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**WELTERBEGEMEINDEN WACHAU**

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Spitz, 02.02.2026/ iH

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2025

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  
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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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**KULTURLAND  
NIEDERÖSTERREICH**

**Bundesministerium  
Wohnen, Kunst, Kultur,  
Medien und Sport**

**WIR leben Land**  
Gemeinsame Agrarpolitik Österreich

## 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:**

*No changes to the previous year: 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;  
*No changes to the previous year.*
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;  
*To raise awareness to maintenance of dry-stone wall as well as winemaking in the Wachau in general the Vinea Wachau organised the first Steep-Slope Forum, a brand-new event dedicated to the topic of steep-slope viticulture. It took place in Spitz, Wachau on March 27, 2025.*  
<https://www.vinea-wachau.at/en/news/news/single/news/magazin-forum-steillage-rueckblick-mit-ausblick>
6. continue efforts to preserve the apricot orchards;  
*No changes to report.*
7. develop an integral approach to tourist management;  
*In 2025 the Wachau's tourist wayfinding system has undergone a comprehensive overhaul. The project "Leitsystem Wachau 2.0" has created a modern, uniform information system that offers both visitors and local residents improved orientation within the World Heritage region. The new panels were installed in summer 2025. As a result, the Wachau's tourist appearance has been modernised while at the same time making the UNESCO World Heritage site more visible and tangible and represent the diversity of the Wachau at a glance – ranging from cultural treasures and nature experiences to tourist highlights.*
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.  
*During various events to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UNESCO-world heritage listing the European Diploma was mentioned and promoted as well.*

#### 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 project to fight neophytes was in the third and last year. It is was funded by the biodiversity fund of the Republic of Austria and ran until the end of 2025. Especially Ailanthus altissima and Robinia pseudo acacia around dry grassland areas got reduced. Up until December 2025 almost 29 thousand trees of gods and black locusts were removed. A new project is planned for the next few years and will be applied on six Danube Islands in the Wachau.*

*The grazing with sheep was continued. In 2025, two flocks of sheep with over 200 sheep were in operation. A total of approximately 20 hectares of dry grassland were grazed between June and October. Another 10 hectares were mowed. A total of 30 individual sites in the Wachau are being managed.*

#### 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.*