



# SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ACTION PLAN

## Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau (PP03)

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CEETO - D.T2.2.3

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## Executive summary

The original natural and cultural landscape of the Lungau contrasts life in city, skyscrapers, streets and offices absolutely. Since ever the Lungau was considered as original living space with distinctive traditions and a high biodiversity. This is also a reason why the Salzburger Lungau received the award as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 2012.

Behind the award stands the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MaB) program, which focuses on a holistic regional development. It is our task to connect and link regional actors from different sectors, existing projects and initiatives and to develop our region together with the local population towards a positive and sustainable direction. The biosphere reserve is not only a tourism organisation and therefore responsible for several other fields of activity within the whole region but everything is related to each other. In the case of a sustainable tourism development, it is of importance, to connect all fields of activity, involve regional actors from agriculture, nature protection, tourism and health and take up and build on existing initiatives and projects.

Through the Interreg Project CEETO - sustainable tourism in protected areas, the chance is given, to develop strategies and projects in the sense of a sustainable and nature friendly tourism. Within the project, the tourism strategy and the action plan at hand were developed, representing also the chapters on tourism development of the new management plan of the Biosphere Reserve Management body. The action plan was developed together with regional stakeholders from different areas and on the basis of the first results of the pilot action. The guiding principle behind the strategy and plan is "Experiencing Biosphere" which addresses guests, but also the local population. 3 fields of activity will be addressed in this plan to raise the awareness for and improve the knowledge about our special living space, to contribute to the regional value added and to support a sustainable development within the region in cooperation with the local population:

**Quality improvement - evaluation, cooperation, education:** Within this field of activity, a survey and evaluation of existing offers, visitors need, expectation and satisfactions as well as a monitoring on specific hotspots (if necessary) will take place. Furthermore, a regional cooperation and network and an education and training program for locals and tourism actors should be established. Together with regional stakeholders the further development of tourism in a sustainable manner will be discussed and planed at ongoing meetings.

**Communication - accessibility and availability of information:** Within this field of activity not only the preparation of content for communication materials and channels but also the provision of appropriate information and communication channels plays an important role to ensure the dissemination of information, to raise the awareness and to improve knowledge. Furthermore, through direct contact with locals and visitors in the frame of events and guided tours, the raise of awareness, transfer of knowledge and appreciation for regional particularities can be further improved.

**Sustainable tourism offers - development and support:** Within this field of activity two things are very important. First, the support of new and innovative concepts and offers like the Biosphere digital and secondly, the development of new and innovative concepts and offers like the long-distance hiking trail to experience the biosphere reserve.



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# 1 Introduction

In 2012 the Salzburger Lungau and the Kärntner Nockberge have been awarded as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. In addition to this award as a very special living space, in which human and its responsible living, working and economic activities in harmony with nature are in the centre, the Salzburger Lungau is a model region for sustainable development. This means, that we have to sustainably develop the region as living, working and economic area together with the local population. Sustainable not only regarding ecological aspects, but also with regard to the local population and economic viability.

Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors in the biosphere reserve Salzburger Lungau. Main attraction is the natural environment. The number of guests who are searching for health, sustainable offers and authentic experiences is increasing and thus the significance of nature as main factor for tourism. To preserve a healthy environment and a healthy nature a responsible interaction is necessary and thus offers, which contribute to the raise of awareness towards the regional particularities, increase the awareness for the importance and protection of nature and provide economic incentives.

The Interreg project CEETO - Central Europe Eco-Tourism: Tolls for Nature Protection addresses the topic of sustainable tourism in protected areas and aims at the implementation of a governance system for sustainable tourism. As a partner in this project, the biosphere reserve Salzburger Lungau promotes a sustainable tourism development. Hence, framework conditions for awareness raising, knowledge transfer and visitor steering and management will be established and together with regional stakeholders the content for the regional actions as well as appropriate visitor steering measures (if needed) will be developed. The communication of the philosophy of the biosphere reserve is in the centre: living and working in harmony with nature with the aim to raise the fascination of guests and locals for nature and to promote a careful interaction with our living space, to enhance the tourism attractiveness, to contribute to the regional added value and to provide innovative impulses for a sustainable regional development.



## 2 The Salzburger Lungau

### 2.1 Geographical location

The Lungau is one of the 5 political districts of Salzburg and is congruently with the district of Tamsweg. It has 15 municipalities and is situated nearly totally at 1,000m above sea level. The lowest point is in Predlitz, with about 920m above sea level. The region is a large, inner-alpine plateau in the southeast of the province of Salzburg, which covers an area of about 1,020km<sup>2</sup> and is surrounded by mountain ranges on all sides. The Schladminger Tauern in the north, the Radstädter Tauern and Murberge in the east, the Gurktaler Alps in the south and the Hohe Tauern in the southwest. The highest mountains are the Hochgolling (2,862m) in the north-east and the Hafner (3,076) in the south-west. The region can be reached via the A10 Tauern motorway, the Murtal federal road and some smaller state roads or by the Murtalbahn, a narrow-gauge railway.

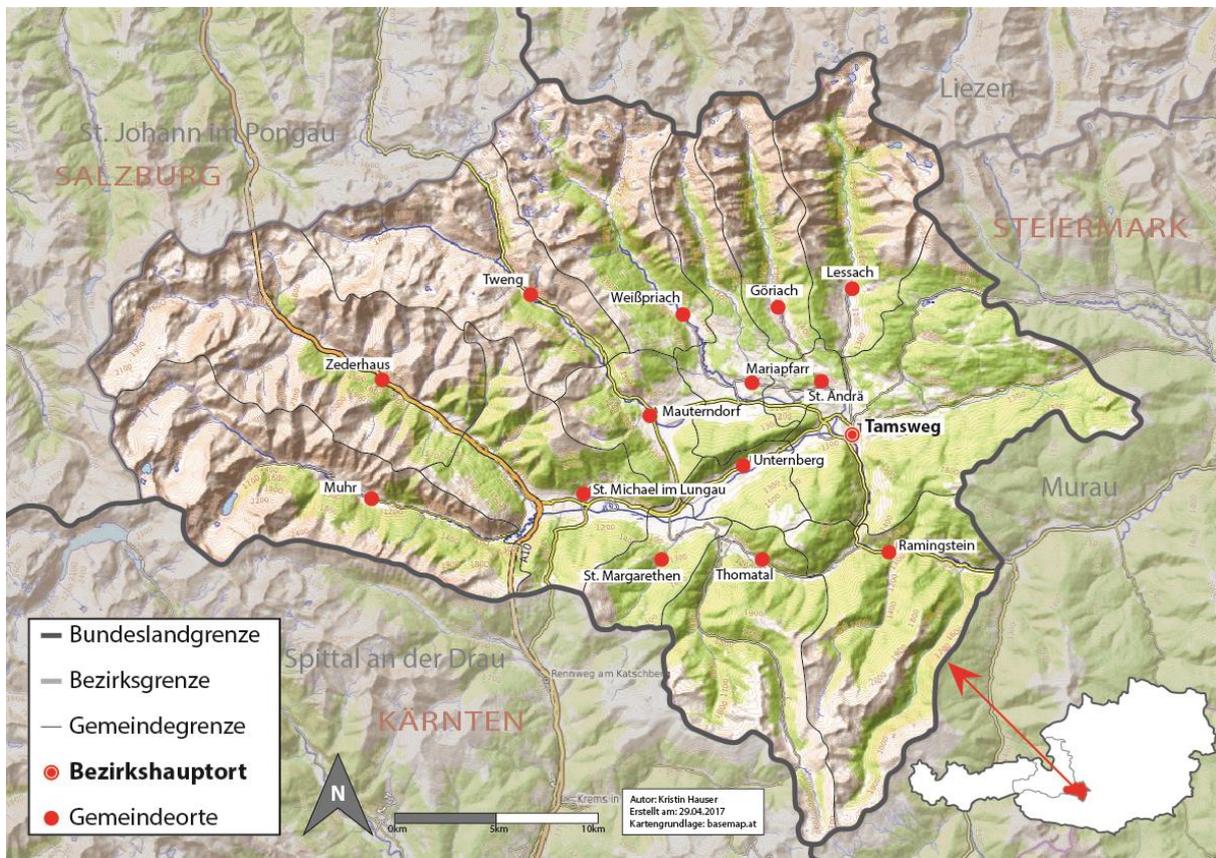


Figure 1: The Salzburger Lungau, political district Tamsweg



## 2.2 Nature & Landscape

The Salzburger Lungau covers an extremely diverse area both in cultural and natural terms. It is a representative example of inner-alpine landscapes and ways of life. The region is characterized by small-scaled and traditional structures in which mountain farming is still present. Characteristic are scattered settlements with old town centers and old farm houses. The face of villages, the settlement structure and the construction style are influenced by history. In the landscape one can find several small huts, barns, traditional farmhouses, fences, hedges as well as several small monuments.

The region is characterised by a comparatively harsh, cold climate, high altitudes and a topography that is, in part, extremely diverse. Because of the high elevation, the topography and the mountains the region is very sheltered from wind and influenced by a continental and sunny alpine climate with long winters, low precipitation rates and high temperature variations between day and night as well as between summer and winter. The typical vegetation zonation follows a pattern that is similar in all areas of the alpine region having a clear altitudinal zonation.

Human activity has changed the appearance of the landscape of the Alps enormously. Through the clearance of forest areas, alpine pastures were newly established as summer pastures for grazing livestock and already-existing open land was enlarged. These areas are extremely rich in species and, due to the harsh conditions, could basically only be farmed extensively. The wetland meadows often found in valleys are mostly farmed extensively only, as mowing on wet grounds is time-consuming and only produces very small returns. The use of heavy machinery is precluded from the start in farming these wetland meadows, and it is therefore only possible to carry out the farm-work manually. The extensive farming of grassland results in a particularly high biodiversity, as highly competitive species are regularly removed through the mowing. Thus, light-loving species have the chance to bloom. Also, the established practice of increasing yield through manuring is largely omitted on the alpine pastures, as only the dung naturally dropped by livestock on the alpine pasture is available as manure. If the traditional usage came to an end, the large number of habitats which were created solely due to the human usage along this altitudinal gradient, would disappear.

Due to the richly-structured landscape because of the land use and the wide range of altitude, from 600m to an altitude of just over 3,000m above sea level (in Lungau from 900m to more than 3,000m), the Lungau-Nockberge Region represents a large portion of the important and typical ecosystems of the Central Alps and a high degree of biodiversity. From marsh areas and alluvial forests in the valleys to cultivated meadows and woodland areas at intermediate altitudes, extending up to the glaciers of the alpine summit regions, a large proportion of the different types of vegetation native to the federal provinces can be found here. The existing protected areas provide habitats for a wide variety of plants, animals and biotopes.

The mixed forests of the montane level are composed of deciduous and coniferous trees, whereby in this region the hillsides close to the valleys are covered by high montane spruce forests, which gradually give way to larch and Swiss pine with increasing height. These mountain forests are structurally and floristically very similar to the boreal coniferous forest zone. In this zone, one often finds a multifaceted mosaic of zonal and azonal ecosystems. Thus, bogs, boulder piles, avalanche stretches and rock steps often interrupt the dense coniferous forests of the subalpine level. At the forest line, the dense forest gives way to thinned-out forest and dwarf-shrub mosaics, which are finally replaced by the alpine meadows above the tree line. These are extremely species-rich habitats, although a few species are dominant in creating structure. The final line is formed by the groups of vegetation-free, scree and rock landscapes of the subnival zone, which are dominated by just a few, highly-specialised plant species.



Particularly worthy to mention are the many wetland habitats, which are partly natural, and partly anthropogenically influenced. Above all, those portions of the Lungauer Nockberge mountains that lie on the shaded side represent some of the most bog-rich areas of the Eastern Alps, which, with communities of cotton grass and sawgrass, dwarf pine bogs and tundra landscapes as relics of the Ice Age, harbour some outstandingly important types of biotope. With the Überling mires, which have been designated a Ramsar protected area and Natura 2000 site and has a size of 117ha, the Biosphere Reserve possesses the largest contiguous complex of bogs in Austria which is of international importance. The concentration of different types of bog on the southwestern slopes of the Preber is certainly remarkable also, as they are home of very rare plants such as the spoon-leafed sundew (*Drosera intermedia*), felwort (*Swertia perennis*), cranberry (*Vaccinium microcarpum*), northern bog club moss (*Lycopodium inundatum*), dwarf birch (*Betula nana*), various rare species of moss and sedge, as well as the bog rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*).

## 2.3 Culture, economy and demography

The entire region is characterised by a wealth of cultural heritage, traditions and customs arising from its varied history in terms of utilisation and a wide range of influences as well as an active club life and social cohesion but also a wide variety of contemporary art and culture. This strong sense of cultural awareness shapes both the landscape and the local population.

At the beginning of 2018 the Lungau has had 20.344 inhabitants and a very low population density of 20 inhabitants per square kilometre. The overwhelming majority of the population is composed of local residents. As in other rural areas of Austria, two trends are also apparent in the region. Firstly, the aging population and secondly, a negative population trend due to the exodus of young people, a declining birth rate and a lack of people moving into the region. The increasing level of education and the lack of appropriate jobs play a decisive role for the emigration of young people. In the last decade, from 2008 to 2018, the Lungau registered a population decline of 3.2 %. The portion of older people (65+ years) is at the moment close to 20% and will further increase as well as the average age which is at the moment at 43,5. Another problem is the emigration of mainly young women. Therefore, the Lungau develop towards being the district with the lowest proportion of women in Salzburg (lower than 50%). Within the region, the population of centrally-situated municipalities remain stable or is even growing, while smaller municipalities in more isolated side valleys are increasingly thinning out. The demographic change and the related challenges like over aging, brain drain, etc. will be one of the core topics for the future development of the region (STATISTIC SALZBURG 2018)

Companies with more than 20 employees are especially in the timber industry, in the building construction and civil engineering as well as in the public sector. But also, successful multimedia companies, printing services providers and production companies have settled in the Lungau. Trade, tourism, commerce and craft as well as business-related services are dominated by small-structured companies (SMEs). The most important economic sectors are agriculture and tourism. Due to its situation regarding the negative population trend, its distance from other large towns and poor transport connections the region is economically disadvantaged.

## 2.4 The Biosphere Reserve

UNESCO Biosphere Reserves are protected areas that represent globally important and unique natural and cultural landscapes. They serve as model regions for sustainable development with the objective to maintain a healthy environment as livelihood for humans through a sustainable management. They are particularly valuable areas of life regarding their natural values but also regarding their local population and culture. The aim of a biosphere reserve is to ensure the preservation of the biological diversity and



the regional cultural values and the social and economic development in exemplary fashion together with the local population The four main functions of a biosphere reserve are:

1. Preservation of the biological and cultural diversity and thus of the living space
2. Establishment of a model region for sustainable development under active involvement of the local population and groups of interest
3. The use of the biosphere reserve as a place for research, monitoring, education and training with the focus on men-environment relationships
4. The improvement of the implementation of the concept i.e. through exchange and participation.

The concept of the Biosphere Reserve is based on the MAB program, which was originally established as a science program for the preservation and usage of the natural livelihood in 1970 originating from the Biosphere Reserve Conference in Paris in 1968. With the second Biosphere Reserve Conference in Sevilla in 1995 an important milestone was set for the development of the concept of the biosphere reserves: the outcome was, that protection of the biological diversity cannot be seen isolated human needs. Protection and conservation of nature cannot be seen next to each other but as a continuous process who focus on the balance between nature conservation and the preservation of the interests and aspirations of the local population. Humans should live as an integral part of biosphere reserves and operate with the aim of preserving their natural environment in the long term.

Biosphere reserves have three interrelated zones that aim to fulfil three complementary and mutually reinforcing functions:

**Core areas** comprise a strictly protected ecosystem that contributes to the conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation. In these areas human utilization is not permitted in order to allow natural processes to continue undisturbed, thereby providing scientists with models to help them understand and analyse these processes. Exceptions are ecologically friendly utilization for hunting purposes and wide-scale grazing, e.g. of sheep. The core areas in the Lungau are subject to the official protected status of different protected area categories, pursuant to the Salzburg Nature Conservation Act. These are: the core and outer zones of the Hohe Tauern National Park, a part of the landscape conservation area in the Niedere Tauern mountains, the Natura 2000 sites of Überling mires and Lake Seetalersee, Rosanin conservation area, and the Ullnwald Natural Forest Reserve.

**Buffer zones** surround or adjoin the core area and are used for activities compatible with sound ecological practices, like cattle breeding, agriculture and forestry as well as tourism and environmental education, that can reinforce scientific research, monitoring, training and education. It contains those areas in which the cultivated landscape is fairly representative. Traditional and sustainable forms of land management not only provide farmers with livelihood but are also essential for preserving the natural landscape. In the Lungau the open land is characterised by a century-long history of farming which has, over the course of time, led to the development of an extremely diverse landscape. In order to guarantee that these areas continue to be managed in an eco-friendly manner and are thereby preserved for the future, they have to remain attractive and profitable prospect for farmers. Wooded areas will also continue to be cultivated. The goal in this respect is to shift away from conventional clear-cut felling towards gentler methods, which means forestry traditions which supports a perpetual, mixed-age forest through selective harvesting, or the removal of individual trees. The mixture of different species should also be allowed to occur as far as possible through natural regeneration rather than re-afforestation. In this way, an area of woodland, appropriate to the habitat, will develop again in a few decades. The buffer zones are subject to the official protected status of different categories of protected area, pursuant to the Salzburg Nature Conservation Act, containing all landscape conservation areas of the region.



The **transition area** is the part of the reserve where the greatest activity is allowed, with the goal to promoting a sustainable development (economic and human) on economic and socio-cultural level in harmony with ecological guidelines. In Lungau, this zone covers the existing settlement areas in valley locations, the geographical centre of the region. It is the living, working and recreation area of the local population. The most important land uses and main economic activities in the transition area are agriculture, forestry and tourism, leisure and recreational use as well as settlement areas and living spaces. Here, the objective is to develop the entire region at all levels, but always from a perspective of sustainability and environmental compatibility. The aim is to counteract specific problems, such as strong trend to migrate from an area, or a fall in number of overnight stays, by means of holistic conceptual planning, thus contributing to the development of a model region. The results of this development are to be documented by means of the accompanying research and long-term monitoring, thereby providing a basis for developing a policy recommendation for regions with similar problems.

There are currently 669 Biosphere Reserves in 120 countries all over the world, three of them in Austria. In 2012 the Salzburger Lungau and the Kärntner Nockberge were awarded together as UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, the youngest and biggest one in Austria. The whole area is about 1,500km<sup>2</sup>, the Lungau part 1,020km<sup>2</sup>. The biosphere reserve management of the Lungau side is part of the Regionalverband Lungau (regional management organisation) and situated in Mauterndorf. The management is responsible for the operating activities of the Biosphere Reserve. As service provider, it offers expertise for communities, initiatives, companies, associations and individual persons, together with cooperation partners. It supports the regional marketing in the areas of Tourism and regional products, moderates forward-looking projects and provides infrastructure for research, environmental observation and education. It works intensively together with similarly oriented institutions and regions at national and international level. It also serves as information platform for the steering committee and the board, represented as a co-opted member and with no voting rights. Here the management has only a consulting function.

The management serves within the region as hub between the tasks of environmental conservation, awareness raising, regional development, social aspects, marketing and research. Beside the assurance of the required coordination and information the management also deals with the implementation of specific projects and the associated public relation. The involvement of existing structures and the cooperation with regional, national and international organisations aims for synergies. From the beginning on a close link with the state and private nature and environment bodies, tourism, agriculture, economy and social institutions is foreseen. The Biosphere Reserve Management is involved in the development of new products and services (e.g. nature experiences, agricultural and commercial products, etc.).



## 3 Tourism in the Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau

### 3.1 Key facts of tourism in the Lungau

Given the existing features of the natural landscape, tourism and agriculture constitute the most important sectors for the biosphere reserve, whilst industry is of little significance. The tourism sector represents one of the central, economic sectors of the region. Concerning the overnight-stays, the focal communities are Tweng and St. Michael, followed by Mauterndorf and Mariapfarr (Table 1). In total, the share of the tourism in Lungau is only 5% of the total tourism in the state of Salzburg (TOURISM STATISTICS LAND SALZBURG, 2018). A glance at the statistics shows an increase of the overnight-stays, mainly in summer, but it also shows, that the winter tourism is still dominating with almost 2/3 of all overnight stays (Table 2).

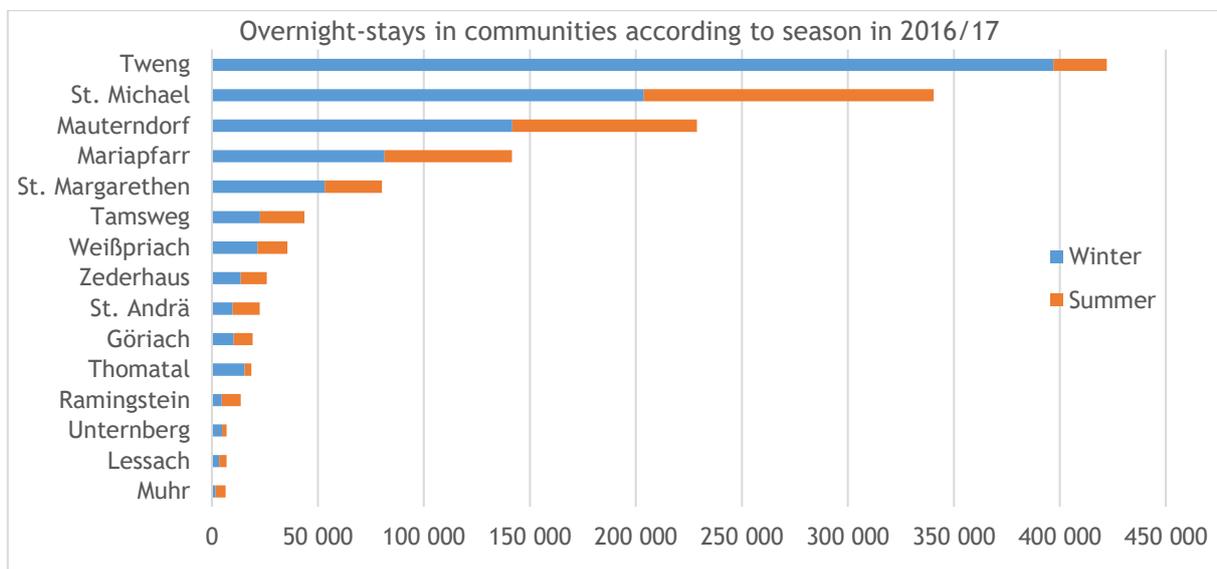


Table 1: Overnight stays in communities according to season 2016/17, Source: Tourism statistics Land Salzburg, 2018

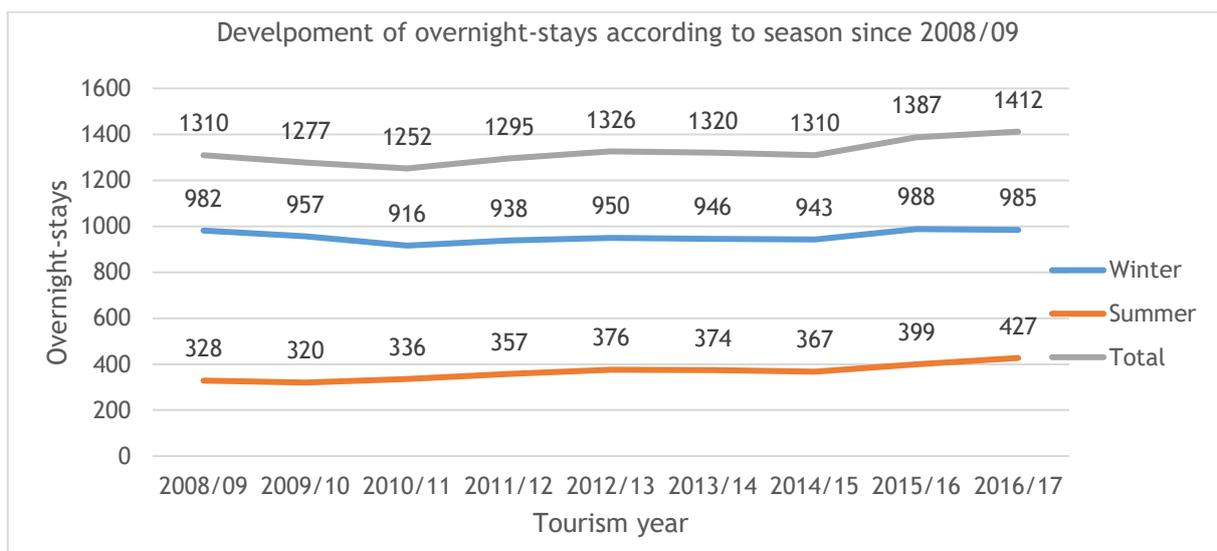


Table 2: Development of overnight stays 2008-2017, Source: Tourism statistics Land Salzburg



Within the region, in most of the communities the winter tourism is predominating, only in St. Andrä, Ramingstein and Muhr the summer season is prevailing (Table 3). This shows, that, even though overnight-stays were increasing in the last years, in the winter season as well as in the summer season, the summer season is still clearly less important at the moment.

| Community       | Winter 16/17 | Summer 2017 | Total   |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------|---------|
| Tweng           | 397.029      | 25.154      | 422.183 |
| St. Michael     | 203.800      | 136.677     | 340.477 |
| Mauterndorf     | 141.743      | 87.100      | 228.843 |
| Mariapfarr      | 81.521       | 60.003      | 141.524 |
| St. Margarethen | 53.246       | 27.061      | 80.307  |
| Tamsweg         | 22.756       | 20.830      | 43.586  |
| Weißpriach      | 21.511       | 14.070      | 35.581  |
| Zederhaus       | 13.637       | 12.241      | 25.878  |
| St. Andrä       | 9.872        | 12.691      | 22.563  |
| Göriach         | 10.208       | 9.055       | 19.263  |
| Thomatal        | 15.387       | 3.308       | 18.695  |
| Ramingstein     | 4.601        | 9.021       | 13.622  |
| Unternberg      | 4.742        | 2.223       | 6.965   |
| Lessach         | 3.485        | 3.451       | 6.936   |
| Muhr            | 1.806        | 4.614       | 6.420   |

Table 3: Overnight stays tourism year 2016/17, Source: Tourism statistics Land Salzburg

Regarding the accommodations, holiday apartments and private accommodations dominate with 47.4% of the total accommodation offer in comparison to hotels with account for 33.5% and other accommodations accounting for 19,1%. Concerning the bed occupancy, the Lungau is ranked with 19% (12,833 beds) on the last place in summer tourism and on the third place in winter tourism 2015/16 with 37% (15,664 beds) compared to the statistics of the other political districts within the federal state of Salzburg. The average length of stay is at 4.3 days (2016/17) but there is an increasing trend towards shorter stays.



### 3.2 Existing touristic offers and infrastructures

The basis for tourism in the Lungau is its natural and cultural landscape, its cultural building heritage as well as the regional culture and the extensive sports and leisure infrastructure. Lungau comprises parts of considerable tourist significance and appeal as well as some “under-developed” parts in terms of tourism. The most important regions are the ski regions Fanningberg, Grosseck-Speiereck and Katschberg-Aineck. In addition to skiing, there are several other popular activities in winter like tobogganing, ice-skating, horse-drawn sleigh rides, as well as ski tours and snowshoe excursions. During winter the typical Austrian advent markets are a major attraction for visitors. Basis for summer tourism are the vast network of hiking trails and mountain bike routes. The activities include also horse-riding excursions, fishing, paragliding, archery and a wide range of leisure activities.

### 3.3 Organization of tourism

The “Ferienregion Lungau” is the tourism umbrella organisation and responsible for the general marketing of the whole region. Additionally, there are 12 local tourism boards which are responsible for the guest information and the development of touristic products (Figure 2).

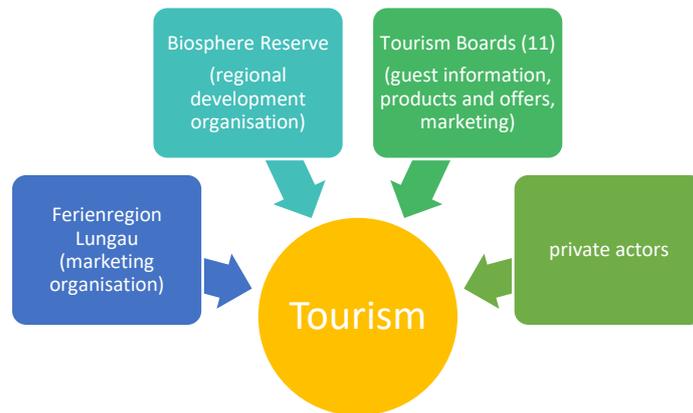


Figure 2: Organisations working on tourism development

The management body of the biosphere reserve supports the development of the tourism sector under consideration of the concept of a biosphere reserve. This means a tourism development under consideration of all fields of activity, at all levels and along the entire regional tourism value chain. The fields of activity are considered the main strategic fields of the BSR that the management strives to develop and support. Consequently, the fields of activity define the thematic scope of work of the biosphere reserve management.

Figure 3 shows how

- the different fields of activity of the Biosphere Reserve Management influence the key activity field “tourism” of the BSR (basis for tourism-related activities of the BSR),
- in which way the management body strives to support the tourism development (development, support, specific measures)
- and how the activities of the management body in the field of “tourism” impact on the other fields activity again

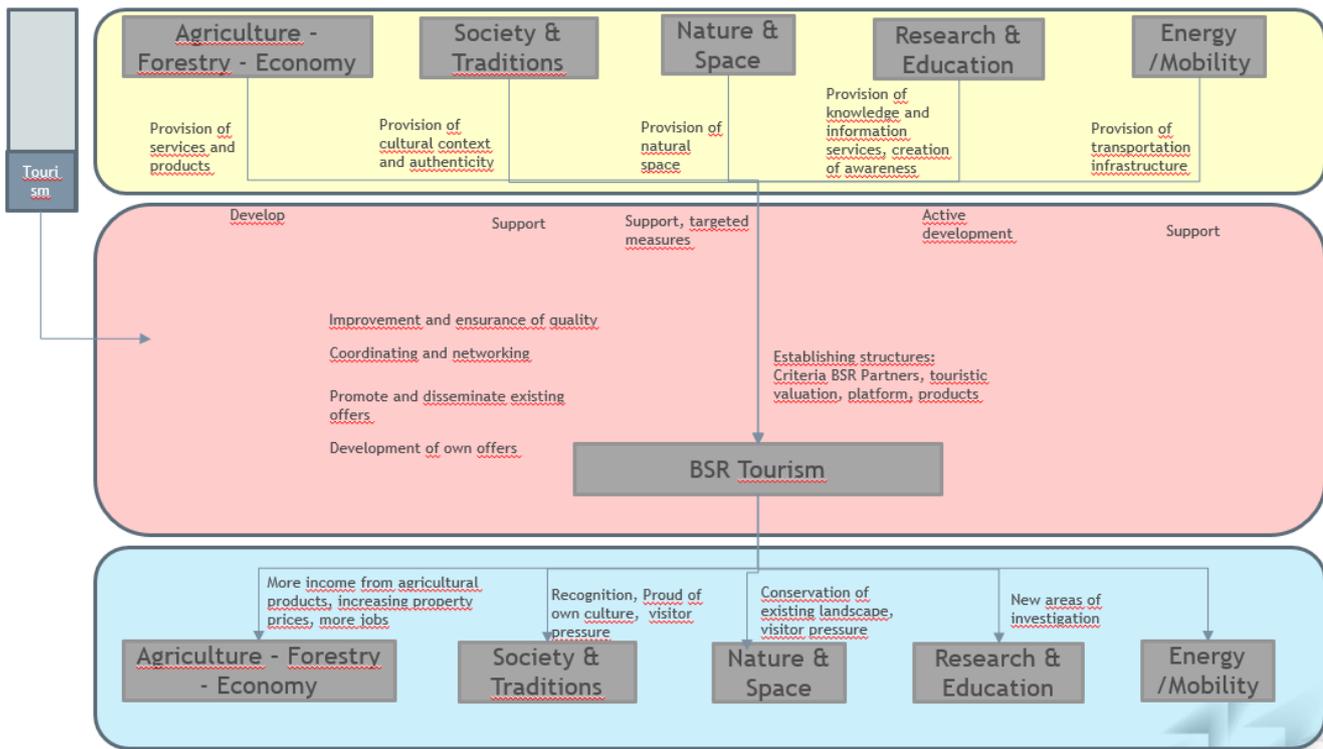


Figure 3: Tourism as field of activity of the biosphere reserve management

The tasks of the management body in terms of tourism development can be summarized as follows:

- Development and support of projects/offers/products which comply with the understanding of tourism of the Biosphere Reserve (e.g. soft, sustainable, near natural)
- Support of production, development and implementation of models and solutions to foster a growing sense of awareness and to smooth out potential conflicts between the interested parties
- Networking, enhance cooperation, bundling resources and make “things” visible, to promote tourism, as part of the concept of interdisciplinary partnership, as a driving force for the region’s entire economic sector.

### 3.4 Challenges and opportunities

The competition in alpine tourism destinations is very tough. General infrastructure, standard tourism offers and price is not enough anymore to distinguish from other destination. Unique features that follow social trends are of increasing importance. The award as Biosphere Reserve offers a new chance for the tourism destination Salzburger Lungau to distinguish itself from other alpine destinations and to position itself. This label enhances the values of the region like its naturalness, genuineness, living traditions and customs, authenticity and biodiversity. In the Lungau one can find traditional landscape, clear water, healthy air and starry nights, a high hospitality and regional products and will be culinary spoiled with regional specialties. But it is also essential, that the destination itself as well as the tourism providers are aware of these values, to communicate those accordingly and to proudly show it to the world.

The diverse structure and scenic beauty of the region are the main attractions for visitors from all over the world. This national and international interest in the distinctive cultural and natural landscape features constitutes a main economic mainstay of the region. The globally-increasing demand for ecologically-sustainable leisure time facilities, the chance to experience unspoilt nature and social trends



like sustainability (ecologically, economically and social justice), authenticity (avoidance of artificial worlds), fascination of nature (peace, recreation and enrichment of life) and re-grounding (down-to-earth, reduction to the essential) gives big opportunities for the region a model area for sustainable tourism, while at the same time conserving its characteristic regional features.

These include:

- The long historical tradition of land cultivation in the Niedere Tauern mountains and the Nockberge mountains
- Traditional farming methods in agriculture and forestry in the valleys
- Alpine pasture farming as a distinctive feature
- High potential demand for the wide range of typical regional products
- An extremely multifarious mosaic of pristine nature and a cultural landscape shaped by human usage
- Agricultural areas structured in very small units
- Numerous landscape elements
- Great potential for recreation and leisure time usage

The current trends and the region's favorable location as a tourist area offers a range of opportunities for the development of "soft" tourism and in this sense for the whole region.

Tourism development also throws up the question of an intelligent and prudent visitor management. Occasionally, conflicts already arise between visitors, nature conservation interests and usage (especially hunting). Therefore, there is a need of the development of exemplary solutions.



## 4 Development of the Strategy

The INTERREG CEETO project is implemented jointly by the Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau and the Ferienregion Lungau. The guiding topic of the Interreg Project as well as of the sustainable tourism strategy is Experiencing Biosphere. The elaboration of the strategy and action plan as well as the implementation of selected actions is funded within CEETO. The Action Plan for CEETO is valid for a five-year period, but it will be integrated into the Management Plan of the BSR, which is valid for a ten-year period.

This strategy serves as a main instrument for the management of the Biosphere Reserves. Actions are coordinated with or implemented jointly mainly with the Ferienregion Lungau as well as with regional stakeholders. Thus, this strategy forms the main element of the 10-year management plan of the Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau. Thus, this strategy will be presented to relevant stakeholders and be subject to endorsement by the regional biosphere reserve steering committee.

The development of the strategy and action plan at hand was initiated by the CEETO project. Objectives and actions were developed and are partly implemented within the project. The results build on the results elaborated in a participatory process in summer 2018, on existing strategies, plans and experiences of regional tourism actors (particularly Ferienregion and BSR management) as well as on the European Charta for sustainable Tourism.

Within the frame of two workshops the following issues were addressed:

- Participatory mapping of the tourism infrastructure
- Development and agreement on a common vision for sustainable tourism
- Discussion and agreement on pilot action and further actions for the action plan
- Discussion on implementation aspects (responsibilities and resources)

### 4.1 Participatory mapping

Within the frame of a stakeholder workshop, a participatory mapping process was carried out to identify:

- Attractive areas worth being protected
- Vulnerable areas with (high) visitor pressure
- Main tourism flows and routes

The results of this process provide a good overview of the main hotspots and challenges for visitor management and tourism development processes (Figure 4). The map indicates a large number of natural assets to be visited. The main visitor flows are directed towards the area of the Preber, into Weißpriach and Rieding Valleys and to the mountain areas of the Großeck-Speiereck and Katschberg-Aineck incl. Gontal.

In winter, ski touring in the Großkessel and Königalm area in the Rieding valley, in the Preber area (especially traffic), in the Gontal and around the Kesselspitz (Tweng) causes some conflicts with hunters and existing wildlife.

In summer, particularly, the Preber area and the Rieding Valley, the national park community Muhr, the Gontal as well as Weißpriach and Göriach receive large numbers of visitor.



Furthermore, areas were identified, that already have high visitor numbers, but still have capacities to receive more visitors: Großeck-Speiereck, Katschberg, Fanningberg, Outdoor Park Mariapfarr (Nessiteich). These areas were identified as buffer areas for dealing with increasing visitor pressure as they have already appropriate infrastructures.

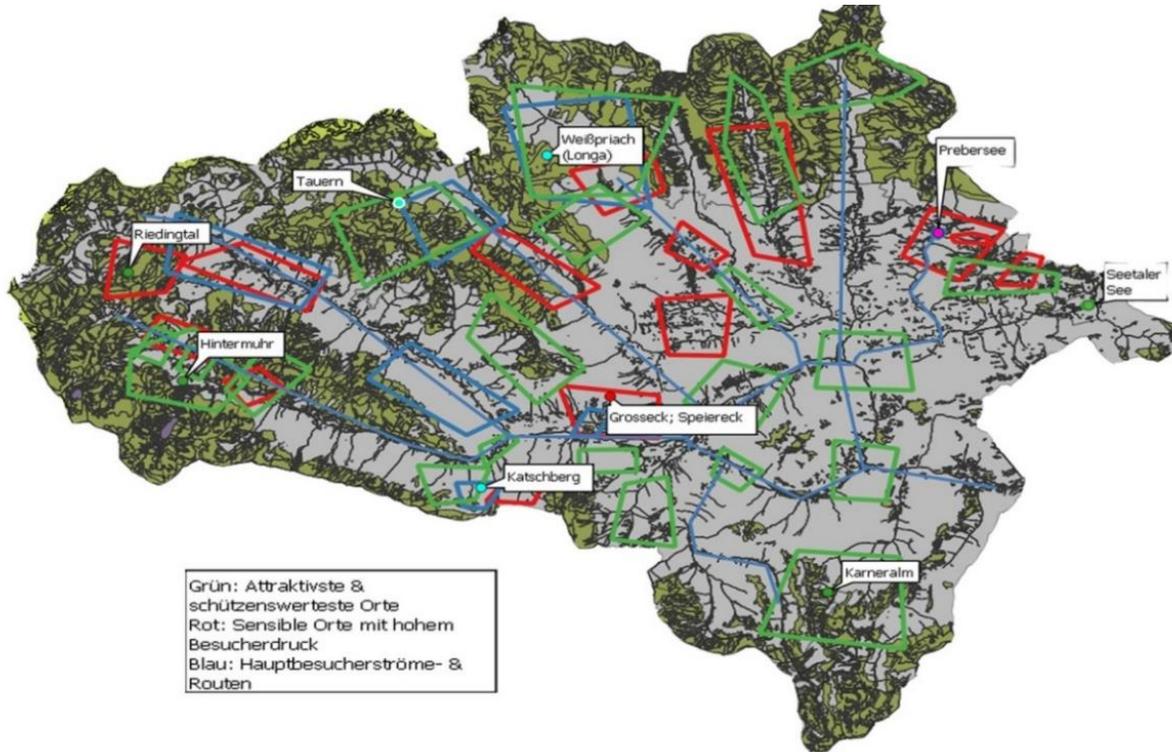


Figure 4: Map with results of the participatory mapping process

## 4.2 Development and agreement on a common vision for sustainable tourism

In this process, stakeholders expressed their vision by concentrating on a headline they would like to read in 10 years from now showing a clear common picture (Figure 5):

*In 2028, the Lungau reconciles living quality for local residents with preservation of its natural assets whilst having become a prime nature-based tourism region in central Europe. Tourism is a major source of income for different economic sectors. Regional value chains are well-functioning and provide authentic visitor experiences and products. The region has become a hotspot for high-quality, close to nature tourism and has an appropriate public transport system.*

(Synthesis of the headlines of the future)

Regarding the organization of tourism, there is a clear vision of close cooperation of regional stakeholders, tourism providers and the region with the Biosphere Reserve along relevant economic value chains. They identify with the biosphere reserve. The biosphere reserve has become a brand that stands for sustainable and high-quality tourism in Lungau.



For all stakeholders it is important to keep in mind, the headline and the vision and how they contribute to the achievement of this vision.



Figure 5: Results of defining a common vision

### 4.3 Pilot Action: Visitor management and monitoring in the Preber area

Subsequent to the workshop on the spot with regional stakeholders, it was agreed to start with the “hotspot” area Preber. The area around the Lake is a popular destination for locals and guests in summer as well as in winter. Therefore, a visitor survey will be conducted in summer 2018 and will be repeated in summer 2019 with the aim to evaluate the effects of the taken measures. Target group of the survey are visitors, which means locals as well as tourists. The pilot action can be seen as some kind of startup action to 1) improve the situation in a specific area and 2) get more information about the awareness of visitors regarding the biosphere reserve. The results from summer 2018 will also be considered in the development of further actions within the action plan and the further actions shall improve the results of the follow up survey in summer 2019.

#### 4.3.1 The specific situation of the Preber area

The huge number of visitors causes some problems, but predominantly the traffic situation plays a crucial role, mainly in the summertime. Most of the visitors arrive by car. There are 3 parking lots but, on some days, additional cars are parking all along the road. A public transport opportunity is currently being offered but should be improved, given this parking situation. The area has numerous entrances and the street is an official state road, so many cars are just passing by on their way from Salzburg to Styria or vice versa and therefore it is not possible to close the road. The road is public and access thus cannot be changed or limited. A local association, Team Preber, is taking care of the area and works on the improvement of the visitor management. The results of the survey will be provided to the Team Preber and together appropriate measures will be developed, to improve the situation in this area through an e.g. appropriate parking management system, improvement or adaption of the public transport offers by



integrating visitors needs and elaboration of information materials (brochures and information boards) about the area and sustainable arrival possibilities to promote the use of public transport offers.

#### Objective

Improvement of the parking situation in this area (measures will be developed together with the Team Preber)

### 4.3.2 The general knowledge and awareness about the biosphere reserve

For the management body, it is important, to get more information about the current level of knowledge of visitors about the biosphere reserve in general. Therefore, the survey in this area will be also used, to get more information about that. The results of this part of the survey will serve as an additional information for the development of the actions within this action plan, to improve the knowledge and awareness of visitors regarding the whole biosphere reserve and monitor the development of these aspects.

#### Objective

Improvement of the awareness for and the knowledge about the biosphere reserve (measures will be developed together with regional stakeholders, e.g. sensitization, appropriate offers, etc.)

### 4.3.3 The Survey

There are two main data sources for monitoring the visitor impact in the specific case

1. Number of persons using the public transport offer (number provided by the public transport service provider)
2. Satisfaction/ willingness of visitors to use public transport system (numbers collected by individual interviews carried out in summer 2018 and 2019)

For point two the following questions will be included

1. Do visitors know that they are in a biosphere reserve?
2. How well do they feel informed about it?
3. What do they believe a biosphere reserve is?

Methodologically, employees of the biosphere reserve management body will collect standardized data from randomly selected visitors of the area on preselected days. A total of 150 interviews should allow to deduct information about:

- Causes for use or non-use of public transport system
- Willingness to use public transport system
- Activities in the area
- Type and motivation of visitors
- Day visitors or overnight visitors
- Socio-economic characteristics
- Awareness and knowledge about the biosphere reserve



The questionnaire will be brief (approx. 5-10 min per interview). Up to 30 interviews per day are realistic, leading to 7 field days. Field day characteristic: sunny day, preferably at least 1 Saturday and 1 Sunday where most visitors show up. These also show different behaviour than tourists that stay longer.

#### Expected outcome (Indicators)

- The number of visitors using the public transport system is increasing by 10% until August/September 2019
- Number of people who feel very well to well informed about the biosphere reserve is increasing by 20% until August/September 2019

#### 4.3.4 First results of the pilot action

The following part shows the results of the survey in summer 2018, the results from the one in 2019 and the comparison of the two surveys will be added after conduction, to show the development and the effects of the actions, as described under 5.4.2. for the specific situation and in chapter 6 for the general awareness and knowledge about the biosphere reserve.

##### a) Facts about the conduction of the survey

From the 21st of August and the 12<sup>th</sup> of September, a visitor survey regarding the recreational use and mobility in the Preber area was conducted. In total 149 persons were interviewed. The survey aimed at the activities and the mobility behaviour of visitors. The survey occurred through standardized questionnaires in the frame of the Central Europe Eco Tourism Interreg project. The project addresses visitor pressure and tourism in protected areas. The Preber has a huge number of visitors and park space problems. There is already a public transport system offer, but this is little used and didn't solve the parking situation. Through this survey, the current situation and possible solutions should be outlined. Furthermore, the survey aimed at ascertain the current state of knowledge of the visitors about the biosphere reserve in general to elaborate and implement specific measures to raise the awareness.

##### b) Analysis of Results - Visitor management and traffic in the Preber Area

44% of the 149 interviewees were female, 56% male. Nearly the half was between 36 and 60 years old. 30% were above 61, 32% beyond 35. The visitors of the area are rather older ones and are mostly on the way with their partners (30%) or with their family (44%). Nearly 70% are visiting this area more than once a time per year, about a third visited the area the first time. The number of vacationers is relatively high (60%), daily guests and locals account each 20% of the interviewees. One third came from foreign countries (mainly Germany), the rest from Austria (20%), Lungau inkl. federal state Salzburg (30%) and Styria (10%).

Main reason for the visit of this area is the circular trail around the lake, the visit of the Ludlalm is on the second place (Figure 7).

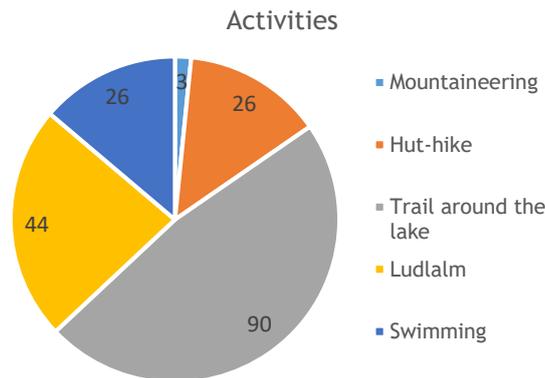


Figure 6: Reasons for visiting the Preber area

The majority of the visitors comes from the Lungau side (89%) and predominantly with the private car (93%). Only 6 persons used the bus. The main reasons for not using the bus are flexibility or emergency cases of families, transit, low frequency of the bus (Figure 8). For Lungau people it is not attractive to drive by car to the bus station and then by bus to the area. 42% cannot imagine to use the bus anyway.

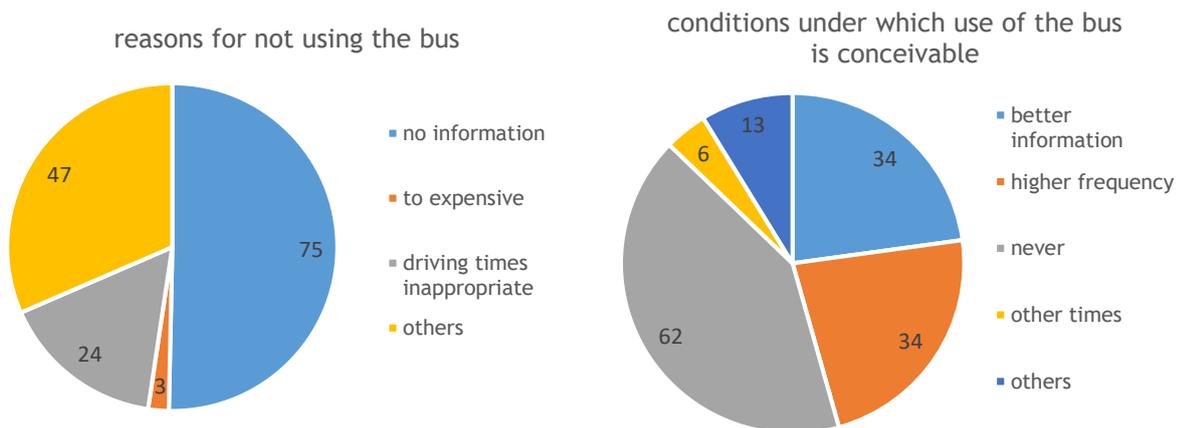


Figure 7: Reasons for not using the bus

Figure 8: conditions under which use of the bus is conceivable

### Conclusion

The current bus offer plays only for a few people a role. In the existing form it is only used very less accepted. About 60% can imagine to use the bus in general, but only 4% are using the bus. The main potential is among guests and seniors. For locals and families, it is least imaginable. For 23% the lack of information is the main reason for the non-usage of the bus (Figure 9).

Hence, possible improvements should address mainly the target group of seniors and guests. Only the increase in the timing without targeted information and active measures (signage, reduction of the parking space or an appropriate parking management system) won't increase the usage of the bus, since 40% can't imagine to use the bus anyway.

### Possible Measures

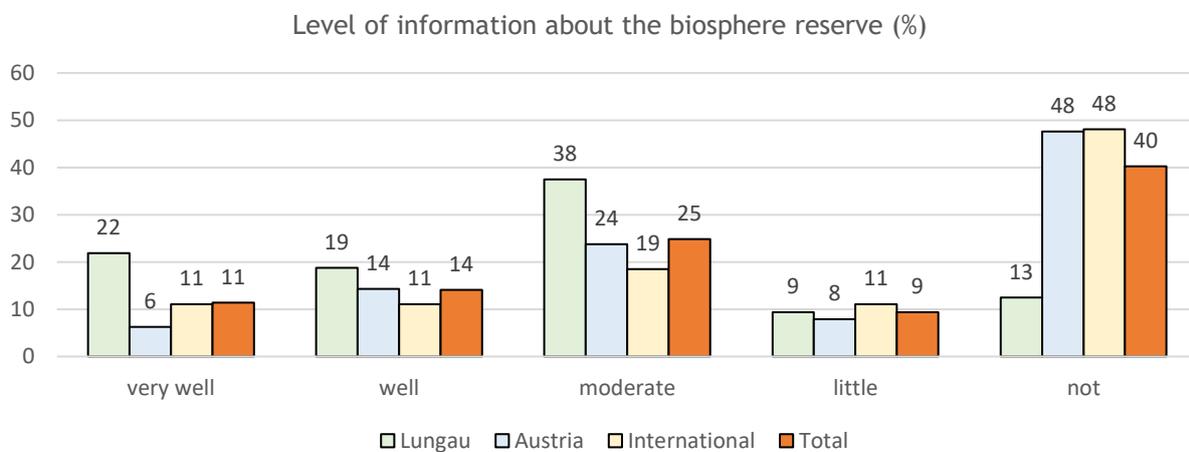
- Special information of the main target group of seniors and guests, targeted offers on accommodations
- Increase or rather adaption of the frequencies (more trips) at peak times (hiking and swimming) combined with a possible parking management system



- Possible accompanying measures: external visitor steering system which leads visitors to the bus station. Attractive design of a main-bus-station with a parking area (main target group are guests)

**c) Analysis of results - Awareness about the Biosphere Reserve**

More than 20% of the visitors were locals, 43% Austrians and the remaining 36% were international. 79% of the interviewees knew, that they are in a biosphere reserve, even if the current state of knowledge about it is very low. 25% felt very well to well informed, 25% moderate and nearly 50% felt little or not informed about the biosphere reserve. The level of information differs by origin. Locals felt each to approx. 40% very well to well and moderate informed, more than 20% felt little or not informed. Visitors from Austria as well as foreign visitors from other countries felt approx. 20% very well to well informed and more than 50% little or not.



**Figure 9: Level of information about the biosphere reserve**

What do you imagine a biosphere reserve is?

About 16% of the interviewees have no idea and can't imagine what a biosphere reserve is. But most of the visitors do have an idea about it. The most statements related to the natural environment as an important aspect, followed by answers to the biosphere reserve as a holistic topic of the region and field of action of sustainability, also in context of tourism.

Conclusion

The current awareness about the biosphere reserve is existing. Many of the visitors can imagine very well, what a biosphere reserve is and the answers showed a good picture about what a biosphere reserve is. The assessment about the personal knowledge and the level of information is very low and a big part felt little to not informed. To make visitors and locals understand, that their ideas about a biosphere reserve are right, measures need to be taken to raise the awareness and improve the knowledge about the biosphere reserve, to transform assumption into knowledge. Therefore, the action plan will be a document for a holistic tourism and leisure time management for the protection of nature, with specific actions to improve information and raise public awareness for the biosphere reserve and the idea behind it.



## 5 Sustainable Tourism Strategy

### 5.1 Vision for sustainable tourism in the Lungau

On the basis of the common definition of a vision, and the first results of the pilot action, the title of the strategy follows the guiding principle of: **Biosphäre erleben - naturnaher Qualitätstourismus im UNESCO Biosphärenpark Salzburger Lungau** (Experiencing Biosphere - nature-based quality tourism in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau).

The vision for the Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau is, that the region become an authentic and renowned nature-based and sustainable tourism destination.

People are aware of the biosphere reserve and the idea behind it and they (locals and guests) are working together, to promote the idea behind it.

There is a close cooperation of regional stakeholders, tourism providers and the region with the Biosphere Reserve along all relevant economic value chains. They identify with the biosphere reserve. The biosphere reserve has become a brand that stands for sustainable and high-quality tourism in the Salzburger Lungau.

To achieve this vision an appropriate tourism governance model is needed promoting a careful handling with our living space, appropriate tourism offers and increasing the regional added-value. The biosphere reserve is one (important) actor who will also contribute to this vision by the implementation of its management and action plan, which focusses on the following statement:

*„Tell me and I will forget,  
Show me and I may remember;  
Involve me and I will understand.”  
(Confucius)*

### 5.2 Long-term development goals

The long-term development goals and main pillars for this strategy closely refer to the contribution of the management of the biosphere reserve and its contribution to achieve the common vision.

- Protection of the natural spaces through awareness raising and visitor management
- Improvement of the regional tourism governance through cooperation between all regional stakeholders involved in and effected by tourism
- Establishment of an appropriate organizational environment for communication, training, quality control and cooperation
- Support and development of innovative tourism concepts according to the ECST
- Creation of high-quality (tourism) leisure time offers in the area of active holiday, well-being, nature and culture, agriculture, food-industry, craft and folk art
- The biosphere reserve has become a brand that stands for sustainable and high-quality tourism in the Salzburger Lungau



This forms the basis of the sustainable tourism action plan and the tourism section of the management plan of the biosphere reserve. The biosphere management body can contribute to the achievement of the common vision and the long-term development goals as figure 6 shows:



Figure 10: Contribution of the biosphere management body to the tourism development

### 5.3 Principles

The region and the biosphere reserve agreed on several main principles for the development of tourism offers, infrastructures and the implementation of projects. Those serve as continuous guiding principles for the biosphere reserve and tourism stakeholders.

#### Regarding the action plan and management plan

- The action plan is a living document. Thus, new projects can be added if meeting the criteria, can be linked to the objectives and if corresponding resources at the Ferienregion or/and the biosphere reserve management are available
- The Lungau has abundant initiatives, offers and organizations in tourism. Activities should build on it, use it and coordinate

#### Regarding the development of tourism infrastructures and offers

- The region acknowledges that an undamaged, intact natural and cultural landscape and modern, adapted infrastructure are the main preconditions for successful development of tourism
- Quality and authenticity instead of quantity and theatrical production
- Quality goes before quantity
- Protected areas, Fexen-guided hikes, health tourism and dark sky promotion are important topics for the development of tourism

#### Regarding awareness raising and appreciation of local population

- Awareness raising, particularly within the region (local residents, tourism providers etc.) is indispensable. Local residents are also often visitors, but less adhere to rules. Tourism providers also communicate contents to guests



- For the motivation of committed stakeholders, mechanisms need to be developed to say “thank you”. This is a crucial element to create appreciation for residents, domestic agriculture, traditional knowledge, etc.

## 5.4 Guiding topic „Experiencing Biosphere “

### *near-natural quality tourism within the Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau*

Experiencing Biosphere means near-natural and sustainable offers that make the Biosphere Reserve tangible and come alive and give visitors (locals and guests) an understanding about the importance of the resources and the particularities of the region through sensitization and awareness raising. Here, the conveyance of the philosophy of the Biosphere Reserve to people of all ages is of importance: Living and working in harmony with nature.

#### Fundamental principles for the selection and development of offers

- Involvement of the local population
- Knowledge about the needs, expectations and desires of the visitors
- Promotion and development of a high qualitative experience
- Respectful interaction with nature
- Development of offers that correspond to the desires of the visitors as well as to the potential of the region and that allow a unique nature experience
- Promotion of the use and marketing of regional products
- Conservation of the natural and cultural heritage for and through tourism and protection from an excessive tourism development
- Reinforcement of activities that support the conservation of the natural and cultural heritage and, if required, reduce activities that negatively influence the quality of landscape, air or water

#### Main objectives pursued by these offers are

- Improvement of the touristic cooperation within the region
- Conservation of the living space through awareness raising and visitor steering
- Reduction/prevention of conflicts of use
- Increasing the added value within the region through nature and environmentally friendly offers and products
- Extension and visualization of existing and new offers in the field of near-natural and sustainable quality tourism

#### Guiding key question for the elaboration of offers are

- Which topics can and have to be picked up in the sense of a near-natural quality tourism?
- What do guests expect from the Biosphere, what would they like to experience, to know?
- How can offers look like in the sense of nature conservation, tourism and economy within the region?



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The offers are supposed to

- Enable an unforgettable nature experience and convey fascinating details about relationships in nature
- Extend the knowledge about the treasures of nature for the personal health
- Increase the appreciation for the domestic agriculture
- Contribute to the regional added value
- Visualize the relationships between one's own behaviour and nature
- Enable visitor's active cooperation



## 6 Sustainable Tourism Action Plan

Given the results of the stakeholder workshop and the results of the first survey in the Preber area in summer 2018, which showed, that there are not only guests, but also locals who do not really feel well informed about the biosphere, it is necessary, to develop actions that address both, guests and locals. The lack of information underlines the importance of the development of actions following the principles under point 4.3. if the vision and the long-term development goals on which was agreed with stakeholders, should be realized. Therefore, the following action plan was set up.

The action plan aims at implementing a tourism governance model in the Biosphere Reserve. The actions within the action plan, some implemented in the frame of CEETO, some will refer to the general working program of the biosphere reserve, were discussed and agreed on in two stakeholder workshops. They will be endorsed by the BSR Steering Committee and be integral part of the management plan of the BSR (to be completed by end of 2019). The aim is to develop and create awareness raising and sensitization offers, take up different topics, take targeting actions and combine nature protection with tourism.

The action plan will deal with the 3 topics: information about the biosphere reserve, information about sustainable tourism and improvement of sustainable tourism and will therefore address the following points:

1. A comprehensive **grass root survey** of existing offers is necessary to collect all existing sustainable offers within the region.
2. Furthermore, it is necessary to **establish appropriate structures and an enabling environment** to guarantee an appropriate information, to make offers visible, to join forces and improve the regional cooperation.
3. By developing **new offers** and supporting partners in the development of new offers, a sustainable and innovative development of tourism will be guaranteed and promoted.
4. Combined with a sophisticated **training and education offers** for regional actors in the field of sustainable tourism and a careful behavior with our living space, quality will be improved further.
5. The best offer doesn't help if it is not communicated, visible and easily accessible. Hence, it is necessary to certify and promote offers and to raise the awareness through comprehensive **communication and information** activities.
6. Finally, it is necessary to check, analyze and improve the efficiency of the undertaken measures and to get more information about visitors (needs and behavior) through **surveys and monitoring** to improve a sustainable development of tourism within the biosphere reserve.

These activities aim to improve sustainable tourism within the whole region and to steer and manage visitors a) directly by carrying out selected visitor management measures at “hotspots” and b) indirectly through communication and information to raise the awareness and promote a careful behavior with and in nature. Possible topics for the activities are:

- Natural and cultural biodiversity
- The importance of the domestic agriculture
- Awareness raising and attentiveness
- Respect your limits - responsible interaction with nature
- Time out and deceleration
- Activity and life energy - nature compatible activities (sports, etc.)
- Do-it-yourself - working in/with nature/natural materials
- Healthy region - healthy human being: the healing power of nature - our living space for our health



## 6.1 Improving quality: evaluation, cooperation, education

*Key words: Evaluation, visitor monitoring and management, quality control*

### 6.1.1 Survey, evaluation and monitoring

To deepen the information about the knowledge of visitors regarding the biosphere reserve, a visitor survey should be implemented as an integral part of the action plan. A comprehensive survey, evaluation and monitoring system allows the Biosphere Reserve Management Body not only to get more information about the biosphere reserve and an overview of the supply as well as the demand side, regarding sustainable and near-natural (tourism) offers, but also

1. The continuous adaption and improvement of the tourism offers and the creation as well as the continuous update of a visitor pressure map, which will be available for all planners and decision-makers involved in tourism
2. The common elaboration of possible solutions for conflicts
3. The definition of appropriate rules of behavior

together with a group of regional stakeholders from different areas.

#### a) Internal evaluation: Grass-roots survey

With the collection and evaluation of existing sustainable and near-natural tourism and leisure-time offers and services within the region an overview about the current status of existing and possible sustainable offers can be given. Therefore, a comprehensive **research** has to be done.

#### Implementation

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Period                          | 2018/19   |
| Number of Activities            | 1 (grass-roots survey)                                      |
| Costs                           | Ongoing staff costs   |
| Involved partners/organisations | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |

#### b) Visitor survey and monitoring: satisfaction and interest, supply-use and evaluation

In addition to the internal evaluation a visitor survey is necessary, to get information about the desires, wishes, preferences and interests as well as about the satisfaction with and supply-use of the existing tourism offers and services. This survey will be done by questionnaires within tourist accommodations (periodic) but also at the planned events (continuous) and maybe also online, by addressing the following questions:

- Which topics are they interested in regarding the Biosphere Reserve?
- Where do they go, where have they been, what do they know and use, what are their preferred places?
- What would they like to see/know, what would they use and expect?



Furthermore, a monitoring will be established to count visitors:

- How many visitors were attending the events, guided tours and other offers?
- How many clicks does the webpage and other information channels get?

**Implementation**

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Period                          | 2018 - 2023 and 2018/19 - 2022/23                           |
| Number of Activities            | Continuous and periodic                                     |
| Costs                           | Ongoing staff costs   |
| Involved partners/organisations | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |

c) Visitor survey and monitoring at “hotspots”

Tourism and leisure time activities can lead to conflicts of use and also harm nature. The whole action plan aims to avoid such conflicts of use and harms to nature preventively, but even if this is the case, it can be possible, that on some points of interest more information about visitor’s behaviour and visitor flows are necessary to develop specific measures and actions to steer and inform visitors in an appropriate way.

**Implementation**

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Period                          | 2018 - 2023   |
| Number of Activities            | Pilot Action Preber; If needed also in other specific areas |
| Costs                           | Ongoing staff costs   |
| Involved partners/organisations | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |

**6.1.2 Cooperation, participation and synergies**

a) Participatory planning (Forum)

For an appropriate development of offers and a sustainable development a participatory planning system is needed. This is not only one of the main objectives of a biosphere reserve but also of the ECST. In this sense, the involvement of regional **stakeholders** plays an important role, for the common definition of possible and important topics and fields of activity. This will be done in the frame of working sessions, containing the following points:

1. Procedure regarding the implementation of targeted visitor steering
  - Planning
    - i. Where do problems/conflicts exist at the moment?
    - ii. Which kind of problems/conflicts?



- iii. What is the objective? (goals and non-goals)
- iv. How do we get there? (Which other actors/stakeholders are needed, which measures have to be undertaken)
- v. How can we monitor the result?
- vi. Resource planning (costs, time, responsibilities)
- vii. Creation of an implementation concept

- Implementation and realisation of the action(s)/concept
- Evaluation, success monitoring, adaption and optimization

2. Procedure regarding sensitization and awareness raising

- Which topics (about the Biosphere Reserve) are of interest/relevant?
- Which topics should be addressed at the events in the next year?
- Which actors, experts, stakeholders are needed?
- Which information should be included in the information materials, are specific information materials necessary (topics, rules of behaviour, etc.)?
- Resource planning (costs, time, responsibilities)

3. General issues

- Are there some other ideas/topics/issues to discuss? Maybe some ideas for new and innovative projects or for the improvement of existing offers/...?

Implementation

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Period</b>                          | <b>2018 - 2023</b>  |
| <b>Number of Activities</b>            | min. 1 per year (stakeholder meeting)                       |
| <b>Costs</b>                           | Ongoing staff costs   |
| <b>Involved partners/organisations</b> | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |

b) **Biosphere Reserve Partner Network**

Raising the awareness about the biosphere reserve and a sustainable tourism is one of the most important aspects within this action plan. Local actors, businesses and stakeholder do not only contribute to the development of the region and provide offers, but are also important multipliers of the philosophy of the biosphere reserve. The development of specific criteria for biosphere reserve partners, also in tourism (meaning all businesses that are directly or indirectly linked to tourism) allows to promote the establishment of a partner network in the biosphere, make the biosphere reserve tangible and visible and contributes to the appreciation of regional businesses and committed actors. The different fields of activities in which the biosphere reserve operates are closely interlocked in this action.

The action aims at building a network of biosphere reserve partners from different areas, to promote the marketing of regional products and exchange expertise and experiences. Therefore, it is necessary to



develop criteria, tailored to different businesses that are directly and indirectly affected by tourism. The criteria can exist in different key areas, but however, above all they relate to special services in nature and environmentally oriented quality and service (well-being of visitors, energy and climate, sustainable mobility, regional products, identification and cooperation with the biosphere reserve, etc.). Anyhow, sustainability is the most important aspect. The philosophy and the idea behind a biosphere reserve shall not be found only in one single product, but in the whole philosophy of the business. Especially those businesses that stand for the genuine, authentic and original of the region, should have an added value. A graduation could take place through “Biosphere-Flowers”, but also a differentiation between partners and premium-partners is conceivable.

Partners/members of the network will get appropriate support through a joint appearance and the certification as partners, furthermore, the internal interlinking and cooperation will be strengthened and thus a contribution to the regional added value will be made. Products and services that are produced in the sense of (ecological) sustainability will receive a higher appreciation and income. In return, partners are functioning as information points, presenting the idea and philosophy of a biosphere reserve to the outside. Thus, a contribution to the joint and sustainable development of the region will be made and the philosophy of the biosphere reserve becomes tangible and experienceable.

*Example: partners and cooperation - regional craft and products - visitors can experience the qualities and peculiarities of the region and in the same time income is increased directly, inter alia through tourism.*

For the elaboration of the criteria it is important to evaluate different comparable existing catalogues of criteria and to develop appropriate criteria for the Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau. What is genuine/authentic? Who cares and maintain the genuine of the region? What are should and must-be criteria? Overall, the result should be a win-win situation for all involved.

### **Implementation**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Period</b>                          | <b>2019 - 2023</b>  |
| <b>Number of Activities</b>            | 2 elaboration of criteria, establishment of the network     |
| <b>Costs</b>                           | Staff costs and external costs                              |
| <b>Involved partners/organisations</b> | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |

### **6.1.3 Education and training**

#### **Development and implementation of a permanent training opportunity for local actors and tourism providers**

Tourism business plays an important role in the implementation and further development of sustainable tourism. They are substantial multipliers, information points and the first contact point for guests. To improve the knowledge and ensure a corresponding quality, a training program will be established, that addresses topics like regional characteristic features, health and nature, communication, sharpening of profiles. These offers will be open for employees, organizations, municipalities and services providers in tourism. A special focus is put on key topics of the biosphere reserve. Those targeted offers should not only communicate the treasures of the own regions, but also raise awareness regarding a respectful behavior in this environment. The detailed contents are based on the needs of the region and the



participants. Particular emphasis will be put on the active involvement of local experts from agricultural, tourism, conservation and hunting sector as lecturers.

### Implementation

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Period                          | 2019 - 2023   |
| Number of Activities            | 2 per year  |
| Costs                           | External (ca. € 1,000,- per event) and ongoing staff costs  |
| Involved partners/organisations | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |

## 6.2 Communication: Accessibility and availability of information

Key words: Promotion, events, information materials, PR, social media, maintenance of platform

### Objective

Creation of offers (education, activity, events) for visitors and local residents in the field of near natural and environmentally friendly tourism of high quality. The aim is to get to know the treasures of the region, to improve the awareness and to promote a change of behaviour towards a respectful treatment of nature.

### Subject

The actions under point 7.2. are focussing on the establishment and implementation of a comprehensive sensitization and awareness raising program, existing out of the following 2 parts:

1. Improvement and creation of information materials and channels
2. Implementation of events and guided tours

The aim is to directly and indirectly convey values, increase the appreciation of the domestic agriculture, improve the knowledge about topics like biodiversity, treasures of nature for human health, regional products, and to promote a respectful way of dealing with our living space. Various fields like nature and landscape, customs and culture, old knowledge and old craft will be involved. Information materials, events and guided tours can focus on different topics but has to be related always to the issue of *living from, in and with nature*. The target group for these actions are locals as well as guests and companies of all kinds.

### 6.2.1 Information materials and channels

Sustainable and near natural tourism offers and a corresponding information needs to be prepared, communicated and easily accessible. Information materials have to contain not only events and guided tours and special features of the region, but also information about the appropriate behaviour in nature. Topics like visitor steering and a holistic experience as well as the sustainable management of issues, related to tourism and leisure time (trash, transport, overnight-stays, etc.) need to be considered within the information materials. Primarily the offers and information will be communicated about the quarterly Biosphere Reserve magazine (including flyers with rules of behaviour) as well as through the biosphere reserve website.



a) Improvement of existing information channels (website, blog, etc.)

To inform locals and guests as well as possible about sustainable tourism, sustainable offers and to improve the knowledge and raise the awareness for our special living space, an up-to date webpage is necessary. Therefore, the structure of the webpage will be revised and updated and important information and content on the topic of sustainable tourism and leisure time will be produced and uploaded.

**Implementation**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Period</b>                          | <b>2018 - 2023</b>  |
| <b>Number of Activities</b>            | improvement of the BR website and preparation of content    |
| <b>Costs</b>                           | Staff costs and print costs                                 |
| <b>Involved partners/organisations</b> | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |

b) Creating new information materials

As a second point regarding an appropriate communication, the provision of new information materials and channels are necessary. Therefore, a quarterly biosphere reserve magazine will be developed, to inform locals and guests as well as possible about sustainable tourism, sustainable offers and to improve the knowledge and raise the awareness for our special living space. Also, the preparation of specific brochures could be considered (example: experiencing biosphere - nature and culture; guided tours, etc.).

**Implementation**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Period</b>                          | <b>2019 - 2023</b>   |
| <b>Number of Activities</b>            | 1 - Contribution to the quarterly magazine of the BSR<br>2 - preparation of brochures on specific topics |
| <b>Costs</b>                           | Staff costs and print costs  |
| <b>Involved partners/organisations</b> | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders  |

c) Reservoir of ideas

**Give Aways**

The design of give-aways as gifts for tourists (herb pillow, cookery book, recipes, art - like pressed flowers in glass, etc.) serves to raise the awareness for the Biosphere Lungau and increases the regional added value. Give-aways can be developed together with locals and regional actors or can be made by the visitor himself.



## 6.2.2 Events and guided tours

### a) Annual main event for visitors and locals

To draw the attention to the regional biodiversity of the biosphere reserve, an annual event on current topics will be held. In the frame of these events different thematic areas will be addressed and accordingly prepared. For example:

- forest (forest related education), meadows (wildflower meadows and herbs), water (blue gold), mountain (stones and minerals, spirituality, etc.), night (...)
- spring, summer, autumn and winter
- earth (healthy soil, medicinal herbs, food), fire (light - day-night rhythm), water (lakes, rivers, hydrotherapy), air (altitude climate, air quality, etc.)

Locals and regional actors are invited to bring in their ideas and to actively participate. Existing potential in the region should be used (who would like to participate, who has already experience and knowledge, etc.), but also external experts.

*Example:* Festival to discover the diversity of our living space; Day of Biodiversity (experts are documenting species in the region, locals and visitors can attend them and experience, so the management body gets better knowledge about the existing species and in the same time awareness raising takes place, could be combined with tasting regional food and products, etc.)

#### Implementation

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Period</b>                          | <b>2018 - 2023</b>  |
| <b>Number of Activities</b>            | 1 per year  |
| <b>Costs</b>                           | External (ca. € 10,000,- per event) and ongoing staff costs |
| <b>Involved partners/organisations</b> | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |

### b) Daily events for visitors and locals

In addition to the annual main event daily events should take place during the year. These events may be related in content to the main event or be independent. In the frame of these events current topics will be addressed and prepared accordingly. Locals and regional actors are invited to bring in their ideas and to actively participate. Existing potential in the region should be used, but also external experts.

*Example:* Herbs from the Biosphere (what: e.g. importance of domestic flower meadows -be healthy with domestic flowers and herbs; how: keynote speech, guided tour and do-it-yourself)

#### Implementation

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Period</b>               | <b>2018 - 2023</b>   |
| <b>Number of Activities</b> | 2 per year   |
| <b>Costs</b>                | External (ca. € 2,000,- per event) and ongoing staff costs |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Involved partners/organisations</b> | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |
|--|---|

**c) Guided tours on specific topics for guests and the local population**

During the year guided tours on various topics will be organized to make the biosphere reserve tangible and experienceable for locals and guests. The participants get the chance to get to know the treasures of nature in guided tours. The aim is to allow a holistic experience of the region on predetermined paths, combined with awareness raising in terms of visitor guidance. Existing offers and potentials in the region should be used.

**Implementation**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Period</b>                          | 2018 - 2023   |
| <b>Number of Activities</b>            | Min. 5 - max. 10  |
| <b>Costs</b>                           | External (ca. € 200,- per event) and ongoing staff costs    |
| <b>Involved partners/organisations</b> | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism boards, different stakeholders |

**6.3 Sustainable tourism offers: Support and development of offers**

*Key words: organizational support, innovative offers, shaping tourism offers, experiencing*

**Objective**

The aim is to initiate, support and implement innovative projects and to develop offers for a near natural, sustainable and high qualitative tourism. For example, developments in the area of Green Care. Locals, the domestic tourism industry and regional actors are invited to bring in their ideas and offers in the area of near-natural quality tourism.

**6.3.1 Biosphere Digital - visitor steering in digital media**

To provide a comprehensive, up-to-date and state-of-the-art information is very important to raise the awareness of visitors, inform them about the biosphere reserve and make existing sustainable offers visible. Existing offers as well as new ones needs to be visualised and easily available. Furthermore, it is important to communicate the offers uniformly to guests and locals. Therefore, an interactive application for the promotion and visitor steering, control and management will be established, free to use for the whole region. The digital representation of the region with all its particularities and offers is an important aspect for the successful tourism development. The application will function as a collection point, containing target group specific topics and experience offers, real nature experiences, route descriptions, near-natural and high-quality offers and the particularities of the region in combination with appropriate information about protected areas, cultural places, regional producers, etc. The application is planned by the biosphere reserve management body in cooperation with the tourism board of Weißpriach and the Ferienregion Lungau. The contribution of the biosphere management body is the following:

- Manging and coordinating stakeholders
- Articulating requirements for a sustainable progress in tourism



- Research on and evaluation of different application systems - obtaining offers
- Discussion, research, definition, evaluation and selection of existing and new content which will be included in the map and represents the sustainable progress of tourism in the region
- After finalisation: ongoing support of the application

#### Implementation

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Period</b>                          | <b>From 2018</b>  |
| <b>Number of Activities</b>            | 1   |
| <b>Costs</b>                           | ongoing staff costs   |
| <b>Involved partners/organisations</b> | Ferienregion Lungau, Tourism board Weißpriach, stakeholders |

### 6.3.2 Long-distance hiking trail

This offer is based on already existing infrastructure within the Biosphere Reserve (managed mountain huts, hiking trails, etc.), unites the special features of the region and allows guests to explore the Biosphere Reserve and its nature and culture in a gentle and sustainable way on 7 stages. This offer should provide to visitors a holistic experience of the region on predetermined paths, combined with awareness raising in terms of visitor guidance. Information, visitor steering, awareness raising and knowledge transfer are the main objectives of this offer.

#### Implementation

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Period</b>                          | <b>From 2019</b>  |
| <b>Number of Activities</b>            | 1   |
| <b>Costs</b>                           | ongoing staff costs   |
| <b>Involved partners/organisations</b> | Ferienregion Lungau, tourism boards, different stakeholders |



## 6.4 Action Plan Overview

| Field of activity  | Action                            | 10 years goal | Period                              | Responsibility | Partners   |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| <b>Improving quality: evaluation, cooperation, education</b> |                                   |               |                                     |                |  |
| Survey, evaluation and monitoring                            | Grass root survey                 |               | 2018/2019                           | BSRM           | FRL, TVB, regional stakeholders  |
|  | Monitoring at hotspots            |               | 2018 and 2019                       | BSRM           | Tourism businesses, regional stakeholders, etc.                                |
|  | Visitor survey and monitoring     |               | 2018 - 2023<br>2018/19 &<br>2022/23 | BSRM           | Tourism businesses, regional stakeholders, etc.                                |
| Cooperation, participation and synergies                     | Participatory planning forum      |               | From 2018                           | BSRM           | Tourism businesses, regional stakeholders, etc.                                |
|  | Biosphere Reserve partner network |               | From 2019                           | BSRM           | Tourism businesses, regional stakeholders, regional and external experts, etc. |
| Education and training                                       | Workshops, seminars               | 2 per year    | 2019 - 2023                         | BSRM           | Tourism businesses, regional stakeholders, regional and external experts, etc. |

Table 4: Action Plan Overview Improving quality



| Communication: accessibility and availability of information |  |                       |                      |   |                        |
|--|--|-----------------------|----------------------|---|------------------------|
| Information materials and channels                           | Improvement of and information through the biosphere website |                       | 2019 - 2023          | BSRM  | Different Stakeholders |
|  | Contribution to the quarterly magazine                       | 4 contributions /year | 2019 - 2023          | BSRM  | Different Stakeholders |
|  | Creating brochures on specific topics                        |                       | 2019 - 2023          | BSRM  | Different Stakeholders |
| Events   | Annual main event  | 1 event per year      | 2018 - 2023          | BSRM  | Different Stakeholders |
|  | Daily events   | 2 events per year     | 2019 - 2023          |   | Different Stakeholders |
| Guided tours   | Tours on different topics                                    |                       | 5-10 events per year | BSRM  | Different Stakeholders |
| Sustainable tourism offers                                   |  |                       |                      |   |                        |
| Development  | Long-distance hiking trail                                   |                       |                      | BSRM  |                        |
| Support  | Digital Biosphere  |                       |                      | BSRM, TVB<br><u>Weißpriach</u> ,<br>Ferienregion Lungau |                        |

Table 5: Action Plan Overview Communication and Sustainable Tourism Offers



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## 7 Perspectives

The strategy will be elaborated and agreed on in 2018. This includes also starting implementation of pilot actions and other actions of the plan. The full process of integration into the management plan of the BSR is expected to be completed at the end of 2019. By this, it should be guaranteed, that the strategy and the actions are a permanent and constant part of the annual program of the biosphere reserve, minimum for the next 10 years.



## 8 Annex

### 8.1 Questionnaire Preber Area - English

Weekday/Date:

Time:

Surveynumber:



**1. What is the reason for visiting Preber area?**

- mountain climbing       hut-to-hut trekking tour       Prebertake round walk  
 Visit of the Ludlalm       Swimming in the Lake       others\_\_\_\_\_

**2. How did you come here?**

- by car       public transport       mountain bike       on foot  
 touring bus       moped       others\_\_\_\_\_

**2.1. Arrival from ...**  Lungau       Styria

**2.2. If you came by car, what were the reasons?**

- No information about public transport possibilities       Bus is too expensive  
 Travel time of the busses are unsuitable       others\_\_\_\_\_

**2.2.1. Under which circumstances can you imagine to use the bus?**

- better information       bus drives more often       never       Bus at other times:\_\_\_\_\_

...„Did you know, that the bus to the preber area drives three times a day to a price for only 1€ for Lungau-Card-Members?“

**2.3. If you came by bus, what were the reasons for?**

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**2.3.1. How satisfied are you with the public transport offer?**



very satisfied      moderate      not at all

**2.3.2. Which suggestions of improvement do you want to give us?**

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Weekday/Date:

Time:

Surveynumber:



3. Did you know, that the Lungau is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve?

- Yes  No

4. How good do you feel yourself informed about the Biosphere Reserve?



5. What do you understand under a Biosphere Reserve?

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**Personal Details:**

- 5.1. Sex:  female  male
- 5.2. Age:  < 17  18 - 35  
 36 - 60  > 61
- 5.3. Where are you from?  Lungau  Salzburg countryside  
 Styria  Austria  
 International
- 5.4. How often do you come to the Preber area?  
 one time  once a year  several times a year
- 5.5. I ...  am a day visitor  am on holiday in Lungau  
 am from Lungau
- 5.6. Who is here with you?  
 partner  group  alone  
 family  friends  others

*Thank you for the participation on the survey from UNESO Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau!*



## 8.2 Questionnaire Preber Area - German

Weekday/Date:

Time:

Surveynumber:



### 1. Was führt Sie in die Preberregion?

- Bergsteigen                       Hüttenwanderung                       Preberseerundweg  
 Besuch der Ludlalm                       Baden im Prebersee                       andere \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Wie sind Sie hierhergekommen?

- Auto                       öffentl. Verkehr                       Fahrrad                       zu Fuß  
 Reisebus                       Moped                       andere \_\_\_\_\_

- 2.1. Anreise aus ...  dem Lungau                       der Steiermark

### 2.2. Wenn Sie mit dem Auto gekommen sind, was waren die Gründe dafür?

- keine Info über Bus                       Bus ist zu teuer  
 Fahrzeiten der Busse sind nicht passend                       andere \_\_\_\_\_

### 2.2.1. Unter welchen Umständen könnten Sie sich vorstellen den Bus zu nutzen?

- bessere Information                       Bus fährt öfter                       nie                       Bus zu anderen Zeiten: \_\_\_\_\_

..., Wussten Sie, dass der Bus zum Preber dreimal täglich fährt und nur 1€ pro Fahrt für Lungauer-Karten/Lungau-Card-Mitglieder kostet?"

### 2.3. Wenn Sie mit dem Bus gekommen sind, was waren die Gründe dafür?

---



---

### 2.3.1. Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit dem Angebot?



Sehr zufrieden                      mäßig                      gar nicht

### 2.3.2. Welche Verbesserungsvorschläge möchten Sie uns mitgeben?

---



---



Weekday/Date:

Time:

Surveynumber:



3. Wussten Sie, dass der Lungau ein UNESCO Biosphärenpark ist?

Ja

Nein

4. Wie gut fühlen Sie sich über den Biosphärenpark informiert?



Sehr gut

mäßig

gar nicht

5. Was stellen Sie sich unter einem Biosphärenpark vor?

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Angaben zu Ihrer Person:

5.1. Geschlecht:

weiblich

männlich

5.2. Alter:

< 17

18 - 35

36 - 60

> 61

5.3. Von wo kommen Sie:

Lungau

Land Salzburg

Steiermark

Österreich

International

5.4. Wie oft kommen Sie in die Preberregion?

einmalig

einmal pro Jahr

mehrmals im Jahr

5.5. Ich ...

bin Tagesgast

mache im Lungau Urlaub

bin LungauerIn

5.6. Mit wem sind Sie hier?

Partner

Gruppe

Allein

Familie

Freunde

andere

*Vielen Dank für die Teilnahme am Fragebogen des UNESCO Biosphärenparks Salzburger Lungau!*

