Results of the survey for the compendium "Flussraumbetreuung in Österreich"

Why River Basin Management / Development?

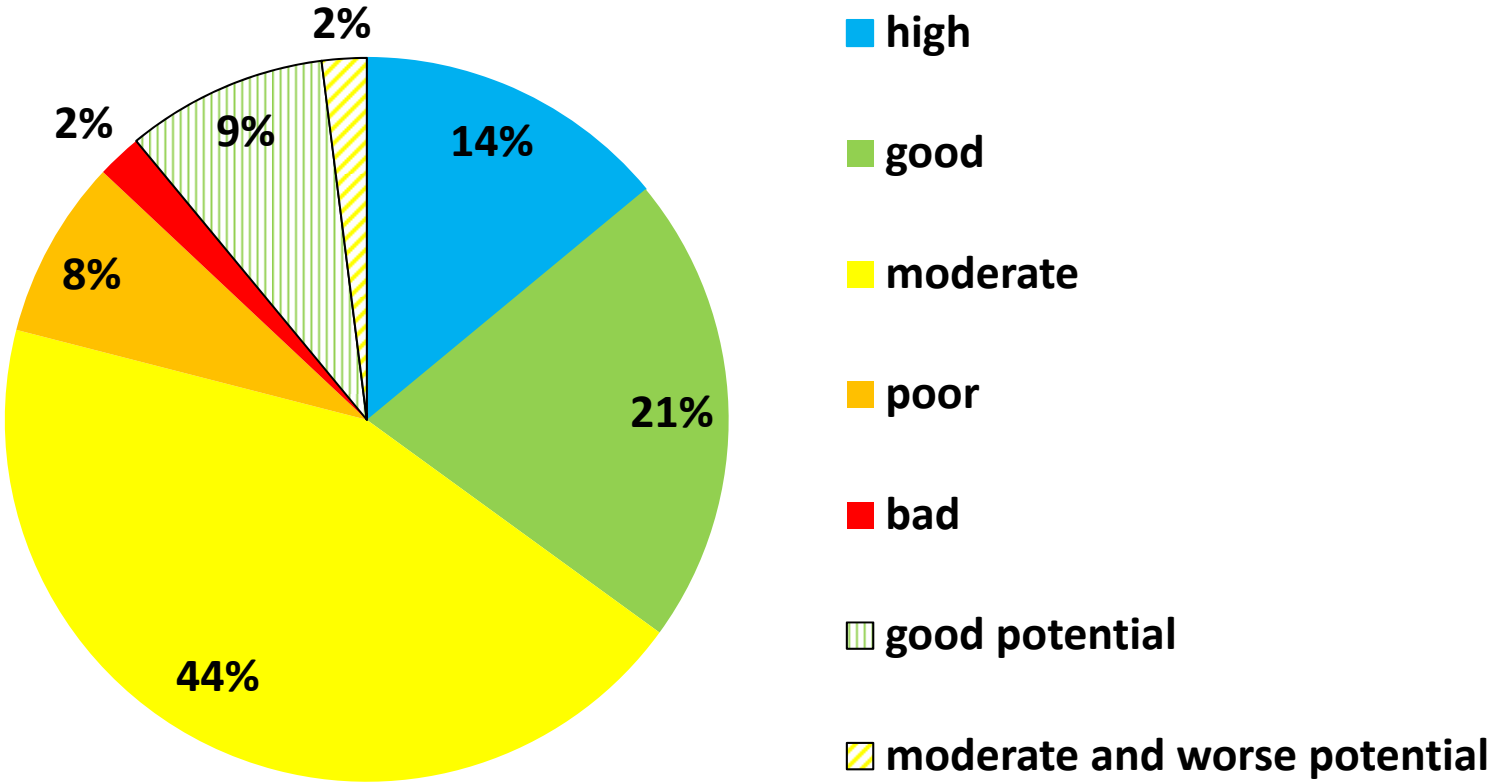
Example Upper Traun River

Analysis of telephone survey

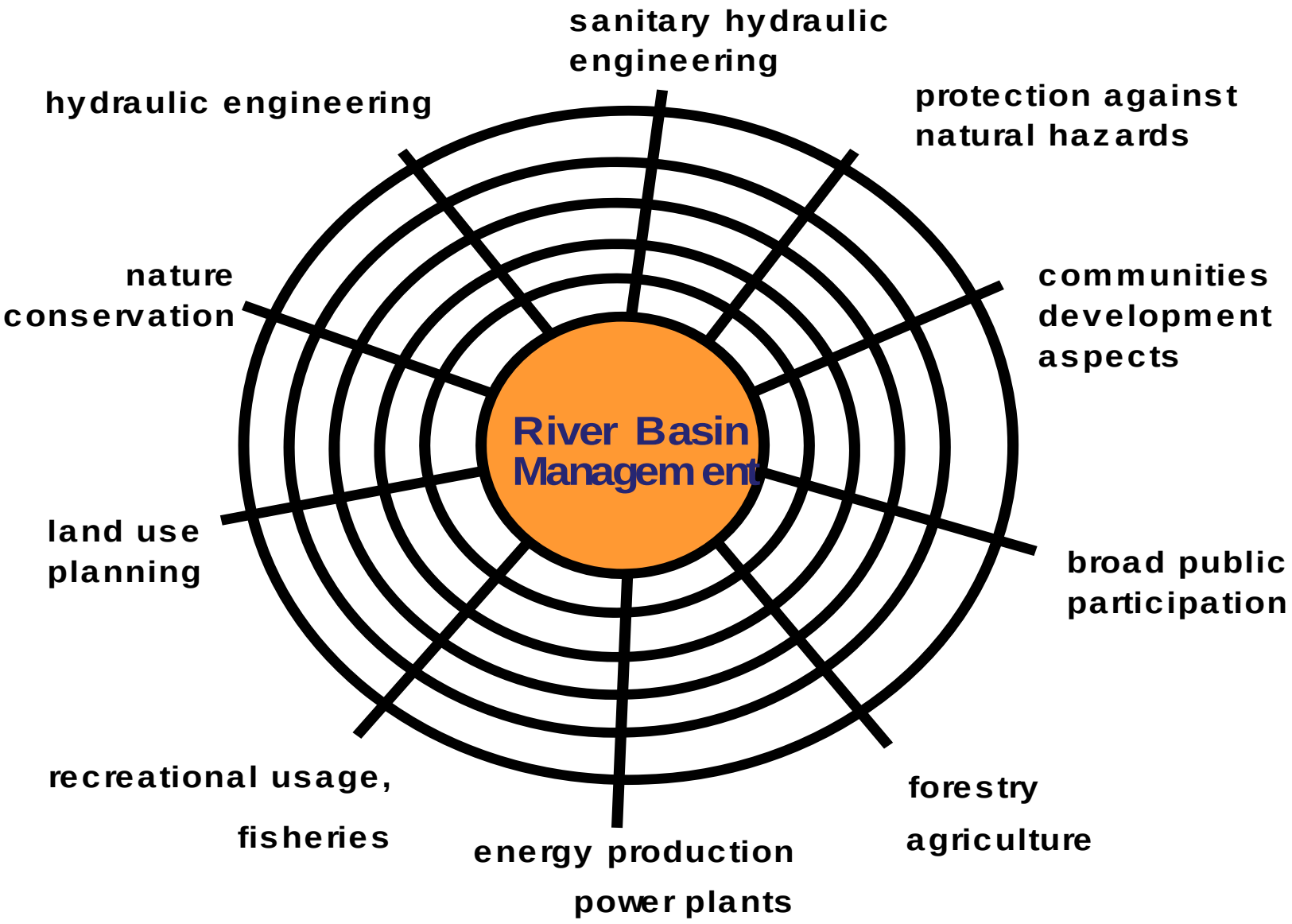
Danube Floodrisk stakeholder workshop
3. - 4. OCTOBER 2011
Trento, Italy
DI Clemens Gumpinger

River Basin Management – Why?

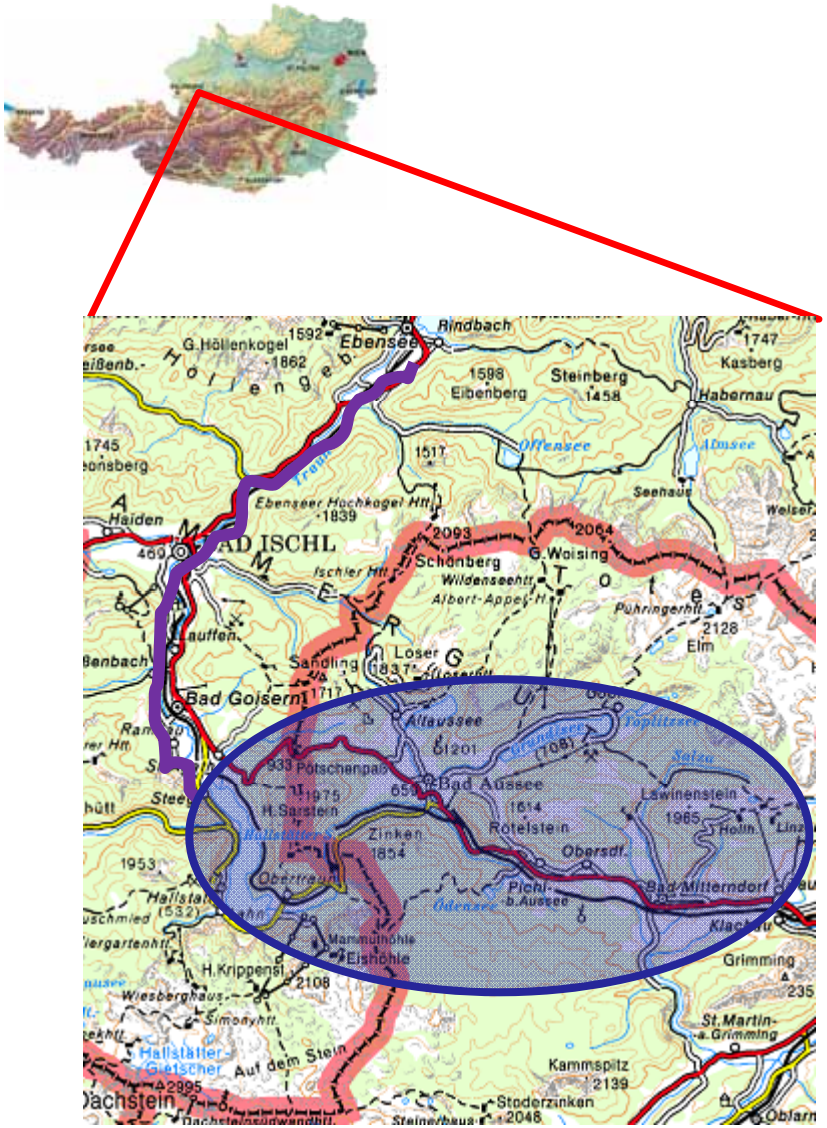
- legal baseline: EU Water Framework Directive & EU Floods Directive
- ecological status of waterbodies in Austria



Various interests along a river and in the catchment area



Example: River Basin Management Upper Traun River



project data

- phase I: province Upper Austria, 46 km river stretch
- nowadays: provinces Upper Austria and Styria,
  8 communities,
  ca. 100 km main river stretch,
  more than 50 tributaries
  1.260 km² catchment area

project phases

- phase I 2007/08
- phase II 2009/10
- phase III from 2011 on

project partners

- Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (Sections: Management of Water Bodies/ Torrent Control)
- WWF-Austria
- Austrian Federal Forests
- local govmts. (Upper Austria, Styria)

Example: River Basin Management Upper Traun River

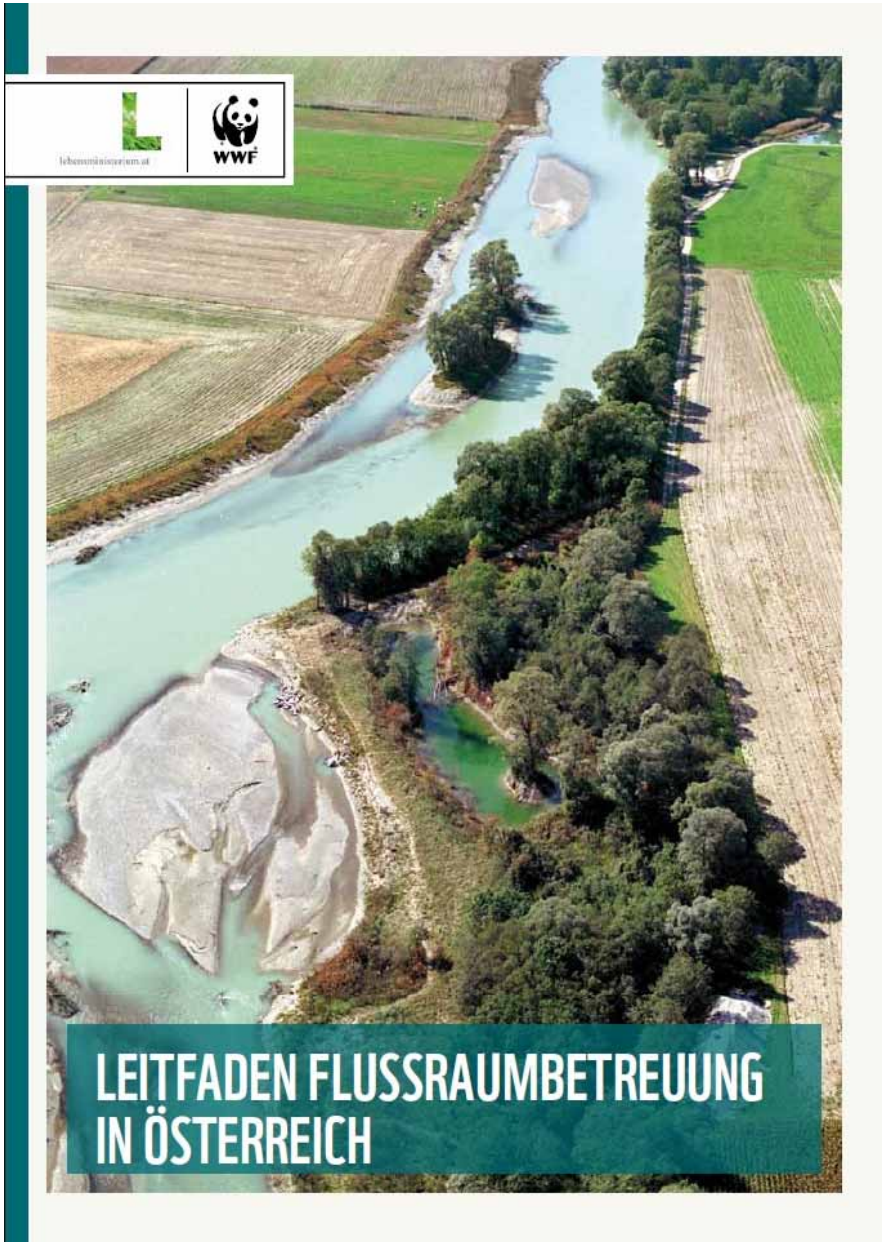
regional goals

- building up alliances for the Upper Traun River
- improve ecological aspects in hydraulic engineering projects (e.g. flood protection, infrastructure)
- raise public awareness and participation
- environmental education
- exchange of experiences
- best practice examples

national goals

- model project for other areas / river basins
- developing guidelines for River Basin Development in Austria

„Guideline to River Basin Management in Austria“



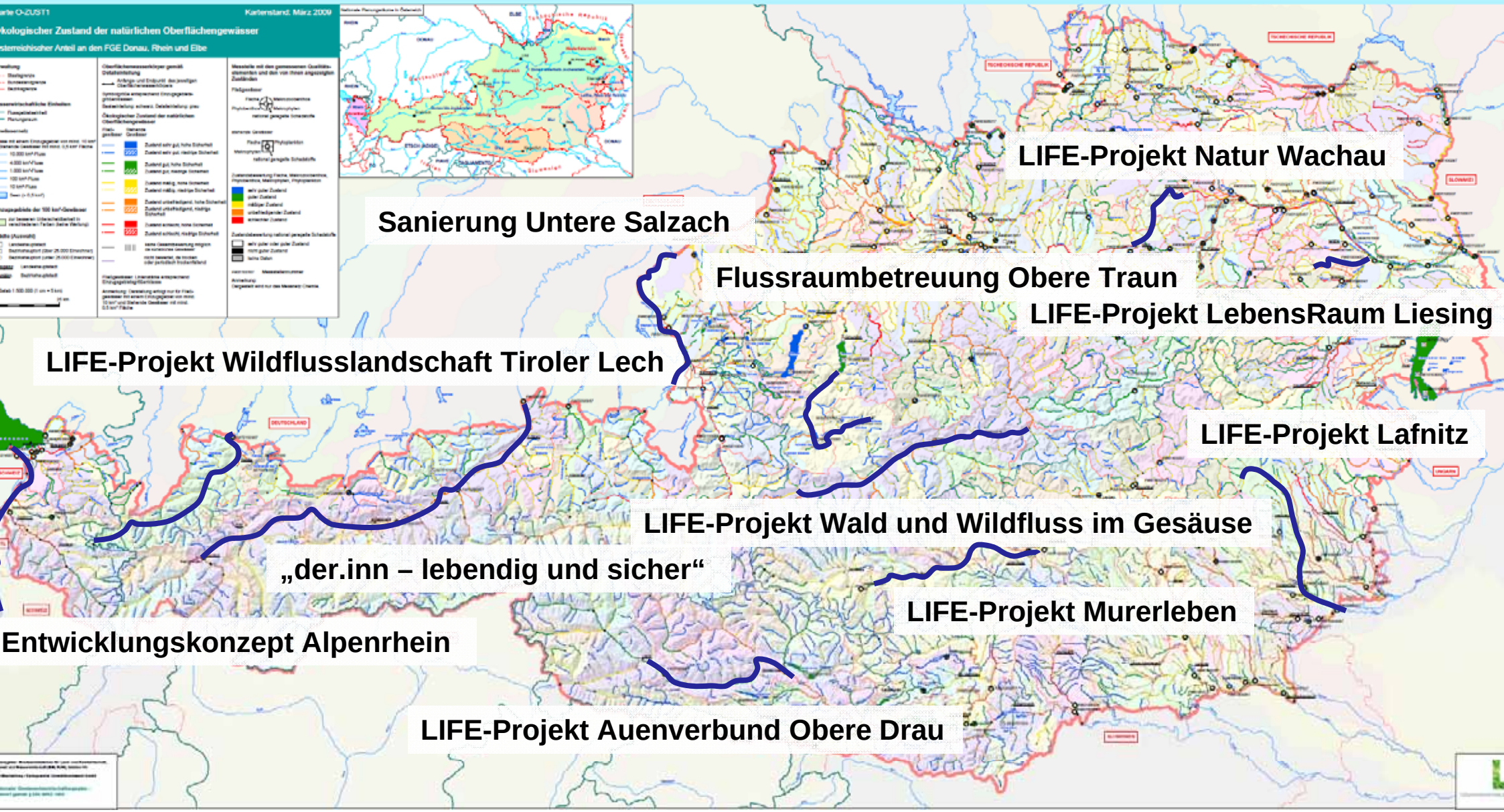
Integrated project management between the aspects of humane usage , protection against natural hazards, ecology and recreation

Several questions asked in a telephone survey of 14 similar projects

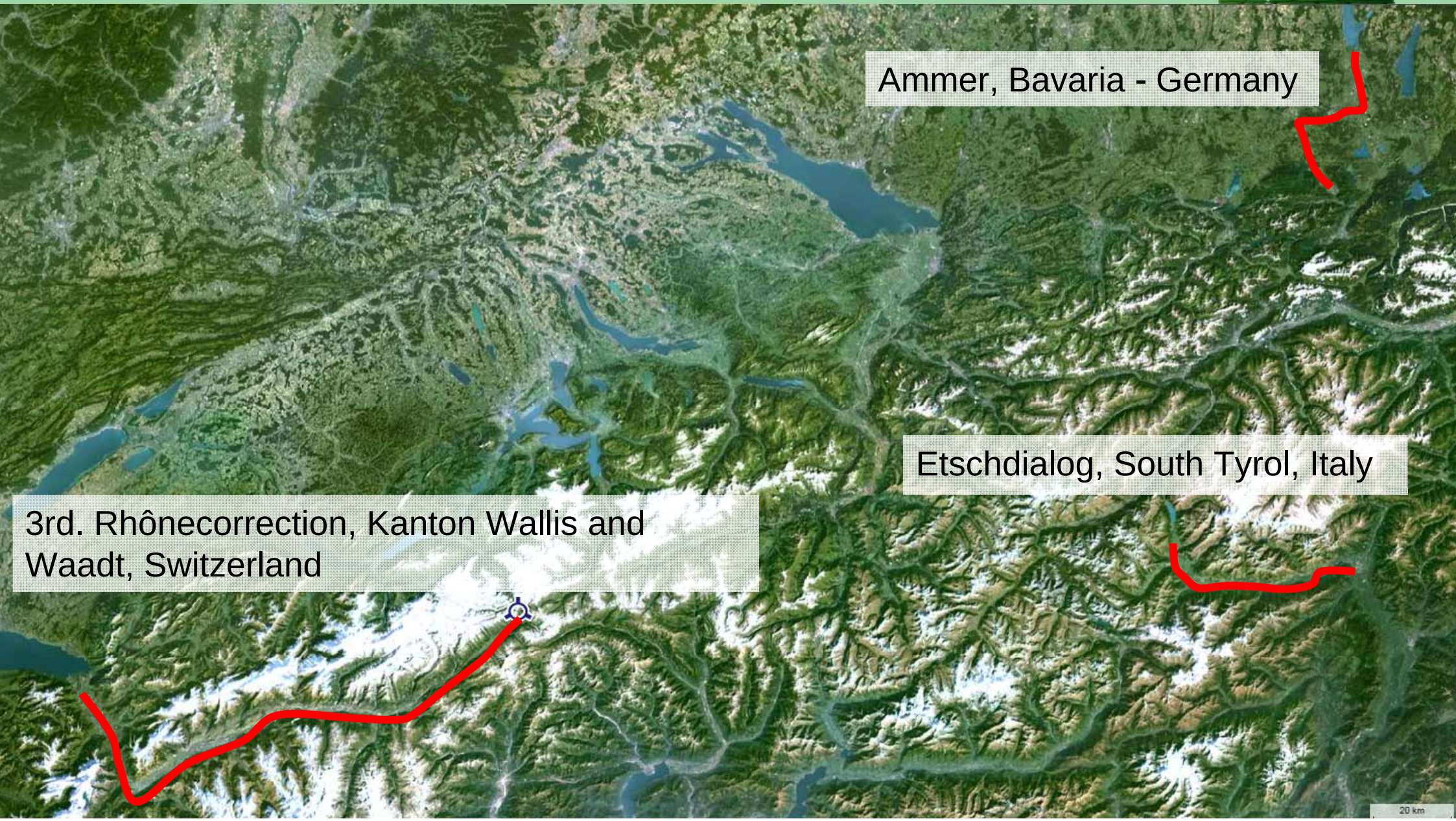
partners involved:

- Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
- WWF-Austria
- Austrian Federal Forests
- Revital Ziviltechniker GmbH

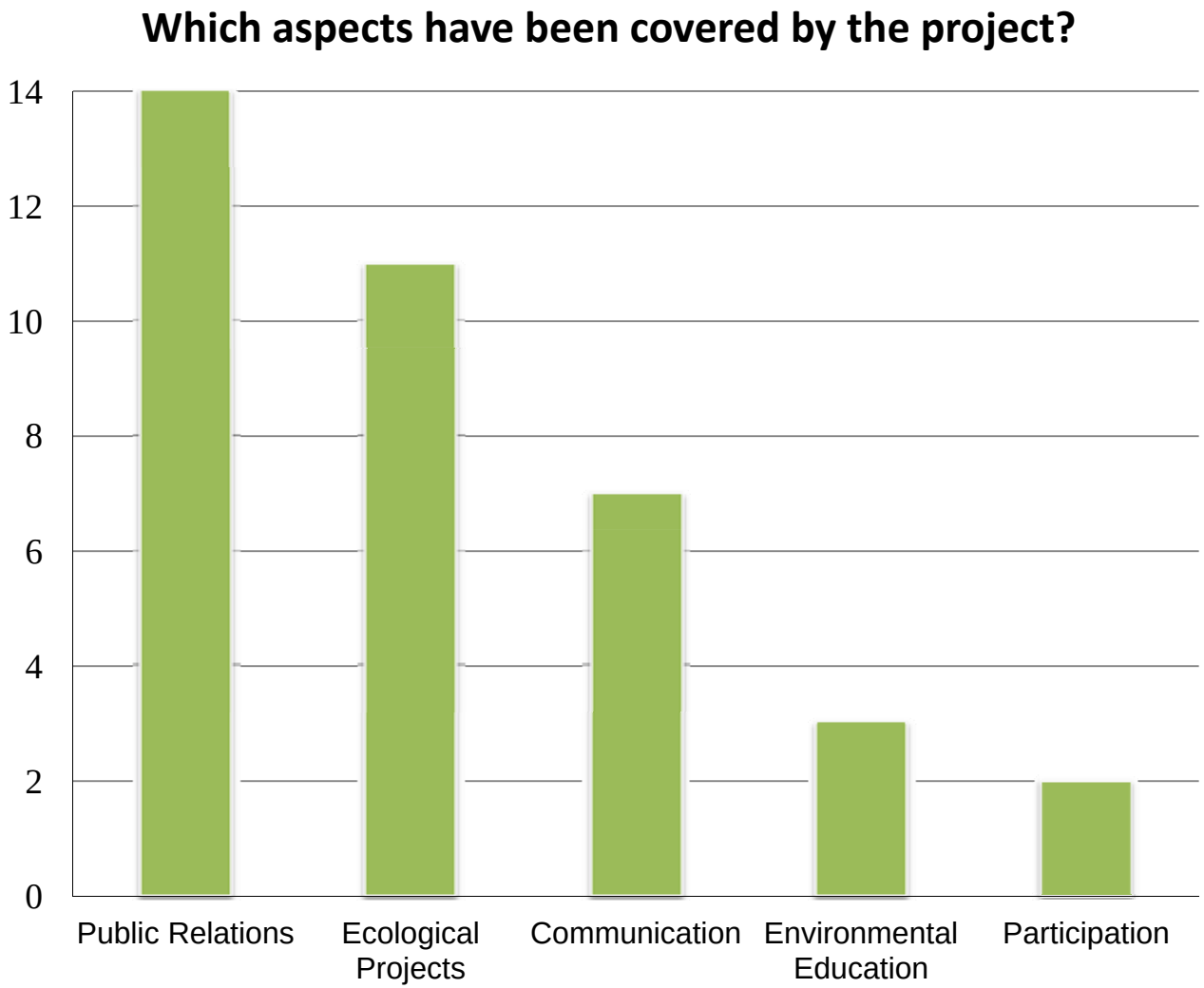
Telephone survey: 11 project examples in Austria



Telephone survey: 3 international project examples

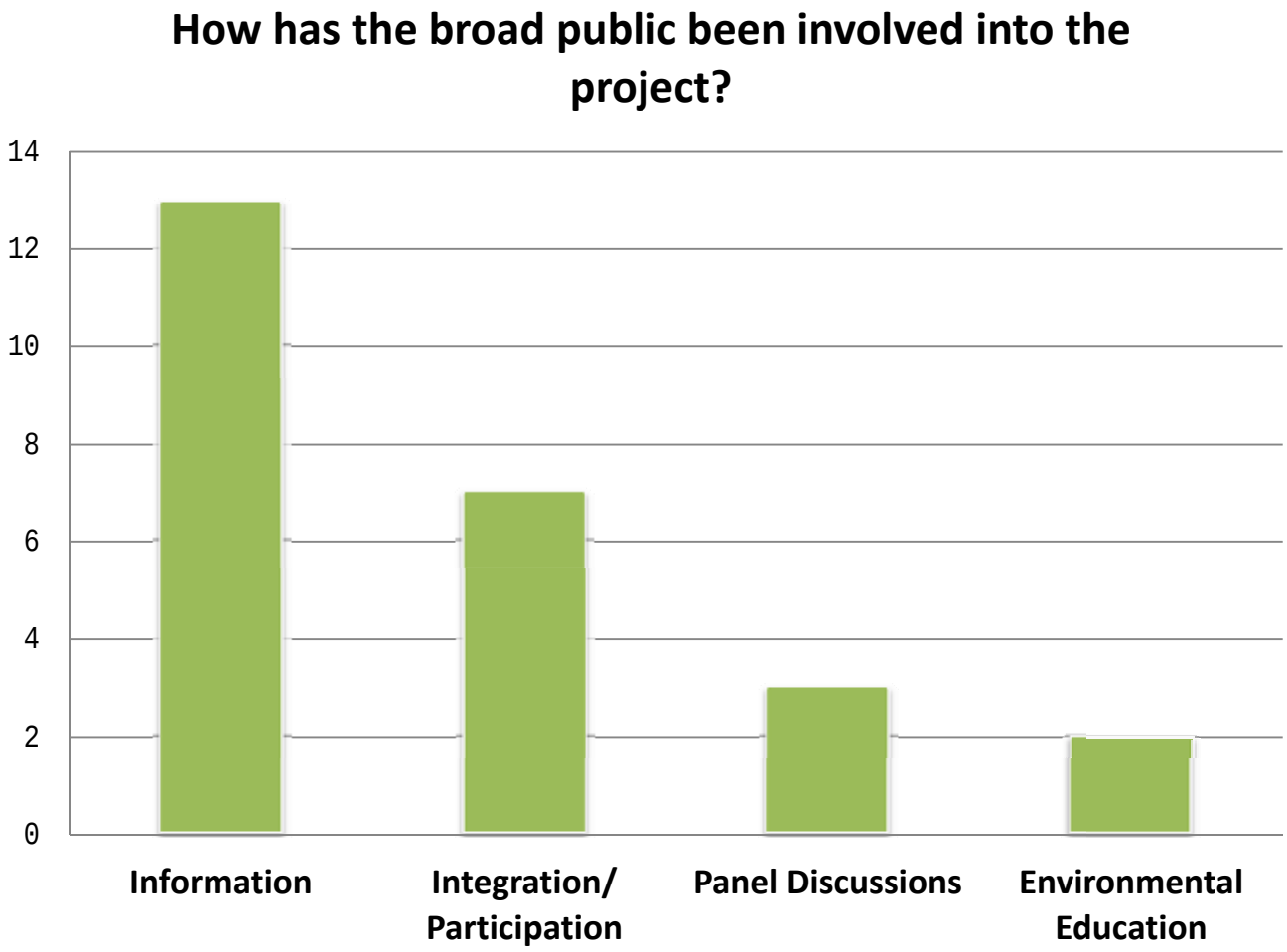


Results: aspects covered by the project



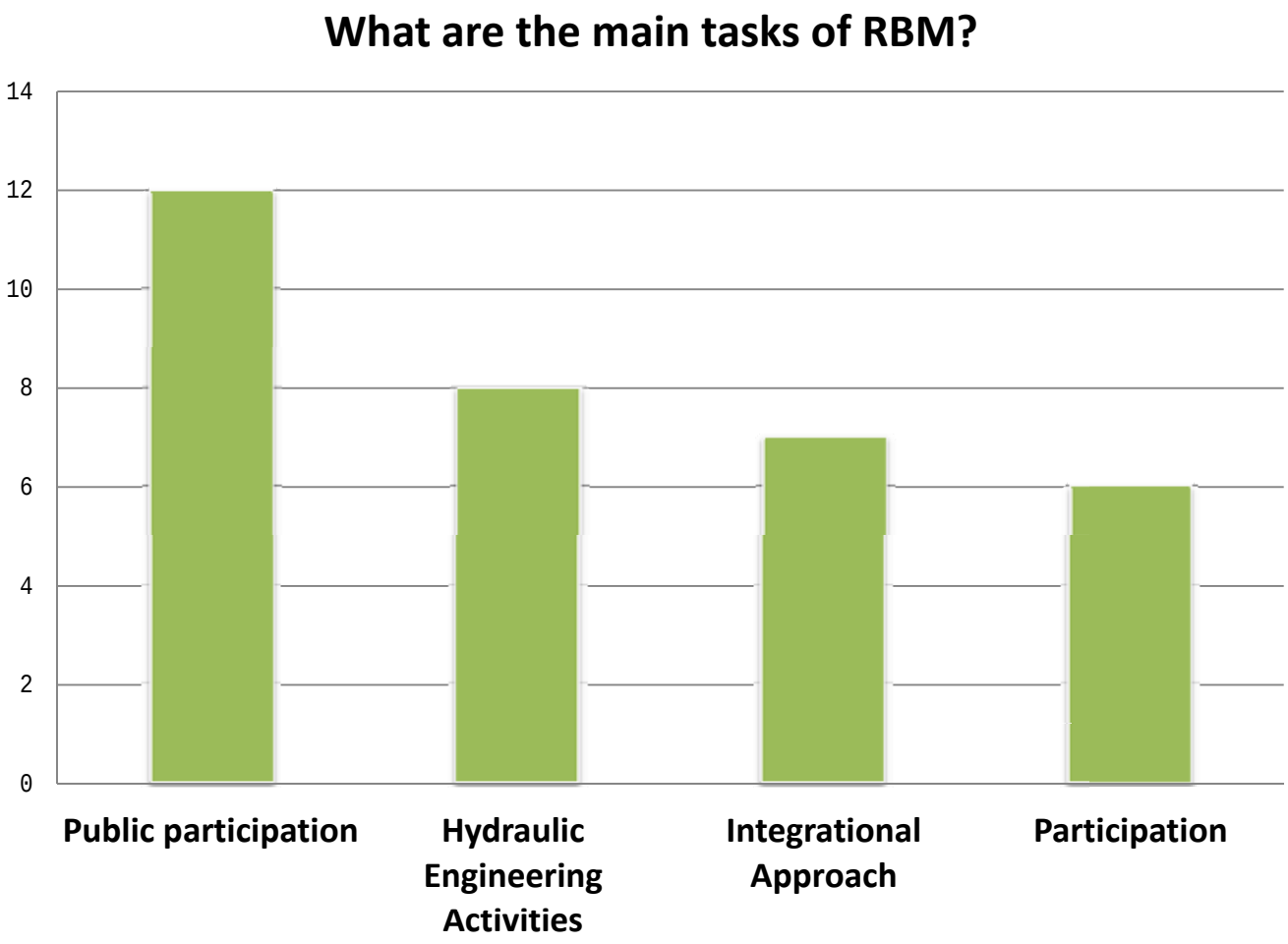
- Public relations have been mentioned in all interviewed projects
- Initialisation, implementation and supervision of ecological projects or wildlife conservation have been listed as important aspect of RBD within 11 projects
- Half of the interviewed mentioned communication as important aspect of their project

Results: information/integration of the broad public



- Information of the broad public by means of homepages, newsletters, media, events, excursions, etc. in 13 of 14 projects
- Within half of the surveyed projects participational methods have been used (e.g. working groups, platforms, river basin forums, advisory boards,…)

Results: main tasks of River Basin Management



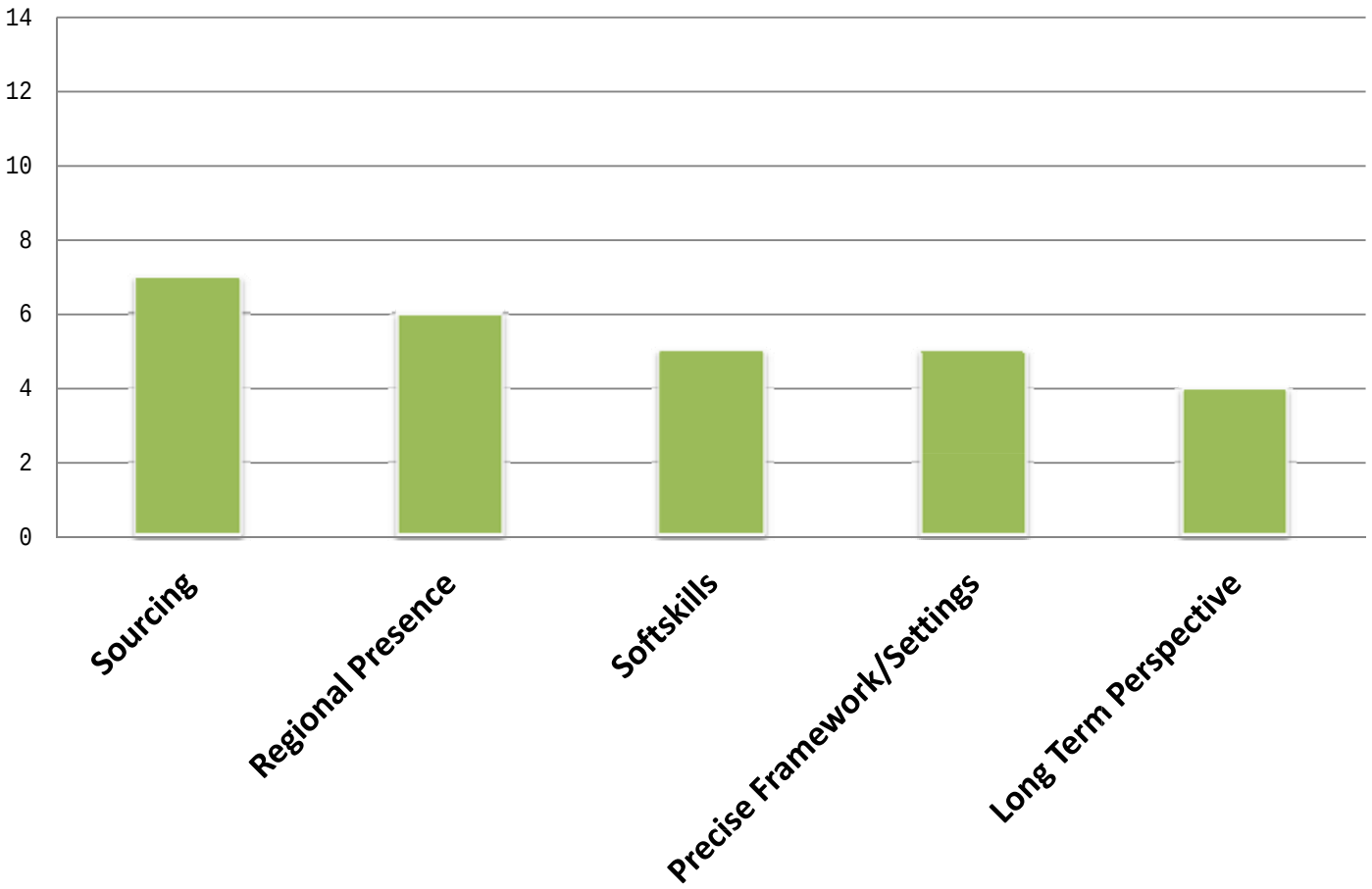
- Public participation is the main task in most of the projects
- Accompaniment of hydraulic engineering activities with a strong aim to get ecological aspects mentioned
- Integration of stakeholders and official authorities in planning processes to define models („leitbilder“) and reach goals

Results: organisational /professional strengths

- Public relations (one of the main tasks) is necessary in a very professional way
- Enforcing cooperation between authorities and planners, especially those with overlapping tasks

Results: key factors for River Basin Management

What are the key factors for a well functioning RBM?



- Sourcing is the crucial aspect
- Regional presence is substantial, but depends on funding
- Softskills imply a high social competence
- Precise framework helps avoiding disappointments
- Long term perspective is needed in high dynamic areas (as river catchments are)

Results: organisational /professional weaknesses

Many different aspects have been named, multiple citations were:

- missing or badly funded personal resources
- missing or bad communications
- missing bigger vision and lack of big river restoration activities
- no follow-up care existing

Other mentioned weaknesses:

- different starting positions of envolved partners
- missing integration of broad public and stakeholders
- bureaucracy of LIFE-projects
- missing person of trust in the area
- too low emphasis on environmental education
- insufficient ways of communication

Profile of requirements for River Basin Management

personal / time resources

- presence in the region (but not descend from?)
- building up networks

professional knowledge

- good knowledge within the fields of aquatic ecology
- basic knowledge of hydraulic engineering, protection against natural hazards, forestry and agriculture, landuse planning, public relations and environmental education

social competence

- high ability to communicate
- faculty of speech
- very sophisticated conflict management

Future of River Basin Management / Development

Presence and activity of river basin managers is viable for…

- the creation of broad understanding for necessary improvements along rivers
- acting as interface between administrational units and stakeholders
- inforcement of an integrative approach balancing between different interests
- acting as a „river lawyer“, representing the „rivers interests“ (ecology, hydrological/flood regime, species-composition,...)

.

General conclusion

- clear position / framework by federal and local governments
- providing enough money for staff and time resources
- provide budget for land acquisition!

Thank You for Your Attention!

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Different organisation of River Basin Development

governmental authorities

+ easier funding
+ better long term possibilities
+ infrastructural equipment is already existing
+ easier communication with authorities
- no sufficient independence
- governments have to save money nowadays
- partially lack of know-how

external companies

+ broad funding possibilities (cooperations, ngo`s, private funding, …)
+ better independence
+ better integrative potential between public and authorities
o independence of companies is necessary
- structural basics have to be created
- very distinct framework has to be settled
- risk of discontinuity / changing companies (if tenders are needed)

as part of a financed project

+ funding is fixed within the project
+ clear project structure / framework
+ good communication structures (especially in LIFE-projects)
+ better focus on ecology (e.g. LIFE)
- mostly short term / only for project durance
- (possible) lack in regional presence
- too much bureaucracy