

2017 Activity Report Hohe Tauern National Park

Publication details:

Media owner, editor, and publisher:
Hohe Tauern National Park Fund, Carinthia
Döllach 14, 9843 Grosskirchheim, Austria

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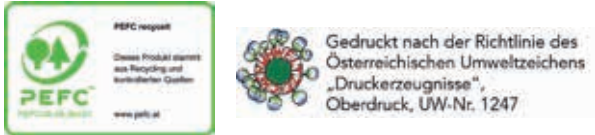
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Cover picture: Zelokssee lake with views of the Hochschober © HTNP / A. Steinacher

Design: vorauerfriends communications gmbh, Thalheim
Graphic design: 08/16 grafik, eva scheidweiler, Lienz – Salzburg

Printed by: Oberdruck GmbH, Stribach



Translations: Stephen B. Grynwasser, London

Despite all due care and attention, misprints and printing errors cannot be excluded.
Situation as at: January 201



Photo: © HTNP / D. Egger

Primula glutinosa: Many so-called Speik grounds in the Tauern mountains derive their name from this purple primrose. Primula glutinosa's oblanceolate leaves with fine toothing near the tip are minutely glandular and sticky. The plant flowers among curved sedge grasses in July and August. It is endemic to the eastern Alps and protected.
(Source: Pflanzen. Wissenschaftliche Schriften. 2014. Secretariat of the Hohe Tauern National Park Council. Retailed through book stores: Tyrolia-Verlag)

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2017 – A successful year for National Parks Austria



Photo: © Office of the Minister

Over the past few years Austria's six National Parks have become a large and tight-knit family with a strong corporate identity, all pulling together in one direction. This first joint Activity Report of the Hohe Tauern National Park as a whole sets the trend for the future. It underscores once again the positive co-operation that exists beyond the boundaries of Austria's individual federal provinces.

The 25th anniversary of the Tyrolean section of the Hohe Tauern was undoubtedly one of the highlights in the National Park's year. At the anniversary celebrations a bearded vulture that had been released into the wild many years ago certainly grabbed everyone's attention. This bearded vulture project is an outstanding example of successful species protection.

Initiated by the Hohe Tauern National Park the 6th National Parks Austria Research Symposium is now a permanent fixture for international scientists working on protected area research. More than 400 speakers and delegates gathered in Salzburg to discuss topics ranging from biodiversity to the analysis of the different requirements that result from human land use. For the National Parks, regular exchanges with the scientific community are crucial to management decisions. And with the award of our Science Prize, we send out strong signals in favour of targeted research in the National Parks.

The 14th National Parks Austria Employee Day focused on preserving, protecting and boosting the development of our natural heritage, and this year a total of 200 committed colleagues had the opportunity to exchange their views.

2018 is set to be a busy year once again, a year in which our solidarity and cohesion are to be strengthened even further. What's more, the Neusiedler See – See-winkel National Park is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

My thanks, then, to all our people and to all those who help preserve our biodiversity and to anchor the significance of our unique natural treasures in the minds of all Austrians. I wish you all a successful 2018.

Yours
ELISABETH KÖSTINGER

Federal Minister
for Sustainability and Tourism

BUNDESMINISTERIUM
FÜR NACHHALTIGKEIT
UND TOURISMUS

National Park Year 2017



Photo: © Rottensteiner



Photo: © Office of A. Rössler



Photo: © Office of Darmann

The Hohe Tauern National Park became a complete entity in 1992 when the Tyrol portion was established, a landmark event we duly celebrated in September of last year. This milestone in nature conservation policy twenty-five years ago also marked the start of our untiring efforts to constantly improve and expand co-operation in Austria's first ever National Park while respecting the nature conservation competence of each individual federal province. Also, the strong commitment of Austria's federal government in helping to finance our activities and projects is founded on the general appreciation of this natural heritage as a whole.

As the three members representing our provincial governments in the federal provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol we are individually responsible for the three National Park Funds and jointly responsible for the National Park Council together with the Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism. With this first joint Activity Report, we want to send out a strong signal for our 2017 operating results in general and do justice to the greatness and significance of our National Park in particular.

Together with our people at the National Park Administrations we take a look back at the past year at the National Park, and much of it will seem very familiar from the past four individual reports. An indication that, already in the past, our joint cross-province projects and activities have become increasingly significant and an indication, too, that the time is now ripe to piece together the jigsaw of our activities to create an ever grander picture of our National Park.

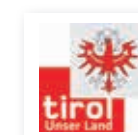
The success of the idea of a National Park in the Hohe Tauern that is apparent on every page of this Activity Report is founded on the constructive co-operation of all the stakeholder interests in and around the National Park, as expressed jointly in our decision-making bodies, boards of trustees, committees and advisory boards.

So a big 'thank you' to the Republic of Austria and our provincial governments of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol for the financing, and to our people for the dedicated implementation of all our ideas and decisions!

INGRID FELIPE

ASTRID RÖSSLER

GERNOT DARMANN



Facts & Figures



With a total surface area of 1,856 km² the Hohe Tauern National Park is the largest national park in the whole of the Alpine region and one of the largest nature protection areas in central Europe.

	Core zone (km²)	Outer zone (km²)	Special protected areas (km²)	Total (km²)
Carinthia	291	113	36	440
Salzburg	440	266	99	805
Tyrol	347	264		611
NP total	1078	643	135	1856

- Stretching east to west 100 km
- Stretching north to south 40 km
- Elevation 1,000 m - 3,798 m
- Mountain peaks above 3,000 m around 300
- Glaciation 155 km² / app. 8 %
- Glaciers 342
- Near-natural mountain streams 279
- of which glacial streams 57
- major waterfalls 26
- Mountain lakes betw. 35 m² & 27 ha 551



Alpine natural and cultural landscape

In the Hohe Tauern National Park all the main alpine ecosystems are preserved intact over a large area. More than a third of all plant species known to exist in Austria are to be found in the National Park. For mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, the proportion is around 50%. The National Park also provides a secure habitat for those animals considered to have been eradicated throughout most of Europe in the early 19th century.

This impressive biodiversity is the result, firstly, of diverse climatic, geological, geo-morphological and hydrological site conditions in this high-mountain region and, secondly, of differentiated adaptation strategies adopted by the fauna and flora. Anyone hiking from the valley floor up to the highest summits in the National Park is certain to cross virtually every single climate zone from central Europe to the Arctic as they pass from one elevation to the next.

The 'Hohe Tauern window' – a tectonic window unique in shape and size anywhere in the world – provides insights into the deepest nappe stacks of the Alps and is key to deciphering the geological structure of the Alps themselves. Rocks of different ages, origins and chemical compositions conceal a treasure trove of up to 200 different minerals.

Facts & Figures

The landscape shapes of trough and hanging valleys, cirques, horns and kettle lakes, of defiles and gorges, etc., reflect the moulding force of ice age glaciers as much as the unrelenting impact of weathering and erosion caused by gravity, frost and water. The transition from the natural alpine ecosystems within the core zone of the National Park to the cultural landscape of the outer zone is a harmonious one. Here century-old mountain farming has given rise to communities whose diverse lifestyles are to be sustained and preserved in the long term.

Main tasks

The development of a protected area is predicated not just on a legal basis and on objectives, but also on the establishment of a professional management, a task carried out primarily by the National Park Administration.

Business areas

Natural resource management, science and research, and education and visitor information are the main duties of any national park anywhere in the world, as set out by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Other main areas of business carried out by the National Park Management include the preservation of the cultural landscape in the outer zone, regional development, and tourism. With its wide range of activities and programmes the National Park Administration makes an invaluable contribution to regional development, in the full awareness that the Hohe Tauern National Park does not exist in isolation, but is embedded in a vibrant National Park region in which people live, work, and drive the economy.

Sustainable development

The big challenge lies in providing sustainable protection and, at the same time, a form of development that is compatible with the objectives of the National Park and also in harmony with the interests of the local population.

Zoning

The development objectives in the protected area are determined by the zoning and stipulations of the IUCN. Within the core zone of the National Park the protection of nature as a whole takes priority. Here any intervention in nature and/or the ecosystem is prohibited as is any impairment of the landscape, apart from a few exceptions all of which are exhaustively enumerated. The outer zone comprises the core zone and represents the transition area from the permanent settlement area to the nature areas under strict protection. This is the site of the near-natural cultural landscape with its alpine pastures, mountain meadows and larch pastures that are typical of the Hohe Tauern, as nurtured and maintained by human hand for centuries. Even in the outer zone, technological developments such as the construction of energy generating plants or ski lifts are forbidden.

Natural Resource Management



Photo: © HTNP / L. Lammerhuber

Science & Research



Photo: © HTNP / F. Jurgelt

Education & Visitor Information



Photo: © HTNP / F. Rieder

Cultural Landscape Preservation



Photo: © HTNP / Popp-Hackner

Regional Development & Tourism

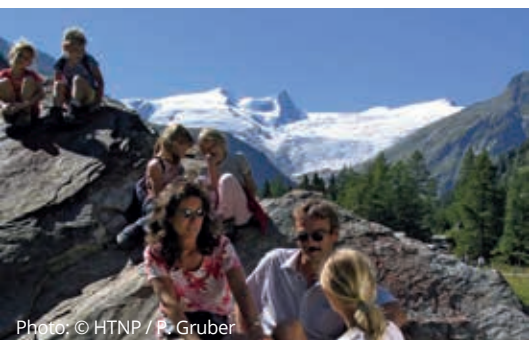


Photo: © HTNP / P. Gruber

National Park Year 2017

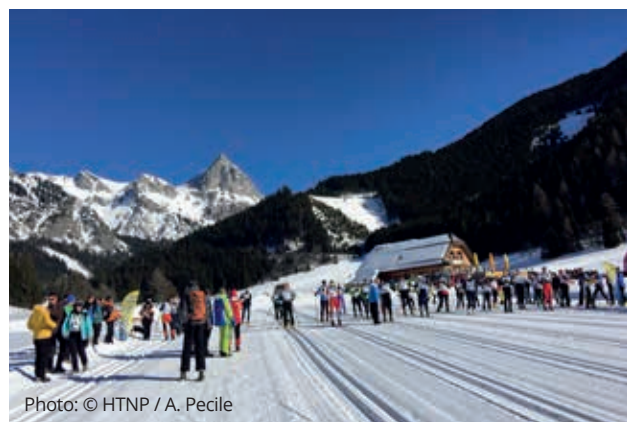


Photo: © HTNP / A. Pecile

January 26 – 29, Admont Danilo Re 'Ranger Olympics'

The 22nd edition of the Danilo Re Memorial was held at the Gesäuse National Park. Danilo Re was a National Park employee from the town of Cuneo in Italy who was killed in a work accident in 1995. National Park Rangers from all the Alpine countries now gather once a year to compete in sporting events and attend a theme-based seminar. The Rangers had to prove their mettle in four sporting disciplines: cross-country skiing, shooting, giant slalom and ski mountaineering. Four teams from the Hohe Tauern National Park competed, with the Tyrol Women's Team taking first place.



Photo: © HTNP / H. Mattersberger

March 6, Grosskirchheim 21st meeting of the Hohe Tauern National Park Council

The Council convened in Grosskirchheim under the chairmanship of *Landesrat* Gernot Darmann. Key tasks in the 2017 work programme and budget of the National Park Council include ongoing major research projects, support for National Parks Austria, and joint education initiatives. In recent years the Council has successfully secured vital EU funds to finance Science & Research, with around half a million euros coming from EU and federal funding in 2017.



Photo: © HTNP / P. Schober

April 23, Mallnitz Exhibition opening at the National Park Centre

The Mallnitz National Park Centre launched its 2017 season with the opening of its exhibition 'Blue goats and black hogs – A journey through the Alps to the last of their kind' and with a lecture by Günter Jaritz on Alpine farm animal breeds that are now almost forgotten.



Photo: © HTNP / P. Schober

May 7, Grosskirchheim New office building for the National Park Administration

Carinthia's new National Park Administration opened to a grand fanfare and a major display of folklore entertainment from all seven National Park Municipalities. The completion of the Grosskirchheim Park Management marks the implementation of the first project in the 2016–2020 infrastructure programme of the Carinthian National Park Fund.



Photo: © HTNP

June 3, Kals Partner schools fête

Some 800 schoolchildren and teachers took up the invitation to attend the partner schools fête. Centre stage in the celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of the Hohe Tauern National Park were lots of exciting experience stations in Kals am Grossglockner. 40 school classes completed these experience stations, which required knowledge, commitment, and a sense of fun. From the animal-based game of memory to the Climate School quiz, the water transport game or the farm touch-box – all the stations were designed to strengthen and broaden the pupils' knowledge of nature through fun games and the experience of nature, entirely in keeping with motto of the National Park's environmental education remit.



Photo: © HTNP / S. Berger

June 7 – 8, Salzburg The National Park Comes to Town

This year the event was staged over two days for the first time and was sold out within a week, with around 1,000 schoolchildren meeting up in the grounds of Hellbrunn Castle to find out more about the Hohe Tauern National Park. The learning stations taught the children all sorts of new things about wildlife ecology, geology and the wilderness of the Hohe Tauern. A big thank-you to the Hellbrunn Castle Administration for making their infrastructure available and also to Salzburg's public transport network.



Photo: © HTNP / M. Kurzthaler

June 26, Matrei Opening of the exhibition 'Tauern views – Awe-inspiring moments'

The trend towards a more contemporary visitor infrastructure was further underscored by the redesign of the Visitor Centre's information and service area in Matrei in Osttirol and the new permanent exhibition. The premises were officially inaugurated by Ingrid Felipe. An ideas competition provided the foundations for the remodelling of the visitor area. The information and visitor services area and the permanent exhibition were completely revamped over the short planning and implementation phase of less than a year (construction time: 6 months).



Photo: © HTNP

June 28 – 29, Mallnitz Partner Meeting + Association of Friends field trip

At the invitation of the Carinthian National Park Administration, the annual meeting of partners of the Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park was held at the Mallnitz National Park municipality in late June. The programme for the Partner Meeting included a wilderness tour of the Seebach valley and a hike up to the Auernig.



Photo: © HTNP / A. Pecile

June 28 – 29, Niedereisill Partner schools fête

The seventy free (school class) places were gone in no time at all, with 'first come, first served' certainly the motto. Around 1,200 schoolchildren from the partner schools attended the fête. The highlight was the presentation of the huge animal book which the schools had designed at their own initiative. Their creativity knew no bounds, from geometric squirrels to sequin-covered alpine salamanders. A huge thanks to the Municipality of Niedereisill!



Photo: © HTNP / Neumayr_MMV

July 6, Heiligenblut Opening of the 'Glacier.Life' exhibition

The new 'Glacier.Life' exhibition at the visitor centre on the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe (2,369 m) offers deep insights into glacier habitats.

The Pasterze and the sensational find made on site of a Swiss stone pine that is more than 6,000 years old – i.e. the 'glacier tree' – have come to symbolise two lovers destined never to find each other: the mighty ice giants and the hidden treasures hidden beneath those icy masses.



Photo: © HTNP / M. Kurzthaler

July 14 – 16, Defereggental 11th Biodiversity Day

Biodiversity Days have been held at the Hohe Tauern National Park every year since 2007. The aim is to find as many animal, plant and fungus species as possible within the space of 48 hours. This year again 90 scientists – more than ever before – followed the call of the National Park and surveyed the biodiversity of the inner Defereggental valley in east Tyrol. Our thanks to all these experts, who do their work free of charge!



Photo: © HTNP / Austrian President's Office

July 24, Krimml Alpine Peace Crossing

For ten years now the Alpine Peace Crossing (APC) Initiative has organised its remembrance march retracing the footsteps of refugees along this trail to freedom. The trail runs from the Krimmler Tauernhaus over the top of the Krimmler Tauern pass to Kasern in South Tyrol. In summer 1947 around 5,000 Jews from eastern Europe used the Krimmler Tauern as an escape route to Palestine. Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen did not miss out on this opportunity to take part in the hike, together with his wife Doris Schmidauer.



Photo: © HTNP

July 28, Mittersill 10th anniversary of the National Park Centre

The National Park Centre is significant not just from a tourism point of view. It offers the full-on experience of our natural treasures, teaching and passing on the idea of the National Park to hundreds of thousands of people. The National Park Administration raises awareness and teaches environmental education – among locals and tourists, young and older citizens alike. The one millionth visitor was honoured as part of the 10th anniversary.



Photo: © HTNP / A. Angermann

August 31 – September 2, Vienna Species Conservation Days at Schönbrunn Zoo

Besides the Zoo itself, some twenty other animal, nature and species conservation organisations showcased their work over these four days. The National Park also reported on its species conservation projects such as the bearded vulture resettlement programme, ibex telemetry, *Urforelle* trout conservation and golden eagle monitoring. The event organised by Schönbrunn Zoo is always a well attended and important education programme for people living in urban environments.



Photo: © HTNP / H. Klemm

September 9 – 10, Vienna Augarten Harvest Festival

Every year the Federal Ministry invites the Austrian National Parks to introduce festival visitors to the idea of a National Park, under the National Parks Austria umbrella brand, and to provide information on important species conservation projects. Federal Minister Andrä Rupprechter attended the Harvest Festival, which provides a good platform for the farming community and for nature conservation to showcase their concerns.



Photo: © HTNP / M. Luggen

September 15, Kals Bearded vulture Lea released back into the wild

The directors of all the Austrian National Parks were present at the foot of the Grossglockner to see Lea the bearded vulture released back into the wild. The bearded vulture had injured its flight feathers in a collision and was incapable of flight; thankfully it was rescued by colleagues at the Stelvio National Park. It was taken to the Haringsee bearded vulture breeding centre for rehabilitation and to be nursed back to health. And now Lea is once again flying high above the Hohe Tauern.



Photo: © HTNP / M. Luggen

September 15, Kals 25th anniversary of the Hohe Tauern National Park Tyrol

Federal Minister Andrä Rupprechter, Tyrol's Governor Günther Platter and invited guests celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Hohe Tauern National Park in Tyrol. The new Glocknerwinkel Visitor Centre at the foot of Austria's highest mountain, the Grossglockner, was inaugurated as part of the anniversary celebrations. Attractions at the new National Park building in the Ködnitz valley in Kals am Grossglockner include a Glockner panorama, exhibition areas on nature in the Alps, a National Park education trail and a viewing platform. Plus lots of new amenities for visitors, including parking, an electric vehicle charging station, and sanitary facilities.



Photo: © HTNP / Photoservice Hetfleisch

September 27, Vienna Austrian Eco-Label for Education

In September the new Carinthian National Park Administration was awarded the Eco-Label for educational establishments. The Austrian Eco-Label commends educational work structured around the principles of education in sustainable development and is mindful of eco-friendly products, resource conservation and an employee-friendly working environment in its approach to the environment. Federal Minister Andrä Rupprechter presented the certificate to National Park employee Hans Keuschnig.



Photo: © HTNP / A. Mayr

October 9 – 10, Windischgarsten National Parks Austria Employees' Day

The various professions and the people who work every day to protect and develop Austria's National Parks are as diverse as the Parks themselves. National Parks Austria invited employees to take part in the 14th Employees' Day in Windischgarsten in the Kalkalpen National Park.



Photo: © HTNP / A. Angermann

October 26, St. Jakob i. D. Anniversary hike

More than 200 people took part in the anniversary hike across the 'Klamml'. The Klamml is the colloquial name given to the Klammljoch at the far end of the Deferegggen valley at the boundary between East Tyrol and South Tyrol. This well-known link between the Hohe Tauern National Park and the Rieserferner-Ahrn Nature Park was the 'high point' of the cross-border hike. The National Holiday hike concluded the 25th anniversary year of the Hohe Tauern National Park in Tyrol.



Photo: © HTNP / A. Pecile

November 2, Salzburg Acknowledgement of the Scientific Advisory Board

On completion of their term of office the members of the Board were honoured as part of the 6th International Research Symposium of National Parks Austria in Salzburg. In accordance with the statutes the Board appoints new members after five years. One landmark decision was the establishment of a monitoring and research programme lasting several years.



Photo: © HTNP / F. Neumayr

November 2 – 3, Salzburg 6th International Research Symposium

International scientists convened as part of the 6th National Parks Austria Research Symposium in Salzburg. During the two-day event at the Science Faculty at Salzburg University some 230 science papers were presented in person by their authors from nineteen countries and various protected areas. The breadth of topics addressed by the projects from nineteen countries ranged from biodiversity to glacier research and the analysis of conflicts that occur in protected areas.



Photo: © HTNP / M. Sonnberger

November 22 – 24, Salzburg Interpädagogica

Austria's National Parks were showcased at the *Interpädagogica*. Each year the trade fair is always well attended, and the Hohe Tauern National Park showcased its range of education offers, which are tailored specifically to its target group. This year visitors were introduced to the Hohe Tauern National Park's brand new digital teaching materials. Designed for secondary school lessons they are structured around modern didactics.

National Parks Austria

We, the six Austrian National Parks, pledge ...



... to protect and research nature, to inform, and to offer rest and recreation.

Our National Parks are committed to the objectives set out by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). Specifically:

- conservation and preservation, protection and nurturing of (cultural) landscapes declared as National Parks;
- unconstrained development of nature (wilderness protection) without human intervention;
- recreation and education;
- to invest today in nature's precious assets for the benefit of tomorrow's generations;
- to make nature an experience, and to offer the highest level of rest and recreation;
- to conduct research benefiting scientifically founded nature conservation;
- to guarantee modern partnership-based nature conservation; to protect microcosms while driving the region as a whole.

Umbrella organisation and network

Since the founding of the umbrella organisation in 2011 the six Austrian National Parks have carried out joint activities under the 'National Parks Austria' umbrella brand. Overall responsibility devolves to the Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism, which co-ordinates implementation together with representatives of the federal government, the National Park directors, and the forestry directors of the three National Park forestry operations. The National Park Advisory Board, which is made up of members of the federal government, the federal provinces and selected NGOs, takes on an advisory and assessment

role. The general assembly convened once in 2017 under its chairman Erich Mayrhofer.

The aim of the umbrella organisation is to promote the further development of the National Parks and boost awareness among the general public. All eight National Park Administrations are actively involved at both the project management level and in various working groups overarching the National Park.

Activities in 2017 focused on enacting the National Park Strategy 2020+, which was adopted in February 2017. Based on the strategy from 2010 and a comprehensive evaluation of the six National Parks, Strategy 2020+ focuses on professional protected area management, co-operation at the regional, national and international levels, the experience of nature and awareness-raising, research, and consolidating co-operation between all six National Parks under the umbrella brand. Over the next five years the twelve adopted objectives in the six main areas of activity will set the trend when it comes to implementing the work programmes and projects, promoting the further development of our National Parks and our natural treasures.



National Parks Austria PR Work 2015-2018

The aim of the project is to bolster the awareness of people in Austria for the country's National Parks. The values and natural treasures represented by our National Parks are to be communicated to the public at large. An umbrella brand 'National Parks Austria – Our Natural Heritage' was therefore created in 2015 to provide the foundations for all subsequent measures in the PR project and publicised using various marketing activities (TV, billboards and online). The advertising campaign continued with a second phase in 2017 and was complemented by additional press work and special events:

Milestones included:

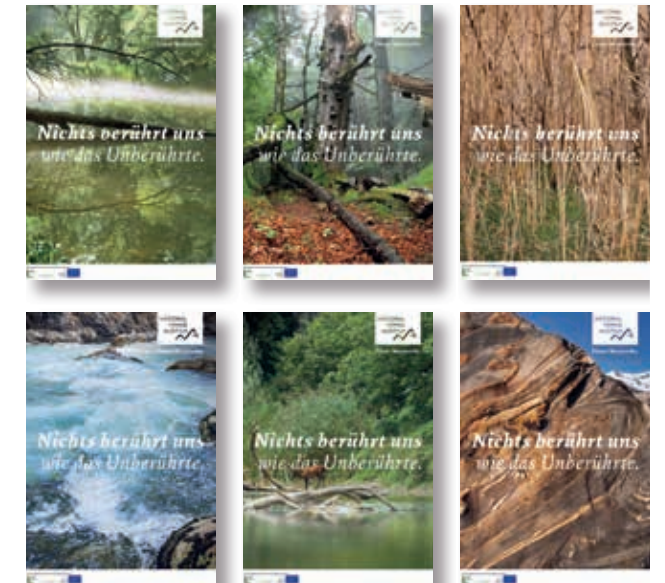
- May 8–10: Press outing to the Thayatal, Donau-Auen and Neusiedler See-Seewinkel National Parks based around the theme of 'Naturally exceptional ... and full of water!'
- May 25: #Wanderlust event: In co-operation with the Gesäuse National Park, visitors, representatives of the media and bloggers from all over Austria explored the Johnsbach as part of a hike under a starry night sky.
- Adventures in the National Parks – seven short films: in summer, Clemens (aged 7) visited the National Parks and captured his experiences with his camera. His short films were shared mainly via social media platforms.
- Media scholarship: 14 young talents documented their highly personal experience of the Austrian National Parks.



Shooting on location in the Dorfer valley for National Parks Austria with young star Clemens.

Other measures:

- Designing uniform working clothes
- Sending out ten press releases
- Producing advertising materials
- Publishing Our Natural Heritage. Touching Insights (in German), 32 pages, A4 format, circulation 185,000. Supplement enclosed nationwide with the Austrian daily *Kurier* on 20.05.2017.
- Launch of the English-language homepage



SEZUM: Service, Co-operation, Implementation Policy paper on wilderness and process protection

In a resolution of the European Parliament dated 3 February 2009 on Wilderness in Europe the European Commission among others was called on to draw up a definition of wilderness tailored to European circumstances, to record wilderness areas and potential areas of wilderness in Europe, to develop a European wilderness strategy, to set up new wilderness areas, and to communicate the value of 'wilderness' to the public at large. Parliament's resolution and other technical recommendations were directly incorporated into the Austrian National Park Strategy 2010 and the Austrian Biodiversity Strategy 2020+. As a result the Austrian National Parks have begun to look closely at the implementation of process protection and wilderness in their core zones, to discuss emerging issues as part of the expert committee on 'wilderness and process protection', and draw up a policy paper on the subject.

An initial implementation has already been put into place in the Salzburg portion of the Hohe Tauern National Park with the 'Sulzbach Valleys Wilderness Area'.

Webinfo:

www.nationalparksaustria.at and www.parks.at
(EU biodiversity strategy and Austrian biodiversity strategy)

National Parks Austria

Research Agenda

As part of the co-operation between the Austrian National Parks a joint 'National Parks Austria' research agenda was drawn up and adopted. In our National Parks, modern research not only serves the spirit of discovery, it is also key to defining the orientation of our protected area management and therefore our quality assurance.

The research agenda of the National Parks Austria is based on a process that involves representatives and outside experts. The drafting of the agenda with its preamble and twelve guidelines also underpins the significance of research in the National Parks.



Webinfo: www.nationalparksaustria.at (Downloads)

6th International Research Symposium

The Research Symposium is an international meeting of experts in the field of science and research into protected areas that is held every four years. It originated in the Hohe Tauern National Park in 1996, with the first four symposia focusing on the Alpine region. In 2013 the National Parks Austria umbrella organisation took over the role of organiser and opened up the Symposium to scientific issues in non-alpine protected areas. 400 participants (speakers & audience members) attended the stellar event held at the NAWI in Salzburg in early November.

National Parks Austria Research Prize

With its Science Prize, National Parks Austria encourages young scientists to conduct their research projects in collaboration with the National Parks and to use the National Parks as a 'field laboratory', to explore exciting questions and, as a result, contribute significantly to the further development of these protected areas.

The prize-winning studies were presented as part of the National Parks Austria Research Symposium in Salzburg in November 2017.

The following were awarded the Research Prize for the Hohe Tauern National Park:

Stefan Schütz, Innsbruck
Georg Niedrist, Innsbruck
Sarah Wendl, Vienna
Florian Resl, Vienna
Verena Gruber, St. Michael/Lungau
Reto Grischot, Amden
Verena Leitner-Klaunzer, Virgen
Claudia Hödl, Graz

Other activities:

- Parcs.at – Compilation of a modern front-end and link-up with the federal government's open-data portal
- Biodiversity database online: a standardised nationwide database for all National Parks is currently being drawn up in co-operation with the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria (web interface).
- October 9–10: 14th National Parks Austria Employees' Day



Photo: © HTNP / Neumayer

Prize-winners from right across Austria received their certificates as part of the Research Symposium.

International Affairs

ALPARC

The Alpine Network of Protected Areas was established in 1995 and comprises all categories of large-scale protected areas within the catchment area of the Alpine Convention. Its objective is the practical implementation of the Alpine Convention's Article on the 'Conservation of Nature and the Countryside'. The emphasis is on exchanges between the staff working in the protected areas and relating to practices, know-how and experiences on topics they share in common. Joint projects are also being continually implemented (e.g. AlpBioNet2030). The Hohe Tauern National Park has been a part of it since the very beginning. The ALPARC Secretariat based in Chambéry provides valuable support with the implementation of the projects.

The *Jugend auf dem Gipfel* ['Young People at Their Peak'] campaign was held for the third time. 32 protected areas in the Alps took part in this international youth event, including 22 young people from the Hohe Tauern National Park.

Webinfo: <http://www.alparc.org>

AlpBioNet2030

Within the scope of the international AlpBioNet2030 project, the Hohe Tauern National Park is also a project partner and a pilot region with its sections in Tyrol and Carinthia and the Rieserferner-Ahrn Nature Park. Numerous protected areas and research facilities are also involved in the project alongside the lead partner ALPARC (Alpine Network of Protected Areas).

AlpBioNet2030 focuses on creating ecological bridges as a basis for habitat and species protection as well as the cohabitation of man and wild animals.

In the pilot region of the Carinthia and Tyrol Hohe Tauern National Park and the Rieserferner-Ahrn nature park the emphasis is on the interaction between the protected areas and their surroundings. The following key issues are being studied with the aim of improving the networking between protected areas, species protection and those who make use of the protected areas:

- Use of lead-free ammunition in the pilot region
- Strategies aimed at the successful coexistence of recreational uses and nature conservation ('man-nature' coexistence)

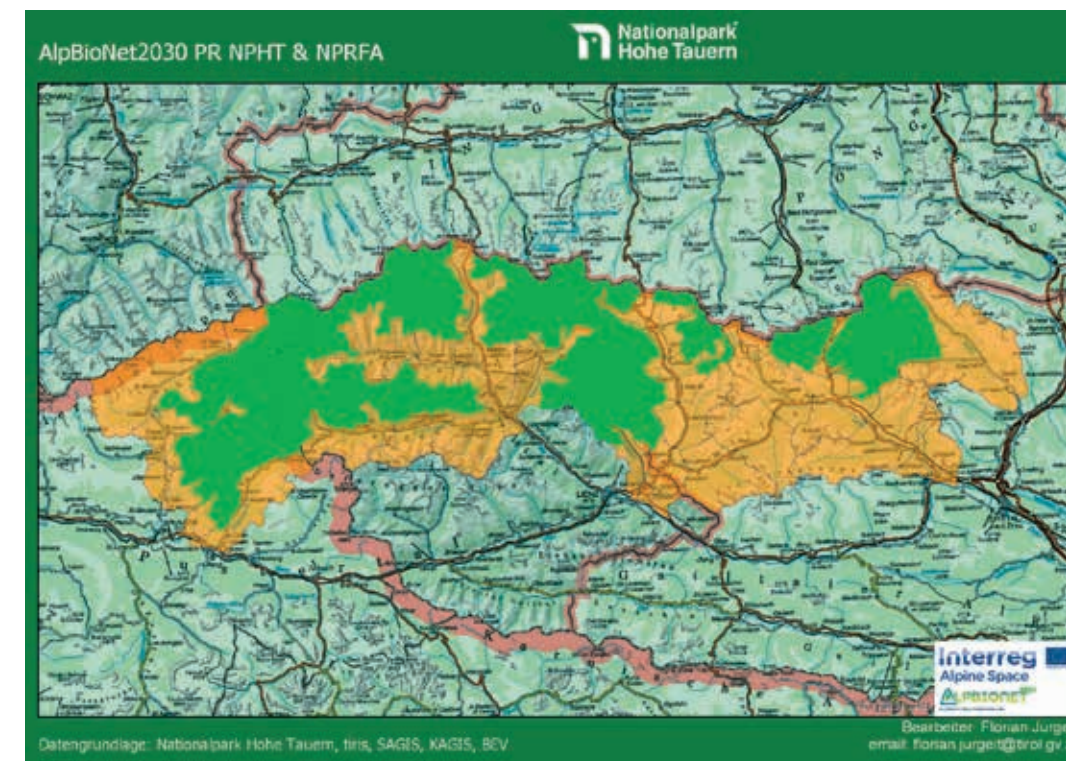
Financing: Total volume, HTNP pilot region: EUR 150,000.–
ERDF subsidy: 85 %

Webinfo:

<http://www.alpine-space.eu/projects/alpbionet2030/>

Other international joint ventures:

- ISCAR-P (International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps for Protected Areas & Editorial Board of eco.mont)
- International Bearded Vulture Monitoring (IBM)
- EUROPARC (European Park Federation)
- IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)
- European Wilderness Society
- VCF (Vulture Conservation Foundation)



Large birds of prey

It was twenty years ago that the first 'wild' bearded vulture flew out following the launch of the reintroduction project in the Haute-Savoie (F); this year, there were no fewer than 31 juveniles, but only one in Austria (Katschberg region). Unfortunately, in the Kruml Valley and the Gschlöss, nesting came to a halt at the end of the breeding season. There are huge regional differences across the Alps in spite of this year's record figures. Around the Mont Blanc, the Swiss National Park and Stelvio National Park the number of breeding pairs and juveniles is already relatively high and the first density-based mechanisms are now starting to take effect. But in the south-western Alps and the eastern Alps, there is still some catching up to do. In Austria there have only been two successful breeding pairs so far, and the population presents a high level of fluctuation, a high loss of adult birds, and a high mortality rate. Lead poisoning has been identified as a main factor, which is why initiatives aimed at promoting lead-free gun ammunition have been launched and the monitoring reinforced. Resolving this question is a top priority within the Alps project as is establishing a meta-population, given that the eastern Alps represent an important stepping stone and bridgehead to south-eastern Europe.

Early June saw the arrival in the Hohe Tauern of the first griffon vultures; during the summering period these birds of prey use the carcasses of dead wild and domestic animals as a food source. Grazing animals that have died on alpine pastures as a result of serious injury, etc., can be left out and do not have to be disposed of, thus providing the vultures with an attractive food source. This year around 60 griffon vultures were counted in the Hohe Tauern, mainly in the region between the Felber valley and Gastein. A monk vulture was also spotted on several occasions throughout the summer. As in previous years, this monk vulture most probably flew to the Hohe Tauern along with griffon vultures from Friuli.

The golden eagle population and its reproductive success were once again surveyed in the region of the National Park in 2017. 17 juvenile fledglings were confirmed as identified. It appears that their reproductive success varies greatly, but there are many factors involved and it is not untypical of golden eagles. In absolute figures it means that the minimum number of juveniles identified in the course of the studies fluctuates between 13 and 22 birds for the National Park as a whole and its surrounding area. Taken as an average over the years we currently assume that there is a steady population of around 42 to 43 pairs.

2017 saw a strengthening of the measures aimed at environmental education and greater awareness of these large birds of prey. Particularly good press coverage was achieved with the 'European tour' of Lucky the bearded vulture, the offspring



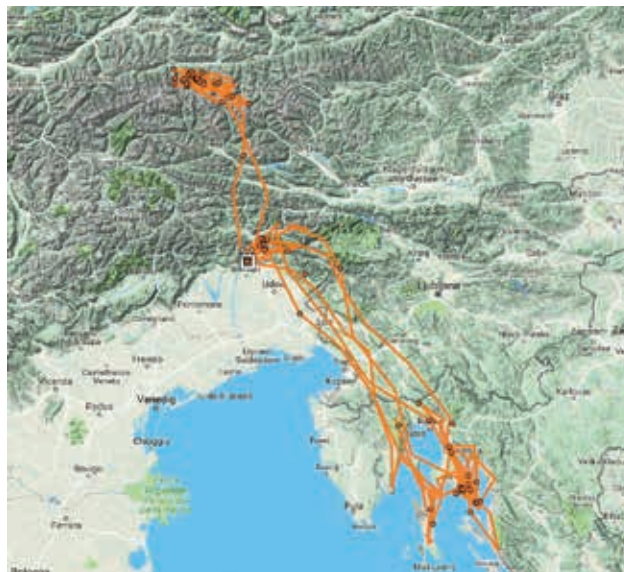
Photo: © HTNP / M. Nindl

Bearded vulture Lucky at the Kürsigner Hütte mountain hut on 27.06.2017 after his European tour.

report relating to golden eagles, and the article in *Panorama*, the mountaineering magazine of the German Alpine Club. The Newsletter *Könige der Lüfte* [Sovereigns of the Skies] is now online. The successful PR work once again resulted in more reports of sightings.

The example of the bearded vulture Lea shows just how important international co-operation actually is. Thanks to the data from the satellite transmitter and the efforts of colleagues at the Stelvio National Park, Lea was rescued after a cable collision. At the anniversary celebrations marking 25 years of the Hohe Tauern National Park in Tyrol, Lea was reintroduced to his old stomping grounds after rehabilitation at the Haringsee bearded vulture breeding centre.

In collaboration with the vulture centre at Lago di Cornino five griffon vultures were fitted with GPS/satellite transmitters to document the interactions between the breeding grounds and the summering areas. Griffon vulture F80 spent the summer in the Hohe Tauern. Unfortunately, he lost his transmitter in early October on his return to the south. The transmitter was found and will be used again next year.



Ibex research

The Alpine ibex remains a focal point of our research work. The backdrop is, among other factors, the narrow genetic bandwidth that is characteristic of this species as a result of its near extinction and other subsequent bottlenecks. In simple terms, every ibex pairing in the Alpine arc corresponds roughly to procreation between cousins, which is why it is still important to gather data about the species.

The Hohe Tauern mountains are interesting in this respect as they are home to the first genuinely large and consistent population (around 1,200 head) in the eastern Alps; in terms of climate, they differ greatly from the regions in the western Alps where ibex also occur. Genetic research has shown that here the population greatly resembles the other colonies in the Alpine arc in terms of genetic diversity. It is closely related to the Piz Albris population in Switzerland, the starting point for most of the animals that featured in the release into the wild, albeit often via somewhat circuitous routes. Genetics are partly responsible for the way living creatures deal with environmental factors. While still barely perceptible (even though proof has been found across the Alps), climate-related habitat changes will entail a change in food quality and availability in the long term and result in changes in the habitat behaviour of wild animals.



Photo: © HTNP / G. Greßmann

There are currently more than 20 animals with visible tags roaming in the Hohe Tauern.

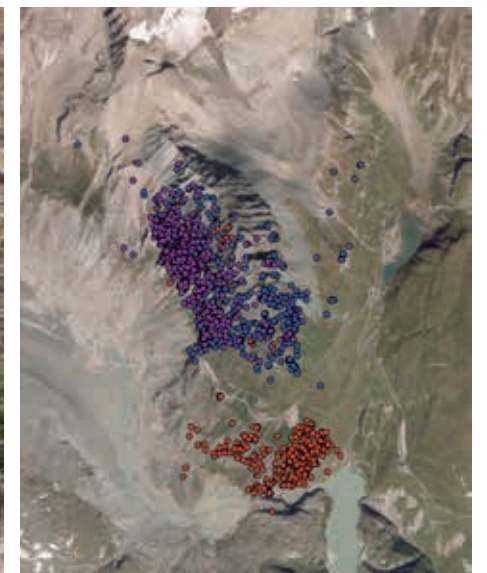
So once again in 2017, four ibex were tagged with transmitters and three other animals marked with ear tags, with help from the Hunters' Association. The existing older telemetry data was used as part of a completed Master's thesis that compared the use of habitat space by male bucks in different regions of the Alps, specifically the Swiss National Park, the Lechquell mountain range, and the Hohe Tauern. It showed that the ranges in which the animals roamed in the Austrian regions were

considerably larger, at least during the snow-free period, than those of the animals in the Swiss National Park.

Mange is a disease caused by mites that can lead to the death of infected animals, and in recent years it has occurred repeatedly and increasingly across the region. The mite itself cannot survive long away from its host animal, so it is dependent on so-called dormant mite carriers (i.e. host animals that are carriers of the mite but do not fall ill, at least not for long periods). Research is underway to try and obtain new findings and discover new ways of dealing with this disease. A current project is working on ascertaining the proportion of dormant mite carriers among the ibex and chamois populations in the Hohe Tauern.

Horn measurements for data analysis

As always, the horns of ibex shot or found dead outside the nature zone have been used for collating measurement data. It is hoped that in the long term these measurements will provide indicators of population trends, since annual horn growth also depends on factors such as weather conditions and wildlife density. 359 buck horns from the Hohe Tauern have been measured to date.



GPS data from collared females in the area of the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe.

This year the cross-province Ibex Day organised by the Hohe Tauern West conservancy community was held in Mittersill, with around 100 participants taking part. The event represents a permanent fixture in the good co-operation between conservancy communities, those persons with the entitlement to hunt, and the National Park.

Urforelle

River trout indigenous to the Danube are now rarely found in the mountain streams of the Hohe Tauern National Park. As part of the species protection programme the autochthonous lines of this salmonid species are kept in selected streams and protected for the future. In late autumn stocks are checked in test waters whenever necessary to obtain valuable scientific evaluations of location loyalty, reproduction and overall condition.

2017 measures

In 2017, as a result of a flood, a stock control/fishery check was carried out in the Kalser Dorfertal in October. As a result of the flooding (> HQ10) large quantities of stream wash were shifted. It was therefore assumed that the stock of autochthonous river trout of the Anraser line had been heavily impacted by the flood itself and that the supply of food in the stream had been reduced. Fish stocks in the Dorferbach stream and the Rumesoi spring creek were heavily depleted; however, young fish (one/two-summers) were found in the area of the Rumesoi spring creek, Stotz stream mouth and Tinklebenalm bridge area, which had weathered the flooding.



Photo: © HTNP / F. Jurgeit

Young fish (own occurrence) Stotzbach section / mouth of the Lapperwitz stream.

Stable stocks of *Urforellen* were documented in the upper reaches of the Seebach, which had been spared the flooding. Stocks were sparser in the lower reaches of the Seebach, which had been within reach of the floodwater. Over 70 river trout were spotted in the Seebach, from mature adults to young fish.

The fishery check was pending in the Anlaufbach stream (Bad Gastein), since it too had often been affected by high floods. In addition, trout stocks downstream from the debris barrier were to be boosted using marked young fish one summer old (offspring from the Anlaufbach population); an increased occurrence of part of the stocking fish was also enabled in flood-protected areas.

Last year many brook trout had been removed from that particular section of the stream, so far fewer of this invasive fish species were caught in 2017. The catch data shows trout stocks with a pleasingly higher proportion of young fish compared with 2016.

500 river trout with an average length of 9.1 cm were available for stocking purposes. The fish represent the offspring from genetically studied parent stocks from the Anlaufbach population and were produced and reared separately at the Thaur fish farm. All the fish were marked using adipose fin clipping. Stock replenishments were carried out in the Anlaufbach upstream and downstream from the bridge (250 fish), the fish-less spring tributary to the abandoned pond area (125 fish) and the lowermost pond (125 fish).



Photo: © HTNP / F. Jurgeit

Stocks are measured and marked.

No fishing was carried out in the Dösenbach (Mallnitz) in 2017 as the spawning season for the autochthonous river trout was already well underway. Fishing had not been possible beforehand due to the heavy rainfall and the constantly high watermark of the Dösenbach. It is to be made up for in spring 2018 before the snowmelt begins. The aim of the measure is to catch any char that may still be in the trout waters and relocate them to the Sterz fish farm. The stocks and survival rate of the 700 river trout released in 2016 are also to be checked and their growth rate calculated.



Photo: © HTNP / F. Jurgeit

The Seebach stream in the Kalser Dorfertal.

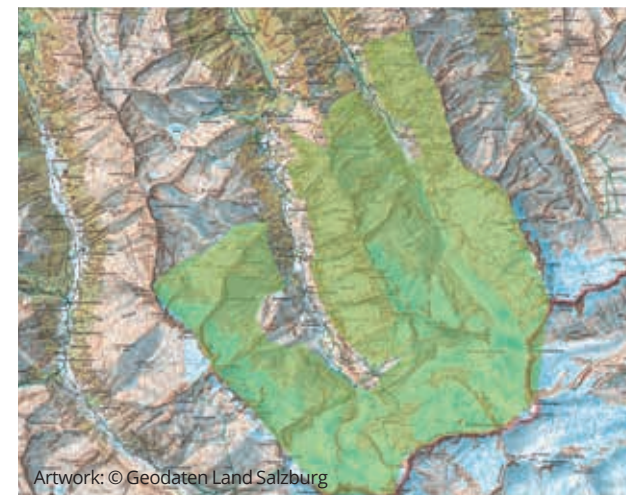
Sulzbach Valleys Wilderness Area



Photo: © HTNP

In the glacier forelands of the wilderness area a natural succession such as it existed 15,000 years after the Ice Age is guaranteed, hence the justified reference to a primary wilderness.

On 7 September 2017 the Special Protection Area Ordinance issued by the Salzburg Provincial Government came into force with which a total of 6,728 hectares in the Municipality of Neukirchen am Grossvenediger were declared as the Sulzbach Valleys Wilderness Area. This provincial government legislation was the final act that concluded several years of auditing, development and negotiation process, securing also for the future the undisturbed natural development that had existed in this territory for thousands of years.



Artwork: © Geodaten Land Salzburg

The 6,728 hectare Sulzbach Valleys Wilderness Area is located in the heart of the National Park so that sufficient ecological buffering is guaranteed in addition to the uncompromising process protection in the area.

The Sulzbach Valleys Wilderness Area is situated in the Ober-sulzbach and Untersulzbach valleys. Since the Hohe Tauern National Park was set up on the Salzburg side in 1984 it has been part of the strictly protected core zone; the areas in the Untersulzbach valley match the special protected area designated as the Inner Untersulzbach valley since 1995.

The strong commitment of European nature conservation policy for the last 'wild' areas of land on the continent began with the first initiatives of the EU Parliament in 2007 and the

Wilderness Conference of the EU Commission in Prague in 2009, based more or less on the model of the Wilderness Act of 1964 passed by the United States Congress. Numerous national and international documents followed which not only drew up standards, but also highlighted the few remaining potential areas of genuine wilderness in Europe. From then on the Hohe Tauern's Venediger Group appeared in all the analyses of potential. The huge responsibility of the National Park Management for this special nature conservation concern was obvious.

As an initial planning stage WWF Austria was commissioned in 2013 with a feasibility study on the 'Potential Wilderness Area Grossvenediger – A Report to the Wild Europe Initiative'; in 2015 the European Wilderness Society carried out a detailed European Wilderness Quality Standard Audit. Both studies represented the technical foundations for subsequent measures aimed at securing the area. Specifically, the contractual nature conservation agreements with the Austrian Federal Forests on some 4,000 hectares already in place for IUCN II recognition were brought in line with the even more stringent requirements of a wilderness area; the remaining areas were secured in terms of property rights as part of a land purchase by the Verein Naturschutzpark Lüneburger Heide. In conjunction with the Special Protection Area Ordinance a stringent process protection was established in the Sulzbach valleys with regard to the autogenous dynamics of these high-alpine ecosystems.

Work is currently underway on a management plan for the wilderness area, with three main areas of emphasis: wilderness protection, wilderness school and wilderness research. The plan complies with all the requirements of the National Parks Austria policy paper on 'Wilderness and Process Protection' and therefore with the Austrian National Park Strategy. In 2018 this wilderness management plan including its wilderness narrative will serve as an application document for Category 1b recognition with the IUCN.

Capercaillie

A detailed survey of potential habitats for this timid woodland bird was already carried out as a pilot project in the National Park region of Mallnitz–Obervellach between 2008 and 2011. In the years that followed, the survey findings led to special measures aimed at securing the occurrence of the capercaillie.

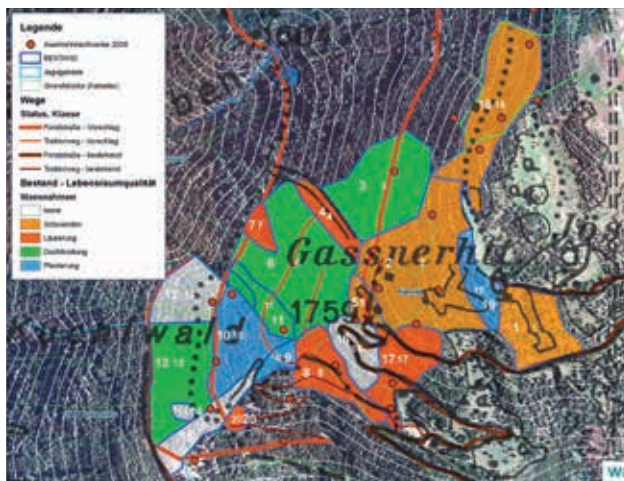


Photo: © HTNP / L. Lammerhuber

Next there followed detailed planning aimed at habitat improvement complete with a catalogue of measures. With each plot of land precisely demarcated, the proposed measures – selective logging, burning, clearing and thinning – have to be described and co-ordinated with the stakeholders; the building of forestry tracks necessary for management as an essential requirement has to be specified; economic necessities also have to be taken into account.

A capercaillie-compatible habitat must always be implemented in complete harmony with forestry use or improvements in pasture and grazing farming. Hunting interests also need to be taken into consideration. Once agreement has been reached with the landowners, the forestry authorities and those with the entitlement to hunt, consideration can be given to contracting a company to implement the planned measures.

For the actual execution of the work any available grants should be availed of (forestry, hunting community) and a quality control set up.



Capercaillie action plans / Mallnitz.

Chamois

The Chamois – Heiligenblut Reserve Model Region research project initiated in 2013 is implemented in close co-operation with the Carinthian Hunters' Association and, in particular, with the hunters of the Heiligenblut Reserve. The principal objective is to analyse the chamois population and its trend over the term of the project, i.e. 2013 to 2018, in the Heiligenblut Reserve and to record it as a basis for further planning.

Two counts of the chamois population were carried out in 2017, resulting in a count of 1,149 chamois. An attempt was made to differentiate the sexes (male, female, yearling, kid) and to assign the animals to a particular age group whenever possible.



Elfi, the female chamois.

The spatial behaviour of individual animals is a key aspect of the ongoing study. Four chamois, two females, one mature male, and one male yearling have so far been tagged. A nine-year-old female tagged with a transmitter on 4 July 2014 has been quite a surprise. Unfortunately, the transmitter only worked for six months. Up until that point, the range covered averaged some 450 hectares, which is relatively large for a female chamois. In September 2016 the project team was sent a photograph of the female chamois called Elfi with a white transmitter collar – from the Mühlbach Valley in the Pinzgau region some 27 km away. Even if such a huge change of location is presumably rare among chamois of this age, the event itself underscores once again the importance of cross-reserve planning. In 2017 a sighting of the female chamois was once again confirmed in the Gössnitz Valley.

Nature zone development

Protecting the natural, biological and underlying ecological structure and the supporting ecological processes as well as promoting and creating recreation is a priority objective as set out by the global criteria of the IUCN for Category II, National Parks. This priority objective is to apply to three quarters of the surface area of the protected area.



Photo: © HTNP / K. Aichhorn

Wilderness nature in its purest form: in the Untersulzbach valley, natural processes can occur untouched by humankind.

Given the particular situation of the Hohe Tauern National Park (its size and zoning in particular), achieving this objective in the Hohe Tauern relates to the core zone (see Austria 2020+ National Park Strategy, p. 10).

At the Hohe Tauern National Park so-called nature zones have been set up to achieve the objective. These nature zones correspond to IUCN areas. Given the statutory foundations and the ownership situation, such areas can be implemented in the Hohe Tauern National Park by way of partnerships, i.e. in the form of contractual nature conservation.



Photo: © HTNP / K. Aichhorn

Letting nature be nature is the main objective, for instance here in the Seebach Valley.

What does 'contractual nature conservation' actually mean?

Generally speaking, the term 'contractual nature conservation' designates agreements concluded on a voluntary basis between the relevant nature conservation authorities and the institutions entrusted with the allocation of funds on the one hand and, on the other, the landowners and those with the entitlement to use areas worthy of protection and in which the land manager with the entitlement to use the land undertakes to carry out, countenance or desist from certain actions in the service of nature and landscape conservation in return for a commensurate compensation for loss of use or a specified remuneration (Gellermann-Widdekke, 1991).

In other words, all the conservation contents over and beyond the scope of the National Park legislation of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol as contained in the IUCN provisions and the Austria 2020+ National Park Strategy can only be achieved on a voluntary basis, i.e. by means of private law agreements (contractual nature conservation); they are set out in the relevant management plans.

The three National Park Funds offer various models which, in combination with wildlife management measures, are all aimed at achieving the agreed effective goals.

In Carinthia, after two years of discussions, a new comprehensive contractual nature conservation programme and a mountain pasture promotion programme were adopted in September 2017 by unanimous resolution within the National Park Board of Trustees. At present areas totalling 88,039 hectares are identified as nature zones (IUCN areas) in the Hohe Tauern National Park.

Long-term Monitoring

In 2016 a new key topic was successfully added to research work in the Hohe Tauern National Park. 'We need to know – and want to know – what we're protecting, and that's not something you can spot at first glance,' says Christian Körner, explaining how after years of preparations the foundations were laid for ecological long-term monitoring. Christian Körner from the University of Basel and Leopold Füreder from the University of Innsbruck are the two scientific directors of the overall project that stands out by virtue of its interdisciplinary and integrative approach in the research landscape.



Photo: © HTNP / E. Hainzer
The areas under permanent monitoring are studied using a raster method. Shown here are staff from Modules 01 (surface phytomass, subsurface plant biomass, soil physics and chemistry) and 04 (soil microbiology) at the Grünecker lake sampling site, in the Seebach valley near Mallnitz, on 15 August 2017.

The uniqueness of the overall project is reflected in the fact that various specialist departments are busy taking samples in the unspoilt core zone of the National Park, in the same location, at the same time and under the same conditions and then documenting their projects. Eight such specialist areas are working together under the topical theme 'Life at the boundaries of existence in the high mountain regions', all pursuing a common objective. Long-term observations are designed to highlight changes in the alpine ecosystem as a consequence of environmental changes. The observations are to be carried out in such a simple way that, even decades later, they can still be analysed by subsequent generations of researchers. Basic conditions were stipulated for the research teams to work under so they could be continually involved in developing their methodology. For the results to be comparable in the long term, each specialist field draws up a single protocol on its methods. Field observations got underway in summer 2017. The areas selected for the observations

were the Seebach valley in Carinthia, the Obersulzbach and Untersulzbach valleys in Salzburg, and the Innergschlöss in East Tyrol.

The areas selected were in the core zone of the National Park. As the core zone is protected long-term from direct human intervention, it is the ideal platform for capturing and describing near-natural terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem processes. The sites chosen as areas for the study were above the tree line where very steep environmental gradients prevail within a

highly confined space (snow-melt gradients), a line along which the living conditions for plants, soil animals and soil microbes change dramatically within a matter of metres.

360 so-called 'areas under permanent monitoring' were staked out at the three sites. In these areas soil temperatures are to be documented as an important microclimate parameter, one that



Areas under permanent monitoring.

Water Quality Monitoring

is also indicative of the snow cover. Soil samples were taken to obtain data on soil physics and chemistry. Biomass samples were harvested to characterise the productivity of the ecosystem. Farm animals and wild animals influence the surface biomass, which is why a wildlife camera is to be used to monitor their habitat use. Many other subsections are to be studied in these areas, e.g. the distribution of plant species, colonisation densities, and the biodiversity of springtail and mites as well as the analysis of bacterial diversity (DNA). In the immediate vicinity of the areas under permanent monitoring, limnologists are to study climate-relevant parameters along flowing and standing bodies of water. Samples are to be taken from several lakes. Studies of zooplankton communities in lakes are to be used to analyse the correlation between abiotic factors (e.g. temperature) and species composition, population dynamics and the long-term trend within communities. The results should allow conclusions to be drawn about the way in which natural ecosystems react to climate change. Similarly, sampling sites have been set up along mountain streams. A highly comprehensive description of the territory in the catchment areas under investigation will be available for the first time. The focus will be on the change in glaciers, climate and hydrological parameters. An overview of the abiotic processes that shape high-altitude mountain regions (weather, hydrology, glaciers, permafrost, morphodynamics) is currently being drawn up.

Work on the technical and methodological handbook proceeded apace in 2017 – one of the main findings from the pilot project which comprises the standard protocols for field measurements in each particular sub-discipline. By 2019 it should be possible to carry over the research project still currently identified as a 'pilot project' to the routine implementation phase of the long-term monitoring project.

Long-term observations on selected mountain streams have been carried out since 2009. They help to establish links between hydrology, glaciology and geomorphology and the structure and function of water ecosystems and their biotic communities, and to define fundamental causal factors and interactions.

Measurements at the 18 sampling areas in the Krimml Achen valley, Anlauf valley, Seebach valley and Innergschlöss were again successfully carried out during the summer months of 2017, focusing on describing abiotic environmental conditions and circumstances. The mountain streams were analysed for hydrochemical parameters (conductivity/temperature/pH value/oxygen saturation), outflow (flow rate and water depth), food availability and turbidity.

Initial results from the extensive data collected allow the effects of environmental change to be estimated and highlighted. For instance it is already possible to predict that, in the course of a climate change, the food resource for higher organisms will change, with the volume of organic material set to increase and food quality set to decrease. This means that the species composition of invertebrate consumers will change, and it has to be assumed that in future so-called specialists will be replaced by generalists.



Photo: © HTNP / E. Hainzer
Samples are taken for subsequent analysis at the hydro-laboratory. Innergschlöss field stage in summer 2017.

Biodiversity research

Biodiversity is a relatively new term for what is actually an ancient fact, namely the diversity of life. It is a portmanteau term derived from 'biology' (life sciences) and 'diversity' and features at several levels: the invisible diversity of genes, the diversity of species, of habitats, and of relations between living creatures and their environment. Biodiversity is the expression of millions of years of the history of life on Earth and therefore the basis for all future life.



Photo: © HTNP / Popp-Hackner
The natural capital of the Hohe Tauern consists of the diverse and species-rich habitats ranging from the valley floors to Austria's highest summit.

Diversity under threat

Biological diversity is constantly undergoing change, with evolution as its driving force. The emergence and extinction of species is a natural process. However, mankind has intervened in this process on a massive scale. The global and regional impact on biodiversity is becoming clearer all the time, and the loss of habitats, species and genetic diversity continues.

Biodiversity – Austria – National Parks

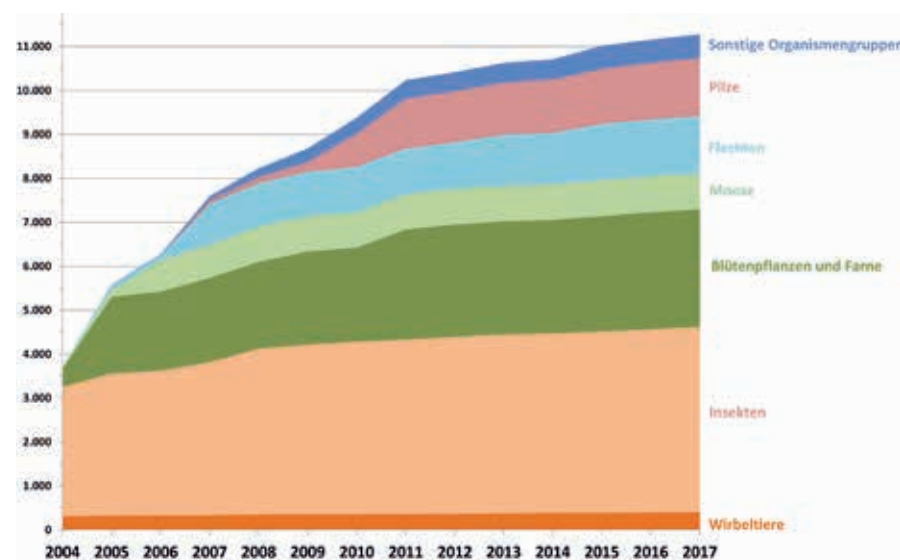
In ratifying the Biodiversity Convention in 1994 Austria pledged to preserve biological diversity. The Austria 2020+ Biodiversity Strategy sets out the national objectives and measures currently necessary to achieve that aim. The field of activity on 'Knowing and Recognising Biodiversity' highlights

the significance and appreciation of biodiversity, with the relevant knowledge to be generated with the help of biodiversity research and monitoring. The Austria 2020+ National Park Strategy, the National Park legislation and the guidelines for research at Austria's National Parks contribute their share at the National Park level towards achieving the country's national biodiversity objectives. Essentially, it is about halting the loss of biological diversity by 2020.

Biodiversity database – Accounting for biodiversity

In 2017 the Austria 2020+ National Park Strategy defined the objective for the 'Research and Monitoring' field of activity as improving scientific knowledge on the status and trends of biodiversity in Austria's National Parks. In the 'Guidelines for Research at Austria's National Parks' stipulated in 2017 a joint biodiversity database was drawn up as a uniform standard for documenting research results.

Many years of co-operation between the Hohe Tauern National Park and the Haus der Natur Salzburg since 2001 have ensured the comprehensive documentation of all the available data on biodiversity. The National Park's biodiversity database specifically collates, standardises, administers, evaluates and supplies the data on the occurrence, distribution, ecology and endangered status of animal, plant and mushroom species for the Hohe Tauern. Just like the bookkeeping at any company, maintaining a biodiversity inventory of natural resources is never completed once and for all. It is an ongoing and necessary task for implementing the core tasks of the protected area. And over the past fifteen years a knowledge database comprised of more than 350,000 data records has been created in this way.



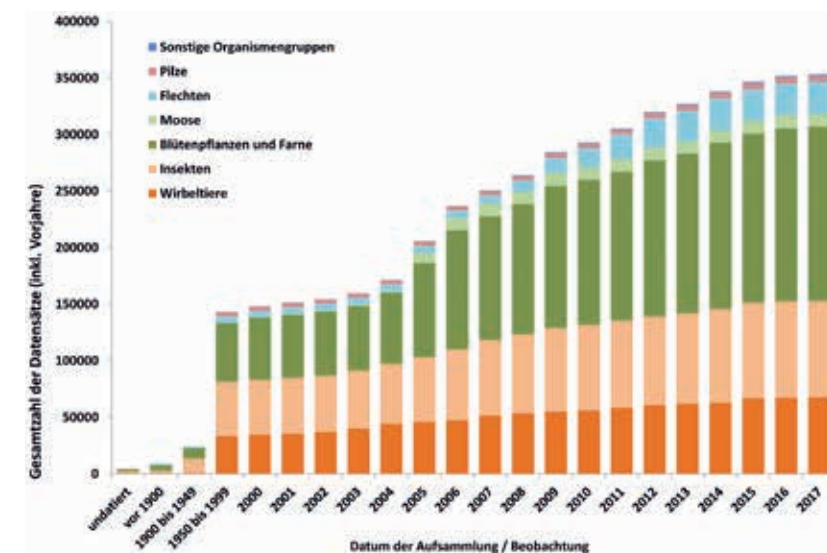
More than 11,000 different species (incl. subordinate systematic units) are currently documented in the biodiversity database of the Hohe Tauern National Park (source: Haus der Natur).

11th Biodiversity Day



Photo: © HTNP / S. Zankl
Ambros Aichhorn and Elisabeth Koder on the lookout for bumblebees during the 11th Biodiversity Day in the Defereggeng valley.

Biodiversity Days have been held at the Hohe Tauern National Park every year since 2007. The aim is to find as many animal, plant and fungus species as possible within the space of 48 hours. So far the following valleys have been scrutinised: Kalser Dorfertal, Wildgerlostal, Dösental, Seidlwinkltal, Teischnitztal/ Ködnitztal, Hollersbachtal, Gschlöstal, Seebachtal, Untersulzbachtal, and the Mallnitz Tauerntal. In 2017 the Defereggeng Valley in East Tyrol was chosen as the venue for the 11th Biodiversity Day to mark the 25th anniversary of the Hohe Tauern National Park in Tyrol. And even though the weather in mid-July was cloudy and rainy, some ninety scientists still showed up to document the biodiversity of the Oberhauser Swiss stone pine forest, the Jagdhausalmen, and the Schwarzach, Arven and Patscher valleys.



The biodiversity database contains first and foremost current reports of finds from the Hohe Tauern, with a total of more than 350,000 data records (source: Haus der Natur).

The extensive management of mountain pastures in the Defereggeng valley – gentle grazing (rough grazing) and late mowing (mountain meadows) – has allowed a high level of biodiversity to emerge. Just under fifty different species of butterflies were identified in heavy rain. In intensively managed valley locations there are hardly any butterflies to be found nowadays, even in fine weather! *Autographa aemula* was identified in East Tyrol for the first time. In Europe this rare species of butterfly only occurs in the Alps and in the Pyrenees. Evidence of breeding and nesting for the highly endangered winchat (*Saxicola rubetra*) was found at two locations: at 1,800 and 2,000 metres above sea level. It is unusual for this thermophile species to occur at such high elevations. Here again, extensive husbandry is one of the reasons that the winchat is breeding here.

On average, a Biodiversity Day usually accounts for some 4,200 data records on 1,500 species. To date, a total of more than 37,000 data records have been collated, i.e. 11 % of the total data inventory of the Hohe Tauern National Park's biodiversity database. The evidence obtained as part of the 2017 Biodiversity Day underscores once again the important role of the Hohe Tauern National Park as a sanctuary for rare and in part extremely endangered species.

Webinfo:

<http://www.hohetauern.at/forschung>

Gössnitz valley monitoring Permafrost monitoring

In 1995 a research team in Heiligenblut, Carinthia, set off in search of spiders, grasshoppers, etc. It found 316 different species, including a previously unknown species of 'daddy longlegs' [opiliones]. Today, the hidden biodiversity of the Gössnitz valley is being studied once again, more than twenty years later.

Equipped with nets, insect traps and soil screens, Christian Komposch and his team were out and about in the Gössnitz valley in 2017. The challenge was to relocate precisely the same areas that had been studied in 1995. The results are impressive: a total of 33 man-days spent out in the terrain collecting eight soil screen samples, 80 insect traps, 50 net samples, and 75 hand catches.

The samples are to be sorted over the next few months and the various species identified, a difficult and time-consuming task. The samplings (e.g. ground traps) are standardised and carried out by the same research team, which means it is possible to make informed statements about the changes in the habitats of the animal communities in the Gössnitz valley.

What is remarkable is the evidence of numerous endemics, i.e. species which are not found anywhere in the world except in Austria or the Alps. As relics of the Ice Age adapted to the cold they now live mainly at higher elevations. The evaluation of these finds will show whether local extinction processes have occurred over the past twenty years and whether there has been a shift in altitudinal distribution.



Photo: © HTNP / K. Aichhorn

Spiders, beetles, etc., are sorted from the screened soil samples using home-made suction apparatus.

A term on everyone's lips in an era of climate change is 'permafrost', i.e. where the temperature of the subsoil year-round is 0 °C or below. Permafrost affects around 12 % of the surface area in the Hohe Tauern, bearing in mind that it depends on various components, e.g. climate factors (air temperature, solar radiation), topographic influences (orientation, slope gradient) and local aspects (vegetation, snow cover).



Photo: © HTNP / K. Aichhorn

The Dösen rock glacier in the Carinthian portion of the National Park is the best researched rock glacier in the Hohe Tauern National Park.

Long-term measurements

In the Carinthia Hohe Tauern National Park, permafrost monitoring is carried out by the University of Technology and the University of Graz in four areas (Dösen valley, Gössnitz valley, Pasterze, Hochtor) and consists of three elements (monitoring of soil temperature, rock glacier and mass movement). Long-term data series on the Dösen rock glacier (Dösen Valley) have been available since 1995; on the Hinteres Langtalkar rock glacier (Gössnitz Valley), since 1999; and on soil temperatures, since 2006. What is striking is that the rates of rock glacier movement are increasing. The maximum values reached 65.9 cm/year for the Dösen rock glacier (2014/2015) and 9.83 m/year for the Hinteres Langtalkar rock glacier (2015/2016).

The thawing of the permafrost and the dynamics of rock glaciers are characteristic natural processes in the Hohe Tauern in particular and, for all the risks and hazards they pose, they represent nature's primordial state in the National Park.

Citizen Science Project Minerals



Photo: © HTNP

The National Park exhibition on 'Emeralds & Crystals' in Bramberg showcases mineral finds from the Hohe Tauern to visitors at the exhibition.

The 'Management Plan National Park 2016-2024 Salzburg Hohe Tauern National Park' sets out as its operational target the 'generation of long-term data series and their interpretation' and, as one of its seven related measures, the 'development and implementation of citizen science projects' in the 'Science & Research' business area / 'Biodiversity Research' field of activity.

With regard to mineralogy in the Hohe Tauern, the region is home to an unimaginable diversity, one which already attracted numerous amateur mineralogists long before the National Park was set up as a protected area. At the same time, knowledge of the 200 and more different minerals and their occurrence has become ever more detailed and better documented, a result also of this passion for collecting. Time and again scientific institutions and collections such as the Museum of Natural History in Vienna, the Joanneum in Graz and the Haus der Natur in Salzburg have tapped into the potential that people with an interest in nature and minerals provide.

However, mineral collection in the National Park is strictly prohibited, at least in the core zone, and exemptions can only be obtained as part of scientific projects and with the prior consent of the relevant landowners in each case.

Knowing full well the value of the expertise and documentation on minerals in the Hohe Tauern, the Hohe Tauern National Park Administration Salzburg chose to adopt a new approach in 2017 for the first time. It not only takes account of the restrictions and control mechanisms imposed by National Park legislation, but also seeks to tap into the knowledge and wealth of experience of the many amateur mineralogists. As part of a Citizen Science Project, interested and experienced laypersons were invited for the first time to work closely with the National Park Administration on documenting the minerals in the Hohe Tauern. The nature conservation and research-relevant outline conditions were subsequently disseminated, documented and checked by means of agreements drawn up under private law.

167 such agreements were concluded and therefore just as many permits issued; a total of 60 finds were subsequently reported by 36 active collectors. In future the exact evaluation and documentation are to be carried out at the Haus der Natur in Salzburg, with a dedicated minerals database to be set up for the National Park. For finds that are either of particular scientific interest or as yet undefined, the National Park Administration also provides funding for special experts and analyses at university facilities. The Crystal Days event held every year at Bramberg am Wildkogel are used to showcase the finds of any given season and offer further training courses, lectures and workshops with recognised mineralogists.



Photo: © HTNP

More than 200 different minerals have been documented for the Hohe Tauern, a genuine treasure trove – also for science and documentation in the National Park.

Alte Prager Hütte

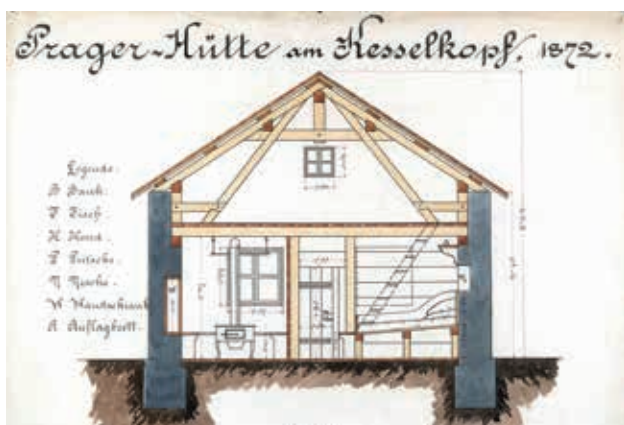


Photo: © HTNP / F. Jurgeit

Building work at the Alte Prager Hütte is already underway.

'Stüdl-inspired research base'

The Alte Prager Hütte mountain hut at 2,489 m was without management for several years and had little or no prospects of commercial operation. Given its historical significance (it was built in 1872 by the Prag - Johann Stüdl Section) the building was designated as a listed building in 2012. Then, in summer 2017, renovation work on the traditional mountain refuge began in earnest, the aim being to restore it in accordance with the original plans as conceived by Johann Stüdl. The funds were raised jointly by the German Alpine Club (DAV) Main Association, the Austrian Alpine Club (ÖAV) Sponsorship Fund and the Tyrol National Park Fund. Given its location in the long-term monitoring area of the Hohe Tauern National Park, the Alte Prager Hütte is ideally suited to be re-deployed as a research base, but not in the sense of a modern mountain refuge, but as an ordinary base in the original state as set out in the 19th century plans. Renovation work aimed at restoring the hut to its original state has been underway since summer 2017 based on the historical plans and the well preserved structure itself. The Alte Prager Hütte is set to re-emerge in new splendour in 2019. Not only will it be a simple research base, it will also provide a real insight into a key aspect of alpine history and the tradition of mountain huts in the Hohe Tauern.



The mountain hut is to be renovated in keeping with its historical plans.

Glacier mass balance

The Hohe Tauern National Park Tyrol and the Hydrographic Department of the Province of Tyrol have been conducting mass balance studies on the Äusseres Mullwitzkees Glacier since 2006. After the negative record in the 2014/2015 mass balance year, the 2016/2017 mass balance was once again highly negative – in fact, the third most negative value since measurements began.

The 'normal range' with regard to ten years of measurements at the Äusseres Mullwitzkees is unfortunately a highly significant loss of mass (exception: 2013/14). In the 2016/2017 mass balance year – a mass balance year covers the period from October 1 to September 30 of the following year – the mass balance loss was -3.721 million m³.

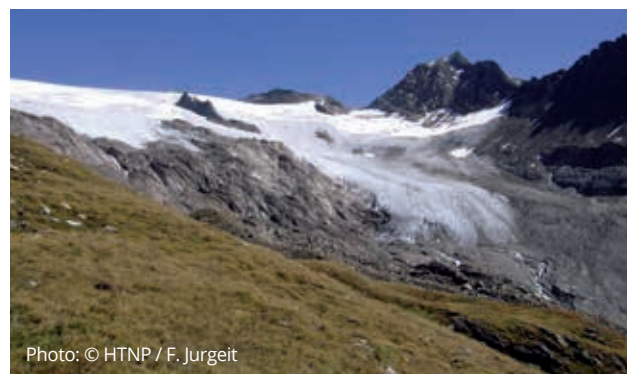


Photo: © HTNP / F. Jurgeit

The Äusseres Mullwitzkees Glacier (Venediger Group) presents large mass losses.

The starkly negative balance is due first and foremost to the strong ablation in July and August and to the low volumes of new snow during the winter months as a 'poor foundation'. This year the equilibrium line at the Mullwitzkees was above the summit level for the fourth time since measurements began.

Äusseres Mullwitzkees annual balances since 2006

Mass balance year	Annual balance (in millions m ³)
2006/07	- 4,461
2007/08	- 1,980
2008/09	- 1,474
2009/10	- 1,481
2010/11	- 3,819
2011/12	- 3,741
2012/13	- 0,638
2013/14	+ 0,342
2014/15	- 4,475
2015/16	- 2,382
2016/17	- 3,721

Webinfo:

www.gletscherwandel.net and www.parc.at

(All annual reports with the results)

Data management

Even a protected area such as the Hohe Tauern National Park is not spared today's problems with an ever increasing glut of data. So it has chosen to address the issue by introducing systematic data management for the research field. Existing and, above all, newly added data from the protected area must be and is to be trackable and preserved in the long term in usable form (data formats).

Johannes Peterseil of the Environmental Agency is to accompany the process as a data expert. The comprehensive topic of data management is to be addressed by looking at a wide range of questions: How time-consuming is the efficient administration of research data? What is the significance of 'open data'? And what characterises a data management plan? By taking account of existing standards and using examples to provide in-depth explanations, the aim is to find out more about meta data, data archiving, and the provision and exchange of research data.

The projects for the Large birds of prey, Long-term Monitoring and Water Quality Monitoring were supported by:



Photo: © HTNP / F. Genero

The bearded vultures are fitted with state-of-the-art GPS technology.

Scientific Advisory Board

Science & Research is a mainstay of the Hohe Tauern National Park. In fact, National Park research focuses on six main areas of research. A Scientific Advisory Board has been set up to provide technical advice on these main topics, assisting the National Park Administrations with regard to strategy development, quality assurance and nurturing contacts with national and international research.

In 2011 a Scientific Advisory Board comprised of eight members from different disciplines, under the chairmanship of Leopold Füreder from the University of Innsbruck, was established in the Hohe Tauern National Park. On completion of their term of office the members of the Board were honoured as part of the 6th International Research Symposium of National Parks Austria in Salzburg and thanked for their many years of valuable co-operation at the service of science and research in the Hohe Tauern National Park. Over the years several research projects were scrutinised by the Board with regard to content, objectives and methodology. All the recommendations put forward by the Board ultimately contributed towards improving the quality of the scientific work carried out as part of the research projects.

Eight new members have now been won over for the new term running from 2017 to 2021. The constituent meeting of the new Scientific Advisory Board is to be held on 23 January 2018, with the chair duly appointed.

Cultural Landscape Preservation

Mountain pastures characterise the higher elevations of the Alps

This thinned, semi-open landscape with its dense intermeshing of forests and grasslands as well as diverse transitional areas was created in the course of its history of use through transformation of enclosed woodlands into this particular habitat type. The cultural landscape characterised by mountain pastures has evolved over decades of landscape husbandry. Compared with the original natural landscape this new habitat type features a greater biodiversity and a diverse landscape. Close integration of original landscape and cultivated land is a characteristic of the Hohe Tauern. That is why, alongside the unspoilt natural landscape, the traditionally farmed cultural land of alpine pastures have been integrated into the National Park, forming the outer zone of the protected area. Here the preservation, nurturing and shaping of the cultural landscape and the preservation of the biodiversity itself are in the public interest. In recent decades changes in agriculture have also resulted in changes in management and husbandry at higher elevations. Many labour and time-intensive tasks are no longer profitable. Agricultural-economic concepts are undergoing change and adapting to the supraregional demands of an increasingly globalised agricultural sector. Mechanisation, reorientation and performance optimisation in agricultural production have also affected alpine farming. The challenge consists of reconciling modern alpine farming with the preservation of a near-natural cultural landscape and a high level of biodiversity.

Sustainable use contributes towards preserving biodiversity in the cultural landscape, with the type and intensity of use crucial for the occurrence and condition of numerous species and habitats. Many of the biotope types that are valuable from the point of view of nature conservation have been created as a

result of traditional alpine farming, and many animal and plant species as well as their habitats depend on maintaining such extensive use and management. Management should therefore be orientated towards natural circumstances and be site-specific and cycle-related. Reducing the intensity of use in the valley floors, preserving and nurturing rough grazing in valley locations and promoting indigenous breeds of farm animals all have a special role to play. Preserving the characteristic cultural landscape requires a specific combination of promoting an ecologically sustainable use and applying targeted conservation activities. Contractual nature conservation is the instrument of choice for preventing excessive pressures on biodiversity and to reduce interventions in habitats particularly worthy of protection.

Funding area: conservation, preservation and nurturing of the cultural landscape

Sustainably managed mountain pastures with their typical cultural landscape structures shape the characteristic landscape of the outer zone and provide largely intact habitats and retreats for a diverse fauna and flora. One key component of that landscape are anthropogenic elements such as building structures, fences, and dry stone walls. Not only do they represent assets of a folklore or cultural-historical value, they also assume a wide variety of ecological and other functions in terms of landscape aesthetics. In combination with a traditionally used cultural landscape, they represent ecologically valuable structures that are used in many different ways by animals and plants and contribute to the high level of biodiversity in the cultural landscape.



Photo: © HTNP / T. Steiner

Arnitzalm mountain pasture.



Photo: © HTNP / G. Hofer

Restored 'Kornmühle' mill.

Contractual nature conservation – pastures

In all three National Park Provinces contractual nature conservation models have been on offer for several years now for the conservation, protection and nurturing of cultural landscapes. The 'National Park certificate for alpine pastures' in Tyrol and the 'Nature conservation plan on alpine pastures' in Carinthia are modern instruments that allow individual funding models for various approaches tailored specifically to local circumstances:

- Pasture management and pasture maintenance aimed at preserving particularly valuable locations
- Biotope protection by creating potential substitute grazing areas
- Creation of landscape elements such as dry stone walls
- Assarting of rough grazing areas
- Species protection programmes (e.g. capercaillie)

In Carinthia 19 alpine pastures have availed themselves of this new contractual model of cultural landscape funding, with 13 in Salzburg and 30 in Tyrol. The success of contractual nature conservation is predicated on close, intensive communication with landowners.



Photo: © HTNP / T. Steiner

Negotiations with landowners.

In 2017 84 projects/measures representing a subsidy volume of EUR 399,655.– were implemented as part of the conservation & preservation of the cultural landscape in Salzburg and Tyrol. In Carinthia, subsidies for the 'Nature conservation plan on alpine pastures' are paid through the funding agency (Office of the Provincial Government of Carinthia, Dept. 8 Protection of the Environment, Water and Nature).



Photo: © HTNP

Shingle roofing.

Alpine pasture subsidies 2017

Intense discussions on the potential duplicate funding of National Park subsidies with the applicable ÖPUL [Austrian Agri-environmental] Programme in all three National Park Federal Provinces have led to a reorientation of this proven funding system in Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol. A key aspect of this reorientation included justifications of this subsidy system specially targeted at National Park regulations, which in its essence can now be maintained in a similar way in all three provinces.

Province-specific orientations and different accounting methods do not yet allow for any direct comparison of this subsidy system.

Tyrol example:

Alpine pasture subsidies in the NP region	EUR 23,126.–
Alpine pasture subsidies in the NP area	EUR 110,170.–
Hardship allowance for alpine pastures not accessible by track	EUR 8,208.–
Mowing subsidy for mountain pastures	EUR 50,546.–
TOTAL SUBSIDIES	EUR 192,050.–



Photo: © HTNP

Wirtsmaos biotope protection.

Alpine farming – status quo

A survey of alpine pasture use was carried out between 2014 and 2016 in the Hohe Tauern National Parks in Carinthia, Tyrol and Salzburg. The survey focused on the following main issues:

- Where do the animals in the National Park graze? What are the main areas of emphasis in alpine pasture use in the core and outer zones of the National Park?
- How are cattle, horses, sheep and goats distributed across the individual pastures and in the National Park?
- How has alpine pasture use changed over the past twenty years (i.e. since the last survey)?
- Area figures on the current grazing intensity and vegetation-based monitoring

Surface area distribution in the National Park

In terms of surface area Salzburg accounts for the largest portion of the Hohe Tauern National Park with around 80,500 hectares. And here the main emphasis is on dairy farming. Indeed, dairy farming is the characteristic activity in the long trough valleys in the west and the Seidlwinkl valley in particular. The second largest share of the surface area is taken up by East Tyrol with 61,100 hectares. Carinthia has the smallest overall size with 44,000 hectares, but with around 32,700 hectares the core zone in Carinthia is only marginally smaller than the core zone in the Hohe Tauern National Park in East Tyrol. Carinthia has the largest share of grazing area within any particular National Park portion. Here a total of 46 % of the National Park is identified as grazing grounds (areas used for grazing in principle). In East Tyrol and Salzburg the corresponding areas account for 39 % and 30 % of the protected area respectively. If we consider the core zone only, the picture is slightly different. In East Tyrol only 20 % of the core zone is within areas of alpine pasture use (grazing areas) and only 8 % of the core zone is actually under grazing. In Salzburg 26 % of the surface area is within areas of alpine pasture use (grazing areas) and 13 % of the core zone is actually under grazing. In Carinthia the share of grazing areas in the core zone is significantly higher at 42 %. But here again only a small proportion (13 % of the surface area) is actually under grazing.

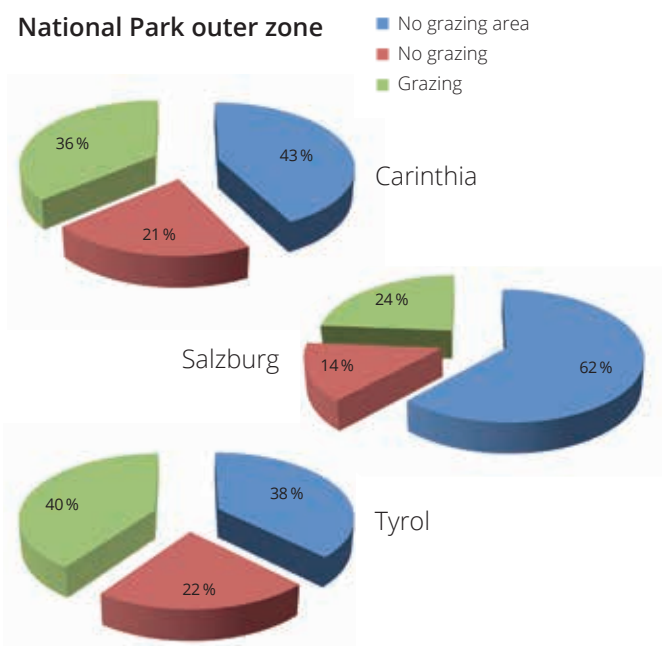
Comparison of cattle drive figures

A total of 14,166 livestock units (*Grossvieheinheit* – GVE) spent the summer months grazing in the Hohe Tauern National Park. They include 20,100 sheep and goats (16% of sheep and goats grazing in alpine pastures nationwide), 12,400 young cattle and horses, and 1,700 dairy cows. With almost 7,000 livestock units (GVEs) the main area of alpine pasture use is in the Salzburg portion of the National Park. This is also where the majority of dairy cows are taken up to alpine pastures (1,200 dairy cows). And while East Tyrol still has a few, less extensive milking pastures, such alpine pastures are almost entirely non-existent in Carinthia. Here only 37 dairy cows are milked up on the pastures. The alpine pasturing of sheep plays a significant role in all three sections of the National Park.

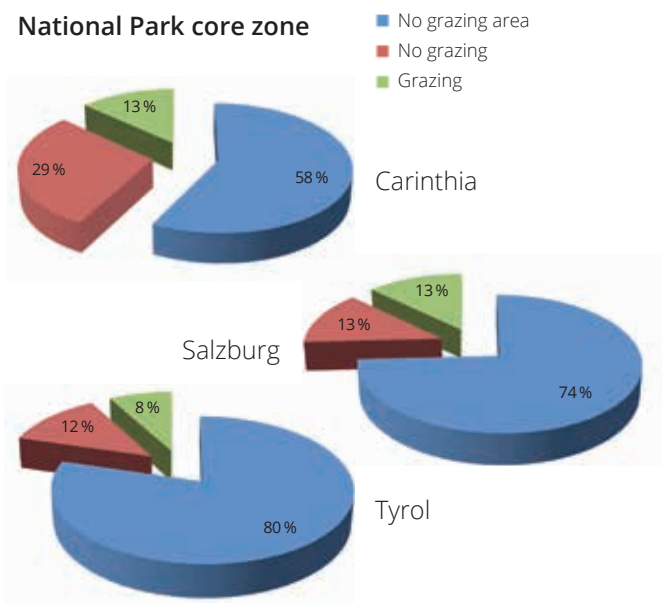
Comparison of alpine pasture use

Livestock density (in livestock units per hectare (GVE)/ha) is below 0.45 GVE/ha on most alpine pastures in the National Park in both the core zone and the outer zone. A higher **live-stock** density of more than 1 GVE/ha is to be found in individual areas only. These are mostly lower-lying, high-yielding fertile meadows near alpine huts or they represent very small pastures that are grazed more intensively. Accordingly, the share of areas with a high livestock density is considerably higher in the outer zone than in the core zone. Vigorous fertile pastures are rare in the core zones and areas with a high livestock density are therefore sparse in all three portions of the National Park and mostly to be found at the margins.

National Park outer zone



National Park core zone



Livestock protection

The return of large predators to the Alps such as wolves, bears and lynx looks set to become a reality. Time and again individual animals have been found to roam through parts of the Hohe Tauern, too. The preferred habitats of wolves in particular are actually vast expanses of near-natural forests, which no longer exist in Austria. Largely unspoiled landscapes are to be found first and foremost at high elevations and so now they also provide a retreat for wolves. With the return of these animals conflicts with traditional alpine farming are pre-programmed. Particularly at risk are small ruminants such as sheep and goats, and in Austria a high percentage of these animals are left out to graze on alpine pastures.

and upkeep of livestock guardian dogs (working dogs), also need to be aligned accordingly in Austria.

This form of sheep pasturing entails many challenges for sheep farmers too. Keeping and shepherding herds in a concentrated form or maintaining herds in corrals at night has given rise to management measures of a different kind for sheep farmers (animal health, lambing schedules, etc.).

In any case, the pilot project has provided some very valuable insights for farming practice in the National Park region itself.



In co-operation with the Hohe Tauern National Park in Tyrol the National Advisory Office on Livestock Protection (Austrian Federal Association for Sheep and Goats) carried out a four-year pilot project in Kals am Grossglockner. It trialled the use of livestock guardian dogs in farming practice in conjunction with the permanent shepherding of a flock of sheep. Over the past four alpine pasturing periods the 1,200 sheep in the Kalser Dorfertal were constantly accompanied by shepherds, herding dogs and livestock guardian dogs of the Maremma-Abruzzese sheepdog breed.

The project faced countless challenges: forming a homogeneous herd of animals that are owned by different farmers; the present-day scarcity of professional shepherds; and chance encounters between hikers and livestock guardian dogs which have a natural protective instinct developed over centuries. The statutory framework conditions, particularly for the use

Information and education are essential aspects of the project. As part of the pilot project, folders containing rules of conduct and information about the project were printed out and made available to visitors.

Education & Visitor Information

Nature education, environmental education and high-quality visitor information are of paramount importance in the Hohe Tauern National Park. Objectives include:

- Conveying the global idea of a national park
- Consolidating the significance of the Hohe Tauern National Park as a protected area
- Transferring knowledge of ecological cycles and connections

- Creating an understanding of environmental protection and nature conservation as a societal responsibility
- Motivating the public to actively experience nature in an unspoilt natural landscape and near-natural cultural landscape
- Guiding the public towards environmentally friendly measures and attitudes based on the principle of sustainability



Photo: © HTNP

naturbegeistert ['loving nature'] – new teaching materials

The teaching resources for schools that were compiled on the Hohe Tauern National Park in the 1990s are starting to show their age. Outdated data and a slightly old-fashioned didactic approach were reason enough to update these teaching resources, which were readily used as part of the Ranger training programmes. *naturbegeistert* ['loving nature'] can now be



downloaded by educators, schoolchildren and others with an interest in the subject. And it's not just schools in the region that support these didactic materials. *naturbegeistert* is also a valuable addition to the regular syllabus taught at middle and high schools in subjects such as biology and environmental studies, geography and economics, as well as history and social studies. Besides well structured technical information with lots of graphics, charts and illustrations, they also contain links to further reading and films as well as the National Park offers available for schools. Teaching staff also have ready access to PowerPoint slides and worksheets.

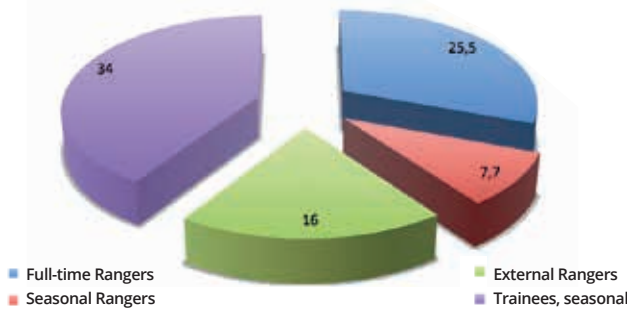
Webinfo: www.hohetauern.at/unterricht

National Park Rangers

All over the world, National Park Rangers are the 'calling card' of National Parks and the link between nature and mankind. They are the ambassadors of protected areas, there to share their knowledge as part of the extensive education offer available at the National Park. They also act as intermediaries between the global idea of a National Park and the possibilities afforded each individual to experience nature. They delight the young and the young-at-heart on field trips and guided tours of the National Park; they implement education programmes such as the 'Mobile Climate School and Waterschool' or touring exhibitions in schools in Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol; and they showcase some of nature's most complex phenomena at education facilities run by the National Park.

Other activities involved in the job of National Park Ranger:

- Regional supervision in the valleys of the National Park
- Inspection duties on the National Park infrastructure
- Education and PR work for visitors and the local population
- Lecturing activities and running information stands
- Involvement in wildlife management measures
- Involvement in science and research at the National Park, e.g. monitoring programmes, species protection programmes, etc.



Training course to become an Austrian National Park Ranger

Since 2010 National Park Rangers have undergone ISO 9001 certified training that is standardised right across Austria. The training course consists of a foundation course (17 days) and an advanced course (15 days) as well as 10 days of practical training; it covers a minimum period of at least two years. Participants in the certificate course receive solid, comprehensive training on the objectives and tasks of a National Park, the general principles underlying Austria's natural resources, and how they came about, and the ecological links between nature and landscape in the National Park Region for which the certificate is issued. The course also looks at the fundamentals of nature studies and the many different ways in which human activities have affected the landscape throughout history, right through to the present. The basics of communication, nature education and the mediation of experience and knowledge about nature and landscape are also taught. Other contents include legal principles and the basics of emergency situation management. Mandatory advanced training courses in the years thereafter ensure that certified National Park Rangers are always up to date with the latest developments.

In 2017 a training course was on offer at the Hohe Tauern National Park. The focus was on a new target group of retirees or prospective retirees. All 26 participants, including 9 'Senior Rangers', successfully completed the foundation course with a written exam.



Photo: © HTNP / M. Luggner

Visitor Support Services 2017 – Facts & Figures

Schoolchildren supported	37,205
Visitors supported	
Adventure programmes	11,915
Visitors supported	
Lectures/multivision shows	3,809
Visitors supported at info centres, exhibitions, 'Meet-a-Ranger' stations	182,696
Visitor centre frequency, general	358,889



Photo: © HTNP / Steinthaler

National Park Rangers in action

- School programmes at National Park education facilities and in schools
- Project days and weeks for schools
- Programmes and projects at National Park partner schools
- Swarovski Waterschool
- Verbund Climate School
- Nature adventure camps for children, teenagers and adults
- Junior Ranger training programmes
- Children's adventure and researcher programmes, kindergarten events
- Year-round support for National Park visitors (summer/winter programme)
- 'Meet-a-Ranger' stations in the access valleys
- Guided tours of National Park exhibitions
- Support services and advice at visitor centres and information offices
- Assistance with the organisation and staging of events (European Day of Parks, 'The National Park Comes to Town', partner school fêtes, species conservation days at Schönbrunn Zoo, Hellbrunn Zoo and the Alpengarten, Vienna Harvest Festival, trade fairs: *Interpädagogica*, Bird Experience, holiday fairs, Biodiversity Days)
- Support and assistance for partner companies
- Support and assistance for press trips and journalists
- Assistance with research projects
- Regional supervision

The footwear for Rangers in Salzburg is provided courtesy of:



The footwear for Rangers in Tyrol is provided courtesy of:



The Junior Ranger Programme in Salzburg is funded by:



Swarovski Waterschool

The Alps are seen as Europe's water tower. Here 279 streams, 551 lakes and 342 glaciers are testimony to the wealth of water assets in the Hohe Tauern National Park. A wealth that is all too often taken for granted.

As Konrad Lorenz once observed: 'You only love what you know, and you only protect what you love!' The aim of the Swarovski Waterschool in Austria is to make children and young people more aware of the vital importance of water.



Photo: © NP Donau Auen / Pölz

An experiment on the topic of water cycles.

It's one of the reasons the Hohe Tauern National Park's Rangers are constantly out and about in school classrooms in Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol, explaining the different aspects of the topic of water to schoolchildren through a total of nine modules. The importance and the properties of water are illustrated using numerous experiments. Under the Ranger's guidance, children are also taught to work out how high their water consumption is at school and at home. They discuss ways of saving water and how water is cleaned naturally, through the ground, or through water treatment plants. Part of the lessons are taught outdoors as pupils search for and discuss animals and plants that live in and around waterways. The forest as a water reservoir is also a topic.



Waterschool worldwide

After the Waterschool was founded in Austria in 2000, Swarovski went on to open other Waterschool sites around the world, and so there are now Waterschool pupils in China, India, Uganda, Brazil, the United States, and Thailand. One aim of the Swarovski Waterschool is to raise awareness of how water is interconnected at the global level. Waterschool lessons therefore focus on a key issue, namely the global water situation, its challenges and possible solutions. The National Park Rangers

SWAROVSKI WATERSCHOOL

for instance demonstrate how a 'Tippy-Tap' works, a device used every day in Uganda for washing hands.



Networking is essential

A great deal of importance is also attached to networking the individual sites. In August a Skype conversation was held between Waterschool pupils in China and Water Camp participants at the House of Water. Also, a UCLA film team shot a film on the Waterschool locations; in Austria the Waterschool pupils in Kals were chosen for the filming.

The project co-ordinators in each individual country are also in constant touch with one another. A meeting of co-ordinators is held every two years. In 2017 it was held in Rishikesh in India.

By the end of 2017 more than 460,000 pupils in the seven countries had taken part in the Waterschool Programme; in Austria alone there were around 74,000 such pupils. Advanced training courses are also held every year for teachers. In 2017, Rangers showcased the Waterschool at the Donau-Auen National Park.



Photo: © HTNP / A. Brugger

Practical advanced training course for teachers in the Deferegggen valley.

VERBUND Climate School

The latest studies by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) leave no doubt: the ongoing climate change is having serious repercussions on people and the environment. In fact, the Alpine region is even more badly affected than other regions. A higher temperature rise has been measured here than in the rest of the world; what's more, the duration of the snow cover is getting shorter all the time. The impact is already clearly visible in the high-mountain setting of our National Park: the loss of glacier surface area, the thawing of permafrost soils, and the associated erosion are just a few examples.



Photo: © NMS Niederdorf / Praschberger

Experiments like this one to create a cloud make lessons all the more entertaining.

Rangers as Climate School teachers

It is 'extremely likely' that human activities are the main cause of global warming. So it is only by altering our lifestyles that we can hope to lessen the warming of our planet. This is precisely where the VERBUND Climate School of the Hohe Tauern National Park comes into play. Specially trained National Park Rangers are on hand to teach children and young people about the vast topic of 'climate'. The aim is that young people, i.e. the decision-makers of the future, will be able to make their everyday



Photo: © HTNP / H. Keuschnig

The VERBUND Climate School of the Hohe Tauern National Park at the Harvest Festival in Vienna.



lives more sustainable and more eco-friendly thanks to a better understanding of the issue and then pass on their knowledge to others.

On the four Climate School Days in total, schoolchildren find out what 'climate' actually is, how it can be measured, and what factors influence the complex climate system. They also look at how climate has changed, what role human activities play within this scenario, and what the consequences of climate change are in the Alpine region and all over the world. Climate change mitigation is of course a focal point of the Climate School.

Interdisciplinary lessons are made very entertaining through the use of countless practical experiments and examples. Special weather phenomena such as the Föhn wind are discussed in detail and demonstrated in experimental setups. The climate timeline is also studied using tree finds discovered far above the tree line in the Hohe Tauern National Park.

Road traffic counts are carried out and CO₂ emissions calculated to highlight the importance of tackling climate change. The school children are regularly given homework on the subject matter, for instance calculating how many kilometres the ingredients used to cook last night's dinner have travelled. This in turn ensures that the topic is discussed at home, within the family.



Photo: © HTNP

Natural phenomena can often be explained much more clearly using simple experiments.

National recognition

The VERBUND Climate School of the Hohe Tauern National Park can be booked free of charge by any school in Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol. Since June 2010 when the School was first established, no fewer than 19,450 schoolchildren have attended Climate School lessons, contributing hugely towards raising awareness. And in 2017 the Climate School received recognition from, among others, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management.

Webinfo: <http://www.nationalpark-klimaschule.at>

Partner Schools



Photo: © E. Angermann

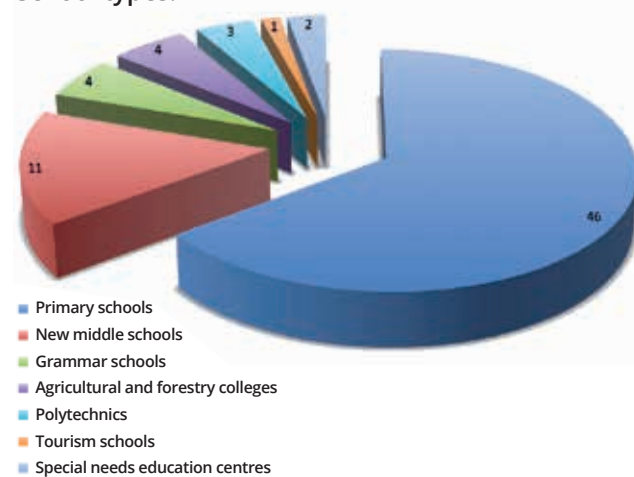
Ja!Natürlich has been lending its strong support to the Partner Schools project for years.

The National Park Partner Schools pilot project began fifteen years ago with one school; today 71 schools in the National Park regions of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol are contractually certified Partner Schools with a total of 8,721 pupils (school year 2017/18) attending primary schools, new middle schools, secondary schools, grammar schools, special needs education centres, agricultural and forestry colleges, polytechnics and tourism schools.

The long-term institutionalised partnership between regional schools and the Hohe Tauern National Park is borne by the conviction that any lastingly effective environmental and nature conservation education as well as a solid anchoring of the National Park idea has to begin in childhood and adolescence. Today's children and young people are the decision-makers of tomorrow: in the future they will be the ones working in municipalities, tourist associations and other bodies and making the decisions about the orientation and content of the Hohe Tauern National Park.

For years the sponsoring partner of the Partner School Programme has been *Ja!Natürlich*, Austria's biggest brand of organic produce, which also supports events with healthy snacks and refreshments.

School types:



Partner School fêtes

Kals am Grossglockner

Celebrating a quarter of a century of the Hohe Tauern National Park in Tyrol was the perfect occasion for organising a school fête for the Partner Schools of East Tyrol in Kals on 30 June 2017. Forty classes and around 800 pupils and teachers worked their way through experience stations at the Kalser Pavilion, the Education Centre, and the sports ground, working with knowledge, fun and personal commitment.

The stations themselves were as varied as the age groups participating (6 to 16): From the animal memory game to the Climate School quiz, the water transport game, the farming touch-box and the pine cone race – all the stations were designed to consolidate and broaden the pupils' knowledge of nature through fun games and the experience of nature, entirely in keeping with the motto of the National Park's environmental education remit.

'The Partner School fête is our way of saying thank you to all the schoolchildren and teachers who, thanks to their terrific commitment, have supported the vision of the Hohe Tauern National Park throughout the school year,' said Tyrol National Park Director Hermann Stotter.



Photo: © HTNP / M. Kurzthaler

Niedernsill

In 2017 the National Park invited the Partner Schools of the National Park Region to take part in the communal school fête for the seventh time now, and this year it was held at the National Park Municipality of Niedernsill. Seventy classes with around 1,200 pupils and 110 teachers once again found out lots of new facts and figures about the National Park at the

various learning stations. At eleven different stations featuring games, knowledge and activities the children were able to show off the knowledge they had acquired at school about the National Park. The National Park's professional hunters used exhibits to talk about some of the animals that live in the National Park, and the Rangers shared their in-depth knowledge of the weather in the high mountain regions and their natural history knowledge of the flora in the protected area. The children were thrilled to find out all about these 'survival artists' of fauna and flora. The Hohe Tauern National Park is keen to make young people in particular aware of themes such as nature conservation and environmental protection and give them an insight into the correlations.



Photo: © HTNP

Mallnitz

The big end-of-year farewell party was held in Mallnitz on 2 June 2017 for all Year 4 classes of the National Park Partner Schools. A total of 92 children attending the primary schools in Heiligenblut, Grosskirchheim, Mörttschach, Winklern, Mallnitz, Obervellach and Malta were presented with certificates confirming that they had successfully taken part in the four-year Partner Schools lessons.

Pupils at the primary schools are regularly taught by the National Park Rangers over a period of four years and go on field trips and excursions with them. Each National Park primary school has its own dedicated Ranger to accompany the schoolchildren throughout their primary education, with each school year devoted to a particular theme. The primary schools at Heiligenblut, Grosskirchheim, Mörttschach, Winklern, Mallnitz, Obervellach, Malta and St. Margarethen all took part in the partner schools programme of the Hohe Tauern National Park.

During the 2016/17 school year 792 schoolchildren in the Carinthian portion of the Hohe Tauern National Park were able to benefit from National Park lessons. Eight primary schools, the Winklern National Park Secondary School, the Drauhofen Agricultural College, and the BORG Spittal upper secondary academic school were all involved in the partner schools project of the Hohe Tauern National Park.



Photo: © HTNP / E. Angermann

The National Park Comes to Salzburg

On 7 and 8 June 2017 the Hohe Tauern National Park once again sent out invitations to the Hellbrunn Castle grounds to celebrate with schoolchildren from the city of Salzburg and its surrounding area. With the help of the team from the Hellbrunn Castle and Park Administration the event was an out-and-out success, with some 1,000 children able to enjoy an exciting morning at the Castle grounds.

The aim of the event is to introduce schoolchildren in the city of Salzburg to the National Park's huge diversity.

The topics ranged from the correct use and handling of indigenous medicinal and crop plants to survival strategies adopted by the Swiss stone pine to get through the icy winters, and to the way weather evolves in the high mountains. The fun snowshoe race also proved a big hit with the children as did the wildlife quiz, which put their sense of touch to the test. The children also had the opportunity to concoct their own herb-flavoured salt and aromatic herb vinegar as a souvenir of an exciting day out to take home with them.



Photo: © HTNP

Children creating a National Park panorama featuring characteristic animals and plants.

Camps

For years, (inter)national young camps and holiday programmes have complemented the education offer of the Hohe Tauern National Park and provided children aged seven to fifteen with an exciting and entertaining programme throughout the summer months. The aim of the camps is to acquaint the children with nature and the idea of the National Park, not to mention the positive socio-educational effects of these get-togethers. As young ambassadors of the Hohe Tauern National Park they will in turn provide valuable information to others in the future.

Junior Rangers

Two Junior Ranger Camps for young teenagers aged twelve to fifteen were held in July and August. Over a whole fortnight the adolescents learned the sorts of skills that genuine National Park Rangers need for their work. But the programmes were not just about conveying genuine knowledge: these dedicated teenagers also got to experience lots of action, fun and adventure. The thirty teenagers came from right across Austria, plus one young man from California, who found out about the camp through an au-pair in East Tyrol and applied to take part. Thanks to sponsoring from the province of Carinthia itself (through *Kärntnermilch*) participants were able to attend the summer camp free of charge. In Tyrol the Administration financed the project itself.



Photo: © HTNP / G. Granig

The Junior Ranger Programme has been held since 2003.

Youth at the TOP ['Young People at Their Peak']

On July 11, former graduates of the Junior Ranger training programme and current Junior Rangers met for a two-day exchange of views and experiences as part of the pan-Alpine ALPARC campaign 'Youth at the Top' ['Young People at their Peak']. The overarching aim of 'Young People at Their Peak' is to reconnect the younger generation with their surroundings and boost awareness of the protection of the Alps and the ways in which the Alpine region as a whole is interconnected. One novelty in this the third edition of the event was the didactic tool 'The Alps in My Backpack', i.e. a large tent canvas that offers lots of teaching possibilities by featuring a map of the

Alps, information on how the mountains were formed, and illustrations of animal tracks. The third edition of 'Young People at Their Peak' was held on July 11 in six countries of the Alpine region and three countries of the Carpathians.

In the Hohe Tauern National Park two youth groups set off under the same motto, venturing out into the Seebach valley in Carinthia and the Debant valley in East Tyrol.

Wilderness Camps

Dates: 24–28 July and 21–25 August 2017

2017 saw the first ever Wilderness Camp, held in the Obersulzbach valley. In addition to forays into the high mountains the programme included wildlife spotting, setting up camp, and spending the night in the great outdoors. The Hofrat Keller Hütte mountain hut, which was entirely renovated in 2017, was available as a base camp. The mountain refuge offers no technical mod-cons whatsoever, so no electricity, no hot water, and no radio contact.



Photo: © HTNP / W. Schuh

Making a fire with just one match is quite a challenge.

Other summer camps and offers for children & adolescents:

- National Park investigators, East Tyrol Region
- Young Explorers' Club, Möll valley region
- Austrian Alpine Club Water & Forest Camp, House of Water, St. Jakob
- 2017 Water Camp, House of Water, St. Jakob

Visitor centres / Exhibitions

The visitor centres (large and small) of the Hohe Tauern National Park are situated in central locations and in well frequented destinations around the Hohe Tauern National Park. For visitors they act as an introduction to the National Park. Exciting state-of-the-art exhibitions often complemented by special exhibitions throughout the year guide visitors through various 'National Park worlds', from small scale to large.

'Tauern views – Awe-inspiring moments'

The redesign of the Visitor Centre's information and service area and the new permanent exhibition entitled 'Tauern views – Awe-inspiring moments' underscore the trend towards a contemporary visitor infrastructure. The information and service area and the permanent exhibition were completely revamped in the short planning and implementation phase (construction time: six months); what's more, the Murre National Park Centre now offers visitors approx. one third more space.

A striking feature is the spacious bright design with a ceiling opening through to the lower level of the exhibition, which not only provides more surface area, but also increases the spatial volume. In its six adventure worlds – from the summits of the Hohe Tauern to glaciers, alpine pastures, mountain meadows, streams & lakes, and mountain forests – the new permanent exhibition acquaints visitors with some of nature's highlights and offers tips and advice on how to enjoy a genuine experience of the Hohe Tauern National Park.

Spectacular 360° videos accompany visitors through the exhibition, with Rangers showcasing National Park hotspots such as the Jagdhausalmen, the Umbal waterfalls, and stunning glacier experiences. Besides modern technology such as 360°

videos the permanent exhibition on 'Tauern views – Awe-inspiring moments' also features more traditional elements such as a 'Tauern view diorama' with the 'Big Five' of the Hohe Tauern National Park and fun elements that invite visitors to embark on a journey of discovery of nature's secrets.

Other National Park centres/exhibitions:

- Mittersill National Park Centre
- Emeralds & Crystals, Bramberg
- Elder at the Klausnerhaus, Hollersbach
- Tauern trails, Mittersill
- Ecological Footprint, Hollersbach
- Resterhöhe National Park Panorama, Hollersbach
- Glacier-Climate-Weather, Uttendorf
- Life Under Water, Fusch
- Sovereign of the Skies, Rauris
- National Park Gallery, Kaprun
- Up on the alpine pasture – Between heaven and earth, Hüttschlag
- Looking Through the Tauern Window, Neukirchen am Grossvenediger
- Swiss stone pine exhibition, St. Jakob im Defereggental
- National Park Welcome Area, Lienz Tourism Centre
- Beyond Time, Virgen
- Grossglockner Panorama, Kals am Grossglockner
- Mallnitz Visitor Centre
- Winklarn National Park Information
- Oberbergmeisteramt, Obervellach
- Swarovski Observatory, Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe
- National Park Exhibition, Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe

Webinfo: www.hohetauern.at



Photo: © HTNP / M. Lugger

Education facilities

Environmental Education is one of the core tasks of any internationally recognised National Park, alongside Natural Resource Management and Science & Research. The pupils at the various National Park education centres learn to describe, understand and explain nature, and always in combination with lots of experiences and adventures. Whether it's the House

of Water in St. Jakob, the Mallnitz Visitor Centre, the National Park Worlds and the Science Centre in Mittersill or the National Park Workshop in Hollersbach, there are opportunities everywhere to explore nature in the National Park and, beyond that, find out more about topical environmental issues such as the global water balance and climate change.



Educational facilities in 2017	
School-classes supported/other groups	392
Participants	7,424

House of Water – Gathering point for young researchers

Water shapes everything – that's the message that participants in the theme-based weeks took away with them. In 2017 they took part in the water project that lasted several days, the summer camps, the guided tours, and the seminars on offer at the facility. The 20,000th visitor was welcomed in May 2017. Under the guidance of National Park Rangers the groups learned to appreciate the value of water. The theory always combines practical examples too. And this ever popular lesson on precious resources is gaining more and more influence: visitors from Kazakhstan were welcomed in 2017 as they arrived



to take a closer look at this modern environmental education facility. The VisionGlobe has been delighting participants since 2012 and has since been complemented by a video on the Swarovski Waterschool. A bread-baking oven has been built in the outdoor area of the House of Water, adding an extra attraction to the *Ja! Natürlich* module on 'A Taste of Nature'.

Webinfo: www.hohetauern.at/hausdeswassers

Mallnitz Visitor Centre

Besides its function as a visitor centre the facility in Mallnitz also acts as an education centre. Each year school and youth groups use the Centre's infrastructure with its seminar rooms, laboratories and interactive exhibition to broaden their knowledge of natural history. The National Park Rangers then take the participants outdoors into the Hohe Tauern National Park. A great deal of importance is attached to putting the theory into practice and to the experiences gained as a result.

In addition, the National Park co-operates closely with the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) to organise each year's Kindergarten Month, which is always a big success. Early experiences of nature and promoting an awareness of the environment among children of kindergarten age are important education goals. The experiences that children have with 'nature' directly influence how sensitive they are towards their environment later on in life, as adults. These action weeks have been held at the Mallnitz Visitor Centre since 2006 – with great success. In 2017 around 1,000 children of kindergarten age from right across Carinthia and the Gastein valley were able



to avail themselves of this education offer. In 2017 everything revolved around water. Children were taught in a fun way the vital importance of water as a resource. During the journey through the water cycle our intrepid little explorers were put into small groups at the various stations to find out more. There was plenty of dancing, music-making with water instruments, and lots of experimenting and DIY-ing.

National Park Workshop

At the National Park Workshop the focus is on the cultural landscape of the Hohe Tauern National Park. Four interactive, professionally guided indoor modules are dedicated to topics such as alpine farming, nature's very own foods and medicinal cures, trees and forests, and animal tracks. By getting to know and trying out traditional rural handicraft techniques, age-old knowledge of the curative powers of the local nature and ecology of the forest as a centuries-old cultural space, visitors are able to learn about the close integration of nature and culture in the Hohe Tauern National Park and reflect on the repercussions of human intervention in nature. The adjoining grounds also have an extensive herb garden and a walk-in 'ecological footprint' for visitors to enjoy.



Science Centre

The Science Centre focuses on the natural history of the Hohe Tauern National Park. Eight interactive, professionally guided indoor modules address the topics of geology and mountain formation, mineralogy, climate and weather, water and snow, high-mountain ecology, elevations and vegetation zones, microworld, and the sounds and voices of nature. Their entertaining and appealing didactic and learning materials, modern binocular telescopes and original exhibits demonstrate even complicated processes and contexts, providing individual independent access to the subject matter.



Webinfo: www.hohetauern.at/bildung

National Park Academy

Since 1997 the Hohe Tauern National Park Academy has been the joint adult education centre of the National Park Provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol. For experts and anyone with an interest in nature, these conferences, courses, seminars and workshops on topics relating to nature and the National Parks have proved very rewarding and an incentive to become inspired and motivated in further education.

Since 2016 more and more education and advanced training courses in wilderness mediation have been on offer alongside programme classics such as the Botanical Mountain Days, an annual wildlife management and agriculture conference, and various herb seminars. The Hofrat Keller Hütte mountain hut in Salzburg's Obersulzbach valley has been set up as a base for wilderness camps and seminars by the National Park Administration of Salzburg. The events are held at dedicated venues such as the Mallnitz Visitor Centre and the House of Water, which also contribute to the concept and organisation of the Academy's programme, run via the Council Secretariat. As a training centre for Certified Austrian National Park Rangers the Academy offers seminars which count towards the overall training. After a basic module held every couple of years, in-depth training courses with qualified experts are scheduled on a regular basis to prepare the Rangers for their future area of activity.

A total of 25 training courses (conferences, seminars, workshops) were offered in 2017, with 678 participants attending (averaging 27 participants/event). Mainly on offer alongside the main conferences – at which experts discuss the aspects of a given topic – are seminars and workshops with lots of practical applications. Highlights include:

Wilderness – Our Mentor

This highly practice-orientated seminar was held at the Hofrat-Keller-Hütte in the Obersulzbach valley. The mountain hut was bought up by the National Park and renovated while preserving its original architectural substance. It is to be used in future as a base for wilderness seminars and courses. It is an ideal venue given that it has deliberately chosen to dispense with modern technology – there is not even a mobile phone signal!

Rangers and those with an interest in the subject matter receive training in wilderness education through the National Park Academy.



Photo: © HTNP / H. Mattersberger
Back to the roots. It's not just young people who were busy gathering firewood and making a fire without modern aids.

Beginner's course on identifying flowering plants

A beginner's seminar in botany was held for the first time and by early February it was already sold out. As an experienced speaker Franz Stürmer did an outstanding job of introducing his lay audience to what is a complex topic. The knowledge gained was then put into practice with commitment and dedication during the subsequent field trip to the Tauern valley/Mallnitz.



Photo: © HTNP / H. Mattersberger

The speaker gave participants lots of tips and tricks on how to identify flowering plants.

Songbirds of the Hohe Tauern

The different adaptation and survival strategies of various songbirds that are typical of the region were explored in the Kalser Dorfertal. National Park Ranger Matthias Mühlburger is a birdlife specialist. Assisting him was Helwig Brunner, a similarly well-versed ornithologist from Graz.



Photo: © HTNP / H. Mattersberger

In June the National Park's birdlife was explored at length in the Kalser Dorfertal.

Webinfo: www.hohetauern.at/bildung

Marketing and Communication

Various PR resources are used to make the National Park's nature conservation initiatives in the areas of Natural Resource Management, Science & Research and Education & Visitor Information known to the public at large, but also to specific target groups. The PR work is based on wide-reaching media such as the homepage of the Hohe Tauern National Park, the National Park Magazine, social media channels and press trips with international journalists. Enquiries from the print and audio-visual media are supported in the best possible way, with the know-how of the National Park and its people producing many quality TV, radio and social media contributions. Regular press releases on topical issues, invitations to fixtures and events, and nurturing existing contacts all strengthen the media presence of the Hohe Tauern National Park, particularly in the regional media.

www.hohetauern.at homepage

In 2017 the homepages of the Hohe Tauern National Park were subject to an independent usability analysis to examine the user's point of view and user friendliness as well as the SEO optimisation. The page was largely given a good performance rating, with a number of potential improvements highlighted. One recommendation was that the two homepages www.hohetauern.at and www.nationalparkerlebnis.at be merged (to be implemented in 2018). Other optimisation measures were implemented in the responsive and SEO areas.

Homepage visitors in 2017:	151,126
Page views:	387,053
Average visitors/day:	414
Average time spent:	2.44 min.
Returning visitors:	37,401 (24.7 %)

Social Media

The growing importance of social media channels and the good web access figures and fan statistics prompted the National Park to draw up a solid social media strategy, which was adopted at the 82nd meeting of the Board of Directors. The bulk of the information consists of value added content contributed by National Park staff in particular. On the basis of this strategy a new tender was issued for the handling of the social media channels, which since October are now managed by a new agency.

Facebook as per 31.12.2017:	33,290 Fans (+ 5,759)
Average reach/item:	4,768
Average interaction rate:	182 (Comments, Likes, Shares)
Item with biggest reach:	39,142

Instagram 2017:	
Own hashtags (#hohetauern, #nationalparkhohetauern, etc.):	26,087 items (+ 7,661)
Instagram Account:	676 followers

YouTube 2017:	53,101 hits (+12,232)
Subscribers:	396

Corporate Design Manual

In August 2017, as part of an ideas competition, the 'vorauerfriends' agency was commissioned to revamp the entire Corporate Design. The printed advertising material and the basic design manual were compiled in 2017, and in future the manual itself will be available to all staff through an online solution.

As a follow-up contract it was decided at the kick-off workshop to include the administrative printed matter, the themed signposts and the online presence in the overall redesign.



Other activities:

- Six-monthly National Park Magazine (approx. 750,000 copies/issue)
- National Park Children's Magazines
- September 19–22: Press trip on real-life nature conservation (12 journalists, advertising value: EUR 323,000.–)
- Various TV productions: incl. *Ö-Bild Naturreich*
- 25th anniversary of the Hohe Tauern National Park Tyrol
- Five short films on education, Rangers, winter, theme trails, visitor centres for various purposes
- Thirty social media moving-image sequences
- Purchase of raw film footage for various applications
- Four general newsletters sent out to 2,200 subscribers
- Two birds of prey newsletters sent out to 1,200 subscribers
- Participation in National Parks Austria PR work
- 82 press releases at the national, local and regional levels
- Six press conferences
- Annual programmes
- National Park Ranger offers
- Publication of digital teaching materials

Infrastructure

The aim of the National Park is to offer a stunning experience of nature to as large a circle of visitors as possible. Regulative measures are designed to minimise any interference in nature caused by visitors whenever possible.

One important contribution to achieving that aim is to continually maintain and improve the National Park infrastructure, which also enhances the range of offers available to tourist organisations.

Grosskirchheim Park Management

The completion of the Grosskirchheim Park Management marks the implementation of the first project in the 2016 – 2020 infrastructure programme. The National Park Administration had previously been located at two separate office sites, which have now been combined, making a lasting contribution to the Administration's economic efficiency.



Photo: © HTNP / Suntinger

When it came to planning the new building, factors such as energy efficiency, functionality, economic efficiency, and gentle integration into the local surroundings were top priorities. In keeping with the 'passive house' concept and to ensure the efficiency of the photovoltaic system, the building structure itself was built almost entirely out of timber; the southern elevation was extensively glazed (triple glazing); and the roof was designed in such a way that large, steeply angled south-facing surfaces were put in place for the photovoltaic plant. In fact, in 2017 the project was commended with an Energy Globe Award.

Total project costs:	EUR 1.2 m
Financing:	'National Park Special Subsidy' as part of the 2014 – 2020 rural development programme

Renovation of the Hofrat-Keller-Hütte

Following the historically significant land purchase in the Obersulzbach and Untersulzbach valleys in 2016, the Salzburg National Park Fund also took ownership of a mountain hut in the Obersulzbach valley, namely the Hofrat-Keller-Hütte.

The mountain hut was renovated in 2017 at a cost of around EUR 120,000.–. The Hofrat-Keller-Hütte provides overnight accommodation for around 30 people and is used as a base camp for training courses and the newly established Wilderness School. Preserving the original structure of the building was a priority during the renovation work. The Hofrat-Keller-Hütte is a unique venue for working on the development of personal skills and co-operation – without any distractions from Wi-Fi signals or mobile phone networks.



Photo: © HTNP / T. Kaser

Total project costs:	EUR 120,209.–
Financing:	2014 – 2020 rural development programme

(M)ursprung – Nature in full flow

The new National Park exhibition '(M)ursprung' is scheduled to open in Muhr in the Lungau region in June 2018. All the necessary preparations were made in 2017. The exhibition planner was selected at a jury meeting following the project presentations. Andreas Zangl, Zangl ULTD., swayed the jury with his expertise and meticulously prepared exhibition concept. Represented on the jury were National Park Director Wolfgang Urban and staff member Anna Pecile, Markus Schaflechner for the Biosphere Park, Josef Kandler as a representative of the National Park Municipality of Muhr, Cornelia Gfrerer/TVB Muhr and Robert Griessner/Lungau school inspector.

'Glocknerwinkel' – Showcasing the Grossglockner

As Austria's highest mountain the Grossglockner is a major attraction for countless visitors, whether they're mountaineers in quest of a summit or hikers eager to admire this king of the mountains from a distance. The newly built Glocknerwinkel Visitor Centre is the perfect starting point for the many activities available at the end of the Ködnitz valley. First and foremost, it is a hub for filtering the 80,000 or so hikers, mountaineers, cars and buses that arrive here each year. Visitors now have at their disposal around 250 parking spaces for cars, dedicated motorcycle bays, e-charging stations, and three parking bays for buses and coaches.

But the focal point is undoubtedly the two buildings at the foot of the Glockner, built with funding from the National Park. Besides the visitor services building with sanitation facilities, a National Park information office and binocular hire, there is now also a panorama building with viewing windows of the Grossglockner and an exhibition on the Hohe Tauern National Park's 'Big Five'. The roof of the panorama building provides a spacious viewing platform with information panels on the many discoveries to be made throughout the Ködnitz valley.

Total project costs:	EUR 1.7 m
Financing:	Province, federal government, 2014 – 2020 rural development programme, Municipality of Kals



Photo: © HTNP / M. Lugger

Infrastructure at the House of Water

New information panels have been set up in the outdoor area of the House of Water in St. Jakob im Defereggental. The activities of Swarovski Waterschool International are described on eight panels relating to its seven locations in Thailand, the United States, China, India, Uganda, Brazil, and Austria. Quoted on the panels are children and Waterschool teaching staff from the individual regions. A bread-baking oven has also been built to be used for various school programmes and camps. The children now have the opportunity to bake bread and learn about traditional handicraft skills.

New entrance to the National Park in the Trojeralm valley

A National Park entrance gate has now been built at the car park leading into the Trojeralm valley in St. Jakob im Defereggental, the last of the main access valleys in East Tyrol. The structure made of larch wood stands almost three metres tall and bears

the logo and logotype of the Hohe Tauern National Park, signalling clearly to visitors that they are now entering the Park. Last year a panoramic panel had already been erected at the car park, which now provides a proper starting point for hiking tours, etc., in the Hohe Tauern National Park.

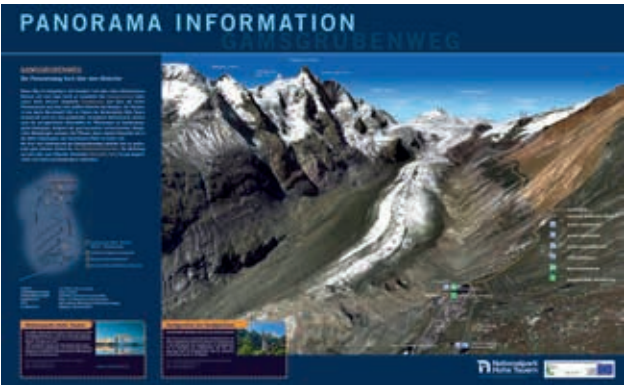


Photo: © HTNP / A. Grimm

Quality-enhancing measures at the National Park Info Points

The National Park Info Points make up a network of information units that are deployed at central locations in the National Park municipalities and at the starting points to hikes into the National Park itself. The vast majority of National Park Info Points in the Carinthian National Park Region was set up in 2004 and 2005, so now, after more than ten years, there is a need for action in terms of both content and hardware.

The total of 38 National Park Info Points is scheduled for completion in early summer 2018.



The projects for the Park Management, Hofrat-Keller-Hütte, Glocknerwinkel and Info Points were supported by:



Hohe Tauern National Park as a tourist magnet

Nature-based travel, the authentic enjoyment of nature, growing environmental awareness, tapping into nature's resources as a haven of tranquillity, and freeing oneself of the increasingly stressful realities of everyday life: these are just some of the reasons why people like to holiday in Austria. And which other region besides the unspoilt natural setting of the Hohe Tauern National Park is able to offer better conditions to satisfy these wishes, wishes which are ever more in demand in these eventful times of ours? Studies by Österreich Werbung show that as many as 38% of summer guests now spend their holidays in Austria enjoying nature. So it comes as no surprise that both Österreich Werbung and the tourist organisations of Austria's federal provinces have chosen to focus on themes such as 'Nature Reloaded' and 'Travelling in Search of Nature' for their global campaigns.

'An encounter with nature. Austria offers genuine, unspoilt nature. It can be found in lush green forests, flowering alpine meadows, crystal-clear lakes, and along mountain flanks glistening in the sun. From the Pannonian low-lying plain in the east to the high-alpine mountainous landscapes in the west you sense in Austria's nature what is all too often lacking in our everyday lives: that moment that belongs to you alone.' (source: <https://www.austria.info/de/austriantime>).

With its sheer diversity the Hohe Tauern National Park offers every visitor moments that belong to him or her alone – a time to slow down, arrive, take a deep breath, and replenish their energy levels. It is particularly pleasing to note that the national tourist organisation Österreich Werbung and the tourist organisations of the federal provinces are using the National Park and the tourism potential of this unique protected natural



Photo: © HTNP / A. Beetz
ITB Berlin 2016 & 2017 – the National Park features prominently at the Österreich Werbung stand.

setting as a driving force for their campaigns. They have recognised its huge potential to get international visitors excited about Austria as a holiday destination and achieve an added value in tourism with the largest and oldest national park in Austria.

Nationwide the significance of tourism in the Austrian National Park regions is also illustrated by the fact that 11 % of the people resident in the National Parks are employed in the core sector of tourism (in tourist accommodation and catering). The accommodation offer comprises around 5,000 establishments and some 65,000 beds, with private lodgings dominating in the National Parks compared with hotels (source: National Parks Austria).

Co-operation with regional tourism players on site (tourism regions, tourism service providers and the tourist organisations of the federal provinces) in various constellations (based on differentiated structures) is just one of the activities of the National Park Administrations in Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol, besides the Hohe Tauern National Park's numerous management objectives and the major contribution to regional development.



Photo: © HTNP / F. Rieder

The National Park panorama on the Resterhöhe attracts visitors in both summer and winter.

The attractive tourism offer is structured around the product 'National Park Rangers' in particular with its numerous visitor programmes that include guided tours with Rangers held all year round (weekly programmes over ten months of the year), specialist advice at Ranger Info Points at National Park hotspots, popular visitor centres (Mallnitz, Mittersill and Matrei in Osttirol), and other specific National Park exhibitions. These offers are ideally suited to appeal to lovers of nature and of National Parks and draw them to regional particularities, enticing them also to return for another visit or set off on a tour to explore the protected area. The Hohe Tauern National Park gives accommodation providers in the National Park Regions a popular all-year booking offer for holiday guests, day trippers and locals alike.



Photo: © HTNP

Rangers are the big attraction of the Hohe Tauern National Park.

The local tourism regions (Hohe Tauern National Park Salzburg holiday region, National Park Region of Carinthia and the East Tyrol TVB tourist association) directly implement tourism marketing activities on specific National Park themes. In Tyrol's National Park Administration, marketing activities of East Tyrol TVB that are specific to the National Park have been boosted



Photo: © HTNP / M. Lugger

Nature Watch, i.e. spotting wildlife in the company of a National Park Ranger, is always popular with younger and older fans of the National Park.

by National Park tourist marketing directly from the National Park.

All the National Park Administrations support the tourism regions in their efforts to promote and boost tourism measures on sustainable National Park themes in order to achieve a tourism value added for the individual National Park regions with the Hohe Tauern National Park. Here it is a matter of achieving the best possible positioning of these destinations, all of which are able to point to the National Park as their unique selling proposition (USP). In this context, the Hohe Tauern National Park welcomes the notion of strengthening the presence of the National Park idea (in terms of both quality & quantity) in all the National Park regions. The many years of close co-operation between Austria's oldest National Park and tourism have once again given rise to new avenues and opportunities in tourism over the past year of tourist activities. What's more, the potential of this natural environment can be harnessed when drawing up offers to attract new visitors to the Hohe Tauern National Park, visitors with a particular affinity for national parks in general.



Photo: © HTNP / Steinthaler

National Park guided tour along the Pasterze Glacier Trail.

Carinthia

Carinthia adventure tours

In 2017 Carinthia's National Park Administration offered a comprehensive programme of visitor support services, guided by the National Park Rangers. As in previous years, snowshoe trekking to the ibex populations in the Grosses Fleiss valley was the most popular winter offer.



Photo: © HTNP / E. Haslacher

Snowshoe hiking in the Fleiss valley as a visitor attraction.

In summer, seven specialist tours to the National Park valleys were on offer, some over two days with an overnight stay at a mountain hut. The weekly guided adventure tours on themes such as glaciers, geology, wilderness and wildlife were also part of the programme. In co-operation with Grossglockner Hochalpenstrassen AG, special ibex spotting field trips around the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe were carried out on four weekends in May and June. There were also daily guided tours along the Gamsgruben Trail from early July to early September. Since summer 2017 the adventure programme can be booked via the online booking portal.

'Magical Moments'

The *Magical Moments* Programme was developed as a unique programme offer in Carinthia in co-operation with the eleven protected areas, ten tourism regions and Kärnten Werbung under the patronage of ARGE NATURERLEBNIS.

In the Hohe Tauern National Park, red deer spotting in the Seebach valley is on offer as one such *Magical Moment*. Specially trained National Park Rangers are a guarantee of this unique experience of nature, one where e-bike mobility and the culinary offer are a prerequisite.

Alpe Adria Trail

The Alpe Adria Trail is a long-distance hiking trail from the Grossglockner across Slovenia to Muggia in Italy and, in summer 2017, its popularity was boosted once again, for the fifth time in a row now. The starting point for the 43 stages is the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe in Heiligenblut. The Alpe Adria Trail passes through the six National Park Municipalities in the Möll valley.

Photo: © HTNP / H. Mattersberger

Salzburg

2017 summer campaign

In a joint venture with the tourist associations and Salzburger Land Tourismus (SLT) a campaign was launched to appeal to both the German and Austrian markets. The main objective was to promote the summer season and boost demand over the summer months and during the shoulder seasons. The target markets were Germany (Bavaria) and Austria (focusing on Vienna, Lower Austria and Upper Austria), concentrating on target groups such as families (incl. grandparents) with children and recreational hikers & mountain bikers.

'National Park Experience' tour portal & tour app

The portal provides all visitors with detailed route planning for their summer and winter holidays. Besides a hiking map of the region the portal and the app also comprise tours for (long-distance) hikers, mountain bikers and cyclists, snowshoe hikers, and cross-country skiers. Information on lookout points, mountain huts, guest houses, and leisure amenities can also be downloaded. The project was implemented together with the company Outdooractiv and the tourist associations.



ders, and three Next Generation workshops. A series of key projects and areas of work were specified as priority topics for the future: connecting symbols and combined marketing, ecofriendly mobility, *Echt Regional* [genuinely regional], Renter Academy.

MOBIL Summer Card

The National Park MOBIL Summer Card is an all-inclusive card for holidays in the region. Holidaymakers are able to use more than sixty attractions such as countless mountain railways and cableways and leisure and sports facilities free of charge, and gain free admission to sights, museums and natural wonders. Also included is the free use of public transport, the Grossglockner Hochalpenstrasse and the Gerlos Alpenstrasse.

Holiday Region 2025

May 2016 saw the launch of the strategy paper on the 'Hohe Tauern National Park Holiday Region 2025'. Twelve months later, comprehensive data was available following seventy-five individual interviews conducted in person, seven sessions of the steering group, a two-day future workshop with key players and service providers,

East Tyrol

National Park as a platform and offer

In June 2017 a positioning workshop was held in East Tyrol aimed at consolidating the integration of the Hohe Tauern National Park into the existing East Tyrol 2025 destination strategy. The defined aim was to make greater use, in tourism terms, of the National Park as a platform and offer in East Tyrol. Strategic ideas for action were drawn up jointly with Deputy Governor Ingrid Felipe (member of the provincial government with overall responsibility for National Parks), tourist association representatives and accommodation providers. Since autumn 2017 project teams have been working on implementing these ideas with key players in the region.



Photo: © TVB Osttirol

National Park & Tourism team working on achieving a stronger positioning of the National Park within the East Tyrol destination strategy

National Park focus campaigns:

- Österreich Werbung #austriantime – Nature Reloaded
 - High-quality content was generated in East Tyrol and then deployed internationally by Österreich Werbung
 - Tirol Werbung – Austrian market, Out of Home
 - Österreich Werbung – German market, active summer campaign & winter magic
 - Austria's hiking villages – special product campaigns for hiking, etc.
 - National Park press events (ITB, editorial tour to Germany, travel summit to Munich, various VA East Tyrol Tourist Assoc.)
- East Tyrol press trips with strong National Park bias (26 individual and 7 group press trips)

East Tyrol National Park partner companies

For more than fourteen years the strong co-operation between the National Park and the East Tyrol National Park partner companies has demonstrated how to reconcile environmentally compatible and sustainable tourism with nature preservation. Since 2009 these partner companies (more than 60) have been organised as an association closely aligned with the National Park. The National Park supports the association through marketing activities and, since 2017, also with the project '2017 – 2019 Qualification Process'. The opportunities of the Hohe Tauern National Park to market these partner companies and the businesses themselves are to be harnessed and optimised in the future. The aim is to achieve a clearly defined National Partner profile for the partner companies (highlighting their USP), improve quality, and strengthen their outward identity and positioning.

Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park



With the support of businesses from the private sector, we once again completed important projects in 2017 in the areas of species protection, environmental education and the nature experience. The Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park plays a pivotal role as the official sponsoring body of the Hohe Tauern National Park. The aim of this non-profit association – a co-opted member in the National Park Council – is to support the development of the National Park in co-ordination with the National Park managers of the Federal Provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol as well as the Federal Government. Around 3,000 individual members and some twenty partners in trade and industry are the mainstays of the Association of Friends.

Background

The National Park is able to perform its core tasks thanks to the public funds provided by the three Federal Provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol, and the funding available from the federal government. Given the cost-cutting measures affecting public finances, important projects and programmes that go beyond those tasks can only be realised with the help of companies in the business sector, individuals and non-profit institutions.

The Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park was established in 1993 to further boost this sponsoring idea and offer the public at large an opportunity to publicise its support for the National Park. Financing options such as these

will have an important role to play in the future, bearing in mind that, in addition to the financial support as such, their commitment to the 'National Park philosophy' and therefore to the acceptance of the Hohe Tauern National Park are hugely important.

Objective and purpose

Sponsoring is a PR & communication instrument which, as an integral part of a company's corporate social responsibility strategy, can be an extremely rewarding corporate measure. Environmental sponsoring in particular enjoys a special status as it is all about 'ecological credibility'. 'Greenwashing', i.e. the spin given to a company's environmental credentials, is widely frowned upon. The sponsoring of environmental projects only makes sense if it is built on a credible basis, i.e. if the sponsor has a genuine interest in environmental issues and if ecological sustainability is actively pursued as a priority objective of corporate policy. Interesting partnerships with added value for both sides can emerge by these means between the sponsor and the sponsored party, who often has considerable know-how in these matters. For the National Park itself this has led to the creation of a network that is also of relevance to tourism. The annual partner meetings, which complement the General Assembly held every autumn, have also proved a success, with their field trips and visits of implemented projects, held alternately in the three sections of the National Park.

General Assembly with partner meeting

At the General Assembly with partner meeting at the Schlumberger Wine Cellars on November 7, Chairman Karl Stoss was able to report on a positive performance. With the help of our sponsoring partners around EUR 600,000.– was raised for key projects by the Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park in 2017.

Webinfo: www.tauernfreund.at



Photo: © Ch. Husar

General assembly at the Schlumberger Wine Cellars.

A big thank you...

... to all our partners who supported our programmes and projects during 2017!

 Swarovski Waterschool Free offer for schools (Year 3 of primary school to Year 4 of secondary school). Implemented by National Park Rangers.	 National Park Partner Schools Free offer for 71 partner schools. 'A Taste of Nature' module. Implemented by National Park Rangers.
 Wilhelm Swarovski Observation Tower Free offer for visitors of the Grossglockner Hochalpenstrasse. Provision of high-quality optical equipment. Managed by the National Park Administration.	 VERBUND Climate School of the Hohe Tauern National Park Free offer for schools (Year 4 of primary school to Year 4 of secondary school). Implemented by National Park Rangers.
 Urforelle species protection project Stocking and management of indigenous brown trout populations in selected waterways of the National Park.	 Teaching materials of the Hohe Tauern National Park Digital teaching materials on the Hohe Tauern National Park, freely accessible online to educators.
 Herd protection project Pilot project aimed at protecting herds from predators on alpine pastures.	 Loan of a vehicle Mobility partner of the National Park Administrations. 2017: Tyrol.
 Bearded vulture resettlement Species protection project: part of an Alpine-wide resettlement project.	 Marketing contribution Partner for visitor facilities (exhibitions) at the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe.
 Equipment for Rangers Equipment outfitter partner for National Park Rangers in Carinthia and Tyrol.	 National Park Academy Programme Support with the National Park's adult education facility.
 Kärntnermilch Junior Rangers Two-week training course in the Carinthia Hohe Tauern National Park for 13 to 15-year-olds.	 National Park Wristwatch Support with the Association's work to provide National Park Wristwatch.
 FreiRaum Alpine Pastures Project and Biodiversity Database Support with alpine pasture measures (FreiRaum alpine pasture projects) and setting-up of the biodiversity database.	 National Park Magazine for Children Free newspaper for children aged eight to twelve (Carinthia).
 Ibex Research in the Hohe Tauern Research into population dynamics using genetic samples and horn measurements.	 Auditing of Accounts Free audit of the Association's accounts.
 Visitor Support Services Support with the adventure programmes on offer from the National Park Administrations.	 Ibex House Support with implementing the visitor centre project and the Ibex House exhibition in Heiligenblut.
 Water Quality Monitoring Abiotic studies (measurement of outflow, turbidity, hydrochemistry) in selected waterways of the National Park.	 Image film Support with image film production (new since 2017)



Photo: © HTNP / H. Mattersberger

The many tasks and duties performed by the Hohe Tauern National Park as well as the political and legal structure of the Republic of Austria demand efficient and effective organisational structures.

The cross-province co-operation, consultative bodies and statutory tasks of the individual National Park Administrations are all strictly regulated.

By contrast, for the National Park Administrations' core duties – from the funding of the cultural landscape and the National Park region to natural resource management, science & research, and education & visitor information – it is expedient to have National Park Funds of the Federal Provinces, the steering of which is the responsibility of the Boards of Trustees, with the National Park Municipalities, the land owners, the Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism, and the Provincial Government all represented on an equal footing.



Photo: © HTNP / H. Mattersberger

Council meeting at the new National Park Administration in Grosskirchheim.

National Park Council

The National Park Council consults with the National Park Directorate and other experts. Co-operation and organisation are regulated in the agreement under Section 15a Federal Constitution Act between the Federal Government and the Federal Provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol on co-operation in matters of protection and promotion of the Hohe Tauern National Park.

Members of the Hohe Tauern National Park Council:

- Gernot DARMANN**, Carinthia, Chair
- Federal Minister Andrä RUPPRECHTER**, Federal Government, Deputy (until 17.12.2017)
- Federal Minister Elisabeth KÖSTINGER**, Federal Government, Deputy (from 18.12.2017)
- Astrid RÖSSLER**, Salzburg
- Ingrid FELIPE-SAINT HILAIRE**, Tyrol

Members of the National Park Directorate:

- Peter RUPITSCH**, Carinthia, Chair
- Valerie ZACHERL-DRAXLER**, Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism – Water Management, Section I/8
- Wolfgang URBAN**, Salzburg
- Hermann STOTTER**, Tyrol

Consultants:

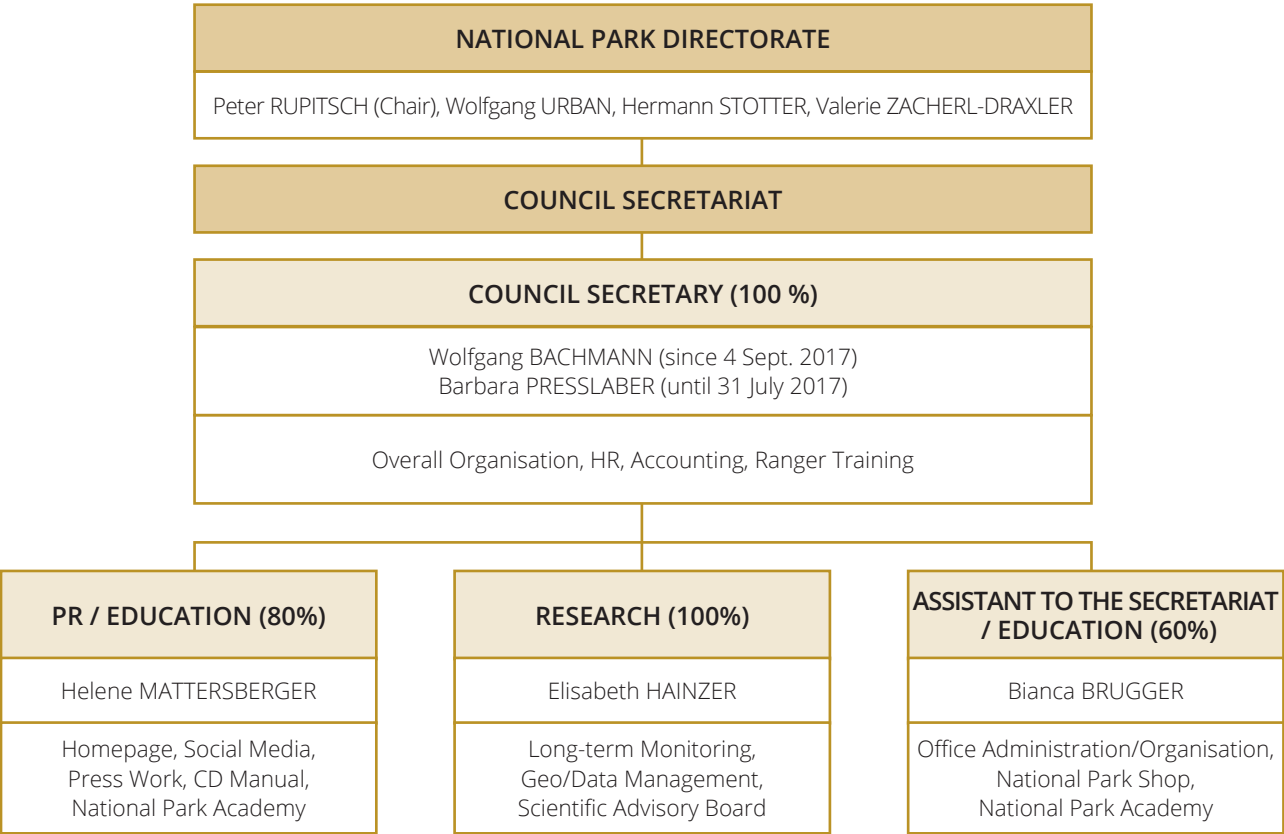
- Mayor Josef SCHACHNER**, Carinthia
- Mayor Hannes ENZINGER**, Salzburg
- Mayor Dietmar RUGGENTHALER**, Tyrol
- Alwin HOFER**, Carinthia
- Georg ALTENBERGER**, Salzburg
- Friedl SCHNEEBERGER**, Tyrol
- Eberhard STÜBER**, Carinthia
- Norbert WINDING**, Salzburg

Co-opted representatives:

- Gerold GLANTSCHNIG**, Carinthia
- Othmar GLAESER**, Salzburg
- Kurt KAPPELLER**, Tyrol
- Karl STOSS**, President, Association of Friends
- Leopold FÜREDER**, former chair, Scientific Advisory Board

Situation as at: January 2018

Organisation



SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

A Scientific Advisory Board was set up to provide the National Park Administrations with technical advice in the execution of their duties in the area of research co-ordination. Its main activities revolve around strategy development, quality assurance and representation in the area of National Park research.

Members:

- Leopold FÜREDER**, Chair; University of Innsbruck (Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck)
- Wolfgang SCHERZINGER**
- Ulrike-Gabriele BERNINGER**, University of Salzburg (Paris-Lodron Universität Salzburg)
- Klaus HACKLÄNDER**, Vienna University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences (Universität für Bodenkultur Wien)
- Günter KÖCK**, Austrian Academy of Sciences
- Christian KÖRNER**, University of Basel
- Thomas SCHEURER**, Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT)
- Christian SMOLINER**, Federal Ministry for Science, Research and Economic Affairs
- Helmut ZWANDER**, Science Association for Carinthia (Naturwissenschaftlicher Verein für Kärnten)

ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS

(Executive Committee)

The aim of this non-profit association – a co-opted member in the National Park Council – is to support the development of the National Park in co-ordination with the National Park managers of the Federal Provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol as well as the Federal Government.

Executive Committee:

- Karl STOSS**, Chair
- Gernot LANGES SWAROVSKI**, 1st vice president
- Nicolas JACOBS**, 2nd vice president
- Martina HÖRMER**, 3rd vice president
- Werner WUTSCHER**, 4th vice president
- Harald RIENER**, 5th vice president
- Christian KOIDL**, keeper of the minutes
- Karl GOLLEGGGER**, treasurer

Advisory Board Members:

- Eberhard STÜBER**
- Christoph IMBODEN**
- Hermann STOTTER**
- Wolfgang URBAN, MBA**

Director:

- Peter RUPITSCH**

Situation as at: 14. November 2017

Carinthian National Park Fund

NATIONAL PARK BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Composition:
Member of the Provincial Government (NP advisor)
Chair **Gernot DARMANN**
- Municipal Representatives
Member **Mayor Peter SUNTINGER**
Substit. member **Mayor Josef SCHACHNER**
- Municipal Representatives
Member **Mayor Günther NOVAK**
Substit. member **Mayor Klaus RÜSCHER**

- Landowner Representatives
Member **Johann BÄUERLE**, Heiligenblut
Substit. member **Thomas PLONER**, Mörttschach

- Landowner Representatives
Member **Martin PIRKER**, Malta
Substit. member **Anton GLANTSCHNIG**, Mallnitz

- Office of the Provincial Government of Carinthia
Ecology, Nature and Landscape Protection
Member **Helmut HARTL**
Substit. member **Bernhard GUTLEB**

- Office of the Provincial Government of Carinthia
Regional Economy of the National Park Region
Member **Heide PICHLER**
Substit. member **Martin LACKNER**

- Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry,
Environment and Water Management
Member **Valerie ZACHERL-DRAXLER**
Substit. member **Agnes ERLER**

- Austrian Alpine Club
Member **Liliana DAGOSTIN**
Substit. member **Hans JURY**

NATIONAL PARK COMMITTEE

- Composition:
7 Municipal Representatives
Heiligenblut **Mayor Josef SCHACHNER**, Chair
Grosskirchheim **Mayor Peter SUNTINGER**
Mörttschach **Mayor Richard UNTERREINER**
Winklern **Mayor Johann THALER**
Mallnitz **Mayor Günther NOVAK**
Malta **Mayor Klaus RÜSCHER**
Obervellach **Mayor Anita GÖSSNITZER**

- 14 Landowner Representatives
Heiligenblut **Johann BÄUERLE**
Heiligenblut **Thomas HARITZER**
Grosskirchheim **Christian ZIRKNITZER**
Grosskirchheim **Reinhard PIRKER**
Mörttschach **Gerhard KEUSCHNIG**
Mörttschach **Thomas PLONER**
Winklern **Lorenz LERCHBAUMER**
Winklern **Melitta FITZER**
Mallnitz **Anton GLANTSCHNIG**
Mallnitz **Alwin HOFER**
Malta **Martin PIRKER**
Malta **Friedrich FEISTRITZER**
Obervellach **Albert HUBER**
Obervellach **Josef EISANK**

- 2 Representatives of the Office of the
Provincial Government of Carinthia
Gerold GLANTSCHNIG
Klaus BRANDNER

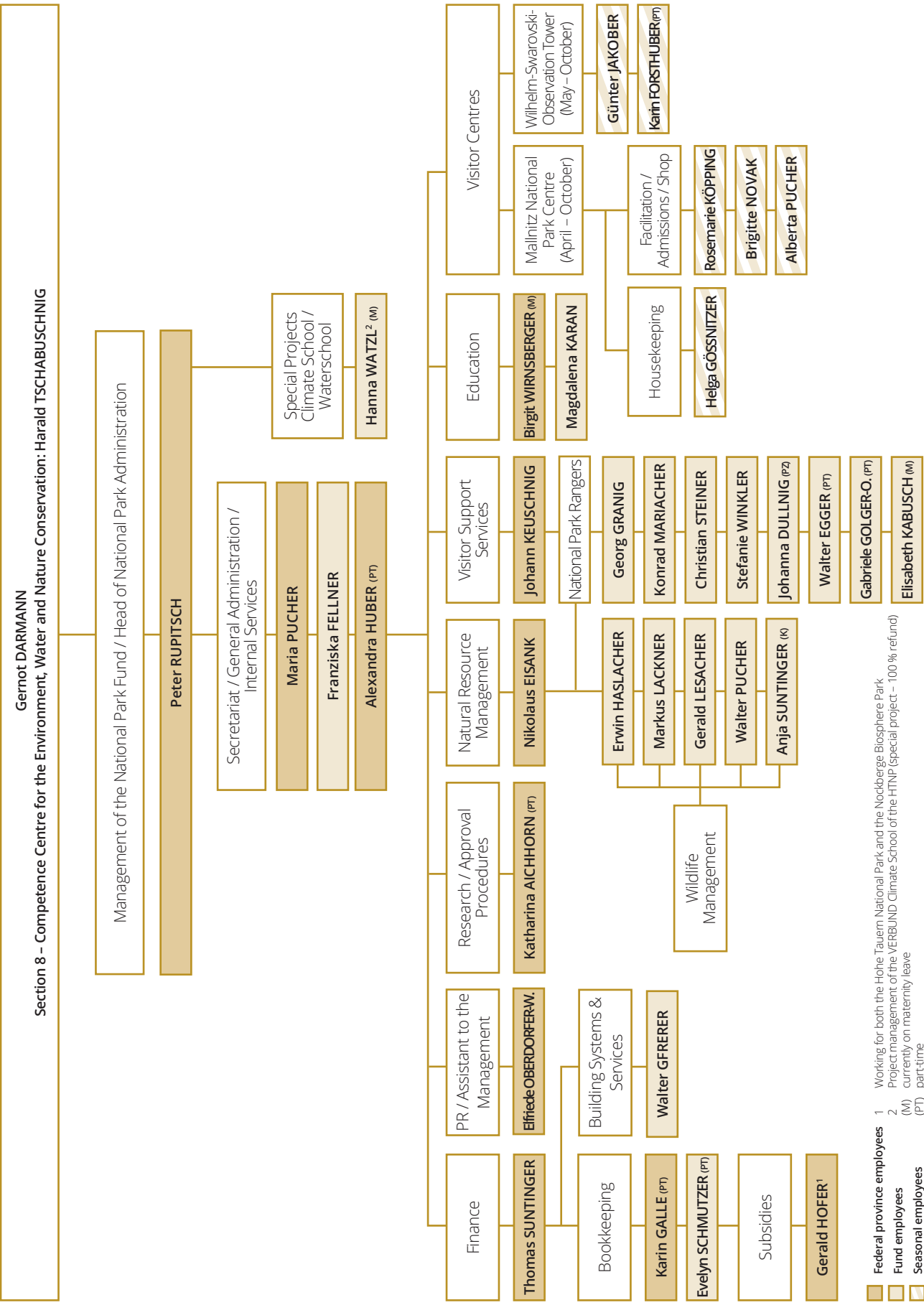
- 1 Representative of the Chamber of
Agriculture and Forestry
Johann MÖSSLER

- 1 Representative of the Federal Government
Valerie ZACHERL-DRAXLER

- 1 Representative of the Austrian Alpine Club
Mag. Hans JURY

Situation as at: 14 December 2017

Carinthia Organisation



¹ Working for both the Hohe Tauern National Park and the Nockberge Biosphere Park
² Project management of the VERBUND Climate School of the HTNP (special project – 100 % refund)
(M) currently on maternity leave
(PT) part-time

Federal province employees
Fund employees
Seasonal employees

Salzburg National Park Fund

NATIONAL PARK BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Composition:
Members and substitute members of the Board of Trustees:
Chair **Astrid RÖSSLER**

1st Deputy Chair **Obmann Georg ALTENBERGER**
Substit. member **Alois BLAIKNER**

2nd Deputy Chair **Mayor Hannes ENZINGER**
Substit. member **Mayor Hans TOFERER**

Member **Hermann HINTERSTOISSER**
Substit. member **Karin KÖNIG**

Member **Ulrike-G. BERNINGER**
Substit. member **Hans-Peter COMES**

Member **Mayor Hannes LERCHBAUMER**
Substit. member **Mayor Peter LOITFELLNER**

Member **Mayor LAbg. Michael OBERMOSER**
Substit. member **Mayor Peter NINDL**

Member **Mayor Hans STEINER**
Substit. member **Rupert HUTTEGGER**

Member **Michael Graf von MEDEM**
Substit. member **Matthias SALZMANN**

Government representative:

Member **Valerie ZACHERL-DRAXLER**
Substit. member **Agnes ERLER**

FUND ADVISORY BOARD

Composition:
Members and substitute members of the Fund Advisory Board:

Member **Bernhard GRATZ**
Substit. member **Manfred PONGRUBER**

Member **Harald WIMMER**
Substit. member **Wolfgang POSCH**

Member **Othmar GLAESER**
Substit. member **Karl JORDAN**

Member **Michael OBERMOSER**
Substit. member **Martina JÖBSTL**

Member **Gunther FITZGA** (until 11.09.2017)
Substit. member **Josef WIMMER** (until 11.09.2017)

Member **Gernot HUBNER** (from 11.09.2017)
Substit. member **Helmut NADERER** (from 11.09.2017)

Member **Karl SCHMIDLECHNER**
Substit. member **Othmar SCHNEGLBERGER**

Member **Rosemarie BLATTL** (until 22.09.2017)
Substit. member **Thomas LEXER** (until 22.09.2017)

Member **Thomas LEXER** (from 22.09.2017)
Substit. member **Alexander GOTTHARDT** (from 22.09.2017)

Member **Rupert FUCHS**
Substit. member **Josef SCHEINAST**

Member **Mayor Manfred GASSNER**
Substit. member **Mayor Mag. Erich CZERNY**

Member **Mayor Günter STEINER**
Substit. member **Mayor Wolfgang VIERTLER**

Member **Mayor Gerhard STEINBAUER**
Substit. member **Mayor Ernst Josef KANDLER**

Member **Otmar HUBER**
Substit. member **Hubert BLAICKNER**

Member **Sebastian GRIESSNER**
Substit. member **Franz MEILINGER**

Member **Anton SCHARLER**
Substit. member **Georg KALTENHAUSER**

Member **Friedrich GEISLER**
Substit. member **Siegfried KALTENHAUSER**

Member **Mayor Hubert LOHFEYER**
Substit. member **Gottfried RETTENEGGER**

Member **Dietmar HUFNAGL**
Substit. member **Helmut EYMANNBERGER**

Member **Edgar ATZMANSTORFER**
Substit. member **Christian LAIREITER**

Member **Otmar SOMMERAUER**
Substit. member **Rudolf GÖSTL**

Member **Mayor Peter NINDL**
Substit. member **Michael OBERMOSER**

Member **Winfried WEINBERGER**
Substit. member **Hannes ÜBLAGGER**

Member **Sophia BURTSCHER**
Substit. member **Brigitte SLUPETZKY**

Member **Hans KUTIL** (until 04.05.2017)
Substit. member **Hannes AUGUSTIN**

Member **Winfried HERBST** (from 04.05.2017)

Member **Josef ZANDL**
Substit. member **Georg MEILINGER**

Member **Stefan DÖTTERL**
Substit. member **Robert JUNKER**

Salzburg Organisation

STAFF OF THE NATIONAL PARK ADMINISTRATION OF SALZBURG

47 employees and an additional 27 seasonal workers were employed in 2017.

National Park Administration
Wolfgang URBAN, National Park Director

Natural Resource Management
Ferdinand LAINER, National Park Deputy Director
Bruno GRUBER, professional hunter
Michael LAGGER, apprentice hunter

Science & Research
Kristina BAUCH
Barbara HOCHWIMMER, GIS
Sonja BERGER, library
Beatrix NEUMAYER, veterinarian

Education & Visitor Information
Anna PECILE
Maria-Rosa SONNBERGER (from 06.11.2017)
Silvia KASERER
Nina ROTH-CALLIES,
Könige der Lüfte [‘sovereigns of the skies’] facility
Sigrid KENDLBACHER, ‘Between Heaven and Earth’ exhibition
Gerhard HOFER, show mine
Johannes HOFER, show mine
Christian KAVELAR, show mine
Kurt BERNERT, show mine
Christoph BREINL, show mine

Area Management
Stefan LERCH
Hannes MILLGRAMMER, trail worker
Norbert RENDL, trail worker
Gregor ENTFELLNER, alternative civilian service (until 31. 01. 2017)
Michael DENGGE, alternative civilian service (from 02. 05. 2017)
Tobias NEURAUTER, alternative civilian service (from 02. 10. 2017)

Legal Department
Ariane SCHWEIGER

Secretariat
Katharina EBERL
Michael HABERL
Maria KALCHER
Veronika MAYER (until 30. 06. 2017)
Cornelia HOFER (from 02. 10. 2017)

Cleaning
Julia KRÖLL, NPV Mittersill
Barbara REITER, *Könige der Lüfte* [‘sovereigns of the skies’] facility

National Park Rangers
Stefan ALTENBERGER

Andreas BALDINGER
Roland FRICKER
Ekkehard HEIDER
Herbert HOFER
Alexander HÖLZL
Martha HUTTER
Robert KENDLBACHER
Maria KIRCHNER
Hannes MUHR
Julia RIEDER
Werner SCHUH
Gerald STURM
Mariella VOGLREITER
Armin WANKE

National Park Seasonal Trainees
Eva-Maria AICHNER
Christina AIGNER
Bruno ANHAUS
Adriana ATZMÜLLER
Vincenth BRENNSTEINER
Stefanie BUCHNER
Vera FOISNER
Thomas FUCHS
Elena GRÜNDLINGER
Leonie HASENAUER
Richard HÖLZL
Verena KAMMERLANDER
Andreas KATSIKIDES
Patrick KRÖLL
Thomas KRÖLL
Norbert LEMBERGER
Lena Maria MOSER
Anna NINDL
Alexandra OBERAIGNER
Johanna PORTENKIRCHNER
Sarah PORTENKIRCHNER
Monika PROMMEGGER
Tanja RAINER
Daniela REITER
Niklas SCHNEIDER
Lukas SPERLICH
Mario WALLNER

Situation as at: December 2017

Tyrolean National Park Fund

NATIONAL PARK BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Composition:
Members and substitute members of the Board of Trustees:

Chair	Ingrid FELIPE-SAINT HILAIRE
Member	Friedrich SCHNEEBERGER, Matrie i.O.
Substit. member	Christoph KÖLL, Matrie i.O.
Member	Mayor Klaus UNTERWEGER, Kals a. Gr.
Substit. member	Alois GRODER, Kals a. Gr.
Member	Vice Mayor Hubert JESACHER, St. Jakob i.D.
Substit. member	Andreas STEMBERGER, St. Veit i.D.
Member	Norbert DUREGGER, Gaimberg
Substit. member	Joachim DEFREGGER, Iselsberg-Stronach
Member	Martin MAYERL, Dölsach
Substit. member	Gregor WURNITSCH, Virgen
Member	Gerald HAUSER, St. Jakob i.D.
Substit. member	Mayor Franz HOPFGARTNER, Hopfgarten i.D.
Member	Mayor Andreas PFURNER, Nussdorf-Debant
Substit. member	Mayor Josef MAIR, Dölsach
Member	Mayor Andreas KÖLL, Matrie i.O.
Substit. member	Vice Mayor E. MATTERSBERGER, Matrie i.O.
Member	Mayor Dietmar RUGGENTHALER, Virgen
Substit. member	Heinrich EGGER, Prägraten
Member	Birgit KANTNER, ÖAV, Innsbruck
Substit. member	Liliana DAGOSTIN, ÖAV, Innsbruck
Member	Kurt KAPELLER, Environmental Protection, Tyrol Province, Innsbruck
Substit. member	Sandra RINNER, Innsbruck
Member	Daria SPRENGER, Regional Planning, Tyrol Province, Innsbruck
Substit. member	Christian STAMPFER, Innsbruck

Government representative:
Valerie ZACHERL-DRAXLER

FUND ADVISORY BOARD

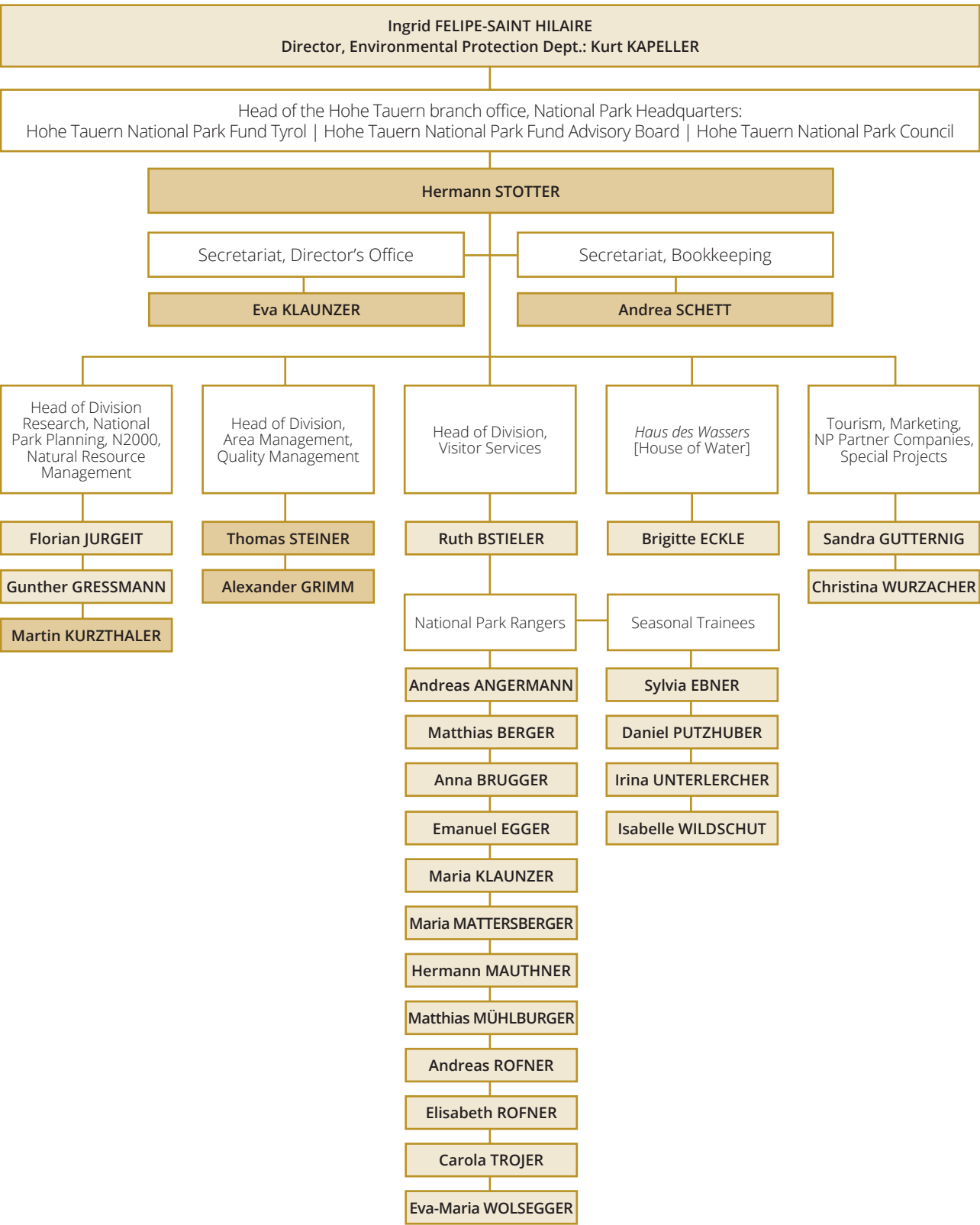
Composition:
Members and substitute members of the Fund Advisory Board:

Chairman	Mayor Anton STEINER, Prägraten
Substit. member	Vice Mayor Anton HATZER, Prägraten
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Substit. member	Johann GUMPITSCH, Dölsach
Member	Martin KÖNIG, Nikolsdorf
Substit. member	Hermann HAIDER, Lienz
Member	Raimund MÜHLBURGER, Matrie i.O.
from September	Reinhold BACHER, Virgen
Substit. member	Wolfgang RETTER, Lienz
Member	Günther IDL, Nussdorf-Debant
Substit. member	Carola WARTUSCH, Innsbruck
Member	Leopold FÜREDER, Innsbruck
Substit. member	Roland PSENNER, Innsbruck
Member	Olga REISNER, Lienz

Nature Conservation Officers Siegfried HUPF, Virgen
Christian PRESSLABER, Virgen

Tyrol Organisation

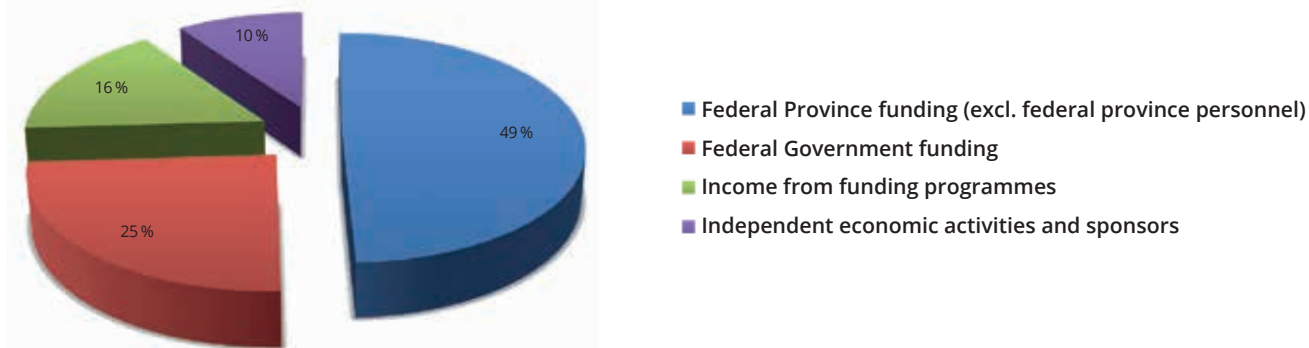


Tyrolean National Park Fund Hohe Tauern
 Federal province employees

Budget for the 2017 National Park Year

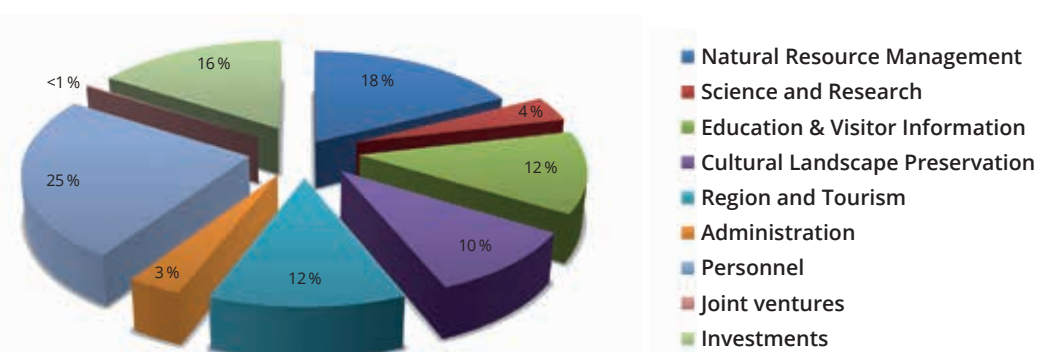
BUDGET INCOME: EUR 10,975,107.–

Federal Province funding (excl. federal province personnel)	EUR 5,422,178.–	49%
Federal Government funding	EUR 2,703,997.–	25%
Income from funding programmes	EUR 1,779,706.–	16%
Independent economic activities and sponsors	EUR 1,069,226.–	10%
TOTAL	EUR 10,975,107.–	100%



BUDGET EXPENDITURE: EUR 10,975,107.–

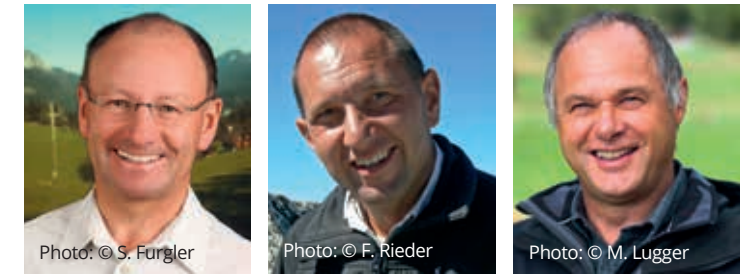
Natural Resource Management	EUR 1,929,605.–	18%
Science and Research	EUR 415,561.–	4%
Education & Visitor Information	EUR 1,358,904.–	12%
Cultural Landscape Preservation	EUR 1,103,577.–	10%
Region and Tourism	EUR 1,329,582.–	12%
Administration	EUR 373,891.–	3%
Personnel	EUR 2,701,591.–	25%
Joint ventures	EUR 22,492.–	< 1%
Investments	EUR 1,739,904.–	16%
TOTAL	EUR 10,975,107.–	100%



The figures indicated are rounded off and consist of the individual budget figures for the National Park Funds of Carinthia, Salzburg, Tyrol and the Council Secretariat Association. They are meant to provide a rough overview of the overall provenance of the funds of the Hohe Tauern National Park and their allocation. Full details can be found in the financial statements and balance

sheets of the individual National Park Funds and the Council Secretariat Association. Beyond the provision of funds the three federal provinces also provide support at various levels of commitment and intensity by providing personnel, infrastructure, IT, vehicle fleets, etc., which are not assessed or reflected in this simple statement of cash flow or the annual accounts.

Outlook



By merging the Activity Reports of the National Park Council and the three National Park Funds of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol, we have chosen for the first time to showcase all our achievements over the past financial year not only in their entirety but, more importantly, in their common aspects. This can only benefit the first of the Austrian National Parks – and the largest National Park in central Europe. We are convinced that we need to continue down this particular path and – whenever and wherever common aspects represent a gain for the implementation of the National Park idea in the Hohe Tauern – combine our resources. For this we are as always reliant on the tried-and-tested co-operation with our people on the ground, the municipalities and the landowners.

Right from the start of 2018 we intend to enhance the National Park's appearance as projected to the outside by sprucing up our corporate image and our corporate design. Similarly, our joint internet presence, which has stood the test of time as www.hohetauern.at – and everything that belongs to the broad field of social media are certain to make an impact. This will help to further consolidate the strong brand awareness that our National Park already enjoys as well as our appeal to our many sponsors and partners in the business sector.

By setting up our long-term monitoring programme an interdisciplinary research group from the Universities

of Innsbruck, Salzburg and BOKU [University of Natural Resources & Applied Life Sciences] in Vienna has succeeded in setting new standards in protected area research; a separate research co-ordination unit is also ensuring the necessary continuity and quality. 2018 will see the establishment of a high-calibre Scientific Advisory Board; after all, we do not want to neglect the all-important 'broader picture'.


Always a key concern and therefore always a new challenge is the environmental education remit, whether in schools, as part of setting up exhibitions and theme-based trails, or when organising the various Ranger programmes. In 2018 the entirely revised edition (in both educational and didactic terms) of our teaching materials is to be just as significant as our renewed certification and quality assurance in accordance with ISO 9001:2015.

The popular fixtures in any National Park year, e.g. the release of bearded vultures, the Biodiversity Day or the Partner School fêtes, will be as much a part of the programme for 2018 as the support and guided tour offers with our National Park Rangers. We look forward to welcoming our Partners and Friends of the National Park and of course our many guests, and to renewing their enthusiasm for the idea of a National Park!

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MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG VON BUND UND EUROPÄISCHER UNION
BUNDESMINISTERIUM FÜR NACHHALTIGKEIT UND TOURISMUS
LE 14-20
Europäische Union
Das Europäische Programm für die Entwicklung der ländlichen Gebiete
The European Union
The European Union

[Nothing spoils us more than the unspoilt]



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