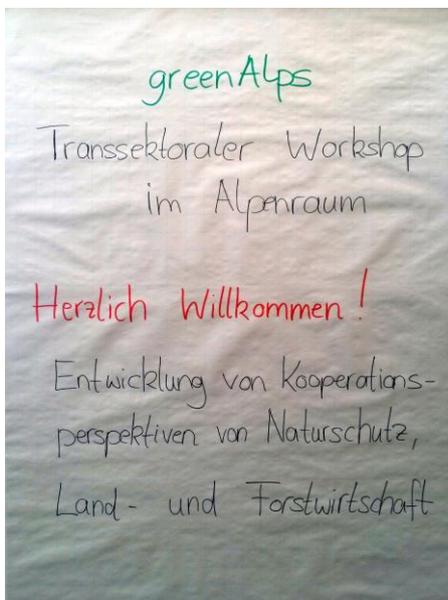


Executive Summary Report

greenAlps trans-sectoral workshop
3 June 2014, 13:00-17:00

@ Wyndham Grand Hotel, Salzburg



On 3 June 2014 the [Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology](#) of the University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, leader of work package 5 of the greenAlps project, organized a trans-ectoral workshop in Salzburg. The workshop's aim was to explore new co-operation perspectives for the next funding period of the [Alpine Space Programme](#)¹, particularly between the biodiversity conservation sector and other sectors that impact biodiversity and ecological connectivity (e.g. agriculture and forestry, spatial planning, tourism).

After a brief introduction about the goals of the [greenAlps project](#) by lead partner [Guido Plassmann](#) ([ALPARC – Alpine Network of Protected Areas](#), headquartered in France) and an overview presentation by [Martina Bach](#) ([ÖROK](#)) on the coming financing

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period 2014-2020 participants from the sectors organic agriculture, forestry, spatial planning, and nature conservation in the province of Salzburg, as well as representatives of the Alpine Space projects greenAlps and [Alpine space In Movement \(AIM\)](#) discussed the multiple challenges of landscape protection in Salzburg and other alpine regions. Mr. Manfred Siller shared information on the various nature protection activities of the BIO AUSTRIA agricultural association and enriched the discussion through insights from another sector of high importance for biodiversity.

Summary

- Ecological connectivity is a central concern for biodiversity conservation. There is, however, insufficient progress in the implementation of connectivity measures. Clear future perspectives have to be worked out, and biodiversity conservation should be prioritized. Next steps should tackle existing problems and gain the co-operation of important actors for the wider implementation of the many already existing concepts and experiences.
- The realities of spatial planning in the province of Salzburg, as in other provinces, are rather difficult. There is a need of more concrete political goals and – consequently – laws and regulations to avoid arbitrary zoning decisions (at communal and regional levels) and to prevent further fragmentation of the landscape.
- Organic agriculture is making an important contribution to biodiversity conservation and to ecological connectivity, complementary to that made by protected areas. Nevertheless there are often conflicts between nature-protection targets and the rising demand for agricultural production, and also concerning land-use on private property. Farmers view mandatory regulations as problematic, even if they share biodiversity goals. This is an area where micro-economic factors (at farm level) can be reconciled with ecological connectivity goals. The farmers' association(s) could take on an important communication role in this area.
- For ecological connectivity it is of supreme importance to obtain the agreement of private land owners to maintain green areas, but such agreement can be difficult to obtain. It is probably essential to provide (financial and other) incentives to land owners when land-use questions come into play. Private actors are key partners who have not been sufficiently involved in the Alpine Space programme.
- It is particularly difficult to obtain the co-operation of tourism in nature-conservation programming, unless projects involve concrete touristic infrastructure planning. This may be due to a lack of awareness of the importance of landscape protection for tourism. Future project work should decidedly target tourism representatives at regional and national levels. "Landscape beauty" is an ecosystem service that is seen as a "free" resource by the tourism sector. Like in the renewable energy sector, it is important to ask how use of this resource could be "compensated". (Remark: The various already running initiatives such as Alpine Pearls could be asked how they see the role of tourism in relation to ecological connectivity.)

- There are many potential synergies between biodiversity conservation, spatial planning, tourism, and agriculture, which are currently under-utilized.
- The collaboration with local actors would be a useful step for the Alpine Space Programme. EU projects are relatively abstract, local actors are not necessarily included. The inclusion would have to be promoted by national ministries or regional administrations, who in turn would have to be involved at the project development stage. The Alpine Space Programme is hardly able to consider transnational and local aspects simultaneously. The interface between these levels can only be tackled through the active involvement of administrations. Exemplary co-operation models, including outside legally binding frameworks (e.g. ÖPUL, conservation contracts, etc.) are required. Policy makers need to state clear goals (e.g. land sparing, interregionally co-ordinated planning, ecological connectivity) that local actors are expected to implement.
- The demand for transnational collaboration in the above-mentioned topics requires political support at ministerial level. It clearly relates to the macro-regional strategy and could bring new wind into transnational collaboration. Ecosystem services-based approaches can offer new impulses to emphasize the connection between resource uses and users and to jointly develop concepts.



"Wordle" of the topics discussed during the workshop

All presentations are available on greenAlps website.