

Documentation



2016 Activity Report

***Salzburg National Park Fund
Hohe Tauern***

Publication Details

Cover picture:

*The fir clubmoss (*Huperzia selago*) is a lycopod plant widely distributed in the Hohe Tauern not only in forests but also in enclosed meadows and dwarf shrub heathland. This species propagates in two ways: firstly via spores and secondly via viviparous fescues formed on the tips of the shoots and - like the well-known alpine bistort (*Persicaria vivipara*) - which develop as a “clone” into new plants (photo: O. STÖHR).*

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The lagoon wood fern (Dryopteris lacunosa) is a triploid (triploid: the nucleus contains a triple chromosome set) of the complex Dryopteris affinis aggregate (aggregate: a group of related species in which it is difficult to differentiate the subspecies) which was first described in 2011 and is, therefore, still unknown to many botanists. With the two specimens found near the Krimml Waterfalls in 2016, this fern has now been documented for the first time in the Hohe Tauern (photo: O. STÖHR).

National Parks Austria 2016 Much Achieved – Much Implemented



The six Austrian National Parks offer a wide range of outdoor experiences and a guarantee of peace and relaxation. "This is how Austria relaxes" - a recent study by the National Parks - shows that around 85% of respondents envisage spending a holiday in Austria's National Parks.

Our National Park Campaign "Nothing touches us as much as the untouched" was launched in April 2016 and has been successful in establishing these unique natural jewels once more in Austrian hearts and minds.

Another milestone in 2016 was the National Park Strategy 2020+. It was developed on a broad basis by the federal provinces and environmental organisations. Among other things, this strategy also demonstrates the intensive collaboration of all the Austrian National Parks. Only if we all pull together will it be possible to deal with the major challenges we face in terms of environmental protection. The National Park Strategy lays an important marker to achieve this.

Last year some major successes were also achieved with regard to a number of nature conservation projects. The Donau-Auen National Park has been significantly expanded. By means of joint efforts and the securing of the necessary financial resources, it has proved possible to hand over these valuable areas of about 280 hectares as a birthday present to celebrate the park's 20th anniversary.

2017 will also be an eventful year for the National Parks. The highlights are certain to include the 20th anniversary of the Kalkalpen National Park, the 15th anniversary of the Gesäuse National Park and the 25th anniversary of the existence of the Tyrolean part of the Hohe Tauern National Park which, as a Tyrolean, I'm particularly proud of.

I'd like to thank all the staff and everyone who makes a significant contribution to the preservation of our natural heritage, and I wish you a successful 2017.

Yours



*Andrä RUPPRECHTER
Austrian Federal Minister of
Agriculture, Forestry,
Environment and Water
Management*

The Past is the Key to the Future



The year 2017 was declared the "International Year of Sustainable Tourism" by the United Nations General Assembly. In the Hohe Tauern National Park Salzburg important measures have already been taken over the past year to work towards achieving this goal.

"Nothing touches us as much as the untouched" - this motto of the National Parks Austria umbrella brand is more relevant now than ever. And this is because our sense of identity with our homeland is strongly influenced by our proximity to and close connection with nature and the landscape.

All too often this extraordinary landscape of ours is taken for granted. In order to ensure that this unspoiled world of nature is handed down to generations to come, I was privileged to take part in the formal signing of the contract on 16 June for the acquisition of 3,000 hectares of land in the Sulzbachtäler valleys. The Nature Conservation Park Association and its foundation have owned these areas for more than 100 years and, by acquiring the land in 1913 and also by virtue of decades of private commitment, they laid the foundations for today's Hohe Tauern National Park.

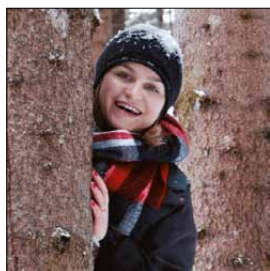
The association has always been a trailblazer when it comes to embarking on new developments to protect the natural environment. This valuable asset which has been acquired will have to be carefully managed in future. Combined with areas of the Austrian Federal Forests leased on a long-term basis, an internationally significant wilderness zone in an area of approximately 10,000 hectares is being created with the credo "Let nature be nature".

People can also benefit when the natural environment remains largely untouched. The National Parks share their natural beauty with all of us. Visitors can enjoy unforgettable insights into their unspoiled landscape and the extraordinary diversity of the scenery.

The National Parks are conceived as a bequest both to people with close ties to the world of nature and to following generations. In the International Year of Sustainable Tourism, the National Parks, as befitting their status as jewels of nature, will also be promoting the means of achieving sustainable tourism as an instrument for protecting the environment, improving the quality of life and enhancing the economic strength of the region.



*Deputy Governor Astrid RÖSSLER
Chair of the Board of Trustees of
the Salzburg National Park Fund*



"Last summer whilst I was working as an 'info hut supervisor' I once more became aware of the paradise in which we're privileged to live. Visitors from all over the world come to the National Parks to enjoy the beautiful landscape, the unspoiled environment and the wide range of leisure activities. And it's this sort of treasure that the Hohe Tauern National Park has been protecting for years to safeguard it for future generations. I'm proud to be a student on work experience, able to help other people gain a better understanding of the National Park and its ideas."

Stefanie BUCHNER

Student of history and English at teacher training college

"The Austrian Alpine Association sees itself very much as an organisation promoting nature conservation, a mountaineering association and a property landowner, and it's inseparably connected with the Hohe Tauern National Park. The Alpine Association has always been there, from the moment the park was founded, to its designation and to the further development of this unique nature protection area surrounded by countless



majestic mountains. For several years now I've had the privilege of being able to live out my personal enthusiasm for the Hohe Tauern's unique natural world and its diverse cultural landscape. It's a special blessing to be part of this wonderful whole."

Liliana DAGOSTIN

Supervisor of the Department for Natural Resource and Nature Conservation

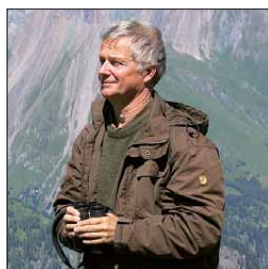
"Research and long-term monitoring of the environment are two of the key goals of a National Park. In this regard the Hohe Tauern National Park offers an ideal base for exploring the effects of climate change on the Alpine region. As a scientist I'm delighted with our success in developing an interdisciplinary and long-term ecological research and monitoring programme for the National Park. This truly marks a new era in the scientific exploration of the Hohe Tauern National Park. The 6th edition of the successful International Symposium on Research in Protected Areas, organised by the Hohe Tauern National Park Salzburg, clearly shows the National Park's commitment to science."

Günter KÖCK

Arctic explorer, member of the Scientific Advisory Board NPHT & Advisory Board Science Coordination Sonnblick Observatorium



"With the establishment of an internationally recognised wilderness area in the Sulzbachtäl valleys, the National Park Hohe Tauern Salzburg is taking a bold and forward-looking step. It's showing that it has its finger on the pulse of the times - both with regard to the further development of Austria's National Parks and to the new European wilderness movement. WWF Austria



congratulates the National Park on its openness to embrace visionary concepts and ideas!"

Bernhard KOHLER

Biodiversity Programme Leader at WWF Austria, wilderness expert (Concept development Sulzbachtäl Valleys Wilderness Area)



"The Hohe Tauern National Park is now very firmly established throughout the region. Many sectors are directly or indirectly affected by its existence. There are, of course, many points of contact with the landowners. Collaboration in the preparation of the management plan in 2016 was, therefore, a major challenge for the group seeking to protect the landowners so that a balance could be struck between use and protection. I'm confident that the National Park will continue to develop positively if we maintain the existing course of partnership and collaboration."

Hubert LOHFAYER

Managing Director of the Landowners in the National Park

"Lying at the very heart of the Hohe Tauern National Park, the Sonnblick Observatory is a good example of how scientific activity can also work in protected areas. Because it's only by working together that many research projects to do with the Sonnblick can be realised - research that affects our future. We have to give great credit to the endeavours of the National Parks to give children and young people a better understanding of the treasures and wonders of nature. I'd like to thank Hohe Tauern National Park for its commitment and look forward to our future collaboration."

Elke LUDEWIG

Supervisor Sonnblick Observatorium, Central Institute for Meteorology and Geodynamics





"On 3 September 2016 the 175th anniversary of the first successful climb to the summit of the majestic Grossvenediger mountain was duly celebrated during the summer and into the autumn. After many discussions in this anniversary year, the Nature Conservation Park Association (VNP) succeeded in purchasing the area. The formal signing of the contract took place in the Neue Residenz in Salzburg in June 2016. Around 3,000 hectares of the 3,500 hectares are now available as a process protection areas for the Hohe Tauern National Park. National Park advisor Astrid Rössler and National Park Director Wolfgang Urban have done a great deal of valuable work with officers of the VNP and others with similar ambitions."

Peter NINDL

Mayor of the National Park community of Neukirchen am Grossvenediger

"Our young people consistently describe nature as something harmonious, something which provides them with adventures, something offering relaxation. You can give your fantasies and dreams free rein, act independently and feel free. They're aware that they bear a great responsibility for nature and that unspoiled areas mean a good quality of life. As the first National Park School in the region, we can highlight some remarkable projects: National Park



logo made of metal, restoration of the woodturning lodge in the Wildgerlostal valley, renewal of the Steinhoag, reforestation and path repairs. For our young people it's important to use these experiences to develop a genuine relationship between the external world of nature and their own inner self."

Hans NUSSBAUMER

Director of the Mittersill Polytechnic School

"Regional development work is about improving the quality of life of the people who live here. The Hohe Tauern National Park plays a major role in all areas of life. Especially in areas of employment, leisure and recreation, education and identity, this protected area is becoming increasingly valuable. More and more people are aware of the region's priceless resources and are determined to preserve and reinterpret the treasures of the region as best they can, which is very evident in the implementation of the projects."

Georgia WINKLER-PLETZER

Managing Director LEADER Region Hohe Tauern National Park



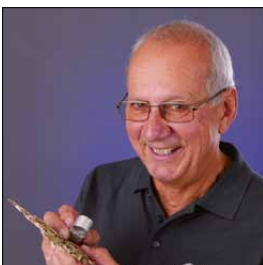
"From the very beginning the Austrian Federal Forests, as the largest landowner, has worked in close partnership with the National Park. What makes Austria's only high-Alpine nature protection area so impressive is its inexhaustible variety of flora and fauna and especially the successful balancing of interests between careful use of the centuries old cultural landscape and protection of the



unspoiled natural areas, a balance based on the strictest international standards. This is a task which the Federal Forests, as the biggest manager of forests and natural resources in the province, will also be actively supporting in the future."

Georg SCHÖPPL

Executive board for Finance and Property of the Austrian Federal Forests (ÖBf)



"Years of research on the biodiversity of lichens in the Salzburg part of the Hohe Tauern National Park have given me a closer appreciation of the natural world and the beauty of the Hohe Tauern and the Zillertal Alps which border to the west. As the number of over 1,100 species of lichens recorded in the scientific paper "Lichens" shows, quasi-natural and natural biotopes and ecosystems are still present in very significant numbers. And this sensitive group of organisms calls for careful management of the forests, the dwarf shrubs and the areas below the glaciers so that this diversity can be preserved for the future."

Roman TÜRK

Lichen expert at Salzburg University, author of "Lichens", Scientific Studies of the NPHT

"Sustainable tourism in the region means acting in an ecological, social and economic sense. Which is why we've undertaken an intensive strategic examination of the issues with 'Holiday Region 2025'. And we now have four working groups in which we're working with the authorities in the National Park Administration, the service partners and the tourism associations, and we've also founded a 'Landowners Academy' to develop and implement projects as specific as possible on 'Mobility', 'Strengthening the Joint Umbrella Brand' and 'Genuinely Regional'. In all these projects the National Park concept is our unique selling point in the competitive world of tourism."

Christian WÖRISTER

Managing Director of the Holiday Region National Park Hohe Tauern



Mission Statement

Facts & figures

The Hohe Tauern National Park is the largest national park in the whole of the Alpine region and one of the largest nature protection areas in central Europe.

	Core zone (km ²)	Outer zone (km ²)	Special protection areas (km ²)	Total (km ²)
Carinthia	291	113	36	440
Salzburg	507	266	32	805
Tyrol	347	264		611
National Park total	1,145	643	68	1,856

- ▶ Distance east to west 100 km
- ▶ Distance north to south 40 km
- ▶ Elevation above sea level 1,000 m - 3,798 m
- ▶ Mountain peaks above 3000 m > 300
- ▶ Glaciation 155 km² / rd. 8 %
- ▶ Glaciers 342
- ▶ Near-natural mountain streams 279
- ▶ of which glacial streams 57
- ▶ Major waterfalls 26
- ▶ Mountain lakes between 35 m² and 27 ha 551

Alpine natural and cultural landscape

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

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

The 'Hohe Tauern window' – a tectonic window unique in shape and size anywhere in the world – provides insights into

the deepest nappe stacks of the Alps and is key to deciphering the geological structure of the Alps themselves. Rocks of different ages, origins and chemical compositions conceal a treasure trove of up to 200 different minerals.

The landscape shapes of trough and hanging valleys, cirques, horns and kettle lakes, of ravines and gorges, etc., reflect the moulding force of ice age glaciers as much as the unrelenting impact of weathering and erosion caused by gravity, frost and water.

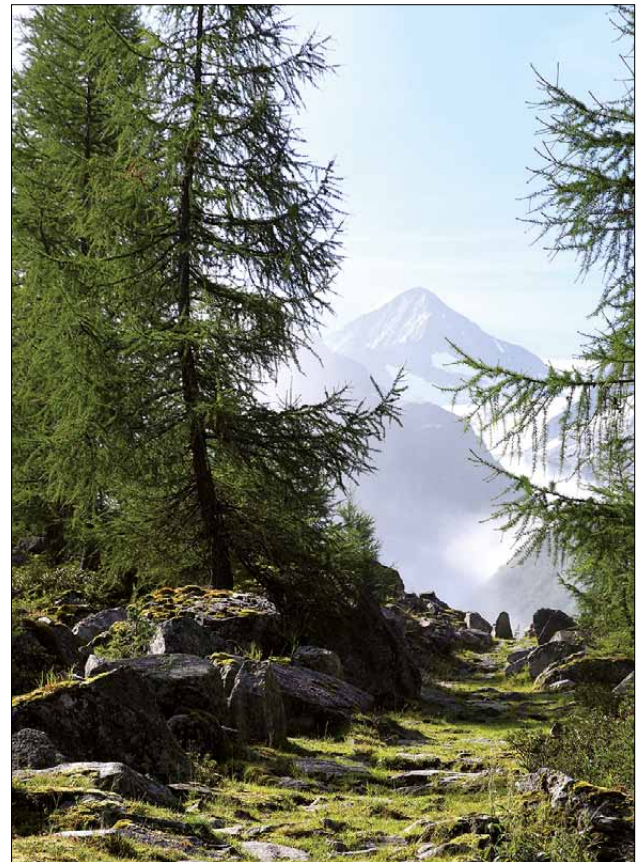
The transition from the natural alpine ecosystems within the core zone of the National Park to the cultural landscape of the outer zone is a harmonious one. Here century-old mountain farming has given rise to communities whose diverse lifestyles are to be sustained and preserved in the long term.



Management within the National Park

It is not just size and stringent protection and preservation objectives that make a protected area a National Park, but more importantly the establishment of professional management resources. The objectives of National Park management are as diverse as the natural and cultural alpine landscapes that are to be preserved, protected, and showcased. Six 'business areas' characterise the main tasks carried out by the National Park Administration:

Natural Resource Management including preserving the cultural landscape, 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 and Natural Resources (IUCN). In the full awareness that the Hohe Tauern National Park does not exist in isolation, but is instead embedded within a vibrant National Park region in which people live, work, and drive the economy, it is also the National Park Administration's duty to contribute to regional development and, in particular, to devote itself to supporting the development of the tourist offer. With regard to 'Regional Development' and 'Tourism' we have succeeded in outsourcing a range of tasks and setting up shared facilities and agencies (LEADER Association, Ferienregion NPHT GmbH) with other stakeholders, ultimately guaranteeing their implementation to a high professional standard.



**Natural Resource
Management**



**Science &
Research**



**Education &
Visitor Information**



**Preservation of the
Cultural Landscape**



**Regional
Development**



Tourism



We, the Six Austrian National Parks, Pledge ...



... to protect and explore nature, inform, and offer rest and recreation. We preserve the habitats of rare animal and plant species, some of which are endangered or threatened with extinction.

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

- ▶ conservation and preservation, protection and nurturing of (cultural) landscapes declared as National Parks
- ▶ unconstrained development of nature (protection of the wilderness) without human intervention
- ▶ recreation and education

... to invest today in nature's precious assets for the benefit of tomorrow.

Our task is to secure and safeguard selected representative areas in Austria in the long term. Our nature protection areas are characterised by their unique landscape and biodiversity.

Securing and safeguarding means:

Ensuring and promoting the course of natural development, and consciously reducing the use we make of these areas.

We want to be able to pass on a piece of unspoilt nature, and even wilderness, to our children.

... to make nature an experience, and to offer the highest level of rest and recreation.

Our visitors share a common interest in nature and the environment. They choose to take time to explore, experience, and enjoy nature's diversity and its ecological cycles. They have the opportunity to explore the Parks alone or in the company of our specially trained National Park Rangers and to sample our wide range of programmes.

... to conduct research benefiting scientifically founded nature conservation.

Thanks to long-term observations at our NP field lab our scientific research gains insights into natural cycles and the development of our nature protection areas.

... to guarantee modern partnership-based nature conservation.

Our National Park Administrations represent the position of nature conservation above all. Our highly qualified and dedicated staff carry out the tasks of the National Parks in a transparent way and attend to the concerns of the population.

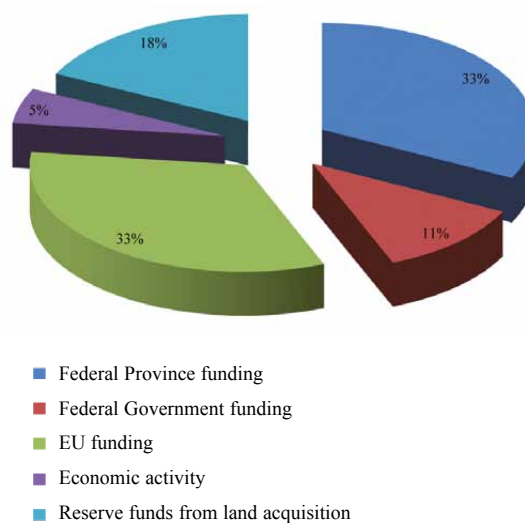
... to protect microcosms while driving the region as a whole.

Our people work hand in hand with the people who live in the regions themselves. We enable sustainable development of rural areas while lastingly securing jobs.

Budget for the 2016 National Park Year

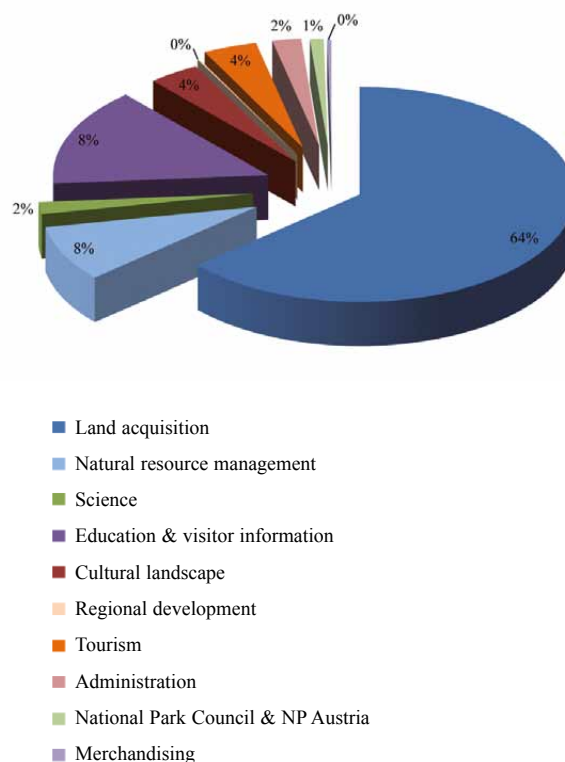
2016 budget income

	Euros	Per cent
Reserve funds from land acquisition	1,517,000.00	18
Federal Province funding	2,778,000.00	33
Federal Government funding	977,000.00	11
EU funding	2,826,000.00	33
Economic activity	457,000.00	5
Total	8,555,000.00	100



2016 budget expenditure

	Euros	Per cent
Land acquisition	5,435,000.00	64
Natural resource management	718,000.00	8
Science	156,000.00	2
Education & visitor information	1,261,000.00	15
Cultural landscape	327,000.00	4
Regional development	12,000.00	0
Tourism	347,000.00	4
Administration	185,000.00	2
National Park Council & NP Austria	88,000.00	1
Merchandising	26,000.00	0
Total	8,555,000.00	100



The figures are not identical to the statement of accounts as the actual cash flow is shown in this representation and the expenditures are grouped into the respective cost centres (business areas).

2016 National Park Year



14 January 2016

Holiday Trade Fair in Vienna

The Holiday Trade Fair in Vienna is a must for Austria's top destinations. The joint PR and marketing activities of the Holiday Region and the Salzburg National Park Administration were presented at the traditional press breakfast in 2016. Both visitors and staff of the tourism companies benefit from precisely targeted offers and effective cooperation between the National Park and the Holiday Region. Highlights this year were '200 years of Salzburg in Austria' and the 175th anniversary of the first ascent of the Grossvenediger mountain. Wilfried Haslauer, Provincial Governor and Leo Bauerberger, Director of Salzburger Land Tourismus, made sure they didn't miss out on the presentation of the activities planned for the year ahead.



15 to 17 April 2016

7th Pannonian Bird Experience

From 9 to 17 April 2016 the wet meadows, salt ponds and reed beds in the National Park Neusiedler See - Seewinkel once again attracted large numbers of birdwatchers and nature photographers. And during the weekend from 15 to 17 April 2016 participants visited the stands of various manufacturers of long-distance optical equipment and accessories suppliers. Austria's National Parks with their very special ornithological attractions were showcased by National Parks Austria. The National Park Hohe Tauern displayed pictures of the large birds of prey in the protected area: golden eagles, bearded vultures and griffon vultures. There was also a presentation about the bearded vulture resettlement project to mark its 30th anniversary.



27 April 2016

National Parks Austria press conference

The Austrian National Parks are making a valuable contribution to the protection of the local natural heritage with their national and international projects. As a recent study confirms, they offer ideal conditions for all those seeking rest and relaxation. With the motto "Nothing touches us as much as the untouched", the campaign of the new National Parks Austria umbrella group highlights the diversity and the achievements of the six Austrian National Parks. Federal Minister Andrä Rupprechter and the eight Directors of the Austrian National Parks held a press conference on 27 April 2016 at which they presented the internationally outstanding performances, the recreation study and the current campaign.



9 May 2016

Meeting of the National Park Council in Winklarn

As part of the 20th meeting of the National Park Council, the implementation of a three-year pilot project for a long-term monitoring and research programme was decided on by the National Park advisors Ingrid Felipe (Tyrol), Christian Ragger (Carinthia), Astrid Rössler (Salzburg) and Günter Liebel, federal government representative. Under the scientific direction of the ecologists Christian Körner and Leopold Füreder, this plan was developed to make it easier in the long term to make statements about the consequences of and latest trends in climate change, and in nutrient input from the air as they too affect terrestrial ecosystems in the National Parks. As a result, the National Park Council acknowledged the need to increase both the financial and human resources of the Council Secretariat.



28 May 2016

“175th Anniversary of the First Ascent of the Grossvenediger”

On 28 May 2016 the special exhibition “175th Anniversary of the First Ascent of the Grossvenediger” was opened at the Felberturm Museum in Mittersill. Astrid Rössler (Deputy Governor), Wolfgang Viertler (Mayor of Mittersill) and Peter Nindl (Mayor of Neukirchen) all took up the invitation of the curator Walter Reifmüller. Numerous pictures and exhibits provided information about, amongst other things, the first ascent, the opening up of the Venediger Group, impressive 3,000 metre high peaks in the area as well as the Grossvenediger as the Eldorado for ski mountaineers. The National Park Administration's displays showed the fascinating diversity and the rewilding in the high mountains. The special exhibition is a collaboration between the Salzburg National Park Administration, the Museum Association and Mittersill Community Archive.



28 May 2016

European Day of Parks

In the week from 21 to 29 May a total of 13 remarkable events took place in all the Austrian National Parks to mark the European Day of Parks on 24 May. The European day of action has its roots in 1909 when the first nine National Parks in Europe were designated in Sweden. This year interested visitors to the National Park were able to see free of charge a variety of National Park exhibitions such as “Auf der Alm – Zwischen Himmel und Erde”, “Smaragde und Kristalle”, “Könige der Lüfte” and others. And at ranger stations they were able to pick up the latest news about the nature protection area as well as details about the current summer programme.



6-9 June 2016

HBLA Ursprung project days

A project carried out this year for the first time at the beginning of June 2016 had its origins in the collaboration with the HBLA Ursprung. The 3rd class in the faculty of Environmental and Resource Management was invited to take part in four different project groups in order to gain an insight into the National Park's management. In the areas of cultural landscape, wildlife management, geology and weather and climate, the students spent three exciting days with National Park staff outdoors in the protection area. The project's aim was to provide the young people with the widest possible insight into the National Park's specific activities and to give them a better understanding of the parks' importance for sustainable development in the region.



8 June 2016

Long-term collaboration with the Federal Forests

It was a milestone when the National Park was internationally recognised by the IUCS in 2006. The key feature of this recognition is the large-scale preservation of original ecosystems with no exploitation. Taking land out of use has been agreed over a finite term as part of the contractual nature conservation. It has now been possible to agree longer-term contracts with the Federal Forests affecting more than 14,000 hectares, in which all agricultural, forestry and hunting use has been suspended for 20 or 30 years. The Federal Forests has also agreed to rewilding an area of 7,000 hectares. CEO Georg Schöppl, Federal Forests, and Astrid Rössler, Deputy Governor, signed this agreement, which has great significance for the protection of the natural dynamics in the high mountains.



10 June 2016

“The National Park Comes to Town” at Hellbrunn Palace

The success of the school fête “The National Park Comes to Town” does not seem to be coming to an end - this year some 500 pupils from the city of Salzburg once more took part in the event. The festival was held at Hellbrunn Palace. At the learning stations the children got to know the National Park in all its many facets. The staff of the Hellbrunn Palace administration supported the event at all levels. In addition to the huge palace grounds, facilities such as power and water supply were also made available. The pupils got actively involved at the different stations and, at the end of the event, they presented Deputy Governor Astrid Rössler with a book on plants they had designed themselves.



16 June 2016

Historic land acquisition in the National Park’s key area

In 1913 the Stuttgart-Hamburg Association Nature Conservation Park laid the foundations for the Hohe Tauern National Park with the first acquisitions of land in the Tauern valleys. With the sale of its land holdings in the Hohe Tauern to the Salzburg National Park Fund, the Lüneburger Heide Nature Conservation Park Foundation took its final important step in 2016: a century later and in the spirit of the association’s founding fathers, the foundation stone for a large and unique wilderness area covering 3,000 hectares of land was laid. Wildfried Haslauer (Provincial Governor), Astrid Rössler (Deputy Governor) and Wildfried Holtmann (Foundation Chairman) signed the purchase contract for the realisation of this nature conservation project on an European scale.



30 June - 1 July 2016

Partner schools event in the National Park community of Hollersbach

There was huge interest once more this year. With the motto “First come, first served” the 70 free (class) places were allocated in no time at all. Over the two days some 1,200 pupils in the National Park region attended, enthusiastically getting involved in exciting topics about the National Park at learning stations devised by the National Park Administration. The highlight of the festival was the presentation to Deputy Governor Astrid Rössler of the large-scale book on plants independently designed by the schools before the event. A big thank you to the community of Hollersbach and the Herb Gardens Association for their energetic support in the planning and implementation of the partner school fête.



23-24 June 2016

Bearded vulture release 2016

The “Resettlement of the Bearded Vulture in the Alps” project was launched 30 years ago with the first release in the Krumltal valley. To mark this anniversary two young bearded vultures from Berlin Zoo were released this year in the Untersulzbachtal valley. This was the first time this has been done in the grounds of the NPs and it attracted great media and public interest. For Deputy Governor Astrid Rössler this was also the first time she had observed a release in the conservation area. So far 210 young vultures have been released in the Alps and 173 young birds have flown the nest in the wild. In the Alps there are now around 240 bearded vultures - making this sort of project one of the most successful releases, showing how to solve a number of problems and eliminate major risks.



23-24 June 2016

National Parks Austria press trip

National Parks Austria’s contribution to biodiversity conservation and species protection is exceptional. To highlight this science journalists from the German-speaking media were invited to join a press trip. In the Hohe Tauern the focus was on the “Resettlement of the Bearded Vulture in the Alps” and the “Great Birds of Prey” project. After a visit to the “Könige der Lüfte” information centre, the results of the griffon vulture study as well as the monitoring of the golden eagle and the bearded vulture were presented in the Krumltal valley. Observing the great birds of prey in the wild was an experience never to be forgotten. The highlight was the release of the young vultures Charlie and Lucky in the Untersulzbachtal valley. The many reports achieved an advertising value of approx. €600,000.



11 July 2016

Fascinating variety of lichens

A long-term research project of the Salzburg National Park Fund in cooperation with the University of Salzburg was concluded with a book about the lichens in the Hohe Tauern National Park. The book provides a fascinating insight into a largely unknown world and presents the results of the research in an interesting and aesthetic way. With this richly illustrated volume in the National Park’s series of scientific publications, an important standard work on the biodiversity in the Eastern Alps has been completed. It is particularly pleasing that three lichen species have been found in the protection area for the first time in Austria. On 11 July 2016 Deputy Governor Astrid Rössler, Director Wolfgang Urban and author Roman Türk held the successful work in their hands for the first time.



3-8 September 2016

Austrian Alpine Club sponsors’ meeting

From 3 to 8 September 2016, the 18th Austrian Alpine Club-National Park Sponsors’ Meeting took place in Neukirchen am Grossvenediger. A collaboration of the Salzburg National Park Administration, Neukirchen Tourist Board and the Austrian Alpine Club led to the organisation of an exciting one-week programme for the National Park’s sponsors. The National Park Sponsorship is an Austrian Alpine Club programme to support the Hohe Tauern National Park. Donations go to the National Park Fund, from which selected projects are financed and implemented throughout the National Park area.



10-11 September 2016

National Parks Austria harvest festival

This year for the 16th time the biggest harvest festival in Austria took place in Vienna. This year the celebrations were held in a new location: Vienna's Augarten, the oldest Baroque garden in the country's capital city. From the very start the six Austrian National Parks have also been represented every year in the "National Parks Austria Village". Visitors had the opportunity to pick up first hand information about hiking and excursion destinations, accommodation and guided tours in the National Parks. As part of a quiz, attractive prizes from the protected areas were raffled. This year the National Park Administrations of Salzburg and Carinthia were present along with Hohe Tauern National Park.



11 September 2016

Species Conservation Days at Hellbrunn Zoo in Salzburg

Hellbrunn Zoo houses a range of local animals from the high mountains which live in the wild in the National Park, from griffon vultures to chamois to ibex. The National Park Administration once again used this event to draw the people of Salzburg's attention to "their" National Park. Both the Zoo and the National Park are important institutions for nature study and environmental education in the province and will continue to work together in the future. The Species Conservation Days at Hellbrunn Zoo also provide a platform for scientific exchange and the opportunity to present the Hohe Tauern National Park's attractive educational programme to a wider audience.



3-4 October 2016

National Parks Austria Annual Conference

"Best of Austria" was the title of this year's National Parks Austria's Annual Conference, held on 3 and 4 October 2016 in the Kulturfabrik Hainburg in the Donau-Auen National Park. The achievements of the Austrian National Parks were the focus of a panel discussion with Andr   Rupprechter (Federal Minister), Carl Manzano (Director of the Donau-Auen National Park), Wolfgang Scherzinger (ecologist), Beate Striebel (Deputy Managing Director of WWF Austria) and Erich Mayrhofer (Chairman of the National Parks Austria Association and Director of the Kalkalpen National Park). "The Austrian National Parks in European Protected Area Networks" provided the main focus, with particular attention given to networking in the Alpine region.



7 October 2016

US ambassador visits Hohe Tauern National Park

In 2016 the US National Park Service celebrated its 100th anniversary. To mark this occasion United States ambassadors visited selected national parks which are successfully implementing this global concept which had originated in North America and elsewhere before coming to Europe. At the beginning of October Alexa Wesner, the US Ambassador based in Austria, visited the National Park community of Mittersill. Director Wolfgang Urban welcomed this international guest to the National Park Centre and, using the various modules of the National Park worlds, explained the characteristics of the alpine natural and cultural area of the Hohe Tauern National Park and its region.



20 October 2016

Audit of the “Sulzbachtäler” wilderness area

On the occasion of the conference "How Wild Can Education Be", Vlado Vancura, Deputy Chairman of the European Wilderness Society, presented Director Wolfgang Urban with the experts' report on the Wilderness Audit. This test procedure included a local review by an international group of experts from 28 July to 6 August 2015 as well as a detailed assessment of research results and evaluations in 2016. The test report provides a comprehensive analysis of the planned wilderness area and identifies 69 recommendations with different priorities which should be implemented by 2020. The 8,465 hectare wilderness area, however, already meets all the criteria for the gold status of the European Wilderness Quality Standard and Audit System.



20-21 October 2016

National Park Academy conference “Wilderness Education”

With the title "How Wild Can Education Be", a conference took place at the National Park Centre in Mittersill addressing the subject of environmental education. The conference provided lots of food for thought about the importance of wilderness education. It also showed how rewilding affects children and young people, and how teachers can help achieve sustainable results, especially in this area. One day was devoted to the practical implementation in the wild: in different workshops participants were able to pick up tips and tricks on implementation. In a series of lectures speakers from Switzerland, Germany and Austria shared their expertise with the audience, who listened with great interest.



10-13 November 2016

Interpädagogica in Vienna

The Interpädagogica trade fair was held for the 38th time. Interpädagogica is conceived as a "hiking fair" and alternates each year between Vienna, Salzburg, Graz and Linz. It is Austria's leading educational trade fair and was visited by some 20,000 people over this long weekend. 257 international exhibitors presented the latest news and innovations in their specialist area. There were presentations about, amongst other things, a new teaching aid and attractive educational offers in various disciplines. The fair's main focus was on "Digitalisation and Integration" and there was much discussion about current challenges facing education, as well as possible solutions.



11-14 November 2016

International Bearded Vulture Meeting 2016

To mark "30 Years of Resettlement of the Bearded Vulture in the Alps", more than 80 bearded vulture experts from all over Europe met for the "Annual Bearded Vulture Meeting 2016" at the National Park Centre in Mittersill. The focus of the conference was on information exchange about breeding in the wild, release activities and current monitoring and research results. Other equally important issues discussed included: current threats such as lead poisoning, poaching or the agricultural use of pharmaceuticals, and the challenges facing the young bearded vulture population as well as the latest news about bearded vulture offspring. Building on the outcomes of the meeting, the strategy of the bearded vulture project in the Alps will be developed further.

National Parks Austria

Web info: www.nationalparksaustria.at



Unser Naturerbe.



As representative and extensive protected areas the Austrian National Parks with their unrivalled diversity are of crucial importance to the preservation of the national cultural heritage. Top photos, from left to right: M. KURZTHALER/NP Hohe Tauern Tyrol, H. WEYRICH/NP Hohe Tauern Salzburg, M. LACKNER/NP Hohe Tauern Kärnten, Ch. UEBL/NP Thayatal; bottom photos from left to right: K. SCHNEIDER/NP Neusiedler See – Seewinkel, E. MAYRHOFFER/NP Kalkalpen, POPP-HACKNER/NP Gesäuse, KRACHER/NP Donau-Auen.

Umbrella brand and network

Under the National Parks Austria umbrella brand, all joint activities are fine-tuned as part of the co-ordination session led by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management. Its members are comprised of representatives of the federal government, the National Park directors, and the forestry directors of the three National Park forestry operations. Acting in an advisory capacity, the National Park Advisory Board, which is made up of members of the federal government, the federal provinces and selected NGOs, evaluates the extent to which objectives are met.

In 2016 National Parks Austria held five coordinating sessions. The General Assembly of the National Parks Austria Association chaired by Erich Mayrhofer and the Association's Executive Board met twice. There were also three meetings of the Advisory Board.

In 2016 in collaboration between the Coordinating Sessions and the Environment Agency led to finalisation of the “**National Park Strategy Austria 2020+**” which lays out the future path for the dynamic further development of these very important protected areas. A special technical committee worked on the

position paper “**Rewilding and Process Protection in Austrian National Parks**”. This paper is based on compliance with the international criteria for wilderness areas and National Parks and the Austrian biodiversity strategy and, in order to help with orientation and decision making, it is tasked with proposing guidelines and specific recommendations for the rewilding process.

SEZUM Project: Service, Co-operation, Implementation

The project (2015–2017) strongly encourages the co-operation of the six Austrian National Parks in different areas. In 2016 the following priorities, amongst others, were set:

► National Parks Austria Annual Conference

The conference entitled “**Best of Austria**” was attended by around 140 participants and addressed the National Parks' role as participants in the network of conservation areas.

► National Parks Austria Education Academy

The training and further education provision is aimed at employees, teachers and people interested in nature.

In 2016, 13 events with around 270 participants were held.

► National Parks Austria Biodiversity Database

With the new web interface all the National Parks now have a uniform user interface to access the biodiversity database.

► National Parks Austria Research Agenda

The aim of the common research agenda is to create new opportunities for synergies and projects. The first workshop covering all the National Parks took place in 2016.

► National Parks Austria Research Symposium

The 6th research symposium in conservation areas will be held in November 2017. In 2016 the first call was made to attract international research work in conservation areas. The final programme will be confirmed in June 2017.

► National Parks Austria Science Prize

In 2016 the Science Prize 2017 was advertised. This prize will be awarded every four years for theses completed in collaboration with the National Park Administrations and which are of a particularly high quality.

- Total project costs: € 600,000.00
- Financing: Rural development, 2014-2020, National Parks measure 16.5.2

“Public Relations National Parks Austria” project

The aim of the project (2015-2018) is to raise awareness about the Austrian National Parks, first and foremost at home rather than abroad. The National Parks, their value and contents must be brought to the attention of the general public. The following priorities, amongst others, were set for 2016:

► National Parks Austria umbrella brand campaign

With the slogan “Nothing touches us as much as the untouched” the umbrella brand campaign was launched on television, on posters and rolling boards as well as online at the end of April 2016. The aim of the campaign was to draw attention to the priceless value of our natural world, first and foremost in the Austrian National Parks. For the campaign, therefore, an addition was made to the umbrella brand logo: “National Parks Austria - Our Natural Heritage”. The campaign also sought to foster in Austrians a sense of personal involvement with regard to nature conservation.

► National Parks Austria campaigns publication

The National Parks were showcased in a brochure entitled “Our Natural Heritage. Discovering the Untouched”, which was issued in May 2016.

► Study “This is how Austria relaxes”

This study shows that Austrians feel a deep connection with nature and use it as a means of relaxation.

► National Parks Austria media scholarship

“selbstverständlich, außergewöhnlich” was the motto of the media scholarship in 2016. For two weeks 13 new talents in literature, journalism, photography and video design drew inspiration from nature in the National Parks.

- Total project costs: € 1,500,000.00
- Financing: Rural development, 2014-2020, National Parks measure 16.5.2



International Affairs



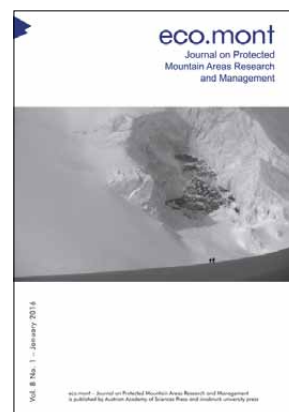
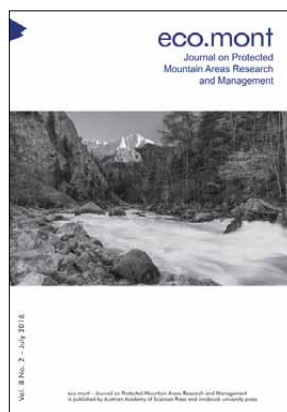
The Hohe Tauern National Park enjoys a great deal of recognition at the international level, whether in science & research, nature conservation and species protection, education & visitor information, or National Park & natural resource management. The following international events and joint ventures were attended in 2016:

International delegations & meetings at the Hohe Tauern National Park

- ▶ **Wilderness Audit**
Official handover of the Evaluation Report on the wilderness area undertaken by experts from the European Wilderness Society
- ▶ **Experts' Conference Wilderness Education**
On the topic "How wild can education be?"
- ▶ **Experts' Workshop and Field Campaign**
Setting up long-term monitoring in the Untersulzbachtal valley
- ▶ **Vulture Conservation Foundation**
Experts meet to confirm the bearded vulture resettlements in Europe
- ▶ **IBM Steering Committee**
Experts meet to confirm the methods and standards for monitoring the bearded vulture in the Alps
- ▶ **Annual Bearded Vulture Meeting**
Exchange of experience about protection and management issues for the bearded vulture at the European level
- ▶ **National Park Triglav (Slovenia) Delegation**
Co-operation between National Park and tourism
- ▶ **National Park Saxon Switzerland (Germany) Delegation**
Co-operation between National Park and tourism
- ▶ **European Wilderness Society Delegation**
Participants from Ukraine, Slovakia, Germany and Spain discuss integration and acceptance of wilderness areas

International joint ventures

- ▶ **ALPARC** – Web info: www.alparc.org
- ▶ **ISCAR-P** – Int. Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps for Protected Areas & Editorial Board of *eco.mont*
Web info: www.iscaralpineresearch.org/iscar_protected_areas
Web info: www.oeaw.ac.at/ecomont/editorial_board.htm
- ▶ **International Bearded Vulture Monitoring (IBM)**
Web info: www.gyp-monitoring.com
- ▶ **EUROPARC** – Web info: www.europarc.org
- ▶ **IUCN** – Web info: www.iucn.org
- ▶ **European Wilderness Society**
Web info: <http://wilderness-society.org>
- ▶ **VCF – Vulture Conservation Foundation**
Web info: www.vulturefoundation.org
- ▶ **Platform for Biodiversity Research in Austria**
Web info: http://131.130.59.133/biodiv_forschung



*The specialist journal *eco.mont* publishes research studies from protected mountain areas. Since 2015 current issues of the journal have also been freely accessible at: www.oeaw.ac.at/ecomont/*

Annual Bearded Vulture Meeting 2016

The international Vulture Conservation Foundation (VCF) and Hohe Tauern National Park jointly organised the international Bearded Vulture Meeting in 2016. It was held in Mittersill and was attended by more than 80 scientists, National Park and conservation area representatives, local authorities, zoos and NGOs as well as vulture lovers from more than 10 countries.

The aim of this international conference was to exchange knowledge and experience with regard to the current situation of the bearded vulture in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, and to share the latest findings from various projects for the protection and preservation of this large bird of prey. One area of focus was also reaching agreement on new activities and conservation strategies.

30 years ago the first bearded vultures were released in the Hohe Tauern National Park. It seemed, therefore, a good time to look back on this successful resettlement project and consider its future. The meeting confirmed that the bearded vulture stocks in the Alps and in Western Europe are recovering and in no small measure because of the rehabilitation projects co-ordinated by the VCF. In the Alps 43 breeding pairs have already become established and this year 25 young bearded vultures have successfully flown the nest.

Despite these record numbers, however, there are still regional differences. In the Central Alps around Mont Blanc and the Swiss National Park and the Stifserjoch National Park, the number of breeding pairs and young birds is already relatively high and the first density mechanisms are effective. However, there is plenty of catching up to be done in the South-Western and Eastern Alps. In the Eastern Alps there are only two successful breeding pairs and the stock shows a high fluctuation of individuals, a high loss

of old birds and high mortality rates, the main factors being lead poisoning and also suspected poaching.

A solution to these questions and increased monitoring, especially in the area between North and South Tyrol, have top priority in the Alpine project, but also the establishing of a meta-population, since the Eastern Alps form an important stepping stone and bridgehead to South Eastern Europe.

Experiences from the project show that

- ▶ all species of vulture - particularly the bearded vulture - are very sensitive species and are already or still endangered in many parts of the world.
- ▶ the successful "Resettlement of the Bearded Vulture in the Alps" project is a model for reintroduction projects in terms of species protection.
- ▶ this project can only be successful in close international collaboration between different institutions (protection areas, zoos, nature conservation organisations, the hunting community, alpine farmers etc.).
- ▶ reintroduction programmes are long-term projects. This means that, regarding the bearded vulture, monitoring must still be carried out after 30 years, and specific measures with regard to causes of death will have to be adopted in the future.
- ▶ the eradication of animal and plant species and subsequent reintroduction tend to take a long time and entail correspondingly high expenditure in terms of money and personnel. Apart from financial expenditure, resettlement projects are never to be equated with natural starting conditions, even in their impact on the genetic range of a population. Getting anywhere near the original conditions when an animal population first became established could take hundreds of years. This is why preserving the diversity of flora and fauna is the top priority.



Management Plan

Management Plan obligation

When the amendment to the Salzburg National Park Act came into force in February 2015, the National Park Administration was also tasked with preparing a management plan. Article 40, paragraph 1 states: "The National Park Administration must develop a management plan for the area of the Hohe Tauern National Park which is based on a planning period of 9 years and which covers all the measures which need to be implemented in respect of §2 to achieve the objectives in the areas of Natural Resource Management, Preservation of the Cultural Landscape, Science & Research, Education & Visitor Information as well as Regional Development."

Aims of the Management Plan

Whilst the first three sections of the Salzburg National Park Act deal with the National Park as a large-scale protection area in general and in terms of sovereignty, the fourth section is entitled "National Park Management" and focuses, in terms of a private sector administration, on a national park's many various tasks and business areas. The management plan is understood as a

planning instrument which derives, defines and describes all the objectives and measures in terms of the National Park's private sector administration and also ranks these issues in terms of urgency and priority. The aim of this medium-term and comprehensive perspective is to support more efficient and effective resource planning and decision-making.

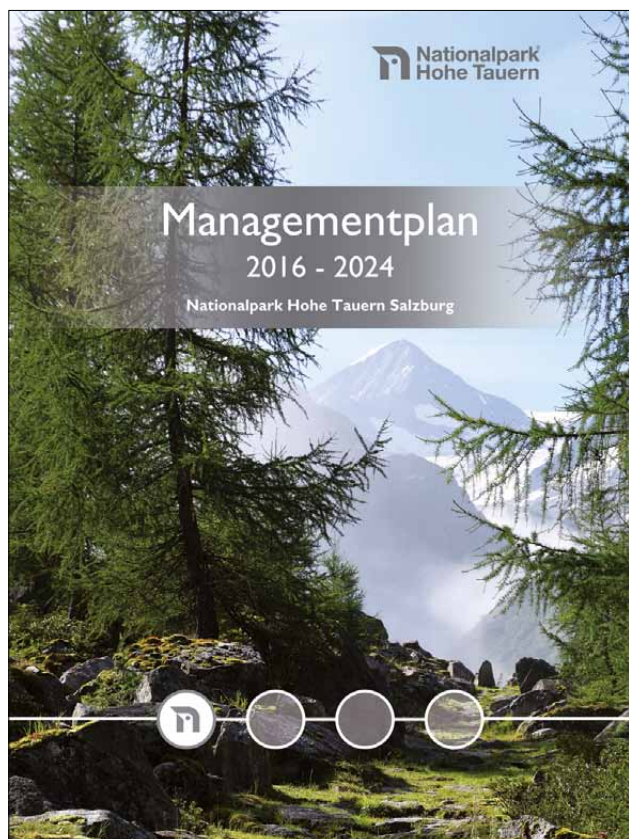
Derivation of objectives and measures

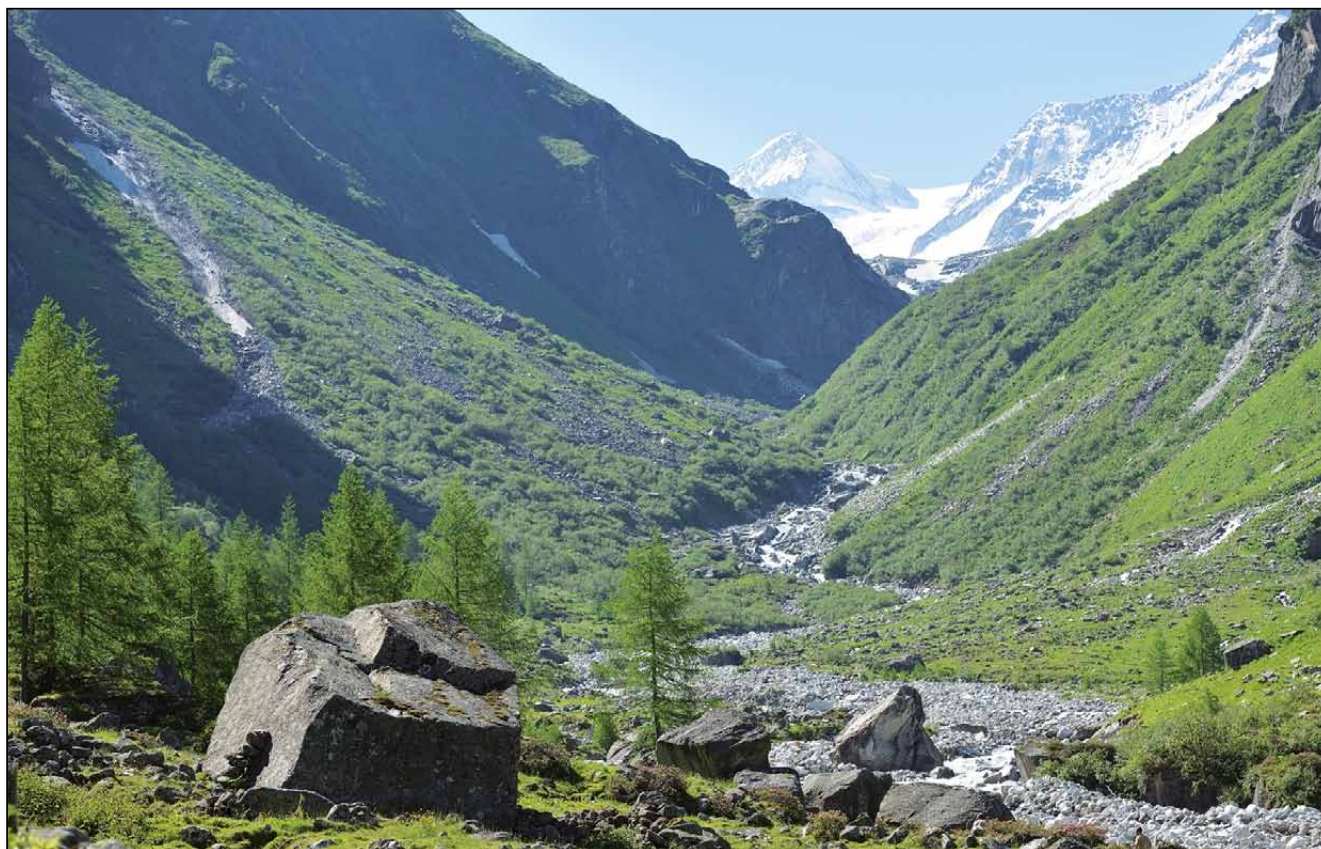
The derivation of objectives and measures is based on national and international stipulations and the basic conditions for the management of large conservation areas, international standards in general and the management of the Hohe Tauern National Park Salzburg in particular. Beyond the statutory norms, which have to be taken into account, especially with regard to the definition of the business fields and the derivation of the strategic objectives, a hierarchy of principles will be applied for the fields of action and operational objectives which must be used in all Austrian National Parks. The measures identified in each case will help achieve the operational objectives in the fields of action.

The Salzburg National Park Administration is active in a total of six business areas: Natural Resource Management, Science & Research, Education & Visitor Information, Preservation of the Cultural Landscape, Regional Development and Tourism. The Management Plan 2016-2024 mentions 12 strategic objectives which are assigned to 30 fields of action with their respective operational objectives. This results in a total of 193 measures which are to be implemented over the course of the nine year plan.

Involvement of interest groups

In the Hohe Tauern National Park there has been a very long tradition of involving stakeholders and various interest groups in the National Park in practical decision-making, a tradition stretching back to the time before the National Park was actually founded. The Salzburg National Park Act also envisages involvement processes in many areas and, in its stipulations as to how advisory and decision-making committees are made up, also takes the different interest groups into account. As a result, in the final outcome of this Management Plan there are comprehensive agreement processes, mainly in the "Board of Trustees" and "Advisory Board" of the Salzburg National Park Fund. On the part of the National Park Administration, a central catalogue of business areas, fields of action, strategic and operational objectives as well as measures were prepared, which then served as a guide to discussion in the following working sessions:





► Presentation of the initial draft to the Fund Advisory Board	8/3/16
► Presentation of the initial draft to the Board of Trustees	15/3/16
► Discussion with the management board of the landowner protection association	16/3/16
► Discussion with the Mayor	18/4/16
► Discussion with the landowners	11/5/16
► Discussion with the hunting community and landowners	1/6/16
► Special meeting of the Fund Advisory Board and Board of Trustees	14/6/16
► Special meeting of the Fund Advisory Board and Board of Trustees	30/6/16
► Recommendation of the Fund Advisory Board	15/10/16
► Decision made by the Board of Trustees	25/10/16

Principles for the implementation of the Management Plan

Since management planning simply seeks to satisfy the objective of providing a medium-term overview of objectives and measures in the management of the conservation areas and thus to facilitate efficient and effective resource planning, it is self-evident that all implementation steps need additional discussion. The Management Plan does not factor in either the annual work programmes or the annual budgets. None of the decision making processes of the committees of the Salzburg National Park Fund with decision making powers are affected by the Management Plan, but ideally they will be able to be guided by and refer to the plan.

In all of those implementation steps which affect not only the National Park Administration's resource planning with regard to personnel and budget but also the interests of third parties, the planned measures have to be agreed with the interest groups involved. The principles of contractual and partnership-based contractual nature conservation apply above and beyond the statutory provisions, first and foremost in the execution of the Management Plan.

Management planning can only be based on the actual circumstances and basic conditions prevailing at the time. In the course of the implementation phase, of course, unexpected changes in priorities and available resources can occur. Risks needing urgent attention and unanticipated opportunities are also conceivable. All of this has to be dealt with and can affect the implementation of the Management Plan to a greater or lesser extent. The implementation of individual measures may require additional budgetary resources.

The Management Plan does not claim to be complete, exclusive or irrevocable. There is also a need for far-sighted, flexible, circumspect and regular decision making in the National Park Administration and the Salzburg National Park Fund's advisory and decision making boards.

Natural Resource Management

Long-term acquisition of land for international recognition

Compared with many national parks around the world, there are two special features that stand out in relation to the development and founding of the protection area in the Hohe Tauern. The first is the integration of the cultural landscape of the Alpine pastures, which have been transformed over the centuries and cared for in a sustainable manner, into the protection concept. The second is the ownership structure to which this is subject. While other large nature protection areas have primarily been established on publicly-owned land (on a national, province or community level), 59% of the 80,500 ha protection area in the Hohe Tauern National Park Salzburg is owned by private companies – largely from the fields of agriculture and forestry. Other de facto private owners include Österreichische Bundesforste AG (Austrian Federal Forests, ÖBF), which owns 35%, and various NGOs that account for a total area of 6%.

The Salzburg National Park Fund does not have any rights of disposal or decision-making powers with regard to this private property. In Salzburg's national park act, agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing continue to be permitted in accordance with their material laws throughout the entire area of the national

park – with the exception of special protection areas.

In addition, Salzburg's National Park Act (S.NPG) allows for civil law agreements to ensure the implementation of the national park's goals. All management goals are therefore agreed and compensated for the entire area by way of contractual nature conservation before subsequently being implemented, regardless of whether this relates to public, non-profit or private property.

Achieving international recognition by the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) in 2006 represented a milestone in the history of the National Park Hohe Tauern. Due to the lack of available land as stated above, it was necessary in Salzburg to undertake 22 years of intensive discussions with the various stakeholders in and around the national park. The National Park Hohe Tauern has been a recognised member of the global national park family ever since.

At the heart of this international recognition is the stipulation that large areas of original natural ecosystems must be maintained across the majority of the core zone and that the land must not be exploited for any purpose in these areas. Salzburg's new National Park Act (S.NPG) states the goal of securing international recognition while also permitting





use of the core zone for agriculture, forestry and hunting. In addition to the purchase of land that was effected in 2016, this international recognition can therefore only be achieved by means of contractual nature conservation via negotiations and settlements with the individual landowners.

The scope of non-exploited areas as required by the IUCN was achieved in 2006, although the contracts that were linked to the hunting lease period according to the hunting law extended only until the end of 2015. This made it necessary to negotiate a new deal for the future. By 2015, contracts covering an area of almost 7,000 ha had been agreed with farming and private landowners – these will remain in force until the end of 2024.

In terms of the areas of Austria that were impacted by this, Austrian Federal Forests (ÖBF) and the National Park management had an ambitious goal. Rather than simply taking this partnership, which had functioned seamlessly over the years, and simply continuing with it for an additional shooting period, they aimed to expand it with regard to the key protection goals and long-term strategies of the national park. Long-term contracts corresponding to the free natural dynamics of our Alpine ecosystems were signed with the ÖBF on 8 June. Of the approximately 14,000 ha in which the ÖBF refrains from any use of the land, especially for hunting purposes, half were secured for almost two hunting lease periods and thus a period of nearly 20 years. The other half were secured for three hunting lease periods, amounting to almost 30 years. A further 3,000 ha in the Habachtal valley research area remain subject to a nine-year lease period, but with the option for an extension.

The fresh aspect of these new contractual nature conservation measures is not only the fact that the ÖBF will not exploit 7,000 ha of the Sulzbachtal valleys for hunting or other purposes across a period of nearly 30 years, but also that it has agreed to the establishment of a Sulzbachtal valleys wilderness area. The ÖBF has additionally signed a moratorium on sheep grazing in specific areas with parties that have been granted forestry entitlements in the Krimmler Achental valley head, which likewise applies for a minimum of three hunting lease periods. Coupled with the areas purchased from the Nature Conservation Park Stuttgart-Hamburg association, this means that there is the potential for a large-scale wilderness area that would be given due consideration in European policy concerning national parks and nature conservation.



Land ownership – the opportunity of the century



In contrast to many other national parks around the world, including those in Europe and Austria, the ownership structure of the National Park Hohe Tauern in Salzburg is unique: 59% of the 80,500 ha protection area is owned by private companies, largely in the agricultural and forestry sector. The other owners, namely Österreichische Bundesforste AG (35%) and various NGOs (totalling 6% of the area), are also seen as de facto private owners and the Salzburg National Park Fund does not have any rights of disposal or decision-making powers. All management goals are therefore agreed and compensated for the entire area by way of contractual nature conservation before subsequently being implemented, regardless of whether this relates to public, non-profit or private property.

In terms of the management of a nature protection area, this lack of available land naturally means that the process of agreeing and implementing decisions is slower and not always ideal for achieving the protection goals in certain situations. After political work on the national park began in 1971, for example, it took 13 years until the Salzburg National Park Act (S.NPG) entered into force and there was a further 22-year wait before international recognition of the national park according to IUCN category II. However, no members of the national park management would wish to do without the intensive discussions with the various interested groups in and around the national park as these ultimately generate a deeper mutual understanding that forms the basis for acceptance and a real partnership.

Nevertheless, all those with decision-making powers at the Salzburg National Park Fund – most of these powers belong to

the landowners and the communities in the national park – agree that owning at least several thousand hectares of land could be hugely beneficial for the Salzburg National Park Fund for special and very long-term projects and developments. An offer made by the Nature Conservation Park foundation (VNP) to sell 3,000 ha in the Untersulzbachtal and Obersulzbachtal valleys to the National Park Fund thus became the opportunity of the century, so to speak.

It is over a century since the Nature Conservation Park Stuttgart-Hamburg association acted on the initiative of Salzburg lawyer and member of the state parliament August Prinzing and acquired its first areas of land in the Stubachtal and Amertal valleys. This was done with the aim of laying the cornerstone for a Hohe Tauern high-mountain national park based on the first national parks in the United States that were known about at that time – all the way back in 1913! In this period, public land was used to build the Abisko National Park in the Lapland area of Sweden (1909) and the Swiss National Park in Graubünden (1914). These served as the initial European responses to the global concept of national parks.

In Salzburg at that time, there was neither the legislative scope nor the political will to establish a national park. Only in 1920 did Austria bestow responsibility for nature conservation and thus for national parks on the federal states. This meant that the only option open to the dedicated national park pioneers was to purchase land in order to further their concept of a national park in the Hohe Tauern region. In the 1940s, this area of 1,100 ha was urgently needed in order to expand the hydroelectric power

capability at Weißsee lake and was therefore exchanged for land belonging to the Federal Forests in the Obersulzbachtal and Untersulzbachtal valleys. In the end, all of the 3,500 ha of land owned by the Nature Conservation Park foundation (VNP) became part of the National Park Hohe Tauern. In 1995, the VNP even gave its approval for the designation of the strictly protected “Inner Untersulzbachtal valley” special protection area in the Untersulzbachtal valley region.

The Nature Conservation Park association has worked tirelessly for over a century until the present day, turning the concept of a national park in the Hohe Tauern region into a reality. Throughout this period, it has always remained aware of the high significance of land ownership in terms of strategy and nature conservation policy. And not only in the Hohe Tauern region: the Lüneburger Heide, a nature conservation area south of Hamburg in Germany that is well-renowned far beyond the national borders, is also owned and managed by the VNP with great success.

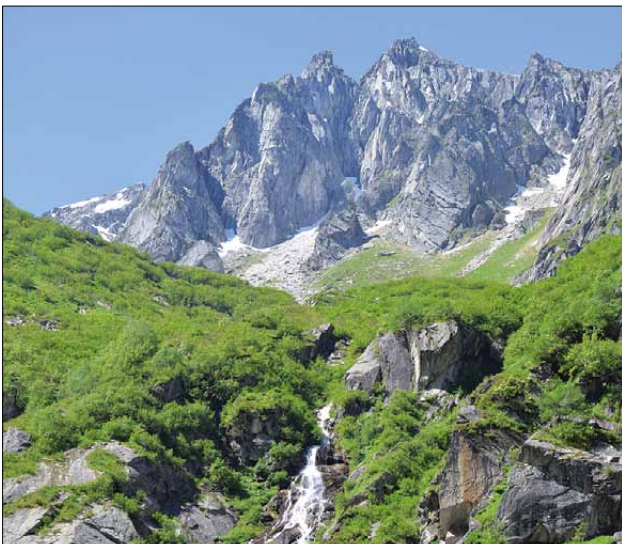
In 2014, the committees of the VNP decided to sell all the properties in the Hohe Tauern. These included a total of 3,500 ha of forest, Alpine pastures and Alpine wasteland, along with four mountain huts including the Hofrat Keller Hütte in the Obersulzbachtal valley. The Salzburg state government immediately recognised the significance of this land purchase for the Salzburg National Park Fund and entrusted the subsequent negotiations to the national park management. It then took almost a year to assess the properties, study the servitude rights, forestry rights and cadastral information dating back over 100 years in certain cases, conduct parallel negotiations with prospective private buyers of the areas that were of lesser relevance to the national park and develop the contractual basis for all property transactions.

Finally, it was necessary to engage in fair and above all transparent price negotiations with the VNP. As an NGO, the

VNP naturally bears responsibility to its many members and supporters, the national park, the public authorities and ultimately the taxpayer. The national park management made an offer of around €5.5m for 3,000 ha of land plus the Hofrat Keller Hütte and Untersulzbachhütte mountain huts, which was accepted by the VNP.

With the province of Salzburg and the federal government each providing €570,000 in addition to around €1.6m of capital and reserves belonging to the Salzburg National Park Fund, it was subsequently possible to apply for a further €2.75m of EU funds in May. This therefore coincided with the start of the new submissions period for the Austrian programme “Rural development RD 14-20”. The reserves of €1.6m are also the indirect result of returns generated in previous years via comprehensive EU co-financing initiatives for a number of projects undertaken by the national park management. Looking beyond the various figures and sums involved, this acquisition of land thus remains a large European nature conservation project – just like it was 100 years ago.

However, the acquisition of land is not the only factor that can be viewed as a European nature conservation project: this also applies to the additional opportunities that are generated as a result. In this way, preliminary work has already started on an area of wilderness according to the Wild Europe Initiative and the initial results of a comprehensive audit conducted in line with the European Wilderness Quality Standards are already available. The wilderness area, wilderness research and wilderness school are challenging projects that are being undertaken by the NP management. Their long-term, if not permanent, nature means that they require not only sovereign and commercial means of enforcement, but also ownership rights. This is the opportunity of the century that must be used to best effect – provided that the requisite approvals are granted by the EU funding programme.



Management of hoofed game in the Habachtal valley research area

In contrast to many national parks, the national park management in Hohe Tauern does not possess hunting rights. Such rights belong to the landowners, who either exercise these rights themselves or lease them to others. For this reason, the national park management leased the Habachtal valley hunting area from Österreichische Bundesforste AG in 2009, developing it into an impressive teaching and research area within a few short years. This area was again leased for nine more years at the start of the new hunting period in order to ensure that the research into hoofed game and the range of learning options and visitor activities, such as show feeding in winter, could continue to be pursued in the coming years. For the module relating to hoofed game research, a rural development project was developed and subsequently approved by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW).

The aim of this research project is to generate long-term data series and interpretations of these using the latest scientific methods in order to assist with habitat usage, population dynamics and veterinary medicine. The process of marking chamois and red deer and fitting these animals with transmitters, which began in 2013, will be continued. 72 permanent observation points have been set up to date, with systematic counts of chamois and red deer being carried out at the permanent observation points or the feeding station. Blood



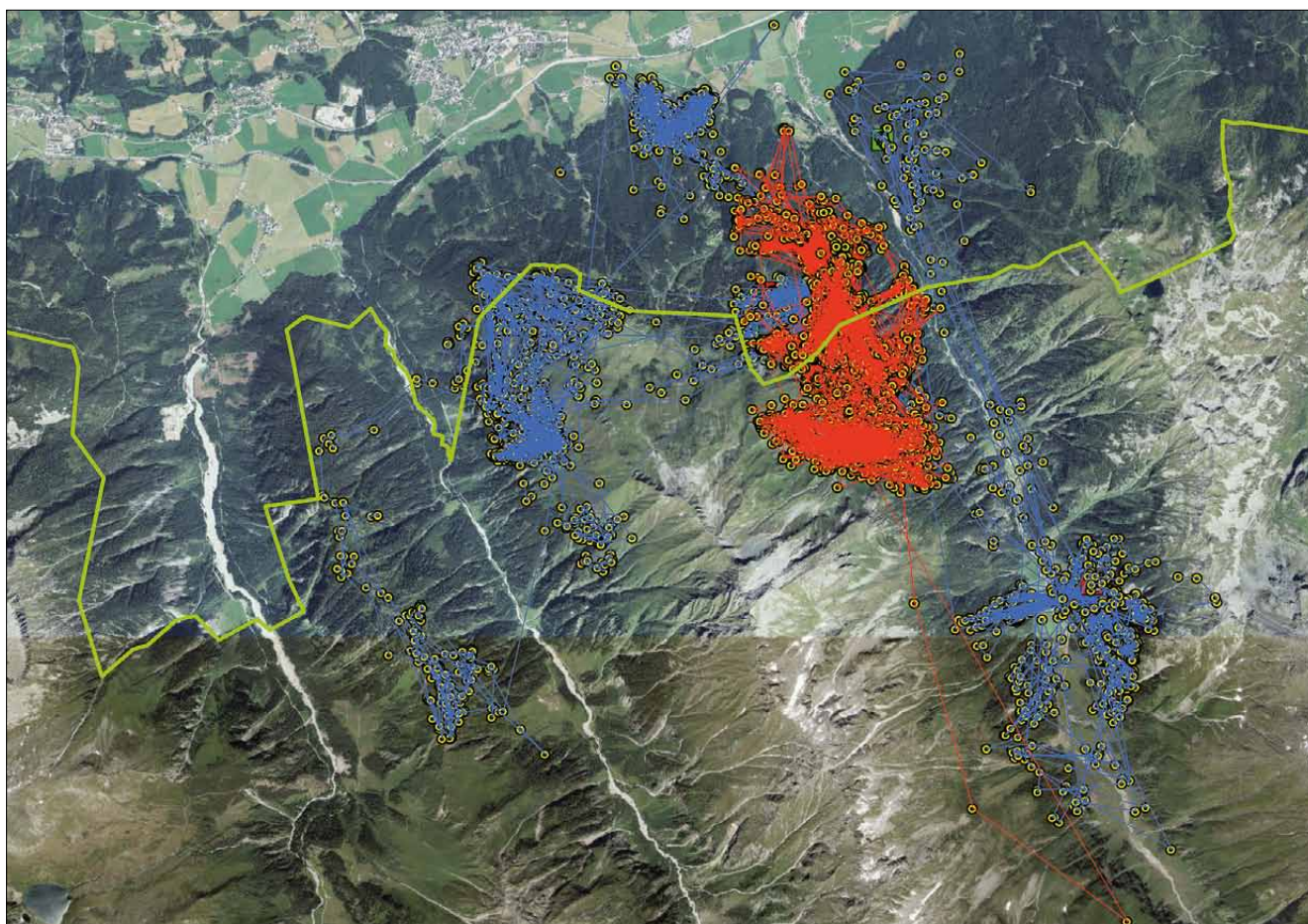
and stool samples were taken when applying markings and fitting transmitters, and these samples were also drawn from chamois and red deer that had been shot. These samples are used to analyse the blood chemistry and blood count of these animals, delivering findings relating to their condition, immune system, parasite infections, digestion, metabolism, stress hormones and antibodies for specific diseases affecting chamois. To assist with future issues concerning genetics, the DNA is isolated and stored at Laboklin for later use.

The research topics are of a highly practical nature, with many of the answers proving relevant to hunting practice in the entire Hohe Tauern region and beyond. The results are the subject of intense exchanges on a national and international level. For example, this enabled the management of the national park to introduce the park as a test region with regard to the discussions surrounding the use of lead-free rifle ammunition for hunting hoofed game. All items on the shooting list were successfully shot with lead-free ammunition and without any complications. Data sheets were filled in to document the use of lead-free ammunition in practical hunting and to provide this information to individuals performing a scientific assessment.

An issue of great significance throughout the entire area is that of habitat usage by the red deer and chamois. For this purpose, 20 red deer and six chamois have thus far been fitted with GPS-GSM transmitters and a further 19 red deer and six chamois have been given earmarks. After two years of battery life, it was time to replace the first transmitters – the collar transmitters were therefore ‘jettisoned’ for seven hinds, a stag and a chamois buck. The radio-controlled release of the magnetic connection on the collars during the show feeding also served as an attraction for visitors. Three stags, a hind, a calf and two chamois kids were subsequently fitted with new transmitters. Three red deer calves were also given earmarks. All of these



*The first chamois sera were sent to the Bolzano animal disease control institute in June, enabling an ELISA test inspection for antibodies to help fight *Sarcoptes scabiei*. However, additional samples still need to be collected in order to allow an interpretation of the results.*



Habitat usage of red deer in the Habachtal valley and the surrounding area, with positioning data from 1 January to 31 December 2016; green: border of NPHT; red: female red deer; blue: male red deer (graphic: B. HOCHWIMMER).

processes took place under veterinary supervision, with samples for additional laboratory tests and DNA samples also being taken at the same time.

	Red deer ♂	Red deer ♀
► Fitted with transmitters	4	3
► Positioning data	4,836	3,691
	Chamois ♂	Chamois ♀
► Fitted with transmitters	3	1
► Positioning data	3,932	2,164

The transmitter collars continuously provide the positions of the respective animals as measured via GPS. These are transmitted directly to the national park management by SMS, where they are stored in databases and in the geographic information system. The data relating to the spatial and chronological use of various habitats can subsequently be combined and linked to specific issues and other forms of mapping. For the 2016 report period, four stags, three hinds, three chamois bucks and a chamois doe provided a total of 14,623 items of positioning data.

The following animals have been included in the project to date:

- **Sedated red deer:**
fitted with transmitters and/or earmarks,
samples taken: 39
- **Shot red deer:**
samples taken: 46
- **Sedated chamois:**
fitted with transmitters and/or earmarks,
samples taken: 12
- **Shot chamois:**
samples taken: 14

In addition to the telemetric data, all visual observations at the 72 permanent observation points were divided up by the wildlife species in question according to gender and age before being entered into a database. This helps create a simple overview of the movements of the red deer and chamois in the area.

- Total project costs: € 324,173.20
- Financing: Rural development 2014-2020, project type 7.6.1b.

Science and Research

Ecological long-term monitoring

The monitoring of terrestrial ecosystems has been developed over the last two years in the Scientific Advisory Board under the scientific leadership of ecologists Christian Körner and Leopold Füreder. The first permanent areas at the three study sites in the Untersulzbachtal valley (Salzburg), the Seebachtal valley (Carinthia) and Innerschlöss (Tyrol) were then set up in 2016. These areas were equipped with data loggers as standard for measuring the ground temperature, visibly marked at their corners with larch stakes and measured using GPS. A weather station was also permanently installed in the Untersulzbachtal valley in order to receive the data measured on site.



Top: searching for suitable study sites in the difficult terrain of the Untersulzbachtal valley. Bottom: setting up a weather station within the permanent areas (photos: C. KÖRNER).

Freshwater monitoring

For over six years now, comprehensive work has been carried out on an initial ecological long-term observation programme at the National Park Hohe Tauern. Local conditions, environmental factors and biodiversity will be measured and documented at selected water bodies across the coming decades and beyond. These high-frequency measurements will detect changes caused by the climate and demonstrate their potential impact on the ecosystems.



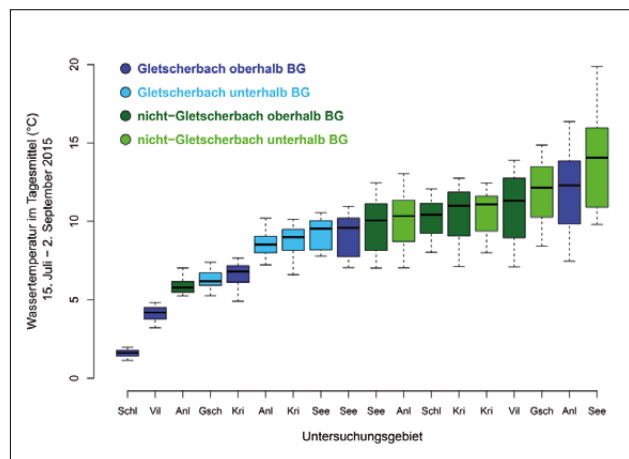
A clear water body, not supplied by a glacier, pictured as it forms a junction with a cloudy glacial stream. The living organisms on the bed of this water body are closely adapted to the respective environmental conditions, meaning that different conditions will result in different community structures and functions (photo: S. SCHÜTZ).

Based on fundamental preliminary work dating back to 1998, which has provided resources such as a water body inventory featuring a comprehensive characterisation of approximately 1,000 kilometres of flowing water bodies and around 130 lakes in the area of the national park along with a typology of Alpine flowing water bodies, Leopold Füreder – an ecologist specialising in water bodies – and his team from the University of Innsbruck have been performing intensive work in four glaciated drainage basins in the National Park Hohe Tauern. In addition to routine recording, analysis and documentation of the data, it has already been possible to generate initial longer-term results from the multi-year investigations of Alpine flowing water bodies. These results can be applied as the starting point for the long-term observation of the spatial and chronological structure and dynamics of typical water bodies located in the mountains.



Taking samples of macrozoobenthos (photo: G. NIEDRIST)

An innovative element in the freshwater monitoring at the National Park Hohe Tauern is the measurement, evaluation and interpretation of the causal relationships between hydrology/ glaciology, geomorphology and ecology/biodiversity. This integrated and interdisciplinary approach makes the process of freshwater monitoring a pioneering project, as a long-term observation of this kind has never previously been established in Austria or the Alps. There is also the potential for addressing issues in related disciplines such as glaciology and meteorology.



This box plot graphic shows which area is covered by the water temperatures measured in the streams and how these water temperatures are distributed across this area. Types of flowing water bodies located above and below the tree line (referred to as the “BG”) and featuring different water temperatures were specifically selected for the purpose of monitoring. With the help of resources such as long-term data series relating to the actual changes in the temperature conditions, it is possible to create models for predicting the type and extent of the ecological and biological consequences of climate change (graphic: L. FÜREDER).

During the set-up phase, it was observed that the process of freshwater monitoring also makes a significant contribution to biodiversity research. In this way, more than 400,000 insects and other invertebrates were collected. The occurrence and distribution of a majority of the specific taxa (coming from approximately 20 orders) is known either to an insufficient



Probe for measuring water chemistry parameters (photo: A. MÄTZLER).

extent or not at all. This long-term research programme will also break new ground with regard to the research and demarcation of the ecological needs of these mountain species.

So-called “**abiotic permanent monitoring**” provides the basic setup and consists of a high-frequency measurement of the most important environmental parameters, such as temperature conditions, water chemistry and turbidity analysis. “**Biotic permanent monitoring**” represents the real tool of this long-term monitoring. It mainly involves a comprehensive analysis of the biotic communities in the various mountain streams, which makes it possible to use the indicator function provided by these water-borne insects and other invertebrates that are closely adapted to their specific living conditions. This is primarily used to enable scientifically sound statements to be made with regard to the status and trends of the water body ecosystems as a result of climate change.

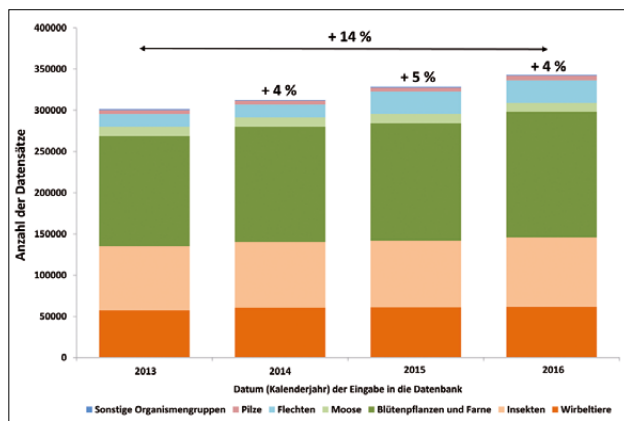
In accordance with the research goals, the process of freshwater monitoring is placed in a long-term, international context. The group of researchers at the University of Innsbruck is carrying out multiple parallel investigations in the mountain region and in the Arctic (Spitzbergen), maintaining a number of collaborations with working groups addressing similar issues (University of Oslo, University of Leeds, University of Birmingham) in Arctic/Alpine regions. Current and future academic results will be presented at international symposia on a regular basis, ensuring innovation, currentness, academic quality, interdisciplinarity and logical synergies of the investigations even in the long term. For example, the Alpine Convention has established “Assessment on the appropriate and adequate coverage of monitoring systems especially in the higher Alpine regions” as a priority for the Alpine region – emphasising the importance of freshwater monitoring for the benefit of science and research of nature conservation areas on both a national and international level.

- ▶ Total project costs: € 190,926.04
- ▶ Financing: Rural development 2014-2020, preservation of the natural heritage measure 7.6.1

Biodiversity at the National Park

'Bookkeeping' biodiversity

Since 2002 a binding joint venture between the National Park Funds of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol and the Haus der Natur in Salzburg has ensured the comprehensive documentation of all available data on biodiversity in the Hohe Tauern National Park. The biodiversity database specifically collates, standardises, administers, evaluates and supplies as required the data on the occurrence, distribution, ecology and endangered status of animal, plant and mushroom species.

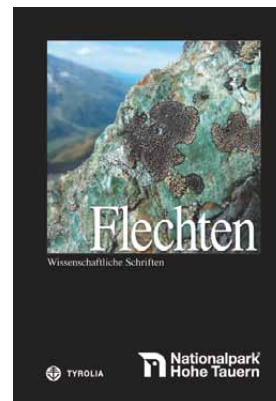


As at December 2016, 343,039 data records had been registered on 11,177 different taxa (species, subspecies, hybrids, varieties) along with 24,333 sites from 515 data sources (commissioned projects, biodiversity days, collections, publications, expert assessments) and 1,131 observers. The data pool has therefore increased by 13,773 data records year on year, an increase of around 4%. In the current contractual period from 2014–2016, the data pool has grown by a total of around 14%.

Trend in the data pool

In terms of figures, the largest increase in data volume for the period 2014–2016 was recorded for flowering plants and ferns. The 17,972 data records represented an increase of 13% compared with 2013. This growth is primarily down to the integration of lots of data from the biodiversity days, with additional aspects such as excursions by the Salzburg botanical working group also playing a part. The largest proportional increase was recorded for the lichens, with the 11,746 data records corresponding to a 75% boost. This data largely stems from the research project studying lichen biodiversity that was carried out by Salzburg lichen expert Roman Türk and has since been published.

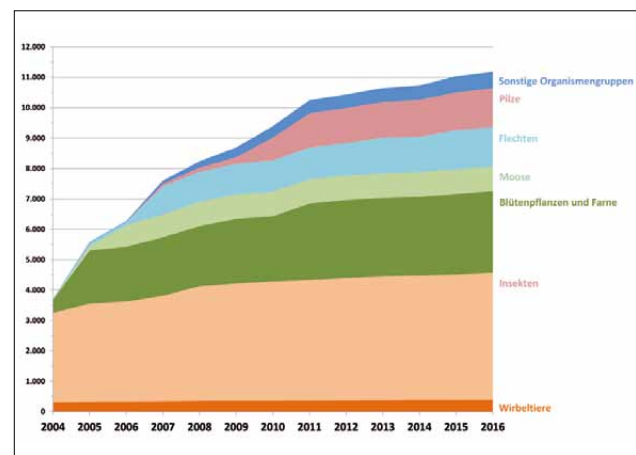
Further noteworthy proportional increases were recorded for the grasshoppers group with 29% and the mammals with 22%. In both cases, the collaboration by "Haus der Natur" on regional and supra-regional evaluations relating to these species groups also made it possible for the data to be integrated into the



TÜRK, Roman (2016):
"Nationalpark Hohe Tauern
– Flechten, Wissenschaftliche
Schriften des Nationalparks Hohe
Tauern", published by Sekretariat
des Nationalparkrates Hohe Tauern,
Verlag Tyrolia Innsbruck, 312 pages,
over 500 illustrations.

Available for €16.90 plus shipping;
to order, contact nationalpark@salzburg.gv.at or call +43 (0)6562 40849.

biodiversity database of the National Park Hohe Tauern. The increases recorded for the other groups can largely be traced back to the results from the biodiversity days.



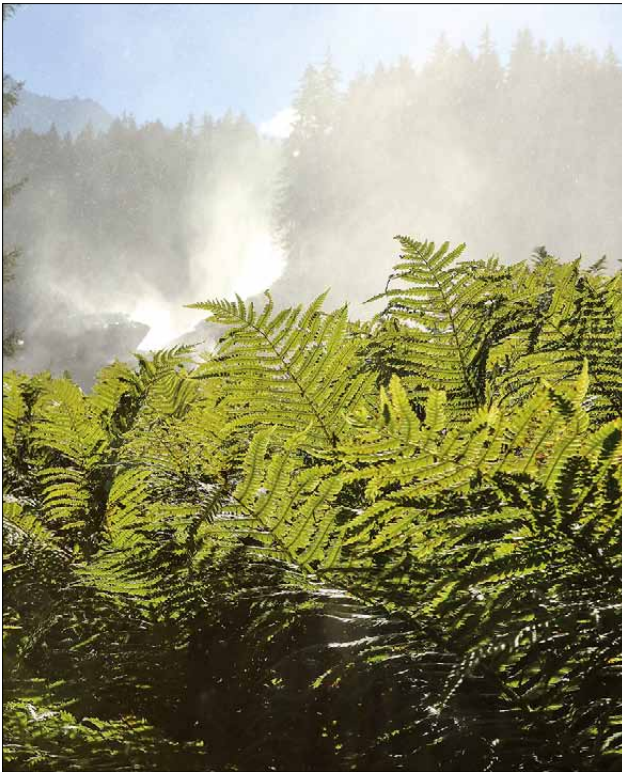
Development of the number of different taxa (species, subspecies, hybrids, varieties) by groups of organisms between 2004 and 2016 that are currently documented in the biodiversity database of the National Park Hohe Tauern.

The level of knowledge about the occurrence and distribution of species in the Hohe Tauern varies greatly from one group of organisms to the next. Birds, mammals, butterflies, grasshoppers, dragonflies and flowering plants are relatively well documented in the Hohe Tauern. By contrast, little to nothing is known about most insect groups – by far the largest group of organisms – or about invertebrates and arachnids in the protection area, and even specialists can only make assumptions about the number of species, diversity and distribution. Likewise, there is a lack of corresponding evidence and systematic increases recorded in the national park for the species in the organism groups of ferns, mosses and algae – in many cases, these can also be applied as indicators for near-natural ecosystems.

- ▶ Total project costs (2014-2016): € 120,000.00
- ▶ Financing: National Park Council

Ferns in the mist of the Krimml Waterfalls

In 2016, botanist and ecologist Oliver Stöhr from REVITAL Integrative Naturraumplanung GmbH was commissioned with the research project “Ferns in the mist – recording the pteridophyte flora of the Krimml Waterfalls”.



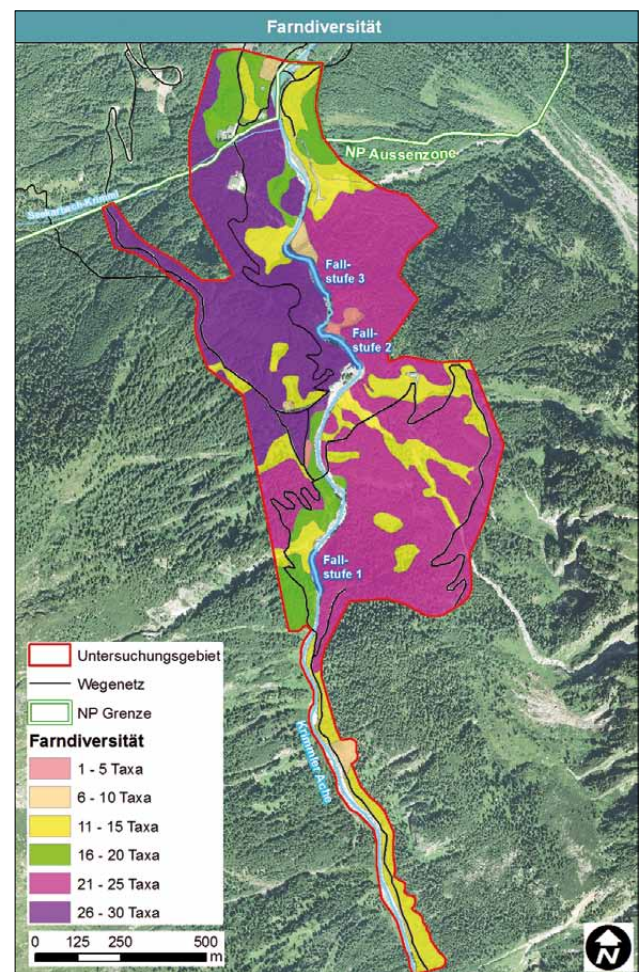
In a study site measuring around 102 ha and located in the area of the Krimml Waterfalls, all occurrences of so-called “fern-related plants” (pteridophyta) were recorded. In addition to careful data research, representative recordings of vegetation were also carried out in order to document socialisation and bonding with the biosphere on the part of these pteridophytes. The expert also held a full-day training course to provide the national park rangers with interesting general information and key knowledge concerning the ferns in the protection area.

The results

A total of 36 species and subspecies of pteridophytes were recorded at the study site. Four taxa belong to the lycopodiaceae family, one species comes from the selaginella family and six species originate from the horsetail family, with 25 taxa and five hybrids classed as actual ferns. Compared with the information from other sources, such as official biotope mapping, literature and details relating to finds from the Hohe Tauern bibliography database, the mapping process performed in 2016 not only confirmed the previously known taxa – it also enabled the discovery of a further eight taxa and hybrids.

It appears likely that this systematic recording resulted in a new find for the Eastern Alps and Austria as a whole – there had not

previously been any signs of *Dryopteris x sarvelae* in this region! The detection of *Dryopteris lacunosa*, a ‘new’ species first described in 2011, also represented a new find for the Hohe Tauern region. Oliver Stöhr was also able to provide the first evidence of the presence of *Pteridium aquilinum* subsp. *pinetorum* in the province of Salzburg. The scientist also brought to light the presence of remarkable flowering plants such as the *Carex otrubae* grass (new for the Oberpinzgau region) and *Poa chaixii* grass (new for the Pinzgau region).



Overview of biodiversity of pteridophyta in the area of the Krimml Waterfalls based on mapping performed in 2016 (map: REVITAL).

These impressive results recorded in a relatively small area of the National Park Hohe Tauern demonstrate the enormous biodiversity potential of this protection area, which is characterised by a wide variety of locations, climate conditions, altitudes and rocks concentrated within a very small area. The recording and documentation of these fundamental and irreplaceable features of the national park is by no means complete, which is why a corresponding field of activity for biodiversity research has been integrated into the management plan for 2016–2024.

Education & Visitor Information

Web info: www.hohetauern.at/de/bildung-hohetauern.html

Web info: www.hohetauern.at/de/bildung-hohetauern/bildungshaeuser.html

Web info: www.nationalparkerlebnis.at/de/



The Education & Visitor Information business area is all about publicising and conveying the following contents in a way that is accessible to all:

- ▶ the global idea of the National Park
- ▶ the significance of the Hohe Tauern National Park as a nature protection area
- ▶ the ecological connections in high mountain regions and the impact of mankind's intervention
- ▶ nature conservation as a societal responsibility

The environmental education methodology at the National Park is based on contemporary educational and didactic approaches that combine for instance the dissemination of knowledge with experience opportunities. In this way the content specific to the National Park is to be consolidated while creating awareness of a need for action.

Media:	Circulation
▶ NP Magazine, 3 issues	590,917
▶ NP Report – Ranger Rudi, 4 issues	20,000
▶ Supplement Kronen Zeitung	423,000

Visitor information:	Visitors
▶ NP outdoor visitors	2,647,938
▶ NP indoor visitors	369,101
▶ Participants in visitor programmes	12,750
Total visitors to national park	3,029,789

Education:	Students
▶ School excursions, outdoors	6,946
▶ Mobile National Park school (Waterschool, Climate School, Drinking Water Days)	4,380
▶ Guided tours of visitor facilities for schoolchildren	2,030
▶ NP workshop and Science Center	952
▶ Lectures	240
▶ Youth camps	22
▶ National Park Comes to Town	435
▶ Partner schools fête Hollersbach	1,225
▶ 42 partner schools with total number of school children	5,506
Total schoolchildren visiting national park	21,736

National Park Junior Rangers

30 pupils aged 16 or more from the Hohe Tauern National Park Region were once again given the opportunity of a holiday work placement in 2016 giving visitors first-hand information about the Hohe Tauern National Park. During the months of July, August and September the seasonal trainees are stationed at the information huts at the National Park's valley entrances, ensuring direct contact with guests and locals alike.



These Junior Rangers acquire their extensive knowledge during intensive induction courses with experienced National Park Rangers. The majority of them also benefit from their previous year's assignments. With 47 permanent members of staff, one person on alternative civilian service, and 30 seasonal trainees the Hohe Tauern National Park Salzburg is one of the region's largest employers. For a number of years now the Junior Ranger Programme has been sponsored by Sparkasse Mittersill and by the sports article manufacturer '2117 of Sweden'. In fact, the seasonal trainees are allowed to keep their '2117 of Sweden' work uniforms even after completing their practical course. Our warmest thanks to all our sponsors who supported the projects of the Salzburg National Park Fund in the Education & Visitor Information business area in 2016!

2117®
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Junior Ranger
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Hiking boots
National Park Rangers

SPARKASSE
Mittersill

National Park Junior Rangers

Kochalpin
GmbH

Snow shoes

Alternative civilian service



From May 2016 to January 2017 the team of the National Park Administration will be assisted by Gregor Entleitner, who is doing his alternative civilian service there. His field of activities will range from infrastructure maintenance to education offers. Between May 2016 and January 2017, Gregor Entleitner was also a big help to the professional hunters, particularly when it came to show feeding.

National Park Rangers



The national park rangers are the figureheads for national parks around the world. They are important ambassadors for the protection area and share their knowledge as part of the comprehensive national park education programme. They also serve as mediators between the global national park concept and the possibility of an individual experience. In this way, they delight young and old alike on excursions in the national park, visit schools throughout the province of Salzburg with the mobile climate and water school, and depict complex natural phenomena and the traditional craftsmanship of the regional cultural landscape at the Science Center and NP workshop educational institutes. The NP rangers are also actively involved in the weekly area supervision of the national park valleys and in the duties relating to the monitoring of the infrastructure that is specific to the national park.



Partner schools event

In 2016, the Salzburg national park management invited the partner schools from the national park region to the sixth communal school festival. In light of the ongoing popularity of the festival, the 2016 edition of this successful collaboration was celebrated with the schools across two days.

This year, the partner schools event took place in the national park community of Hollersbach. A total of 69 classes, comprising approximately 1,200 pupils and around 110 teachers, were able to visit a series of stations to find out lots of new information about the national park. On the premises of the bathing lake, in the NP workshop at the Klausnerhaus farmhouse and in the area of the Hollersbach herb garden, various stations dealing with a range of different topics were set up by the national park management. These stations provided the pupils with a number of opportunities to engage with topics relating to the sustainable management of nature and natural resources in a playful way using their own initiative. They were able to learn a great deal about the nature and culture of the national park.

The national park employees ran different stations dealing with a total of 11 characteristic topics that enabled the children to test or refresh their knowledge in a playful way that ensured lots of fun – whether participating in the witches’ dance, playing stream ball bowls, identifying mimed imitations of wild animals or touching deer antlers, tree fruits and animal silhouettes.

The station of the NP’s professional hunters once again proved a big hit, providing very vivid explanations with the help of a

range of exhibits that dealt with wildlife ecology in general and the animal inhabitants of the national park in particular. Rangers shared their well-founded knowledge of the weather and climate in the high mountains, as well as interesting phenomena of natural history in the protection area. The children were thrilled by presentations on topics such as the survival specialists of the animal and plant world.

It is especially important for the National Park Hohe Tauern to positively raise awareness among young people in particular with regard to the issues of natural and environmental protection, helping them see how the essential aspects are related. The participants were able to replenish their energy reserves with a healthy bite to eat, as the sponsoring partner “Ja!Natürlich” once again provided generous support to the partner schools event by supplying organic snacks.

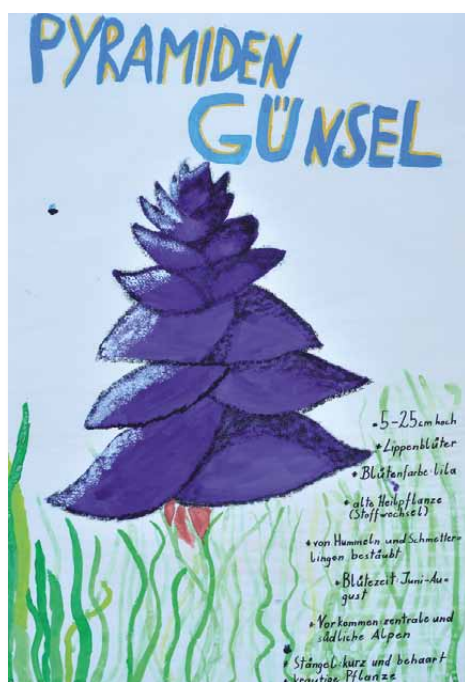


National Park Comes to Town

The National Park Hohe Tauern visited the city of Salzburg on 10 June 2016, with Schlosspark Hellbrunn providing the ideal location for this event. The collaboration with the Hellbrunn palace and park management team ensured a seamless schedule, enabling around 440 children to experience an exciting morning. This campaign aims to provide schoolchildren with a closer look at the diversity of the national park, even in the city of Salzburg.

The topics that were addressed included the correct handling of native medicinal and crop plants, the survival strategy of the arolla pine in the icy winter and the changing weather conditions in the high mountains. The children had lots of fun playing “stream ball bowls”, with the best male and female players being crowned the winners, and enjoyed the wild animal quiz that tested their sense of touch. The “stream ball bowls” game proved a real hit – the “stream balls” themselves were rocks from the stream that had been worn down into round balls over the centuries as a result of friction on the stream bed.

The sponsoring partner “Ja!Natürlich”, the biggest organic brand in Austria, once again provided a healthy snack of generous proportions. The schoolchildren were free to choose from a colourful range of fruit and vegetables along with wholegrain baked goods. By the end of the event, the children had not only gained new knowledge in relation to the National Park Hohe Tauern and its inhabitants – they were also able to take home a herbal salt or vinegar they had created themselves as well as a pine wood pendant they had personally crafted, both serving as mementos of a day packed with experiences.



Ursprung school project days

From 6 to 9 June 2016, an environment and resource management study group from the Higher Federal Institute for Agriculture in Ursprung/Elixhausen, visited the National Park Hohe Tauern. The cooperation was a result of the high level of interest that the pupils and teaching staff had with regard to the National Park Hohe Tauern and the topic of protection area. As part of a project week featuring various key topics, the pupils were able to gain an insight into the everyday working lives of the national park staff.

The “wildlife management” group spent a number of exciting days with the professional hunters from the national park in the Habachtal valley research area. They played an active role in constructing a hunting perch, discovered why hoofed game are fitted with transmitters and learned which veterinary examinations are performed and archived.

The “geology” group was accompanied by Salzburg state geologist Ludwig Fegerl. The excursion took the pupils to the Obersulzbachtal valley, where the Sattelkar landslide provided them with a close look at the consequences of melting permafrost. They subsequently visited the Hochfeld show mine to find out about the Hohe Tauern window and how the Alps were formed.

Another group dealt with the topic of the “cultural landscape”. With the NP ranger, they visited the Drechselhütte mountain hut in the Wildgerlostal valley and learned lots of important things about the arolla pine and its use in regional handcrafts. The pupils were also shown how dry stone walls were put together – these were typically formed by removing stones from the surface of the Alpine pastures in order to set the plots apart from neighbouring pastures and to restrict the movements of the grazing livestock.

The most action-packed day was had by the “glacier, climate and weather” group. Accompanied by national park mountain guide Ferdinand Rieder, the small group climbed up the Rauriser Sonnblick mountain. Once they had reached the summit, they could assist with the daily measurements performed at the Sonnblick observatory to get a look behind the scenes.

A communal hike to the Kürsingerhütte mountain hut in the Obersulzbachtal valley was scheduled for the third day of the project week. The route led the pupils up to the refuge via the glacier education trail. During the hike, the rapid decline of the Austrian glaciers was discussed – a topic that led to lively discussions. On the final day, the pupils held presentations for their colleagues to show what they had learned and experienced over the previous days.



Waterschool

The Swarovski Waterschool has been a fixture at the National Park Hohe Tauern since 2000 as part of a collaboration with the sponsor Swarovski. This offers schools the opportunity to book project experiences that focus on the topic of water and last for a number of days. This project, which is the only one of its kind in Europe, provides young people aged between 8 and 13 with a closer look at careful handling of water. A playful approach helps the young participants, the decision-makers of tomorrow, to learn more about the global importance of how we handle our water.



The content of the courses is tailored to the ages of the pupils. The use of interdisciplinary education and a variety of methods are principles of the course units, promoting creativity, a willingness to experiment and a thirst for knowledge among the schoolchildren. The course units are held indoors and also outdoors right next to the water body itself. After a few hours of classes, the group heads into the immediate surroundings of the school in order to investigate a water body. Under the guidance of a national park ranger, the children get to know the inhabitants of the local water bodies and learn how to determine water quality. Using portable binoculars, it is possible to take a microscopic look at the water-borne animals directly on site before releasing them back into their habitat. The support provided by Swarovski means that participation is free for all schoolchildren.

Climate school



The history of the earth has been marked by a series of significant changes in the climate. The changes in the global climate and their effect on humans and the environment have been one of the most prominent topics of recent decades. Even in the high mountains, the effects of global warming can be seen and felt – the retreat of the glaciers and the thawing of the permafrost soil provide visible signs of this phenomenon. The national park aims to use the education programme entitled “Verbund Climate school of the National Park Hohe Tauern” to raise awareness of sustainable climate protection among school children aged 9 to 14, with the Verbund acting as a sponsor.

The sponsor contract with the Verbund was signed again in 2016 and supports the environmental education carried out by the national park rangers with regard to the climate. Further progress was made thanks to the fact that the Verbund climate school can be booked for free, not only by schools within the NP region but also across the entire province. The Verbund climate school bears the costs for the days worked by the rangers and for the working materials used in the course of teaching.





Relaunch of the Resterhöhe

In summer 2016, the Resterhöhe national park panorama was redesigned in collaboration with the graphic design agency "Design am Berg". The panorama provides visitors with a nearly 180-degree view of the Hohe Tauern mountain landscape located opposite. The installation of the stand enables visitors to find out the names and altitudes of the imposing summits that rise up in front of them. As a result of technical problems, the original digital concept was reworked and a new analogue installation was developed.



- ▶ Total costs: € 30,000
- ▶ Financing: Salzburg National Park Fund



National park exhibitions in the Salzburg national park region:

National park exhibition:

- ▶ Smaragde und Kristalle
- ▶ Holler im Klausnerhaus
- ▶ Ecological footprint
- ▶ Resterhöhe national park panorama
- ▶ Nationalpark-Welten
- ▶ Tauernwege im Felberturm
- ▶ Gletscher-Klima-Wetter
- ▶ Nationalpark-Gallery
- ▶ Leben unter Wasser
- ▶ Könige der Lüfte
- ▶ Zwischen Himmel und Erde

NP community

- Bramberg
- Hollersbach
- Hollersbach
- Mittersill
- Mittersill
- Mittersill
- Uttendorf
- Kaprun
- Fusch
- Rauris
- Hüttschlag



Relaunch of Nassfeld education trail

The Gastein valley head is worth visiting whatever the season. In addition to the impressive landscape, Nassfeld also provides hikers with an exciting themed trail that features a number of display boards to boost knowledge of the geology and mining history of the region, the topic of “people and farming” and



- ▶ Total costs: € 25,000
- ▶ Financing: Salzburg National Park Fund

“water – the basis of life”. Visitors learn about the wild animals that live in the national park, the dwarf shrub heathlands that dominate the region, and ponds and swamps. The themed trail is divided into two parts, with an easier tour leading along the floor of the valley. The somewhat more demanding route branches off at the wildlife display board and heads along the Alpine trail on the eastern side of the valley. There is an altitude gain of around 100 metres and this route takes at least an hour longer to walk. The circuit can be completed within 2.5 to 3 hours.

The Nassfeld education trail was the result of a collaboration with the Alpenstraße Gastein. It was drafted and designed by “Design am Berg”. The content was provided by the Salzburg national park management.

The national park education trails in the Salzburg national park region are as follows:

National park education trail:

	NP community
▶ Alpine Peace Crossing	Krimml
▶ Obersulzbachtal valley glacier education trail	Neukirchen
▶ Geo-education trail	Neukirchen
▶ Emerald trail	Bramberg
▶ Educational stream trail	Hollersbach
▶ Ecological footprint	Hollersbach
▶ Glacier education trail	Uttendorf
▶ Rauriser Urwald	Rauris
▶ Könige der Lüfte	Rauris
▶ Nassfeld education trail	Gastein

Preservation of the Cultural Landscape



In the course of the settlement history of the Hohe Tauern, large areas of the natural landscape were transformed into Alpine cultural landscape. The forests, which were originally closed, were cleared for Alpine farming. This occurred both from the top down, with the natural grassy areas initially being used for grazing, and in the valleys where new grazing areas were created. As a result, the new type of cultural landscape embodied by the Alpine pastures developed with a richly ordered dovetailing of forest and grassland, along with a variety of transitional areas featuring many species of flora and fauna.

This cultural landscape, which boasts a high level of quality in terms of its ecology and scenery, was integrated into the protection concept of the national park and primarily represents the outer zone of the protection area. The practices of preserving, maintaining and shaping the cultural landscape and preserving biodiversity in this area are in the national interest.

117 Alpine pastures in the protection area were farmed in 2016, supporting 1,322 dairy cows, 5,903 non-dairy cows/calves, 365 horses and 7,739 sheep. The forage area amounted to 9,154 ha. A couple of Alpine pastures were added this year, although the areas and livestock units remained approximately the same. In the valleys, where the dairy livestock is taken in the summer months for grazing in the Alpine pastures, the areas in the valley floor and in the vicinity of the mountain huts are subject to intensive or very intensive use in terms of Alpine farming. According to the Alpine pasture usage survey of 2015, however,

only 24% of the outer zone and 15% of the core zone are used for grazing. This means that the majority of the national park area is not used for Alpine farming.

Agro-economic concepts adapt to the requirements of globalised farming. Labour-intensive and time-intensive work is no longer profitable, favourable locations are being intensified and unfavourable locations situated far away from mountain huts are being abandoned. The issues of mechanisation, reorientation and optimisation of output in agricultural production are also changing the existing nature of Alpine farming. These new challenges must be tackled in order to harmonise cutting-edge Alpine farming and the preservation of a near-natural cultural landscape including a high level of biodiversity.

Many valuable types of biotope were created as a result of traditional Alpine farming, with a large number of animal and plant species and their habitats dependent on the continuation of extensive use and maintenance. Farming must therefore be aligned with the natural conditions, adapted to the specific locations and support recycling. The preservation of the characteristic cultural landscape requires a combination of support for ecologically compatible use and targeted protection activities by means of contractual nature conservation. The reduced intensity of usage in the valley floors, the preservation and maintenance of rough pastures in the valley locations and the promotion of local livestock breeds play a special role in this regard.



The promotion of elements of the cultural landscape is highly significant with regard to the preservation of the characteristic image of the landscape and the integration of buildings that are typical of the area into the aesthetics of the landscape. In contrast to agricultural support, the Salzburg National Park Fund therefore provides support for shingled roofs even when the dimensions involved are large – with one such example being the 900 m² of roofing at the Krimmler Tauernhaus.

Landscape elements

The sustainably farmed Alpine pastures, which feature buildings typical of the cultural landscape, define the characteristic image of the landscape in the outer zone. In contrast to the cultural landscapes that have been subject to intensified usage and ecological impoverishment, these pastures largely provide intact habitats and retreats for a diverse range of flora and fauna.

The buildings, fences, stone structures and other constructions assembled by people are a key component of this landscape. They not only represent values relating to folklore and cultural history, they are also of ecological significance. These extra structures are used by animals and plants in a variety of ways and therefore also contribute to a high level of biodiversity. Species of mammals, reptiles and amphibians, together with a number of species of insects and arachnids, enjoy a suitable habitat here alongside higher plants, ferns, mosses and lichens.

Cultural landscape elements supported in 2016:

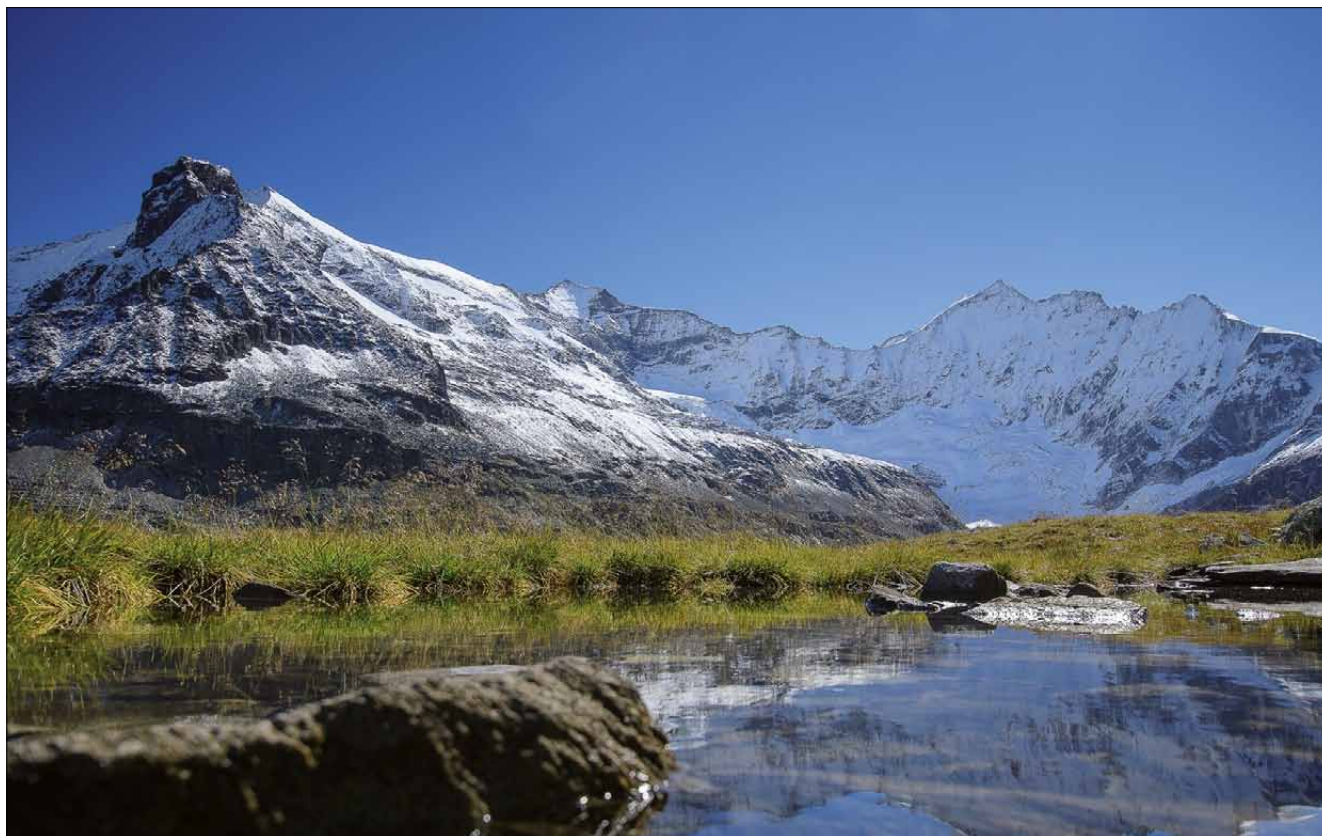
- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| ▶ Pole and Pinzgau fences, stone walls | 1,013 lin. metres |
| ▶ Larch shingle roofs | 1,249 m ² |
| ▶ Wooden roof guttering | 44 lin. metres |
| ▶ Wall shingles | 1,046 m ² |
| ▶ Wooden gates | 4 |
| ▶ Wooden water trough | 1 |

As part of the FreiRaum project in 2016, pupils from Mittersill polytechnic school and the Ursprung-based Higher Federal Institute for Agriculture worked on the construction and renovation of stone structures and Pinzgau fences in the Untersulzbachtal and Hollersbachtal valleys in the course of project days. In the Untersulzbachtal valley, two expert national park employees (qualified stonemasons) worked together with the young visitors to rebuild the stone structure on the border of the Untersulzbachtal valley special protection area that had been carried away by floodwater. This enabled them to inform the pupils about the construction, maintenance and ecological importance of these elements of the cultural landscape that are characteristic of the Hohe Tauern region.



Tourism

Web info: www.nationalpark.at



National Park Sommercard Mobil

The “National Park Sommercard Mobil” was released on 1 May 2016, providing an innovative premium card to be used while staying in the National Park Hohe Tauern holiday region. Holiday guests from the participating partner companies can use this all-inclusive card to see over 60 sights such as attractions, museums and natural spectacles for free – in addition to being able to use leisure centres, sporting facilities and a number of cable cars free of charge. The card also provides maximum mobility, entitling holders to free use of local public transport, a day ticket for the “Großglockner High Alpine Road” Adventure Worlds and a week ticket for the Gerlos Alpine Road.

The National Park Hohe Tauern is the largest national park in the Alps: it enables people to experience a unique natural landscape featuring over 300 glaciers, protected species of wild animals and botanical treasures while preserving all this for future generations. Sustainability and eco-friendliness play an important role at the National Park Hohe Tauern. The new “National Park Sommercard Mobil” was therefore released on 1 May

2016, offering free entry to over 60 attractions in the region and free participation in the national park ranger programme with over twenty hikes and excursions every week. This premium card therefore provides very special benefits when it comes to mobility.



Summer campaign 2016

Additional pooling of budget resources enabled the National Park Hohe Tauern holiday region and the SalzburgerLand Tourismusgesellschaft to collaborate on a campaign to promote the summer season among specific target groups. The key carrier media used were online, radio and print. The target markets were those of Germany and Austria, with families, leisure hikers and bikers being the target groups.

Hiking World Championship



Hiking is healthy and keeps you fit. The 14th Hiking World Championship, which was held in 2016, also represented a wonderful opportunity for tourism in the National Park Hohe Tauern holiday region. The event was attended by over 1,000 hikers from 30 countries. The Hiking World Championship was established in 2002, with hosting rights being awarded to the best European hiking destinations on an annual basis. Mittersill prevailed against strong international competition in its bid to host the 14th Hiking World Championship. Mittersill Plus GmbH and the National Park Hohe Tauern holiday region were awarded the hosting rights by the Austrian Federation of Popular Sports (ÖVV).

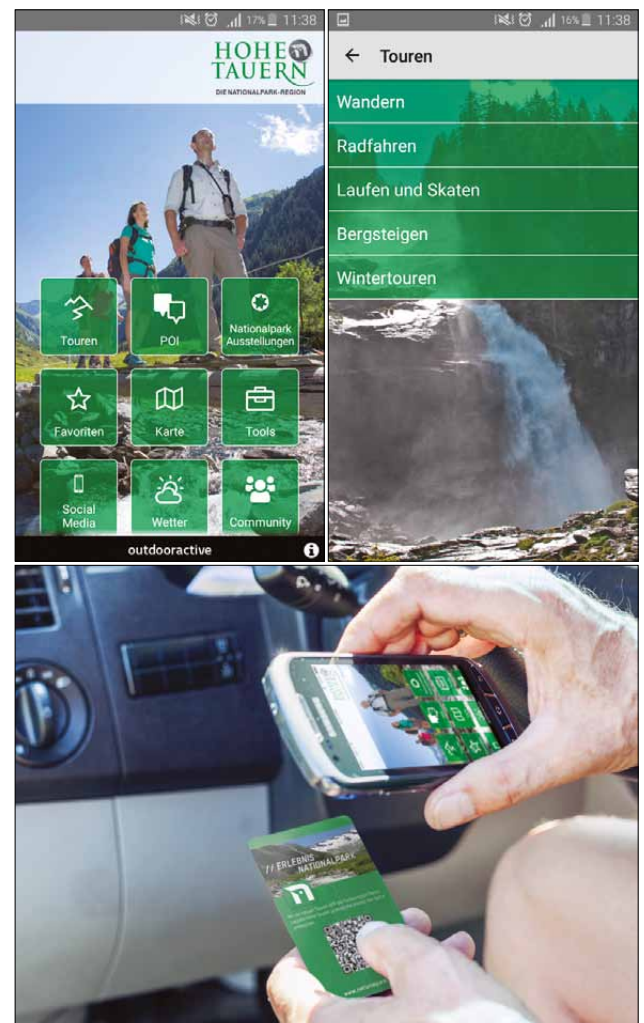
The handover of the World Championship flag also marked the start of the competition itself, during which time the organisers did everything to ensure that the Championship 2016 in

Mittersill would be an unforgettable experience for all participants – from leisure hikers to ambitious performance athletes. The Hiking World Championship is an event for all. Every day, participants departing from Mittersill were free to choose from three hiking routes that offered different challenges and featured scenic highlights, idyllic forests, ravines, mountain streams, lakes and last but not least the 3,000-metre high mountains of the National Park Hohe Tauern.

Internet and web marketing

The shared internet presence of the National Park Administration and the Holiday Region at www.nationalpark.at is characterised by a user-friendly layout and handling.

The “National Park Experience” app for communal tours has been available since summer 2016, displaying specific GPS coordinates for hikes even in offline mode and guiding visitors through the national park. In addition to the topographical hiking map of the entire holiday region (scale 1:25,000), this hiking app also features updated tours for hikers, long-distance hikers, cyclists, mountain bikers, snowshoe hikers and cross-country skiers.



National Park Region

Web info: www.nationalparkregion.at

Key aspects of climate protection

2016 was an intensive and successful year of work for the LEADER region of the National Park Hohe Tauern. More than 20 projects were submitted, with a considerable amount of subsidy funds being received by the region.

As the European funding programme for boosting rural areas, LEADER has worked closely together with the National Park Hohe Tauern from the beginning. One current project involves working with the NP management to start the “Ranger Rudi” publication, with the aim of providing interesting news from the national park specifically for a younger audience. The magazine is distributed free of charge to the 6,000 pupils of over 40 partner schools in the NP region and has been very well received. The project began in 2016 and will now run for three years.

An important issue both for the national park and for LEADER is meeting climate protection goals and recording the necessary drop in CO₂. The aim is to achieve this primarily by means of



reducing traffic and rethinking aspects of mobility. The “e-BOB” project in the forest and the “VorTEIL” project, which aims to create a model tourism region based around energy technology and innovation, are two forward-looking concepts.

The LEADER region, which is a model region for climate and energy matters alike, was under consideration as a possible region for the “VorTEIL” project and was asked to provide example ideas for all of Austria. Supported by the Austrian Institute of Technology and MODUL University Vienna, high-ranking representatives from the fields of tourism, communities, farming and traffic were invited to the National Park Centre on two afternoons to discuss measures that would be ecologically sound and positive for tourism throughout the entire region. Based on selected tourism regions, the project shall demonstrate that an ambitious vision can have a positive impact on visitors’ energy behaviour and simultaneously boost the tourism industry. There were a large number of participants who developed high-quality concepts and approaches, with the aim being to implement these ideas in the future by means of flagship projects.

The tourist resort of Wald-Königsleiten entered into the future of electric mobility with the launch of the “e-BOB” project. The project is worth millions of euros. The aim is to promote environmentally-friendly mobility in the national park community in the future through the use of electric cars and electric bikes (over 75 electric bikes and initially two BMW i3 electric cars), not only among visitors but also increasingly among the locals. They can rent the electric vehicles for an affordable price, with charging stations and special electric bike routes also available. The campaign is being continuously promoted in order to generate a focus on the topic of electric bikes over the coming year.

Association of Friends

Web info: www.tauernfreund.at

With the support of our private-sector partners, we once again completed important projects in 2016 in the areas of species protection, environmental education and the experience of nature. 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.

From the National Park's viewpoint a sponsor is not simply a financial backer: a sponsor is also a partner in a project. A sponsor provides the National Park with a link to an important part of modern-day society. The sponsor often has direct access to the National Park's target groups and can be an important multiplier. As a co-opted member in the National Park Council the Friends act as the National Park's official sponsoring body.

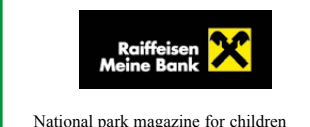
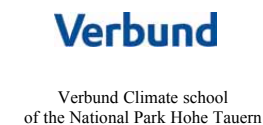
2016 Partner Meeting

On 28 and 29 June, the Tyrol national park management invited its guests to attend the annual partner meeting in the national park community of Kals. The programme of events included a visit to the Glocknerhaus to see the exhibition "Im Banne des Großglockners", a hike into the Dorfertal valley in Kals and a talk held by the internationally renowned extreme mountain climber Peter Habeler. At the general assembly held in the Schlumberger Kellerwelten on 3 November 2016, President Karl Stoss delivered an upbeat report stating that around €600,000 was available for the implementation of projects in 2016.



Many thanks ...

... to all our partners who supported our programmes and projects during 2016!



Organisation of the National Park Administration

The many tasks and duties performed by the National Park Administration require an efficient and effective organisational structure. Statutory tasks, i.e. those where the National Park administration acts as a public authority, are ideally anchored within the organisational structure of the Office of the Salzburg Provincial Government. By contrast, for the National Park Administration's core duties – from the funding of the cultural landscape and the National Park region to natural resource management, science & research, and education & visitor information – it is expedient to have a National Park Fund, with its steering the responsibility of a Board of Trustees in which the National Park Municipalities, land owners, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, and the Provincial Government are represented on an equal footing.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees held four meetings in 2016:

15 March; 14 and 30 June, special management plan meetings; 25 October

Members and substitute members of the Board of Trustees:

Deputy Governor. RÖSSLER Astrid, Chairwoman
ALTENBERGER Georg, 1st Deputy Chairman
ENZINGER Hannes, 2nd Deputy Chairman
HINTERSTOISSER Hermann
BERNINGER Ulrike-G.
LERCHBAUMER Hannes
OBERMOSER Michael
STEINER Hans
Graf von MEDEM Michael

BLAIKNER Alois
TOFERER Hans
KÖNIG Karin
COMES Hans-Peter
LOITFELLNER Peter
NINDL Peter
HUTTEGGER Rupert
SALZMANN Matthias

Government representatives:

ZACHERL-DRAXLER Valerie

EHRENFELDNER Johannes





Fund Advisory Board

The Fund Advisory Board held four meetings in 2016:

8 March; 14 and 30 June, special management plan meetings; 25 October

Members and substitute members of the Fund Advisory Board:

GRATZ Bernhard, Chairman
WIMMER Harald
GLAESER Othmar
OBERMOSER Michael
FITZGA Gunther
SCHMIDLECHNER Karl
BLATTL Rosemarie
FUCHS Rupert
GASSNER Manfred
STEINER Günter
STEINBAUER Gerhard
HUBER Otmar
GRIESSNER Sebastian
SCHARLER Anton
GEISLER Friedrich
LOHFEYER Hubert
HUFNAGL Dietmar
ATZMANSTORFER Edgar
SOMMERAUER Otmar
NINDL Peter
WEINBERGER Winfried
BURTSCHER Sophia
ZIMMERMANN Mathias
KUTIL Hans
ZANDL Josef
DÖTTERL Stefan

PONGRUBER Manfred
POSCH Wolfgang
JORDAN Karl
JÖBSTL Martina
WIMMER Josef
SCHNEGLBERGER Othmar
LEXER Thomas
SCHEINAST Josef
CZERNY Erich
VIERTLER Wolfgang
KANDLER Ernst Josef
BLAICKNER Hubert
MEILINGER Franz
KALTENHAUSER Georg
KALTENHAUSER Siegfried
RETTENEGGER Gottfried
EYMANNSBERGER Helmut
LAIREITER Christian
GÖSTL Rudolf
OBERMOSER Michael
ÜBLAGGER Hannes
SLUPETZKY Brigitte
WEINBERGER Winfried
AUGUSTIN Hannes
MEILINGER Georg
JUNKER Robert

Employees of the Salzburg National Park Administration

In 2016 47 employees and 32 seasonal trainees worked for the National Park Administration.

National Park Administration

URBAN Wolfgang, National Park Director

Natural Resource Management

LAINER Ferdinand, National Park Deputy Director

GRUBER Bruno, professional hunter

KAUFMANN Anton, professional hunter (until 31.07.2016)

LAGGER Michael, professional apprentice hunter

Science and Research

Kristina Bauch

HOCHWIMMER Barbara, Geographic Information System

BERGER Sonja, library

NEUMAYER Beatrix, veterinarian

Education & Visitor Information

PECILE Anna

RIEDER Ferdinand

KASERER Silvia

ROTH-CALLIES Nina, Haus Könige der Lüfte

KENDLBACHER Sigrid, "Zwischen Himmel und Erde" exhibition

HOFER Gerhard, show mine

HOFER Johannes, show mine

KAVELAR Christian, show mine

BREINL Christoph, show mine

BERNERT Kurt, show mine

Area Management

LERCH Stefan

MILLGRAMMER Hannes, trail worker

RENDL Norbert, trail worker

ENFELLNER Gregor, alternative civilian service (from 02.05.2016)

Legal Department

SCHWEIGER Ariane

Secretariat

EBERL Katharina

HABERL Michael (from 04.04.2016)

KALCHER Maria

MAYER Veronika

Cleaning Service

GRATZ Andrea, NPV Mittersill (until 29.02.2016)

KRÖLL Julia, NPV Mittersill (from 26.02.2016)

REITER Barbara, Haus Könige der Lüfte

National Park Rangers

ALTENBERGER Stefan

FRICKER Roland

HEIDER Ekkehard

HOFER Herbert

HÖLZL Alexander

HUTTER Martha

KENDLBACHER Robert

KIRCHNER Maria

MEIXNER Anna

MEIXNER Patrick

MUHR Hannes

NAGLMAYR Hans

RIEDER Julia

SCHMUCK Herbert (until 29.02.2016)

SCHUH Werner

STURM Gerald

National Park Seasonal Trainees

AICHNER Eva-Maria

ANHAUS Bruno

ATZMÜLLER Adriana

BRENNSTEINER Vincenth

BUCHNER Stefanie

FOISNER Vera

FUCHS Thomas

GAUTSCH Eva

GERMANN Felix

GOLLER Sebastian

GRODER Michaela

HÖLZL Christa

HOFMANN Pia

KAMERER Tobias

KATSIKIDES Andreas

KELLNER Katharina

KRÖLL Benjamin

KRÖLL Patrick

KRÖLL Thomas

LEMBERGER Norbert

LINDNER Tanja

MACHEINER Viktoria

MOSER Lena Maria

NINDL Anna

OBERAIGNER Alexandra

PORTENKIRCHNER Sarah

SCHNEIDER Niklas

SCHWEIGER Evelyn

RAINER Tanja

WALLNER Mario

WOLLMARKER Daniela

ZEHENTMAYR Lena

Outlook



How do we successfully sign off on a year at the national park? It is not simply a case of ticking off the tasks we have completed, but also about focusing on the related challenges that will have to be addressed in the year ahead. And there are plenty of challenges in store. The management plan for 2016 to 2024 that has been developed and adopted by our committees will serve as our most crucial guide in this regard from now on. The 12 strategic goals within the six business areas were used to identify 30 areas of action together with their operational goals, which will ultimately require the implementation of 193 (!) different measures.

Given the purchase of 3,000 ha of land in the Sulzbachtäler valleys in 2016, the conclusion of a very long-term contractual nature conservation agreement with Austrian Federal Forests (ÖBF) and the results of the European Wilderness Quality Standard Audit, there is nothing preventing us from designating a special protection area of wilderness in the Sulzbachtäler valleys. Wilderness research and a wilderness school are also part of the management plan and it should be possible for them to be implemented soon.

Building on the improvements we were able to achieve for the core zone within the scope of the completed contractual nature conservation agreements for 2016–2024, we also need to make improvements for the outer zone and expand the scope of the contractual nature conservation. This tool plays an especially

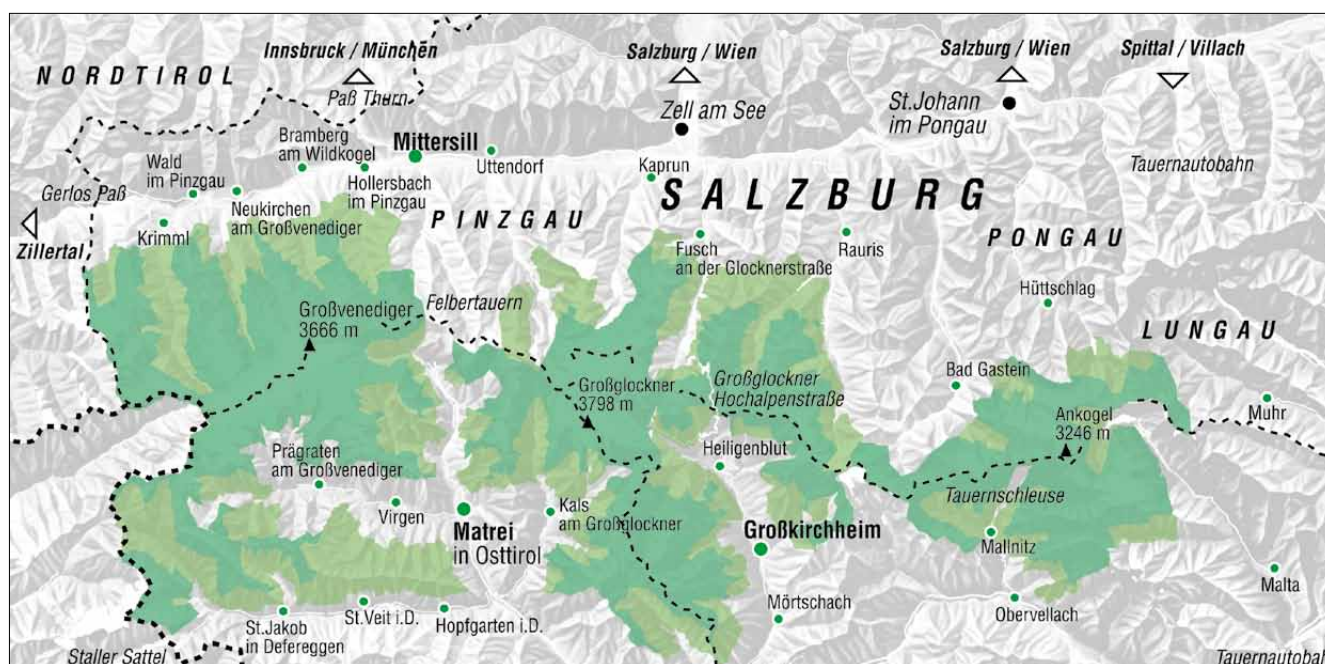
important role in our protection area, which is subject to very liberal provisions in national park legislation concerning the use of the land for farming and forestry. Its most important leverage effect for the benefit of nature is to help achieve urgently required improvements and to counteract negative development tendencies. With regard to the many land managers who assist us in implementing our goals of preserving the cultural landscape to best effect, the relevant support should be provided in an even more targeted manner.

It is not only the handling of financial resources that demands an efficient and effective approach, but also the deployment of our most valuable resource: our employees. While our education programmes continue to attract a continuous stream of participants, we need to make use of new concepts in terms of being available to our visitors. From summer 2017, our rangers will be present in all national park valleys every day. This means that they will be available not only to groups of visitors that have made a booking, but to all visitors – and nearly one million people visit our valleys. This will ensure that the national park and the national park concept will be more visible, more personal and easier to experience. In spite of the high esteem in which we hold research, environmental education, exhibitions and information events, it is ultimately the experience of nature that is and remains the greatest “asset” of a national park – to borrow an expression from the world of business.



Wolfgang URBAN,
National Park Director

Contact



National Park Administration

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Web info: www.hohetauern.at



www.nationalpark.at
www.hohetauern.at