Five" in the African National Parks), which makes the typical small mudflat organisms a subject of discussion. The new attractive package was a successful advertisement for guided National Park tours as a holiday highlight. A detailed presentation of the Wadden Sea was given in the "Mobil" magazine of Deutsche Bahn which is produced in millions. The International Tourism Bourse and the Reisepavillon-fair in Berlin also focussed events on the Wadden Sea.

Further activities made the news: in August 2009 a photo festival took place for several days in Husum with professional lectures and outdoor events. The annual symposium "Naturerlebnis Wattenmeer im touristischen Angebot" (Wadden Sea Nature experiences in tourism) also focused on the World Heritage Site, as well as the Nordseetourismustag (North Sea Tourism Day) in Lower Saxony. The annual Zugvogeltage (Migratory Birds' Days) of the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea

National Park, which has taken place in autumn since 2009, are accompanied by regular television productions. They report on the 100-plus single events in the whole National Park area which all have one principal recognition criteria as a topic: the meaning of the Wadden Sea for worldwide biodiversity. The Migratory Birds' Days are inter alia DBU (German Federal Environment Foundation) funded. Besides nature tourism events and marketing, protected sites and research approaches are also supported and demanded. In particular, worldwide bird migration raises questions concerning habitat quality, the protection of resting places or international cooperation: Those shall be treated even more systematically than before under the flag of World Heritage, because World Heritage is much more than marketing and tourism.

In the future it is important to enlarge national and international cooperation. As important as this is the development of good working cooperation between National Park and tourism on a regional level towards more quality and sustainability in offers, the enlargement of transparency and informing the committee and the public.

After the evident euphoria about the Wadden Sea, it is important to produce constant support for protection as a requirement for high quality nature experience and nature compatible tourism.

Since June 27th 2011 the Hamburg Wadden Sea has been part of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site. Originally it was intended to register this area with UNESCO together with the Danish Wadden Sea. In cooperation with the partners in Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, the German government, as well as the Netherlands and Denmark it was decided in September 2010 to register Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park without the Danish Wadden Sea as a part of the existing World Heritage Site as soon as possible because the initial founding process of the Danish Wadden Sea National Park wouldn't be completed before 2012. Thus, Hamburg filed a petition for minor change of borders at UNESCO on February 1st 2011 in order to integrate the Hamburg Wadden Sea into the existing World Heritage Site as soon as possible.

## Germany's ancient beech forests declared UNESCO World Heritage Site

ACHIM FREDE

Five German beech forests in four states have successfully applied for joint inscription onto the UNESCO World Heritage list. As of 25th June 2011, Germany now boasts three natural heritage sites.

These forests include selected sections of the following large protected areas:

- Jasmund National Park (Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania)
- Serrahn Forest in Müritzer National Park (Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania)
- Grumsin Forest in the UNESCO-listed Schorfheide-Chorin Biosphere Reserve (Brandenburg)
- Hainich National Park (Thuringia)
- Kellerwald-Edersee National Park (Hesse)

These sites represent the precious remnants of Germany's once massive pristine beech forests, and were selected within the context of a screening study on potential world heritage nomination as well as a feasibility study. The German beech forests will act as an extension to the Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians to form a joint heritage site.

With the support of a team of experts, state representatives from Thuringia, Mecklenburg-West-Pomerania, Brandenburg and Hesse joined federal representatives from the Federal Ministry of the Environment and the Federal Ministry of Conservation to form a federal /state working group. The group's task was to prepare a nomination dossier in accordance with UNESCO guidelines and to oversee trilateral cooperation with the Ukraine and Slovakia. As part of the accompanying communication strategy, an internet homepage, leaflet and brochure were created, along with a representative exhibit, "Beech Forests: Natural World Heritage". This exhibit was led by Kellerwald-



*Lying deadwood and natural rejuvenation*

Edersee National Park and was shown for the first time at the 2008 Convention on Biological Diversity in Bonn.

In order to keep the public informed about important milestones throughout the process and to closely involve citizens at the regional level, a publicity campaign accompanied the entire application process and will also provide updates on the programme's future work.

After extensive preparation and the completion of the application process, the nomination dossier for inclusion on the world heritage list "Ancient Beech Forests of Germany" was submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in Paris on 1st February 2010. In September of the same year, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN<sup>1)</sup>) toured the nominated areas on behalf of UNESCO.

The UNESCO World Heritage Convention of 1972 was adopted to protect unique and outstanding natural and cultural sites as the heritage of all humanity. UNESCO laid down strict criteria for inclusion on the list; the application process is very

demanding and requires qualified preparation. In accordance with UNESCO's implementation guidelines, the German joint nomination dossier included a detailed description of the relevant areas and substantiated their outstanding universal value as well as their integrity.

Furthermore, the dossier also detailed protective measures for the entire cluster of forests included in the proposed world heritage site.

Europe's beech forests represent a unique natural heritage: stands of deciduous trees dominated by the European Beech *Fagus sylvatica* are a phenomenon found only in Europe. Germany lies at the heart of the beech's global natural distribution. Towering silver-grey trunks are crowned with a canopy of leaves displaying a shifting palette of colour throughout the seasons. Today, the native habitat of Europe's beeches has been reduced to just a few remnants.

The history of the beech's post-glacial expansion, the enormous competitive ability of the European Beech and the diverse range of geographical and ecological features found in beech forests with their distinctive flora and fauna are unique in the world.

<sup>1)</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources = Weltnaturschutzunion





*Deadwood clamours with life*

The nominated sections of the German forests include the most important areas representing the various types of beech forest. Those located in the lowlands and central uplands are an ideal complement to the mountain beech forests native to the Carpathians. This cluster reflects the broad spectrum of beech forest types extending from the coastline to the mountains. The selected beech forests in Germany document the beech's postglacial expansion from south to north as well as its variation across an extremely diverse range of habitats from east to west and from low-lying to high altitude areas. Each of the nominated areas exhibits special characteristics and distinct local features, making it unique and irreplaceable.

Today, pristine lowland beech forests can be found only in Germany, and the German central uplands are home to the highest concentration worldwide of beech forests in low-nutrient habitats.

World Heritage Site status is a special distinction: Germany's beech forests now stand alongside the Grand Canyon in the USA, Australia's Great Barrier Reef and the Wadden Sea, which was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2009 and up until now was the only large-scale World Heritage Site in Germany. This underscores the large responsibility Germany bears for these two ecosystems with respect to the international community.

Further information and a copy of the nomination dossier can be found at [www.weltnaturerbebuchewaelder.de](http://www.weltnaturerbebuchewaelder.de).

# With the people ... more nature

## Year of Forests

VIVIAN KREFT

The international year of forests 2011 presents new opportunities to look at Germany's most favourite child: the German forest. After acid rain in the 1980s it went quiet concerning beech, oak, and spruce. To draw attention to the various beauties and services of the forest ecosystem, the board of EUROPARC Germany decided to issue its own campaign for the international year of forests: "We are forest" (Wir sind Wald). This campaign should help familiarize the umbrella brand "National Natural Landscapes" and its contents.

The association took a new path to fund this campaign. No equity capital was invested except for some initial funding. Furthermore, the capital should be acquired from the private sector. The core partners Skoda Auto Deutschland, Town & Country Haus, Siemens AG implemented the campaign together with Steinecke bakery and "Mein schönes Land", a magazine from the Burda publishing house. Additional supporters and sponsors help with implementation. Nature conservation projects initiated within national natural landscapes by this campaign will be continued for several years.

The Federal Minister of the Environment, Dr. Norbert Röttgen, gave the starting signal for "We are forest" at the Berlin TV tower on February 16th, 2011. He highlighted the validity of the campaign objective – joining nature and environmental conservation with the economy – and its function of setting an example for the future. He also emphasised the support of the Federal Ministry of the Environment for this initiative: "The campaign motto 'We are forest' is well chosen, as it expresses the collective identity and the emotional attachment that characterises us Germans ... 'We are forest' is also a warning shout, a wake-up call, a cry for help for the forest."

The campaign addresses the broad public with various offers and events. Thus the summer forest picnic in the Teutoburger Forest on June 25th, 2011 promoted the "Waldbrücke Borg-holzhausen", a forest corridor that joins two unconnected NATURA 2000 forest areas. Further projects for forest conversion, acquisition of forest areas and tree planting, as well as sponsorship for forest habitats, urge businessmen and dedicated individuals to commit themselves to the forest.

The campaign emphasises two themes:

- Specific nature conservation projects shall be initiated within national natural landscapes that can be continued for several years.
- Environmental awareness and communication projects shall be kicked off. Here new ground shall be broken to bring young audiences closer to the topic of nature conservation



The short film competition "premiere forest" is another innovative communication module. It addresses film and media makers to stage the forest and related issues. The renowned German Film Institute Frankfurt is supervising this competition for students. "Premiere forest" is in particular introduced into the social web. The contributions appear online on YouTube. A premiere night will feature the best short films and the award winners – in the forest.

The homepage for "We are forest" was designed as an online-magazine. It introduces contents and projects of the campaign as well as additional topics in an easily comprehensible format.

One focus of the work on-line is the so called social web. "We are forest" is the most successful site of the International Year of Forests on Facebook. More than 200,000 hits in four months (as of press date), including more than 9,000 individual messages and an exceptionally high status of approval is verification that this line of communication has been accepted.

It is being considered whether the positive approaches of "We are forest" can be transferred into a long-term campaign, into a "Decade of Forests". Not only do the initiated nature conservation projects suggest that, but also the growing interest generated by public relations work could thus be turned into more sustainable actions.

The structure of the campaign can be used for other topics as well. National Natural Landscapes with their eco-systems offer additional starting points to awaken public interest and develop concrete measures for protected areas.

The direct application of funds, issued by the communication office, offers another advantage for national natural landscapes. Lengthy applications are not required. In fact private sponsors have complete confidence in the administration of protected areas, so funds can be used directly in terms of protected areas.

The communication office "National Natural Landscapes" was set up as an individual economic entity to develop the concept and implement the campaign. It carries a full commercial risk and is bound to EUROPARC Germany and the umbrella brand by a license agreement. It is headed by Dirk Nishen, who has already implemented various public-private-partnership projects and has worked previously for the umbrella brand.

## Expansion of "National Natural Heritage"

ADRIAN JOHST

### Point of departure

Many valuable nature conservation areas in Germany – especially in large protected areas – have been or still are federal property. These are largely

- Former military areas, and ones still in use
- Areas along the former inner German border (Green Belt)
- Rehabilitated sites of GDR brown coal mining and
- Previously publicly owned area ("BVVG areas")<sup>1)</sup>

The federal government is advised to dispose of all areas that are not required for federal tasks. Constitutionally these tasks do not include nature protection. In the past this posed the threat of privatisation of core zones of national parks. Environmental associations have pointed out this problem since

the end of the 1990s. A first success was achieved in 1998: The then red-green federal government decided to exclude 50,000 hectares of BVVG forest areas in protected or NATURA 2000 areas from privatisation. These should be transferred free of charge to the states or environmental associations with the appropriation of "nature conservation". Of the 50,000 hectares announced at that time 36,000 hectares have been actually transferred to this day.

### DNR strategy group nature conservation areas and coalition agreement of 2005

Since 1999 the environmental associations NABU, BUND, WWF, Grüne Liga as well as the Heinz Sielmann Foundation, the Foundation Euronatur and the Nature Foundation David have cooperated in a strategy group "nature conservation areas" under the umbrella of the DNR (Deutscher Naturschutzring). As of 2002, EUROPARC Germany contributes to this group – later the Michael Succow Foundation, the Zoological Society Frankfurt and the bird protection committee were included. The goal was long-term protection of all federal areas valuable to nature conservation over and above the BVVG forest areas.

In the run-up to the federal election of 2005, the DNR strategy group developed a study in cooperation with the business consultancy Ernst & Young that outlined the need for action and pointed out possible solutions. The term "national natural heritage" was introduced as a catchy expression and communicated accordingly. Cooperation with the German Federal Foundation for Environment (DBU – Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt) was a key to the later success.

The common engagement of environmental associations, DBU, ministry administration, and politicians showed results. The coalition agreement of November 2005 stated: "We will gratuitously include ... nationally representative federal nature conservation areas ... from 80,000 to 125,000 hectares in a federal foundation (preferable the DBU) or transfer them to the states. An immediate moratorium on sales is intended for short-term protection of the natural heritage."

<sup>1)</sup> The Land Utilisation and Management Company (BVVG) is a German state-owned company. The role of the BVVG is the management, leasing and privatisation of formerly state-owned agricultural and forestry land in the new German states.





*View into Kyritz-Ruppin Heath with a mosaic of dry sand grassland and lichen-grassland as well as various types of heath and pioneer forests*

### **Transfer list**

In autumn 2006 the federal government and the states agreed upon a transfer list of 100,000 hectares. In preparation the DNR strategy group compiled their own "reference list" and could thus assess that the adopted transfer list excluded from sale the most important and outstanding areas. About half of the selected areas are in national parks, biosphere reserves, and nature parks. A huge challenge was the requirement from the budget committee that personnel costs of the Federal Forestry accruing on the area had to be borne by the recipient – an impressive sum of roughly nine million Euro annually.

### **Nature conservation criteria for transfer**

In the summer of 2007 the Federal Ministry of the Environment presented a first far-reaching draft for nature conservation criteria of transfer. This intended among others that all forest areas should be completely excluded from use after 20 years at the latest. The states and the DBU disagreed with that. The DBU referred to the requirement to take over personnel costs linked to management of former military areas. They

have to refinance some of the costs via forest management. The DBU therefore suggested a qualitative instead of a quantitative approach: All deciduous forests should be released from use immediately, for all other forests conversion should be possible even after 20 years. Abandonment of management should only follow once the desired forest composition has developed. The environmental foundations and associations agreed to that approach – however, concerning their adopted areas, they go one step further and will conclude managed forest conversion no later than 20 years after transfer. In the end the states also consented to the suggestion of the DBU in principle. Therewith use is discontinued on about 8,000 hectares deciduous forest instantly.

### **Transfer**

In May 2008 the DBU signed a framework contract with the Federal Republic of Germany to take over 47,000 hectares of nature conservation areas. The DBU-Natural Heritage Ltd (DBU Naturerbe GmbH) was established to manage these areas. They finalised a service contract with Federal Forestry in December 2008. Henceforth the federal forestry personnel on these 33 areas work on behalf of the DBU. The actual transfer is conducted gradually until 2011. As of April 1st 2009 the DBU



*The area of the former "Bombodrom" will also be transferred and left to nature. The heath, previously used by the military, is shown here featuring a sand lizard (*Lacerta agilis*) on a grenade.*

Naturerbe GmbH took over all property rights and duties, even if the transfer had not been completed.

A further milestone was reached in summer 2008. After tough negotiations the Free State of Thuringia and the Federal Ministry of Finance achieved a solution for the transfer of about 3,900 hectares along the "Green Belt" in Thuringia. The corresponding agreement between the Free State and the Federal Republic was signed on November 9th, 2008. Agreements with all new states followed until 2010. Not only large protected areas along the Green Belt from Vogtland in the Southeast to Schaalsee in the North will benefit from that.

In spring 2009 a law was passed changing the acquisition of areas. This cleared the path for the transfer of BVVG areas. Another 29,000 hectares valuable areas could be saved in addition to the BVVG areas, which had been transferred by the end of the 1990s. Among them were not only forests as in 1999 but also valuable open lands and wetlands. About 13,000 hectares of the BVVG areas were transferred to the states, approximately 16,000 hectares to foundations and associations.

On July 1st, 2009, the budget committee of the German Bundestag agreed to the protection of former military areas that had not been transferred to the DBU. This includes mainly areas in national natural landscapes – such as Speck training area in Müritzer National Park, or Sundische Wiesen in the West-Pomeranian Bodden Landscape National Park. As the states normally cannot take on personnel costs, the areas will remain federal property but will be managed according to the criteria of national natural heritage. The Federal Ministry of the Environment will cover costs arising in the process.

### Remaining 25,000 hectare

Federal legislation laid the legal foundation for continuous protection of property rights of 100,000 hectares of very valuable nature conservation areas in September 2009. In the coalition contract the new federal government committed to protect the remaining 25,000 hectares of nature conservation areas. This included mainly conversion areas that had been just recently released from military use. The DNR strategy group had published their own reference list in early 2010. Here again many areas are situated in large protection areas – for example in Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve along the Elbe River.

### Assessment and Perspective

After the national park programme of the GDR, property rights protection of federal nature conservation areas, combined under the term "National Natural Heritage", is another important milestone in German nature conservation. The success of area protection is based on close and exemplary cooperation of nature conservation associations, politicians and ministry administrations.

Despite the success, more tasks are pending: On the one hand it has to be ensured that the new owners actually implement the ambitious transfer criteria on the areas. On the other hand further areas have to be protected as to property rights – for example Kyritz-Ruppiner Heide, also named "Bombodrom" in Stechlin Nature Park. Beyond that the goal is that the states permanently renounce privatisation of nature conservation areas.

# For a common future ... partners and co-operation

HOLGER WESEMÜLLER

Protected areas are no longer seen as an obstacle to development in a region. Awareness of the value of nature has grown (see contribution p. 59 f). Nature protection no longer equates to job losses. In rural economic problem regions they can even be a job creating machine (see JOB 2010). Rural areas offer many more development opportunities than just the conventional forestry and agricultural sector. More and more people predict a prosperous future for green markets – renewable raw materials, renewable energies, environmental technology, sustainable mobility, 'natural' tourism and protection of nature – a prosperous future. National Natural Landscapes cannot just make a contribution to health care, but they also have the role of supporting regional development. All three protected area categories work actively in regional development, particularly nature parks and biosphere reserves.

Meanwhile, rural development can even be described as a sphere of modern nature protection policy. If, after 2013, European Union agricultural subsidies are cut back as expected, the so called second column of European agricultural policy will continue to gain significance. Nature experiences, recreation and tourism will drive structural change in rural areas. The marketing of regional products will increase jobs in agriculture and handcrafts, and the economy of the region will become secured. In the biosphere reserve newspaper published for BUGA 2009 (National Garden Show in Schwerin) Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel issued a challenge to rural areas to protect natural resources. Nature parks and biosphere reserves have a model function, to provide local people and tourists with education about National Natural Landscapes.

National parks strengthen, above all, thoughts about wilderness and protecting nature as it is in its natural development. At the same time they offer people the possibility to fulfil the longing for "original" nature. This trend to experience "pure nature" and to select beautiful landscapes for holidays is enjoying increasing popularity. Even national marketing companies are marketing nature and in particular specific regional characteristics. Protective areas are among these.



*Health and nature protection go together – at the Federal Horticultural Show (BUGA) in Schwerin, Federal Health Minister Ulla Schmidt, Social and Health Minister for Mecklenburg-West Pomerania Manuela Schwesig, Holger Wesemüller (ED) promoted 3,000 steps in National Natural Landscapes.*

National Natural Landscapes in Germany therefore offer the best conditions for a lasting nature experience. "However, the requirements of the guest also grow into the quality of the tourist products. For the enterprises and organizations concerned and for the protected area administrations, hereby the challenge is to link of the protection of nature and guest-oriented nature experience" (JESSEL in OD 2010).

No wonder that in different National Natural Landscapes there is a great interest in co-operation between protected area administrations and regional, locally-based business. Partnerships are increasing. The criteria for these partnerships, as well as the image to the outside world, are now set in a common basis.

Health and nature protection go together – at the BUGA in Schwerin, Federal Health Minister Ulla Schmidt, Social and Health Minister for Mecklenburg-West Pomerania Manuela Schwesig, Holger Wesemüller (ED) and others, promoted 3,000 steps in National Natural Landscapes.



## National and european partners

Our future depends on cooperative conservation work. On the one hand, this impacts our National Natural Landscapes and their surroundings directly. On the other hand, this also affects our involvement in the global network of protected areas which lie beyond our borders. Standards and recommendations provide valuable guidance at both the European and international level. Several previous references have been made to conventions and the IUCN Protected Areas Management Categories. EUROPARC Germany has established a cooperation of long standing with the US National Park Service, enabling us above

all to make more extensive use of the Park Service's expertise in the Junior Ranger programme. (This has been previously described on pages 34 ff.)

Until now, Germany's work on the behalf of protected areas, the ways in which we and our neighbours work together and the achievements of the EUROPARC Federation, our umbrella organisation, have not typically been observed. Nonetheless, the results are plain to see. The German section has undertaken an increasing number of projects which are also of interest to our neighbours. Besides the Volunteer and Junior Ranger programmes, the national evaluation process for the three categories of protected areas, as well as our efforts to further optimise the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas (cf p. 11), have been met with great interest by the Federation and by park services in other countries. And some German parks also cooperate with our neighbours across borders. Read on and see for yourself!

### Partnerships in action, from the Wadden Sea to the Bavarian Forest

JENS BRÜGGEMANN

The partner initiatives established within the National Natural Landscapes (fig. 6) represent a close and trusting cooperation between the administrative bodies of the national parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves as well as regional economic advocates.

These cooperative programmes aim to establish stronger links between conservation and economic initiatives in order to support National Natural Landscapes' conservation objectives and promote sustainable regional economies. Businesses, associations, clubs and individuals, primarily those providing tourist services and products, which fulfil extensive quality criteria and have the desire to work together with National Natural Landscapes are considered, because they see themselves as ambassadors for the protected areas movement.

Fig. 6: Partner Initiatives in National Natural Landscapes



Both the project's aims met with success:

1. At the end of 2008, minimum standards and criteria for all National Natural Landscape partner initiatives were developed and uniform national standards determining the structure of all initiatives within the corporate design of National Natural Landscapes agreed. The minimum standards form the basic requirements for each individual protected area partner initiative. Included was the development of a list of criteria with categories of requirements for potential partners from various industries.

In addition, minimum criteria regarding identification, environmental orientation and regional involvement as well as quality and service were developed for this list of criteria, in order to screen and certify potential partners.

Each organisation must comply with the uniform national minimum standards in order to be enlisted as an official partner of "its" park in National Natural Landscapes. The standards ensure that every participating partner organisation across the country maintains the same high quality and environmental standards. This has clear benefits for guests as well.

The concept of partner initiatives in National Natural Landscapes corresponds to section 2 of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas coordinated by the EUROPARC Federation.

2. The first joint marketing activities outlined in our marketing plan were also quickly implemented. In order to promote recognition of partner initiatives at the national level, a joint internet platform was launched on the National Natural Landscapes website ([www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de/partner](http://www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de/partner)). Banners and postcards displaying the National Natural Landscapes design were created for partner initiative presentations at conferences as well as regional and national events. A joint brochure introducing each partner initiative from the Wadden Sea to the Bavarian Forest provides organisations and protected areas alike with a wide variety of ways to (further) extend and enrich their projects. Presenting the partner initiatives as a unified whole in this way has boosted reception of external marketing schemes at the national level.

Approximately 500 enlisted partner organisations from various industries, such as lodging and catering, transportation and sightseeing tours and well as numerous other tourist service providers are now able to use the national logo<sup>1)</sup> (fig. 7) in their advertising as a unique and exclusive selling point. These businesses fulfil high quality standards, are committed to nature conservation and protection of the environment and receive

Since 2003, cooperative programmes of this type have been introduced in the majority of Germany's national parks, and a large number of selected organisations have been awarded the distinction "National Park Partners". More recently, the nature parks and biosphere reserves have begun to establish regional partner initiatives. So far, National Natural Landscapes have enlisted organisations in 16 initiatives as "National Park Partners", "Nature Park Partners" or "Biosphere Reserve Partners".

Since 2005, representatives from participating protected areas have engaged in affiliating and further developing their respective partner initiatives. Regular meetings provide the opportunity for exchange regarding the progress and development of current programmes as well as the planning of joint marketing activities, which have also been the focus of an official working group (WG) within EUROPARC Germany since 2007.

In 2008, funding from the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and the Federal Environment Ministry, coordinated by EUROPARC Germany, gave EUROPARC's WG fresh impetus and helped the organisation to broaden the scope of its partner initiatives. In addition to developing new initiatives, the research and development project "National Park Partnerships in Germany", which ran from July 2008 to February 2010, aimed to develop uniform national minimum standards for all partner initiatives and carried out the first joint marketing activities.

<sup>1)</sup> With several historically determined exceptions

**Fig. 7: Organisations partnering with protected area administrative bodies are able to use the national logo as part of their advertising campaigns**



regular training on the features which make “their” National Natural Landscape special. As such, they are reliable partners and disseminators of knowledge. This benefits the guests, National Natural Landscapes and the surrounding region alike: well-informed and satisfied visitors respond with respect for sensitive natural areas, and become valuable ambassadors for the national park, nature park or biosphere reserve and the region they are visiting. The partner initiatives have succeeded in stimulating and strengthening collaboration between the protected areas and regional economic advocates. They offer participating companies a platform in which to market their services, and partnership networks also provide these organisations the opportunity to increase their visibility at the national level.

Through their contact with enlisted partner organisations, guests gain an intimate understanding of Germany’s precious protected natural and cultural landscapes and are given the opportunity to immerse themselves in nature. Involvement on the part of partner organisations serves to promote and strengthen the cause of protected areas.

This unique network is set to remain vital and accessible in the coming years, and will continue to prosper and develop. Here are just a few areas in which this cooperative project is looking to grow across Germany:

- The development of new initiatives, especially in nature parks and biosphere reserves, calls for the integration of further sectors into partner initiatives, particularly within regional marketing.
- The encouragement of closer collaboration between partner initiatives. Plans include a national conference with 50 organisations representing every partner initiative in attendance. The goal: increase awareness of the national network of initiatives, promote solidarity and bring together examples of best practices from every corner of Germany, thus providing a platform for the exchange of ideas and experience.
- The development of comprehensive schemes for all partner initiatives and further cooperative marketing activities aim to increase the initiatives’ visibility at the regional and national levels, thus raising the profile of National Natural Landscapes as a tourist destination, in accordance with its objective to protect natural areas.



# Case Study

## Partner initiative in Müritz National Park

Prior to the enlistment of the first seven organisations as Müritz National Park Partners at a public event in April 2005, it was impossible to predict how the partner initiative would develop in the Müritz lakeland. However, the fact that a fisherman from the National Park introduced himself at this meeting and expressed interest in becoming a partner was seen as just as good an omen as the steadfast commitment shown by these first seven partners.

Just five years later, there are now 40 enlisted partners. A regional directorate, which now includes two partner representatives, makes decisions relating to partnership applications. Together, the directorate and partners ratified the

national partnership logo and agreed on the collection of a financial contribution of 100 to 800 Euro from each organisation, based on its size. This fee was allocated for joint marketing activities and the evaluation of standards by an external body.

The Müritz National Park office maintains the newly renovated website [www.mueritz-nationalpark-partner.de](http://www.mueritz-nationalpark-partner.de) and coordinates marketing activities, which thus far have been funded by contributions. In addition to leaflets introducing participating partners, a system utilising letter boxes has been developed, enabling organisations to bring attention to their partners using business cards of a uniform design.

This system has also proved useful in the National Park's visitor information centres, and supports the partnership's spirit of cooperation.

Above all, the partners appreciate being put on equal footing with the National Park in the flow of information. And the Müritz National Park office sees the partners as important ambassadors for the national park movement. Visitors who have been well-informed by partners have realistic expectations and tend to cause fewer disruptions. To facilitate this role, partners are provided ready access to materials containing information about their personal support contacts. These contacts are employees from the National Park office with diverse areas of expertise who have agreed to become support contacts for National Park Partners, either because of their physical proximity or out of personal interest.

The intended economic benefits of enlistment as a National Park Partner have so far been felt by just a few partners. Thus, challenges relating to the national marketing of enlisted partners remain, which are being dealt with in cooperation with the other National Natural Landscapes partner initiatives.

JENS BRÜGGEMANN

*Excursion in Müritz National Park as part of an annual partnership meeting*



## National Natural Landscapes – a factor for regional development

### Introduction

The German brand “National Natural Landscapes” combines national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks, which all help to promote destinations in the nature tourism market. In general, protected areas aim to conserve natural and cultural landscapes. A side benefit of parks is the enhancement of the local economy by tourism. This article will give a broad overview about the economic effects and the number of potential jobs which are generated by national parks in Germany. Furthermore it introduces a new research project on the economic impacts of tourism in biosphere reserves.

### Conservation and development in National Natural Landscapes

The three categories of protected areas have different goals. Above all, national parks are designated to conserve nature and allow environmental education and nature-based tourism. Beyond this legal priority of protection, however, the designation of national parks follows political rationales of attracting tourism to peripheral regions and promoting regional development. The protection of biodiversity has traditionally been achieved through the application of strict laws and the exclusion of humans (“fence it or fine it”). Alternatively, biosphere reserves try to achieve nature protection and conservation of biodiversity by participation (“use it or lose it”). The MAB programme (Man and the Biosphere) describes biosphere reserves as the link between biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development. These parks are following three functions: nature conservation, regional development and a logistic support function. The latter is enhancing communication, environmental education and research and monitoring. Nature parks in Germany are cultural landscapes which try to promote sustainable tourism, but there are differences between the parks in old federal states and the new states. The nature parks in the new states have a greater focus on nature protection. Most national parks are situated in remote areas on the outer borders of Germany, like the Wadden Sea National Parks or the Berchtesgaden National Park in the German Alps. Yet there are

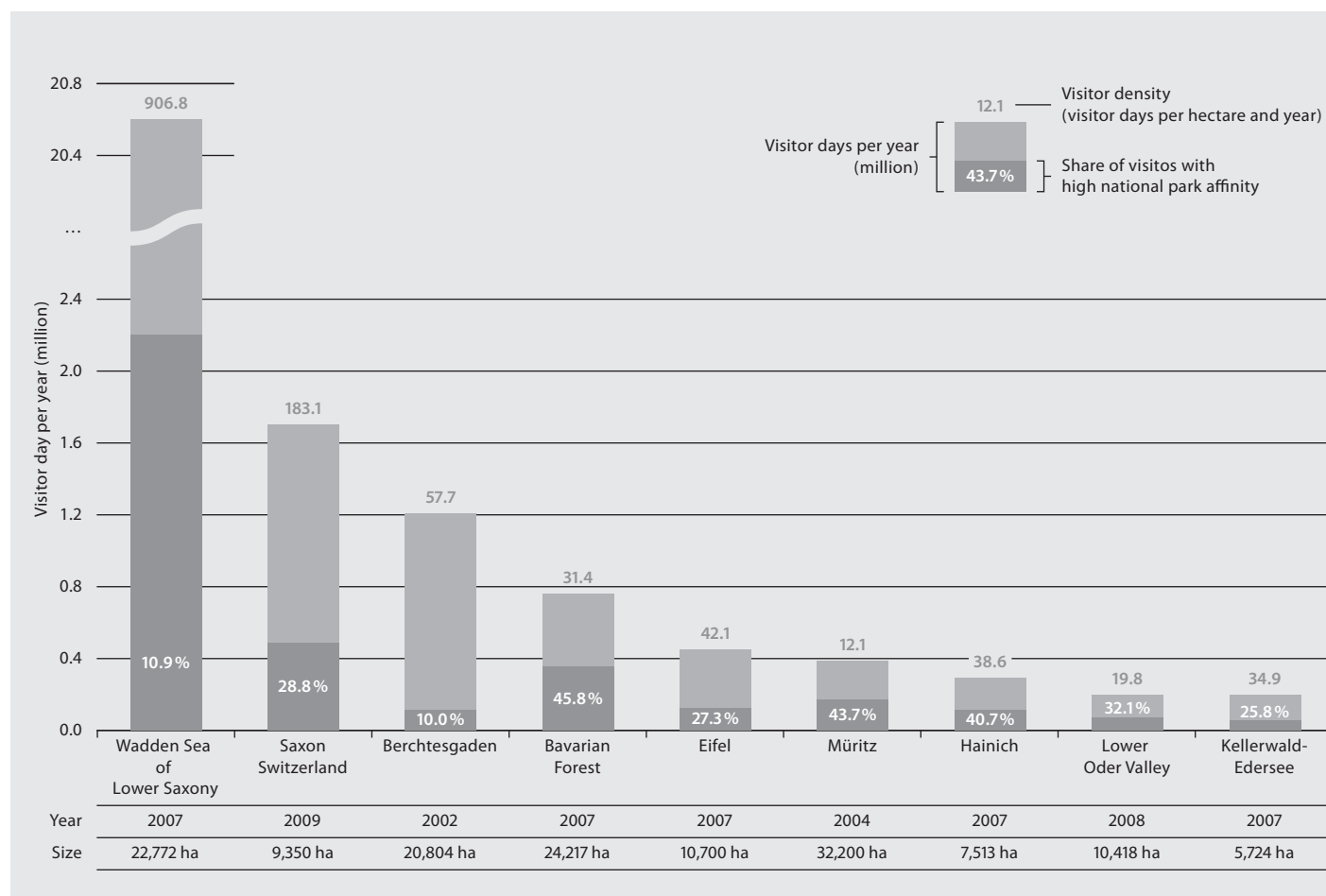
also some parks along the former inner German border, which is today known as the Green Belt. The location of biosphere reserves is more complex. Some are situated in remote areas and some are close to big metropolitan areas like Stuttgart or Berlin. Therefore both the concept and the needs of the regions are more complex. The nature parks are more or less evenly distributed across Germany - only the alpine and peri-alpine regions are limited in their number of nature parks.

### Socioeconomic impacts: parks and jobs

The economic impacts of tourism in parks are twofold. Tourism generates direct and indirect income. Direct income is derived from the expenditures of tourists for e.g. accommodation and food in the park or the surrounding region. Yet only a certain percentage of the expenditures stays in the region and helps to generate income, wages and profit. In addition indirect income is a product of the economic process. Shops have to buy goods and services to produce their products, which is again an income for companies, businesses and people in the region. The national park study analysed the economic impacts of national parks and concluded that the 14 German national parks are visited by 50 million people a year and generate € 2.1 billion of turnover in total. This number gives us a clue that there is a potential of 69,000 people who earn their living by tourism in the national park regions. If you take a closer look at the figures, 10.5 million people are attracted by the national park brand. These people visited the regions because there are national parks. These visitors to national parks spent € 431 million, which equals approximately 14,000 jobs. These numbers are based on an extrapolation of survey data. In total the research project gathered more than 65,000 short interviews and 12,000 long interviews. The following figure (fig. 8) shows the visitor days per year of nine national parks. With a total of more than 20 million visitor days in 2007, Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony received approximately 12 times more than Saxon Switzerland (2009) and 30 times more than Bavarian Forest (2007). National park affinity, however, was lowest in Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony (10.9%), whereas Bavarian Forest at 45.8% was at the high end of the scale, closely followed by Müritz (43.7%) and Hainich (40.7%). At more than 900 visitor days per hectare and year, visitor density is also considerably higher in Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony than in any of the other reserves. The

**Fig. 8: Visitor days, share of visitors with high national park affinity and visitor density**

Sources: JOB/WOLTERING/MERLIN (2010); JOB/WOLTERING/HARRER (2009); changed loading and calculation of data based on REIN/SCHIEDER (2009); JOB/METZLER/VOGT (2003)



national parks with the lowest visitor densities are Müritz and Lower Oder Valley.

Table 6 gives an overview of the economic impacts of tourists who are attracted by national parks. The numbers in brackets in the last row are the total income equivalents generated by all tourists. Again Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony takes the lead with a gross tourist spending of € 115.5 million Euro. It is followed by Saxon Switzerland (€ 18.9 million) and Bavarian Forest (€ 13.5 million). Lower Oder Valley and Kellerwald-Edersee are at the bottom end of the scale. The potential jobs, which are created by the expenditures of tourists, range between 3,360 for Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony and 20 at Lower Oder Valley. The figures show that national parks are generating substantial economic revenue, which is a factor for job creation in the national park regions.

### New research in biosphere reserves

In Mid 2010, another survey was undertaken to measure the regional economic impacts of tourism in biosphere reserves. Financed mainly by the Federal Environment Ministry, the study will be conducted in four German biosphere reserves. The areas under investigation are Palantine Forest, Schaalsee, Spreewald, and Southeast Rügen. Moreover there are two smaller projects which take a look at the tourist spending, but have additional foci. The German Federal Foundation for Environment (Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt – DBU) is financing a project in the Rhön Biosphere Reserve. This study analyses supply chains and cooperation of businesses in regional marketing initiatives. The Thuringian Ministry of Environment is funding a project to calculate the prospective profit of forestry and the potential impacts of the extension of the Vessertal-Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve.



**Tab. 6: Systematic comparison of economic impacts of tourists  
with high national park affinity**

	Bavarian Forest	Berchtesgaden	Eifel	Hainich	Kellerwald-Edersee	Müritz	Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony	Saxon Switzerland	Lower Oder Valley
Year	2007	2002	2007	2007	2007	2004	2007	2009	2008
Gross tourist spending	13.5	9.3 <sup>2</sup>	2.8	2.2	1.0	5.6	115.8	18.9	0.65
Direct regional income	4.3	3.1	0.93	0.77	0.35	1.9	39.7	0.64	0.20
Indirect regional income	2.2	1.5	0.45	0.35	0.17	0.9	18.5	0.30	0.10
Total regional income	6.5	4.6	1.4	1.12	0.52	2.8	58.2	0.94	0.31
Income equivalents	456 (9391)	206	85 (2651)	92 (2061)	28 (1051)	261 (6281)	3,360 (30,2891)	602 (18781)	20 (611)

<sup>1)</sup> all national park tourists

<sup>2)</sup> different basis for calculating

Sources: JOB/WOLTERING/MERLIN (2010); JOB/WOLTERING/HARRER (2009);  
changed loading and calculation of data REIN/SCHIEDER (2009)

**Fig. 9: Research design for biosphere reserves, parks,  
marketing initiatives and jobs**



In all six reserves, 20 survey days will take place in each reserve during one year and in different locations. These locations are chosen depending on the structural framework of the areas. The methodology is similar to the analysis of national parks, but was adapted to the needs of biosphere reserves. The framework of tourism in biosphere reserves is totally different because they have more functions and various backgrounds. As mentioned it is not only the spatial setting in Germany that is different, but the historical development of most areas is diverse. As biosphere reserves attract more kinds of tourists, e.g. cultural tourism, wine tourism and nature tourism, the studies objective is to get information about tourist spending and economic impacts while taking a sophisticated look into motivation and attitudes. Figure 9 shows the research design for the biosphere reserve project. In addition to the long interviews, the team will conduct a discrete choice model to get a better understanding of the attitudes and motivation of tourists in biosphere reserves. Results are expected to be published by the end of 2013.

It is only in recent times that protected areas in Germany been promoted as tourism destinations. Nature tourism is still a niche product on the German tourism market, which is growing constantly and is a source of considerable income for businesses and people. In order to increase the economic benefits accruing from parks, regional policy could aim at a qualitative upgrading of tourist services, increased marketing of labels like National Natural Landscapes and the promotion of a diverse regional supply base. In addition, most parks are trying to enhance the local economy by partner networks and regional brands. These marketing approaches aim to consolidate and foster the economic structures of the region. The initiatives promote their products and services as regional and high-quality to gain a price premium. As a by-product, the support for traditional manufacturing and production conserves the cultural landscapes and biodiversity. The Rhön Biosphere Reserve study will analyse the networking structures, their specific spatial patterns and the need for sustainable entrepreneurs for the development of a region. It aims to close a gap between tourist expenditures and the economic circle for regional value creation.

## The EUROPARC Federation: our European Umbrella

MORWENNA PARKYN

### 100 years of national parks in Europe – a cause for celebration

The EUROPARC Federation – Europe's umbrella organisation for protected areas – unites national, regional and nature parks as well as biosphere reserves in 36 countries. Our shared goal is the long-term protection of the uniquely diverse range of flora and fauna, habitats and landscapes found in Europe.

As a membership organisation, the EUROPARC Federation promotes the exchange of experiences and good practice, provides access to training and is committed to the development and improvement of programmes and initiatives in all areas relating to the management of protected areas. In the entire field of modern and integrated protected area management, only EUROPARC provides this forum and is the sole European network offering comprehensive support of this type.

### Who we are

A large group of active participants from a range of European countries contributes to the work of the Federation. A directorate and president comprise the Federation's administrative leadership; their office acts as a hub for the entire Federation. The small six-person team is operationally active and coordinates a variety of important European projects. It further acts as the EUROPARC Federation's representative to the EU in Brussels and as a representative for various matters relating to its members' interests.

The work of the directorate and its office is supported by seven inter-regional and national sections as well as several working groups. There are currently five separate working groups: Health and Protected Areas, Sustainable Tourism, Trans-boundary, Wildernesses and the Value of Protected Areas. The sections implement EUROPARC's objectives, above all by facilitating the exchange of experiences between members at the national level, but also by taking into consideration the various regions' individual characteristics and the unique challenges they face.

Membership in the Federation is a noteworthy achievement. As of April 2011, there were 440 members from 36 countries representing primarily protected areas; however, state environmental and conservation offices, governmental authorities and ministries, NGOs and individuals are also part of the network.

### Our activities in 2010/2011

#### *EUROPARC Conference 2010 in Italy*

The EUROPARC Conference 2010 took place in Italy's Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park, with 276 participants representing 34 countries. The conference's presentations, excursions and workshops focused on the theme of "Living together. Biodiversity and Human Activities: A Challenge for the Future of Protected Areas." One of the resounding conclusions of the conference was the need to improve communication with the general public. The conference also saw the adoption of the Pescasseroli Declaration. This document calls upon European governments to urgently recognise protected areas as cornerstones for the preservation of nature and biodiversity. The declaration was distributed to, among others, the EU, national and regional governments and the press.

#### *Communication*

2010 was named the International Year of Biodiversity. This theme took centre place in EUROPARC's communications, publications and events. Throughout the course of the year, it was evident that communication relating to the management of protected areas must become more effective.

In addition to its usual publications, EUROPARC had an extremely active year in 2010, publishing numerous press releases, establishing new contacts and taking part in press conferences. In addition, the exhibition "Living Parts," a part of the project "100 Years of National Parks in Europe" was shown in five European countries and welcomed approximately 10,000 visitors.

New in 2010 were the EUROPARC Federation's Siggen Seminar series. The Alfred Toepfer Foundation (DE) kindly provided the Federation free use of their seminar centre, the Siggen Estate, for this purpose. EUROPARC working groups met with each other throughout the week to discuss plans surrounding their future work. Also included was a seminar on the

theme "The Economics of Ecology". The Siggen Seminar series endeavours to enhance the work of the EUROPARC Federation and its members, thereby helping us to attain our goals.

#### *Support for protected areas management*

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is a practical management tool introduced by the EUROPARC Federation. It aims to assist those with a stake in protected areas in working side-by-side with private companies and communities to build a sustainable tourism industry. The concept has already been implemented in 88 protected areas in eight different countries, and these numbers are growing every year. Seventeen Charter certificates were awarded at the 2010 annual conference alone.

In 2010, the EUROPARC Federation participated in three projects: Parks & Benefits, Sustainable Tourism in Enterprises, Parks and Protected Areas – STEPPA, Sustainable Tourism Destinations. Despite their diverse regional and thematic focuses, these projects shared a common objective: to promote the Charter concept and to establish a forum in which participating partners could share ideas and experiences.

One of EUROPARC's objectives is to foster inter-regional cooperation. The main focus of this effort is the initiative "Transboundary Parks – Following Nature's Design," a certification system that aims to facilitate cooperation in Europe's transboundary protected areas. At present, there are 17 certified EUROPARC transboundary parks in eight complexes, including Germany. The EUROPARC Federation's TransParcNet was extremely active in 2010. An important milestone was the foundation of the new working group "Transboundary Parks". A variety of events and a new publication helped to raise the profile of both the programme and parks across Europe. From 27th – 30th April 2010, the second TransParcNet meeting was held in the transboundary national parks Neusiedler See – Seewinkel/Fertő-Hanság Nemzeti.

The Alfred Toepfer Medal, named after the founder of the EUROPARC Federation, Dr h.c. Alfred Toepfer, is awarded each year to an individual who has made a special contribution to the cause of European protected areas. The medal, which is presented at the annual EUROPARC conference, was awarded in 2010 to Lassi Karivalo, a former Senior Advisor from Metsähallitus (FI).



### *Educating young people*

Involving young people in the conservation of protected areas is a key focus for the EUROPARC Federation. The development and leadership of the Junior Ranger programme is one of the Federation's main contributions to this effort. Currently, the Junior Ranger network consists of 75 protected areas in 15 countries, involving approximately 120 Rangers and 2000 young people across Europe. The network's most important event of the year is the international Junior Ranger camp. In 2010, 40 campers representing twelve protected areas in eight countries attended the annual camp hosted by AONB Mendip Hills (UK). Within Germany, we are pleased to announce that rapid progress has been made by the WWF-supported Junior Ranger programme, including the pilot project "Marine Ranger" (cf p. 32 ff).

Each year the EUROPARC Federation awards three Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarships to talented young people who show an interest and aptitude for work in protected areas. At the EUROPARC Annual Conference in Italy in 2010, the three scholarships were awarded to Ekatarine Kakabadze (GE), Alina Ionita (RO) and Matthew McGettigan (UK). They are studying transboundary cooperation, rural development and climate change.

### *Activities in 2011*

The Federation's focal point for 2011 is the development of effective communication structures, with the aim to expand and strengthen our communication network as well as our lobbying work. This effort, which stemmed from the annual conference, was also the theme of the second Siggen Seminar series. In addition, the EUROPARC Federation and its members support the International Year of Forests and the European Year of Volunteering.

Through our on-going networking and lobbying activities we strive to ensure that the Federation maintains a high profile at the European level.

When it comes to raising the Federation's public profile, a very important event is the EUROPARC Conference 2011 ([www.europarc2011.com](http://www.europarc2011.com)), which will be held from 21st - 25th September in the Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve, Bad Urach (DE). This year's theme is "Quality counts - Benefits for Nature and People".



*Above: New and re-evaluated Charter Park certificates presented at the EUROPARC conference 2009 by the president, Erika Stanciu (centre front)*

*Below: Living Parks Book*

Developing new projects and raising funds to support our work remain important goals for the Federation. To that end, we must make the value of protected areas and the social benefits they provide evident to all. This calls for strengthened collaboration with the various sections, an effort which will require on-going work on the part of the entire Federation.

## EUROPARC Germany's contribution to Europe

JOHANNES HAGER

EUROPARC Germany – as a section of the Europe-wide family of protected areas that come under the umbrella of the EUROPARC Federation – represents a commitment to the qualitative improvement of Europe's protected areas and ultimately to the development of a worldwide network of protected areas. As a CBD signatory, Germany is committed to the foundation and development of a qualitative network of protected areas. The results of our organisation's work serves to further this goal at various levels. This is accomplished

1. through involvement in the Council of the EUROPARC Federation: our former chairman, Eberhard Henne, has been an elected member of the Federation's Council since 2008.
2. through cooperation with the national sections of the EUROPARC Federation: EUROPARC Germany meets regularly with the other national sections, of which there are currently six. The German section is typically represented by chairmen Johannes Hager and Holger Wesemüller. Finally, a publication by the Spanish section<sup>1)</sup>, "Plan de Acción", provided essential impetus for the German Action Plan of 2004. Within this framework, the idea for an annual progress report with information about our parks was formed.
3. at the project and programme level: three programmes, Volunteers in Parks (s. p. 41), Junior Ranger (s. p. 34) and Quality Campaign (s. p. 47) have previously been described. The EU-supported Grundtvig Learning Partnership Project<sup>2)</sup> European volunteers in parks was also established within the volunteer programme. In addition to EUROPARC Germany, members from other countries as well as various section representatives (from Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Iceland, Spain, the Atlantic Islands and Romania) also participate in this programme. International cooperation also plays a significant role in the Junior Ranger

programme<sup>3)</sup>. With Holger Wesemüller as representative, the programme was able to cooperate closely with the US National Park Service – so in this case, cooperation extended beyond Europe. Both programmes have been and continue to be developed and expanded in coordination with the EUROPARC Federation.

4. A great deal of attention has been given to the development of nationally accepted quality criteria and standards for all three categories of protected areas. Projects relating to the quality management of Germany's National Natural Landscapes are supported by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation by means of funds from the Federal Environment Ministry, and serve to evaluate National Natural Landscapes. An evaluation of Germany's national parks is also planned for early 2012. EUROPARC members in the Netherlands, Italy and the Nordic-Baltic Section are particularly interested in the content and development of this evaluation process.

The umbrella label National Natural Landscapes stands for the quality of large-scale nature conservation in Germany. Together with national parks, biosphere reserves and nature parks, it represents an important country's contribution to the development of Europe's network of protected areas.

### Parks without borders – working with our neighbours to preserve biodiversity

SIGRUN LANGE

UNESCO's nomination of the Wadden Sea as a World Heritage Site<sup>4)</sup> on 26th June, 2009 was a triumph for Germany and the Netherlands. With the inscription of the wetlands on the World Heritage List, both countries were rewarded for their contributions to the protection of this special area. Nature knows no boundaries: coastlines, forests and mountain ranges don't end at border crossings. Thus, if Germany wants to protect its special natural areas, it pays to coordinate our conservation efforts with our neighbours. At present, Germany has seven transboundary protected areas, including the new

<sup>1)</sup> [www.europarc-es.org](http://www.europarc-es.org)

<sup>2)</sup> [www.freiwillige-in-parks.de/grundtvig-learning-partnership-european-volunteers](http://www.freiwillige-in-parks.de/grundtvig-learning-partnership-european-volunteers) (cf. p. 39 ff, 115)

<sup>3)</sup> [www.junior-ranger.de](http://www.junior-ranger.de)

<sup>4)</sup> Information from the German UNESCO Commission: [www.unesco.de/welterbe-wattenmeer.html](http://www.unesco.de/welterbe-wattenmeer.html)

Wadden Sea World Heritage Site, the Lower Oder Valley International Park, the Palatinate Forest / Nordvogesen Biosphere Reserve as well as four bilateral nature parks. Protected areas on both sides of the border also cooperate in five further natural areas.

#### *Pilot study in the Palatinate Forest*

In accordance UNESCO's international standards of 1996, and following the Pamplona recommendations of 2000, the world's first transboundary assessment was begun in 2009 in the Palatinate Forest-Northern Vosges Biosphere Reserve, which spans the border between Germany and France. The evaluation was completed in 2010. A survey was drawn up in close consultation between UNESCO and the French and German MAB Committees which – providing it was proved useful over the course of the process – was to serve as the basis for future evaluations of transboundary biosphere reserves. "Although it has already become clear that certain goals, such as joint zoning, are not attainable, everything we have learned up until now indicates that those who have invested in the bilateral biosphere have reason to be proud," said Daniel Wolf, managing director of the German MAB Committee. "There have been some extremely positive examples of French-German cooperation."

#### *Learning from our neighbours*

The High Venn / Eifel Nature Park has participated in the INTERREG IVA Project "Netzwerk der Naturparke der Großregion" (Network of Nature Parks in the Greater Region) since 2008. In this programme, the European Union fosters collaboration between nine nature parks in Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg and France. "Although a project such as this requires a large investment of time, it is worth the effort. There is a great atmosphere, not just at the personal level – the professional exchange is good, too," said Jan Lembach, Director of the High Venn / Eifel Nature Park. At a workshop in Nettersheim in October 2009, Mr Lembach introduced the initiative "A Barrier-free Eifel – Nature for All". The goal was to increase colleagues' awareness of the importance of making wildlife areas handicap-accessible and to discuss joint efforts for improving the park's infrastructure for these visitors. Handicap accessibility has become an important topic for large protected areas in Germany over the past few years, and is set to become an established feature of protected area management plans.

The practical experience gained in the German-Belgian border region should also act as an impetus for several neighbouring projects (cf. Second Progress Report, p. 49 ff).

#### *Doubly rewarded*

In 2009, Karl Friedrich Sinner, Director of the Bavarian Forest National Park, received two awards in recognition of the cross-border cooperation between Bavaria and the Czech Republic: in September 2009, he and Zdenka Krenova, Deputy Director of Šumava National Park were awarded EUROPARC's "Transboundary Park – Following Nature's Design" certificate. The certificate had previously been awarded just once in Germany and eight times in Europe.

Prior to awarding the certificate, an assessment by two independent experts had confirmed that the collaboration between the two neighbours represented a shining example of EUROPARC's standards for transboundary cooperation. Just a month later, Sinner was also awarded the Czech Prize for Conservation and Environmental Protection. "This is a wonderful acknowledgement of eleven years of work. Given the complex relationship between Germany and the Czech Republic, this is an encouraging sign that a bit of normalcy is possible," Sinner said after returning from Prague. From a professional standpoint, the necessity of carrying out conservation work across

*Experiencing nature, barrier-free. As part of an INTERREG IVA Project, the High Venn/Eifel Nature Park shares its experiences with eight neighbouring nature parks..*





borders might seem obvious; in practice, however, it is rarely so easy. Historical conflicts, diverse political systems, language barriers, cultural differences and varying conservation regulations are frequently barriers that need to be overcome.

A 1999 memorandum regarding collaboration between the Šumava and Bavarian Forest National Parks served as the only formal framework for the parks' cooperation. The impetus for more unified cooperation came in 2007, when border controls between Bavaria and the Czech Republic were lifted and winter storm Kyrill brought about widespread uprooting of trees along the entire border. Since then, four new border crossings have been created for hikers, and public transportation schedules on either side of the border synchronised.

One result of the "Europe's Wild Heart" project has been the consolidation of the two national parks' management divisions. This means that within the bilateral wilderness area they share, nature can be nature – and even after large-scale wind damage to forests, both park administrations have decided not to log trees damaged by bark beetles<sup>1)</sup>.

Studies show that cross-border cooperation is more likely to be successful when backed up by goodwill between neighbours (LANGE 2009, UNESCO 2003, ZBICZ 2003). This means that person-to-person meetings at all levels (not just between high-ranking park administrative representatives) are especially important. So, too are informal events which create a basis of trust for the parks' cooperative work: even if political circumstances should change, these relationships remain.

Thus, activities such as the 2009 competition attended by approximately 400 students from the Bavarian Forest and Šumava National Park regions, or the joint presentation of Bavarian and Czech partner organisations and environmental education events in brochures, are to be welcomed. Over the course of the years, excursions and skiing trips as well as joint language and training courses have strengthened the ties between staff at the two national parks.

The appointment of a Czech employee to the Bavarian Forest National Park staff in 2008 took the collaboration to a new level. Four bilateral meetings were held in 2009 as well as a joint winter rescue exercise. In some instances, work partners



Above: Celebrating their award as a "Transboundary Park", from left: Hans Kiener and Karl Friedrich Sinner from the Bavarian Forest National Park, Erika Stanciu, President of the EUROPARC Federation, and Zdenka Krenova and Michal Valenta from Šumava National Park

Below: Karl Friedrich Sinner was awarded the Czech prize for Conservation and Environmental Protection in October 2009.

become friends, as was the case for park rangers Günter Sellmayer and Jan Svoboda. The two became acquainted through various park events and patrolled their respective sides of the border together. After a few informal meetings outside of work, the two rangers then arranged a two-week trip to the Sarek National Park wilderness in Sweden, which they traversed together on skis and snowshoes.

<sup>1)</sup> Europe's Wild Heart Guidelines: [www.nationalpark-bayerischer-wald.de/detail/grenzueberschreitend/doc/memorandum\\_richtlinien\\_internet.pdf](http://www.nationalpark-bayerischer-wald.de/detail/grenzueberschreitend/doc/memorandum_richtlinien_internet.pdf)

# Forecast: "Quality counts – profit for nature and people"

HOLGER WESEMÜLLER

"Quality counts!" That is the slogan of the EUROPARC 2011 European conference of protected areas, held in the Swabian Alps Biosphere Reserve in Germany. Together we can design the future, in order to maintain natural diversity and to face climate change effectively. Large protected areas in Europe can do this (in Germany they exist under the umbrella of national natural landscapes) if the necessary basic conditions exist:

- legal protection and a direct link to the appropriate level of political decision making
- adequate personnel and financial provision, in particular professional support and ranger systems
- appropriate facilities for the designation of an area and regular evaluation of management effectiveness.

Under these conditions, national natural landscapes fulfil their specified tasks, among other things (see EUROPARC Germany Action Plan, 1994):

- Protection of natural and biological diversity, also by means of large wilderness areas
- Development of models for the prevention of and adaptation to climate change
- Communication as well as education for sustainable development with the main focus on the environment
- Research and monitoring
- Testing models for sustainable land use (biosphere reserves and nature parks)
- Build up regional value-added networks.

Like all European states, Germany is a signatory of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and a member state of UNESCO; it is bound at the same time to adherence to the management criteria of IUCN and UNESCO for protective areas.

However, many protected areas perform these specified tasks inadequately. Due to the current European and worldwide crisis situation, the conditions in many areas have clearly got even worse. Resources for the public authorities in the German states are less and less. This phenomenon of scarce resources is predominant throughout Europe. EUROPARC Germany sees protected areas as more than just a species reservoir or a place for great experience; we also place their ecosystem achievements more into the foreground. Even though the UN TEEB study has already shown the impressive value of nature in its global dimension, it is never-

theless meaningful to break this down to a national level. Because we, the citizens, must understand it and get a local feeling for what the economic use of intact ecological systems and protective areas is. Should it not be turned around then, so that society should be charged for the benefits from nature which it has so far received for free? That may not yet be imaginable for many, but it reflects that large protected areas could even value themselves in this sense! The tourist valorisation of national natural landscapes is already accepted. Should, or rather must, we not as a nation finally afford a professional support system?

In particular the function of moorlands, wilderness and forests to store carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) or too "bury" it for a long time (moorlands), and thus to remove it from the cycle, should be evaluated alongside the technical possibilities of CCS technology (Carbon dioxide Capture and Storage). Too often one looks to technical solutions while nature offers solutions which can be cheaper and more effective. Perhaps nature protection and national natural landscapes have a role in dealing with CO<sub>2</sub>. What would the possibilities be if we succeeded in using such markets and market mechanisms more strongly in the field of biological diversity? Who has paid for the countless emission certificates which nature has processed and "settled" free of charge thus far? If we want to maintain natural diversity in the long-term, then we must also ask questions about our lifestyle. If we carry on as before, then we will need not only this Earth, but - as WWF so graphically states - this century a second and in the future yet more planets like the Earth. We stand as representatives of the rich states before the great challenge of developing a less destructive lifestyle yet still achieving satisfaction in society. The Federal Chancellor has sworn to make the long-overdue change in direction more lasting in the international year of biodiversity. In this regard our task remains to secure and further develop national natural landscapes on a long-term basis in the European context. Recognition of protection efforts, as well as accolades such as the designation of Wattenmeer and the beech forests as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, promotes understanding and provides more support to the regional and local population for large-scale protection plans and ideas.

There is great potential in the protected areas of Europe. We can convince the political decision makers at the national, state and municipal level as well as in different social groups. Together we will raise it piece by piece and as a nation use it for environmentally-compatible development of our society.

We do it together for Europe's natural heritage: Quality counts!

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| <p><b>Naturpark<br/>Erzgebirge/Vogtland</b> </p> <p>Schloßplatz 8<br/>09487 Schleitz<br/>Tel.: 0 37 33 - 62 21 06<br/><a href="http://www.naturpark-erzgebirge-vogtland.de">www.naturpark-erzgebirge-vogtland.de</a></p>   | <p><b>Naturpark<br/>Mecklenburgische Schweiz<br/>und Kummerower See</b> </p> <p>Dorfstraße 124<br/>17139 Basedow<br/>Tel.: 03 99 57 - 2 91 20<br/><a href="http://www.naturpark-mecklenburgische-schweiz.de">www.naturpark-mecklenburgische-schweiz.de</a></p> | <p><b>Naturpark<br/>Pfälzerwald</b> </p> <p>Franz-Hartmann-Straße 9<br/>67466 Lambrecht (Pfalz)<br/>Tel.: 0 63 25 - 95 52-0<br/><a href="http://www.pfaelzerwald.de">www.pfaelzerwald.de</a></p>  | <p><b>Naturpark<br/>Westhavelland</b> </p> <p>Dorfstraße 5<br/>14715 Havelaue / OT Parey<br/>Tel.: 03 38 72 - 74 3-0<br/><a href="http://www.naturpark-westhavelland.brandenburg.de">www.naturpark-westhavelland.brandenburg.de</a></p>                                   |
| <p><b>Naturpark<br/>Feldberger Seenlandschaft</b> </p> <p>Strelitzer Straße 4, OT Feldberg<br/>17258 Feldberger Seenlandschaft<br/>Tel.: 03 98 31 - 52 78-0<br/><a href="http://www.naturpark-feldberger-seenlandschaft.de">www.naturpark-feldberger-seenlandschaft.de</a></p> | <p><b>Naturpark<br/>Mecklenburgisches Elbetal</b> </p> <p>Am Elbberg 8-9<br/>19258 Boizenburg/Elbe<br/>Tel.: 03 88 47 - 62 48 40<br/><a href="http://www.elbetal-mv.de">www.elbetal-mv.de</a></p>  |  |  |



