

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

PROJECT TITLE: LIFE Salzachauen - Riparian Forest Restoration

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

Strategic objective

The project aims at significantly improving the qualities of the "Salzachauen" as one of Austria's most important alluvial forests. This will be done in a demonstrative way by using the high potential of the Salzachauen in terms of Natura 2000 habitats / species and of sustainable nature experience.

Specific objectives

1. Optimizing the habitat qualities of the alluvial forests in the Weitwörther Au

- > Optimizing of near-natural alluvial forests and improving of forest plantations through forest conservation measures thus creating a coherent natural alluvial forest about 220 ha in size; to the benefit of alluvial forests, beetles, bats and birds
- > Afterwards leaving the forests to natural processes in order to further old-growth stages crucial for many species thus supporting habitats typical of alluvial forests, *Cucujus cinnaberinus*, bats and birds
- > Increasing the amount of old and dead trees for the benefit of woodpeckers and beetles

2. Improving hydrological and morphological dynamics

- > Creating of new highly dynamic alluvial areas to further habitats typical of alluvial forests, amphibians, fish and birds

3. Ecological wildlife management instead of trophy hunting

- > Shifting from trophy hunting to an ecological wildlife management adapted to species sensitive to disturbances and to natural forest regeneration; for the benefit of alluvial forests and birds

4. More spawning grounds for amphibians

- > Strengthening the populations of amphibians by creating new spawning grounds

5. Transforming the "Ausee" into a rich habitat for fish and birds

- > Shifting from intensive fishing to an ecological management in favour of indigenous fish and birds
- > Developing the Ausee into an alluvial habitat rich in structures and species

6. Managing and informing of visitors with regard to the Natura 2000 conservation objectives

- > Providing tranquillity in the Salzachauen by means of visitor management
- > Rising awareness amongst visitors for the benefit of the whole Natura 2000 site

7. Disseminating the results of LIFE Salzachauen

- > Sharing the lessons learnt with regard to the project's demonstrative character in order to stimulate follow-up projects

ACTIONS AND MEANS INVOLVED:

Actions for objective 1: Optimizing the habitat qualities of the alluvial forests

A.2 Detailed planning of conservation measures in forests as a precondition for permission by forest authority, for awarding of contracts and implementation of C.4

A.6 Survey of *Cucujus cinnaberinus* as a basis for C.5.3

B.1 Purchase of land in the Weitwörther Au: purchase of 118 ha of forests in the Weitwörther Au and of the Ausee (10.5 ha) as a precondition for actions C.1-6 and thereby for a broad ecological improvement of the alluvial forests and the Ausee and for then leaving it to natural processes

C.4 Nature conservation measures in forests on the purchased land (removal of spruce plantations, transformation of poplar plantations etc.)

C.5.2 Special conservation measures for bats

C.5.3 Special conservation measures for Cucujus cinnaberinus

Actions for objective 2: Improving hydrological and morphological dynamics

A.1.2 Detailed planning for introducing more dynamics into the Reitbach stream

C.1 Lowering the terrain on an area of about 4 ha to create new dynamic alluvial areas

C.2 Action to introduce more dynamics into the Reitbach stream

Actions for objective 3: Ecological wildlife management instead of trophy hunting

A.3 Concept for ecological wildlife management as a basis for C.7

B.2 Purchase of the hunting right in the Weitwörther Au as a precondition for the future ecological wildlife management

C.7 Initial measures of wildlife management

Actions for objective 4: More spawning grounds for amphibians

C.1 Creating temporary spawning grounds as part of the terrain lowering

C.5.1 Special protection measures for amphibians: Creating groups of small ponds as spawning grounds

Actions for objective 5: The Ausee as a habitat for fish and birds

A.1.3 Detailed planning for the revitalisation of the Ausee

A.4 Ecological concept for fish management

B.3 Purchase of the fishing right at the Ausee

C.3 Revitalisation of the Ausee

C.6 Initial measures for fish ecology

C.7 Initial measures for wildlife ecology

Actions for objective 6: Managing and informing visitors with regard to the Natura 2000 conservation objectives

A.5 Detailed planning for visitor regulation

E.1 Website

E.2 LIFE-Newsletter

E.3 Excursions, action days

E.4 Floodplain experience path

E.5 Points of interest

E.7 Information signs for the Natura 2000 site

E.8 Renewal of the "Vogellehrpfad Irlacher Au" nature trail

E.9 Layman´s report

Actions for objective 7: Disseminating the results of LIFE Salzachauen

E.10 Symposia

E.11 Technical paper