



## Interactions between mountain farming and tourism

**Results from the project  
Alp Austria**  
www.almwirtschaft.com

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## Introduction

- > 20% of Austria are (potentially) alpine pastures
- > 9000 actively used alpine pastures; 12% of Austria (Parizek, 2006)
- Total use of Austrian alpine pastures: ~ 300 Mio. € (Riemerth & Greif 2006)
- > 50% of all alpine pastures with tourism infrastructure
- Tourism as additional income



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## Correlations between tourism & mountain farming

■ Since 1950 - 50% of alpine pastures have been (partly) afforested (Bogner, 2006) → effects on landscape, trail network, identity, hunting, biodiversity, tourism etc.

**Tourism**

↑

Landscape aesthetics  
Tourism offers Infrastructure  
Working places  
Income etc.

**Mountain farming**

↓

„Erst geht die Kuh, dann kommt der Wald. Kommt der Wald im Übermaß, so geht der Mensch“ (Eisl 2004)

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## Study goals

- Tourism supply and demand depending on region
- Correlations between tourism & mountain farming:
  - Cooperations,
  - Constraints,
  - Potentials
- First recommendations
- Methods used: expert interviews with different stakeholders, analysis of existing data



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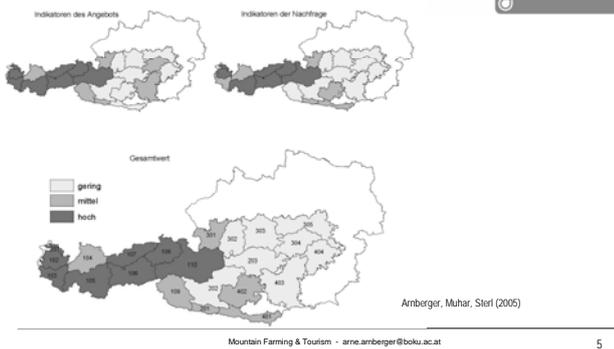
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## Tourism intensity



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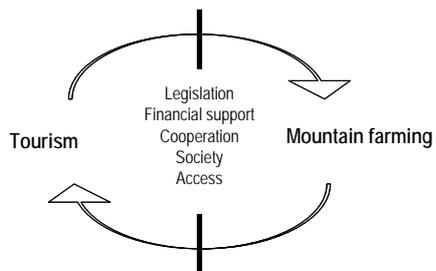
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## Constraints and potentials for tourism use of alpine pastures



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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 1) Legislation & financial support

#### • Regional spatial planning legislation:

Constraints in some provinces of Austria for renting rooms, and other tourism offers in alpine regions

→ Changes in legislation to enable tourism (no mass tourism)

#### • License to run a small company:

Getting license is difficult, limiting tourism development

→ Easier access for those providing tourism and are at the same time active mountain farmers

#### • Legislative constraints:

More restrictive laws regarding environment protection and hygienic issues are perceived as constraints for offering tourism.

→ Consultation and financial support

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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 1) Legislation & financial support

#### • Ownership:

„Einfurstungsalmen“ are limiting tourism use of alpine pastures, huts etc.

→ Ownership supports development, wish of farmers for a change, better contracts

#### • Financial support:

Partly missing financial support for tourism offers and infrastructure, while some degree of satisfaction with support for farming activities.

→ ÖPUL would indirectly assist tourism development, but synergies are not really considered:

Natura 2000 was not mentioned as a possibility to get financial support for maintaining farming

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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 2) Cooperation

#### • Mountain farming – tourism:

High satisfaction degrees about this cooperation from both sides,  
Lack of organisation of alpine farmers, lack of integration with other local and regional tourism offers

→ Integration of mountain farming tourism with other local and regional tourism initiatives (offers such as „Berg & Tal“; international marketing, websites, „Almsommer“).

Knowledge exchange between stakeholders from tourism, tourism experts and farmers

More quality, more offers of self-made local products („Kein Kaiserschmarrn aus dem Packerl“)

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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 2) Cooperation

#### • Among mountain farmers:

- Lack of cooperation and knowledge exchange
- Lack of support
- Lack of a common marketing (destination „Alm“),

- ➔ More cooperation and common marketing („Großarl – Das Tal der Almen“)
- Websites, knowledge exchange
- trails connecting alpine pastures

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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 2) Cooperation

#### • Mountain farmers – Alpine associations (ÖAV, DAV, NFÖI, ÖTK):

Many members, easy access, but few cooperations

- ➔ Marketing, direct marketing of farming products,
- Information about mountain farming,
- Information about the right behaviour on alpine pastures,
- Support in finding the best solutions for tourism infrastructure

#### • Mountain farmers– Cable car companies:

Trail network is often not suitable for walking, additional income: working places, renting areas for skiing etc. but dependent on cable car companies, weather and tourism cycles

- ➔ More use of cable cars for summer tourism,
- better connection to tourism offered by cable car companies

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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 3) Society

#### • Awareness:

Good image of mountain farming in society, but no knowledge about real living conditions and about the contribution of mountain farming to maintaining the alpine landscape  
Mountain farmers are not aware about this image

- ➔ Awareness rising through
  - Objective reports in media
  - Guided tours
  - Courses
  - Educational trails
  - School subject etc.



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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 3) Society

#### • Visitor behaviour:

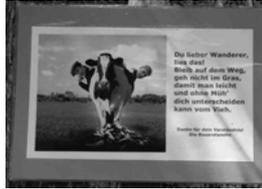
Ecological impacts; disturbance of pasturing, user conflicts (dogs); tourism use throughout the year

#### → Visitor management

- Financial support
- Improved trail infrastructure (signage, trails not leading through pastures, educational trails etc.)

- Information about the right behaviour (folder)

- Role of associations



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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 3) Society

#### • Social carrying capacities:

- Farmers: 2 jobs; lack of cheap and qualified personnel for tourism and/or farming
- Impacts on family and relatives; children

When focus on tourism, no or reduced farming activities, „Gäste melken ist einträglicher als Kühe melken“

- Guests: mass tourism reduces the alpine experience, use displacement

#### → Investigations on social carrying capacities of farmers, local population and visitors

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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 3) Society

#### • Demands for higher standards

Increasing demands of tourists for higher room standards

Increasing demands for farmers and farming personnel regarding living conditions, high costs for adaptation of rooms and huts

#### → Financial support

#### • Training:

Lack of training for tourism

Lack of professionalism, marketing and innovation

#### → Financial support for training courses (tourism, marketing, innovation, guiding visitors)

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## Constraints, Potentials and Recommendations



### 4) Accessibility

Correlation with income from tourism,  
Lack of good access limits farming activities,  
Good accessibility leads to problems (noise, accidents, conflict with wildlife etc.)  
Traditional and attractive hiking trails are no more used.

- Tourism contributes to the maintenance of the trail network
- Supports farming activities
- Revitalisation of traditional hiking trails
- Traffic management

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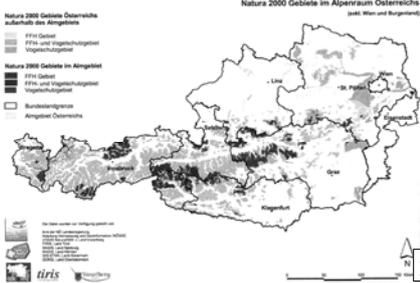
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## Natura 2000 and tourism in alpine areas



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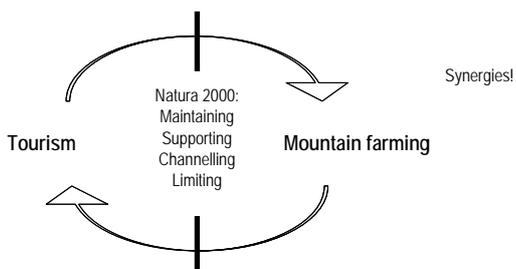
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## Constraints and potentials for tourism use of alpine pastures



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## Conclusions

- Tourism can contribute to the maintenance of mountain farming, but the balance between farming and tourism activities must be granted: „Hirt soll nicht Wirt werden“, → Financial support
- Trends → Potential for tourism
- Alpine pastures are recreation areas
- How many alpine pastures are needed?
- Natura 2000 as a chance for both mountain farming and sustainable alpine tourism

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## Thanks!



Have you  
never seen  
before Natura  
2000 - Cows?

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