“Forest Pedagogic” – Forest related Environmental Education experiences made in Austria

Th. Baschny – Vienna

International Meeting of the FAO-ECE Forest Communicators Network – Bled 10 October 2007
Forest pedagogics in Austria

- Share of forests 48 %; of which 82 % private forests; thus:
  many private activities/initiatives!

- Forest pedagogics has been a TOPICAL issue in Austria since 1990!

- Training: Forest pedagogics courses have been offered at the Centre for Forest Pedagogics at the Forestry Training Centre Ort (Upper Austria) since 1994
In the years 2000 and 2005 the week of the forest was dedicated to the topic of forest pedagogics (Motto “adventure forest”). (Integration of 3.600 primary schools)

At the moment there are in Austria 18 forest education centres (schools in the forest)
Forest pedagogics in Austria 3
Forest pedagogics in Austria

The centres are run by different organisations:

- Offices of the Federal Provinces
- Municipalities
- Private forest administrations
- Federal hunting associations
- Associations
Moreover **guided tours** (at least 3 hours) are **offered** in the forests on the spot

**Providers are:**

- ) Private forest educators
- ) Authorities
- ) Forest owners
- ) Foresters at state forests

There are about 1.200 trained forest educators (**800 of which are people from the forestry sector**)
**Forest pedagogics in Austria**

The association

2001 foundation of the "**Association of Austrian Forest Educators**" (Verein der Waldpädagogen Österreichs)

Since 2006 new name:

"**Forest pedagogics in Austria**” (Waldpädagogik in Österreich)

[www.waldpaedagogik.at](http://www.waldpaedagogik.at)
Forest pedagogics in Austria  
the Association

- **Coordination** and **further development** of forest-pedagogical activities in coordination with the “Ministry of Life”

- **Representation** of forest educators

- **Organisation** of events, public relations, participation in quality assurance and further development of offers
Forest pedagogics in Austria

- 2002: Appointment of an own official in charge of forest pedagogics at the “Ministry of Life”

- 2002 (Amendment to the “Forest Act”): Forest pedagogics was for the first time laid down by law as an **educational mandate** for the authorities (Forest Act = Federal Act)
Forest pedagogics in Austria  

the term

Forest pedagogics is **forest-related environmental education**. It comprises all learning processes concerning the habitat forest enabling the individual and the society as a whole to act and thus to think on a long-term basis, holistically and committed to public welfare and in a future-oriented way.
Core message: “Doctor forest”

When did you last observe the dance of the sunrays in the treetops lying on the forest ground or feel barefooted the cool of wet forest meadows, thinking of the wonderful fairy tales and stories of your childhood in which the forest was also home to fabulous creatures?
Forest pedagogics in Austria

The core message: sustainability

Our forests are the living evidence for the fact that it is worth while to think on a long-term basis.
Forest pedagogics in Austria

The core message: “Forests set a precedent in terms of school"

Many categories of forest pedagogical offers are first and foremost addressed to pupils.

Thus it holds true:

“Forests help PISA”

Schools teach in a

two-dimensional way,

forest pedagogics in a

three-dimensional way
Forest pedagogics in Austria

The guiding principles

- A good human-forest understanding
- A good human-forest relation
- People acting in a responsible way
Forest pedagogics in Austria

The target groups

Forest pedagogics is there for people of all age-groups.

However, in the interest of success target group orientation is necessary.
Forest pedagogics in Austria

- It is the declared goal of the “Ministry of Life” that every Austrian pupil should participate one in a guided forest tour with a forester!

- Control via forestry subsidisation!

- Only persons with “CERTIFIED” training in forest pedagogics are subsidized!
Forest pedagogics in Austria 16
Possibilities of subsidisation

“Rural Development Regulation – Austria Programme 2007-2013”:

Information and public awareness raising on the ecological and social functions of forests;
Information of the public within the framework of youth education

**Amount of subsidies: (only for CERTIFIED PERSONS !)**
160 € per forest excursion;
Forest pedagogics in Austria

- **Certified courses** have been offered at the Forestry Training Centre Ort since 1 May 2003 and at all 5 Forestry Training Centres since January 2004 as well as for forestry students at the Forestry School at Bruck/Mur.

- The **modular training** is open to **EVERYONE**. The 3 modules (A, B and C) comprise 80 hours. The further training module D is on a voluntary basis and comprises 20 hours (recommended every 5 years).
Forest pedagogics in Austria

With these forest-pedagogical activities/concepts Austria is on a good track and will be committed to this important field also in the future.
European Network 1

The start

- 2004: Formation of an initiative group “Europe Network Forest Pedagogics” - (Vienna initiative) – an impulse of the “Ministry of Life”

Initiators:
- Thomas Baschny, coordinator
- Albert Knieling
- Klaus Radestock
- Robert Vogl
- Dirk Schmechel

- 1st April 2005: Official start of the “Europe Network Forest Pedagogics”
European-Network

The goals

- **Quality assurance**, 
- **Transfer of knowledge**
  and
- **Ensuring the framework conditions**

www.waldpaedagogiknetwork.eu
European-network

The instruments

- **Assistance in the implementation of the key action 10 – EU Forest ACTION Plan (FAP)**
  “Encourage environmental education and information (forest pedagogics)”

**Opening event** in Vienna in February 2007 with representatives from Brussels and European Forestry Ministries

**Follow-up meetings are planned!**

14 –15 January 2008 in Vienna (Please send your advisor !)
Forestry pedagogics is very important from the point of view of forestry policy!

It is up to the foresters, but also to all of us to be good “ambassadors” of the forest.

Forest pedagogics is an ideal instrument for this purpose.