



ALPBIONET2030

Integrative Alpine wildlife and habitat management for the next generation

Round table “Mountainbiking in Berchtesgaden”

A discussion with local stakeholders
on July 30th 2018 at Haus der Berge (NPB)

1 Participants

Roland Albrecht (German initiative Mountainbike, DIMB);
Ulf Dworschak (NPB);
Wolfgang Fegg (DVL);
Sarah Fellner (District administration Bad Reichenhall: Nature conservation);
Nico Gareis (German Alpine Club Association DAV, Federal association);
Florian Gottschlich (local biker);
Michael Gröll (Hunting cooperation Ramsau);
Tassilo Heller (BaySF Bgd);
Stefanie Heyder (District administration Bad Reichenhall: Nature conservation);
Wolfgang Kastner (District administration Bad Reichenhall: Nature conservation);
Carolin Klar (NPB);
Lorenz Köppl (NPB);
Beppo Maltan (German Alpine Club Association DAV, Section Berchtesgaden);
Lisa Mandl (NPVB);
Peter Nagel (BGLT Tourism director);
Franz Rasp (Mayor of Berchtesgaden);
Fritz Rasp (Tourism director Ramsau);
Sonja Schreiter (DIMB IG Chiemgau-Bgl);
David Schuhwerk (Naturpark Weißbach);
Maria Stangassinger (BGLT);
Thomas Weber (Mayor of Bischofswiesen).

2 Introduction

The discussion of the topic *Mountainbiking in Berchtesgaden* started in September 2017 within the frame of a workshop in cooperation with Eurac and WP T5: *Human activities and wildlife - Is coexistence possible? A focus discussion on sport activities and deer management*. In this workshop, Mountainbiking emerged as a central problem in the Alpbionet2030 project working region Berchtesgaden-Salzburg and the need came up to focus more on it. Furthermore the new technologies of E-Mountainbikes are omnipresent and this brings some new issues which should be discussed and conflict-solving approaches should be found.

As an interactive introduction to the topic, the general opinion of the participants in the stakeholder-workshop in Berchtesgaden about the current development of E-Mountainbiking was asked. The participants had to rank their view on the scale “perceive development as very positive” to “perceive development as very sceptical”. The results were ambivalent: The opinions were both, very positive as well as very sceptical. Most of the participants are in between, this might show the complexity of the topic.

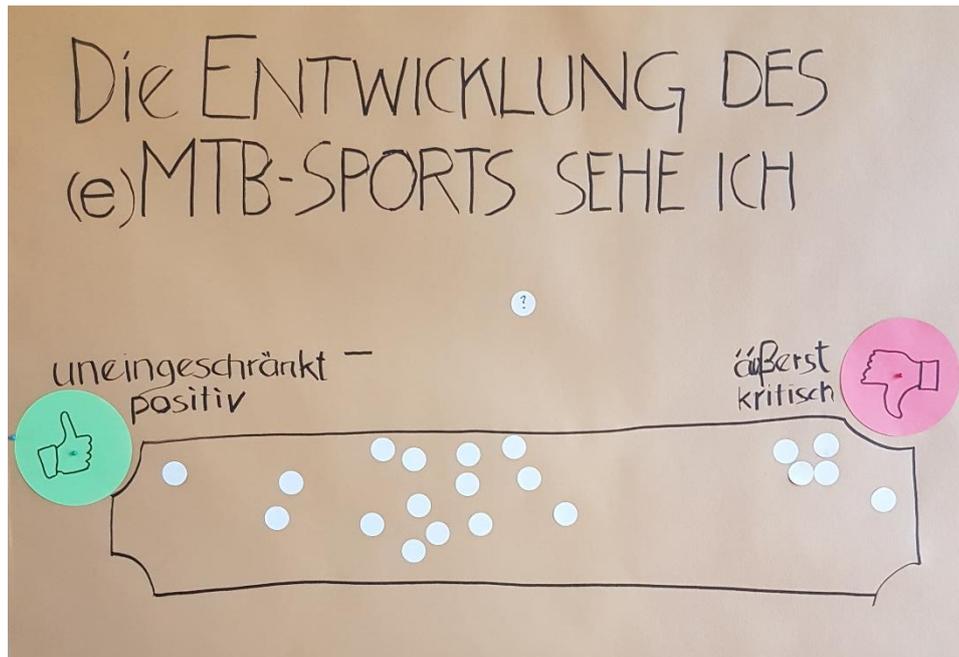


Figure 1: View of the participants of the development of E-Mountainbiking

3 Current trend, opportunities and issues

In the last years a revolution of the mountainbike was noticed. New technologies allow nearly all humans to reach alpine terrain with an E-bike, where before only sporty people were able to get to. Now all kinds of trails are ridden as far as the bike allows - also hiking paths uphill as well as downhill. Together with local stakeholders opportunities and issues of the trend in the region were discussed.

As a touristic opportunity a new quality of life through the new technologies and the easier approach to mountainous nature areas was mentioned. Another positive aspect is the sustainable mobility of biking tourists. They rather leave their cars and use the bicycle for their activity. As a result, there is less pressure on traffic and the parking situation improves.

There are some proposals for mountainbiking routes on forest roads offered by the tourist agency of Berchtesgaden. Apart these roads there is no structure and guidance for mountainbikers on singletrails in the valley of Berchtesgaden. This leads to an uncontrolled biking on all ways. The problems and conflicts are still manageable but there is the need for action before problems become vast. Only in the National Park Berchtesgaden - according to legal regulations - biking is restricted to selected forest roads.

However, even on forest roads the high number of E-bikers cause problems. Missing skills in handling the heavy E-bike, steep mountain roads and oncoming hikers or cars are a source of danger.

Two possibilities of solving these issues have been discussed: Separating bikers and hikers or implement so called “fair play trails” where mutual attention of all users is assumed. Closures of roads and paths are not easily to operate in Bavaria because of the ‘open entry right’. Also from the point of view of the bikers (represented by DIMB), closures of trails are no option.

Guidance concepts for bikers are very complex and expensive, the other possibility of sensitizing and informing would be a first and easier way to solve the problems. Reminding bikers as well as hikers of “trailrules” like mutual consideration or nature awareness on hot spots like huts, parking sites and crossroads are soft instruments (see figure 2).

Reckless bikers on roads (in particular forest roads) highly frequented by hikers are a main problem. Moreover E-bikes allow an expansion of range which caused the discussion about an increasing pressure of “bike&hikers” in remote and sensible mountain areas. Even if most of the E-bikers stayed on the huts instead of continuing their uphill, GPS-tracks of hidden trails published in Social Media (e.g. Trailforks) could lead to a sudden increase of bikers and a hardly controllable dynamic.

From the touristic point of view, all participants agreed that Berchtesgaden should not become a trail region with focus on Downhill or Enduro on singletrails. Nevertheless, it was part of the discussion who is or should be the target group because local bikers act differently than E-bike tourists or local recreationists. To avoid uncontrollable biking, an additional offer for the increasing number of singletrail bikers should be considered. However, the pull effect of a promoted trail should not be underestimated.

From the point of view of nature conservation, the higher disturbance by bikers compared to hikers was mentioned. First of all an investigation of habitats and species disturbance, like e.g. grouses, in the areas of possible bike trails should be made by an expert.

4 Legal aspect

The “freies Betretungsrecht” (open entry right) also for bikers on suitable pathways is fixed in the Bavarian Nature Conservation Act (Art. 26-29 BayNatschG). However the term “suitability of the paths” is not clarified in detail and there have been verdicts of the Bavarian Constitutional Tribunal where this was interpreted as the physical and mental constitution of the biker (www.gesetze-bayern.de/Content/Document/Y-300-Z-BECKRS-B-2015-N-49706?hl=true, seen on 9.8.2018). Furthermore, the discussion of how to define pathways is not clear. This undefined legal situation forces the need to integrate the private landowner as early as possible in the process of defining bike trails to find common solutions.

The question about liability is an important issue to clarify. In fact, the liability status does not change by labelling a bike trail and landowners are responsible in the case of serious negligence and for the maintenance of buildings like bridges. Legal judgements result normally on the cost of the bikers but there is no guarantee for this. To solve this situation, communities could take the liability for the landowners and make sponsorships for the trails.

Furthermore, the the legal dedication of the pathways labelled with a bike trail in forests and possibly needed rededication should be proved.

5 Conflict solving approaches

A biker proposed to setup a local trail advisor who would be the interface between bikers, nature conservation, community, hunting, forestry, tourism and could care about maintenance, information and labelling of the trail in close consultation with the stakeholders. He is further interested in establishing a local biking association.

Furthermore, the possibility of implementing a bike park in skiing areas was discussed but evaluated critically for a certain ski lift in the area (Götschen) because of the legal status and allowed use only for winter.

The biker proposed his idea for a fair play trail for bikers and hikers on already existing hiking trails, where bikers already ride. In his opinion, it could be institutionalized as pilot project for the region to proof and solve certain issues. This concrete idea was discussed critically and finally excluded by the participants because of several conflict points (species protection, conflicts with hikers, conflicts with hunters and landowners). But the discussion was constructive and further steps were fixed: The local biker will have a look on the map together with nature conservation administry to check whether or where a trail would be acceptable for species and habitat protection. These ideas will be discussed together with the stakeholders in the next meeting probably in autumn 2018.

6 Conclusion

(E-)Mountainbiking is booming and the increasing number of bikers in mountainous regions leads to conflicts with nature conservation, hunting, forestry and tourism (hikers). More and more bikers leave the gravel roads and use hiking paths as singletrails.

The meeting was not setup to bring out a certain result of a mountainbike concept but to open the discussion with the important stakeholders and to think about further steps. Participation is important in multiple-stakeholder conflicts and solving processes. All participants are interested to find solutions for the problems, which are still manageable in Berchtesgaden. The round table discussion with local stakeholders was constructive and open-minded. Everybody was able to share his/her personal opinion, wishes and

considerations. The group will come together again probably in autumn 2018 to discuss further ideas and concrete proposals for trails.

Appendix: Sensitizing campagne of the German Initiative Mountain Biking (DIMB); list of participants on 30.7.2018

7 Appendix



Figure 2: DIMB campagne "Gemeinsam Natur erleben" and DIMB trailrules

Teilnehmerliste 30.7.18 Runder Tisch Mountainbiker

Name	Institution	Unterschrift
Carolin Klar	Nationalpark Bgd	[Signature]
Lenz Kopyl	-	[Signature]
Rasp Fritz	TI-Ramsau	[Signature]
Rasp Franz	Markt Bgd	[Signature]
Thomas Weber	Gemeinde Bischofswiesen	[Signature]
Mastner Wolfgang	LRA uNB	[Signature]
Stefanie Heyder	LRA uNB	[Signature]
Felber Sarah	LRA Arubi	[Signature]
Schreiter Sonja	DINB IG Chiemgau/BGL	[Signature]
Albrecht, Roland	DINB	[Signature]
Floian Göttschlich	Biker	[Signature]
David Schukewek	Naturpark Laßbachtal	[Signature]
Michael Esch	JGR (Jagdgenossenschaft)	[Signature]
Heppner Mathias	DAV Sekt. Bergbau	[Signature]
Nico Gais	DAV Bundesverband	[Signature]
Hans Langgasser	BSC	[Signature]
Wolfgang Kegg	Alp Bionet 2030 DVL	[Signature]
Ulf Dworschak	NLP-BGD	[Signature]

Figure 3: List of participants (missing on the list: Heller, Mandl, Nagel)