



## ***2014 Activity Report***

*Carinthian National Park  
Fund Hohe Tauern*

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Cover picture: **Capercaillie (Tetrao urogallus)**  
The capercaillie is the largest indigenous member of the grouse family. In German  
its family name Raufusshühner literally translates as ‘rough foot chickens’ owing to  
the distinctive shape of the feet, which are either densely feathered right down to the  
talons (ptarmigan) or provided with small elongated horn tacks known as ‘courting  
tacks’. In winter these tacks serve as a snowshoe-like elongation of the toes; they are  
absent in the summer.

The capercaillie is well adapted to open mature stands (coniferous and mixed coniferous forests) interspersed with clearings as well as young tree growth offering cover alternating with dense ground vegetation. Good availability of berry bushes is also particularly important as is an abundance of forest ants when young chicks are being reared. In the region of the National Park the capercaillie is therefore most likely to be found in mountain forest sections little used for forestry purposes and undisturbed protected forests. As a breeding bird it reaches altitudes of around 1900 m. It may also migrate up to higher altitudes once the breeding season is over. Providing the capercaillie population is sufficiently high, the cocks will begin their courting display on shared courting grounds, with each cock defending its own strictly demarcated salt territory. The main courting season is from mid-March to mid-May. The hens arrive at the courting grounds ready to be mounted, after which they retreat to their nesting areas.

Back cover: **Schober Group**

Despite due care and attention, misprints and printing errors cannot be excluded.  
Situation as at February 2015

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LAND  KÄRNTEN

## National Park Year 2014

Dear Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to look back at the past year and draw a positive summary. Despite budgetary constraints we have been successful in implementing a multitude of projects.

The sheer diversity of projects managed by the Carinthian National Park Fund never ceases to amaze. It ranges from traditional protection and preservation projects to activities in the fields of science and research, various environmental education programmes, and the promotion of tourist measures.

It is always a source of particular pleasure when we are able to continue successful programmes such as our partnership with the Winklarn National Park Secondary School, which has been extended by another four years.

Clearly we are also on the right track with our education work, which we regard as a key investment for future generations: take the growing demand for the Young Explorers' Club, which was attended by around 350 children over the summer months, but also the fact that in the autumn we celebrated our 10,000th 'climate pupil'.

Just as remarkable is the fact that the Wilhelm Swarovski Observation Tower on the Grossglockner High Alpine Road recorded its one millionth visitor.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my warmest thanks to all the sponsors of the National Park; without their support many of these projects would not have been possible.

2014 was also the year of the capercaillie. In co-operation with the Kärntner Jägerschaft [Carinthian Hunters' Association]



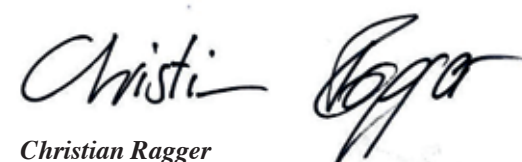
we were able to implement a number of exemplary measures aimed at improving the habitats for this timid woodland bird and, as a result, secure its population in the long term. It is also particularly satisfying to note that our many years of efforts aimed at resettling the bearded vulture are visibly bearing fruit. After 2012, we are able once again to report on a successful open-ground birth on the Carinthian side of the Hohe Tauern in 2014.

For all these pleasing events we must not overlook the fact that there is urgent need for further development in a number of areas. The forthcoming updating of the National Park Plan would be an appropriate occasion for taking policy decisions for the years ahead.

And may I, at this point, also congratulate all the land owners, but also all our partners, friends and staff at the Hohe Tauern National Park for their hard work and dedication. They have been instrumental in the positive development of this gem of nature in Carinthia's crown.

May I wish all our readers lots of pleasure and enjoyment browsing through the Report and also extend an invitation to visit the Hohe Tauern National Park and make use of our extensive range of programmes on offer.

With best regards,



**Christian Ragger**

Member of the Provincial Government of Carinthia  
in charge of National Parks



## Diversity Is Our Planet's Life Insurance Policy

Around 3,800 nature protection areas worldwide bear the title 'National Park'. Of these, a total of 2,527 – 354 in Europe – are Category II certified in accordance with the guidelines of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). In Austria six of the ecologically most precious regions have been declared National Parks.

Globally, these protection areas cover a surface of 3.1 million square kilometres and an average of 3.8 per cent of each country's surface area. In Austria the six natural gems account for a share of around three per cent and cover an area of approx. 2,000 square kilometres, putting us in the top third of a potential ranking.

Austria also leads the way, both internationally and at the European level, when it comes to another important factor, i.e. the preservation of biodiversity. I presented our contribution towards the protection of biodiversity at the Biodiversity Conference in South Korea. Our national biodiversity strategy was drawn up by a separate commission as part of a two-year process and unanimously adopted. The main emphasis is on containing the loss of species and genetic diversity as well as habitat degradation. But we also need to be proactive in addressing the causes of these threats. A key element of success lies in biodiversity monitoring, i.e. keeping track of the connections between human activity and biodiversity and adopting targeted measures.

2015 will be all about even more efficient co-operation between the Austrian National Parks. The joint project entitled 'National Parks Austria PR' is to be continued. New pioneering projects are also planned in the areas of research and



education. Strategically, preparing for the challenges ahead is particularly important. The Austrian National Park Strategy is to be restructured accordingly and developed further.

The six Austrian National Parks illustrate the diversity of our homeland and are showcase projects for nature conservation and biodiversity. But they are also research sites and visitor attractions and, as such, they have a positive impact on the regional economy too.

All the people who work for these all-important nature protection areas do tremendous work and demonstrate their commitment day in and day out. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them, and I look forward to a successful and busy 2015.

Yours



**Andrä Rupprechter**

Austrian Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry,  
Environment and Water Management



## Austria's Six National Parks



Austria's six National Parks.  
Total surface area: 2,373 km<sup>2</sup> (2.83% of the total territory)

## Umbrella brand and network

Austria boasts an enormous diversity of ecosystems, natural and cultural man-made landscapes, all of which are preserved by a wide range of protective and support measures as well as sustainable use. Of these, National Parks Austria represent the glacier-covered high-mountain regions, alpine cultural landscapes, various coniferous and deciduous ecosystems, fluvial wetland forests, and the Pannonian steppe. As representative extensive nature protection areas they are therefore of crucial importance to the preservation of the national natural heritage.

All the activities of National Parks Austria are fine-tuned as part of co-ordination sessions during which the heads of the National Park and Forestry Administrations get together several times a year under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW).

The activities of National Parks Austria are supported by the National Park Advisory Board, which was set up by the BMLFUW as part of the strategy development. It is comprised of members of the federal government, the federal provinces, and selected environmental NGOs. Its primary remit is to put forward proposals and recommendations on specialist and strategic objectives. Two co-ordination sessions were held in 2014 along with two meetings of the National Park Advisory Board.

**Web-Info:** [www.nationalparksaustria.at](http://www.nationalparksaustria.at)

## National Parks Austria Association

Important joint measures are implemented through the National Parks Austria Association. In 2014 the National Parks Austria Association focused on the LEGZU Project (co-operation, guidelines, and principles) and the evaluation of the Austrian National Parks (EMINA).



## LEGZU

### Co-operation, guidelines, and principles

The three-year project consists of several work packages on the subject areas of overall management, natural resource management, protection of biodiversity, knowledge management, National Park region, education/communication, and marketing. The persons in charge of these subject groups at the individual National Parks discussed the topics in four work groups and a total of eight work packages, drawing up guidelines and recommendations as a result. LEGZU has shown that, for a number of topics, better progress was achieved through a concerted approach than through the individual initiatives of each Park.

## EMINA

### Taking a close look at the National Parks

In 2014 all the Austrian National Parks took part in an external evaluation as part of the EMINA Project – the acronym stands for Evaluation of Management in the National Parks Austria.

All the National Park's areas of activity were assessed, specifically biodiversity and natural resource management, PR work and education, research, organisation and running.

#### PROJECT STAGES IMPLEMENTED/TO BE IMPLEMENTED:

- ✓ **Summer 2013:** Call for tenders
- ✓ **November 2013:** Awarding of the contract to **EUROPARC Deutschland e.V.** and the **Institute for Rural Development Research (IfLS)**
- ✓ **January 2014:** Kick-off workshop in Windischgarsten
- ✓ **February 2014:** Finalising of the indicator sets & questionnaire
- ✓ **March 2014:** Completion of the questionnaire by the National Parks
- ✓ **April 2014 to February 2015:** Tiered evaluation by the evaluation team and outside experts
- ✓ **June 2014:** Workshops at the **Hohe Tauern National Park** with the evaluation team, outside experts, the National Park Administrations, and local stakeholders and interest groups
- ✓ **October 2014:** Workshop in Windischgarsten attended by all the National Parks Austria, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, representatives of the federal provinces, evaluation team, and outside experts
- ✓ **February 2015:** Completion of the evaluation reports

The evaluation reports on the individual Austrian National Parks describe the situation as it currently stands, comprise a SWOT analysis, and recommendations for action incl. implementation priorities for each particular National Park.

The Project provides important results for the future management of the National Parks.

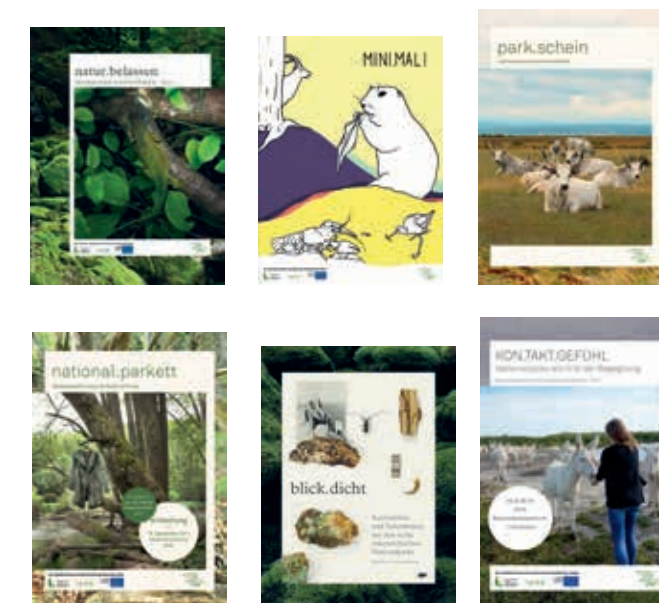


## Public relations work 2012 – 2014

A three-year PR campaign was launched in 2012 to raise the general public's awareness of the individual National Parks. The campaign was aimed at making as many people as possible aware of the issue of National Parks. The campaign was sponsored by the Austrian Environmental Umbrella Organisation.

#### MEASURES IMPLEMENTED IN 2014 (selected):

- ✓ **Publication of two issues of the magazine natur.belassen**
- ✓ **National Parks Austria children's colouring book MINIMAL!**
- ✓ **Publication of educational resources for schools durch.blick.kontakt – Die österreichischen Nationalparks im Unterricht**
- ✓ **National Parks Austria scholarship park.schein awarded for the first time to new generation of young authors, journalists and up-and-coming photographers**
- ✓ **National Parks Austria Fashion Show national.parkett as part of the MQ Vienna Fashion Week 2014**
- ✓ **National Parks Austria art book blick.dicht**
- ✓ **3rd National Parks Austria Annual Conference 2014 KON. TAKT.GEFÜHL – Nationalparks als Orte der Begegnung [CON. TACT. FEELING – National Parks as Places of Encounter]**

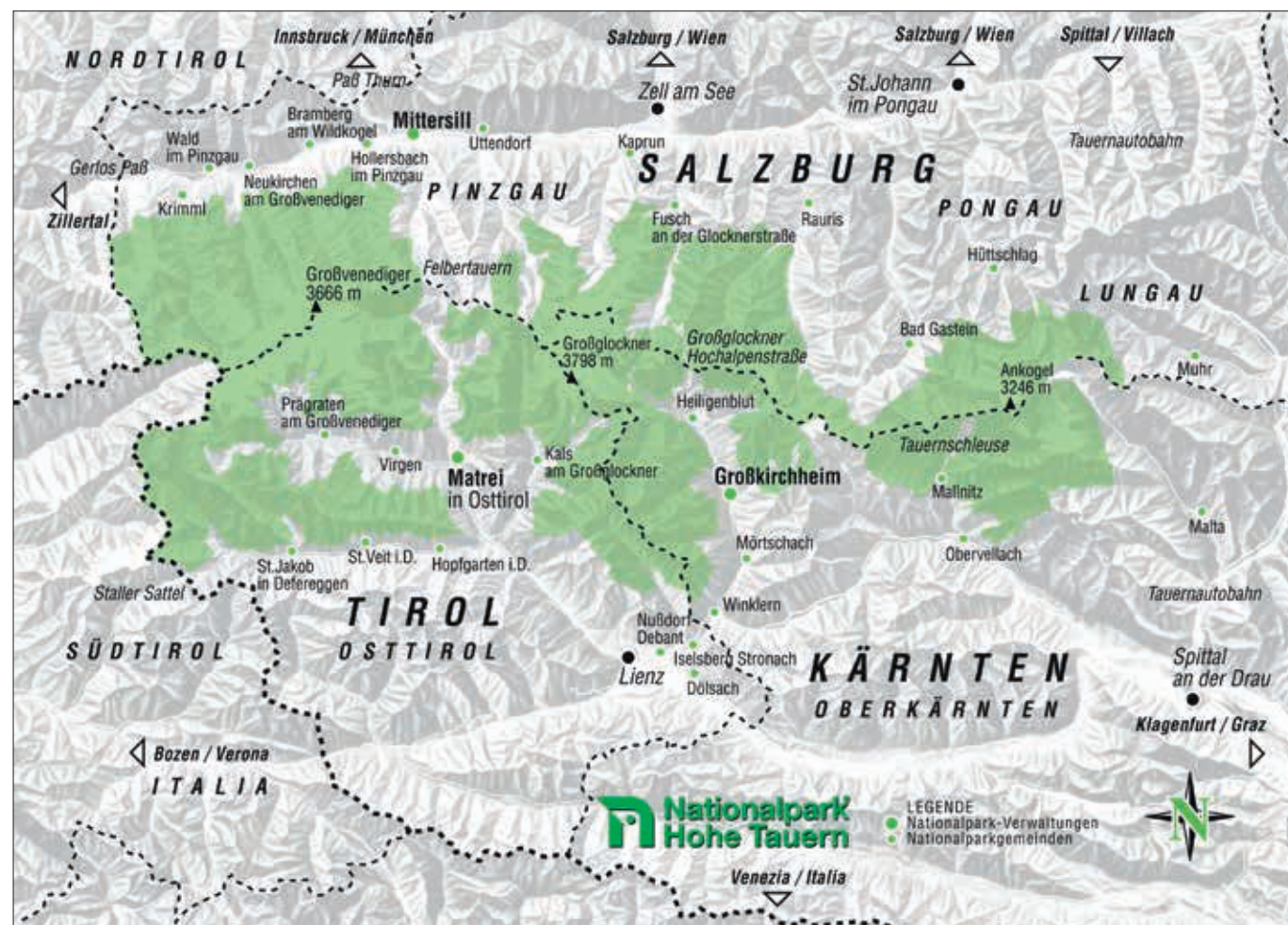




## Facts & Figures

With a surface area of 1856 km<sup>2</sup> the Hohe Tauern National Park is the largest nature protection area in the European Alps. That also makes it the largest, and largely unspoilt, protected natural landscape in the heart of Europe (core zone and special protected area) in conjunction with an outstanding cultural landscape (outer zone) in terms of landscape aesthetics. Stretching more than 100 km east to west and 40 km north to south the Hohe Tauern National Park covers altitude elevations ranging between 1000 m in the valleys up to 3798 m on the summit of the Grossglockner, the highest mountain in Austria and the eastern Alps. The entire area is a representative section of the eastern Alps, with 266 mountain peaks above 3000 m, including the Grossvenediger, Hoher Sonnblick and Ankogel.

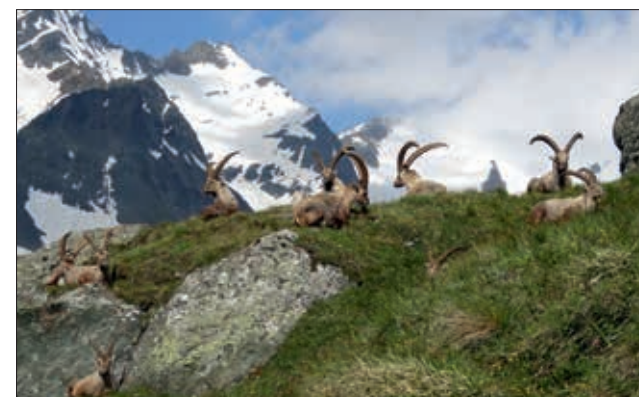
	Core zone	Outer zone	Special protected area	Total
Carinthia	291 km <sup>2</sup>	113 km <sup>2</sup>	36 km <sup>2</sup>	440 km <sup>2</sup>
Salzburg	507 km <sup>2</sup>	266 km <sup>2</sup>	32 km <sup>2</sup>	805 km <sup>2</sup>
Tyrol	347 km <sup>2</sup>	264 km <sup>2</sup>		611 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,145 km<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>643 km<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>68 km<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>1,856 km<sup>2</sup></b>



(Situation as at December 2014)

Web-Info: [www.hohetauern.at/mapservice](http://www.hohetauern.at/mapservice)

## Main Tasks



### NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



### SCIENCE & RESEARCH



### EDUCATION & VISITOR INFORMATION

It is not just the size and the rigorous protection and preservation objectives that make a nature protection area a National Park, but also the implementation of professional management resources in particular. The objectives of National Park management are as diverse as the natural and cultural alpine landscapes to be preserved and protected.

## Business areas

Natural resource management, science & research, and education & 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). 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 development that is compatible with the objectives of the National Park, but also in harmony with the interests of the local population.

## Zoning

The development objectives in the nature protection 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 alpine pastures, mountain meadows and larch pastures typical of the Hohe Tauern, as nurtured and maintained by human hand for centuries. Even in the outer zone technological developments such as the erection of energy generating plants or ski lifts are forbidden.



## Looking Back



**February 11**

Press event: 'Capercaillie and lead-free gun ammunition',  
Klagenfurt



**February 13**

18th meeting of the National Park Council,  
Matrei



**March 26**

Presentation of the 2013 Annual Report  
and preview of 2014,  
Klagenfurt



**March 29**

National Park presentation  
at the *Weidwerk & Fischweid*  
hunting & fishing trade fair,  
Klagenfurt

## Looking back

**April 4**

Presentation of the 'VERBUND Climate School  
of the Hohe Tauern National Park' as part  
of the 'Long Night of Research' event,  
Klagenfurt



**April 7**

Start of the kindergarten month,  
Mallnitz



**April 9**

First official visit to Federal Minister  
Andrä Rupprechter,  
Vienna



**April 26**

Festival of the Mountains,  
Klagenfurt





## Looking Back



**April 27**

Opening of the special exhibition  
'The Hohe Tauern 100 Years Ago',  
Mallnitz



**May 2**

Hohe Tauern National Park –  
Carinthia awarded 'Themed Trails of the Year 2014'  
status for four of its themed trails,  
Kals



**May 9**

Milka event 'Lila Loves Green –  
Biodiversity Hands-on',  
Vienna



**May 23**

'Capercaillie' seminar in co-operation  
with the Carinthian Hunters' Association,  
Mallnitz

## Looking Back

**June 4**

13th meeting of the *Jagdbeirat*  
[Hunters' Advisory Council],  
Heiligenblut



**June 13**

Partner school fete of the National Park  
Primary Schools,  
Mallnitz



**June 18**

Meeting of the National Park Board  
of Trustees and Committee,  
Mallnitz



**June 23**

EMINA workshop with  
the evaluation team,  
Matrei





## Looking Back



**June 27**

Climate school fete of the 'VERBUND Climate School of the Hohe Tauern National Park', St. Jakob



**July 3-4**

Partner meeting of the 'Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park', Heiligenblut



**July 18**

Kärntnermilch Junior Rangers closing event, Mallnitz



**July 18**

Presentation of the reissue of the scientific studies on the 'Flora of the Hohe Tauern', Mallnitz

## Looking Back

**July 18-20**

8th Biodiversity Day in the Seebachtal valley, Mallnitz



**July 29**

Children from Greenland on a visit to the Hohe Tauern National Park, Heiligenblut



**July 28 to August 1**

Summer camp for young climatologists at the Hohe Tauern National Park, Heiligenblut and Mallnitz



**August 28**

One millionth visitor at the Wilhelm Swarovski Observation Tower, Heiligenblut





## Looking Back



### September 9-12

National Park delegation from Plitvice on a visit to the Hohe Tauern National Park, Heiligenblut



### October 3

Young Rangers' Day at the Winklern National Park Secondary School, Mallnitz



### October 3

'Green Classroom' project presentation by the HAK Lienz Commercial Academy, Winklern



### October 26

National Park Hiking Day to the Lonzaköpf, Obervellach

## Looking Back

### October 26-28

Annual meeting of the Mountain and Nature Patrol Working Group, Mallnitz



### November 4

Signing of the partnership agreement between the 'Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park' and the JA!Natürlich food brand, Vienna



### November 4

Partner meeting with general assembly of the 'Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park', Vienna



### December 5

Extension of the partnership with the Winklern National Park Secondary School, Winklern





## Carinthian National Park Fund

### National Park Board of Trustees

**Duties:** Activity Report, accounts, budget estimate

#### Composition:

#### Member of the Provincial Government (NP advisor)

Chairman *Christian Ragger*

#### Municipal Representatives

Member *Mayor Peter Suntinger*

Substitute member *Mayor Josef Schachner*

#### Municipal Representatives

Member *Mayor Klaus Rüscher*

Substitute member *Mayor Wilhelm Pacher (for half the term)*

*Mayor Günther Novak (for half the term)*

#### Landowner Representatives

Member *Franz Schmid*, Heiligenblut

Substitute member *Johann Bäuerle*, Heiligenblut

#### Landowner Representatives

Member *Martin Pirker*, Malta

Substitute member *Albert Huber*, Obervellach

#### Office of the Provincial Government of Carinthia Ecology, Nature and Landscape Protection

Member *Helmut Hartl*

Substitute member *Bernhard Gutleb*

#### Office of the Provincial Government of Carinthia Regional Economy of the National Park Region

Member *Heide Pichler*

Substitute member *Martin Lackner*

#### Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management

Member *Viktoria Hasler*

Substitute member *Johannes Ehrenfeldner*

#### Austrian Alpine Club

Member *Liliana Dagostin*

Substitute member *Hans Jury*

### National Park Committee

**Duties:** To act in an advisory capacity for the management and adopt resolutions concerning funding proposals

#### Composition:

#### 7 Municipal Representatives

Municipality of Heiligenblut *Mayor Josef Schachner, Chairman*

Municipality of Grosskirchheim *Mayor Peter Suntinger*

Municipality of Mörtschach *Mayor Horst Plössnig*

Municipality of Winklern *Mayor Hermann Seebacher*

Municipality of Mallnitz *Mayor Günther Novak*

Municipality of Malta *Mayor Klaus Rüscher*

Municipality of Obervellach *Mayor Wilhelm Pacher*

#### 14 Landowner Representatives

Municipality of Heiligenblut *Johann Bäuerle*

Municipality of Heiligenblut *Franz Schmid*

Municipality of Grosskirchheim *Johann Pichler*

Municipality of Grosskirchheim *Peter Zirknitzer*

Municipality of Mörtschach *Gerald Oberdorfer*

Municipality of Mörtschach *Thomas Ploner*

Municipality of Winklern *Arnold Fercher*

Municipality of Winklern *Johann Thaler*

Municipality of Mallnitz *Mag. Anton Glantschnig*

Municipality of Mallnitz *Alwin Hofer*

Municipality of Malta *Martin Pirker*

Municipality of Malta *Friedrich Feistritzer*

Municipality of Obervellach *Albert Huber*

Municipality of Obervellach *Josef Eisank*

#### 2 Representatives of the Office of the Provincial Government of Carinthia

*Gerold Glantschnig*  
*District Governor Klaus Brandner*

#### 1 Representative of the Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry

*Chairman Johann Mößler*

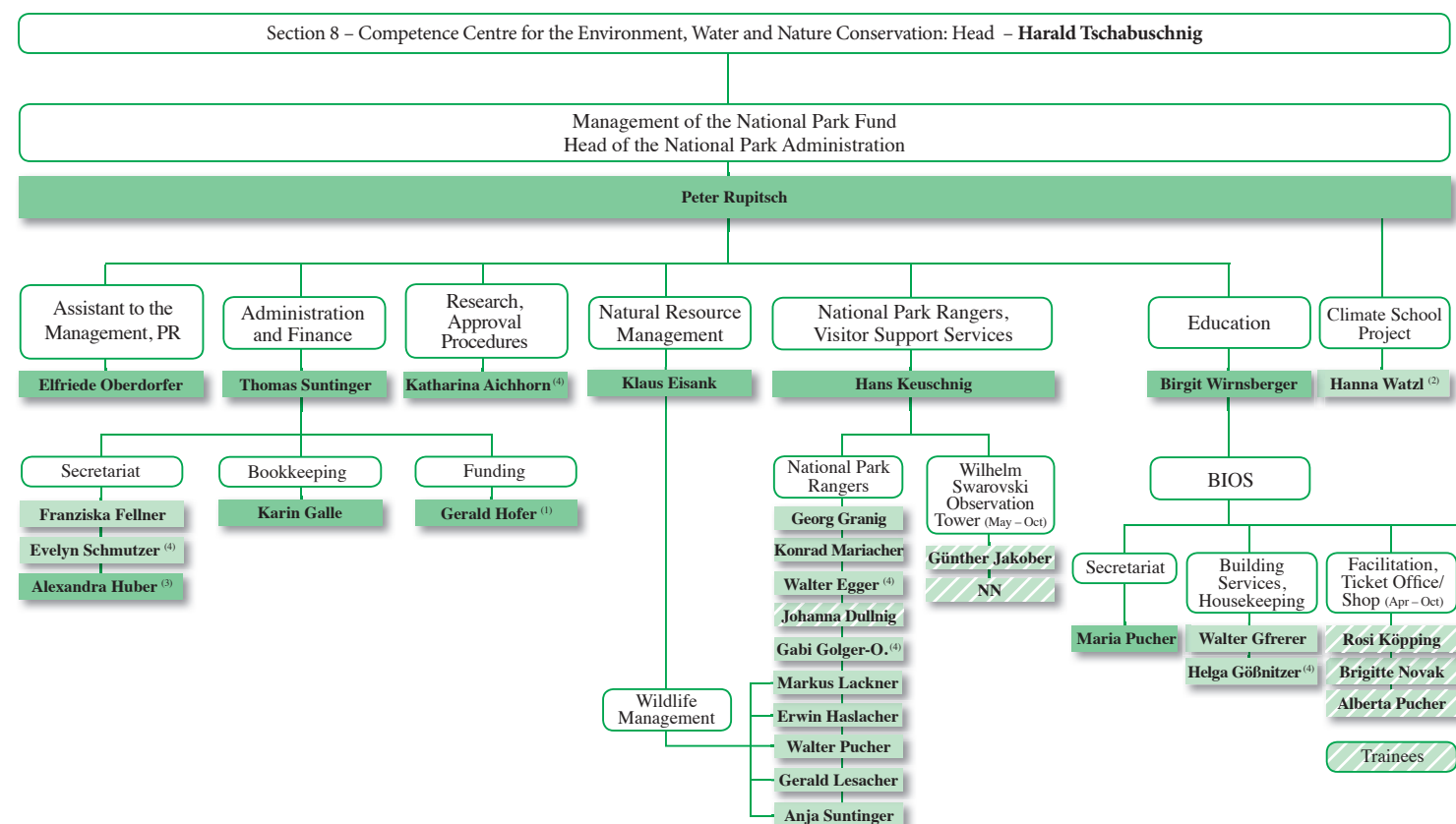
#### 1 Representative of the Federal Government

*Viktoria Hasler*

#### 1 Representative of the Austrian Alpine Club

*Hans Jury*

## National Park Administration



 Federal province employees

 Fund employees

 Seasonal employees

(1) Working for both the Hohe Tauern National Park and the Nockberge Biosphere Park

(2) Project management of the VERBUND Climate School of the NPHT (special project – 100% refund)

(3) Currently on maternity leave

(4) Part-time employees

Situation as at June 2014

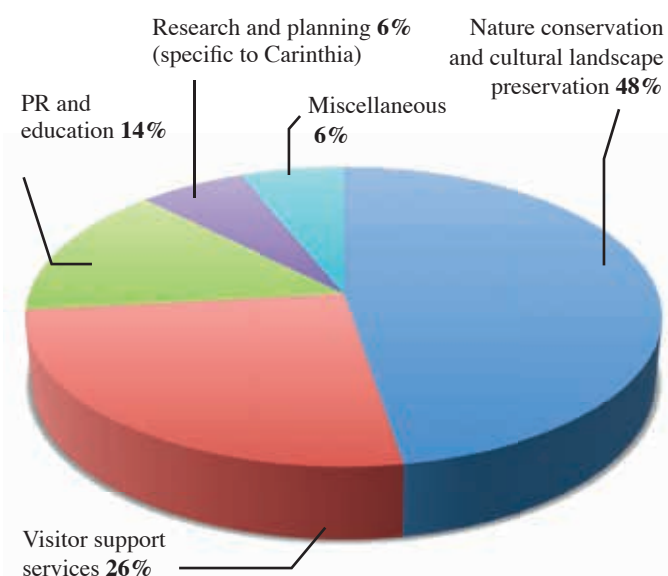
Situation as at November 2014



## Allocation of Funds

**2014 expenditure:**  
**EUR 2,750,331.00**

Nature conservation and cultural landscape preservation	EUR 1,304.907.00
Visitor support services	EUR 710,732.00
PR and education	EUR 393,821.00
Research, planning (spec. Carinthia)	EUR 172,213.00
Miscellaneous	EUR 168,658.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>EUR 2,750,331.00</b>



### National Park Council

Subsidies from the Federal Province of Carinthia to the National Park Council are not shown in the chart. Under the terms of the agreement pursuant to Section 15a BVG [Federal Constitutional Law] between the Federal Government and the Federal Provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol, the parties to the agreement provide financial resources for cross-province projects with emphasis on science, PR work and education.

Subsidies from the Federal Province of Carinthia to the National Park Council in 2014: EUR 72,673.00.

*Situation as at 14.01.2015, expenditure prior to transfers and follow-up entries as part of the preparations for the financial statements 2014*

National Park funds are allocated to the following areas and comprise costs for the following tasks:

### NATURE CONSERVATION AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION

- ✓ **Hohe Tauern contractual nature conservation programme**  
Carinthia's contractual nature conservation programme is founded on three pillars: general compensation, natural landscape compensation, and cultural landscape compensation.
- ✓ **Wildlife management**  
Costs for hunting leases, shoots, wage costs for shoots, vehicles for shoots.
- ✓ **Cultural landscape programme**  
Promotion of special forms of management and husbandry, skills, traditional fencing, nurturing of pruned and pollarded trees, larch pastures, stone block work, and dry stone walls. Handicraft skills and locally adapted management and farming methods are preserved and passed on to future generations. The conservation of habitats makes an important contribution towards biodiversity.
- ✓ **Promoting cultural and village ecology**  
Promoting the timber roofing of properties and premises, and renovating buildings of cultural-historical merit.

### VISITOR SUPPORT SERVICES

- ✓ **Preservation of National Park-compliant infrastructure such as hiking trails, educational trails and other facilities**
- ✓ **Publicising, organising and staging summer and winter programmes as well as youth programmes**
- ✓ **Visitor support services at the Mallnitz BIOS National Park Centre**

### PR WORK AND EDUCATION

- ✓ **National Park magazine (three issues per year)**
- ✓ **Partnerships with schools**
- ✓ **Junior Rangers programme**
- ✓ **Management of internet presence and press work**
- ✓ **Education programmes such as Waterschool and Climate School**
- ✓ **Education programmes at the Mallnitz BIOS National Park Centre**

### RESEARCH AND PLANNING (SPECIFIC TO CARINTHIA)

- ✓ **Science projects**
- ✓ **Research work**
- ✓ **Baseline study and planning**
- ✓ **Wage costs – scientific staff**

*For other research projects implemented over and beyond the boundaries of the federal province see page 45 (NP Council)*

### MISCELLANEOUS

- ✓ **Costs for various administrative expenditure**

## Funding Programme

aimed at maintaining and improving the infrastructure as part of visitor management and information

As part of our visitor management and information services a priority objective is to offer a stunning experience of nature to as large a circle of people as possible – without causing harm or damage to nature in any way.

This is achieved by continually maintaining and improving the National Park infrastructure (educational trails, hiking trails, info-points, signposting, etc.).

These measures also represent an important prerequisite for hiking-based tourism throughout the National Park region.

Each year visitor information and management services in co-operation with local organisations help to secure 15 seasonal jobs in the seven National Park municipalities.



*Construction work along the hiking trail to the Zirknitz cave*

In 2014 the programme carried out jointly with the National Park municipalities and aimed at servicing the National Park infrastructure successfully maintained some 600 km of hiking trails, 18 educational trails, and a multitude of info-points. A subsidy in the amount of EUR 205,400.00 was made by the Carinthian National Park Fund. The shortfall of more than EUR 275,000.00 in the financing of required funds was met by local organisations.

An additional EUR 10,000.00 of subsidies were raised for maintenance and visitor management measures along the Rabisch Gorge hiking trail.



*Improving and maintaining the signposting*

## In Summary

### Sum total:

- ✓ **Subsidy from the Carinthian National Park Fund: EUR 205,400.00**
- ✓ **Services provided:**  
Maintenance of approx. 600 km of hiking trails and 18 educational trails
- ✓ **15 seasonal jobs**  
in seven Carinthian National Park municipalities



*Bridge renovations along the educational and hiking trails*



## Wildlife Management – Showcasing the Capercaillie

2014 was declared the 'Year of the Capercaillie' by the Carinthian Hunters' Association. The National Park Administration of Carinthia signed up to the initiative and implemented a whole raft of measures aimed at improving the habitat of this timid woodland bird.



The male capercaillie can weigh up to 6 kg; the hen is somewhat smaller and weighs approx. 2 kg

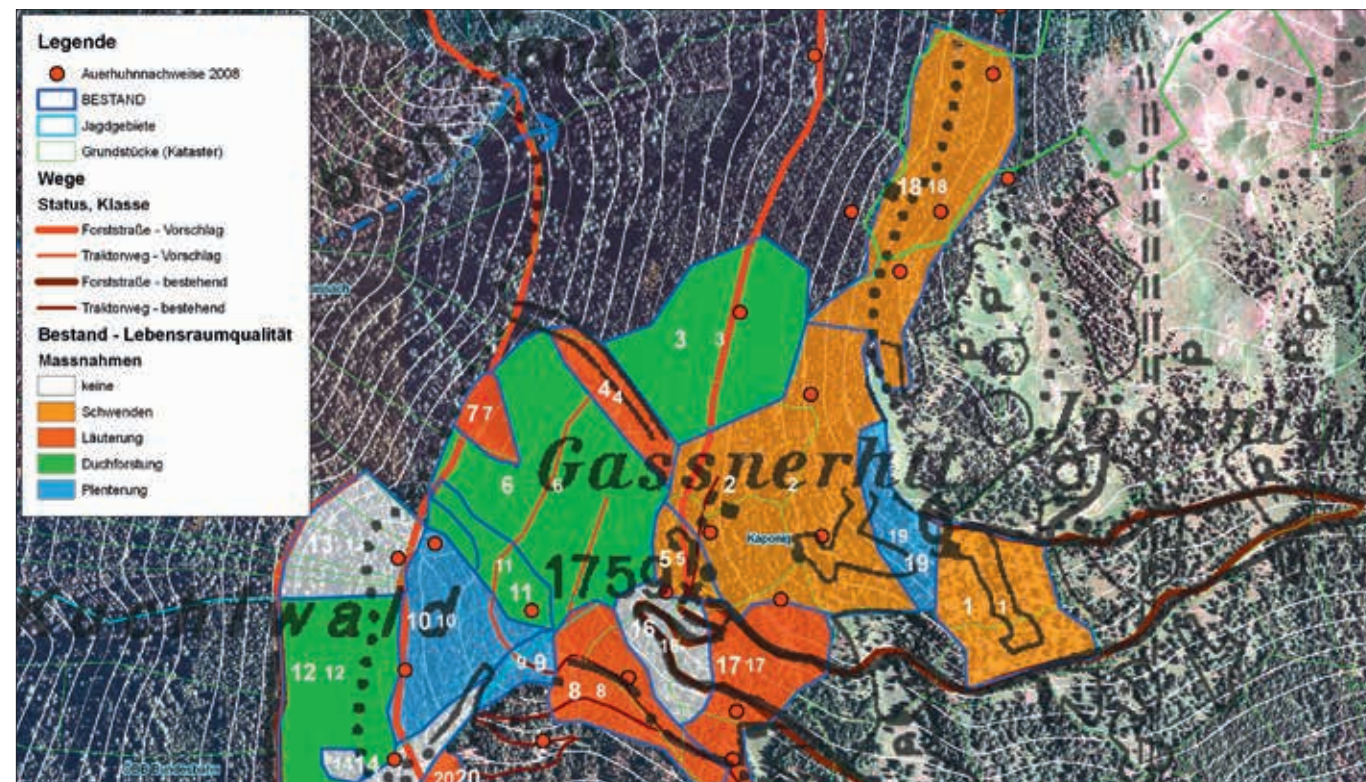
### Starting point and objectives

As part of a pilot project conducted in the National Park region of Mallnitz/Oberveßlach between 2008 and 2011, potential habitats for the capercaillie were surveyed and DNA typing was used to carry out a scientifically based estimate of the population. Based on the above, special activities aimed at securing the presence of capercaillie populations were then carried out in 2014.

### Catalogue of measures

As part of the project, measures designed to improve the habitat were planned in detail in the defined sub-areas; a catalogue of measures was then drawn up, part of which has already been implemented. The following project areas have been identified as crucial areas for implementing these measures:

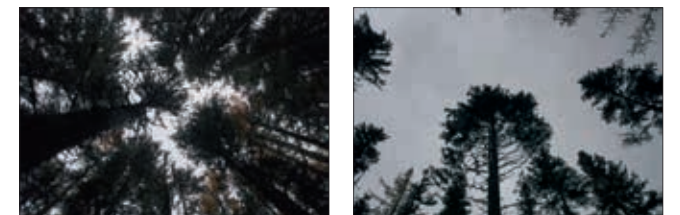
- ✓ **Kaponig / Lassach** (50 ha)
- ✓ **Schönberg / Valindalm** (17 ha, incl. small-scale assarting)
- ✓ **Auernigboden** (32 ha, forestry measures)
- ✓ **Häusleralm / Mallnitz West** (65 ha)
- ✓ **Pfaffenberger Alm** (68 ha)
- ✓ **Pfaffenberg / ÖBF** (68 ha)



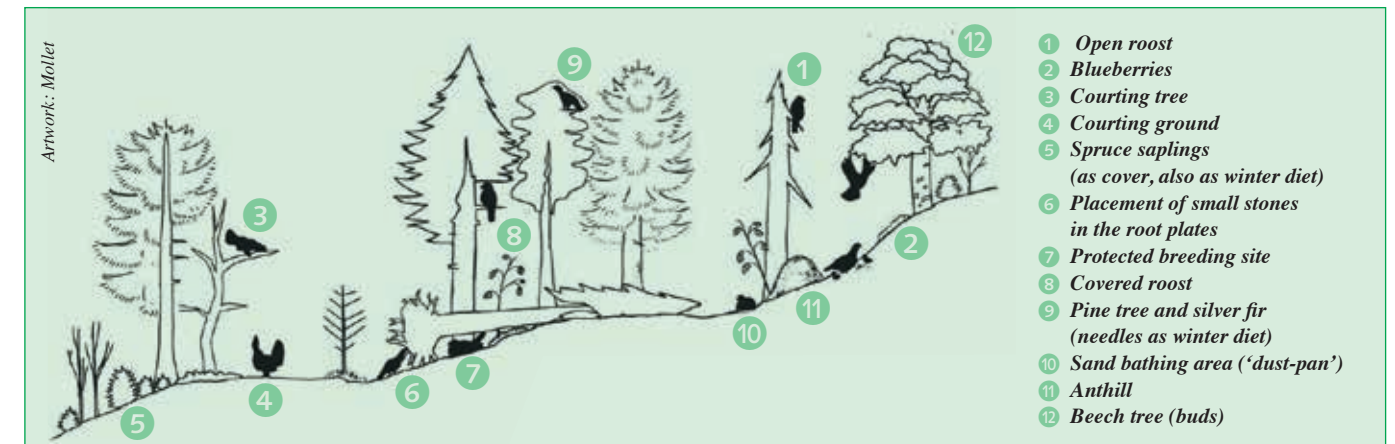
Action planning was carried out for all these sub-areas in order to determine how a capercaillie-compatible habitat might best be implemented in harmony with forestry use or improvements in pasture and grazing farming

### Implementation

A 10 ha area of woodland was made 'capercaillie-compatible' mainly in the forested area of the cadastral municipalities of Lassach and Pfaffenberg, with the consent of a number of forest owners and in close co-operation with local forestry authorities and scientists. The illustration below by Mollet (2001) gives an idea of what an optimum capercaillie habitat might look like.



An open canopy (right) provides a new habitat for the capercaillie



### Work stages

The following work stages were taken into account for the implementation of the measures:

- ✓ **Action planning – priorities**
- ✓ **Ascertaining the land owners, declarations of consent**
- ✓ **Determining the boundaries, clarifying outstanding questions**
- ✓ **Co-ordinating with forestry authorities, businesses, land owners and persons licensed to hunt**
- ✓ **Estimating costs and ascertaining funding opportunities**
- ✓ **Profile and work instructions for entrepreneurs**
- ✓ **Separate marking-out according to land owners**
- ✓ **Specifying the timber hauling methods and the skidding and rope tracks**
- ✓ **Intermediate checks of works in progress: quality, harvest damage, branch material**
- ✓ **Improvement and complementing of the marking-out**
- ✓ **Final inspection before forwarder moves away**
- ✓ **Continual photo documentation**



Creating capercaillie habitats where the wild species still occurs

### Capercaillie seminar

On May 23 a seminar entitled 'Capercaillie – the high-maintenance wildlife' was jointly organised at the Mallnitz BIOS National Park Centre with the education platform of the Carinthian Hunters' Association. More than 100 licensed hunters took part in the subsequent field trip to the Kaponig/Lassach project area. On site, participants had an opportunity to see for themselves how the project is being implemented and to get practical advice from the experts.



Presenting the Kaponig/Lassach project area to participants as part of the field trip



## Wildlife Management – Chamois Research Project

### Heiligenblut model region

Due to the ongoing debates surrounding the chamois the Hunters' Advisory Council of the Carinthian National Park Fund decided to set up a research project on this noble game species in the Hegering Heiligenblut preserve. The chamois is not just the heraldic animal of the Carinthian Hunters' Association, but also the principal species of wild animal to be found at the Hohe Tauern National Park. The research project will document and analyse the way in which the chamois population has evolved, retrospectively from 2001 through to 2016. The Carinthian Hunters' Association and the local hunters' association in particular will be supporting the research project with chamois counts, surveys of chamois stocks, and telemetry tagging.



The chamois – the main species of game found in the Hohe Tauern National Park

#### Chamois count

In keeping with the project's objective, two counts of the chamois population were carried out in 2014 (June 18, July 5). The project area was divided into two counting areas (north and south). Results show that a healthy population comprised of 1,294 chamois was counted in the Hegering Heiligenblut project area. The count consisted of 259 males, 511 females, 103 yearlings, 298 kids, and 123 chamois of unspecified gender. The result shows that there is an excess of females. With this count it should be noted that, particularly in the Schober Group (south counting area), the proportion of males (bucks) could not be recorded in full as they were located in areas that were not observable at the time of the count (forest areas, rocky regions). A second counting date was therefore planned for the autumn, to coincide with the start of the rutting season. However, the date had to be

cancelled due to weather conditions (lying snow, inaccessibility of a number of beats).

On each counting date 35 qualified persons were out and about in the beats of the Hegering preserve.

The results of the counts tie in very well with the estimates of chamois populations made in recent years. An interesting detail is the difference in chamois density between the north and south counting areas. One of the reasons for these differences could well be the winter habitats that have been lost. A comparison of the 2013 and 2014 counts also showed that more than 50% of the kids counted did not survive the winter due to the large masses of snow.



Chamois count in the Heiligenblut National Park municipality

#### Catch and telemetry

A minimum of six chamois were to be collared with telemetry devices as part of the project. The two live traps (Gössnitz, Fleiss) were checked for proper functionality on 20 May 2014 and subsequently primed. Thereafter the traps were checked daily; three chamois were collared in the Gössnitz trap, and two were marked.

#### TELEMETRY TAGGING:

- 04.07.** Female 8-9 years, 'Elfi', white transmitter colour, transmitter No. 12594, left ear: yellow F13 mark at the front, blue at the back
- 23.07.** Female 3 years, 'Franzi', brown transmitter colour, transmitter No. 12598, left ear: white F13 mark at the front, blue at the back
- 21.08.** Male 9 years, 'Hansl', yellow transmitter colour, transmitter No. 12595, right ear: green H26H mark at the front, blue at the back blue

#### MARKING:

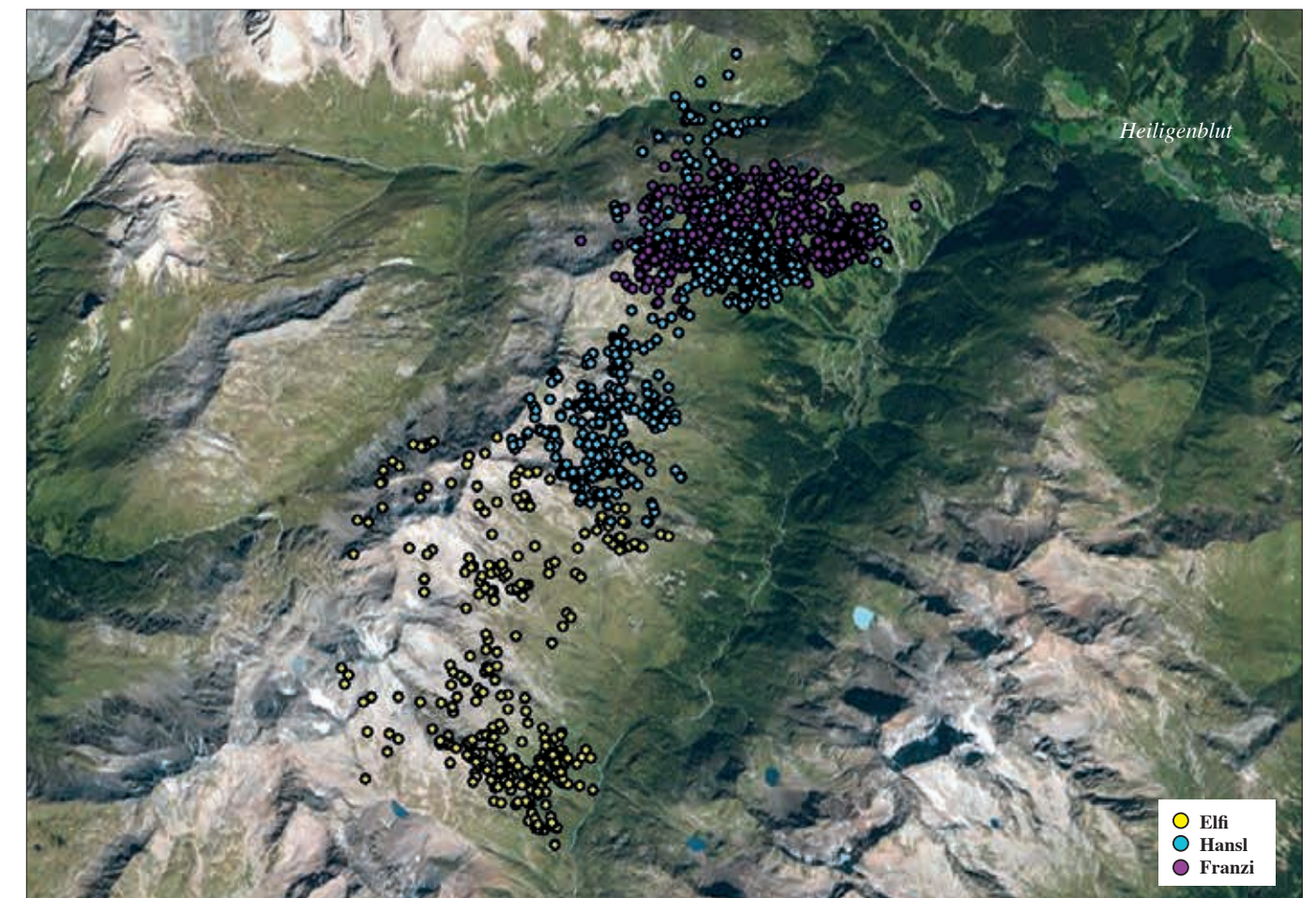
- 23.07.** Female yearling, right ear: large white F13 at the front, small blue at the back
- 28.07.** Female yearling, right ear: large yellow F13 at the front, small blue at the back

While the 'Gössnitz' trap was no longer primed after August 21, the 'Fleiss' trap was unsuccessful in collaring a chamois over the catch period lasting until October 27. The 'Fleiss' trap was neutralised on 27 October 2014 due to weather conditions (new snow).

Equally striking are the initial results obtained for the three collared chamois, which due to the minimal amounts of snow did not migrate down to lower valley levels during the winter months of November/December.



Releasing the chamois after collaring



Position data for the collared chamois in the Gössnitz valley

#### Analysis of faeces samples, examination of chamois legs

Around 40 samples of chamois faeces were also collected and subjected to parasitological tests. The analyses of the samples did not reveal any exceptional anomalies.

A chamois with in part excessively long claws and dew-claws on all four legs was shot in the Hegering Heiligenblut preserve. The legs were sent to the Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology for analysis of suspected foot-rot (claw disease). The diagnosis showed no indication of pathology (foot-rot, etc.). Chamois and other cloven-hoofed game can occasionally be prone to claw deformations.

#### Scientific supervision

The scientific supervision for the project was entrusted to the Game Biology Office, represented by Dr Veronika Grünsachner-Berger, who will also be documenting the project results in a report.



## Wildlife Management – Deer Telemetry Research Project

The research project launched in 2011 to examine the way in which deer behave in, and use, the habitat space available to them in the National Park region of Mallnitz/Oberveellach has now been extended, initially until 2016. This was necessary because, so far, only one deer has been successfully tagged for telemetry purposes; its data is therefore not statistically relevant.



Deer herd in the Mallnitz Seebachtal valley

### Animal 11579

Animal No. 11579 survived the 2013/14 winter well in the Reisseck municipality and wanted to return to the summer cover of the Mallnitz Seebachtal valley already on April 1. However, prevailing snow conditions prevented this, and so 'Liesl' then made a second attempt on April 8, which took her to the Dösental valley over the course of a few days. On April 26 she reached her summer cover and in early June gave birth to a calf in Tromkar. She spent the summer months there, and on October 31 she showed her calf the way to the winter cover, as far as Kaponig. The excursion was short-lived before she finally set off for Penk on November 21, reaching the winter cover on November 23. We do not know why she returned to the Seebachtal valley once again between December 24 and 29. Due to transmitter problems no further data has been received since December 29.



Trail routes covered by deer No. 11579

### Animal 11580

There was a great deal of excitement among the gamekeepers when another deer stepped into the live trap in the National Park reserve of Lassacher Alpe on 26 May 2014. Once it was immobilised, it was tagged with transmitter No. 11580 (white collar). Already at this stage the animal was classified as an old hind as evidenced by the significant amount of wear and tear apparent on its incisors.

After its release no position data was received initially as the old hind remained on the shady side where there is no mobile reception. By summer the ground station had still not received any data, which is why the transmitter was assumed to be defective. But on July 19, during the 8th Biodiversity Day which, in 2014, was held in the Seebachtal valley, scientists came across a deer skeleton with a white transmitter collar. It was removed and sent to the laboratory for data analysis. No results are known as yet, but they will be published in the interim report of the Office for Wildlife Ecology and Forestry.



Immobilising deer No. 11580

## Wildlife Management – Ibex Research

As part of the ibex research in the Hohe Tauern genetic samples are to be taken from shot animals; likewise, horn measurements (referencing annual growth, span, length, etc.) are to be carried out on an ongoing basis. This will allow conclusions and results to be drawn up about the population dynamics. Another project objective is to obtain important data on ibex in the Hohe Tauern through to 2016 using scientifically established monitoring (cross-province counts).

### Grossglockner ibex preserve community

#### Ibex count

This year's cross-province ibex count took place on June 14. The result of the count revealed a healthy ibex population comprised of 264 animals. The ibex population consists of 89 males, 93 females, 45 yearlings, 35 kids and 2 ibex of unspecified gender.

#### The Unicorn ibex

Our ibex gamekeepers made an interesting observation on the Franz-Josefs-Höhe for the first time in November 2013. It was there that they spotted an approximately 10-year-old ibex with a horn broken off on its right-hand side. The ibex survived winter 2013/14 well and could be observed throughout summer 2014 in the area of the Franz-Josefs-Höhe and the 'Gamsgrube' special protected area. Due to its striking distinguishing feature this particular specimen has become known by the nickname *Unicorn* among ibex spotters.



Unicorn ibex, 11 years old

*Unicorn* was last spotted by our ibex gamekeeper in December 2014 in the area of Lake Zirm in the Kleines Fleisstal valley. The distance between the 'Gamsgrube' special protected area and Lake Zirm is approx. 15 km as the crow flies. The broken horn could have been caused by a fall or as the result of the horn being struck by a rock.

#### Ibex marking

Using the ibex trap on the Franz-Josefs-Höhe we succeeded in marking four ibexes (1 female, 3 male) using ear tags. Ibexes are also being marked in the eastern Tyrol and Salzburg sections of the National Park, which is why ear tags are selected and co-ordinated accordingly. It allows us to continue documenting the way in which the ibex population moves around the Hohe Tauern National Park.

#### Horn measurement

As part of the cross-province research project on horn measurement 12 ibex trophies were measured at the Alte Schmelz National Park centre on 30 January 2014 under the supervision of Gunter Gressmann and in the presence of the ibex gamekeepers.

To date a total of 61 trophies have been measured in the Carinthian section of the National Park, recording in each case the data relating to annual growth, horn length, span, etc. The oldest ibex analysed had reached the age of 14; by reverse calculation, it was determined that it had been born in 1961. The analysis of annual growth also provides an indication of weather conditions (e.g. duration of the winter) and of factors relating to population dynamics such as game density or suitable habitats. Based on initial findings across the provinces it is already possible to conclude that, in terms of horn growth, there are striking differences between the northern and southern flanks of the Hohe Tauern. Ibex on the northern side present a much reduced horn growth during the first few years of their life as they are forced to invest more in physical fitness than in horn growth due to the extreme surroundings of their habitat. 249 trophies were measured in total in the Hohe Tauern.

## Hunters' Advisory Council

The 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Hunters' Advisory Council for Carinthian National Park reserves was held at the Glocknerhaus on June 4. Discussions focused on the deer telemetry project in Mallnitz, the ibex research, and the 'capercaillie habitat' pilot project with the activities of the Carinthian Hunters' Association marking the 'Year of the Capercaillie'.

District *Jägermeister* Franz Kohlmayer made a surprise announcement at the meeting, one which reflects the principles of the National Park: 'In future the head of deer approved in the shooting plan in the Lassacher Alpe reserve will no longer be shot; instead, they will be tagged with transmitters to provide us with ever better findings on the deer's habitat behaviour.'



## Contractual Nature Conservation

### 511 contracts with 234 contractual partners

Following co-ordination with the stakeholders a comprehensive contractual nature conservation model was implemented by the Carinthian Natural Park Fund in 2001 based on detailed baseline studies as part of the IUCN approval procedure. Key principles of this private-sector agreement between land owners and the National Park Fund are 'voluntariness' and 'time limitation'.

The number of contractual partners and contracts was down slightly compared with 2013; the payout sum increased once again due to the index rise, amounting to around EUR 560,000.00. Not included in this are costs of EUR 248,000.00 for hunting leases. The sum total was therefore EUR 808,000.00, which was paid out to the land owners (around 30% of the overall budget per year).



Grossesendtal Valley: Here the cultural landscape compensation, which is aimed at preserving traditionally farmed alpine pastures in the National Park's outer zone, is contractually regulated



Even after 20 years of contractual nature conservation, continual contact with land owners and beneficial owners is essential

## Evaluation of National Parks Austria

The contractual nature conservation model adopted by the Carinthian National Park Fund was scrutinised as part of the process of evaluation of the Austrian National Parks by EUROPARC Deutschland e.V. and the Institute for Rural Development Research.

Generally speaking, contractual nature conservation is regarded as an excellent means of fulfilling National Park objectives on private land; in fact, it is nothing short of a success story. The situation of equal partners created by these contractual relationships has led to a general acceptance founded on a solid basis of trust, paving the way for a consensual approach to conflict resolution.

But alongside the very positive arguments, there has been criticism of the ten-year time limit imposed on the term of these contracts. It has been suggested that longer-term contracts be concluded in future.

### In Summary

Contractual partners, total:	234	
Contracts, total:	511	
of which:		
General compensation:	300 contracts	EUR 231,786.25
Cultural landscape compensation:	112 contracts	EUR 118,490.42
Natural landscape compensation:	99 contracts	EUR 209,105.51
<b>Total:</b>		<b>EUR 559,382.18</b>

## Cultural Landscape Programme

The cultural landscape programme is designed to make a lasting contribution to the preservation and continuity of the indigenous cultural landscape. Traditional forms of management and husbandry and the preservation of cultural and open-field monuments and memorials worthy of protection are processed through this funding programme.



Unspoilt cultural landscape in the Mallnitz National Park municipality

## 2014 Summary

### Allocation of funds to individual landscape elements:

A total of 246 management contracts with 144 applicants were processed without red tape through co-operation and a proactive initiative with local natural land associations.

Renovation of haystacks, mills, etc.	EUR 2,164.28
Erection of traditional wooden fencing	EUR 21,450.06
Traditional summit utilisation	EUR 4,776.20
Traditional maintenance of larch pastures	EUR 7,336.89
Maintenance of intact dry stone walls	EUR 14,781.15
Traditional renovation of dry stone walls	EUR 718.65
Traditional maintenance of stone block work	EUR 3,050.28
Other measures (renovation of wayside crosses, shrines, etc.)	EUR 2,674.06

### Transfer of the cultural landscape programme into the EU's EAFRD Programme (ÖPUL [Austrian Agri-environmental Programme] and natural conservation projects)

Now that the new ÖPUL programme has incorporated additional landscape elements into its funding programme, the cultural landscape programme can be carried forward through ÖPUL in future. This means that the financing of the cultural landscape programme through EU funds from the agriculture sector is secured in the long term, thereby precluding any duplicate funding.

### New as of 2015

Land managers are now offered the possibility of drawing down funds for the landscape elements included in the previous cultural landscape programme (dry stone walls, tree pollarding, etc.) in conjunction with meadow use through Pillar 1 in matters of preservation and through ecologically valuable areas in matters of management and nurturing.

As for alpine pastures, there is still the possibility of applying for, and processing, subsidised maintenance programmes over several years through the 'Natural Conservation Plans on Alpine Pastures'. Agricultural holdings are to be advised and informed accordingly in the course of information events.

## Funding of individual projects

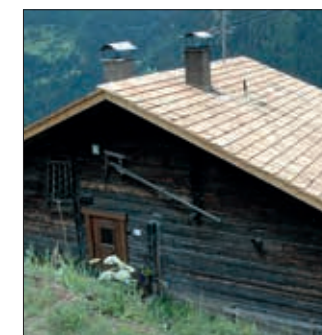
In 2014 individual projects were also funded alongside the cultural landscape programme.

The funding projects were processed in co-operation with the Carinthian Federal Monuments Office.

Various premises were thus saved from dilapidation. A lasting contribution to the preservation of village ecology and an intact landscape was made as a result.

### Measures aimed at preserving objects and premises of cultural-historical merit:

2 projects with a total sum of EUR 13,529.20



Timber roofing for a farmhouse in Allas



Timber roofing for a farmhouse – incorporated as part of the ensemble of Apriach mills



## *The Seebachtal – A Species-rich Valley*

### 8<sup>th</sup> Biodiversity Day in the Hohe Tauern National Park

Between 18 and 20 July 2014, a total of 70 scientists from Austria, Germany, Slovenia and Italy combed through the Seebachtal Valley in Mallnitz in a bid to discover as many species as possible over a period of 48 hours. The 8<sup>th</sup> Biodiversity Day in the Hohe Tauern National Park was a resounding success, thanks not least to the wonderful summer weather.

The 52 km<sup>2</sup> Seebachtal Valley in the Carinthian section of the National Park curves round from Mallnitz into the Hochalmspitze mountain range, over a length of 13 km. This classic trough valley is characterised by a relatively flat valley floor without notable drops in elevation, steep valley flanks, vast expanses of mountain forests, extensive alpine grasslands, and a multitude of waterfalls. Even today the landscape is still shaped by numerous dynamic processes: the silting-up of Lake Stappitz, the mountain stream dynamics of the Seebach river

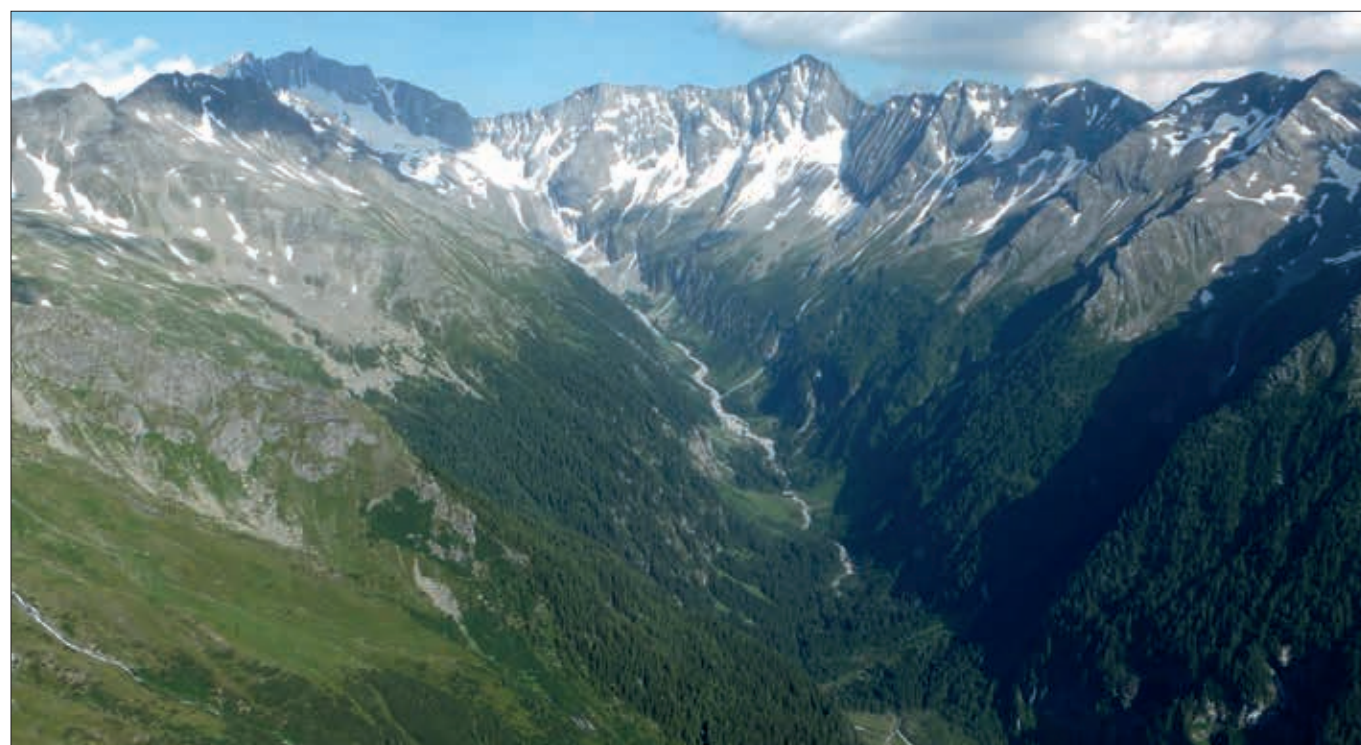
in its many forms, regular avalanches and mudflows, and the glacier dynamics at the valley head, to mention but a few. All these natural prerequisites form the basis for the Seebachtal Valley's biodiversity.

#### What's that crawling on the Ankogel?

The many snowfields still present in July were a sure indicator of just how much snow had fallen on the southern flanks of the Alps throughout the winter and even in spring 2014. Nonetheless, Alexander Rief and Michael Steinwandter from the University of Innsbruck ventured up onto the 3252 m Ankogel, discovering 14 species of spiders and daddy longlegs (Opiliones) along the way. Even near the summit the two mountain enthusiasts still managed to come across arachnids with such fine-sounding names as *Oreonetides glacialis*, *Erigone tirolensis* and *Dicranopalpus gasteinensis*.

#### Airs and graces

In the Seebachtal Valley itself ten ornithologists spotted a total of 67 species of bird, a truly remarkable number as bird specialist Christine Medicus from Salzburg's *Haus der Natur* readily confirmed. Especially since mid-July is already relatively late for surveys of birds. Ralph Winkler was fortunate enough to observe something truly special. He spotted three griffon vultures as they spiralled upwards from the Hannoverhaus before flying off at speed on a northerly heading. Golden eagles, common buzzards and honey buzzards also capitalised on the good thermal dynamics of these wonderful summer days. The Alpine swift was also out in force, with flights of at times at least ten specimens hunting for insects in impressively racy aerial displays.



The valley head of the Seebachtal is surrounded by striking summits, some partly covered in glaciers: from the Hochalmspitze – the highest summit in this range at 3360 m – to the Säuleck (3086 m) and the Maresenspitze (2916 m)

#### Bat(wo)men in the National Park

The four-person team of the Co-ordination Office for Bat Protection and Research in Austria – KFFÖ for short – made perfect use of the summer weather both during the day and at night. They were able to detect twelve different bat species in the valley using 16 Batcorder locators, i.e. special devices for sensing and determining species of bat. Decaying deadwood, woodpecker holes, hollow trunks, rock fissures, but also old barns, lofts and mountain huts all provide an excellent habitat for these nocturnal creatures. According to Daniela Wieser, KFFÖ co-ordinator for Carinthia, there are still plenty of structures such as these in Mallnitz and the Seebachtal Valley, thanks also to the Hohe Tauern National Park.



Harald Mixanig of the KFFÖ with a Batcorder in the Seebachtal Valley

#### High-flying admirals

A poplar admiral female (*Limenitis populi*) was discovered at an altitude of 2630 m on a snowfield close to the Hannoverhaus. The butterfly's natural habitat is located in well structured mixed forests since its caterpillars feed on aspen leaves, so in actual fact it should not be found in high-altitude mountain ranges at all. Botanists Günther Nowotny and Peter Pilsl discovered not just the female of the species, but also a male right next to the Mallnitz railway station, where small stands of aspen trees grow. Just how this butterfly found its way up to such lofty and icy heights remains a mystery. Patrick Gros from Salzburg's *Haus der Natur* has even conjectured that the butterfly ended up taking an unintended ride on the Ankogel cable-car. Be that as it may, the butterfly expert was more than satisfied with the outcome, with more than 300 observed species. So far 438 species had been known to exist in the Seebachtal Valley; with around 100 additional species spotted during the Biodiversity Day, the valley now comprises some 550 butterfly species.

Biodiversity Days have been held in the Hohe Tauern National Park every year since 2007, to great success. To date, more than 27,300 data records have been collated, i.e. almost nine per cent of the total data inventory of the Hohe Tauern National Park's biodiversity database.



During the Biodiversity Day in the Seebachtal Valley the poplar admiral (*Limenitis populi*) was spotted for the first time within the boundaries of the Hohe Tauern National Park

For large conservation areas in particular, targeted surveys over a defined area and period of time are particularly well suited for systematically recording biodiversity. But these Biodiversity Days would not be possible without the dedication of so many scientists. Plus: how many other events offer such a splendid and unique opportunity to combine the joys of discovery with the useful gathering and compilation of nature conservation data!

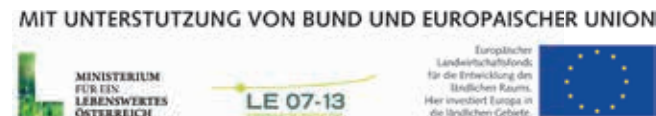


A wonderful array of flowers on an avalanche slope in the Seebachtal Valley

**Web-Info:** [www.hohetauern.at/de/forschungs/tage-artenvielfalt](http://www.hohetauern.at/de/forschungs/tage-artenvielfalt)

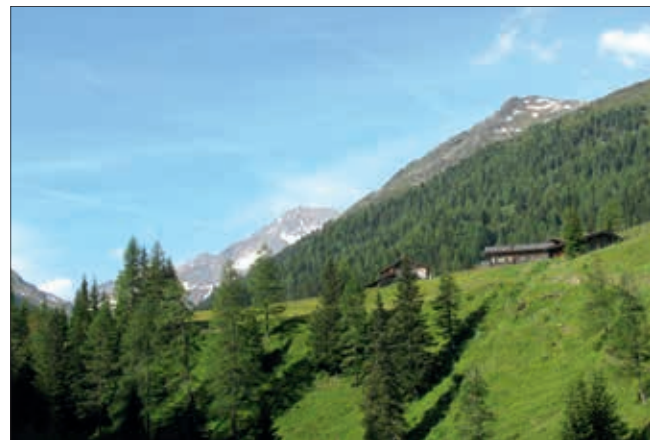


## Alpine Farming, Biodiversity & National Park: Yesterday – Today – Tomorrow



Between 1996 and 2001 alpine pastures were analysed in all three sections of the Hohe Tauern National Park and, subsequently, also for the expansion areas in the Carinthian section. Pasture use potential and grazing intensity were determined based on a simulation model specially developed for the National Park and subsequently fine-tuned with reference mapping made on the ground and conversations with the alpine pasture farmers themselves. This proved an efficient way of obtaining an area-wide planning basis for the National Park Management. The results of the surveys on alpine pasture use provided an important basis for the zoning, international recognition and contractual nature conservation model in the Hohe Tauern National Park Carinthia. 15 years since the initial survey is a sufficiently long and meaningful period of time to relaunch a detailed review of alpine pastures in the Hohe Tauern National Park Carinthia. A project cofinanced by the EU entitled 'Alpine Farming, Biodiversity & National Park: Yesterday – Today – Tomorrow' therefore got underway in spring 2013. It comprises the following modules commissioned by the National Park:

- ✓ Repeat of the surveys on alpine pasture use as a monitoring instrument
- ✓ Ecological monitoring of alpine pasture vegetation
- ✓ Current situation and future of alpine farming



Today, alpine pastures in the National Park – as here in the Gössnitztal valley – represent the very core of the alpine cultural landscape in the Hohe Tauern. Discussions about the future of alpine pastures have played a huge role in the course of the National Park's evolution. In the outer zone in particular the sustainable management of a near-natural cultural landscape shaped by traditional mountain farming is a priority objective for the preservation of biodiversity and the characteristic landscape

### Repeat of the surveys of alpine pasture use as a monitoring instrument

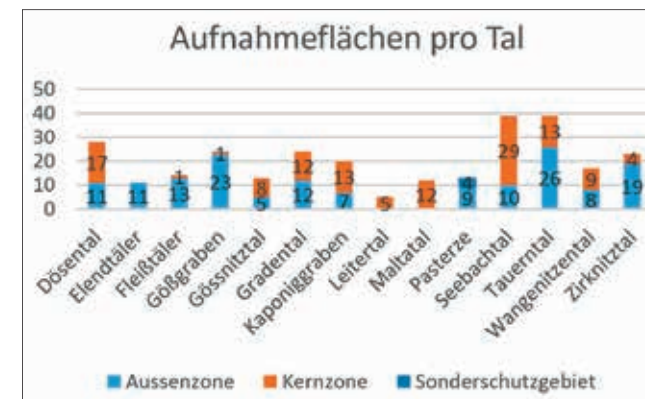
The Hohe Tauern National Park Carinthia currently covers a total surface area of 44,000 ha. Within the Hohe Tauern National Park Carinthia alpine pastures account for a surface area of 19,812 ha, of which 6,577 ha are in the outer zone and 13,218 ha in the core zone. In the 'Gamsgrube' and 'Grossglockner-Pasterze' special protected areas, alpine pastures account for a minimal share of the surface area (less than 1 ha). There are currently 110 alpine pastures in the Hohe Tauern National Park Carinthia. In an initial phase the existing model simulation used by eb&p Umweltbüro GmbH in Klagenfurt was developed further, optimised, and then implemented based on the current data (figures for cattle drives up to alpine pastures, grazing areas, grazing days).



The near-natural cultural landscape typical of the Hohe Tauern, as featured here on the Retschitzalm in the Gössnitztal Valley with the Hoher Sonnblick in the background, evolved as a result of centuries of alpine farming

### Ecological monitoring of alpine pasture vegetation

In a second phase field mapping is to be used to plot the current status of alpine pastures over selected reference areas. In summer 2014 the Klagenfurt-based company E.C.O. Institute for Ecology carried out the relevant selection, setup, location and initial survey of a total 282 monitoring areas in the Hohe Tauern National Park Carinthia. This network of monitoring areas is an important instrument for documenting the current status of, and any changes in, Carinthia's alpine pastures, and all habitat types of relevance to alpine farming at different altitudes were taken into account.



Number of recorded surfaces per valley  
(Chart: E.C.O.)

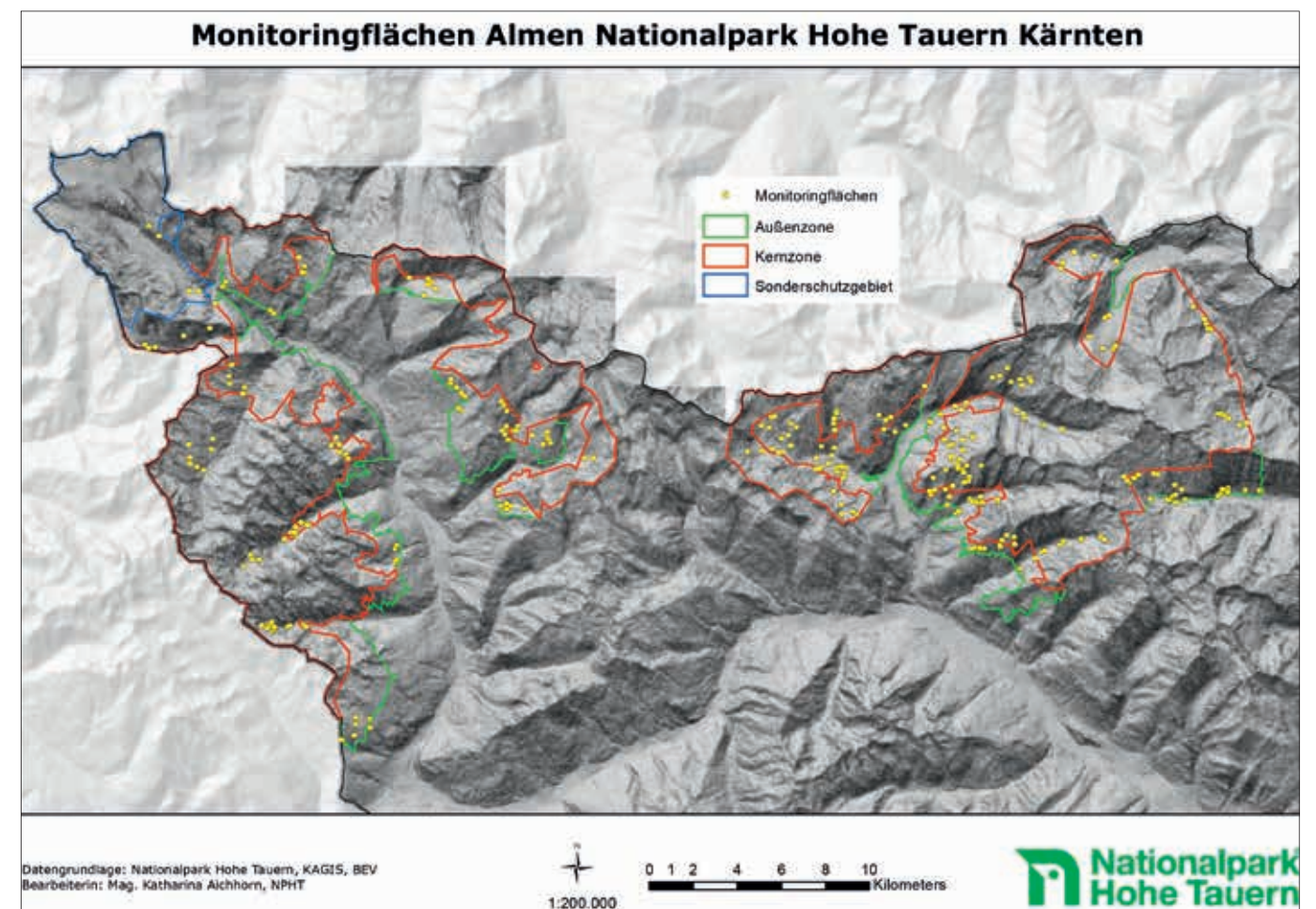
### Current situation and future of alpine farming

In 2015 eb&p Umweltbüro GmbH in Klagenfurt are to interview alpine farmers about the current and planned management of their alpine pastures. The results of these interviews and the data from the ecological monitoring of vegetation will be entered into the model simulation. Gross energy yield, grazing intensity and livestock density will be determined currently for each alpine pasture.

The new findings gained from the surveys on alpine pasture use and the monitoring of these pastures are to be used for the tasks of the National Park, specifically for the National Park Planning and its Natural Resource Management. Workshops will then be set up to elaborate and specify targeted proposals for implementation in the National Park Management.



Monitoring areas on alpine pastures in the valleys of Dösental, Gössnitztal and Gradenal, and above the Glocknerstrasse



Distribution of the 282 monitoring areas in the Hohe Tauern National Park Carinthia



## Nature & Environmental Education

As central Europe's largest nature protection area we have made education our priority task alongside natural resource management, science and research.

Every year thousands of schoolchildren, but also adults, make use of the wide range of offers available in matters of environmental education at the Hohe Tauern National Park. Lessons taught by the National Park at the schools themselves but also directly on site, in what is then Austria's biggest classroom, give children an opportunity to explore the natural and cultural landscapes of the National Park and find out more about topical environmental issues such as the global water balance and climate change. As part of our mobile Water and Climate Schools and the National Park's mobile exhibition our Rangers go directly to the pupils in their schools, bringing along everything they need for their lessons.

The focus is on the diversity of methods and self-study. As part of our project weeks, the Young Explorers' Club and various holiday camps, children are able to go on an adventure tour through the Hohe Tauern National Park accompanied by our National Park Rangers. There they learn all about the flora and fauna of high-altitude mountains, glaciers and aquatic creatures. The shared enjoyment of nature, learning, playing, having fun, and the group dynamics make these outdoor events an unforgettable experience. And of course the National Park also offers a fun educational programme for our very youngest visitors, the kindergarten children, with an entire month every year earmarked for the programme at the Mallnitz National Park Centre.

Adults also get the opportunity to broaden their knowledge by attending our seminar series at the Mallnitz National Park Centre while enjoying the breathtaking natural backdrop of the Hohe Tauern National Park.

### Visitor Support Services 2014 – Facts & Figures

Supported school classes .....	463
Supported schoolchildren .....	9,244
Visitor field trips .....	2,055
Visitor lectures, slide shows .....	729
Visitor info-centres/exhibitions .....	80,332
Supported visitors and schoolchildren, total .....	92,360

### National Park Rangers Completion of certificate courses

Training courses to become an Austrian National Park Ranger have been held at the Hohe Tauern National Park for the past two years. The National Park Academy was supported in this venture by the National Park Administrations and the *Haus der Natur* in Salzburg. Over the past two years course participants received solid, comprehensive training on the National Park's objectives and tasks. Other topics covered by the course included the general principles underlying Austria's natural resources and how they came about as well as the ecological links between nature and landscape at the Hohe Tauern National Park.



Training course to become an Austrian National Park Ranger

The course also looked at the fundamentals of nature studies, the many different ways in which human activities affect the landscape, the basics of communication, nature education, the mediation of experience and knowledge about nature and landscape, legal principles, and the basics of emergency management.



On 11 December 2014 18 participants successfully passed their final exam to become Austrian National Park Rangers

Web-Info: [www.hohetauern.at/bildung](http://www.hohetauern.at/bildung)

## Partner Schools

### Winklern National Park Secondary School

**NaturSportSpass [Nature, Sports & Fun]:  
a successful school project goes into extra time**

The school mission statement of the Winklern National Park Secondary School aims to anchor the National Park idea in the minds of young people and strengthen the way in which they identify with the Hohe Tauern National Park. To this end the programme entitled 'National Park Experience – Nature, Sports & Fun' was drawn up in co-operation with the National Park Administration, alongside the adaptation of the school curricula.



Young Rangers' Day at the Mallnitz National Park Centre

The partnership agreement between the Hohe Tauern National Park and the Winklern National Park Secondary School was officially signed back in 2002, laying the cornerstone for a close and mutually rewarding partnership.



Year 3 alpine course in the Gradental Valley – alpine ecosystems, edible and usable plants, geomorphology, rock glacier, open-land orientation, meteorology, team building, alpine training, ...



Nature, Sports & Fun – a programme that does justice to its name in every respect. It is an integral part of every pupil's curriculum at the Winklern National Park Secondary School from Year 1 to Year 4. Key topics are assigned to each school year, to match the age of the pupils in each case. The National Park topics are prepared in class and then worked through as part of three-day courses at the National Park's mountain huts and during field trips throughout the National Park region.

As the experts in the field, our National Park Rangers have a special role to play, accompanying the children on their adventure trips through the National Park throughout their entire schooling. This school partnership and the associated lessons guarantee that an awareness of the National Park as a region, with a balanced and sustainable development, is created among the many children and young people reached by the programme.



Year 1 winter course in the Astental Valley: open-land orientation, meteorology and avalanche awareness, tracking and searching for animal trails, team building with adventure and outdoor games, support through mountain rescue with First Aid measures, ...

Web-Info: [www.hohetauern.at/bildung](http://www.hohetauern.at/bildung)



## Partner Schools

### National Park Primary Schools Big farewell party for Year 4

Getting schoolchildren excited about nature and introducing them to the beauties of the National Park – those are the basic ideas behind the partnership between the Hohe Tauern National Park and the primary schools in the National Park region.



*The partnership with primary schools in the National Park municipalities has been in place since 2004*

Over a period of four years pupils at the primary schools are regularly taught by the National Park Rangers, so of course saying farewell at the end of Year 4 is always difficult. To consolidate the shared experiences one final time, a big farewell party was held in June at the Mallnitz National Park Centre for all Year 4 classes of our partner schools. A total of 89 children from primary schools at Mallnitz, Obervellach, Malta, Mörttschach, Winklarn, Grosskirchheim and Heiligenblut attended the celebrations.



*Learning & playing station on the circular economy*

The party was organised and held in co-operation with the HAK Lienz Commercial Academy. The schoolchildren were able to put all the material they had learnt into practice through the system based on learning stations. At the 'Forest and Forest Animals' station for instance they had the opportunity not only to identify and touch various forest animals, but also to experience the fresh scent of Swiss stone pine and other tree species to be found in the National Park.

At the 'Circular Economy' station it was time to put their sense of taste to the test by trying to differentiate various types of milk, from long-life milk to goat's milk and organic cow's milk – just by tasting. Finally, physical fitness was also on the agenda, this time at the Swarovski Waterschool station where the schoolchildren had to compete by carrying water and filling up so-called tippy-taps. Tippy-taps are simple hand-washing devices of the type used for instance in Uganda, another of the Waterschool countries.



*Swarovski Waterschool learning & playing station*

Once all these tasks had been passed with flying colours the pupils were presented with their certificates, confirming they had successfully taken part in the partner school lessons.

These many years of co-operation between the Rangers and Year 4 pupils, and the party itself, were rounded off in style with a fun barbecue with *Ja!Natürlich* products. The *Ja!Natürlich* food brand sponsors the partner school project.



*Project team of the HAK Lienz Commercial Academy with pupils from the National Park primary schools*

**Web-Info:** [www.hohetauern.at/bildung](http://www.hohetauern.at/bildung)

## Other School Programmes

### Swarovski Waterschool Austria

Without water there can be no life. And although we are all aware of this, the way we use water simply does not reflect how precious it is. As the saying goes, 'it's only when the well runs dry that we appreciate the value of water'. There is in principle enough water on Earth for everyone; however, as it cannot be redistributed any way we want, the world is inexorably heading for a global water crisis. This century freshwater supplies may well become the greatest environmental challenge we have ever faced, and its impact on people may well be far more immediate than global warming.



*In four-day courses this unique project teaches young people how to adopt a more responsible and sustainable approach towards water use*

That is why Swarovski Waterschool Austria has set itself the objective of teaching schoolchildren about the importance of the sustainable use of water resources for their lives and their health in general. Since September 2014 Swarovski has once again become an active co-operation partner of the Waterschool, a project which in recent years has evolved into a widely recognised awareness-raising institution in matters of water resources.

The Waterschool is a mobile school, i.e. it travels from school to school to give courses to pupils on site over a period of four days – partly in the classroom itself and partly outdoors. The lessons are taught by specially trained National Park support staff.

## SWAROVSKI WATERSCHOOL



*Swarovski Waterschool India*

The Swarovski Waterschool is an international project that is setting a precedent not just in Austria, but now also in India, China, Uganda and Brazil. People who live in Austria enjoy a privileged situation when it comes to water. But that also entails a responsibility on the part of the authorities, politicians, the business sector, and each and every individual. And that is particularly true of the inhabitants who live in the mountain regions that supply the water.



*Swarovski Waterschool China*

**Web-Info:** [www.hohetauern.at/bildung](http://www.hohetauern.at/bildung)



## Protecting the Climate Together

### VERBUND Climate School of the Hohe Tauern National Park

Protecting the Climate Together – that's the motto of the VERBUND Climate School of the Hohe Tauern National Park. After all, our climate needs greater awareness on our part and the active involvement of as many people as possible. So it was particularly satisfying for us to be able to celebrate our ten thousandth 'climate pupil' in September 2014. During the four-day Climate School lessons, pupils were able to gain an awareness of climate change and recognise the necessity of adopting a sustainable lifestyle. The dedication of our Rangers proved particularly expedient, combined with numerous experiments and not least an exciting interdisciplinary programme of lessons. These interactive lessons have already been secured for a further 6,000 schoolchildren over the next two years.



Experiment vividly demonstrating a weather phenomenon typical of the mountains: the foehn wind

#### Actively protecting the climate

2014 was the best attended year since the Climate School first began in 2010. A total of 1,355 schoolchildren at 48 schools took part in these free project lessons. The year was also marked by lots of exceptional Climate School assignments. Participation in the Long Night of Research event and the Sustainability Trade Fair, both of which were held in Klagenfurt, attracted a wide audience and introduced them to the notion of climate protection. 2014 saw UNESCO's decade for Education on Sustainable Development come to an end, a decade during which, two years ago, the Climate School was awarded a prize as UN Decade Project. The Climate School was selected out of more than 200 Decade Projects and was showcased to an interested audience of professionals and specialists in the field at the closing event.



#### Successful Climate School fete

The second cross-province fete organised by the Climate School in St. Jakob i. D. was a major event, attended by 1,075 schoolchildren. All the primary schoolchildren of the upper Mölltal Valley were among the many participants. Eco-friendly travel arrangements in group buses were organised with funding from the Carinthian Institute for Climate Protection in order to minimise the carbon footprint. National Park Rangers from all the federal provinces and support from regional climate protection organisations ensured that all the children and teenagers were very well looked after and that the celebrations were a resounding success.



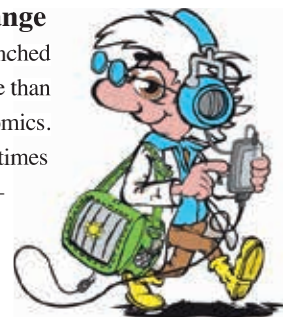
The 1,075 participating schoolchildren packed out the fete venue in St. Jakob i. D. during the closing event

#### September 2010 to 31 December 2014:

	Carinthia	Salzburg	Tyrol	Total
Schools	126	42	192	360
Assignment Days, Rangers	758	285	899	1,942
Teachers	210	81	345	636
Pupils	3,736	1,664	5,591	10,991

#### Getting creative on climate change

A Climate School competition was launched during the 2013/14 school year, with more than 70 schoolchildren submitting creative comics. Pupils came up with innovative and at times extraordinary solutions for ways of contributing towards climate protection. It was an opportunity for the schoolchildren to engage actively with the notion of climate change in general.



Web-Info: [www.nationalpark-klimaschule.at](http://www.nationalpark-klimaschule.at)

## Holiday Programme & Camps

### Kärntnermilch Junior Rangers

Eleven new *Kärntnermilch* Junior Rangers at the Hohe Tauern National Park

The two-week training course to become a *Kärntnermilch* Junior Ranger was launched in 2013. A total of 11 young participants completed the course in summer 2014, rounded off with an official presentation of their certificates.

While the focus in 2013 was first and foremost on theoretical content, the emphasis in 2014 was on the profession of ranger itself. The young candidates had the opportunity to get a taster of this interesting field of work and to accompany our Rangers as they went about their daily work. National Parks in America provided the inspiration for introducing young people to the tasks involved in looking after a nature protection area as Junior Rangers (mentored by experienced full-time Rangers) and getting them to experience the everyday life of a professional Ranger. It means that all the theory previously learnt can be put straight into practice.

The topics studied as part of the training course to become a *Kärntnermilch* Junior Ranger are very diverse. They range from the fauna and flora of the Hohe Tauern National Park, life in high-altitude mountains complete with altitude levels and alpine hazards, the forests and cultural landscapes, and the role water plays in the Hohe Tauern. The project not only raises young people's awareness of nature conservation and species protection, it also serves to mediate a wealth of knowledge about the natural and cultural resources of the National Park region. The project itself was sponsored by *Kärntnermilch* not just with funding, but also with their own company products.



Identifying plants as part of the Junior Ranger training course

### National Park Young Explorers' Club

Out and about again in the Hohe Tauern National Park

During the summer holidays children aged between six and ten set off once again to explore the Hohe Tauern National Park Carinthia, equipped with cup magnifiers and official explorer ID cards.



Off on a field trip in the company of our National Park Rangers

Once a week our inquisitive young explorers met up in Mallnitz, Malta and Grosskirchheim to set off and discover the breathtaking world of our nature protection area in the company of a Ranger. 'Explore, discover and have fun': that's the motto of this successful holiday programme – all the while learning about the National Park and its fauna and flora in a fun and entertaining way. The themes proved very popular with the children, so it was no wonder that the Young Explorers' Club was completely booked out even before it began. Making nature a thrilling, hands-on experience especially for children and teenagers is an integral part of the educational remit of any National Park. Making your own DIY woodland spirits, studying the way ants live, and finding out all there is to know about our native trees are just some of the many activities that awaited our young explorers during this holiday programme of a special kind.

### National Park Adventure Camp

Young climatologists in action

This year again a summer camp was held. Over a period of five days 15 children aged 12 to 14 were out and about exploring the National Park. They were particularly impressed by the sheer diversity of the fauna and flora in the Hohe Tauern. As part of a workshop participants even got to create the formula for their very own lip salve, using mountain herbs with medicinal properties. There was also plenty of excitement in store during the rafting session on the Möll and the gold panning in Heiligenblut. The camp was sponsored by the VERBUND Climate School of the Hohe Tauern National Park and organised in co-operation with the Youth Group of the Austrian Alpine Club as part of the 'Meeting Friends' project.



## Media Work (Online, Print, Radio & TV)

Regular mailshots on topical issues, invitations to fixtures and events, press events and press trips, and nurturing existing contacts are all guarantees of a good media presence for the National Park, particularly in the regional media. And the most important communication tool besides the website itself is the National Park Magazine, which is published three times a year.

### www.hohetauern.at

The Hohe Tauern National Park homepage is one of the most popular resources for finding out more about the National Park. Topical information on the Hohe Tauern National Park is uploaded almost daily via online media. The menu item most frequently clicked is 'Plan Your Visit', which is available in both English and German and features general information on planning your trip and your stay as well as highlights, FAQs, and what we have on offer.

543,152 page views were recorded in 2014, with an average length of stay per user of three minutes and seventeen seconds. Another key figure is the number of return visitors. 37,513 users browsed the National Park homepage more than once in 2014.



www.hohetauern.at – a key communication tool for the Hohe Tauern National Park

### www.nationalparkerlebnis.at

After a phase publicising the new portal in 2013, which very prominently showcased our guided tours and offers, the portal ran without any advertising measures in 2014. As with all Hohe Tauern National Park offers, visitors had the option of registering online. 120,273 page views were recorded in 2014.

## Social Media Presence

For the past five years or so the National Park has also been represented in various Web 2.0 applications.

### Facebook

By the end of 2014 the Facebook page had 16,440 fans (compared with 8,569 fans at the end of 2013, i.e. a plus of 7,871 fans), who were very active in visiting the page. Anyone interested is able to post about the Hohe Tauern National Park and to comment on posted content. The largest user group is aged between 25 and 34, with the share of male and female users more or less evenly distributed. The next biggest group is aged between 35 and 44, closely followed by 18 to 24-year-olds.

The Facebook page of the Hohe Tauern National Park currently ranks among Austria's TOP 500 on the ranking portal <http://socialmediaradar.at>.



7,871 new Facebook fans were recorded in 2014

**Weblink:** <http://www.facebook.com/hohetauern>

### #Instagram



The Instagram module #hohetauern set up in 2013 featuring topical photos posted from the National Park itself by visitors to the National Park is as successful as ever. 2,100 entries were recorded by the end of 2014.

Since autumn 2014 Instagram #RangerNPHT also offers the possibility of accompanying our Carinthian Rangers virtually on their tours and gaining first-hand impressions. For the National Park this is an even more effective means of reaching young people and getting them excited about nature themes.

**Weblink:** <http://iconosquare.com/tag/hohetauern> and [www.instagram.com/NationalparkRanger](http://www.instagram.com/NationalparkRanger)

## Public Relations

### 2014 cross-province press trip

'The Sovereigns of the Skies' (griffon vultures, bearded vultures, golden eagles) was the motto of the 2014 press trip. Under our expert guidance 12 journalists from the editorial science departments of various media in Austria, Germany and Switzerland were able to witness how scientific means are used to record, research and publicise the lives and habitats of these majestic birds of prey in central Europe's largest nature reserve.



Vulture expert Fluvio Genero and journalists during observations in 'Vulture Valley', i.e. the Krumltal

### QUANTIFIABLE RESULTS

The 2014 press trip corresponds to a countervalue (as at December 2014) of EUR 412,867.-, projected on the basis of advertisement rates.

### Features appeared in (among others):

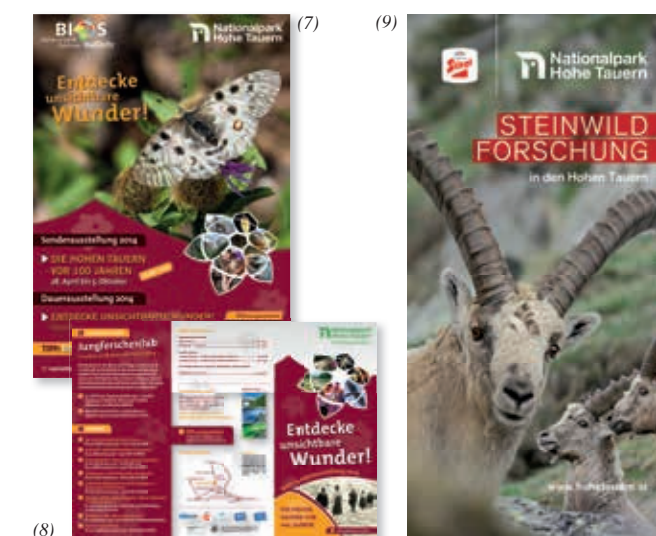
Kurier, Der Standard, FAZ am Sonntag, OÖN, Ö1, Universum Magazin, NZZ, Profil, Deutschlandradio Kultur, ...



The journalists undertook beautiful but also challenging hikes – as here in the Kleines Fleisstal Valley – to witness these 'sovereigns of the skies' close-up

## Publications

- ✓ Hohe Tauern National park Das Magazin – three issues (1)
- ✓ Activity Report (2)
- ✓ Reissue of the Scientific Studies on the 'Flora of the Hohe Tauern' (3)
- ✓ 'Climate School' Information Pack (4)
- ✓ 'Young Explorers' Club' Information Pack (5)
- ✓ Malta Summer Programme Poster (6)
- ✓ 'Permanent and Special Exhibition' BIOS Poster (7)
- ✓ BIOS Information Pack (8)
- ✓ 'Ibex Research in the Hohe Tauern' roll-up (9)





## Education Centre



Awarded the  
Austrian Eco-Label

The interactive education and seminar centre combines many different functions under a single roof. With its permanent exhibition entitled Discover Hidden Wonders! and its rotating annual special exhibition it is always a popular excursion destination for all the family.

## Permanent exhibition Discover Hidden Wonders!

An opportunity to marvel, explore and understand – numerous interactive stations are on hand at our permanent exhibition to help visitors young and old to seek answers to the big questions, such as: ‘What is life?’ ‘How did it originate?’ and ‘Where is it to be found?’ This journey of discovery ranges from the very small to the very large: from the most amazing structure to be found under the microscope to a real mountain stream flowing through the exhibition itself.

Visitors at the Mallnitz BIOS National Park Centre are always at the heart of the action, whether it’s live at the flowing water’s edge or stepping among the stones and the rocks and the moss, or peering down a microscope. Here visitors of all ages have the opportunity to discover a world which is otherwise hidden well out of our sight.

The BIOS also has something to offer our very youngest researchers: an exciting guided tour specially for children, including the feeding of our ‘tiniest predators’, i.e. the ants!



Fun & games and adventures aplenty guaranteed for the whole family

## 2014 Activities

- ✓ 7 April to 16 May: Kindergarten event
- ✓ 14 to 18 April: Easter events for children



Easter event: Making nests for Easter eggs

- ✓ April 27: Opening of the photo exhibition ‘The Hohe Tauern 100 Years Ago’
- ✓ May 11: Mother’s Day event with magic show
- ✓ 13 to 14 May: 8<sup>th</sup> session of the National Parks Austria Advisory Board
- ✓ 13 to 14 June: Workshop on ‘Digiscoping for Hunters’ with Swarovski Optik and Anblick
- ✓ June 13: Partner schools farewell party for Year 4 of the National Park Primary Schools
- ✓ June 28: Pörschach Kindergarten farewell party
- ✓ 18 to 20 July: 8<sup>th</sup> Biodiversity Day in the Hohe Tauern National Park
- ✓ 9 to 12 September: National Park Delegation from Plitvice on a visit
- ✓ September 20: ÖBB [Austrian Federal Railways] Experience Nature Day
- ✓ September 22: Nature protection area delegation on a visit from Serbia
- ✓ 26 to 28 September: Annual meeting – Austrian Mountain and Nature Patrol Working Group
- ✓ October 3: Ja!Natürlich Young Rangers’ Day for Year 1 classes of the Winklarn National Park Secondary School



‘Young Rangers’ Day’: Making deliciously tasty bakery products

## Special Exhibition

### ‘The Hohe Tauern 100 Years Ago’

The special exhibition entitled *The Hohe Tauern 100 Years Ago*, which was on show at the Mallnitz BIOS National Park Centre from April 27 to October 6, was dedicated to the life work of Viennese photographer Karl Kaser (1861-1942).

It featured a selection of photographs from the extensive estate of Viennese photographer Karl Kaser. Karl Kaser first began taking photographs of high-altitude mountain ranges and glaciers around 1898. A lawyer by profession, Karl Kaser felt that, for someone like him who came from the lowlands, mountaineering and photography were the fulfilment of a lifetime.



One of the photographs from the special exhibition shows a glacier excursion undertaken around 100 years ago

His life work comprised more than 12,000 photographs consisting of glass slides and glass negatives, including around 400 photographs featuring the mountains and valleys of the Hohe Tauern. On his many hikes through the Glockner, Ankogel and Goldberg mountain ranges he took photographs which now stunningly bring the past back to life (e.g. with glaciers which no longer exist today in this form) – photographs as aesthetically pleasing as paintings, showcasing the mountains in tranquil and picturesque settings.

As a photographer Karl Kaser was a leading chronicler of his day, his photographs capturing the world of the Hohe Tauern 100 years ago. His photographs are of a high artistic standard, reflecting his own personal view of the motifs depicted. Thanks to his extraordinary talent and his unique aesthetic sensitivity, he has earned his place as a recognised early 20<sup>th</sup> century Viennese photographer.

## Programmes



### Seminars, Conferences & Workshops

The seminar series on offer at the BIOS National Park Centre features a varied and extensive programme aimed at local residents, thereby contributing to the region’s sustainable development. The themes addressed are designed to raise awareness and to make children and adults alike more attuned to topics of relevance to nature conservation. Eight seminars were organised in 2014, attracting a total of 349 participants.



Further education course entitled ‘Discovering Diversity – Wayside Plants’

### Kindergarten Event

The event weeks entitled ‘Kindergarten Children on a Visit to the National Park’ were held for the ninth time already, in close co-operation with the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB). A total of 792 children of kindergarten age from all over Carinthia explored the BIOS in the company of Walli, our forest fairy, encountering many known animal representatives of the fairy-tale world on their forays through the National Park Centre. It was a fun way for them to learn about the ways of life and particularities of these animals and to compare and contrast them with the characteristics usually attributed to them in fairy tales.

### Project Days Nature in the classroom

Numerous schoolchildren also visited the BIOS National Park Centre in 2014 as part of our Project Days lasting one to five days. Depending on the school year and the main focus of the topic, teaching staff are able to put together their own individual modular programme as part of these Project Days. The shared enjoyment of nature, learning, playing, having fun, and the group dynamics all combine to make this programme an unforgettable experience.



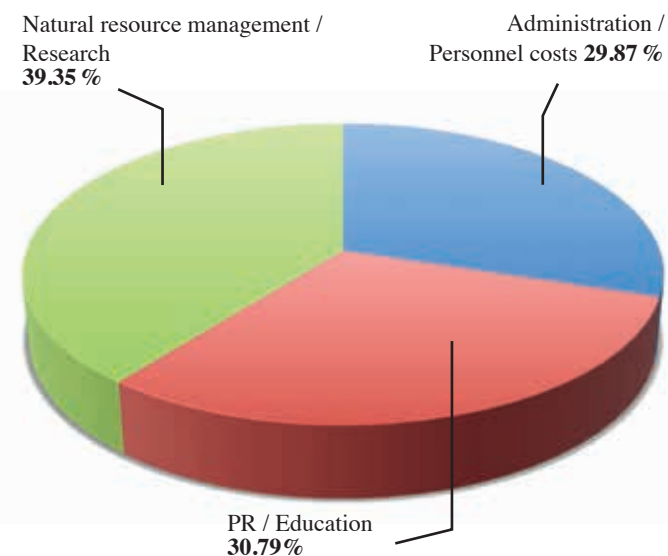
## Cross-province Co-operation

Work on 25 projects was carried out in 2014, focusing on the areas of education, research, natural resource and information management as well as PR.

The conceptual design, cross-province co-ordination and implementation of these projects were carried out in close co-operation between the staff of the three National Park Administrations and the Secretariat of the National Park Council.

### 2014 budget expenditure

	<i>Euro</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
<i>Natural resource management / Research</i>	<i>215,305.00</i>	<i>39.35 %</i>
<i>PR / Education</i>	<i>168,470.00</i>	<i>30.79 %</i>
<i>Administration / Personnel costs</i>	<i>163,436.00</i>	<i>29.87 %</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>547,211.00</i>	



Situation as at 2 February 2015, expenditure after transfers and follow-up entries as part of the preparations for the financial statements 2014. The exact absolute figures will be set out in the official statements of account once verified by the auditor.

## National Park Academy

The Hohe Tauern National Park Academy is the joint adult education centre of the National Park Provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol. Conferences and seminars on topics relating to nature and the National Parks allow course participants to find out more about natural sciences and the idea of National Parks. The Academy is also the training centre for our Certified Austrian National Park Rangers. After successfully completing their training the Rangers are committed to furthering their education by attending annual seminars. This ensures that our Rangers maintain a high level of knowledge and expertise.

*12 events took place in 2014, attended by 488 participants* (average of 41 participants per event). The analysis of the evaluations for organisation, content, practical relevance, venue and administrative handling showed an average rating of 1.19 and an average assessment of 1.30 for the speakers and lecturers.



Participants at the seminar entitled 'Introduction to the Geology of the Hohe Tauern and the Regional and Cultural History of the National Park Region'

## Interpädagogica

This year again Austria's six National Parks were represented at the *Interpädagogica* event held in Vienna. The Hohe Tauern National Park in particular showcased its education programmes aimed at school-children, i.e. the Project Weeks, Climate School and Waterschool.



National Park presentation at Interpädagogica in Vienna

**Web-Info:** [www.hohetauern.at/bildung](http://www.hohetauern.at/bildung)

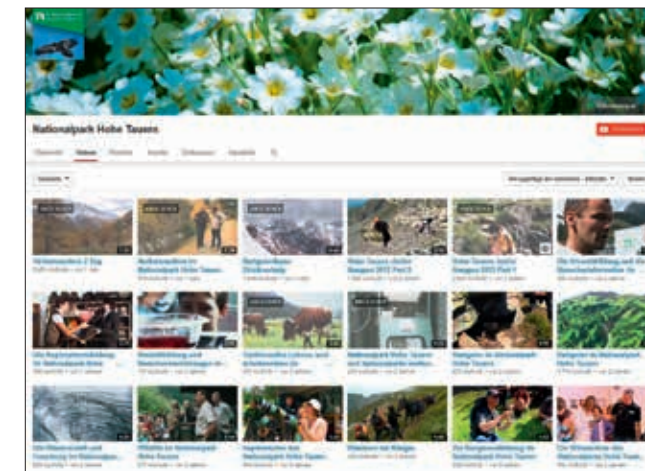
## Selected PR Projects

In addition to the PR initiatives of the three National Park Administrations, each year the Secretariat of the National Park Council also carries out a number of jointly co-ordinated key campaigns. Highlights include:

### YouTube

The National Park's YouTube channel features impressions from the Hohe Tauern National Park. There are plans in future to shoot professional video clips with a storytelling character to be broadcast via various channels. The video ads trend in marketing has been maintained to reflect user behaviour.

**Weblink:** [www.youtube.com/NationalparkHT](http://www.youtube.com/NationalparkHT)



Impressions from the Hohe Tauern National Park

### Smartphone web.app – Hohe Tauern National Park

This app serves to optimise the Hohe Tauern National Park homepage for smartphone use. A sharp rise in the number of accesses to the website via the app was recorded in 2014. The general trend is set to continue, with users with good broadband coverage and therefore fast data downloads making ever greater use of online services via their smartphones.

### Apps – smartphone summiting

Since 2011 the Hohe Tauern National Park has also had an app that features live broadcasts, via AR function, of the summits of the Hohe Tauern as well as the alpine huts of the Hohe Tauern National Park.

The app is currently compatible with Android 1.6 and upwards and Apple IOS 4.2 to 5\*. It proved very popular once again in 2014.

## 2014 Natural Resource Management/Research Projects

**Work continued apace on many cross-province projects in 2014, e.g.:**

### ✓ BEARDED VULTURE PROJECT

Release of two young birds in the Debanttal Valley, east Tyrol

### ✓ IBEX PROJECT

Research work on 'population dynamics'

### ✓ GOLDEN EAGLE MONITORING

Survey of the golden eagle population

### ✓ 'URFORELLE' PROJECT

Continuation of this project focusing on a rare species of trout, in particular the stocktake and monitoring of indigenous brown trout populations



### ✓ GEO DAY OF BIODIVERSITY 2014 IN THE MALLNITZ SEEBACHTAL VALLEY

Between 18 and 20 July 2014 70 scientists combed through the Seebachtal Valley near Mallnitz in a bid to survey as many animal, plant and mushroom species as possible within 48 hours, from valley floor up to summit elevations.

### ✓ BIODIVERSITY DATABASE

Database maintenance and data integration: Total inventory: 315,661 data records from 23,713 sites and 11,097 taxa (situation as at November 2014)

### ✓ WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Continuation of abiotic (hydro-chemistry, hydro-physics) and biotic measurements (aquatic organisms)

### ✓ MONITORING AND RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Monitoring and research programme lasting several years, jointly elaborated with the scientific advisory committee of the Hohe Tauern National Park

**Web-Info:** [www.hohetauern.at/forschung](http://www.hohetauern.at/forschung)



## Hohe Tauern – The National Park Region in Carinthia

Hohe Tauern – die Nationalpark-Region in Kärnten Tourismus GmbH is the company set up to carry out the regional tourism tasks for the National Park region as set out in Carinthia's Tourism Act. The Carinthian Hohe Tauern National Park Fund currently holds a 15.1% stake in Hohe Tauern – die Nationalpark-Region in Kärnten Tourismus GmbH, and the Managing Director of the Carinthian Hohe Tauern National Park Fund, Peter Rupitsch, sits on the Supervisory Board.

## Sustainable Tourism in the Hohe Tauern National Park

Based on the service promise jointly set out in the 2011 Destination Process, i.e. *'The region has the expertise and knowhow to implement surprising services and facilities to take the strain out of the mountains and bring people closer to nature'*, the region undertakes to showcase the Hohe Tauern National Park as a key brand content, particularly in its product development. The 2014 business year focused on the following products and projects:

### Magic Moments

The 'Magic Moments' concept, i.e. fully serviced high-end value-added outdoor programmes, was developed even further and extended into summer 2014. The following service parameters have to be met in order to comply with the claim of Carinthia's advertising campaign to market 'Magic Moments' as a province-wide lead product within the scope of Natur Aktiv:

- ✓ **Shuttle service**
- ✓ **Qualified tour guides**
- ✓ **Culinary appetiser**
- ✓ **Rental equipment**
- ✓ **Centralised booking management**

Even if in summer 2014 the weather all too often thwarted our programmes, we did succeed nonetheless, especially in August, in achieving some very positive booking figures, which is why our region accounted for more than 50% of all the programmes sold in Carinthia.

### TOP 5 'MAGIC MOMENTS' IN 2014:

- 1) **Glacier trekking on the Pasterze Glacier**
- 2) **White-water rafting on the Möll river**
- 3) **Night walk through the Groppenstein Gorge**
- 4) **Canoe tour of the Upper Drau**
- 5) **Ibex spotting on the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe**

Particular mention ought to be made of the active role played by the Tauern Alpin National Park partner in securing bookings for the add-on daily programmes. No fewer than four of our accommodation providers from within the region are among the top ranked establishments in terms of sales:

- 1) **Landgut Moserhof (Reisseck)**
- 2) **Ferienhotel Alber (Mallnitz)**
- 3) **Eggerhof (Mallnitz)**
- 4) **Herkuleshof (Reisseck)**



Ranked No. 1 among our 'Magic Moments': Glacier trekking on the Pasterze Glacier

### National Park Hiking Bus

An integrated tourist mobility programme is the mainstay of any sustainable regional tourism concept. The challenge was and is to be able to provide guests with an attractive package of services, even after the *klima:aktiv* funding programme has come to an end. Such a package comprises offers for eco-friendly travel to the final destination, with in this instance close co-operation with the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) and Deutsche Bahn (RIT Ticket and in particular the *Fahrtziel Natur* platform). As a logical extension, shuttle services to the booked accommodation will be on offer from the IC-EC railway stations at Mallnitz-Oberveellach and Spittal-Millstätter See.



National Park Hiking Bus: We'll take you hiking



Inner-regional mobility essentially revolves around the National Park Hiking Bus, which services the 'Magic Moments' programmes and, as a scheduled bus service, provides eco-friendly transport to 20 excursion destinations and starting points for hikes into the National Park as well as, for the first time, the Upper Drau Valley.

The National Park Hiking Bus package is integrated into the National Park's Carinthia Card on a 'Superbonus Partner' basis, with no fewer than 1,794 weekly passes for the National Park Hiking Bus sold on this basis in 2014.

The mobility programme in its current form would never have been possible without the many years of generous support for the National Park Hiking Bus from the Alpine Associations, specifically weighted as 1) the Austrian Alpine Club and 2) the German Alpine Club.



### Alpe-Adria-Trail

The Alpe-Adria-Trail is a bookable long-distance hiking trail from the foot of the Grossglockner to the Adriatic coast, near Trieste. It is offered as a lead product on the 'Hiking' theme by our project partners Carinthia, Slovenia, and Friuli Venezia Giulia.

The Alpe-Adria-Trail has proved an outright success in its second year of full operations and, despite the middling weather conditions, even managed to generate a slight growth in overnight stays and sales. 2,318 overnight stays and sales of EUR 213,000.00 were recorded within the framework of the Alpe-Adria-Trail Booking Centre, managed by Hohe Tauern – die Nationalpark-Region in Kärnten Tourismus GmbH in its second year of operations. If we include those hikers who completed their tour without availing themselves of the services of the Alpe-Adria-Trail Booking Centre, the Trail managed to record approx. 23,000 overnight stays and sales of EUR 1.2 m in 2014!

The Alpe-Adria-Trail Booking Centre offers the following range of booking services to individual customers and special tour operators:

- 1) **Accommodation (in three categories where available)**
- 2) **Luggage transfer**
- 3) **Shuttle service (where necessary, or return transfer to the starting point)**

- 4) **Tour documentation pack and give-away**
- 5) **Alpe-Adria-Trail Carinthia Card for use at facilities and amenities along the Trail**
- 6) **Service hotline**

In 2014 the Alpe-Adria-Trail was also voted among the '10 best new long-distance hiking trails' worldwide by the *National Geographic Traveller*, the internationally renowned travel magazine!



Magical places accompany hikers on their journey from glacier to seashore

### Ski Plus

The aim of the 'Ski Plus – Skiing and More' concept is to reposition Carinthia's relevant winter products in the international market. In our region this is implemented, as in the summer months, through extra bookable, fully serviced daily programmes designed to complement the alpine skiing. Besides guided snowshoe tours and winter hikes with National Park Rangers the 'Starry Nights' event on the summit of the Schareck in the Grossglockner/Heiligenblut skiing arena attracted a great deal of interest from guests and media alike.



The Starry Nights event at the Grossglockner

Günter Mussnig, Managing Director

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## Association of Friends

Web-Info: [www.tauernfreund.at](http://www.tauernfreund.at)

With the support of our private-sector partners, we were able once again to realise important projects in the areas of species protection, environmental education and the experience of nature in 2014. The Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park plays a pivotal role in this respect. The objective of this non-profit association 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. This is done mainly with the help of private-sector businesses, but also some 3,000 individual members. As a co-opted member in the National Park Council the Friends act as the National Park's official sponsoring body.

## 2014 Partner Meeting

The annual meeting of partners was held at the Heiligenblut National Park municipality on July 3 and 4 at the invitation of *Grossglockner Hochalpenstrassen AG*. The programme included wildlife observations on the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe and a hike along the Gamsgrube panoramic trail to the Wasserfallwinkel, and a lecture by internationally renowned extreme mountaineer Peter Habeler.

At the general assembly at Casino Baden on November 3, Chairman Karl Stoss was able to report on a positive balance, with around EUR 400,000 available to National Park projects in 2014.

Also adopted at the meeting were resolutions relating to the revised sponsoring concept, a community document by the Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park and the National Park Council.



2014 partner meeting on the Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe

## A big thank you ...

... to all our partners who supported our programmes and projects during 2014!



## Outlook for 2015

The savings objectives prescribed in the public finances do not stop at the National Parks. We are continually being urged by the relevant departments of both the Federal Province and the Federal Government to review our use of funds with regard to their efficiency and effectiveness; at the same time we are also being encouraged to put forward suggestions for improvements. We are happy to comply with these demands, knowing full well that the Hohe Tauern National Park also has a development mandate. Indeed, it is not just an isolated nature protection area, but an integral part of a 'bigger entity'. The 'protection aspect', combined with the consistent implementation of global standards (IUCN Category II) will always remain our core activity; but beyond that, the National Park Administrations are engaged in pushing ahead with a number of initiatives that have repercussions on the immediate pre-stage, i.e. the National Park region itself. Action is certainly called for in the infrastructure sector, e.g. the administrative sector! The fact that the National Park Administration of Carinthia is spread over two offices results in higher expenditure, combined with avoidable additional costs. If we are to improve our efficiency and effectiveness it is therefore crucial that these duplicated structures be dissolved immediately.

We also urgently need to set a new course if we are to secure a future for the BIOS National Park Centre in Mallnitz. The current status, a mix of tourism-cum-education-cum-administrative facility cannot be sustained any longer in this form due to annual outflows that have to be compensated out of the current budget of the National Park Fund.

We also need to eliminate the 'National Park infrastructure shortfall' in the Heiligenblut municipality. The Ibex House Project can contribute to this, and a concrete proposal is already on the table. The partners involved in this project are the municipality of Heiligenblut and its Tourism Association as well as the Association of Friends of the Hohe Tauern National Park. The common objective is to set up an innovative information and service facility for visitors.



The 'Natura 2000' issue also remains unresolved. The Hohe Tauern National Park in Carinthia is now the only National Park in Austria not to have been fully nominated as a Natura 2000 area and shown as such. In the current evaluation procedure relating to the regulation on nature protection areas within the EU, the National Park Administration has clearly spoken out in favour of an area-wide designation and stated its reasons accordingly!

The National Parks Austria programme is similarly ambitious. For now we all eagerly await the final report on the evaluation of all the Austrian National Parks, the completion of which is imminent. We are planning, among others, a joint PR campaign aimed at uniting the many different characteristics of Austria's nature protection areas under one roof, boosting the National Parks Austria brand, and at the same time raising awareness of the importance and preservation of these six premier protection areas.

The National Park Tourism Organisations of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol have joined forces under the auspices of Grossglockner Hochalpenstrassen AG to showcase the Hohe Tauern National Park at EXPO 2015 in Milan to an international audience of millions.



**Peter Rupitsch**  
National Park Director



## *Staff of the National Park Administration of Carinthia*



*19 December 2014, field trip to the Mittersill National Park Centre*

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