

# The relevance of Ecotourism in the Danube region

- Latest trends and challenges

## Conference 'Green Competences for Ecotourism in the Danube region'

- Comana, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015



Christian Baumgartner  
response & ability





Eco or  
Sustainable –  
what are we  
talking about?

Trends and  
Demands -  
Examples of  
sustainable  
ecotourism at  
the Danube

Some figures

Challenges  
(not only) for  
education





## **Eco or Sustainable – what are we talking about?**

Trends and Demands -  
Examples of sustainable ecotourism at the Danube

Some figures

Challenges  
(not only) for education





## ECOTOURISM DEFINITION – THE ORIGINAL

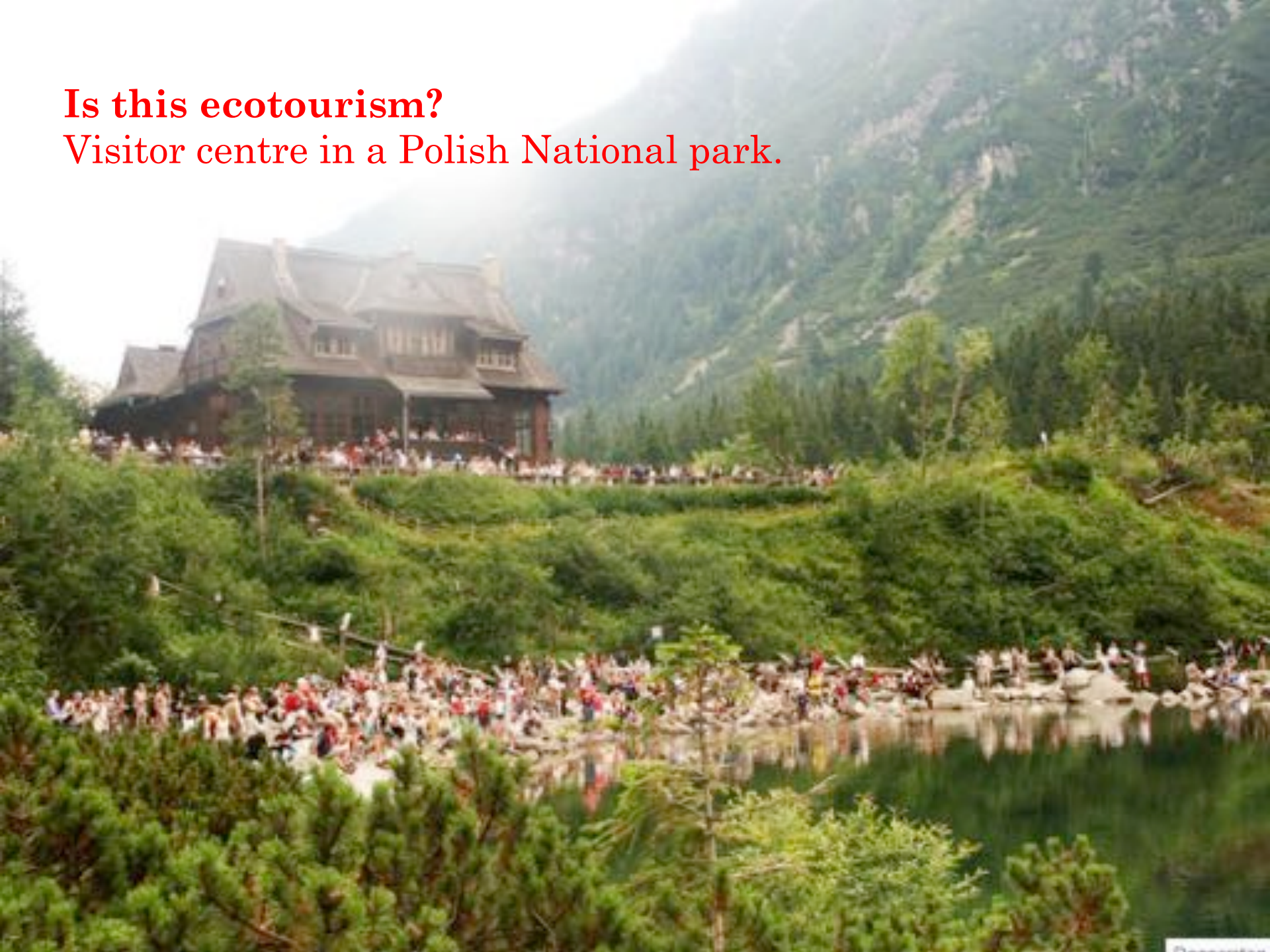
"Tourism to protected nature  
or at least natural areas."

ECOTOURISM SOCIETY (1965)

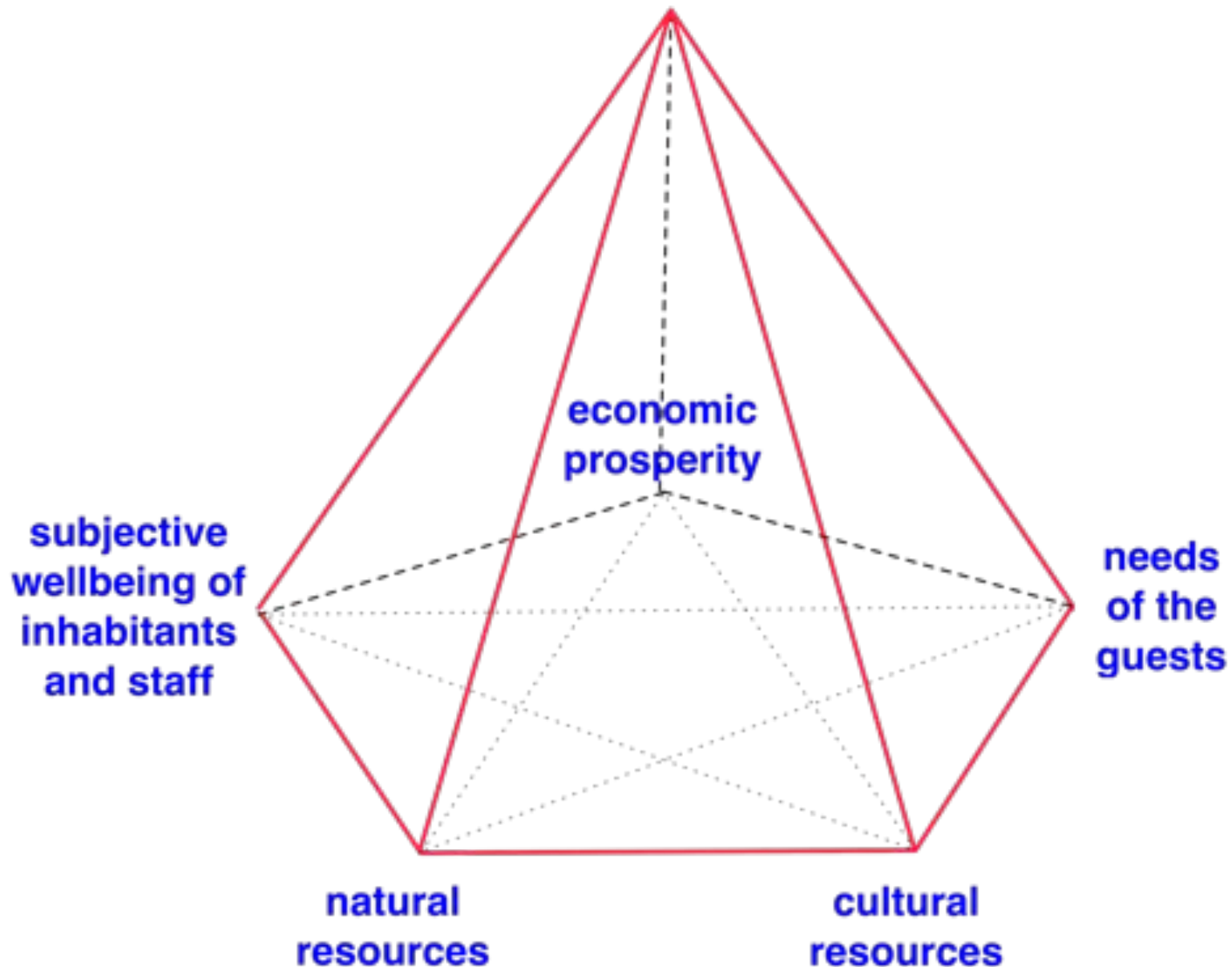


**Is this ecotourism?**

Visitor centre in a Polish National park.



# **Sustainable** **Tourism**



Open-minded  
for culture  
and contacts  
to locals

Local food  
inside

Eco-friendly  
activities

Time does not  
play a role

Key for  
bed & breakfast



## DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABLE ECO-TOURISM

"Sustainable Eco-tourism  
conserves nature and  
landscape, offers nature-  
related activities and  
promotes the local culture  
and economy of the  
destination."





Eco or  
Sustainable –  
what are we  
talking about?

**Trends and  
Demands -  
Examples of  
sustainable  
ecotourism at  
the Danube**

Some figures

Challenges  
(not only) for  
education







**Trend 1:**  
**Tourism in protected areas**

**DANUBE PARKS**  
network of protected areas



# DANUBE PARKS

network of protected areas



- |                                  |   |                                      |                             |   |                                    |                             |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve | 2 Lower Prut Nature Reserve               | 3 Lower Prut Floodplain Natural Park | 4 Small Wetlands of Braila  | 5 Kalimok-Brushlen Protected Site                 | 6 Ruzenski Lom Nature Park         | 7 Persina Nature Park       |
| 8 Iron Gates National Park       | 9 Derdap National Park                    | 10 Longsko Polje Nature Park         | 11 Kopački rit Nature Park  | 12 Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve       | 13 Duna-Drava National Park        | 14 Duna-Isoly National Park |
| 15 Fertő-Hanság National Park    | 16 Dunajské Luhy Protected Landscape Area | 17 Záhorie Protected Landscape Area  | 18 Donau-Auen National Park | 19 Narrow Valley of the Danube in Passau district | 20 Donausauwald Neuburg-Ingolstadt |                             |









# Discovering a water world





Nature discovery with the whole family





# Children and youth camps





**Do it yourself  
scientists**





**Trend 2:**  
**Active holidays in nature**







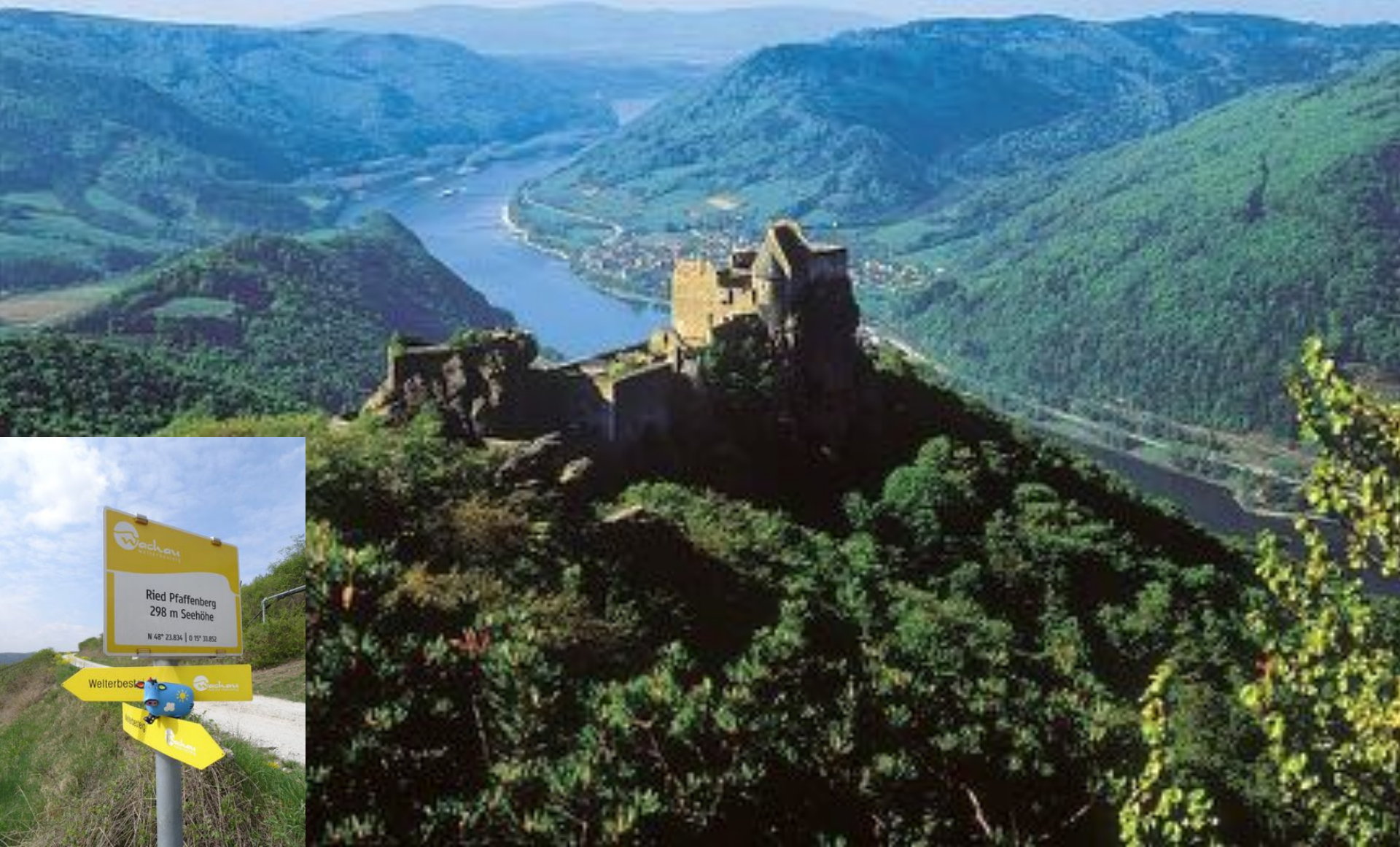
# Project: DanubeHike - The Upper Austrian Danube Trail





# Project: DanubeHike

## - The Lower Austrian World Heritage Trail







# Project: DanubeBike







## A comparison



Cruise tourists		Cycling tourists
Foreign tour operator / boat owner	<b>Economy</b>	Local agency
-		Hotel, accommodation
-		Restaurant
Souvenirs brought on the boat (often not regionally produced)		Local / regional souvenirs
Guides (sometimes)		Guides
+/- env. friendly	<b>Ecology</b>	Very env. friendly
No contacts with locals	<b>Culture</b>	Many contacts with locals

Some Data ...	Hikers	Cyclists
Demograph. Data	Average age: 48y (DE) Single men, families, small groups, few package tours	All ages Families Also large organised groups.
Accommodation	***-hotels preferred, farm-stays, B&B 30-40% search for family atmosphere, regional cuisine	Biker-friendly accommodation
Numbers	DE: 55% of population, 20% also in winter; 33% do one (or more) hiking holidays/a	EU: 2,8 bio cycle tourist trips (3% of total) LowAus-Danube: >200.000/a SER: from 1000->15.000/a
Expenditures	DE: > than cyclists	EU: 54 bio €/a 53,-€/d, 353,-€/trip DE: 62% > 1000,-€/trip
Sources	Hiking-Study 2010 (www.wanderforschung.de)	Euro-Velo Study (NHTV CSTT); Der Donauradweg 2010 (Zolles & DTC)



## **Trend 3: Regionality and Authenticity**

SOUL FOOD SERBIA



Eco or  
Sustainable –  
what are we  
talking about?

Trends and  
Demands -  
Examples of  
sustainable  
ecotourism at  
the Danube

**Some figures**

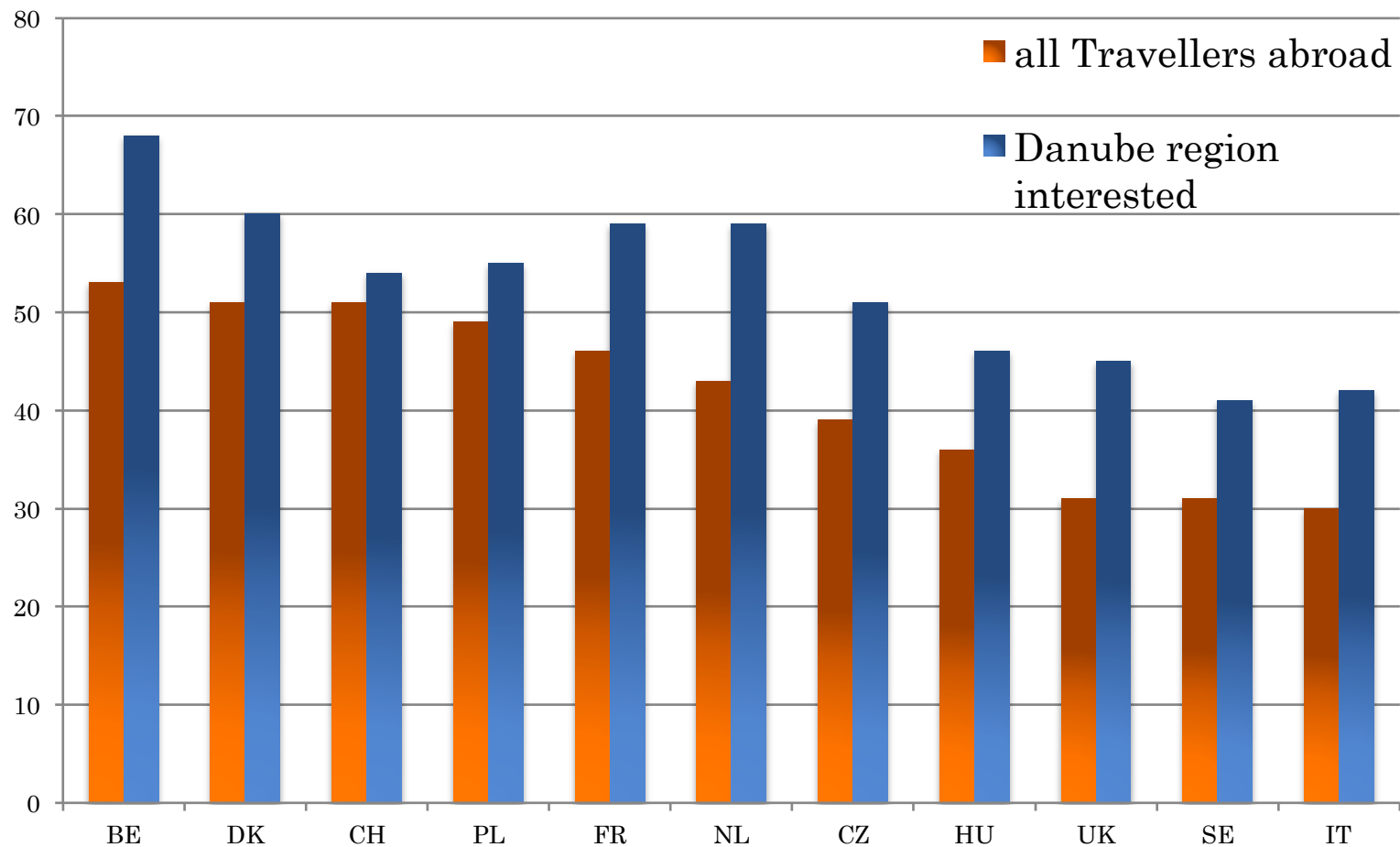
Challenges  
(not only) for  
education





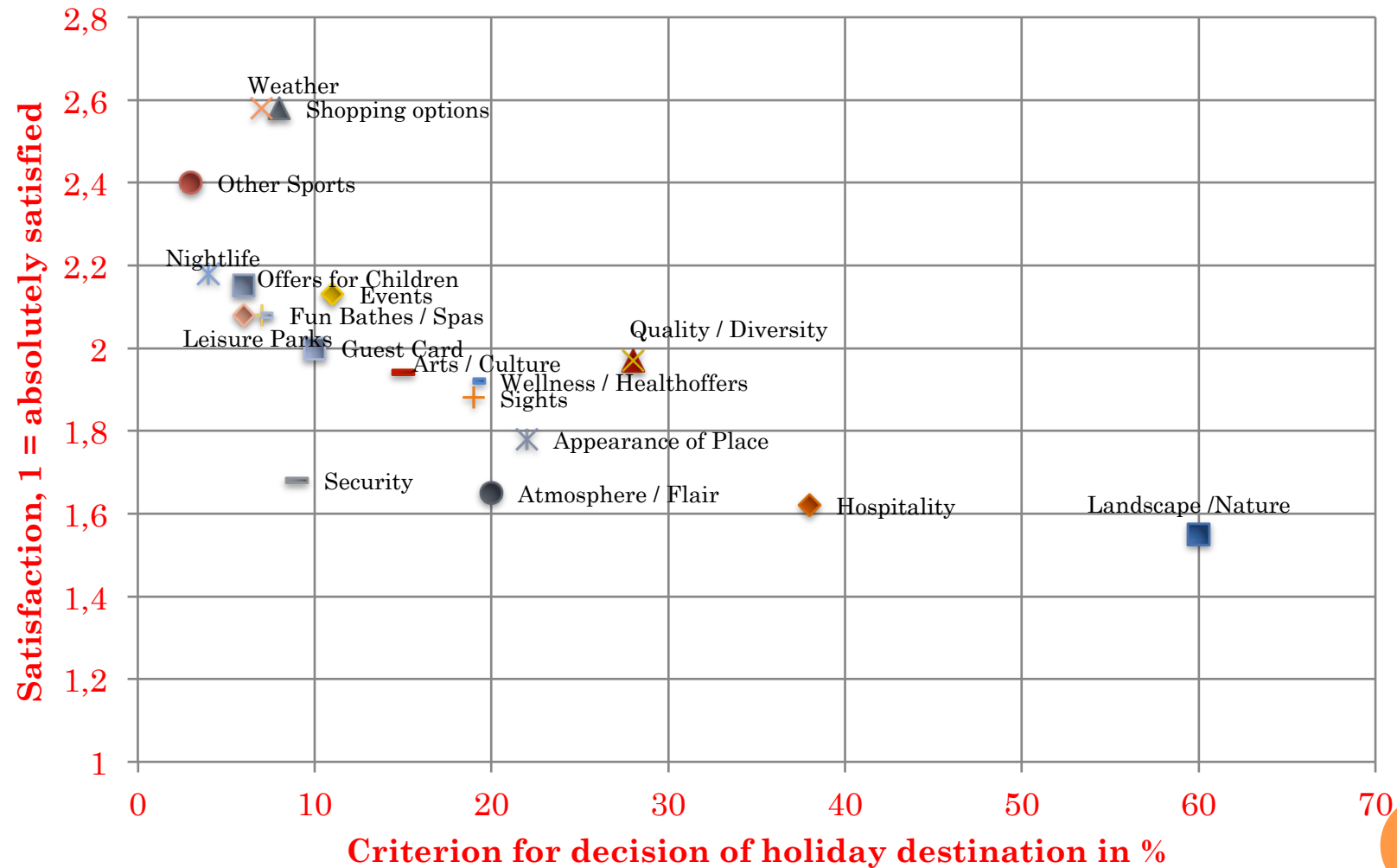
# DEMAND FOR NATURE

(TRAVEL MOTIVE 'TO BE IN NATURE'; % OF TRAVELLERS)



Source: Natur im Urlaub. Zahlen – Daten – Fakten; Österreich Werbung, 2015

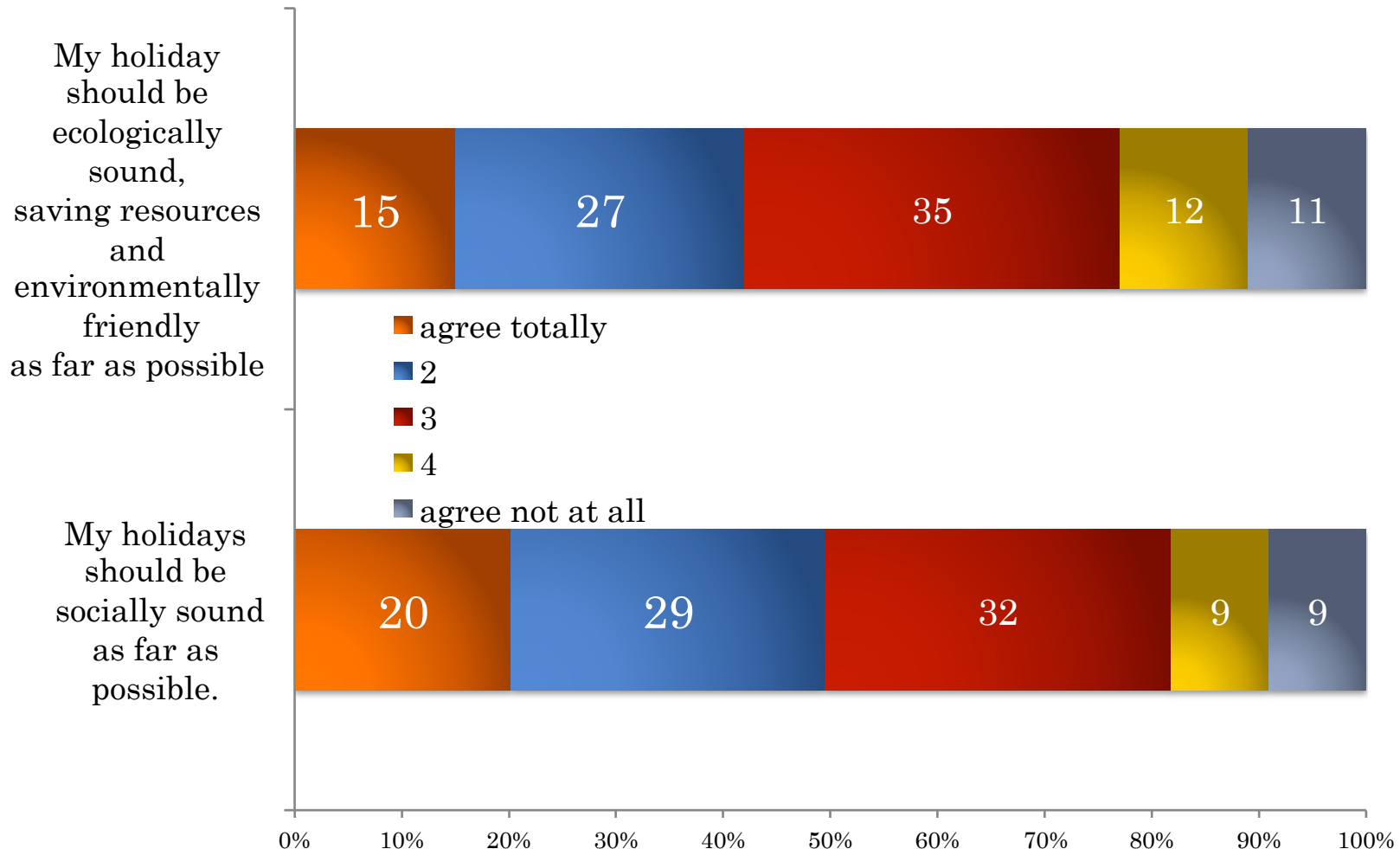
# DECISIONS FOR THE HOLIDAY DESTINATION





# DEMAND FOR SUSTAINABILITY

DURING THE HOLIDAYS – GERMAN POPULATION, >14 Y



# NATURE-RELATED HOLIDAYS

## Germans

- 54 % of population define ,experience of nature‘ as a ,very important‘ motive
- 29 % of all travels 5+ days; 7 % of travels 2-4 days
- Daily expenditure / person (inkl. transport): 74,- € / 72,- €

## Hungarians

- 54 % of population choose destination conc. ,landscape and nature‘
- Daily expenditure / person (inkl. transport): 75,- €





# Types of nature tourists

Type	Main interest	Importance of intact nature	Demands on guides	Standards of comfort	Quantitative demand potential
<b>The "committed nature tourist"</b>	experiencing nature, special interests	very important	special knowledge of ecology	low	low
<b>The "interested nature tourist"</b>	experiencing nature, ecological inter-relationships	important	good knowledge of ecology	low to high	moderate
<b>The "casual nature tourist"</b>	easily accessible/ "obvious" nature attractions	less important	unspecific knowledge of ecology	moderate to high	high
<b>The sports/ adventure tourist</b>	focus on activities	nature as a backdrop	area and technical knowledge	low	moderate to high (diving)
<b>The hunting / fishing tourist</b>	focus on activities	nature as a backdrop	area and technical knowledge	low	low
<b>The nature tourist with cultural interests</b>	natural and cultural experience	important	good ecological and very good cultural knowledge	low	moderate

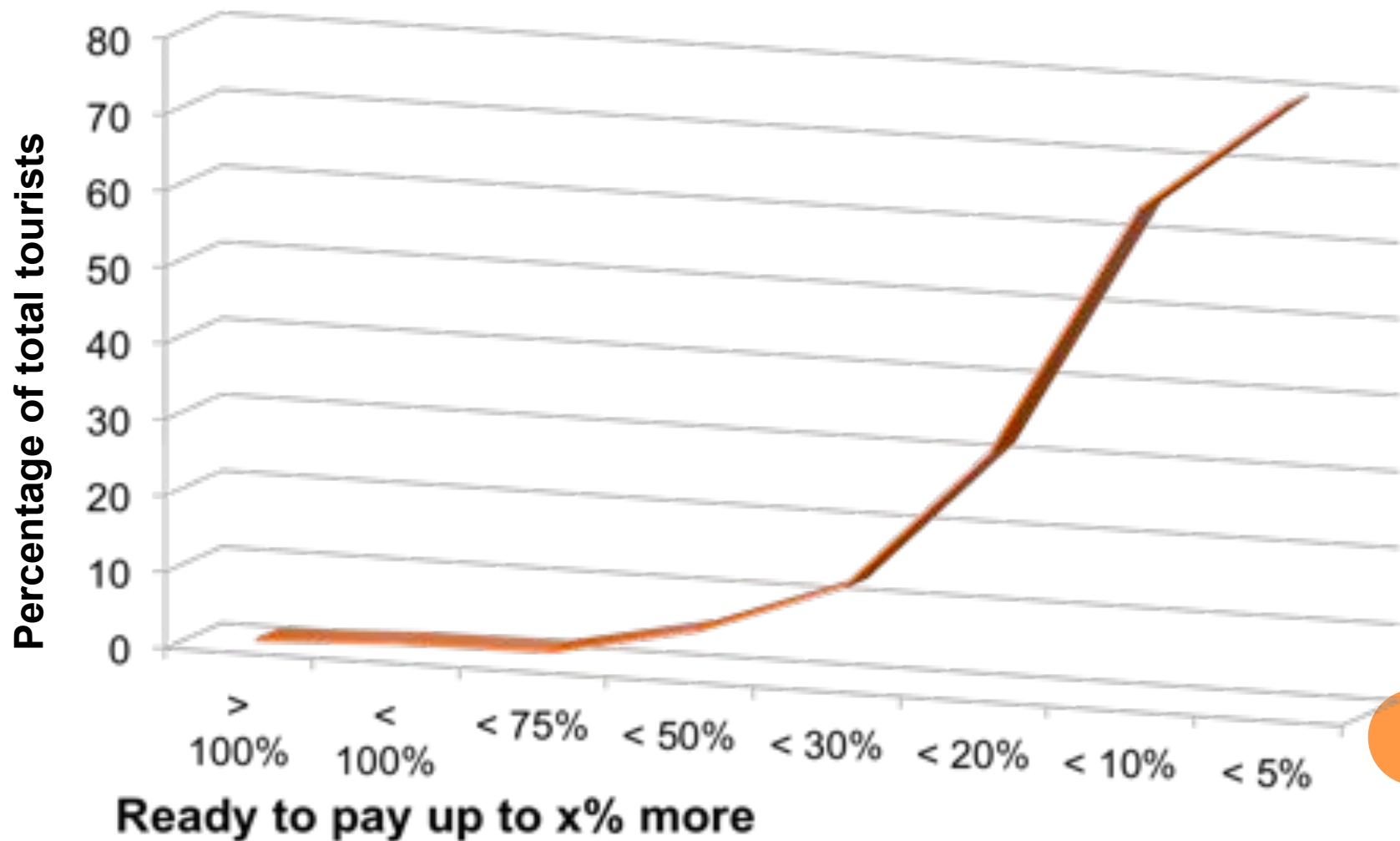
# Interested in sustainable tourism



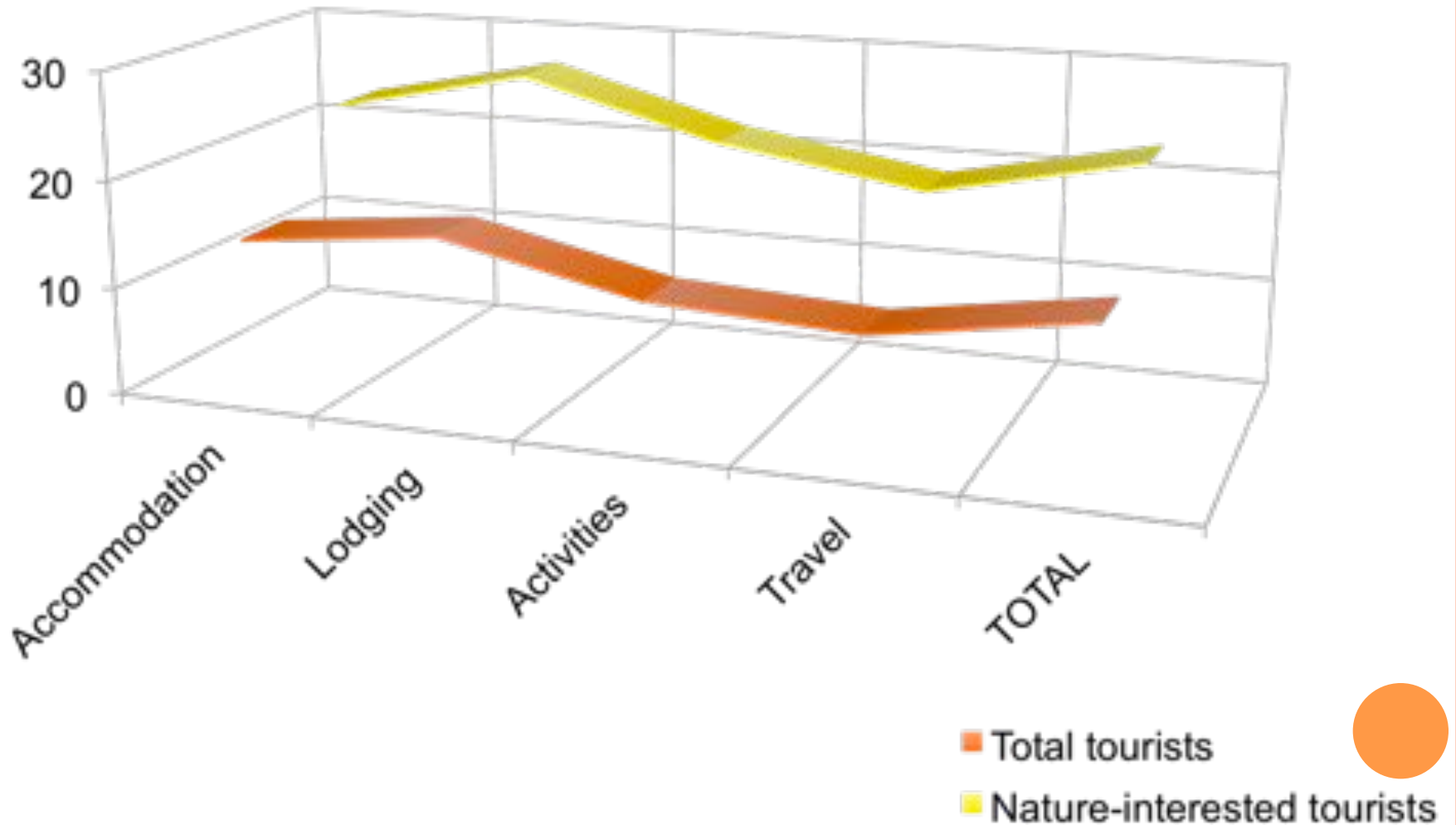
Creative Class	Millennials	LOHAS	Golden Generation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher service demand</li> <li>• Luxury-oriented</li> <li>• Technology-affine</li> <li>• Self-employed</li> <li>• Small entrepreneurs</li> <li>• High-skill worker</li> <li>• Active</li> <li>• Communicative</li> <li>• Enjoyable</li> <li>• Inspiring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Born in the 80ies</li> <li>• Post-TV generation</li> <li>• Technology-affine and very connected</li> <li>• Digital lifestyle</li> <li>• Very health conscious</li> <li>• Part of the trend 'new middle class'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hybrid lifestyle: health and enjoyment</li> <li>• Awareness of sustainability</li> <li>• Technology-affine</li> <li>• Conscious of internal values and optimistic</li> <li>• Green lifestyle</li> <li>• Spiritually oriented</li> <li>• Holistic needs and perception of reality</li> <li>• Authenticity is very important</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent the social majority in the future: time rich, money rich!</li> <li>• Experienced – but not experienced consumers</li> <li>• Sophisticated and interested</li> <li>• No senior citizens resorts</li> <li>• Communication and service is important</li> </ul>



# PREPAREDNESS TO PAY MORE FOR ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIALLY SOUND PRODUCTS



# PREPAREDNESS TO PAY MORE FOR ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIALLY SOUND PRODUCTS







Eco or  
Sustainable –  
what are we  
talking about?

Trends and  
Demands -  
Examples of  
sustainable  
ecotourism at  
the Danube

Some figures

**Challenges  
(not only) for  
education**



- **Visitor Management and Monitoring**





## Closer Visitors Management

- Zoning
- Honey Spots
- Roads and paths
- Tourist routes
- Barriers and site hardening
- Levies
- Restrictions
- Information and interpretation
- Permits
- Codes of conduct



## TASK FIELDS OF VISITOR MANAGEMENT





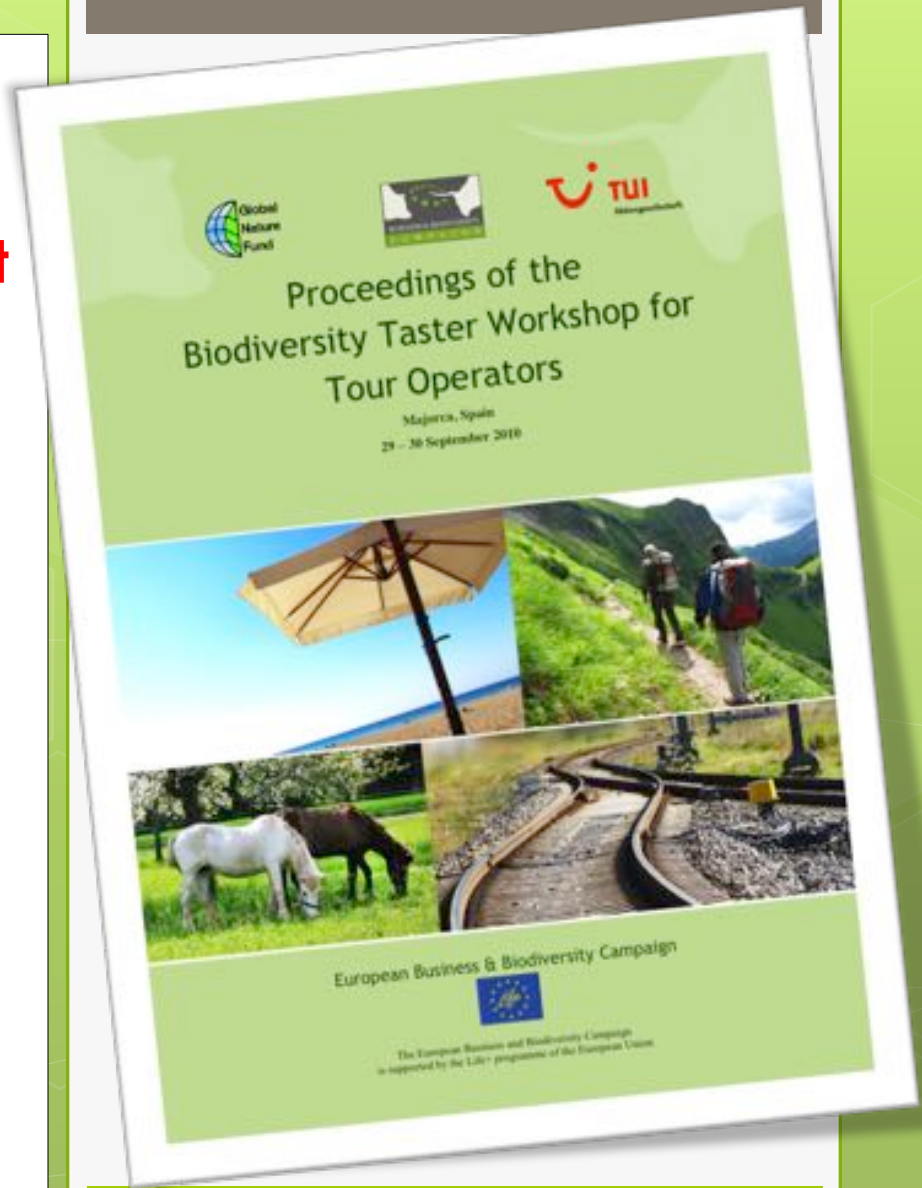
*Monitoring is the systematic and regular observation of a place or destination, in qualitative (non numerical) and quantitative (numerical) terms.*



# Monitoring

Type	Example	Benefits	Drawbacks
<b>Self-registration</b>	Guest book entries	Cost-effective Participative	Could be inaccurate
<b>Visitor registration form</b>	Accommodation providers note key details	Cost-effective Accurate	Only covers overnight stays
<b>Visitor survey</b>	Face-to-face survey	Accurate	Costly in time and labour
<b>Remote sensing and traffic counting</b>	Automated counting devices using infrared	Accurate	Technical (could break down); costly
<b>Visitor survey – self-completion</b>	Survey forms left in weather-proof boxes at key points	Cost-effective	Vulnerable to damage by weather and people
<b>Interviews</b>	One-to-one interviews	Accurate and give possibility to ask follow-up questions	Costly in time and labour
<b>Internet survey</b>	Online survey tools	Can be free and accessible to many	Could potentially be falsified
<b>Focus group discussion</b>	A small sample group is brought together to discuss issue	Accurate and open – good depth of information revealed	Wrong group could make results unrepresentative

- Visitor Management and Monitoring
- **Product development**





# (Guided) Bog walking with special footwear



Experience „Mud between the toes and grass in the ear”



E.g. Winter hiking





- Visitor Management and Monitoring
- Product development
- **Accessibility**

## **Barrier-free access in accommodation AND to activities**



- Visitor Management and Monitoring
- Product development
- **Accessibility**

## Public Transport and Soft Mobility to AND within the destination



- 
- A grid of 48 various eco-certification logos, arranged in 6 rows and 8 columns. The logos include:
- Row 1: Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet.
  - Row 2: Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet.
  - Row 3: Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet.
  - Row 4: Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet.
  - Row 5: Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet.
  - Row 6: Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet, Green Leaf, Blue Planet.





- Visitor Management and Monitoring
- Product development
- Accessibility
- Environmental performance of tourism in general
- **Working conditions**



- Visitor Management and Monitoring
- Product development
- Accessibility
- Environmental performance of tourism in general
- Working conditions
- **Cooperation and Partizipation**



- Visitor Management and Monitoring
- Product development
- Accessibility
- Environmental performance of tourism in general
- Working conditions
- Cooperation and Participation
- **Awareness Raising**





- ◉ ... understand and actively live a **multi-stakeholder approach**
- ◉ ... involve all stakeholders with **effective communication** in order to jointly plan, manage, market and monitor biodiversity based tourism products.
- ◉ ... define properly those natural areas to be used and monitor their **capacity limits** in order not to damage habitats and species.
- ◉ ... understand **ecological and sustainable management of accommodation**, the whole **service chain and the destinations**
- ◉ ... develop intensive, distinctive and **creative products** and campaigns, **raising the public** (local !!) **and international** community (guests !!) **awareness** for biodiversity and sustainability. This should go hand in hand with the development and maintenance of appropriate physical infrastructures and operations for adequate sustainable tourism activities.
- ◉ ... **involve all local suppliers and stakeholders** in product development and continuous training programmes – including subjects such as biodiversity, conservation, ecology-zoology, man and environment interactions, traditional and local cultures, etc.  
...

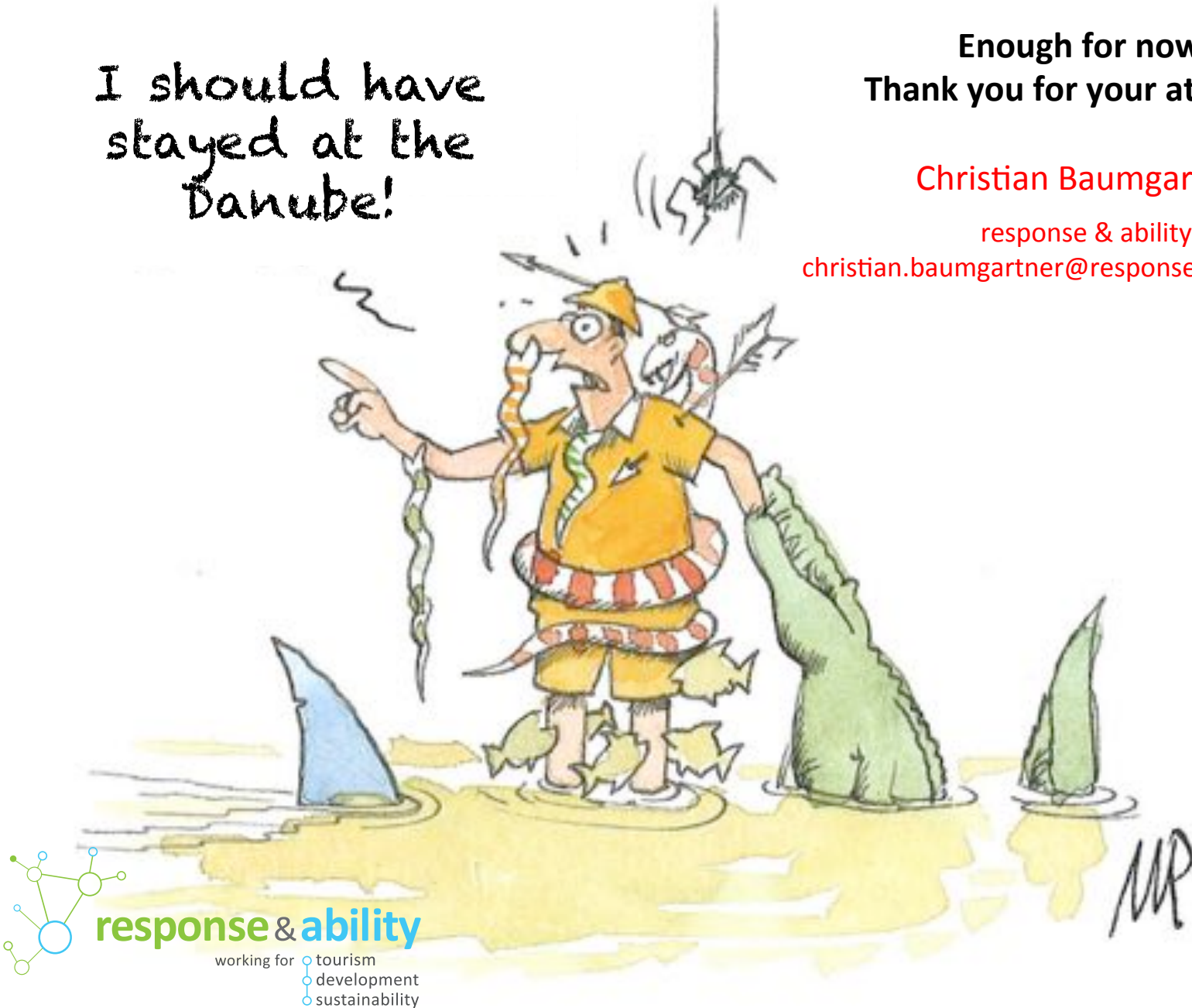
I should have  
stayed at the  
Danube!

Enough for now!  
Thank you for your attention

Christian Baumgartner

response & ability

[christian.baumgartner@responseandability.com](mailto:christian.baumgartner@responseandability.com)



response & ability

working for  
tourism  
development  
sustainability

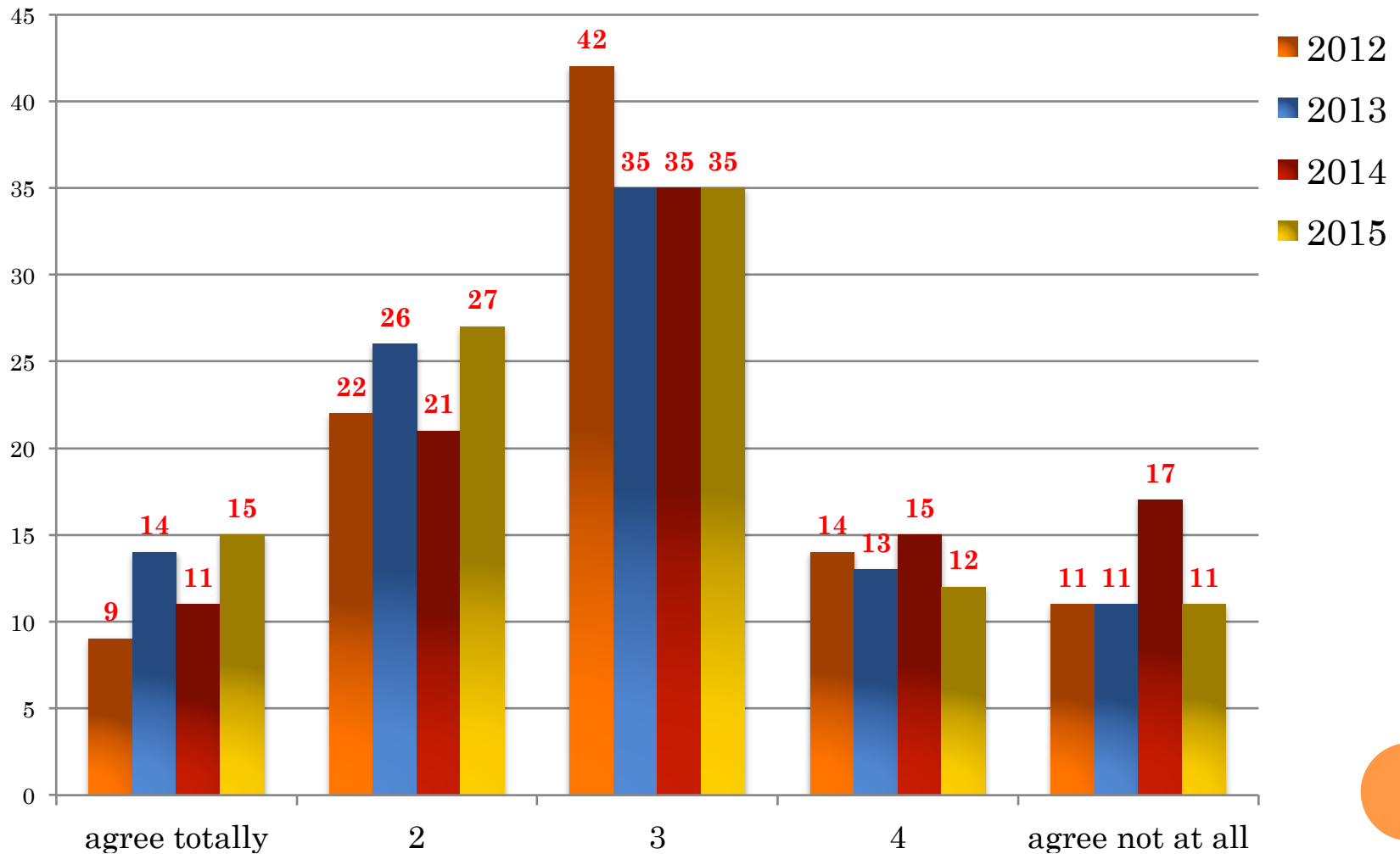




**On solid ground again**



# DEMAND FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DURING THE HOLIDAYS – GERMAN POPULATION, >14 Y



# Target groups and needs for offers

Source	Target groups / guest segments	Characteristics	Needs for offers in tourism in PA
LOHAS-Studie (Wenzel et al. 2005)	Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lifestyle-oriented, growing target group interested in sustainability products</li> <li>- sense of responsibility, values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainable offers</li> <li>- Intact environment</li> <li>- Hybrid lifestyle offers based on both/and-principles</li> </ul>
Zukunft des Ferienreisens (Bosshard & Frick 2006)	Holiday makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New understanding of prosperity, new values: ecological, ethical and social attitudes</li> <li>- sense of health</li> <li>- responsible, nature-oriented lifestyle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not the most expensive, but good basic quality</li> <li>- Periodical short holidays near home</li> <li>- nature-oriented and health-oriented offers</li> <li>- reserves, wilderness</li> <li>- responsible tour operators</li> </ul>
Naturnaher Tourismus in der Schweiz (Siegrist et al. 2003)	Tourists close to nature with subtypes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- athletic</li> <li>- regional</li> <li>- ethical</li> <li>- earning little</li> <li>- cosy</li> </ul>	Most important preferences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- stunning landscapes</li> <li>- near-nature cultural landscapes</li> <li>- wilderness</li> <li>- biodiversity</li> <li>- protected areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wildlife observation in pristine landscape</li> <li>- small, inexpensive accommodation</li> <li>- atmosphere typical of the region</li> <li>- regional and organic cuisine</li> <li>- tours without guides</li> </ul>

# Target groups and needs for offers

Source	Target groups / guest segments	Characteristics	Needs for offers in tourism in PA
Erlebniskompass (Siegrist & Wasem 2007)	Tourists close to nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attractive and intact landscape</li> <li>- Authenticity and uniqueness</li> <li>- holism</li> <li>- information and interpretation</li> <li>- active adoption of nature and culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contrasts within a small area</li> <li>- Products and services typical of the region</li> <li>- combination of different forms of experience</li> <li>- professional offers of interpretation</li> <li>- locomotion, design</li> </ul>
Naturparke Burgenland (Weixlbaumer et al. 2007)	84 % daily visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personal rest (relaxation, enjoying tranquillity and vacation)</li> <li>- acquiring knowledge</li> <li>- late 40s, higher level of education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spending time with friends</li> <li>- journey by car</li> </ul>
Naturpärke Kärnten (A) (Handler & Siegrist 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Families with children</li> <li>- Young seniors and spa guests</li> <li>- Locals looking for rest nearby</li> <li>- more and more daily visitors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for deceleration</li> <li>- Consciously enjoying natural and cultural landscape experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intact nature</li> <li>- hiking, outdoor sports, wellness and health offers</li> <li>- gastronomy – regional specialties and products</li> </ul>



# Target groups and needs for offers

Source	Target groups / guest segments	Characteristics	Needs for offers in tourism in PA
Naturpark Rieserferner-Ahrn (Südtirol) (Lehar et al. 2003; Amt für Naturparke Bozen 2004)	Visitors staying overnight > 40 %	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rest and health</li> <li>2. Avoiding mass tourism</li> <li>3. Exploring natural environment and cultural region</li> <li>4. observing and experiencing Alpine fauna and flora</li> <li>5. hiking in groups, gregariousness</li> </ol>	Nature park is an important criterion in the choice of holidays (40 %)
Nationalpark Vanoise (F) (AGC Consultants 2002)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High percentage of daily visitors</li> <li>- couples, on average &gt; age 46</li> <li>- families with children (24 %)</li> <li>- university graduates, rarely blue-collar workers</li> <li>- high percentage of visitors coming again</li> </ul>	65 % of the visitors know one of the five most important attractions of the national park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hiking (49 %), taking a walk (43 %) focus: summer</li> <li>- Visits to Alpine huts, lakes, glaciers, waterfalls</li> </ul>

# Target groups and needs for offers

Source	Target groups / guest segments	Characteristics	Needs for offers in tourism in PA
Naturpark Blockheide Gmünd – Eibenstein (Maier 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High percentage of daily visitors</li> <li>- high percentage of regular visitors</li> <li>- landscape-related visitors (25 %)</li> </ul>	<p>Most important motives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- natural landmarks and landscapes</li> <li>- taking a walk</li> <li>- rest, tranquillity, relaxation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intact landscape</li> <li>- Taking walks within good recreational infrastructure (signposting, trails, maps etc.)</li> <li>- possibility to go by car to the entrance of the nature park</li> </ul>
Naturpark Zillertaler Alpen (Fröhlich 2008)	<p>Most important potential target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- alpinists</li> <li>- families with children</li> <li>- tourists searching to experience nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hiking, mountaineering</li> <li>- Adventure and rest</li> <li>- active, athletic activities in the outdoors, trend sports</li> <li>- experiencing regional cultural and natural features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intact landscape</li> <li>- hiking, outdoor sports</li> <li>- Infrastructure for trend sports</li> <li>- cultural and scenic attractions</li> </ul>

# Strategies for Visitors Management



*Positive visitor management supports the following objectives:*

- *Satisfying different target groups (e.g. children, the elderly, adventure seekers, walkers, horse riders, etc.).*
- *Increasing accessibility and avoiding traffic congestion.*
- *Preventing disturbance in sensitive areas.*
- *Supporting local social and economic development.*



## Monitoring

*Monitoring is the systematic and regular observation of a place or destination, in qualitative (non numerical) and quantitative (numerical) terms.*

- Visitor numbers and types
- Visitor activities
- Visitor satisfaction
- Impacts of management and infrastructure
- Environmental impact of tourism
- Socio-economic impact
- Trail conditions

# Combination of sport and environmental education

