



GRÜNES BAND

OBERPFALZ – TSCHECHISCHE REPUBLIK

FEASIBILITY STUDY GREEN BELT REGION UPPER PALATINATE (BAVARIA) - CZECH REPUBLIC

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1. Starting point

The European Green Belt stands for the border area along the former Iron Curtain across Europe. The feasibility study „Green Belt Region Upper Palatinate – Czech Republic“ deals with the section between Bavaria and the Czech Republic with a length of approximately 200 km along the Bavarian administrative district of the Upper Palatinate.

Today, based on the former remoteness, after overcoming the European division, there is a huge potential for the development of nature and landscape and, consequently, for the use of recreation seekers. The once separating border became the symbol of unity and international understanding, flanked by cultural sites of Europe's past.

The Bavarian State Government recognised this potential and commissioned the District Government of Upper Palatinate in 2017 to develop a feasibility study for the Green Belt along the border between Upper Palatinate and the Czech Republic.

2. Actions implemented

The feasibility study examines options for action and realisation opportunities for projects to develop the specific natural and cultural landscape potentials of this particular border region. The process involves many local actors, e.g. administrations, nature conservation authorities and associations etc. on both sides of the border.

Three thematic fields are addressed:

- Biodiversity and habitat connectivity
- Historic cultural landscapes including the examination of the topic „border“
- Development of nature-friendly forms of tourism

3. Results

The feasibility study was able to identify a large number of already started or promising activities in the investigation area, which are proposed or put to discussion for a priority implementation.

Biodiversity

Measures to promote specific habitat type and manage indicator species, e.g.

- Habitat optimisation for Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*)
- Restoration of former black grouse habitats (*Lyrurus tetrix*; currently without proof)
- Wetlands and river systems (e.g. border waters)
- Montane meadows, e.g. grass swards (*Nardus stricta*), arnica (*Arnica montana*)

Cultural landscape

- Landscaping for awaking awareness of the border and proposals for more extensive agriculture
- Connecting landmarks: castles, observation and watching towers
- Intended Land Art project about recent settlement history (Universities of Prague/Freising-Weihenstephan)

Nature-friendly tourism

Theme trails for settlement history:

- „Lost Places“
- Relicts of historical cultural landscape
- Historical trade routes

4. Outlook

The feasibility study will be completed and presented to the public at the beginning of 2019. In the dialogue with local actors, shortly thereafter, priority implementation projects will be started. For the further realisation, possible organisational forms, sponsorships and financing options are shown, for example through the targeted application of existing funding programmes of nature conservation, agriculture or tourism etc.

The targeted measures include local activities as well as cross-border projects to be processed together with Bavarian and Czech partners (e.g. INTERREG projects). In the sphere of cultural landscape and tourism the co-operation with the Pilsen region is already established, which, among other others, addresses the topic of „Lost Places“ and „nature-friendly tourism development“.



Capercaillie cock / © Hans-Joachim Fünfstück / piclease



Wetland Fahrachtal / © Ursula Blum / Planning Office Blum



Course of the border at Neualbenreuth with Tillenberg mountain / © Peter Blum / Planning Office Blum



Ploč, abandoned village (CR) / © Ursula Blum / Planning Office Blum

