



11.10.2018 – Anne Schierenberg/Kerstin Emonds, EUROPARC Deutschland

“Planning Accessible Experiences of Nature” – Manual –

Nationale
Naturlandschaften





Introduction

Accessibility and Inclusion in Protected Areas



Experiences of EUROPARC Germany and members

Two aspects:

1. **Accessibility** of protected areas' terrains and infrastructure
2. Involvement of **volunteers with disabilities**

Example to be presented:

Manual “Planning Accessible Experiences of Nature”



Why “Planning Accessible Experiences of Nature”?

- By the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** i. a. EU countries are legally obligated to create conditions for equal participation in society.
- Accessibility essentially means **more service and convenience for ALL visitors.**
- Benefits for the protected areas and their regions: **image promotion and economic benefits** because of being attractive for (additional) tourists.
- In line with the self-conception of protected areas: **involving people (everyone)**



Example: Advantages of a ramp with handrail



“Planning Accessible Experiences of Nature” Manual (available in English and German)



Who are we talking about?

People with

- **physical disabilities**, in some cases dependent on walking sticks, walking frames, wheelchairs etc.
- **visual impairments**, blind people
- **hearing impairments**, deaf people
- **intellectual disabilities**

People who may only be **limited temporarily** – for instance after an accident.

Groups and families

- with **young children** using prams, runner bikes, scooters etc.
- with accompanying **relatives with disabilities**

Older people with decreasing hearing, vision and stamina; increasing need for security



What are we talking about?

Examples:

- wide entrance doors
- at least partially lowered counter
- well lit exhibits
- paths easy to walk and drive on
- counter with a stick holder
- wooden boardwalks with toeboard
- multisensory exhibits
- accessible public toilets nearby
- sign language interpreter available
- access without steps to all floors
- visible or tactile step edge markings
- signage in the outdoor area easy to spot, rich in contrast and non-reflecting
- brochure with accessible offers
- website: possibility to enlarge the writing and increase the contrast
- bird hides accessible at ground level
- stairs with handrail
- short information, simple texts without technical terms
- important and popular paths at least 1.5 metres wide
- rangers with hearing induction loop to transmit the voice directly to a hearing aid
- audio guides free of charge
- audios and videos for different target audiences
- tactile signing marking potential hazard areas

Success factors for planning accessibility (1)

Involve your target groups at the initial stage of surveying and planning

Consult with those affected

=> They will sharpen your awareness and you will see opportunities that you would not have thought of alone.

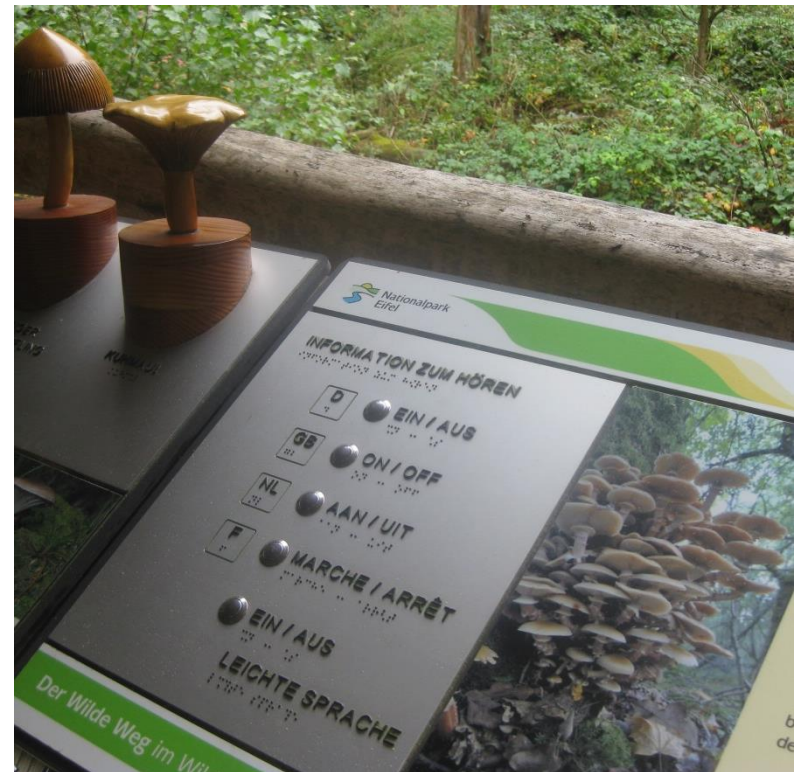


Example: Video clip about the Rhön Biosphere Reserve in sign language, presented by deaf people

Success factors for planning accessibility (2)

Begin with the most appealing places of interest, when you plan and realize accessibility

- => No visitor will expect that everything is accessible in nature. But, every visitor wants to experience the uniqueness of your region.
- => No matter where you start, every detail benefits people with disabilities.



Success factors for planning accessibility (3)

Train the park's staff

=> Train paid staff and volunteers on how to interact with visitors with different types of disabilities and needs.



Success factors for planning accessibility (4)

Give information as specifically as you can:

About what is possible for people with disabilities and also what is not (yet) possible.

=> Inform about accessibility as a feature of convenience not only for the narrow target group of visitors with disabilities.

=> With honest information you can avoid disappointments on the ground.

Barrierefreie Angebote und Gastgeber in der Nationalpark-Region Eifel
Übersichtskarte

5 Ferienwohnungen »Margarethenhöfe
Virnicher Straße 3, 53894 Mechernich
Tel.: +49 (0)2256 7126, Fax: +49 (0)2256 950526
Landurlaub@Margarethenhof.info
www.margarethenhof.info

6 »Kurpark-Hotels
Parkallee 1, 53937 Schleiden-Gemünd
Tel.: +49 (0)2444 9511-0, Fax: +49 (0)2444 9511-33
www.kurparkhotel-schleiden.de
info@kurparkhotel-schleiden.de

7 Hotel »Zum Urfttale
Alte Bahnhofstraße 12, 53937 Schleiden-Gemünd
Tel.: +49 (0)2444 9595-0
Fax: +49 (0)2444 4569687
info@urft-hotel.de, www.urft-hotel.de

8 Café Müller
Restaurant »Zum alten Rathaus
Marienplatz 17, 53937 Schleiden-Gemünd
Tel.: +49 (0)2444 914200
Fax: +49 (0)2444 914201
info@altes-rathaus-gemuend.de
www.altes-rathaus-gemuend.de

9 Ferienwohnung »Die Pawlaks
Martinsstr. 4, 53937 Schleiden-Herhahn
Tel.: +49 (0)2444 911594
Fax: +49 (0)2444 913395
ferienwohnung@diepawlaks.de
www.diepawlaks.de

10 Bistro »Alte Molkerei
Hauptstr. 72-74, 52156 Monschau-Höfen
Tel.: +49 (0)2472 8025777
Fax: +49 (0)2472 8025778
info@alte-molkerei-hoefen.de
www.alte-molkerei-hoefen.de

Schleiden 9, 52196 Heimbach-Hergarten
Tel.: +49 (0)2446 80977010
Fax: +49 (0)2446 80977035
info@nationalpark-guestehaus.de
www.nationalpark-guestehaus.de

Success factors for planning accessibility (5)

Team up to with other regional travel suppliers

- => Tourism supply chain: Your range of nature experiences is part of it. The well-functioning of the whole chain is important.
- => Find dedicated individuals, societies, organizations and companies committed to supporting accessibility in your region and create common tourist services.



Success factors for planning accessibility (6)

Appoint a person who ‘cares’ and who ensures continuity with personal commitment and necessary time

- => The person does not have to do everything by itself, but shall focus on building a network in the region.
- => A gentle, long-term approach keeps the motivation high and gives all regional stakeholders enough time to grow together.





EUROPARC
DEUTSCHLAND

Nationale
Naturlandschaften



Thank you for your attention!

EUROPARC Deutschland e. V.
Pfalzburger Str. 43/44
10717 Berlin
Germany

Anne Schierenberg
Kerstin Emonds

E-Mail: anne.schierenberg@europarc-deutschland.de

E-Mail: kerstin.emonds@europarc-deutschland.de

Tel.: +49 / (0)30 / 288 788 2-15

Photos: Kerstin Emonds