

INNsieme: A Cross-border cooperation for the river Inn

The Inn, as a heavily used stream, is often scene of conflicts, due to various interests: space for settlements and business areas, flood protection, tourism, nature conservation, energy production, agriculture and sports. "INNsieme" - which is derived from the Italian word for "together", is a three-year, interregional river protection project that focuses on the Inn as a living ecosystem and wants to contribute to the cooperation between different usage groups. This cross-sectoral species protection initiative focuses, for the first time, on the cross-border peculiarities and requirements in nature protection so that the necessary protective measures are not limited by national borders. For this reason a cross-border mission statement and an action plan for protective measures for key habitats and species on the Inn should be developed within the framework of INNsieme by 2021. The aim is to show which protective measures are necessary in order to restore the river in order to improve the living conditions for the species who had been found in this areas over the last centuries.

Some punctual measures for ecosystem improvement will already been taken during the project phase, such as restoring the connectivity of a small tributary to the main river (in order to allow fish to reach breeding areas in smaller creeks), replantation of alluvial plants in riparian areas etc. Furthermore, environmental education has a key role in the project. Public events by the river, specialist excursions and lectures for selected target groups, including sessions for school classes, should help to raise awareness of the environmental problems at the river Inn and acceptance for protective measures. Specific challenges and use interests will be addressed in public stakeholder workshops.

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