



A future task in good hands



# The European Green Belt: history of the initiative and examples of Green Belt tourism

**Dr. Karin Ullrich**

Biotope Protection and Biotope Management

Nature Tourism Conference, Riga, 22.03.2011



# European Green Belt Initiative

## Content

- Background – predecessor initiatives, historical development
- Idea/Vision for the European Green Belt
- Set up of the Initiative
- Actions for implementation
- Nature tourism
- Outlook



# Green Belt of Fennoscandia

- Background
- Idea/Vision
- Set up
- Actions
- Nature Tourism
- Outlook

**YMPÄRISTÖJÄRJESTÖJEN ALUSTAVAT RAJAUKSET VIHREÄKSI VYÖHYKKEEKSI**

Suomen Luonnonsuojeluliitto, BirdLife Suomi, WWF Suomen rahasto, Suomen Greenpeace, Luonto-Liitto (28.1.1997)

**GREEN BELT AREAS PROPOSED IN FINNISH AND RUSSIAN NATURE RESERVES**

Finnish Association For Nature Conservation, BirdLife Finland, WWF Finland, Greenpeace Finland, Finnish Nature League (28.1.1997)



**Finnish-Russian**

nature conservation cooperation



Finland Ministry of the Environment – Finnish Environment Institute

Lähteet, sources: Luonto-Liitto ry/ Finnish Nature Conservation Center of Finland, Biodiversity center of Russia, Greenpeace



# Balkan Green Belt: Core areas

- Background
- Idea/Vision
- Set up
- Actions
- Nature Tourism
- Outlook

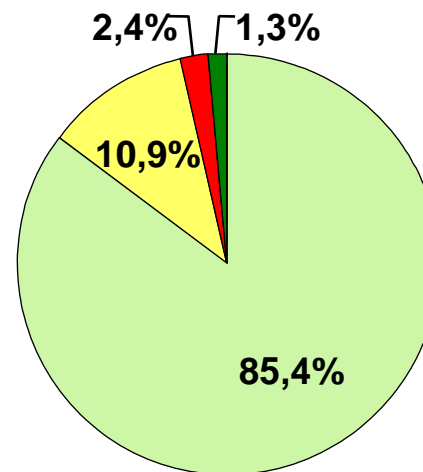


- Cross-border regions between Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Greece.
- Newly proposed and already existing protected sites.
- 15 sites to form a green corridor stretching from Albania almost to East Rhodope (Bulgaria, Greece).

# German Green Belt

- Background
- Idea/Vision
- Set up
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- Nature Tourism
- Outlook

## Percentages of land-use types in the Green Belt (2001/2002):



- semi-natural to close to natural habitats
- intensive agricultural use
- built up areas / roads
- afforestations



- 16 % of the area covered by Annex I habitats (Habitats Directive)
- 48,8 % of the area covered by endangered habitat types


# 1st International Conference

- Background
- Idea/Vision
- Set up
- Actions
- Nature Tourism
- Outlook



10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)

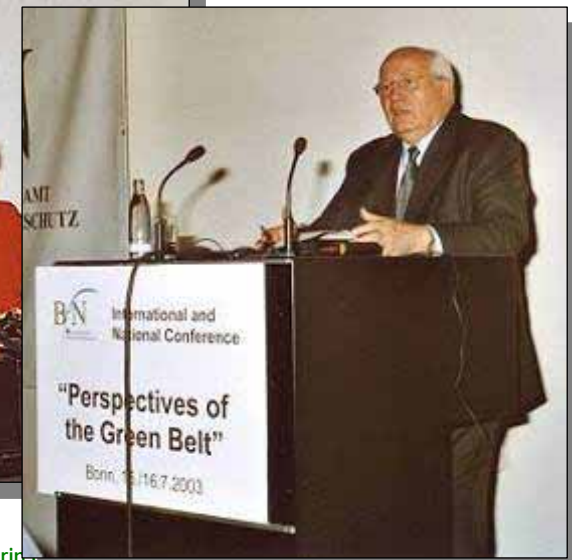
International and national conference  
„Perspectives of the Green Belt“



Chances for an ecological transition from the Barents Sea to the Mediterranean

15 - 16 July 2003

➤ First step: International conference "Perspectives of the Green Belt" (15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> July 2003, Bonn)





# European Green Belt I

- Length: > 12.500 km
- Wilderness areas
- Water ecosystems
- Cultural landscapes
- Endangered species



# European Green Belt II



## Vision:

To create the backbone of an ecological network running from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea that is a global symbol for transboundary cooperation in nature conservation and sustainable development.

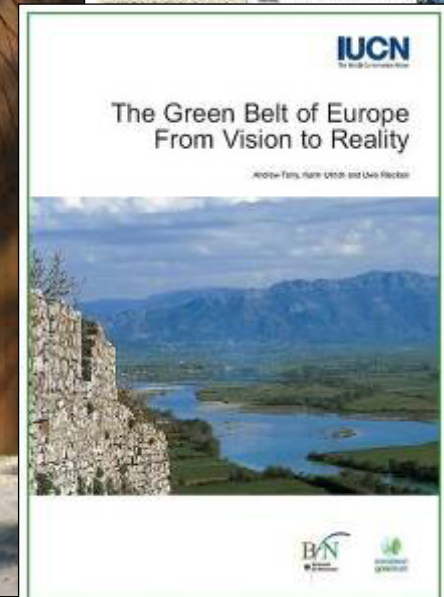
## Chances offered by the European Green Belt:

- to save part of the pan-European Nature Heritage
- contribution to a pan-European ecological network
- corridor across many landscapes (climate change mitigation)
- to save a living historic monument
- to enhance cooperation across borders and sectors
- to help overcoming the historical division of Europe
- to raise public interest for a nature conservation topic
- region for sustainable regional development (extensive agriculture, nature tourism etc.)



# 2nd International Conference I

- Background
- Idea/Vision
- Set up
- Actions
- Nature Tourism
- Outlook



# 2nd International Conference II

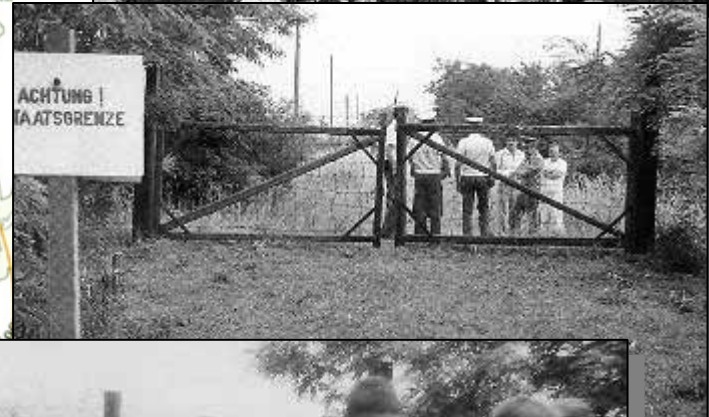
**Location: transboundary National Park**





# 2nd International Conference II

Historical  
place





# Action plan

- Background
- Idea/Vision
- Set up
- Actions
- Nature Tourism
- Outlook

## Programme of work:


**programme - element 1:**  
direct action to implement the  
**European Green Belt**

**programme - element 2:**  
agreement on cooperations and  
organisational structure

**programme - element 3:** preparations  
of common transboundary activities

### Programme of Work

Mission: To create the backbone of an ecological network, running from the Barents to the Black Sea that is a global symbol for transboundary cooperation in nature conservation and sustainable development.



europaean  
greenbelt


#### History


The European Green Belt (hereafter called the Green Belt) is an initiative to transform the route of the former Iron Curtain (including the still strongly protected borderline between Finland and Russia) into an ecological corridor running from the Northern tip of Europe at the border between Norway, Sweden, and Finland, crossing Central Europe to the border of former Yugoslavia (today between Slovenia, Croatia and Hungary) and continuing to the Black Sea, Aegean Sea, Jordan Sea and Atlantic Sea along the borders of Albania, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia & Montenegro and Turkey. For centuries this line has witnessed some of Europe's most devastating human conflicts and for decades at the end of the 'twentieth century' it was also the symbol of political and ideological division between the powers of Europe. The Iron Curtain (in name still represents an area for division, both political and personal, and is still a healing wound for many of the people and countries deeply affected by it).

The only benefit to come from the Iron Curtain was that it created a forbidden zone to people, allowing (silently) a 40 year respite along its route. Europeans in Europe, hobbies were being changed and modified through processes such as intensive agriculture, transport infrastructure and industrial developments. The route of this strongly protected borderline thus stands through some of the most important habitats for biodiversity in Europe. This is the starting point for the Green Belt initiative.

#### A Green Belt

A Green Belt means many different things to many different people. As to given the great diversity of political, biological and socio-economic conditions in the countries that border the Green Belt, there will be no single focus for the Green Belt to take throughout Europe. In most countries, the Green Belt will connect national parks, nature parks, Biosphere Reserves and transboundary protected areas and other areas used to foster sustainable development initiatives for a global environmental scheme, commonly known, in some countries, for example Germany, it is in addition aimed to protect the Green Belt, i.e. a strip of land of varying width, in its entire length. At least the Green Belt is expected to fulfil the function of a backbone of an ecological network and thus contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. However, a Green Belt must also serve to better harmonise human activities with the natural environment, increasing opportunities for the socio-economic development of local communities. The Green Belt will become a tool for cooperation across borders between local communities and also an important instrument to fulfil the national and international commitments made by diverse makers.



The Programme of Work, 2005 

# Organisational structure

- Background
- Idea/Vision
- Set up
- Actions
- Nature Tourism
- Outlook

## Overall coordination:

- **IUCN**
  - Green Belt Secretariat
  - Green Belt Coordinator

## Regional coordination:

- Northern section: **Association of Northwest Russian Zapovedniks & National Parks**
- Central section: **Friends of the Earth (BUND/BN Bayern)**
- Southeastern section: **EURONATUR**

**23 states**

**18 national “focal points”**



# Actions

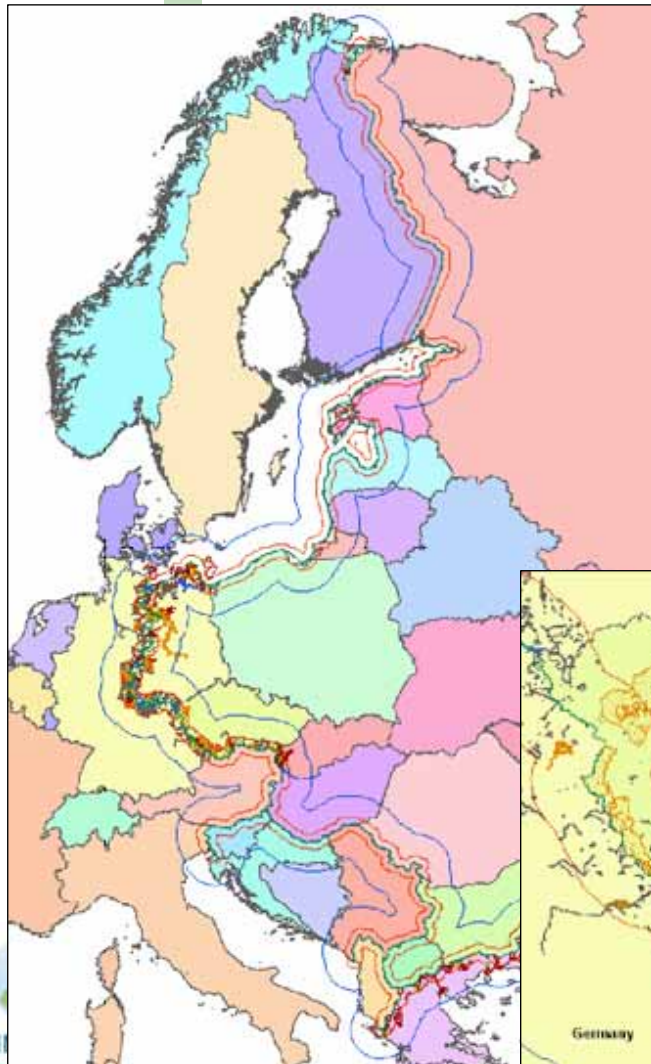
## Meetings of the working group

- pan-European
- regional (sometimes in the context of other projects)

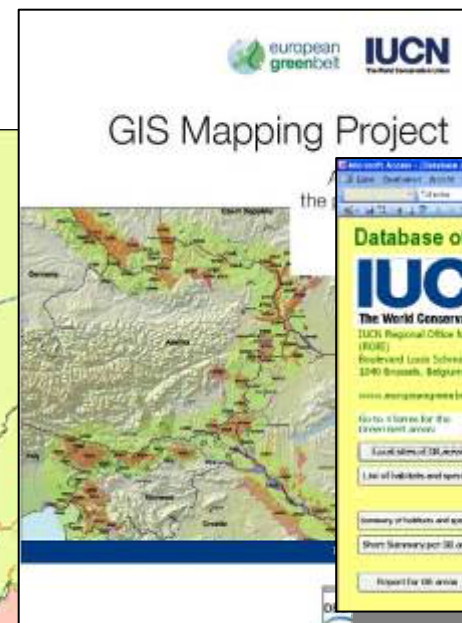




# Green Belt Mapping Project



- General data basis on the situation of the **European Green Belt** (land use, protected areas etc.)
- 2005 – 2007 by IUCN + BfÖS
- BfN funded methods, mapping of **Central European Green Belt**;  
(DBU funded mapping of **Fennoscandian and Balkan Green Belt**)

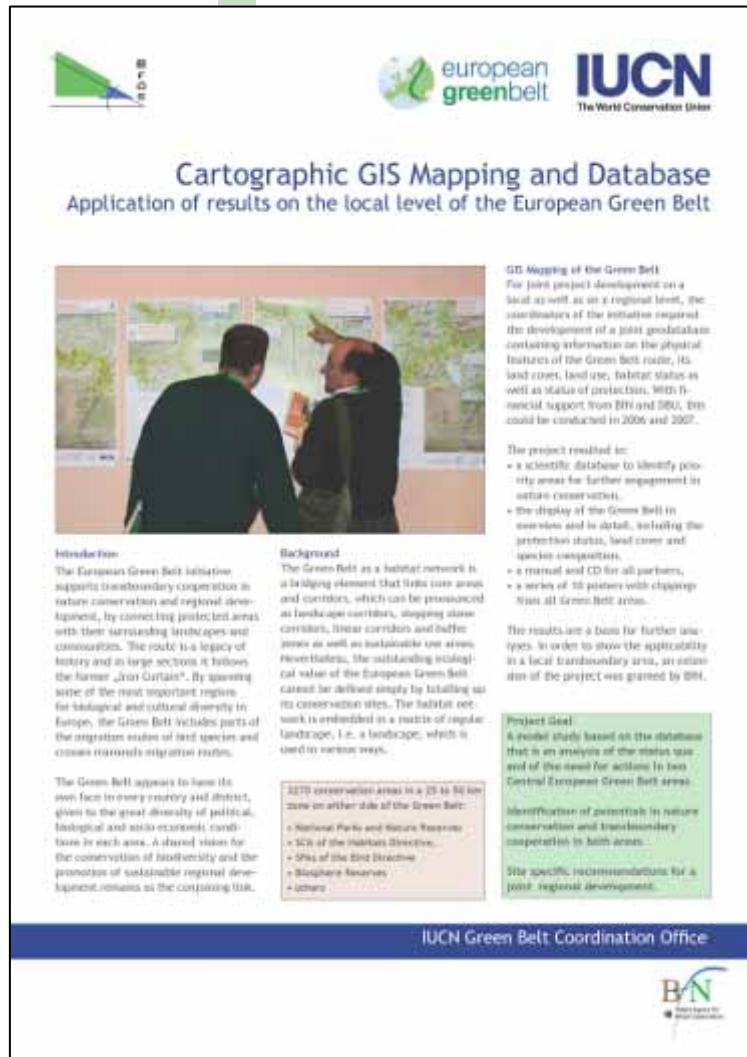


# National Parks/Zapovedniks along the European Green Belt



- 1 **a/b** Øvre- Pasvik (NOR) / Zapovednik Pasvik (RUS)
- 2 Urho-Kekkonen (FIN)
- 3 Riisitunturi (FIN)
- 4 **a/b** Oulanka (FIN) / Paanajärvi (RUS)
- 5 Kalewala (RUS)
- 6 Hiidenportti (FIN)
- 7 Koli (FIN)
- 8 Patvinsuo (FIN)
- 9 Petkeljärvi (FIN)
- 10 Valkmusa (FIN)
- 11 Laheema (EST)
- 12 Matsalu (EST)
- 13 Kemeris (LV)
- 14 Slitere (LV)
- 15**a/b** Kuřiy Nerija (LV) / Kurschkaja Kossa (RUS)
- 16 Slowinski (PL)
- 17 Jasmund (D)
- 18 Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft (D)
- 19 Harz (D)
- 20**a/b** Šumava (CZ) / Bayerischer Wald (D)
- 21**a/b** Thayatal (A) / Podyjí (CZ)
- 22**a/b** Neusiedler See (A) / Fertő Hanság (H)
- 23 Triglav (SLO)
- 24 Donau-Drau (H)
- 25 Golubac (SRB)
- 26 Skutari (MNE)
- 27 Mavrovo (MK)
- 28 Shebenik-Jablanica (AL)
- 29 **a/b/c/d** Galicia (MZ)/Prespa (AL)/Pelister (MZ)/Prespa (GR)

# Green Belt Mapping Project



**Cartographic GIS Mapping and Database**  
Application of results on the local level of the European Green Belt

**Introduction**  
The European Green Belt Initiative supports transboundary cooperation in nature conservation and regional development, by connecting protected areas with their surrounding landscapes and communities. The route is a legacy of history and in large sections it follows the former „Iron Curtain“. By spanning some of the most important regions for biological and cultural diversity in Europe, the Green Belt includes parts of the migrator routes of bird species and crosses mammals migration routes.

**Background**  
The Green Belt as a habitat network is a bridging element that links core areas and corridors, which can be pronounced as landscape corridors, stepping stone corridors, linear corridors and buffer zones as well as sustainable use areas. Nevertheless, the outstanding ecological value of the European Green Belt cannot be defined simply by labelling all its green-wild sites. The habitat network is embedded in a matrix of regular landscape, i.e. a landscape, which is used in various ways.

**2020 conservation areas in a 25 to 50 km zone on either side of the Green Belt:**

- National Parks and Nature Reserves
- SCs of the Habitat Directive
- Sites of the Birds Directive
- Biosphere Reserves
- Others

**Project Goal**  
A reader study based on the database that is an analysis of the status and use of the area for actions in two Central European Green Belt areas.

**Identification of potentials in nature conservation and transboundary cooperation in both areas.**

**Site specific recommendations for a joint regional development.**

**GIS Mapping of the Green Belt**  
For joint project development on a local as well as on a regional level, the coordinators of the initiative required the development of a joint geodatabase containing information on the physical features of the Green Belt route, its land cover, land use, habitat status as well as status of protection. With financial support from BfN and IUCN, this could be conducted in 2006 and 2007.

**The project resulted in:**

- a scientific database to identify priority areas for further engagement in action conservation,
- the display of the Green Belt in overview and in detail, including the protection status, land cover and species composition,
- a manual and CD for all partners,
- a series of 55 posters with clippings from all Green Belt areas.

**The results are a basis for further analyses. In order to show the applicability in a local transboundary area, an extension of the project was granted by BfN.**

IUCN Green Belt Coordination Office

- Local application tested in two model regions
- **Guidelines on the application of the database developed – goals / options for local use:**
  - Synthesis of site descriptions and processing of material
  - **Identification of potentials in transboundary cooperation for nature conservation (e.g. management and development)**
  - **Site specific recommendations for joint regional development**
  - Analysis of biodiversity, species and habitats along the Green Belt
  - Studies on landscape ecology, analyses of connectivity and surroundings.
  - Suggestions for a foresighted adaption to climate change



# INTERREG III B-project „Green Belt“ (CADSES-Region)

June 2006 – May 2008

EU-financed: approx. 750.000 €

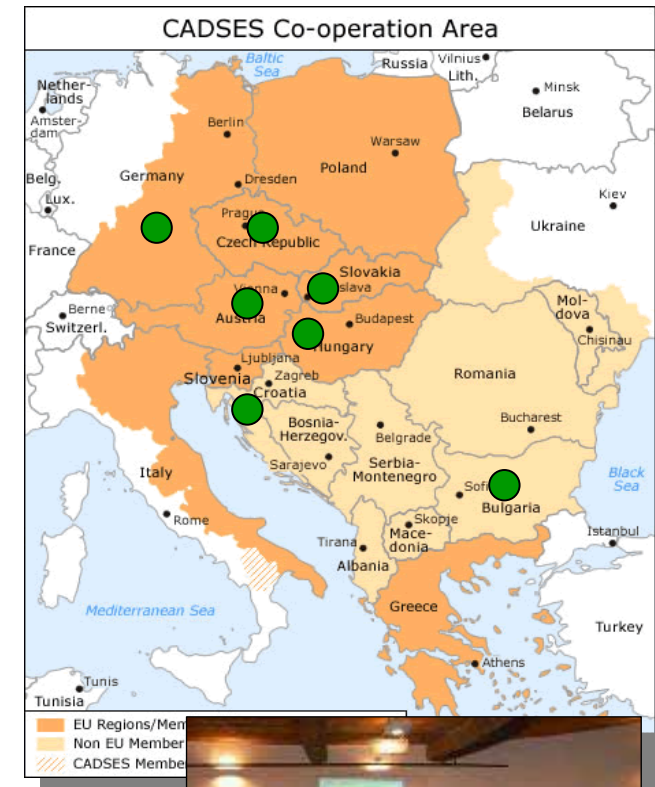


## Objectives:

Preservation and development of transboundary ecological corridor „Green Belt“ through ...

- gap-analysis
- sustainable regional development
- careful infrastructural development of the (former) border areas
- public relations, touristic marketing, educational projects
- establishment of long lasting transboundary networks in the CADSES-Area and beyond

[www.greenbelteurope.eu](http://www.greenbelteurope.eu)



# INTERREG IV B-project „baltic green belt“



January 2009 – January 2012

Total budget: 2.45 Mio €

22 Partner Organisations

Lead: University Kiel

## Objectives:

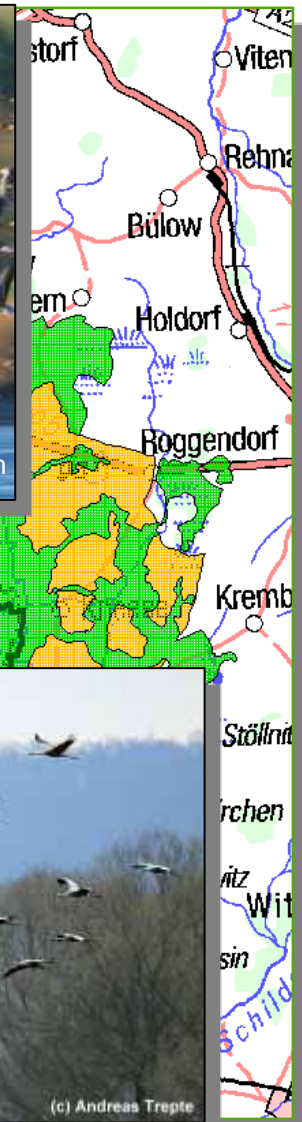
- Improve the implementation of **integrated Coastal Zone Management**, capacity building
- Improve Baltic Sea **biodiversity** and **reduce eutrophication**
- Communicate consequences of global **climate change** on coastal areas
- **Integrate human activities** with the natural environment in protected as well as non-protected areas



<http://www.balticgreenbelt.uni-kiel.de/>



# Large scale nature conservation project Schaalsee-Landscape (Germany)





# Project Jablanica-Shebenik

## Border area between Albania and Macedonia

- 34 km of the Green Belt
- important habitat for bear, wolf and lynx (Balkan subspecies)
- preparation of National Parks
- capacity building

➔ Follow up projects on Balkan lynx



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# Information – public relations work



**European Green Belt  
Exhibition at Linz  
(European Culture  
Capital 2009)**

**Now turned into  
travelling exhibition**

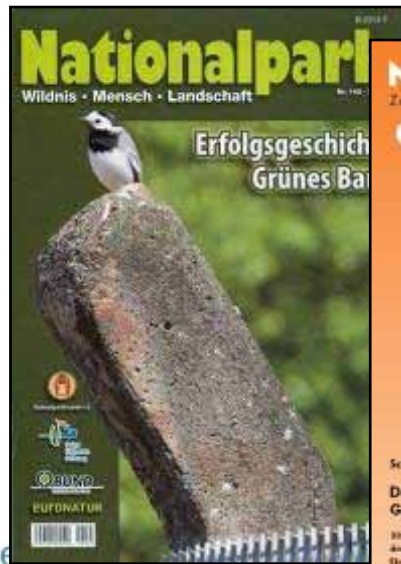
Exhibition catalogue German/English





# Joint public relations work I

- TV-Documentaries (e.g. BBC, ARD, ZDF, ORF, 3 SAT, Arte, France 5)
- DVDs
- Publications



## Joint public relations work II

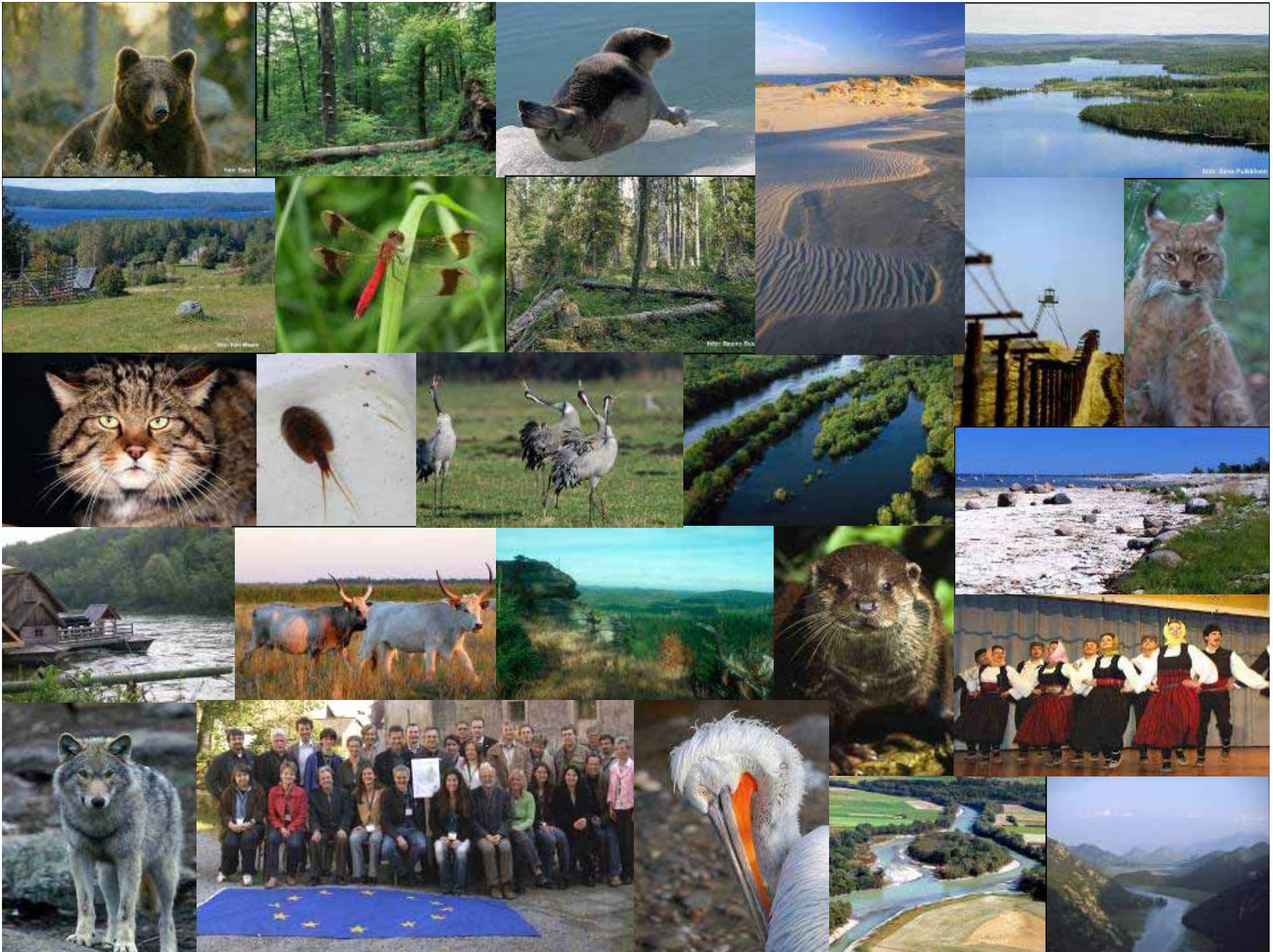
- Alternative **travel fair** “Reisepavillion” in Munich 26.02.-01.03.2009 – main topic “Green Belt”
- **Press journeys** organized, e.g. April 27.-30.2009 focusing on the project regions “Experience Green Belt”
- Naturathlon (August 2009) – **Nature sports event**



ence, Riga, 23.03









# Nature tourism – Green Belt of Fennoscandia

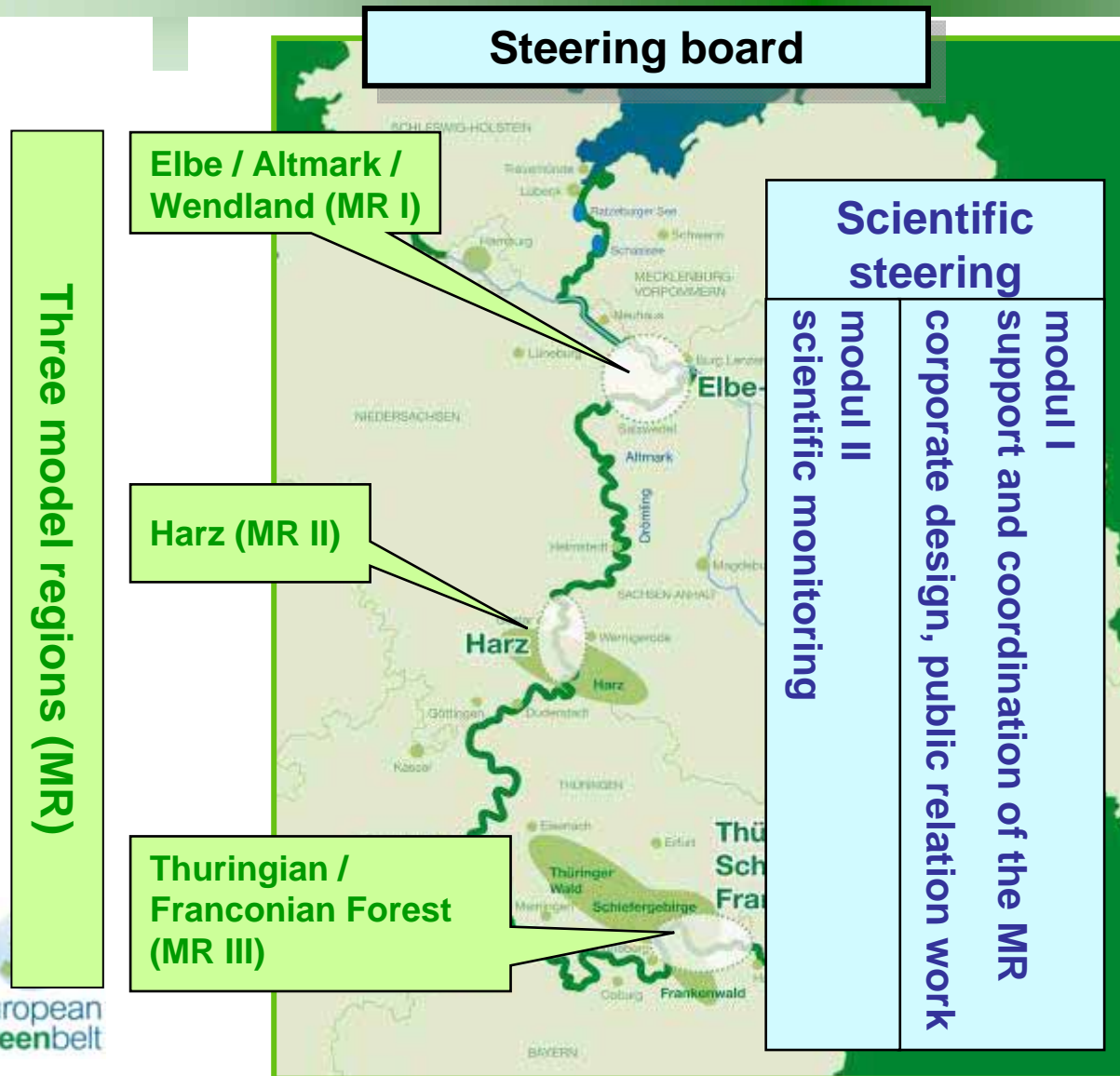




# Nature tourism – Green Belt of Fennoscandia



# ‘Experience Green Belt’ (Germany)

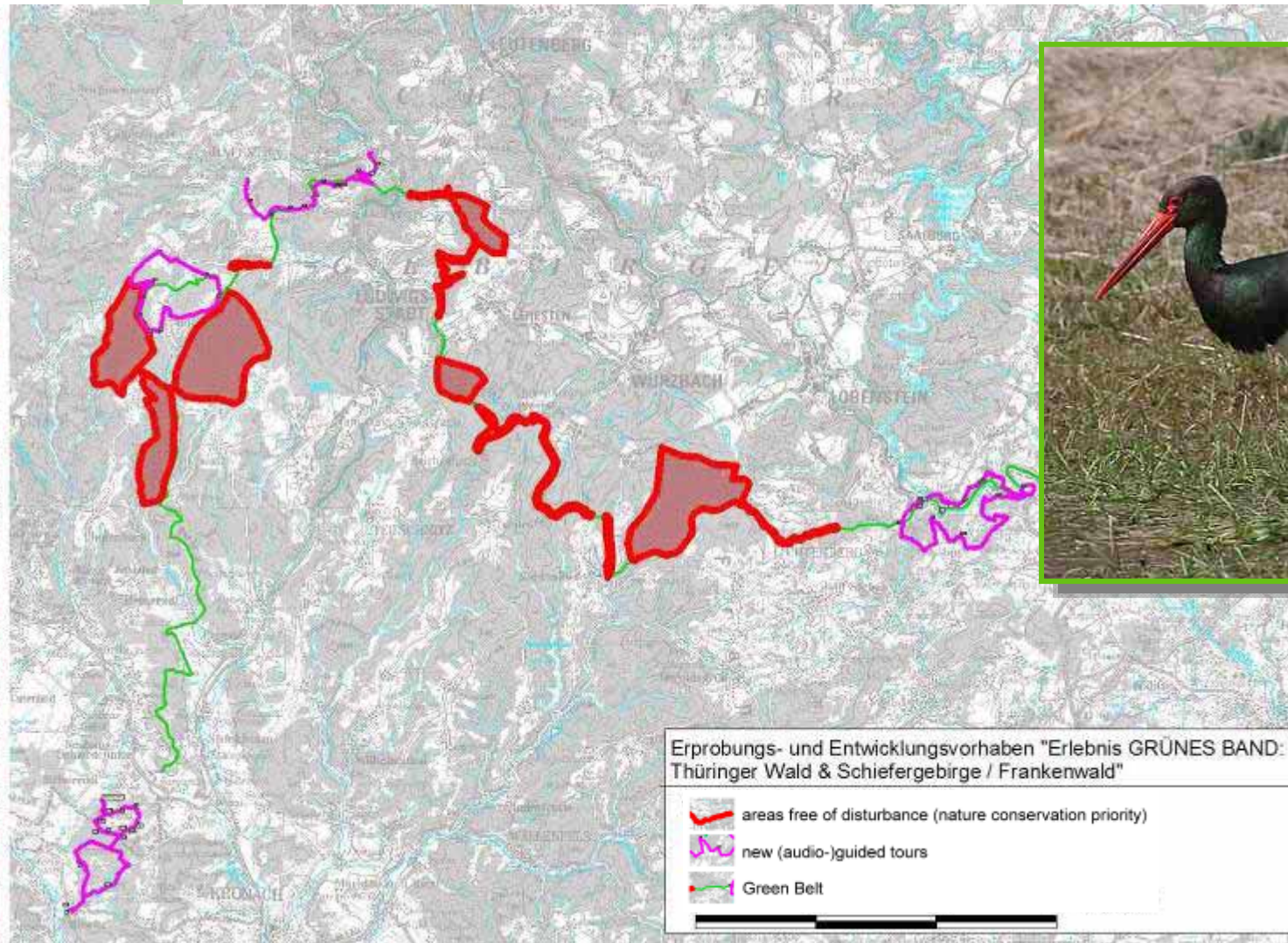


## Complex structure:

- three model regions (MR)
- in each region numerous partners from:
  - nature conservation, tourism and administration
  - several federal states (Bundesländer)
- lots of coordination, public relation work etc.



# Mapping – Planning





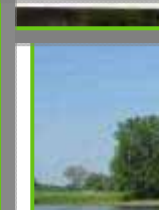
# Planning – Management





# Nature experience

- hiking paths
- canoeing
- biking courses
- audio guided tours
- guided tours  
(specific education programmes for nature guides)
- work camps
- special touristic offers



# Younger German history

- historic workshops
- cooperation with border museums
- interviews with contemporary witnesses (recordings used in audio guided tours)
- development and reconstruction of border relicts





- literature dealing with aspects of nature or history of the border area (exhibition, catalogue)
- art projects with schools
- land art projects



European  
greenbelt



## Green Belt Exhibitions:

- New national park visitor center TorfHaus
- Probstzella – former border crossing point (railway)
- Mödlareuth – divided village
- Mobile exhibition







## Information points ‚Experience Green Belt‘

- internet access and special information on the Green Belt
- opportunity to hire audio guides (MP3-, SatNav-audio guides)

## Mobile phone guides

## Information boards

## Printed information

- maps
- tour books
- flyers
- etc.



# Touristic offers





### Wie einst Nils Holgersson Auf den Spuren wilder Gänse

Wenn in der Abenddämmerung tausende wilde Gänse ihr Schlafgewässer im schönen, schauigen Rambower Moor aufsuchen, ist das ein besonderes Naturerlebnis. Begleiten Sie uns von der historischen Burg Lützen mit dem Fahrrad auf den Spuren der Zugvögel. Lassen Sie sich verzaubern von einer einzigartigen Flusslandschaft im Grünen Band.

- + 2 Übernachtungen in stilvollen Gästezimmern inkl. Frühstück
- + Bio-Vollverpflegung, Abendessen am Kamin und „Hexenkessel“ im Moor, Lunchpaket
- + Exkursion ins Moor, geführte Radtour in die Flussvertschaft Elbe
- + für Kinder Naturspiele

**Preis:**  
159,- € p.P.,  
Kinder bis 14 Jahre 89,- €

**Mindestteilnehmerzahl:**  
8 Personen

**Buchbare Termine:**  
von November - März auf Anfrage

**Hotel Burg Lützen**

### Auf den Spuren von Luchs & Co.

Im wildromantischen Harzbergwald wird jede Wanderung zum Naturerlebnis. Bei einem Ausflug in den Nationalpark erfahren Sie von den Nationalpark-Mitarbeitern Spannendes über den Luchs und seinen außergewöhnlichen Lebensraum. Höhepunkt ist die Fütterung an den Rabenklippen. In gemütlichen Landhauszimmern können Sie Kraft schöpfen und wohlige Entspannung finden Sie in den Harzburger Sole-Thermen.

- + 2 Übernachtungen inkl. Frühstück (Buffet mit Bio-Ecke)
- + Begrüßung und Einführung in die Erlebnisausstellung TurfHaus
- + Luchsfütterung an den Rabenklippen: Vom 01. April bis 15.

**Preis:**  
89,- € p.P. im DZ  
EZ/Zuschlag: 20,- €

**Buchbare Termine:**  
buchen bis 23.12.2010

**Solehotels Tannenhof und**

### Wo sich Fuchs und Hase gute Nacht sagen

Den Zivilisationsstress hinter sich lassen, sich auf die Natur konzentrieren und zur Ruhe kommen – erleben Sie eine spannende Natur im Funkloch am Grünen Band.

- + 2 Übernachtungen in Zelten, Baumhaus, selbst angefertigten Linterschlöpfen oder im Holzstanzlager
- + Vollverpflegung während der gesamten Reisedauer
- + „Grünreisen“ inkl. Softdrinks, abschließend Latamany-/Aberlaxenwaidenung mit einem ehemaligen Grenzpolizisten
- Leben von dem, was die Natur bietet: Kennenlernen der Umgebung, Frühstück aus der Natur, Herstellen von Werkzeugen und Gerätschaften
- + geführte Wanderung zum Grünen Band (ca. 10 km) mit Erläuterungen zu Geschichte und Natur
- + Sammeln von essbaren Wildgewächsen und Zubereitung leckerer Menüs am Lagerfeuer

**Preis:**  
159,- € p.P. für Erwachsene  
99,- € für das 1. Kind, jedes weitere Kind 89,- € (empfohlen ab 8 Jahren)  
10 % Rabatt ab 10 Personen

**Hinweis:** Selbstes Wasser aus dem Bach „Waldkotte“, erteilungsbeständige Kleidung, Rucksack, Schlafsack, etc. sind mitzubringen.

**Mindestteilnehmerzahl:** 8 Personen

**Buchbare Termine:**  
21.05. – 23.05., 02.07. – 04.07.2010  
13.08. – 15.08., 15.10. – 17.10.2010

**Weitere Termine auf Anfrage**

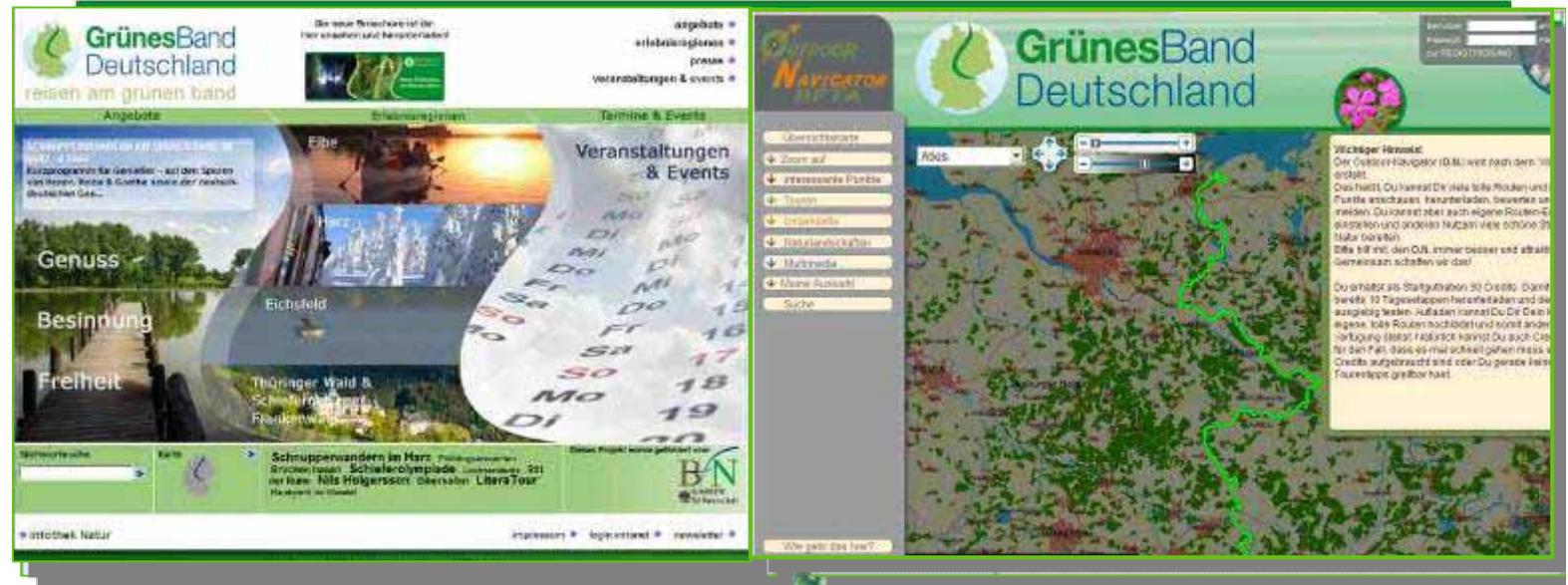
**Mia Lenzner  
Evabara Wildgewächse  
Barnsdorfer Str. 14  
07368 Eisenberg  
Tel.: 036642/27963  
info@evabara-wildgewaechse.de  
www.evabara-wildgewaechse.de**

- Elbe-Altmark-  
Wendland
- Harz
- Thuringian /  
Franconian Forest

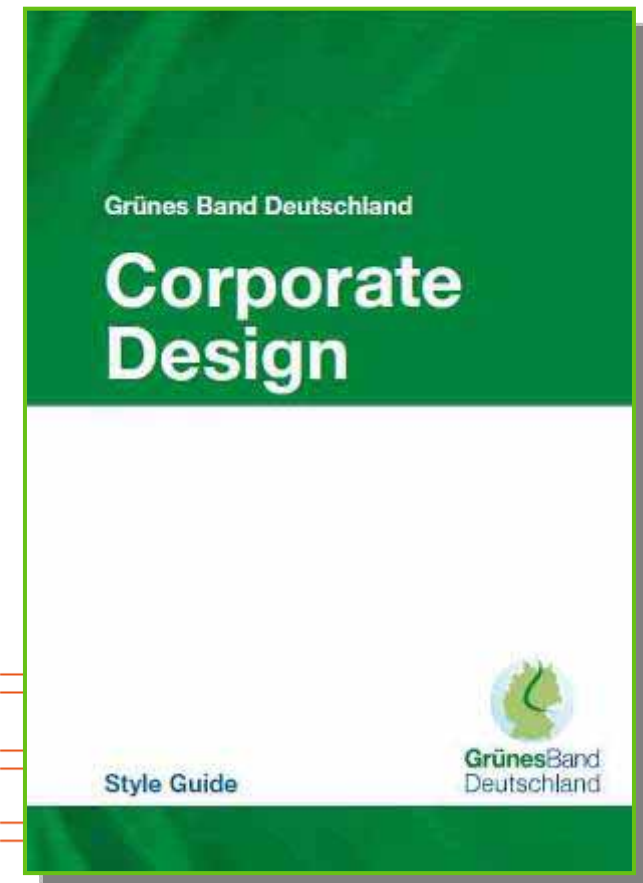
22 – 24 March 2011, Toronto, Dr. Uwe Riecken



- general information
- regions
- touristic offers
- outdoor navigator



# Corporate Design





# Nature tourism – Shebenik-Jablanica/ Macedonia-Albania







# Nature tourism – Shebenik-Jablanica/ Macedonia-Albania



## Vlerat e masivit Shebenik - Jablanica The values of Shebeniku - Jablanica

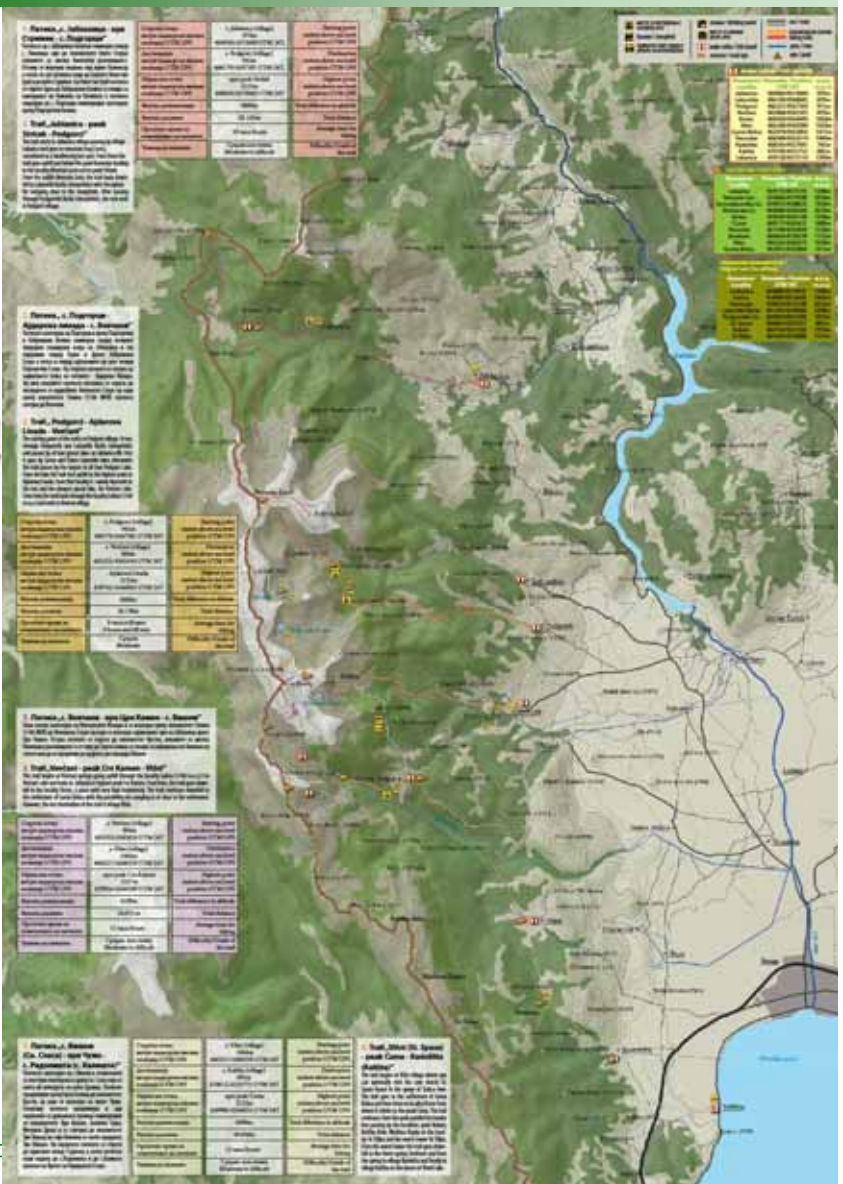


### Shtegu 1 Trail 1

**TRAJEKTORIE SHKENCËRE** (SCIENTIFIC TRAJECTORIES) - This section discusses the scientific value of the area, focusing on the unique geological and biological features. It highlights the presence of various plant and animal species, including the lynx and wolf, and the importance of the area for biodiversity conservation.

**TRAJEKTORIE SHKENCËRE** (SCIENTIFIC TRAJECTORIES) - This section continues the discussion on scientific value, detailing the significance of the area's flora and fauna. It mentions specific species like the Balkan lynx and the wolf, and the role of the area in maintaining ecological balance.

**TRAJEKTORIE SHKENCËRE** (SCIENTIFIC TRAJECTORIES) - This section provides further details on the scientific importance of the area, emphasizing the need for protection and sustainable management of the natural resources.







# Nature tourism – Prespa-Ohrid-Region Macedonia-Albania-Greece

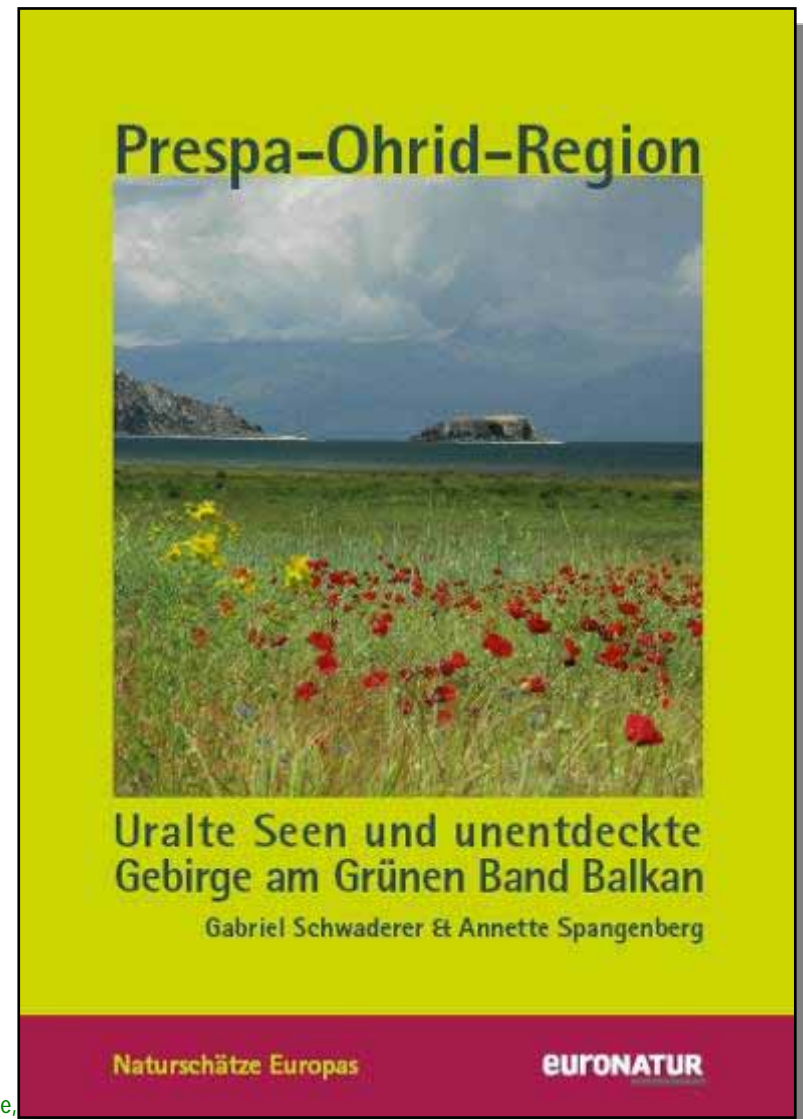
Balkan Green Belt

Albania – FYR Macedonia – Greece

eurONATUR STIFTUNG



Nature Tourism Conference,



# Outlook I

## Coordination work:

- IUCN has no capacities and funding for European Green Belt coordinator and secretariat
- A coordination board will be formed and take over the work (Regional Coordinators + selected National Focal Points and NGOs from each region)
- A project funded by BfN is in preparation to develop an improved working structure including a sustainable funding mechanism

## Programme of work:

- Update/Follow up-version necessary
- Filling of gaps in implementation, e.g.:
  - Establishment and use of European Green Belt as Label
  - Improve establishment of approach on the ground, better integration of national parks and protected areas





# Outlook II

## Meetings:

- Some future meetings that are needed to discuss and establish the working structure and the update of the PoW can hopefully be integrated in the project mentioned

## Public relations work:

- A lot of material available → **long term use of products**

## Political lobbying e.g. towards EU:

- **increased efforts necessary**

## Tourism - nature conservation:

- Intact nature + history + cultural identity that can be experienced form the touristic potential of the European Green Belt
- **use chance for soft touristic development taking care to preserve these values!**



## Outlook III

### INTERREG IV B Central project “Greennet” in Central Europe:

- Start: April 1<sup>st</sup> (end May 2014)
- Objectives (within the Central European Green Belt):
  - safeguarding an interlinked ecological network (focus on legally non- or low protected ecologically valuable areas)
  - lobbying at EU level
  - enhance nature protection in **5 Greennet pilot areas**
  - enhance civic participation and public awareness (focus on pilot areas)
  - joint transnational strategy for management and securing non- or low protected areas (volunteer approach)
- Kick-off meeting planned for end of June → some partners of the Baltic Green Belt project will be invited







A future task in good hands



# The European Green Belt: history of the initiative and examples of Green Belt tourism

**Dr. Karin Ullrich**

Biotope Protection and Biotope Management

**Thank you for your attention !**

