

Mountain forest forums; dialogue between stakeholders and institutions for the conservation of mountain forests. The example of Bavaria in Germany.

### Summary

These local forums bring together stakeholders in the forestry sector: professionals, organisations, inhabitants, local institutions, politicians, etc. They are invited to take part by the public authorities and receive EU support to ensure, in particular, that the organisers are trained.

### Key words

Public authority initiative, **dialogue between forest users**, Bavarian Minister for Food, Agriculture and Forestry

### Context

As part of the Bavarian climate programme 2020, Germany is leading an 'offensive' campaign for the better adaptation of mountain forests to climate change (Bergenwald Offensive). In this context, various measures have been implemented with all relevant interest groups in specially defined regions.

### Partners

In Bavaria, the project is led by the Bavarian Minister for Food, Agriculture and Forestry, with the Bavarian Land Institute for Forestry and Sylviculture (LWF).

Mountain forest forums have been created in several regions. They bring together relevant public authorities, land owners, farmers, hunters, communes, citizens, representatives of local tourism and the economy, and environmental protection organisations.

### Activities

Local forums work to promote the conservation of the mountain forests and to seek solutions to conflicts where necessary.



At Oberammergau, for example, in 2009 the Weilheim Food, Agriculture and Forestry department sent out an invitation to local stakeholders: land owners, pasture companies, local politicians, hunters, public sector institutions, tourist offices, the League for the Protection of Nature, etc. Participants were invited to present the issues on which they would like to work.

Three working groups were created: hunting, pastures, tourism and environmental protection. Each group works independently, but forums are organised regularly to enable them to share their views with one another. In 2010, a new regulation on pastures was established in the Laber-Aufacker region: this was the result of this process of dialogue having an impact upon public policy on the local level. Other projects are underway in this region.

## Results and prospects

These projects are supported by the Interreg IV-A project 'Protection Forests Platforms and Forums in Tyrol and Bavaria'. As part of this programme, training was offered to organisers of these local forums and to stakeholder representatives.



## Comments

Through the creation of the 'forest dialogue', Austria has established a similar initiative in the Tyrol. It plans to organise a debate on economic, ecological and social issues with a view to launching a forest action programme.

There are many such initiatives, which aim to bring groups of local stakeholders and authorities together around a common issue (a forest, water, pastures, etc.) in order to jointly define local management rules, and they concern several European countries. They sometimes develop from a desire by public authorities (a Minister, a public agency, a local authority, etc.), sometimes from an initiative by local stakeholders (farmers, ecologists, inhabitants, etc.), and often from a combination of these two types of stakeholders. The scope of their work is often limited to the local area, except in the case of water resource management, which sometimes involves cooperation over fairly vast regions. In this case, the project is made possible by the involvement of public authorities through defined programmes.