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WELTERBEGEMEINDEN WACHAU

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2023

Spitz / 14.12.2023 / IH

State: Austria

Name of the area: Wachau

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:
Awarded 1994, last renewal: 2019

Central authority concerned:

Name: Land Niederösterreich Federal Government of Lower Austria), Department of Nature Protection (RU5),
Dipl.-Ing. Brigitta Mirwald
Address: Landhausplatz 1, Building 16, 3109 St. Pölten, Austria
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Authority responsible for its management:

Name: The Chairman of Welterbegemeinden Wachau Association (World Heritage Municipalities Wachau Association): Dr. Andreas Nunzer, MA
Manager of Welterbegemeinden Wachau: Ingeborg Hödl, MA
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Bundesministerium
Kunst, Kultur,
öffentlicher Dienst und Sport

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Conditions:

Condition #1: Abandon definitively the scheme to build a dam on the Danube at Dürnstein, as well as a similar scheme within and immediately downstream from the area covered by the diploma:

There are no plans of constructing a dam or a power plant on the Danube in the Wachau. The free-flowing Danube is not only condition number one for holding the European Diploma but is also one of the most important attributes of the outstanding universal value (OUV) of the Wachau World Heritage.

Recommendations:

- 1. guarantee a sustainable budget for the managing authorities to ensure that the management plan can be fully implemented without relying on financial resources from projects;**
No changes to the previous years.
- 2. encourage the setting up of a long-term institutional management framework for the Wachau Protected Landscape and Jauerling-Wachau Naturpark**
No changes to the previous year. Long-term institutional management framework is implemented.
- 3. ensure the implementation and updating of the management plan in a participatory way;**
Because of the 3. Cycle of the UNESCO-Periodic Report in May 2023 the evaluation and update of the current management plan was postponed to 2024 and should start in January with an evaluation process using the Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0 (EoH 2.0) published by the UNESCO in November 2023.
- 4. continue the good practice of a global approach to forestry and wild-game management (including co-operation with managing authorities in bordering administrative entities);**
No changes to report.
- 5. continue the good practice of maintenance and reconstruction of terrace vineyards;**
No changes to the previous year.
- 6. continue efforts to preserve the apricot orchards;**
No changes to report.
- 7. develop an integral approach to tourist management;**
No changes to the previous year.
- 8. explore optimal solutions for preserving the appearance of the landscape (colors of the protection nets and barriers against rockslides, light pollution and Christmas tree plantations);**
No changes to report.
- 9. use the European Diploma logo more regularly on publications and appropriate infrastructure, promote the European Diploma more actively, encourage partners and stakeholders to use the European Diploma logo.**
No changes to report.

Site Management:

List here any changes to the European Diploma holding site management, in relation to both terrestrial and aquatic environments (as appropriate), and in relation to staff and finances, since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

The LIFE+ Wilderness Wachau project was finished and approved by the EU.

The restoration of autochthonous alluvial forests has been continued.

*In May 2023 a project to fight neophytes has started. It is funded by the biodiversity fund of the Republic of Austria and runs until the end of 2025. Especially *Ailanthus altissima* and *Robinia pseudoacacia* around dry grassland areas should get reduced.*

*4 new breeding ponds for amphibia especially *Bombina bombina* and *Triturus dobrogicus* have been created the last year.*

The grazing with sheep was continued in 2023. About 17 ha nature grassland in the region was managed between June and September 2023.

The Wachau Volunteer project was hold for one week in July 2023.

Boundaries:

Give details of any changes to the boundaries of the European Diploma holding site since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. If there are any changes, please attach an appropriate map to this report. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

No changes.

Other information:

List here any other information about the European Diploma holding site which you consider should be provided to the Council of Europe.

No changes.