

**Annual report 2019
on the nature and protected landscape of the
"Wollmatinger Ried-Untersee-Gnadensee" (Germany)**

Site code: DE940007

Reporting period: October 1 2018 to September 30 2019

Country: Germany

Name of the area: Wollmatinger Ried-Untersee-Gnadensee Nature Reserve

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1. CONDITIONS

The extension of the Europa Diploma for the Wollmatinger Ried until 28.11.2029 was approved by the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe on September 4 2019 and was linked to three conditions; six recommendations were also made.

a. **Study on the expansion of the core zone of the nature reserve**

Prepare a study about the legal possibilities for the extension of the strict core zones of the Wollmatinger Ried-Untersee-Gnadensee nature reserve and report to the Secretariat by 2024.

In the period since the conditions were decided (September 4 2019), no relevant steps have yet been taken to implement them.

b. **"Schneggλισand-Wälle", sedimentation areas and natural processes preserved**

Reject any suggestion or plan aimed at removing naturally occurring ramparts such as the so-called Schneggλισand Bank and mudflats and allow natural processes to take place without human intervention in a larger area, with the exception of deviating public interest, e.g. flood protection.

The dredging of the estuaries was no longer an issue during the reporting period. The erosion and sedimentation processes therefore take place naturally.

To date, the nature conservation administration has seen no reason and no legal possibility to intervene in these processes. Due to the new condition, a final and permanent decision must be taken, if necessary by the responsible ministries.

c. **Management plan**

Design and adopt by 2022 a management plan which complies with the rules and objectives of the European Diploma for Protected Areas and addresses the subsequent recommendations for the renewal of the diploma.

In the period since the conditions were decided (September 4 2019), no relevant steps have yet been taken to implement them.

2. Recommendations

The Council of Ministers issued six recommendations, the implementation of which has progressed as follows:

a) **Harmonisation of the protective provisions and NSG (nature reserve) extension on the water side**

In cooperation with the Swiss authorities, the following possibilities should be examined: the harmonisation of the regulations for the protection of nature on both shores and the extension of the nature reserve Wollmatinger Ried-Untersee-Gnadensee up to the national border in order to enlarge the water zone. This is crucial, especially during the low water level in winter.

Although this recommendation in a slightly modified form was already linked to the extension from 2009 to 2019, no contacts with the Swiss authorities on this issue were established during the reporting period.

b) **Improvement of the networking between the NSG (nature reserve) and the hinterland**

Continued efforts to improve the links between the protected areas in the hinterland and the Wollmatinger Ried-Untersee-Gnadensee nature reserve with a view to the extension of the B33 main road, including the extension and / or adaptation of the boundaries of the nature reserve. The compensatory measures should be continued and the construction work should be carried out in such a way as to minimise the impact on the protected area.

The compensatory measures anchored in the zoning decision for the B33 are being consistently implemented. The inclusion of the remaining properties between the NSG (nature

reserve) border and the B33 in the nature reserve, as applied for by the NABU in the course of a planning amendment procedure, is being addressed by the road construction administration and the planning approval authority of the Freiburg regional council in a current plan amendment for the area between the Kindlebild intersection and the railway bridge. For the section between the Constance wastewater treatment plant and the Kindlebild intersection, this goal is being further pursued by the nature conservation authorities on the basis of the new recommendation.

c) Ending fishing in the most sensitive zones

Ending fishing in the most sensitive areas, mainly in the estuaries and in the southern Hegne Bay, in compliance with the provisions of the bilateral agreement (between Germany and Switzerland) and with the aim of improving the quality of the area as a breeding ground, wintering area and moulting area.

Since the decision to introduce protected water areas in the “Markelfinger Winkel” near Radolfzell, the “Round Table on Fishing in the Nature Conservation Areas at Lake Constance-Untersee” has been suspended.

No further talks were held during the reporting period.

d) Closure of the cycle path

Close the existing cycle path between the B33 and the protected area borders. The path is only used by a few cyclists, so it can be integrated into the nature reserve Wollmatinger Ried-Untersee-Gnadensee in order to achieve effective nature conservation.

The former road plots between the NSG (nature reserve) border and the B33 were not included in the nature reserve in the course of the planning change procedure for the B33. (cf. chap. 2 b). At that time, the new recommendations of the Council of Europe were not yet available. In spite of the negative attitude of the lower and higher nature conservation authorities, the municipality of Reichenau is still adhering to its intention to reactivate the path.

e) Reduction or termination of disruptions

Reduce or end disruptions affecting the protected area through leisure activities and sport by raising awareness and passing on information to boat rental companies and to hot-air balloon and zeppelin travel operators.

NABU's floating protection and observation station, where water sports enthusiasts are informed about the significance and the protection regulations of the Wollmatinger Ried (mainly on weekends), was occupied by volunteers for a total of 88 days this year.

An agreement was reached with a canoe rental company that the new edition of the company's brochure would address the NSG (nature reserve) more fully. The intention here is to reduce the pollution caused by illegal canoeists in the protected shallow water and shore zones.

Authorisation for a large-scale public waste collection operation was not granted because of the massive disruption involved.

Discussions with suppliers of hot-air balloon and zeppelin flights have not yet taken place.

f) Consideration of interests of the protected area during constructional development of adjacent municipalities

In order for the objectives of the protected area to be achieved, it is essential that you take into account the boundaries of the protected area, its possible development and the need for sufficient buffer zones when planning and considering the expansion of future building sites in the affected communities.

The structural development in the surroundings of the protected area continues undiminished. The city of Constance did not adopt NABU's advice on leaving sufficient distances between buildings and the border of the protected area.

At that time, the new recommendations of the Council of Europe were not yet available.

3. Area management

No changes

4. Borders

No changes were made during the reporting period.

5. Other information

Other relevant information on incidents in the protected area during the reporting period can be summarised for the Council of Europe as follows:

Temperatures in the reporting period were again relatively high. At 11.1°C, the annual average temperature was 2.0°C above the long-term average in the years from 1961 to 1990.

The Lake Constance depth gauge was unusually low in the autumn of 2018, but by 19 June 2019 it had already reached its highest level this year – 50 cm above the long-term average.

The international importance of the protected area for resting and wintering waterfowl was also confirmed this year. The highest daily total was 40,000 individuals in January 2019. Various waterfowl species reached national and international importance with their daily values: e.g. 5,500 gadwall ducks (*Anas strepera*) in November, 6,600 teals (*Anas crecca*) in December, 1,100 pintail ducks (*Anas acuta*) in December, 4,600 crested ducks (*Netta rufina*) in January, 10,700 pochards.

The breeding success of the waterfowl was strongly influenced by the water level dynamics. The black-necked diver brooded successfully again after a two-year break.

The landscape maintenance work was carried out to the extent planned.

The information boards on the “Gottlieber Weg” and the Reichenauer Damm were renewed. The accompanying flyer has also been reprinted.

More than 600 guests attended the opening of the new NABU Lake Constance Centre on 13 October 2018. Since then, 2,381 visitors have visited the new exhibition, which presents the habitats, their species and conservation work in the European Diploma Area Wollmatinger Ried and the other NABU sanctuaries.

The new conditions and recommendations associated with the extension of the European Diploma should contribute to the conservation and development of the protected area on the part of the Council of Europe. Since the interests of other groups are also partially affected, the path to implementation will not be conflict-free.

However, the time since the resolution was passed a few weeks ago has not been sufficient to take the first steps. We aim to address the conditions and recommendations that have not yet been introduced in a timely manner.