CEETO – D.T2.4.1

Monitoring Workplan (of Pilot Actions)

Naturpark Sölktäler (PP04)

Version 1
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1. Introduction

Naturpark Sölktäler is situated in the Lower Tauern massif. The whole park covers 28.800 ha and stretches out from 694 in valley Ennstal up to 2747 meters above sea level. Most of the mountains are extremely steep and not easy to cultivate. The forest line lays about approximately 1800 – 1900 m height. Lots of alpine meadows lower than this line bring a mosaic of different habitats in small spaces. These regions have the highest abundance of species. There are different rock materials, being the reason why there is so much biodiversity of vegetation. Through mainly old rocks a band of marble extends across the two valleys and enriches the vegetation. Distinguishing of the Naturpark Sölktäler is the swampy landscape and the numerous lakes in the different altitudes.

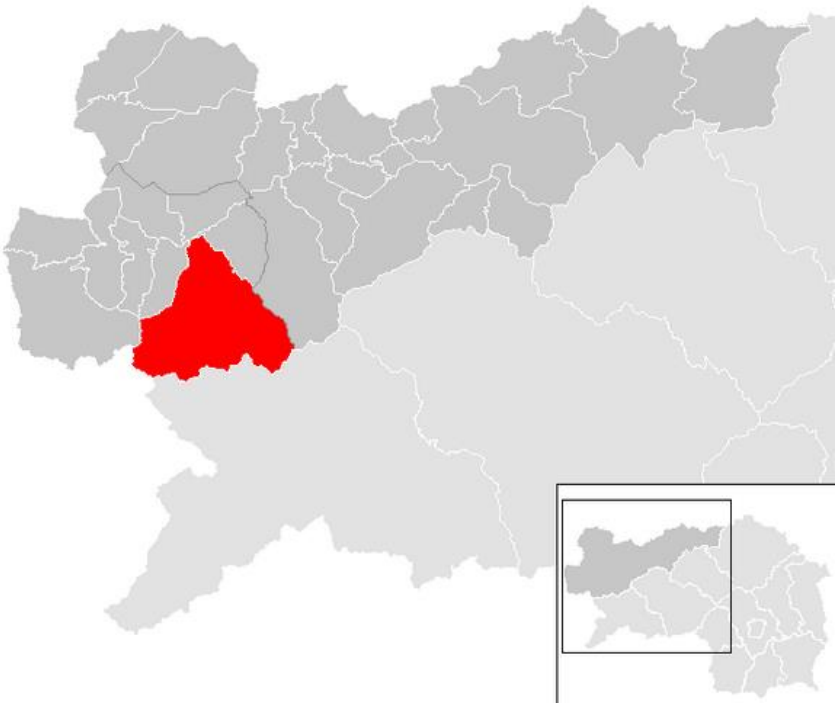

Figure 1: Map showing the Naturpark Sölktäler

The red part is the Naturpark Sölktäler, a protected area as a whole (Naturpark and Natura 2000). However, the tourism is increasing within the entire Schladming-Dachstein region. Due to more visitors it is important to gain information about the tourists and their common destinations in the Naturpark Sölktäler. Thus to get a better understanding about the visitor flows and behaviour of visitors a monitoring system was set up.

2. Monitoring Measures

To gain a better understanding of the visitor flow, four electronic counters from the company “Elektro Wolf” were set up at four common hiking spots. The counters are small black boxes and count bi-

directional, hence displaying the in- and outflow into the area of visitors. The counters were installed on August 13 2018 (see figure 2).

Figure 2: electronic counter installed at St. Nikolai

Note: Some inaccuracy regarding the actual numbers is to be expected. The system is not able to count two people walking too close next two each other; furthermore, they are not able to distinguish between a bicycle, a person walking and a car.

Additional to the plain numbers of the electronic counting and as control, manual monitoring stations were set up in summer holidays (August, September 2018).

A status quo must also be determined for the winter. Prior to this, the ski tours were already adapted based on the old routes, some of which led through quiet zones. This has already been implemented as a first measure. At the same time, the ski tourers are recorded numerically on the basis of evaluations of the summit books as well as their effects on the wild animals. In this context, the density and population of the ptarmigan is determined. As already described in the Action Plan, the avalanche equipment and the spotting scope are required for this purpose due to the exposed location of the study areas and the distance involved. Put differently, the ski tour folder, which was redesigned in winter 2018/2019 (described in more detail in the pilot action of raising awareness/Pilot Action), is already a result of the previous status quo analysis and contains as a result already changes of the routes and extensions of the rest zones as well as informative contents about the habitats of the animals on site.

Short-term measures also include ongoing monitoring of the impact of people/tourists on the environment. This includes on-site inspections in summer as well as in winter, using on the one hand the Swarovski spotting scope and on the other hand the avalanche equipment, in order to be able to determine the effects on a very large area on the one hand, and on the other hand to be equipped with the dangers of winter in the form of avalanches, which very often occur in this region. The affected areas are usually very exposed and therefore the weather influences should not be underestimated. Part of the status quo is to determine the current chicken population in order to exclude negative developments.

2.1. Locations

First, four monitoring locations were chosen for the electronic counting. The electronic counters were set up the hiking "hotspots" (still not a real hotspot in the common sense because of less people) in the Naturpark Sölktäler:

- St. Nikolai
- Deneck
- Mössnakar
- Kleinsölk (Köckalm)

The hand count was executed in summer at two locations: St. Nikolai (in addition to the electronic counting) and in the Kleinsölk near the toll station to the Schwarzensee.

All people pass the counters on their hiking way because they are installed shortly after the parking possibilities.

2.2. Methods

In hand counting, as in electronic counting, a distinction was made as to which direction the persons were going: in or out. It was also noted when a travel group or bus was involved.

In addition, questionnaires could be filled in by tourists and day guests at different alpine huts and restaurants down in the valley. The aim of this activity was to gain information of the tourists and their motivation to come to the Naturpark and their demands. At the same time, information about sustainable tourism within the park was given, as well as simple rules of conduct that everyone can easily follow. Some demographic information was also asked to identify the groups of tourists to be targeted in the pilot action.

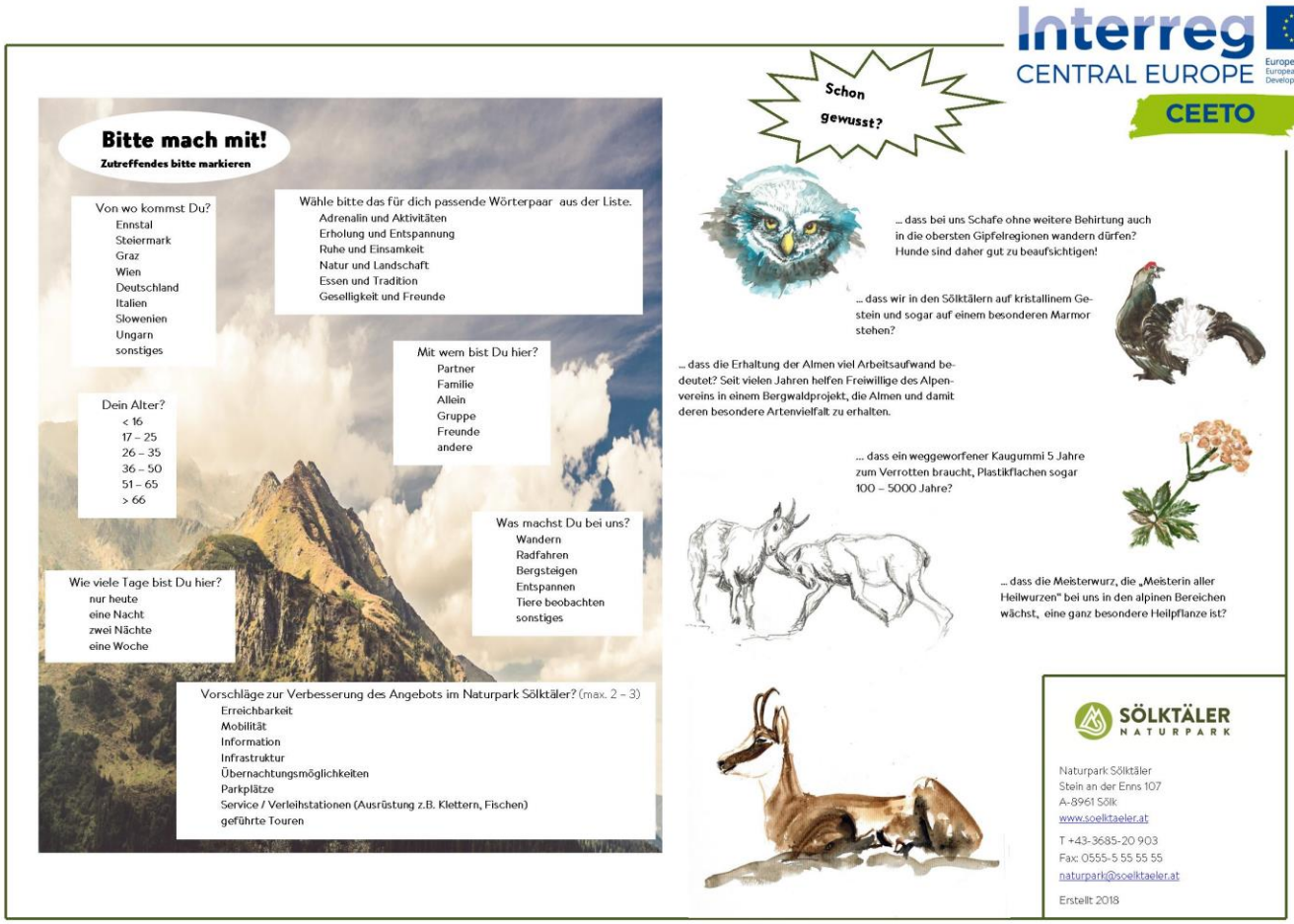

Figure 3: tourist questionnaires (placemats)

2.3. Data collection and evcaluation

The data of the electronic count are read out every 30 days via a USB stick and then imported into the program. This offers the possibility to manage the statistics online or to output them as Excel files. The data were output in the Sölktäler Nature Park as Excel files for easy processing of the data. For the first presentation of the results to the stakeholders in November 2018, some overview graphics were created and passed on to them.

The manual counting data was transferred to an excel file. Also here graphics were created for the simple representation.

From the data of both counts, the most frequented days and weeks can be determined. From this, visitor guidance measures can be implemented to canalize tourist flows on the existing paths.

The questionnaires used as placemats are evaluated by a frequency distribution in Excel. The results of this survey shows which motives tourists emphasize more or less in the Naturpark and what the popular reasons are for staying in the nature park.

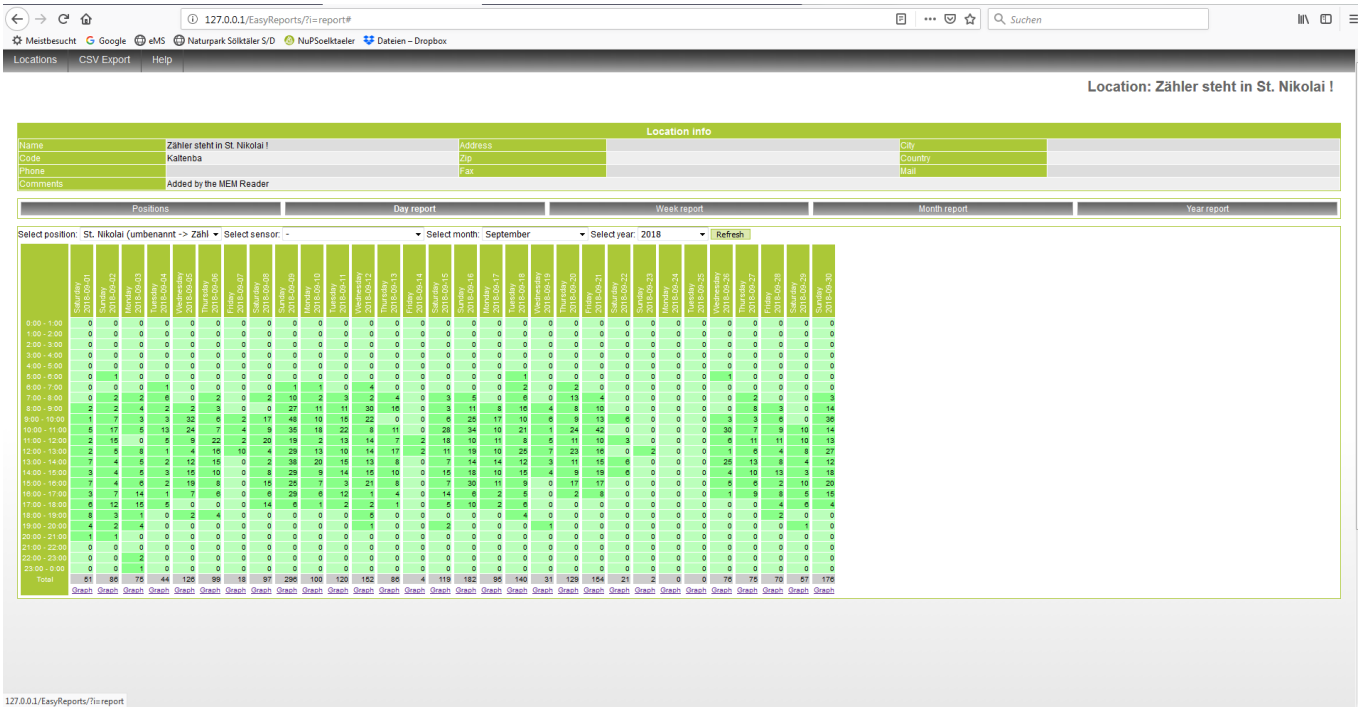

Figure 4: online data collection and analysis

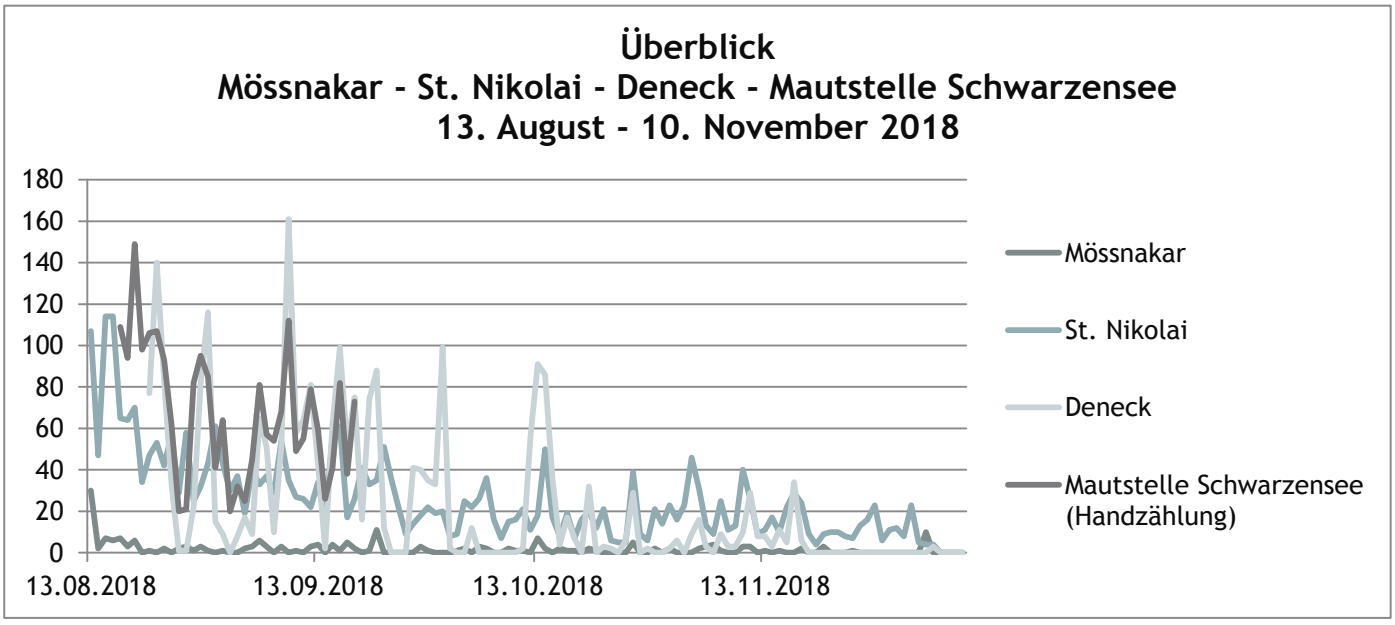

Figure 5: overview elektronic and hand counting

3. Workplan

		2018		2019				2020	
	Tasks	3/4	4/4	1/4	2/4	3/4	4/4	1/4	2/4
1	**Monitoring and Management Plan (pilote action)**								
1.1.	Preparation of visitor survey								
1.2.	Conduction out of visitor survey (light barriers and human resources, ev. booklets of mountain tops)								
1.3.	Data analysis and evaluation								
1.4.	Rock Ptarmigan and ski tourism - Data Charging								
1.5.	Data analysis and evaluation								
1.6.	Questionnaire - Alpine huts and landlords								
1.7.	Data analysis and evaluation								
1.8.	Ski tour tourism booklet and establish locally status quo								
2	**Raising Awareness - locas and tourists (pilot action)**								
2.1.	Future dialoque I youth								
2.2.	Future dialogue II stakeholder								
2.3.	10 Workshops "gemeinsam drüberschauen"								
2.4.	Approval of the action plan								
2.5.	Data analysis and evaluation								
3	**Sustainable Tourism Action Plan**								
3.1.	Workshop on the spot								
3.3.	Data analysis and evaluation								
3.4.	Formal approval of the Action Plan								

Milestone
workshop
finished
work in progress