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Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve (D)

On-the-spot appraisal June 2016





The boundaries of the Weltenburger Enge Nature Reserve should be extended to achieve greater spatial unity. The title of the reserve is to be amplified if appropriate, in that the Danube gorges now represent only a part – albeit the most prestigious and vulnerable – of the protected area.

(RESOLUTION (98) 16, Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 18 September 1998 at the 641 meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)







KLETTERN VERBOTEN vom 01.02.- 30.06.



1. Devise and implement maintenance procedures to control the increasing growth of bushes on outcropping rocks, resulting in a reduction of the extent of xerotherm rock locations and the adapted species inhabiting them;

Most xerotherm rock locations cleared of bushes and only little maintenance work to be done in 2016. This resulted among others in a larger number of Burning Bush (Dictamnus). Documentation of the evolution of vegetation and snail fauna (Gastropodae) compiled in 2015.

2. Maintain strict control over boat traffic, particularly on the right bank of the Danube where numerous private boating tourists land on the exposed gravel banks during the summer months, when water levels are low;

Situation still the same and obviously the result of some weakness in legislation. A new condition is to be imposed to clarify the legal possibilities and implement a subsequent strategy. Problems with private boats, swimming and camping occur mostly on sunny summer weekends.



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3. Monitor the effects of boat traffic on the aquatic fauna;

In line with the NATURA2000 management planning a study was carried out on the fish fauna. The monitoring of specific fish fauna is carried out in line with a power plant 25 km upstream of Weltenburg.

4. Encourage the extensive use of fields and meadows, particularly by farmers and private owners;

Some parcels in the area are managed extensively according to the agroenvironment scheme. The Landschaftspflegeverband Kelheim VöF e.V. is involved in several spots. One field was bought and turned into extensive grassland.

5. Conduct regular audits of management effectiveness for biodiversity conservation and tourist control in the reserve;

The evolution of flora and fauna and impacts caused by tourism are carefully monitored by the site managers. Tourist infrastructure is evaluated and maintained as necessary.

Conditions 2017

- (1) Formally realise immediately the extension of the European Diploma area to 934 hectares, change the name to <u>Weltenburger Enge und Hirschberg</u> <u>und Altmuehlleiten</u> and adapt as soon as possible all signposts, brochures, maps and leaflets to the new area, and issue an overall management plan in addition to the existing NATURA2000 management plan by 2023.
- (2) Conduct an expertise on legal options to stop or at least regulate disembarking of private boats on the right bank of the Danube between the Weltenburg landing place and river kilometre 2416, and to ban overnight camping and campfires in the whole European Diploma area and report to the Council of Europe latest by 2023.
- (3) Start further research on the effects of wave disturbances of larger boats on the river bank and on selected and relevant species, especially fish, freshwater molluscs and dragonflies, and report to the Council of Europe within five years.

Conditions 2017 (cont.)

- (4) Extend, wherever ecologically and touristy worthwhile and as soon as possible, the stricter regulations of the decree on the Nature Reserve Hirschberg und Altmuehlleiten to the area of the Nature Reserve Weltenburger Enge to make the rules more comprehensible for visitors and supervision more effective, and to underline the togetherness of both sites as an ecological entity.
- (5) Take more responsibility for the preservation of the archeologic monument Keltenwall (Celts' wall) and stop further damage and erosion through visitors' management or appropriate installations to limit hiking and mountain-biking on the monument, in cooperation with the government agency for monument conservation.
- (6) Consider a harmonisation of information boards to stop their uncontrolled number and different layouts and add the European Diploma logo at least to those boards containing information on natural and cultural highlights within the European Diploma area. This includes the information point at the landing place in Kelheim. Immediately add information about the role of the European Diploma on information boards, at least those at the main access routes.

- (1) Conduct more and efficient control of illegal mountain-biking off the official mountain-bike routes.
- (2) Carefully examine the opening of official viewing points taking into consideration the natural value of the specific site, and close down a number of uncontrolled and unsafe spots.
- (3) Put an emphasis on the natural succession of forests and the development of more natural forest reserves in the total area and avoid clear cuts of any size, minimize commercial exploitation of forests and stop the use of heavy machinery in forestry management. Thoroughly weigh up any intervention in the forest around the Befreiungshalle and refrain from any forest management that cannot be considered ecological.
- (4) Recognise the need for a professional on-the-spot supervision of the area including fieldwork by professional and permanent staff and envisage an increase in capacity of permanent supervision staff.
- (5) Assess the technical possibilities and financial support for restoration of the cultural monument Kloesterl.

It is recommended to renew the European Diploma for another period.

It is also recommended to formally extend the European Diploma area northwards to the adjoining nature reserve.