

Interreg

CENTRAL EUROPE



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BEECH POWER

World Heritage Beech
Communities as model for
ecosystem-based sustainable
development



Background

The concept of “World Heritage Beech Community” has evolved within the Interreg Project CE1340 “BEECH POWER: World Heritage BEECH Forests: emPOWERing and catalyzing an ecosystem-based Sustainable Development” in which the City of Angermünde (Germany), Slovenia Forest Service (Slovenia) and the Paklenica National Park (Croatia) have been closely cooperating on the development of World Heritage Beech Communities as model for ecosystem-based sustainable development in the respective communities of 4 component parts of the World Heritage site “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe”:

1. The City of Angermünde with the beech forest component part Grumsin, Germany
2. The Municipality of Starigrad with the beech forest component parts Suva draga-Klimenta and Oglavinovac-Javornik in Paklenica National Park, Croatia
3. The municipality of Loška dolina with the beech forest component part Snežnik
4. The municipality of Občina Kočevje with the beech forest component part Krokav

Definition

The idea behind the “World Heritage Beech Community” concept is that the component parts of the World Heritage site and the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) they represent need to be regionally embedded - within a World Heritage Beech Community - to ensure their long-term preservation. Accordingly, a “World Heritage Beech Community” is a community in whose municipal boundaries one (or more) of the component parts of the UNESCO World Heritage Site “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe” is/ are located and which is strongly committed to the long-term conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development promoting the fullest and broadest application of the World Heritage Convention by all relevant stakeholders on the local and regional level. A World Heritage Beech Community assumes the responsibility to forge a productive relationship between the maintenance and improvement of the OUV of the respective component part(s) on the one hand, and the sustainable development of the regions and communities surrounding them on the other hand.

Vision

A World Heritage Beech Community pursues the following vision: The natural World Heritage of the component parts of the “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe” is part and parcel of the sustainable development of the region and the communities belonging to it. Its potential to support this development is recognized and explored by all relevant actors, making the component parts and the surrounding communities model regions for sustainable development within and across sectors in social, economic and environmental terms. This includes the creation of human wellbeing, regional added value and places of learning/ education as well as the identification and harnessing of synergies between nature conservation, climate change mitigation/ adaptation and regional development.

Objectives

Based on this overall vision, a World Heritage Beech Community strives for the following objectives:

1. World Heritage Beech Communities become drivers for sustainable regional development.
2. Participatory formats and processes are put into practice to support World Heritage Beech Communities.
3. The identity of a regionally embedded World Heritage Beech Communities is being developed and assumed by the local population.
4. The World Heritage status of the respective component part(s) is recognized and systematically used as opportunity and means to reach the objectives of sustainable development of the region.
5. The World Heritage is adequately integrated in the school and adult education sectors, in activities of the tourism sector, and by the arts and culture.
6. The opportunities for regional and municipal development arising from the pan-European character of the series - e.g. in the field of education and tourism - are used to their full potential.
7. World Heritage Beech Communities promote the generation, marketing and equitable sharing of regional added value in line with the principles of sustainable development.

Areas of responsibility

From these objectives pursued by a World Heritage Beech Community, the following possible areas of responsibility arise:



1. Information, education and participation of citizens



2. Sustainable regional development



3. Contributions to visitor experience, management and guiding

Areas of responsibility



4. Integration of the WH topic in municipal thinking and acting



5. Identity creation as "WH Beech Community"



6. Regional and intra-regional cooperation

1. Information, education and participation of citizens to enhance ownership of and support to World Heritage component area: World Heritage Beech Communities enable and empower citizens of surrounding municipality(-ies) to participate in an informed way to the protection of the component part and the sustainable development of the region in which it is embedded enhancing their ownership.
2. Promotion of sustainable regional development through the World Heritage component area: World Heritage Beech Communities capitalize on the regional development opportunities in sectors such as sustainable tourism and visitation, marketing of local products or the development of environmental awareness including support, consolidation and upscaling - where appropriate - of existing initiatives.
3. Contributions to enhanced visitor experience, management and guiding: World Heritage Beech Communities promote visitor information, interpretation and education offers, safety and security, gastronomy and related services as well as conservation-compliant visitor guidance in the World Heritage landscape.



4. Integration of the UNESCO and World Heritage topic in municipal thinking and acting: World Heritage Beech Communities ensure that the World Heritage topic is regularly considered and dealt with harnessing synergies with basic public services (health, food safety, education etc.)
5. Identity creation as “World Heritage Beech Community”: World Heritage Beech Communities development and communicate a “story” based on the local history or context of the respective World Heritage component part(s), the European dimension of the World Heritage site and its global importance creating a “World Heritage Beech Community” identity for the local population and visitors of the region.
6. Regional and intra-regional cooperation: World Heritage Beech Communities foester cooperation and partnerships at the regional and intra-regional level across all relevant sectors.

DISCOVER MORE ABOUT BEECH POWER

World Heritage BEECH Forests:
emPOWERing and catalyzing an
ecosystem-based Sustainable Development

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