

# Large protected areas in Germany: ‘dynamic parks’ for sustainable development?

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# Large protected areas in Germany

## Academic background

- ZENARiO - Centre for Sustainable Spatial Development at Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg
- German Association of Geographers – Rural Geographers Working Group
- alparc – Conference in Chartreuse 2011
- Visiting professorships in the UK



# Large protected areas in Germany

## Agenda

- Large protected areas in Europe: a shift of paradigm?
- Germany: history, legal frame, concepts
- 'Dynamic parks' for sustainable development?
- Future challenges in Germany and beyond



# Large protected areas in Germany

## Large protected areas in Europe: a shift of paradigm?

- Nature protection among most outstanding societal values across Europe
- Important role of (large) protected areas (PAs): national parks, nature parks, biosphere reserves etc.



# Large protected areas in Germany

- Relevance of historic perspective to understand traditions, forms and challenges of PAs today
- Ideal function of National Parks of North America
- Different preconditions for PAs in Europe: cultural vs. natural landscapes



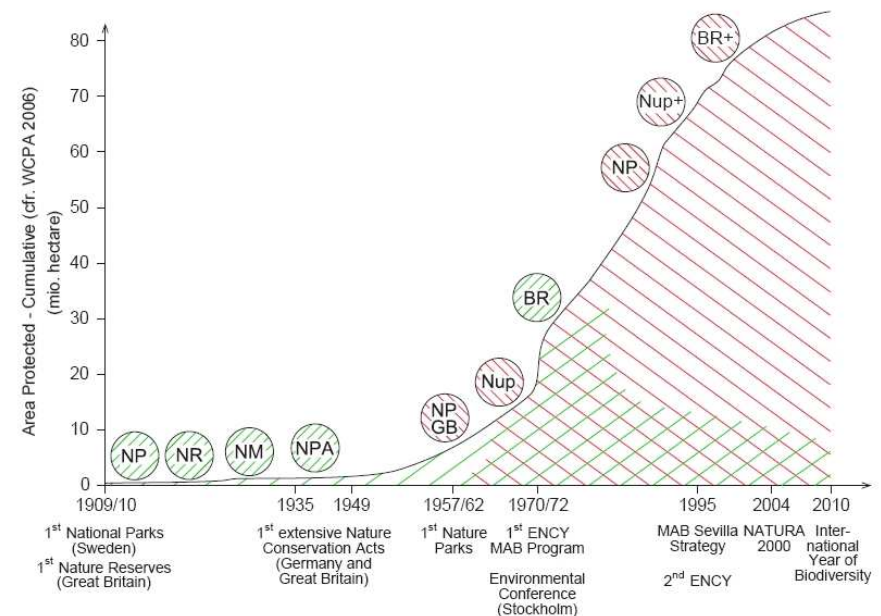
Blick in das Thal des Wellepfer-Flusses. (Nach einer Originalphotographie.)



# Large protected areas in Germany

- Since first designation of PAs significant increase in number and area
- Rapid takeoff after World War II, especially since 1970
- Current advancement (e.g. Switzerland, Norway)
- Significant differentiation of types by targets and functions

Advancement of Protected Area Policy in Europe



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Main paradigm strands:		Protected areas - categories:	
	segregated approach		National Parks
	integrated approach		National Parks GB
	ENCY: European Nature Conservation Year		Nature Reserves
			Nature Monuments
			Nature Protection Areas
			Nature Parks
			Biosphere Reserves

## Large protected areas in Germany

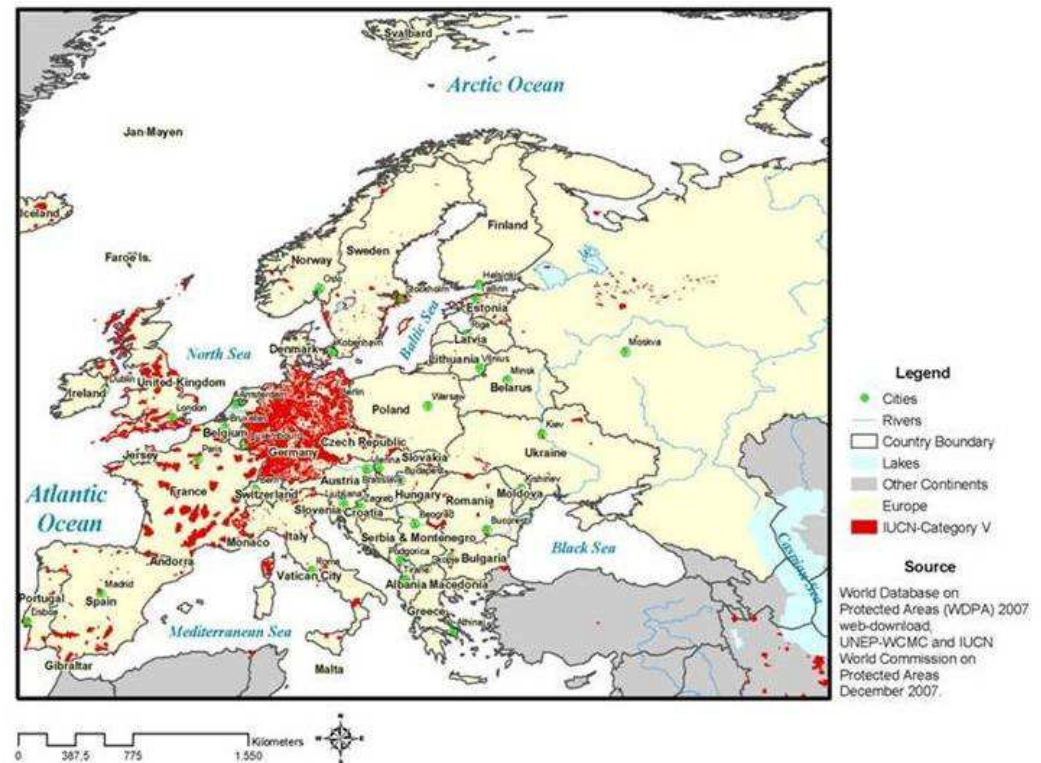
- Confusing diversity of national terminologies across Europe hinders easy orientation

### Major types of PAs in Europe

- National Parks (international)
- Naturparke (Germany, Austria, South Tyrol)
- Parc Naturel Régionaux (France)
- Parchi Naturali Regionali (Italy)
- Parque Natural (Spain)
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (England and Wales)
- Regionalparker (Norway)
- Regionale Naturpärke (Switzerland)
- Biosphere Reserves (international)

# Large protected areas in Germany

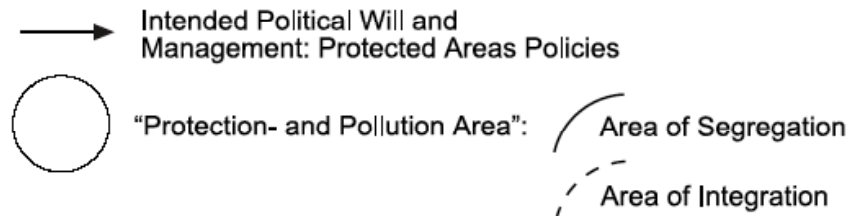
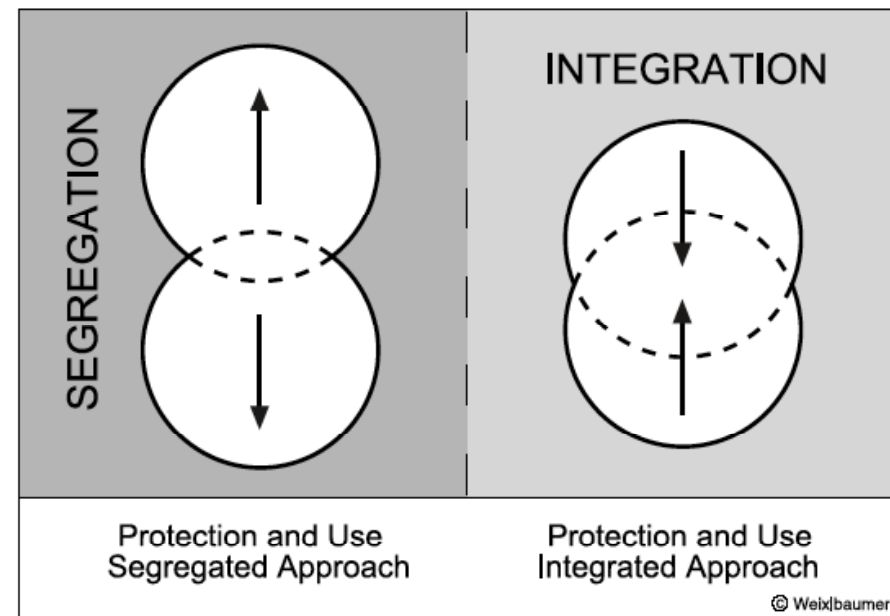
- Dominant role of IUCN category V across Europe: „protected land-/sea-scape“ (almost 50 % of all PAs territory)
- Major focus thereby on „interaction between people and nature“
- Common image of „dynamic PAs“





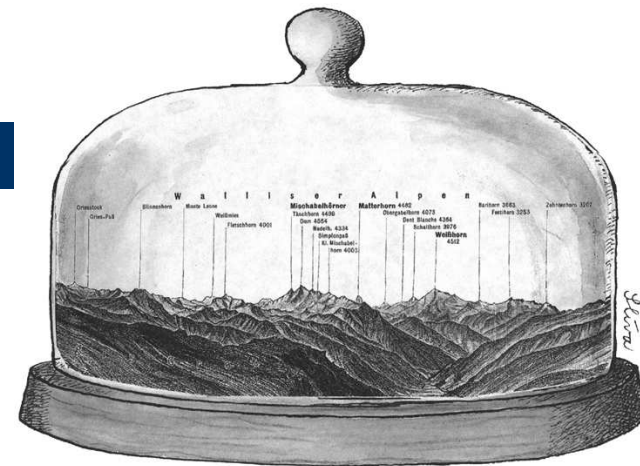
# Large protected areas in Germany

- Increasing role of dynamic PAs mirrors obvious change of perspective
- Weixlbaumer (2005): two basic principles of area protection
- Hence, engaged debate over paradigm shift (or extension) in PAs policies



# Large protected areas in Germany

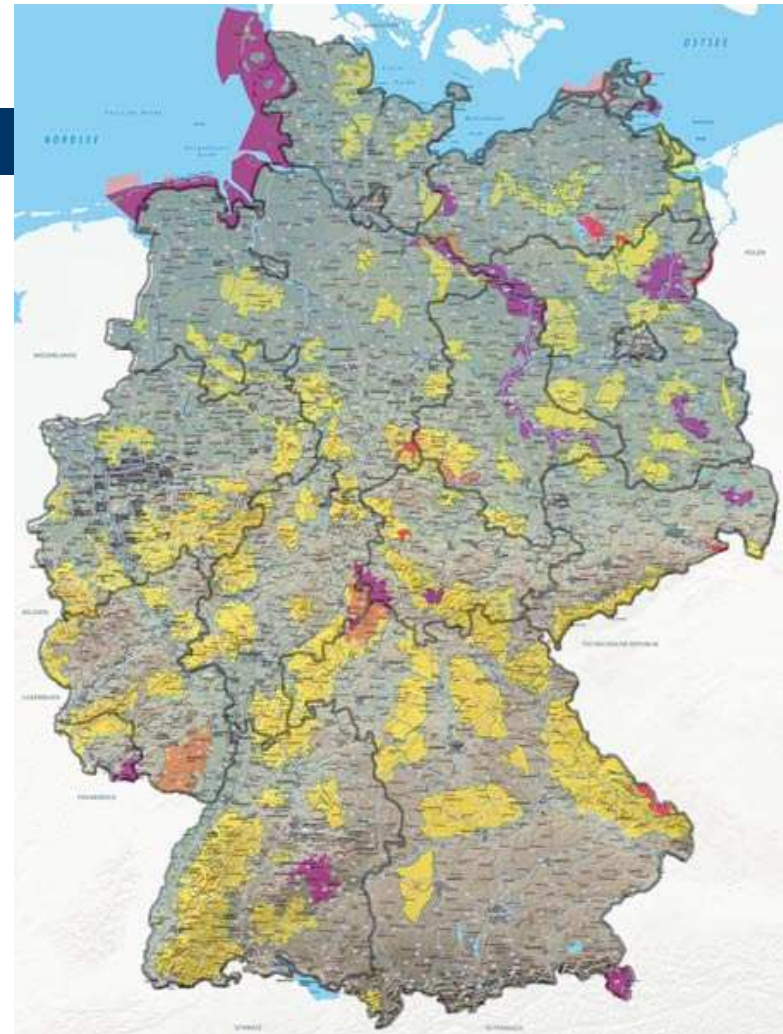
- Consequently, traditional model of „cheese cover“ gradually losing dominance
- Instead increasing relevance of PAs in the sense of „working landscapes“
- Finally, PAs even regarded as tools for sustainable development



# Large protected areas in Germany

## Germany: history, legal frame, concepts

- In European context Germany provides special case for PA policies
- Although highly urbanized, today nearly 1/3 of territory designated as PAs
- Wide range of different categories and labels



# Large protected areas in Germany

- Multitude of historic roots
- Decisive role of private initiatives
- First introduction of PAs during early 1900s
- Implementation of legislation mid 1930s
- First national park 1970
- Extension of PA system after German re-unification
- Increasing involvement of important NGOs



# Large protected areas in Germany

- PAs today defined by a complex system of legislation
- „*Bundesnaturschutzgesetz*“ of 1978 provides basis on national level
- Accordingly each of the *Länder* execute their own law (with minor differences)
- Increasing role of EU legislation (NATURA 2000)

## BNatSchG (2010)

- § 23 *Naturschutzgebiet* (2,3%)
- § 24 *Nationalpark* (2,0%)
- § 25 *Biosphärenreservat* (4,4%)
- § 26 *Landschaftsschutzgebiet* (24,9 %)
- § 27 *Naturpark* (18,7%)
- § 32 *Natura 2000* (4,0%)

# Large protected areas in Germany

- Complexity of legal framework reflects conceptual differentiation
- Three major dimensions of area protection in Germany
  - Protection (or restoration) of valuable ecosystems
  - Scenic areas for recreation in nature
  - Integration of protection and development



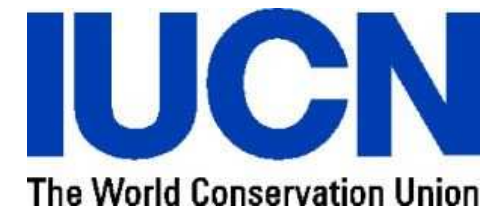
## Large protected areas in Germany

- Thus introduction of PAs often highly disputed
- Potential of controversy about conflicting concepts: segregation versus integration
- Varied forms of landownership to be considered
- However, majority of PAs in Germany can be regarded 'dynamic parks'



# Large protected areas in Germany

- Currently increasing tendency of (additional) labelling
- Context: demand for higher acceptance and additional value
- Since 2005 joint promotion of all large PAs on national level: „*Nationale Naturlandschaften*“



Nationale  
Naturlandschaften

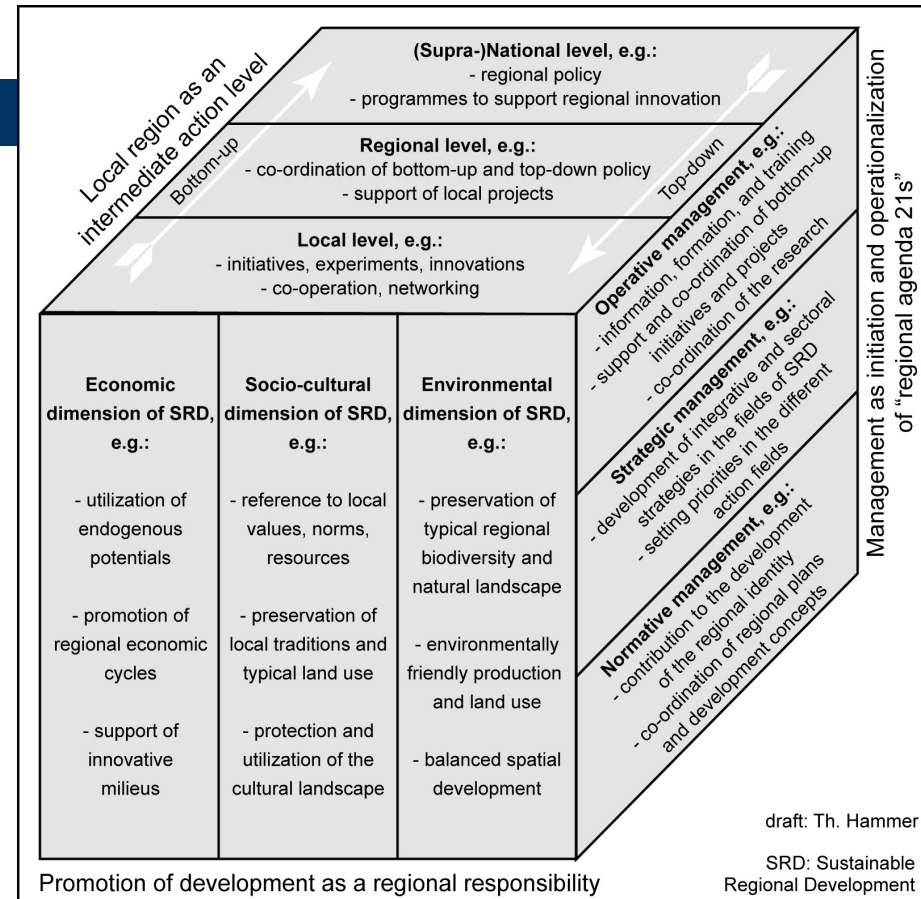




# Large protected areas in Germany

## 'Dynamic parks' for sustainable development?

- Further than integration of protection and development PAs have become concerned with subject of sustainability
- Several contexts of sustainability debate in PAs



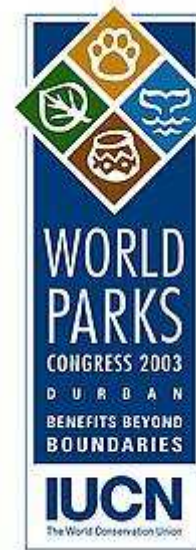
The hexahedron of sustainable regional development

# Large protected areas in Germany

- Initial catalyst: Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro 1992
- Adaptation of concept for PAs in different directions:
  - Seville Strategy for UNESCO Biosphere Reserves 1995
  - Durban Accord 2005 of the IUCN
  - Also several national adaptations, e.g. for *Naturparke* in Germany (2006)



**RIO+20**  
United Nations  
Conference on  
Sustainable  
Development



# Large protected areas in Germany

- So far heterogenous performance of PAs in Germany regarding conceptual demands of sustainability

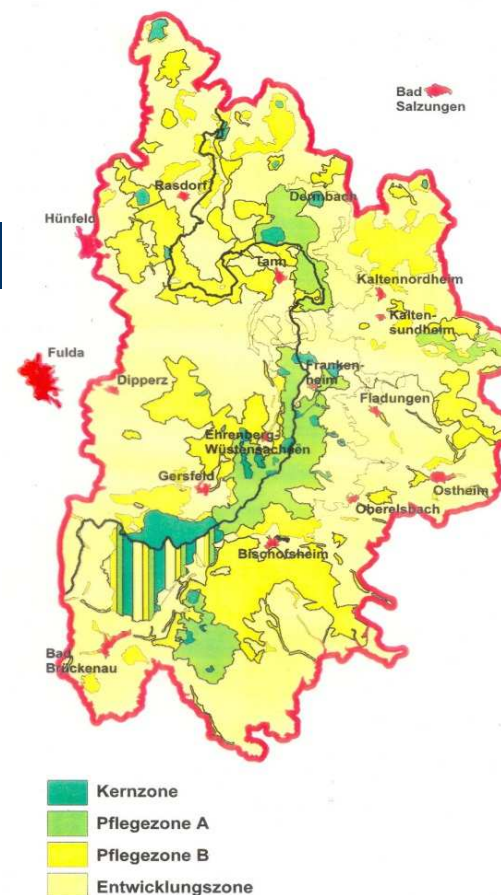
## Performance of PAs in sustainability

- *Nationalparks*: limited connection in theory , however several initiatives and projects (e.g. *Nationalparkpartner*)
- *Naturparke*: defined role according to the law, however slow response with few positive examples so far
- *Biosphärenreservate*: strong affinity, many positive examples of successful application

# Large protected areas in Germany

## Example of Rhön Biosphere Reserve

- Implemented in 1991 as first biosphere reserve in West Germany
- Involvement of three *Länder*
- Test-bed for sustainable development
- Development based on long-term vision (*Leitbild*)



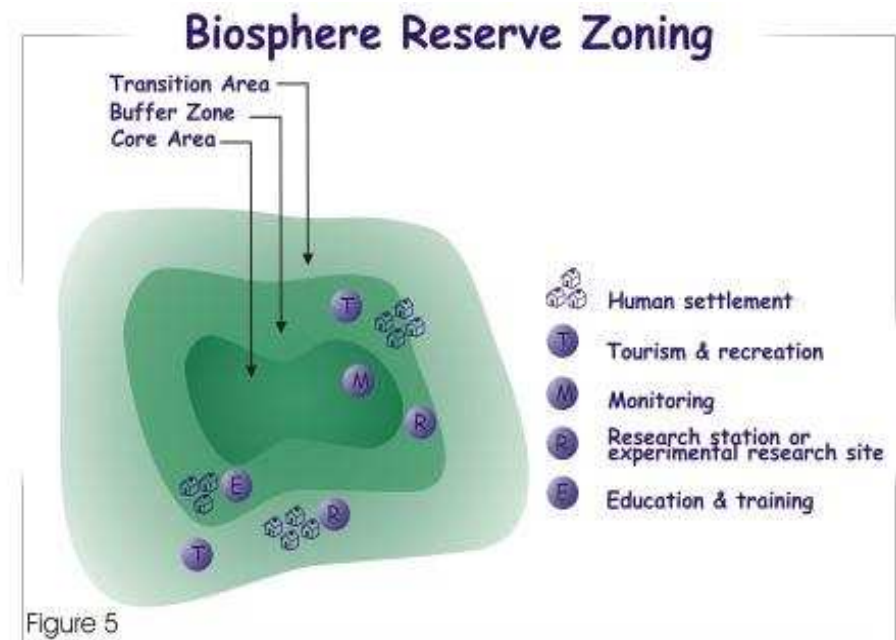
Natur- und Lebensraum Rhön e.V.  
Trägerverein für das Biosphärenreservat  
Georg-Meilinger-Str. 3  
36115 Ehrenberg-  
Wüstensachsen

Biosphärenreservat  
Rhön



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- Rhön reflects specific qualities of biosphere reserves
- Major attributes:
  - Zoning concept
  - Professional management structures
  - Involvement of stakeholders (governance)
  - Participation of population
  - Use of development programmes (e.g. LEADER)
  - Monitoring



# Large protected areas in Germany

- Various projects in progress:
  - Re-invention of Rhön sheep
  - Mixed apple orchards
  - Timber products from the region
  - Renewable energies
  - Nature oriented tourism
- Consequently, many projects take a holistic view



# Large protected areas in Germany

## Future challenges in Germany and beyond

- So far continuous advancement of area protection – future unsafe though
- Eye-catching increase of 'dynamic parks'
- Dynamic parks regarded as model landscapes for sustainable development
- In effect, 'dynamic parks' create and meet high expectations at the same time
- Specific requirements for successful design of future pathways
- Selected core issues for future research and practical application

# Large protected areas in Germany

## a. Stakeholder involvement and participation

- Understand dynamics of stakeholder involvement and governance
- Negotiate appropriate forms of participation
- Test and make use of suitable forms of governance: public-private partnerships, community appraisals etc.





# Large protected areas in Germany

## b. Future topics

- Address topics of future relevance, e.g. renewable energies, climate change, biodiversity, wilderness
- Initiate projects for practical demonstration (test-beds)
- Identify examples of good practices as models for others



# Large protected areas in Germany

## c. Communication of ideas and experiences

- Establish networks for cooperation, joint learning and innovation (learning regions) (e.g. LEADER)
- Connect with other national and international partners to exchange ideas and experiences (e.g. EUROPARC, alparc)

LEADER SüdWestAlb

Lebenswerter Ländlicher Raum



# Large protected areas in Germany

## d. Transdisciplinary research

- Support development of models by inter- and transdisciplinary research
- Thereby integrate real-world perspective
- Obtain better understanding and create more accepted solutions in the region



**LEBEN 2014**

Perspektiven der Regionalentwicklung in der  
Nationalparkregion Hohe Tauern/Oberpinzgau



# Large protected areas in Germany

- In summary, goals and chances of PAs have to be made clearly visible - in the regions and beyond
- PAs have to be promoted as innovation centers for sustainable development for the society at large
- Successful development of parks is the work of at least one generation



# Large protected areas in Germany

Thank you very much!

Further information under:  
[www.raumentwicklung.uni-oldenburg.de/](http://www.raumentwicklung.uni-oldenburg.de/)



# Large protected areas in Germany

## Selected literature

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