

River Basin Development Upper Traun River From European to Local Level

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Introduction

„Working together for more safety and wildlife habitats” is the central goal within this project by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW), the two federal states of Upper Austria and Styria and the Federal Service for Torrent and Avalanche Control. By realizing a sustainable development of the Traun River and its tributaries integrating public participation methods the project is striking new paths within the management of water bodies and flood protection within Austria. Developed and initiated in the Year 2007 as a regional role-model by WWF-Austria it is moving now further by trying to settle “River Basin Development” as a nationwide standard operational tool within the federal water management.

Goals and Implementations

Public Information/Participation

Informing local people early - ensuring possibilities of active participation.

- **Project-homepage** - www.flussraumbetreuung.at with interactive map, detailed project info, press-corner, calendar of activities, photo documentations
- **Newsletter** - 4 times a year, informing almost 200 registered users about news and proceedings within the RBD.
- **Press relations** - writing reports, organizing conferences, and interviews for newspapers, radio- and TV-stations trying to keep RBD in the local peoples mind.
- **Workshops** on special topics within the project area, involving specific local stakeholders for sustainable results.

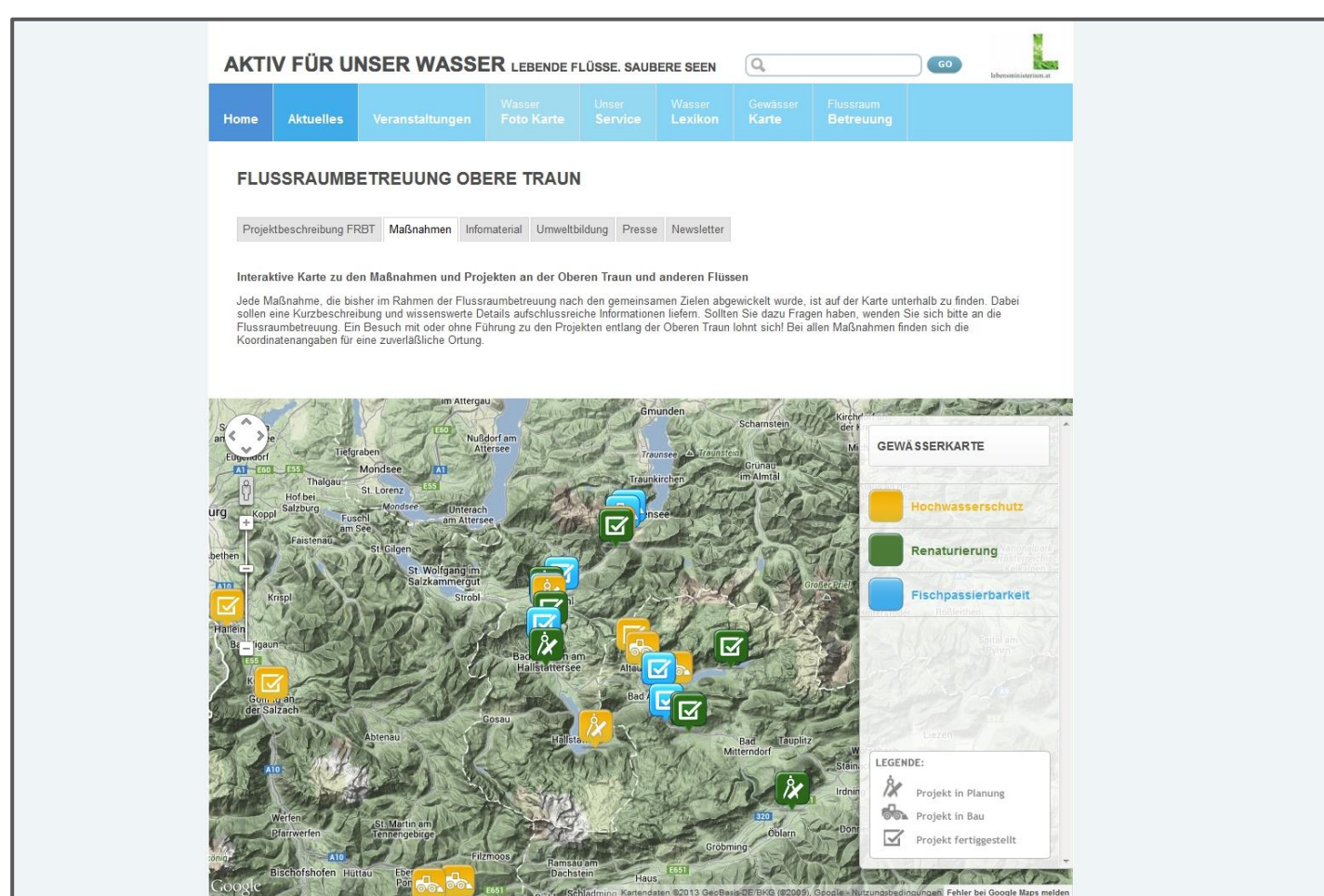


Fig.1: Screenshot of the interactive project map.



Fig.2: Workshop towards a new „water adventure trail”.

Ecologic expertise to river engineering

Enhancing the ecological aspects of river engineering measures.

- **Planning** –RBD integrates it’s local expertise into planning processes.
- **Construction process** –RBD is present during sensitive constructions periods if ecological construction supervision is not carried out.
- **Monitoring** –RBD is visiting sites regularly and reports to project partner trying to integrate results and conclusions for further projects.



Fig.3: Widened river bank at Ebensee.



Fig.3: Restructuring river bed after flood protection measurments.

Outdoor Education

Creating understanding for river ecology, flood protection and renaturation activities within the local population.

- **Excursions** within the project area, e.g. actual construction sites or highlights like the annual spawning migration of local white-fish population (*Coregonus* sp.)
- **“Best Practice Excursion”**, visiting outstanding projects along other rivers in Austria and nearby neighboring countries.
- **“Class Room on the River Bank”** Half to day-long program with school classes right in the river bed.
- **“River-Adventure Days”**: Outdoor holiday-action with local children addressing river topics in a fun and playful way.



Fig.5: River race with selfmade rafts.



Fig.6: „Classroom on the Riverbanks”.

Networking

Interlinking stakeholders within the river basin of Upper Traun River.; acting as a non-governmental contact person between local authorities and general public.

- **Jour Fixe Meeting** – six times a year – bringing all project partners together, enabling interdisciplinary discussions and informing each other.
- **“Mayor-talks”**: Once a year RBD meets every single mayor of all 11 communities presenting BRD actualities.
- **Stakeholder meetings** – e.g. fishermen, environmental care groups, watersports, tourism, etc.

Upper Traun River Details

Covered Catchment Area: 1285 km²

Length total: 86,18 km

River: 53,28 km; 4 Lakes: 14,9 km

Important Species:

Brook Trout (*Salmo trutta fario*)

Greyling (*Thymallus thymallus*)

Bullhead (*Cottus gobio*)

White fish (*Coregonus* sp.)

Common sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

River kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)

Goosander (*Mergus merganser*)

Italian crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*)

European tree frog (*Hyla arborea*)

Yellow-bellied toad (*Bombina variegata*)

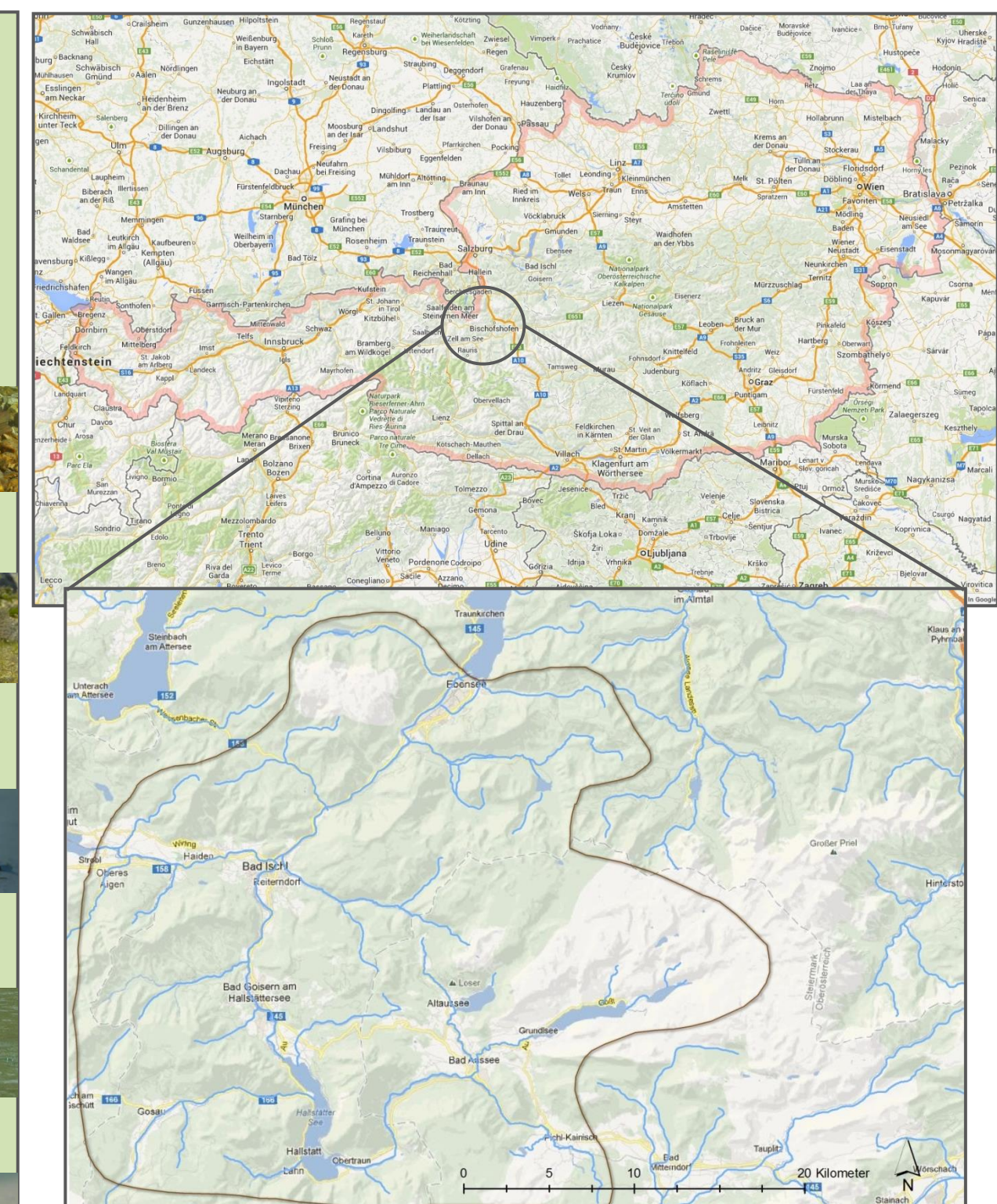


Fig.7: Project area and catchment area .

The author wishes to thank the project partners (Ministry of Life, Federal State of Upper Austria and Styria, Federal Service for Torrent and Avalanche Control) for their excellent cooperation and will to develop standards and measurments within Austrias water management further. Also WWF-Austria for it’s vision on rivers and the possibility of building up this outstanding project together.