



Sustainability in Tourism and  
Resource Management



Looking back and looking forward  
There is so much energy in our regions  
Self-confident answers to global challenges



PROJECT PART-FINANCED  
BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

North EAST South West  
 INTERREG IIC

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#### Imprint

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## 1. SiTaR = visible – touchable – lasting



Provincial Governor  
Hans Niessl, Burgenland.  
(Photo: Erich Janzso)

When regions join together and exchange their experiences across national borders, the question always arises whether it has been worth the expense for the partners and whether added value has resulted from the cooperation. This self-critical view has nothing to do with egoism, but rather it is necessary when resources are tight, most especially when financial means of the European Union have been used.

The Interreg IIC Project “Sustainability in Tourism and Resource Management (SiTaR)” had to prove that regions lying nearly 1,000 kilometers distant from one another could, within only three years, through lean organization and skilful selection of projects, use their experience for the realization of cooperative pilot projects and the development of new products and services in important sectors.

Within this short time, in every region the competences were successfully bundled so that visible and touchable results with long-lasting effects resulted:

- New health tourism offerings were developed and have already been realized in an exemplary fashion.
- The effect of health tourism offerings in thermal baths for people suffering from burnout syndrome were researched and a folder with suggestions for preventative measures was made available to the enterprises for their guests.
- Regional products from the nature park and national park regions were united in a single marketing systems and a network for cultural cooperation was created.
- The use of sources of renewable energy, including renewable raw materials for energy use, was not only presented and examined, but based on the results of a pilot project, was even developed to the point of founding a company.
- The purifying effects of mixed water treatment in purification basins, having been installed in Burgenland, was proved and has now been realized in all the partner regions. As a result the costs of the sub-project were already saved several times over during the life of Project SiTaR.

This selection represents only a few examples of the 23 subsidized sub-projects and documents the fact that regions which learn in cooperation with one another can achieve more than they could through their own initiatives, if supported by the economic protagonists and policies of those regions.

The results of SiTaR have left their mark on the programme of the Structure Support Fund 2007-2013 due to the integration of the most important regional institutions which are responsible for the regional and economic development. In Burgenland, for example, health tourism and the subsidization of renewable energy with the goal of energy autonomy in certain areas are important subsidy points in the Phasing Out Programme 2007-2013 and in the programmes of the cross-border cooperation with neighboring regions in Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia.

It is now easier to make use of the possibilities of transnational cooperation in the upcoming support period because of the previous positive experiences with Project SiTaR. The increase in competitive capabilities, together with its positive effects on the labor market, will make possible a contribution to investment measures which build on them through the formation of innovative projects in selected areas.

I wish to thank all the partner regions and their employees for their readiness to cooperate, through which this transnational project was realized. In this way they have made contributions to the further development of their own regions and of others.

*Hans Niessl*  
*Provincial Governor of Burgenland*

## 2. The Highlights



The representatives of the SiTaR regions at the First Annual Conference (13 and 14 October 2005).

(Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH - photo service)

The Interreg IIC Project SiTaR – Sustainability in Tourism and Resource Management – was realized in four components.

Component 1: Administration and Coordination.

Component 2: Health Tourism.

Component 3: Culture and Ecotourism.

Component 4: Resource Management.

Life of the project: 2004 through 2007.

Intensive communication contributed to the success of the project.

Health Tourism,” “Culture and Ecotourism” and “Resource Management” were the main headings for the subprojects within the framework of Project SiTaR. Twenty-five ambitious concepts were approved, of which twenty-three were realized.

One project was cancelled, and its budget was used for other projects. One further project had to be broken off due to coordination problems.

The organizational threads came together through the work of the project partner Burgenland. Here the subprojects were coordinated and the complete course of events of Project SiTaR was steered.

Project SiTaR was shaped by intensive communication. The partner regions actually spoke in person with each other. During the life of the project from 2004 to 2007 there was a series of meetings:

- Steering Committee Meetings: These meetings, during which the subprojects were approved, took place twice yearly. At each steering committee

meeting reports on the current status of the projects were heard and planned activities were discussed.

- Annual Conferences: During the life of the project three annual conferences took place - one each in Burgenland, South Tyrol and Waldeck-Frankenberg. At the annual conferences the subprojects were presented.
- Information Events: In order to make the subproject partners acquainted with each other and to provide them with the necessary knowledge in the area of invoice procedures, relevant information events took place in each partner region.
- Special exhibitions: Under the title “Support works! Burgenland and the EU” and “Support works! Waldeck-Frankenberg and the EU” respectively special exhibitions took place during which the best-practice projects were introduced.
- Completion Conference: All activities led to the Completion Conference on 24 October 2007 in Bad Tatzmannsdorf, Burgenland, where the project partners proudly presented their results.

From 2004 to 2007 within the framework of Project SiTaR, forward-looking work was performed, far-reaching scientifically substantiated results were achieved, successful methods were developed and economic impulses were begun.

SiTaR contributed to this process, with the result that the participating EU re-

gions can now face the challenges of the future with self-confidence. All projects had visible effects on the regions. Some of them have even awakened sensational interest throughout the EU and around the world.

On the following pages you can read what made this project so successful!

## 2.1. HEALTH TOURISM – REGIONAL OFFERS FOR YOUR WELL-BEING



The precious healing waters of the thermal baths in the SiTaR Regions - the picture shows a drinking fountain in Bad Wildungen in Waldeck-Frankenberg - are the basis for attractive health offerings.

(Photo: The archives of the Staatsbad Bad Wildungen GmbH – Reckhard Pfeil)

Attractive programmes in the area of health tourism are a chance for the regions to position themselves professionally. The demand for health tourism offerings is growing continually for various reasons:

- Total commitment without interruption is demanded of us every day both in our professional and in our private lives. Body and soul yearn for a break in order to gather strength.
- When a human being is exposed to constant stress, chronic fatigue conditions leading to burnout can be the result. In this case professional help is needed.
- In retirement the wish grows for healthy exercise and preventative health programmes which are equally good for both body and soul.

With their attractive thermal springs and unspoiled landscapes, the SiTaR regions are perfectly located for tourism purposes. Warm healing springs and other remedies unique to each location form the

basis for a complete health and wellness offering. Those who travel to Burgenland, South Tyrol or Waldeck-Frankenberg to relax or to be healed, receive in addition to highly professional medical help a complete supporting programme in the area of wellness and further opportunities to enjoy the natural beauties of the regions. A health holiday in a SiTaR region is equally healing to body, mind and spirit - a totally holistic viewpoint.

The health experts of the SiTaR regions have recognized that new health programmes that move beyond the classic offerings are needed. How can people suffering from chronic fatigue be helped? Is an “emergency kit” for stress situations feasible?

How can regional products be built into health tourism? And finally: How can we support people who do get exercise and want to stay sprightly and healthy? You can read more about the results of these considerations in the following chapters.

Component 2: “Health Tourism”.

Overall responsibility: The Autonomous Province of Bolzano-South Tyrol.

Vital programmes keep body and soul healthy.

Natural remedies as the basis for health tourism offerings in the regions.

Unspoiled landscapes increased the effects of the regional health tourism programme.

Completely new therapies are being developed.

Under the overall responsibility of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-South Tyrol, eight subprojects of SiTaR's Component 2: Health Tourism were realized. One project was broken off because delays at the beginning prevented its completion within the time available.

At the Platform Conference on the subject of health tourism at the Meran Thermal Baths on 7 December 2006 and at the Second Annual SiTaR Conference on 19 April 2007, also in Meran, the subprojects were presented. Future cooperation in the area of health tourism was discussed at a workshop.

In the near future the partner regions want to deal with a number of subjects, including:

- Safeguarding of available resources
- Innovation in cooperation with other sectors
- Mobility

- Cultivation of micro-destinations
- Securing of quality and qualifications

A regional analysis on the subject of health tourism describes the potential of the SiTaR regions in this sector. This publication is available both as a brochure and as a download from the SiTaR website.

In South Tyrol especially the subproject "Primary and Secondary Prevention of Chronic Fatigue" has provided momentum for the tourism sector and achieved a closer interweaving between health precautions and tourism.

In Waldeck-Frankenberg a project group was founded which will realize the market introduction of the intervention programme against chronic fatigue. All the project partners have developed a better understanding of the connections among the various areas. Networks have been built up which extend beyond the project itself.

Eight subprojects were successfully developed in the area of "health tourism".

The cooperation among the SiTaR Regions extends far beyond the life of the project.

## 2.2. FIT AND HEALTHY – NO CHANCE OF BURNOUT!



Nordic walking is one way to prevent burnout.

(Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Walter Luttenberger)

The eight subprojects in the component “Health Tourism” dealt with current symptoms such as chronic fatigue, stress and burnout. In the rehabilitation garden, older and handicapped people learn how they also can perform garden work. (By the way, these tips are interesting for every hobby gardener who would like to protect his back and joints!) The newly created Nordic Walking Eco-Trails combine healthy exercise in the fresh air with exciting information about the exceptional features of the region - but read it for yourself!



In Bad Tatzmannsdorf an intervention programme for patients with chronic fatigue was developed.

(Photo: Health Resort Bad Tatzmannsdorf – Andreas Bruckner)

### 2.2.1. How does one protect oneself against chronic fatigue?

Chronic fatigue with impairment of health are a growing problem for health services. This SiTaR subproject took on this topic. The health experts who were involved

tried to develop a programme through which people in danger of chronic fatigue could be protected.

First, the term “chronic fatigue syndrome” was defined based on the existing scientific literature. Then an innovative intervention concept was worked out including the application of balneology therapies. The effects of the intervention were evaluated through scientific research projects. This evaluation is intended on the one hand to serve the purpose of ensuring the scientific basis of health therapy offerings in cases of chronic fatigue, and on the other hand to serve as a basis

for the training of members of various health professions.

The intervention programme was successfully tested on 100 participants in South

Help with exhaustion, stress and burnout.

Project title: Primary and Secondary Prevention of Chronic Fatigue.

Project sponsor: Institute for Health Research, Prevention, Rehabilitation and Balneology (Waldeck-Frankenberg).

A specially developed programme helps people with chronic fatigue.

Tyrol. The feedback forms which were filled out were evaluated in Bad Wildungen (Waldeck-Frankenberg). Preliminary results were presented in South Tyrol on 19 April 2007. A separate intervention programme worked out in Burgenland examined the effects of the usual health cures on parameters connected with chronic fatigue.

Its goal was to find out whether a demonstrable effect on chronic fatigue can be obtained during a usual health cure, and whether such an effect is long-term.

### 2.2.2. Healthy garden work

Garden work is considered an especially fulfilling hobby by many people. One does not necessarily have to have a green thumb to recognize that the peaceful state of affairs in a garden, no matter how small, have positive effects on body and soul. This knowledge forms the basis for the project "Health in the Garden - the Rehabilitation Garden". The Rehabilitation Garden was realized as part of the Hessian Provincial Horticultural Show 2006 in Bad Wildungen (Waldeck-Frankenberg). The results confirm the health benefits of working in a garden.

With appropriate modifications of the garden, garden work is also possible for people with physical limitations.

Five workshops were held during the Hessian Provincial Horticultural Show 2006 from 31 May to 29 September 2006. At these workshops experienced physiotherapists demonstrated how special gardening techniques and new ergonomically designed garden tools can be used to avoid damaging the body. The provincial horticultural show was visited by 450,000 guests.



Ergonomically formed garden tools protect the back and joints.

(Photo: ErgoBase)

In Bad Wildungen two rehabilitation clinics are interested in taking the concept of the rehabilitation garden into their programmes. Gardens lying very near the clinics will be redesigned in order to use them for therapeutic purposes at a later date. In existing rehabilitation gardens and health gardens further events will also be carried out.

The South Tyrolean project partner plans to modify an existing clinic park to create a "Rehabilitation Garden - Sound and Art Garden" and to make the entire garden area accessible for rehabilitation patients and wheelchair users. The valuable, scientifically documented emotional influence of music and art on recovery will be encouraged through little concerts, lectures and art shows.

### 2.2.3. Exercise and nature experience - Nordic Walking Eco-Trail

Nordic walking is an ideal connection between gentle health tourism and nature experience. In order to improve the tourism infrastructure for the three regions Burgenland, South Tyrol and Waldeck-

Frankenberg, a concept was designed of Nordic Walking Trails posted with special signs dealing with and uniting the aspects of health, nature and ecology.

In addition, information points were established informing users of the health advantages of Nordic walking.

The medium which unites the three SiTaR regions in which Eco-Trails were established is the element of water. In Waldeck-Frankenberg a mill path was suggested, in South Tyrol the ecological emphasis lay on water in the Alpine region, and in Bad Tatzmannsdorf, Burgenland, the local mineral and acidulous medicinal springs

A research project on the subject of chronic fatigue also took place in Burgenland.

Project title: Health in the Garden - The Rehabilitation Garden.

Project sponsor: Institute for Health Research, Prevention, Rehabilitation and Balneology (Waldeck-Frankenberg).

Trying out the Rehabilitation Garden at the Hessian Provincial Horticultural Show 2006 in Bad Wildungen (Administrative District Waldeck-Frankenberg).

Two rehabilitation clinics want to take the concept of the rehabilitation garden into their programmes.

Project title: Nordic Walking Eco-Trail.

Project sponsor: University of Applied Sciences Burgenland Ltd.

Water as a connecting element.



Among the products available in South Tyrol are grapes, wool, whey, and apples, among others. The aspect of seasonal availability was important. Perishability and deliverable quantities also had to be estimated.

The first step was to identify South Tyrolean raw materials which could serve as the basis for the applications. The next step was to research the effectiveness of these raw materials. Studies of allergic reactions and possible contraindications were carried out.

Then the selected products and individual applications were packed in uniform packets which will be offered to the guests in future. Individual applications are desirable, but above all the packets show their preventative or relaxing effects.

For this purpose working groups were again put together, each consisting of a doctor and an expert from the designated area.

The last step was linked to the planning. The type and amount of the planned raw material for the packet and application had to be determined. Negotiations with farmers, cooperatives, and other suppliers had to be carried out.

### 2.2.5. All about looking after yourself – Health packages

When one submits to a medical operation, one certainly feels better during the stay in the clinic if an attractive total package

is offered. Such health packages were bound up in the scope of the SiTaR sub-project which is introduced here.

The start of the project was a brief market analysis, and building on the analysis innovative health packages for the patient

and/or those accompanying him were developed. An example is the Clinic of Our Lady, where there was a center for plastic surgery and where a working group developed an appropriate concept. Hotels agreed to serve as partners for cooperation. Eight packages were developed together with the hoteliers. By means of the marketing instruments which were devel-

oped (brochures and internet entry) the cooperation's products were placed on the market.

To complement the medical operations, packages of offerings were developed which could be carried out completely in

the clinic, for example, check-ups, medically supported nutritional advice, advice on weight reduction and general health (lifestyle advice). Other offers were developed with elements of beauty culture and the area of wellness. An important difference between these offerings and previous wellness offerings consists of the

constant presence of medical personnel, which significantly increased the innovative character of the products.

The know-how transfer took place at a SiTaR meeting in Bolzano, where the status of the project was presented to all the partners.



Regional Products, for example apples, are an excellent starting point for innovative therapies and applications.

(Photo: Department of Health and Social Services of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano)



A diverse health programme supports the stay in the clinic.

(Photo: Health Resort Bad Tatzmannsdorf – Andreas Bruckner)

Experts developed the product lines and application packages.

Project title: Development of Health Packages in Combination with Plastic Surgery including the Cluster Tourism Medicine.

Project Sponsor: Clinic of Our Lady.

Complementing the medical operation there is a complete health and wellness programme.

An important factor is the constant accompaniment of medical personnel.

### 2.2.6. The proper way to deal with stress

Stress is a constant companion in modern society. We feel better when we learn to deal with stress better. During this SiTaR subproject, which was an extension of the subproject “Primary and Secondary Prevention of Chronic Fatigue”, the role of stress in the origin of chronic fatigue was researched. Additionally a self-practice programme was developed to help people under stress to deal with that stress.

During the development of the self-practice programme one decisive point stood at the center: the content of the programme had to be relatively easy to integrate into everyday life. Elements of exercise and relaxation are the main components of the self-practice programme: Nordic walking, bicycling, swimming or relaxation pools help people to find peace. A self-designed weekly plan offers an overview of the elements of the self-practice programme and the activities that are actually completed.

Further information can be obtained from a flyer about the self-practice programme, containing both an overview and background information on coping with stress as well as a reading list detailing individual coping measures. The flyer was assembled by the Institute for Health Research Bad Wildungen. The project partner in Burgenland was responsible for its printing. It is planned to distribute the flyer in hotels, enterprises and institutions for health tourism.

### 2.2.7. What should thermal baths be able to do?

High quality Central European thermal springs are facing ever more competition while at the same time the requirements and expectations of the quality of the thermal springs and wellness offerings continue to climb. Within various marketing strategies, positioning takes on a central meaning. „Positioning starts with a product ... But positioning is not what you do to the product. Positioning is what you do with the mind of the prospect.

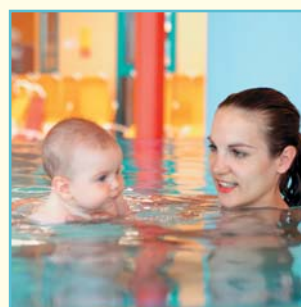
That is you position the product in the mind of prospect” (Ries A. & Trout J. 1986). This quote makes clear the actual goal of positioning. The perception of the products and services by the customer is in the foreground, and less the actual positioning of the individual enterprises on the market, which makes it clear that the positioning in the customer’s perception is what he will reference later, and it will have definitive influence on customer satisfaction.

Specializations in the thermal springs sector allow the thermal springs to position themselves. To satisfy customers’ expectations it is necessary on the one hand to know the criteria which are necessary to satisfy those expectations and on the other hand to have methods which make it possible to measure the degree to which the goal has been achieved in the criteria which were determined. Successful positioning shows the advantages of a product or service in



Nordic walking is a part of the anti-stress programme.

(Photo: Health Resort Bad Tatzmannsdorf – Andreas Bruckner)



Family thermal springs such as the Sonnentherme Lutzmannsburg recognized the trend and positioned themselves in relation to the target group.

(Photo: Sonnentherme Lutzmannsburg)

Project title: The Meaning of Stress and How Individuals Deal with It, with Reference to the Origin of Conditions of Exhaustion.

Project sponsor: Institute for Health Research, Prevention, Rehabilitation and Balneology (Waldeck-Frankenberg).

An exercise programme against stress - appropriate for integration into everyday life.

Information flyer for hotels and health enterprises.

Project title: Multi-criteria Thermal Springs Positioning Tool.

Project sponsor: University of Applied Sciences Burgenland Ltd.

Specialized thermal springs fulfill customers’ wishes.

contrast to the competition and makes them unique in the customer's eyes.

As part of this subproject a systematic multi-criteria tool for the positioning of thermal springs was developed based on various aspects (degree to which the positioning can be put into operation and to which success can be measured). Various criteria for the qualification of diverse expectations were defined, methods to determine the degree to which goals are reached in designated criteria were developed, and sample measurements were carried out.



Offerings for people in need of care were developed.  
 (Photo: Fotolia\_© Ilan Amith)

During the marketing observation in the three thermal springs regions a total of 56 thermal springs enterprises (28 in Austria, 1 in South Tyrol, 27 in Hesse) were analyzed. The resulting summary of positioning is as follows: 9 family thermal springs, 13 adventure-fun thermal springs, 3 thermal springs for pleasure lovers, 4 thermal springs for the senses, 17 healing thermal springs, 4 Alpine thermal springs, 1 golf thermal spring, 1 exclusive thermal spring, 1 Far East thermal spring (a total of 63, since there were sometimes overlaps in the positioning).

The positioning of the thermal springs occurred, according to one result, on at least two levels. First, various criteria were en-

listed which related to the thermal spring's performance spectrum. Here clear distinctions among the thermal springs can easily be imagined. Another level has to do with the area of "wellness" and "contentment". Here the most varied criteria can be imagined, all of which have the same relevance in all thermal springs, for example, temperature, air streams, air quality and noise levels.

### 2.2.8. The elderly and handicapped also have a right to holidays!

"Accompanied holidays" are a tourism offering for

elderly or handicapped people who do not wish or no longer wish to travel alone. The task of this SiTaR subproject was to make accompanied holidays also accessible to people in need of care.

The general goal of the project lay in the elaboration of a study with possible offerings. The results of this study serve as a basis for the introduction of innovative offerings on the travel market that are directed toward people in need of care and those who accompany them. As a result a serious basis was created for the sustainability of the following measures. A concrete partner is the Private Clinic Martinsbrunn, which is currently being renovated so that offerings for people in need of care can be integrated in its concept.

Highly scientific thermal springs test.

56 thermal springs enterprises in the three SiTaR regions.

Project title: Holidays for Those Needing Special Care.

Project sponsor: Private Clinic Martinsbrunn.

Convalescent holidays for those needing special care.

### 2.3. CULTURAL AND REGIONAL PRODUCTS AS BRANDS



The SiTaR regions can offer a broad range of regional products.  
(Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Walter Luttenberger)

Thanks to outstanding resources of every type – from the unspoiled landscape through pleasant sources of healing to cultural attractions - the SiTaR regions can offer an unbelievable breadth of original products.

But the loveliest wares remain on the shelves if they are not properly advertised. This SiTaR subproject was dedicated to this very aspect.

Dr. Christoph Engl, Director of South Tyrolean Marketing Ltd, is a recognized and successful professional in the field of correct positioning. For the SiTaR Completion Report he gave the following interview:

What is the secret of the success of the Brand “South Tyrol”?

Dr. Christoph Engl: “One of the most important requirements for success is that the Brand “South Tyrol” was developed together with the market applications. The brand was not imposed from above, but developed with the participation of South Tyrolean enterprises during a period of over eighteen months. The brand users

were involved in the process. Thus they created their own brand. This is an important requirement for something like this to succeed.”

What can other regions learn from South Tyrol?

Dr. Christoph Engl: “Perhaps one can learn here how to make things happen in a very heterogeneous land which, in addition to three language groups, displays widely diverse product groups. One must keep processes such as brand formation out of the sphere of political influence, so that work can be accomplished professionally and apolitically.”

Give us three generally applicable principles which must be observed when marketing regional products.

Dr. Christoph Engl: “First: One can only plausibly market and sell what one has. Regional products must prove their authenticity.

Therefore product development must be taken very seriously. Second: Critical amounts must be available. If one only wishes to cover the local market, then one

Correctly placed on the market.

Brand South Tyrol was developed together.

Removing brand formation from the sphere of influence of politics.

does not need large communication resources. Third: Regional products only grow in believability and communicative power when they can as easily as possible be identified with the same destination. One must be able to recognize on the apple itself, in the brochure and on the yoghurt that this product comes from the same region.”

Which role does networking within the region and with other regions play in the marketing of regional products?

Dr. Christoph Engl: “Networking within the region is decisive. This stretches from the agreement on the messages to be conveyed all the way to the marketing of the product. It is important that there is one responsible contact point and one point of decision making. Someone has to be able to decide how the marketing process will be carried out. Networking with other re-

gions can only work when one gives up regional purchases. If one places the product in the foreground rather than the regional purchase, then it makes sense to work together with another region. But such cooperations are in the minority. The real strength in our globalized world lies in regional purchasing. That way the regions can become better known than the political limits would permit.”

Culture as brand - what does one have to think of here?

Dr. Christoph Engl: “In contrast to other products, culture can be established as a brand completely separate from its regional source. There are festivals that take place in places in which there are no similar cultural events during the rest of the year. However, if there is a clear relationship to the event venue, then the marketing process is stronger.”

Regional origins must be recognizable at a glance.

Central decision-making processes.

The real opportunity lies in regional purchases.

## 2.4. CULTURE AND NATURE AS ADVERTISEMENT



The glorious landscape of the SiTaR regions - here the peaks of the Geisler in the Villnöß Valley in South Tyrol - offers the ideal conditions for many forms of tourism linked to nature.

(Photo: South Tyrol Marketing – Othmar Seehauser)

A wealth of historical monuments of all epochs, contemporary art, theater and concerts document the cultural richness of the SiTaR regions. A great deal is offered to interested guests. This also applies to the area of nature experience. But are these treasures properly marketed?

In Component 3: Culture and Ecotourism a number of subprojects were devoted to the question, “How do we sell ourselves?”

New nature experience programmes were developed, existing institutions were equipped with newly worked out marketing concepts.

At the same time the project partners built totally new networks: in one case a database for the marketing of regional specialties was set up, and in another artists and creative artists from all the SiTaR regions made contact with each other and exchanged their experiences at specially arranged events.

Under the direction of the Province of

Burgenland, Component 3 realized the most subprojects. From eighteen projects, eleven were approved. Nearly all projects were able to make use of their entire budgetary allotments. One project was realized with low costs.

In another project the South Tyrolean partner was unable to take part, so that the South Tyrolean budget was transferred to other uses.

During the life of the project two platform conferences with concentration on “National and Nature Parks and Their Role in Regional Development” and “Tourism Connections among Landscape, Culture and Ecotourism” took place.

Component 3 was also an area of emphasis at the First Annual Conference in Bad Tatzmannsdorf on 13 and 14 October 2005.

During the regional analysis the existing offerings and resources of the partner regions in the area of culture and ecotourism were clearly presented. The pub-

Component 3: “Culture and Ecotourism”.

Overall responsibility: The Province of Burgenland.

Area of concentration: marketing.

Culture and Ecotourism: Eleven subprojects were realized.

lication “Culture and Ecotourism” is available as a brochure and also as a download from the SiTaR website. The project partners indicated their interest in follow-on projects.

Nearly all subprojects founded workable partnerships which can also be used for future cooperation. A few cross-border projects, such as the common product database, will be continued.

## 2.5. NATURE EXPERIENCE AND CULTURE NETWORK



In Waldeck-Frankenberg the Eisenstein Path was newly designed as a thermal springs experience path.

(Photo: cognitio)

Eleven subprojects dealt with aspects of the larger theme “Culture and Eco-tourism“. One area of concentration was the development and marketing of experience programmes for guests interested in nature. A second area of concentration in the cultural sector was an emphasis on interregional contacts. In both areas works were completed - but it would be best if you read this for yourself.

### 2.5.1. Advertising for the Nordic Walking Eco-Trail

At present Nordic walking is one of the most popular and also healthiest sports. Beautiful landscapes are especially good for the performance of this endurance sport. Everyone who walks the Nordic walking trails in the SiTaR region is doing something good for both body and soul.

Many tourist locations have latched onto the sport trend and begun to signpost Nordic walking trails. In Schenna, South Tyrol, a Nordic Walking Fitness Park was established in June 2004. As part of Project SiTaR this facility was expanded by three Nordic walking trails.



The SiTaR regions cannot imagine themselves without the Nordic Walking Eco-Trails!

(Photo: Running & Walking Arena Bad Tatzmannsdorf)

Of the four trails which were in existence then, three were in high mountain regions. To make the park more attractive and easily usable all year round, three further trails near the town and in the low mountain ranges were designed. These simple walking trails are

available even in early spring and late autumn when there is already snow in the high mountain ranges.

In addition, three sport trails were set up: one trail for mountain bikes, one for racing bikes and one for mountain running.

Experience programmes and cultivation of cross-border contacts.

Project title: Nordic Walking Eco-Trail – Marketing Concept.

Project sponsor: Tourism Association of the Seiseralmschlern Area.

Snowfree walking stretches.

Provision of signs and marketing were optimized.

After this extensive expansion the park received a new name: “Nature Fitness Park Schenna-Hirzer-Meran 2000”.

Marketing is an important aspect. Therefore the internet site [www.schenna.com](http://www.schenna.com) was provided with the latest information. The signposting of the Nordic Walking Eco-Trails was completed and adapted to the overall concept of the Nature Park Schlern-Rosengarten and the existing information boards.

The Nordic Walking Eco-Trails were advertised in the other SiTaR regions as well. In the Province of Waldeck the Trail had already been signposted at the beginning of November 2005. On 30 November 2005 the new leisure facility was presented to the public in a small official opening ceremony.

The networking of the central ideas of the Nordic Walking Eco-Trails within the region of Waldeck-Frankenberg had already taken place: the Nordic walking working group, which in the meantime includes over twenty-five Nordic walking centers belonging to the “Nordic walking paradise Waldecker Land”, was informed and integrated.

The partners in Burgenland have increased publicity on radio and television. In addition a brochure was created.

### 2.5.2. Nature experience well prepared

The SiTaR regions Burgenland, South Tyrol and Waldeck-Frankenberg are proud of their nature parks and national parks.

Each nature preserve has its own character and its incomparable landscape highlights. Selected nature experiences in the nature preserves can be presented to interested visitors in a targeted and profes-

sionally prepared manner, supporting sustained tourism. With skilful marketing the product “nature experience” can energize the region’s economy.

In the SiTaR regions the existing nature experience offerings have been emphasized. The various offerings in the region Waldeck-Frankenberg were tested by excursion groups.

In Waldeck-Frankenberg interested enterprises were encouraged to develop appropriate products and services in order to bring the existing natural beauties to life. In addition, structures for a better nature experience offering were set up. There were continuing education offerings. An old pet breed was rediscovered as the brand “Kellerwaldrind”. Building on this a new regional brand was developed.

The new so-called “hiking modules” are especially planned for guests of the youth hostels in the area of the Nature Park Kellerwald-Edersee. This showed that the nature guides sometimes have didactic deficits when it comes to providing age-appropriate tours for children. Therefore training sessions were organized which were also offered to the other SiTaR partners.



Children especially love the exciting nature experience offerings. The photo shows a group at a night hike to the Neuhaus ruins in Burgenland.

(Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Franz Kovacs)

Twenty-five out of forty nature park guides were trained through workshops and tours to create offerings for children such as the “forest playground”. These offerings are publicized through a flyer which the guides themselves developed.

In addition, the project was involved in the creation of a regional product: the “Kellerwaldbrett”, a specially formed wooden breakfast platter.

Hiking is one of the most popular, nature-related athletic leisure activities. Tourists

Popular Nordic Walking Eco-Trails.

Project title: Nature experience as development potential for sustainable tourism in large European nature preserves (nature parks and national parks).

Project sponsor: Nature Park Kellerwald-Edersee.

“Kellerwaldrind” as a new brand.

Nature park guides were specially trained for the work with children.

are glad to take advantage of the offer of luggage service. One exemplary model is already in existence in Burgenland for bicycle tours.

In addition the project helped to develop events for unusual times (at night, by full moon) which vary from the usual offerings of the nature parks.

### 2.5.3. Integrated art

The goal of this subproject was to bring artists and creative artists from all the SiTaR regions into contact with each other. Its intention was to realize subprojects cooperatively. The experiences gained were to serve as a basis for further common cultural and art projects. An additional practical result was to be the creation of a comprehensive network.

As part of Module 1 an international sculpture workshop was held in Stadtschlaining in Burgenland from 15 to 21 August 2005. This cultural event was documented through an accompanying volume and a film. Numerous network meetings with the local population, regional artists and representatives of the media took place.

The International Youth Music Festival in Bad Arolsen (Waldeck-Frankenberg) from 26 to 30 April 2006 was carried out under Module 2, even though it was very difficult to find participants from the project regions. In view of this it is especially gratifying that a high-quality choir came to the festival from the neighboring Hungarian region.

Contact has been made with the ensembles from all the regions to check for interest in participation in another Inter-

national Youth Music Festival in 2008.

An immediate consequence of the workshop in Stadtschlaining was a city festival at which the idea of the project and all the competition entries were presented. Another exhibition of the artworks took place in the Galerie Quellenhof.

Yet another exhibition took place in the Cultural Center Güssing. In all around 1,500 people have seen the artworks. The Burgenland artist and filmmaker Karl Hiess created a film about the workshop which was premiered in September 2005.

A further exhibition took place at the Bonhagemuseum Korbach (Waldeck-Frankenberg). This presentation was dedicated to "Art from Burgenland".

The network was expanded to the areas of science and education.

### 2.5.4. Biking Enjoyment in the Province of Meran

In addition to Nordic walking, bicycling is a popular and especially nature-related sport. However, it is important to consider the interests of both the free time athletes and the farmers equally. The subproject "Biking Enjoyment" was dedicated to exactly this point.

The starting point was the wish of the farmers that the bikers should be guided to designated routes in order to protect the landscape. Therefore the bicycling network of the Province of Meran was analyzed and defined from the point of view of the biking target group.

The paths were professionally recorded and clearly described in a brochure.

Project title: Cooperative Structures in Art and Culture – Modules 1 and 2.

Project sponsor: Office of the Burgenland Provincial Government, Department 7 - Culture, Science and Archives.

Sculpture workshop and youth music festival.

1,500 people saw the artworks.

Expansion of the art project into the areas of science and education.

Project title: Biking Enjoyment in the Province of Meran.

Project sponsor: The Tourism Association of the Province of Meran.

Bicycling without upsetting the farmers.



The Burgenland artist Karl Hiess at his workshop in Stadtschlaining.

(Photo: Office of the Burgenland Provincial Government, Department 7 – Culture, Science and Archives)

During a press trip the existing and planned points of the offerings were presented to selected journalists.

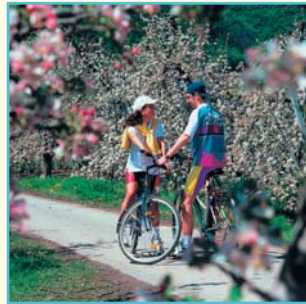
The tours which have been worked out can be viewed on the homepage [www.meranerland.com](http://www.meranerland.com).

### 2.5.5. Regional delicacies – perfectly presented

If you take a deeper look at the regional specialties of the SiTaR regions, your mouth will start to water: be it bacon, sweet chestnuts, wine or sweets, the traditional cuisines have much to offer. Many of these tasty delicacies are equally suitable for sale outside their own regions. This consideration brought about the founding of a special platform which not only offers an overview of culinary specialties but also presents arts and crafts products from the regions.

During the project the partner regions worked out completely new concepts for marketing typical regional products.

In Burgenland the criteria were set for agricultural and arts and crafts products. A great deal of information was gathered with the assistance of representatives from the various crafts. The result of this information gathering is an internet arts and crafts database. In this virtual showroom the artists and craftsmen can present themselves. The arts and crafts database was presented to the public during a press conference. In the regions the media reported on the new marketing plans.



Under the slogan “Biking Enjoyment” the biking path network in the Province of Meran was newly conceived and clearly presented.

(Photo: Tourism Association of the Province of Meran)

A competition to create a flexible sales stand was carried out together with the Burgenland Chamber of Economics. In Waldeck-Franckenberg the project partners dealt with the wish to integrate local products better into the tourism industry. The most important insights were channeled

into the concept “Totally Regional” - the integration of local products into the tourism concept of the Nature Park Kellerwald-Edersee.

In South Tyrol a blanket registration of producers took place. First the interested parties were contacted and asked for their cooperation. Information was gathered and presented to the interested parties. General and

specific criteria were set and the further role of the nature park authority was defined.

The producers who were considered possible partners for the project were informed.

In South Tyrol and Waldeck-Franckenberg two studies emphasizing the basis and the marketing potential of regional specialties in nature preserves were carried out.

If you are interested in the database you can have a look at the following internet sites:

■ Project homepage: [www.sitar.co.at](http://www.sitar.co.at)

- South Tyrolean Nature Parks Authority: [www.provinz.bz.it/natur](http://www.provinz.bz.it/natur)
- Working Cooperative of Burgenland’s Nature Parks: [www.imburgenland.at/naturparke](http://www.imburgenland.at/naturparke)



All SiTaR regions have typical specialties to offer. One of the subprojects dealt with the marketing of these products.

(Photo: Nature Parks Working Cooperative)

Project title: Innovative Marketing Possibilities for Agricultural and Arts and Crafts Products in Connection with Nature Preserves.

Project sponsor: Working Cooperative of Burgenland’s Nature Parks.

Regional delicacies and arts and crafts products are offered outside their regions.

Local products for tourism.

Database provides information about regional products.

In the first draft there is no shopping solution, but one may be developed in a follow-on project. There are, however, already producers who have their own homepages which are linked. The database is first and foremost about provision of information.

Further maintenance of the database will be carried out in South Tyrol by the Authority for Nature Parks and in Burgenland by the Working Cooperative of Nature Parks.

### 2.5.6. Cloisters, culinary delicacies and culture

Travellers are greatly interested in varied holiday packages.

In South Tyrol, Waldeck-Frankenberg and Burgenland such varied visitors' programmes were grouped under the motto "Cloisters, culinary delicacies and culture - Discover the senses, experience enjoyment". The result was tourism packages lasting between three days and one week in the area of culture and ecotourism, during which cultural treasures and scenic highlights of the regions were included. Of

course culinary enjoyment is not neglected. These packages were tested in the regions. The experiences which were gathered will be integrated into the holiday concepts. Thus the regional packages can be continually developed.

Synergies resulted for all the participants in the information exchange. For example, South Tyrol is considering implementing the grape health cure developed in Burgenland, and the latter will be supplemented with the ideas developed for South Tyrol's one-week package. In addition, the preparatory work for new packages will be much easier in future. The

important basics include an overview of the resources in the area, the calculation models and the marketing schemes. Due to cost considerations, the decision was made not to set up a homepage for the project at this time.

However, there are plans to include internet entries on the various region-specific websites. The regions will also appear together at trade fairs. In addition, joining the advertising association "Klöße" is under consideration.

During the project an exchange of knowledge and ideas with the Hungarian cloister Pannonhalma took place.

In Waldeck-Frankenberg nature park guides from the Kellerwald took part in a workshop. Together with the project sponsor in South Tyrol and the Nature Preservation Academy in Hesse, an attractive experience offering was developed, into which further partners will be integrated.

### 2.5.7. Literature without borders

Literature and landscape were the cornerstones of an authors' forum in South Tyrol. The organizers set the goal of creating a dialog between the written word and territorial actualities: an experiment which was seen as a complete success. Readings, discussions and public authors' forums created a successful link between the view from within and from without.

In accordance with the purposes of SiTaR a literary network was created. The writers in the participating regions gladly accepted the offer of an opportunity to make contact with colleagues, exchange experiences and get to know models of literary



The spa hotel Marienkron created a vinaceous cure in Burgenland.

(Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Walter Luttenberger)

Project title: Cloisters, Culinary Delicacies and Culture - Discover the Senses, Experience Enjoyment.

Project sponsor: District Community Group Eisacktal.

Synergies used optimally.

The cross-border character of the project came to full fruition this time as well.

Project title: Cooperative Structures in Art and Culture - Module 3.

Project sponsor: Autonomous Province of Bolzano-South Tyrol, Department 14 - German Culture and Families.

Authors networked with each other.

production, reception and industry from neighboring regions.

The three partner regions strove to create a continuing cooperation. The Provincial Press Office of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-South Tyrol announced the various events and reported on them in the local press. A documentary about the Literature Week is being planned.

Due to the common cultural themes of art, music and literature, which were also the themes of the three Events Weeks in the three countries, a good basis for future cooperation was established.



In Bolzano at the Authors' Forum from 18 to 22 September 2006, writers came together to converse.

(Photo: Autonomous Province of Bolzano-South Tyrol, Department 14 – German Culture and Families)

### 2.5.8. Art in the middle of the countryside

An ideal connection between art and landscape is created by the art movement "landscape art". As part of this subproject a Landscape Art Conference with ten separate events at four venues took place in Waldeck-Frankenberg from 15 to 18 June 2006. Specialist and lay public fell equally under the spell of the artistic creations and information offerings.



The Landscape Art Installation "Anton Windbeutel" on the Eisenberg in Waldeck-Frankenberg.

(Photo: Reta Reinl)

The events in the Cloister Schaaken with fire performances, music and culinary delicacies from the cloister were prompted by the SiTaR subproject "Cloisters, Culinary Delicacies and Culture" and were intended to stimulate networking ideas through the involvement of the partner regions. The nearby Nordic Walking Eco-Trail was used to demonstrate the concept of "art walking". Interested parties were

conducted along the trail to the event venue by Nordic walking guides at no cost. The contribution of the project partner in Burgenland was transformed by the Working Conference in the second half of 2006 into a landscape art contribution by the Burgenland artist Wolfgang Horwath, which had, however, already formed a part of the Landscape Art Conference in June.

The website [www.landart-konferenz.de](http://www.landart-konferenz.de) was set up in spring 2006 and for the time being provided with the complete programme and individual texts about the Landscape Art Conference.

At the SiTaR meetings the representatives of the partner regions were able to get acquainted and exchange experiences. Their lively communication showed how synergies can be created through networking.

Months after the Landscape Art Conference there were inquiries from all over the world about whether similar events were planned for the future. This positive feedback confirmed the relevance and presence of the attempt.

We will strive to build on the contacts which arose in Burgenland through the conference and to utilize its opportunities for exchange and coo-

peration. If follow-on events take place, the subject could also be placed with the culture tourism offerings in the regions. In addition to numerous press releases, two brochures were also produced.

Basis for future cooperation.

Project title: Landscape Art Conference.

Project sponsor: Municipal Authority of the City of Lichtenfels, Waldeck-Frankenberg.

Other SiTaR projects were involved in the series of events.

Landscape Art Conference excites international interest.

### 2.5.9. Experiences by the side of the path

In the natural expanses of the SiTaR regions there is a great deal of excitement to experience, or better said, to walk through. Within this subproject experience paths were newly created or redesigned.

A total of four projects were realized. The project partners in Waldeck-Frankenberg designed the Eisenstein Path as a thermal spring experience path. An accompanying brochure provided information about the individual stations. In both regional daily newspapers the project was extensively presented. In a first project of the geopark, the Geofoyer Nieder-Werbe, and in the accompanying material the Eisenstein Path will be advertised in a publicly effective and targeted fashion. The path will also be mentioned in the region's new Nature and Culture Guide.

Additional new designs in the Administrative District Waldeck-Frankenberg include an Energy Teaching Path. This Teaching Path, called "Climate Protection Route of the Region Kellerwald-Edersee", is divided into four partial routes. Two routes are suitable for hikers and two for cyclists. The Teaching Path is located so that it can be experienced and walked in numerous ways. The Path was publicized in the press, through flyers and on an internet site that is linked to nature park sites.

One important South Tyrolean effort is the

"Feldthurn Chestnut Teaching Path". One learns a great deal in an outdoor "classroom" which has been set up in a chestnut grove along the Keschtn Path. At the Keschtnloach an art gallery has been created. These two attractive resting places are important stops along the path. At the tenth annual "Keschtnigl", an art event based around chestnuts, the SiTaR project partners presented the Keschtn Path with good effect on the press through the lively participation of the population. On this occasion the first artworks were also exhibited, to the public's great admiration.

Thanks to the SiTaR project, one can take a "bat tour" in Burgenland.

The bats' domains were investigated, "Bat Information Evenings" were held, and a brochure was produced.

The regions' typical natural resources were used as a basis for soft tourism in all the subprojects. As a result, the newly developed programmes contribute to the economic upswing in the regions. A further important aspect is the provision of information. Environmental education is being used as an instrument of landscape marketing.

The subprojects resulted in regionally effective chain reactions. For example, the Eisenstein Path, which SiTaR initiated, was developed into a meaningful tourist theme path by the communities and the geopark. It links geological highlights and preserves the region's mining history.



Exciting glimpses into the life of the nocturnal animals were provided during the "Bat Tour" in the Landsee Ruins in Burgenland.

(Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Franz Kovacs)



In Burgenland information evenings were held on the subject of "bats".

(Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Franz Kovacs)

Project title: Networked, integrated tourism marketing of natural resources with consideration of their cultural meaning and historical development as a contribution to their sustained protection and added value to their regions.

Project sponsor: Nature Park Lake Diemel.

Eisenstein Path and Energy Teaching Path in Waldeck-Frankenberg.

Chestnut Path in South Tyrol.

"Bat Tour" in Burgenland.

SiTaR Projects were picked up and developed further in the regions.

The project partners used their meetings to exchange experiences regarding the gratifying progress of the individual experience paths. The far-reaching effects of the new attractions were also discussed. The “Energy Teaching Path” in Waldeck-Frankenberg excited the interest of the visitors in a method for dealing with energy in a manner which protects resources and which furthers the image of a region which protects its climate.

The “Feldthurn Chestnut Teaching Path” in South Tyrol increased the knowledge of the population, including children and youth, about this cultural heritage which is thus preserved through the appreciation of the tourists.

The “Bat Tour” in Burgenland contributes to the preservation of the local bat population. Information and experience offerings featuring bats enrich the tourist programme.

### 2.5.10. Culture Agency “ago3”

This culture agency, founded during the sub-project, bundles the cultural activities in Waldeck-Frankenberg. A widely calculated analysis began the work. People and organizers who are creatively active were asked about their potentials and needs. This information was used by the responsible parties of the agency to define areas of concentration and main concepts in the area of culture and cultural education were developed. All the information is available in a culture database.



The Culture Agency “ago3” extended invitations to a number of successful events, including a lecture by the South Tyrolean architect Susanne Waiz in Lichtenfels-Sachsenbeg on 23 August 2007.

(Photo: Reta Reinl)

The Culture Agency “ago3” was of course also active as the organizer of a newly created series of events. Artists, organizers and multipliers from the entire region took part in three multipliers’ meetings. In Lichtenfels a culture tourism day with lectures and example events took place. In

addition, as part of the project a film was made. A user-friendly overview of all the activities is offered at the internet site [www.kulturagentur-ago3.de](http://www.kulturagentur-ago3.de), including an events calendar and login area.

Contacts, discussion rounds and promising ideas arose. An experience exchange took place and new cooperation projects with Burgenland and South Tyrol were formulated. Lec-

tures about the architecture in Waldeck-Frankenberg and the Art House Mera-noarte are planned with South Tyrol.

Landscape art cooperations and creative economic projects with Burgenland are under discussion.



For the Baroque Festival Bad Arolsen a concept for the improvement of concert enterprises was designed.

(Photo: Tourist Service Waldeck-Ederbergland Ltd)

### 2.5.11. Classical: perfect concerts

Classical music in the form of concerts plays an important role in the cultural life of all the SiTaR regions. As part of the project data on classical music from the three partner regions Burgen-

land, Waldeck-Frankenberg and South Tyrol was gathered.

Through the selection of suitable best-practice examples from the three regions and beyond, further opportunities to im-

Project title: Culture Agency “ago3”.

Project sponsor: District Association for Adult Education Waldeck-Frankenberg Registered Association – District Adult Education Center.

Series of events, film and internet entry.

Project title: Improvement of Concert Enterprises.

Project sponsor: Franz Liszt Association Burgenland.

prove concert enterprises will be introduced, in order to build a basis for the further extension of the offerings in the regions.

In Burgenland a meditation CD with information about the offerings in the region was produced and can be heard, with reference to the project, in the wellness zone of the Four Seasons Hotel in Lutzmanns-

burg. At the symposium “Strong Brands in Culture, Tourism and the Economy” eighty participants from the partner regions met at the Liszt Center in Raiding.

In South Tyrol a jazz study was carried out. In Waldeck-Frankenberg a concept for improvement of the quality of the Baroque Festival Bad Arolsen was designed.

## 2.6. RENEWABLE RESOURCES – REGIONAL ANSWERS TO GLOBAL QUESTIONS



Regionally produced organic substances – here in the form of wood chips – frees the end user from imported energy.  
(Photo: EEE Güssing)

The environmental concepts of the SiTaR regions place a high value on the use of regionally available resources for the production of renewable energy.

The use of solar power, wind power and waterpower as well as organic substances secures at least partial independence from imported energy, supports the worldwide measures against climate change and encourages the economic upswing in the regions.

As part of SiTaR, the project partners had the opportunity further to develop their efforts in the area of alternative energy provision and to try out new variations. Thus a contribution was also made to the encouragement of sustainable energy sources.

Walter Dersch, Managing Director of Maschinenring Waldeck-Frankenberg e.V. and of Landtechnische Fördergemeinschaft Waldeck-Frankenberg e.V., reports on the subject of energy from organic substances as follows:

What progress are the regions participating in SiTaR making in the provision of regionally produced energy forms?

Walter Dersch: “Clear progress has been made. Recently a working group was initiated to take over the presentation of organic substances from cultivation through use.”

How in particular is the development of organic substances looking?

Walter Dersch: “There are regional projects: fast-growing woods (Firma Viessmann), cultivation of miscanthus (Maschinenring), production of briquettes and wood chips from various raw materials on Maschinenring’s woodyard, and transregional projects such as the production of pellets (Firma Ante).”

Which impulses for the support of renewable energies started with SiTaR?

Walter Dersch: “Especially activities involving the preparation and critical incorporation of organic substances from forest and field were moved forward by the project.

Renewable, regionally available raw materials replace imported fossil fuels.

SiTaR encourages sustainability.

On the other hand, the installation of suitable plants for use (especially in communal heating areas) has, in our opinion, not been sufficiently taken into consideration.”

In which areas is it absolutely necessary

to move forward with the innovations in this sector through cooperation with other EU regions?

Walter Dersch: “The evaluation of the provided organic substances in local heating networks and communal or private projects.”

## 2.7. ENERGY FROM REGIONAL SOURCES



Photovoltaic is constantly increasing in importance.  
 (Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Walter Luttenberger)

Climate protection is a global challenge requiring different answers for different regions. As part of Component 4: Resource Management, the SiTaR regions worked on finding these answers under the responsibility of the Administrative District Waldeck-Frankenberg.

Three “hot irons” were tacked within the overarching category of resource management: raw materials which grow again, water conservation and photovoltaic.

Four projects were assigned to these sub-categories, dealing with specific problems of the regions and putting forward directions in which the regions wished to develop further in cooperation with each other.

It was a process both of taking up and of eliminating. After the analysis of the regions it became clear that wind power cannot be used everywhere (South Tyrol) but that in some places it is already widely used (Waldeck-Frankenberg), so that in these regions there was no call for the support of projects. Therefore there was

no project in the area of wind power.

In the area of water conservation included the most expensive and extensive project, titled “Mixed Water Treatment in Purification Basins”. The use of these resources was, however, completely justified, since even before its completion within the framework of SiTaR the project brought about effects and interest among specialists stretching far beyond the borders of SiTaR.

Additionally, as a result of the project more than its total cost was saved through infrastructure measures for construction and reconstruction of purification basins. Because of the desired advantages and due to the pressure of the problem from EU directives for improvement of sewage treatment, a situation was created which was similar in all the regions. This is a further explanation for the success of this project.

In the area “photovoltaic” the initial situations in the regions was as varied as in the area of wind power. In contrast to the

Component 4: “Resource Management”.

Overall responsibility:  
 Administrative District  
 Waldeck-Frankenberg.

Varied requirements during  
 the use of renewable energies.

Innovation in the purification  
 of mixed water (surface  
 waters following precipitation  
 mixed with domestic and  
 commercial sewage).

other countries, in Germany the construction of solar plants is strongly supported by the government.

The technological development is far advanced there. Other countries have great difficulty creating public awareness of this form of energy. Therefore the subject of this project could not be basic research, but rather had to be a specific approach which would indirectly lead to "improved usefulness" in the regions. This usefulness consists of the creation of a tool for the economical calculation for a photovoltaic plant which is simple to use and delivers scientifically precise results, so that the residents of the regions can decide for themselves whether a photovoltaic plant makes sense for them.

All participating regions are interested in continuing to work together in the area of resource management. Among other con-

cerns there is the question of which limits the individual regions face through their geographic and climatic situations when deciding whether or not they can strive for energy autonomy - an area of research which is both interesting and innovative.

At two platform conferences titled "Photovoltaic and Solar Power" and "Systemic Demands of the Cultivation and Exploitation of Organic Substances with Concentration on Wood" the representatives of the SiTaR regions exchanged experiences. The Third Annual Conference took place in Korbach on 28 August 2007 and focused on Component 4: Resource Management.

The regional analysis on the subject of resource management is now available as a brochure and as a download from the SiTaR website.

Quickly calculating the effects of photovoltaic.

Which preconditions are necessary in order to strive for independence from exports in energy supply?

**2.8.**  
**ORGANIC SUBSTANCES, SOLAR**  
**POWER AND CLEAN WATER**



Thanks to a new process, large quantities of mixed water can be purified.  
 (Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Walter Luttenberger)

The substances which form the basis for the subprojects in the component Resource Management are truly elementary: raw materials which grow again are innovatively used to create energy.

The power of the sun is exactly calculated and tested for its effectiveness in the production of electricity.

At the center of a wider - almost sensationally successful - project is water, which tends after heavy rainfalls to shoot in large amounts through the canals and into the sewage plants, which in the past has sometimes overtaxed the systems.

Therefore when the systems were overloaded, large amounts of untreated mixed water were released back into brooks and rivers. SiTaR made available a scientific-

method for purifying large amounts of mixed water. You can read more about it yourself below.

**2.8.1.**  
**An online tool delivers quick answers:**

**Does photovoltaic make sense?**



For the calculation of photovoltaic plants – the photo shows a plant of the University of Applied Sciences Pinkafeld – an online tool was developed.  
 (Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Walter Luttenberger)

For all planners who deal with the use of solar power, the University of Applied Science's degree programme in Energy and Environmental Management in Pinkafeld, South Burgenland, created an important tool: with the support of their Heads of Department, Dipl.-Ing. Dr. Gernot Hanreich und Dipl.-Ing. Dr. Arne Ragossnig, the

students developed an online simulation tool for photovoltaic plants.

This online tool, which is also easy for the lay public to use, is suitable for calcula-

Elementary - the Basis of the SiTaR Projects.

Project title: Online Simulation Tool for Autonomous and Network-linked Photovoltaic Plants.

Project sponsor: University of Applied Sciences Burgenland Ltd.

tions both for network-linked and for autonomous (island) plants.

For these supply types the online tool calculates the necessary dimensions for the photovoltaic plant to create the maximum necessary electric supply.

The online simulation tool fulfils an important task in the decision-making phase: the questions of how large the photovoltaic plant must be and whether - in the case of island plants - an autonomous energy supply with such a plant is possible at all can be answered quickly and without great effort.

At the beginning parameters were selected as a basis for further calculations: the choice of plant type (network-linked or autonomous), investigation of the position of the sun, integration of weather data, calculation of shadowing, etc. Then using practical experiments, calculation models and algorithms were designed with which the energy production of photovoltaic plants can be realistically simulated.

The tool can be used via the internet at no cost: <http://www.fh-pinkafeld.ac.at/pv/>. There were experimental plants in the regions Burgenland and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-South Tyrol.

The version is available to all SiTaR regions and interested parties and can be considered a successful scientific and technical formulation.

The practical usefulness of the tool, however, has evidenced itself so far only in Burgenland, since in Waldeck-Frankenberg, for example, no weather data were available.

The provision of such information was not a part of the project, though.

## 2.8.2.

### Purification plants: triumphal march of an ingenious method

The project was carried out by all the SiTaR regions together. It was a great success whose effects reach far beyond the

SiTaR project. The intention was scientifically to research the basis of a procedure, to transfer this to other treatment plants and to make the results generally available. The method developed into the solution of a problem which arises after heavy rainfalls: large amounts of rainwater overload the plants and flow back untreated into the water cycle.



The treatment of mixed water in purification basins has been used at the treatment plant in Wulkaprodersdorf for decades.

(Photo: Office of the Burgenland Provincial Government, Department 9 – Water and Refuse Industry)

During mixed water treatment in purification basins, the rainwater is directed into purification basins by use of a bypass. This procedure has been used in the treatment plant in Wulkaprodersdorf for thirty years. The basic scientific research on what effect the bypass procedure has taken place in cooperation with the Technical Universities of Dresden and Vienna.

The scientists first carried out simulations in laboratories and in their half-technical experimental plant. During these experiments and in concluding tests in the treatment plants it was shown that the purification effect was clearly higher than when conventional mixed water treatment was used. In addition, it was possible to treat significantly more mixed water.

All four partner regions were able to profit from these scientific results, since the resulting knowledge was integrated in the project plants in Sopron (West Hungary), Bergheim-Edertal (Waldeck-Frankenberg) and Sarntal (South Tyrol). Through the simple technical and mechanical implementation which removed the need for

Online calculation as an important basis for decision-making.

On the website <http://www.fh-pinkafeld.ac.at/pv/> one can carry out the online calculations.

Project title: Mixed Water Treatment in Purification Basins.

Project sponsor: Office of the Burgenland Provincial Government, Department 9 - Water and Refuse Industry.

The procedure has been used in Wulkaprodersdorf (Burgenland) for thirty years.

In Western Hungary, Waldeck-Frankenberg and South Tyrol the method was integrated during the construction and reconstruction of treatment plants.

the expensive construction of rain collection tanks, significant reductions in construction costs were achieved which have already repaid the costs of the SiTaR project.

Finally, it is important to mention that the scientific results have achieved worldwide attention. Among other opportunities to make them known, the project results were also presented at a conference in Australia. Articles on the subject appear continually in scientific publications.

**2.8.3. Organic substances – energy source and income source for farmers**

The use of innovative and renewable energy sources is what is called for now. The three partner regions of South Tyrol, Waldeck-Frankenberg and Burgenland set the goal of moving forward the use of organic substances for the production of energy.

The three partner regions started with extremely varied initial situations and goals: In South Tyrol the use of organic substances from wood was to be emphasized. As a result an important additional source of income for the forest's owners was opened up.

In Waldeck-Frankenberg tests were conducted to determine whether efficient cultivation of *Miscanthus giganteus* (elephant grass) is possible. In Burgenland the question of whether grasses cut on the shores of Lake Neusiedl could be used to produce energy was researched.

In the Administrative District of Waldeck-Frankenberg an experimental field of 3.8 hectares was planted with *Miscanthus*. After six weeks, 30 % of the rhizomes had

developed shoots. After another four weeks the following growth was very strong. By the middle of September the plants had reached an average height of approximately 1.8 meters, with on average twenty to thirty shoots per rhizome stem.



In Seewinkel in North Burgenland the possibilities of the utilization of mown grass were analysed.

(Photo: Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH – Walter Luttenberger)

The harvest was carried out using a corn cutter. The following can be said of the further utilization: The harvest can be utilized in organic substance heating.

A large amount of space is needed, however - 140 kilograms per stacked cubic meter - which means that pressing the crop into pellets or briquettes is advisable. The

customers rated the burning performance of the briquettes in various ovens and chimneys as good.

Cost efficient heating with *Miscanthus* is therefore possible. One hectare of *Miscanthus* produces the equivalent of approximately 5,000 to 6,000 liters of heating oil per year.

In South Tyrol the project drivers took pains to deal with people on all levels who deal with the forest both in general and as an energy source, to make contact and thus to discuss in detail concrete suggestions for improvement.

The discussion partners included the Provincial Forestry Commission, the District Heating Works, the forest workers, the sawmill workers, carpenters, joiners, and finally the owners of the forest themselves.

At the center of the consultations were the District Heating Plants, which register a continually increasing need for organic substances based on wood, and the forest owners, who are the most important supplier group.

Project title: Organic substances - energy source and income source for farmers.

Project sponsor: The Autonomous Province of Bolzano-South Tyrol, Department 36 Tourism.

Waldeck-Frankenberg: Experiments with elephant grass.

South Tyrol: Heating plant operating authorities and forest owners in dialog.

The prognoses for South Tyrol are difficult to pinpoint. Some points can, however, be mentioned:

- The import of wood chips from Austria will decrease in future, because organic substances based on wood will increasingly be needed for their own use.
- The need for wood chips in South Tyrol will continue to increase – according to conservative estimates, over 700,000 stacked cubic meters per year.
- The importance of sawmills in the delivery of wood chips will decrease, since the sawmills are increasingly utilizing the wood refuse in their own industry.
- Thus the availability of wood chips for heating plants will become ever less in future. A shortfall in supply and a related increase in price is to be expected.

In Burgenland the potential utilization of biogenetic material (approximately 90 % mown meadow grasses) from an area of approximately 1,150 hectares in Seewinkel, a region in North Burgenland, was lifted up. The possibilities for preparing these organic substances for use, such as solar drying and production of pellets, were researched through studies of literature and analyses, and were compared with each other.

Additionally, estimates were made of how high the logistical expenditure would be for a decentralized utilization of organic substances.

In the Lake Neusiedl National Park, a method for mowing the meadows in a fashion which is regular, on schedule and protective of the environment is absolutely essential for the preservation of the existing variety of plants. The entire park covers an area of approximately 10,000 hectares. Of this area, 52 % is a non-cultivation protection area and 48 % is a nature area. The mo-

wing takes place in the non-cultivation protection area.

The heating value of these organic substances from benign stalks is approximately 5.1 kilowatt-hours per kilogram or 16 megajoules per kilogram dry measure. The ash content is significantly higher than with wood. In order to be able to utilize this energy content optimally, it is necessary to dry the mown grasses quickly. A medium dry measure yield of 3 tons per hectare per year results in a total organic substance yield of 3,450 tons per year for the entire surface, and thus a heating value of 15.5 gigawatt-hours per year. This is the equivalent of a year's heating needs for approximately 1,000 moderately well insulated single-family houses.

In spite of the variety of approaches, during the life of the subproject parallels and transregional possibilities were plumbed: the region Burgenland was so interested in the results of the cultivation of Miscanthus that such a cultivation in an area of Hanság could well be imagined.

And in reverse, the results from Burgenland are interesting for Waldeck-Frankenberg, because in that region mown grasses could also be obtained in future.

#### 2.8.4. Vegetable oil as fuel

Also this subproject dealt with the economic utilization of innovative and regenerative energy sources: cold-pressed vegetable oil may be used in future as fuel for

the agricultural industry. Thus dependence on fossil fuel will be reduced. At the same time the farmers will have the chance to build up a new source of income.

In both Burgenland and Waldeck-



Vegetable oil is an economically interesting alternative to fossil fuels.

(Photo: Working Group for Vegetable Oil as Fuel)

Burgenland: A study of the utilization of mown grass.

The partners profit from the research results.

Project title: Vegetable Oil as Fuel.

Project sponsor: Working Group for Vegetable Oil as Fuel.

Frankenberg (The South Tyrolean partner withdrew from the project.) independent analyses and projects were carried out and the results of both projects were exchanged. The results are so interesting that the projects in both regions are to be continued. In Burgenland the SiTaR project even founded a company (see Chapter 3.1.).

After an intensive research phase which proved to be especially impressive, informative and motivating for all the participants, the analysis and evaluation of the results, offerings and economic conditions was carried out in Burgenland. The con-

clusion which was drawn was that vegetable oil as fuel is an ecologically sensible and most importantly an economically interesting expansion of the palette of agricultural products in the region.

The central realization is that the production of vegetable oil is a good source of income for agriculture. The material from which the oil has been pressed can be used as a high quality animal feed, as raw material for biogas plants or for the production of pellets in combination with wood, straw or Miscanthus. The cultivation of vegetable oil is ensured due to the increasing prices for fossil fuels.

## 3. The lasting effects of SiTaR - “Spin Offs”

Sustainability is one of the principles that those responsible for the project have prescribed for the subprojects. However, sustainability applies to the project as a whole as well. SiTaR is not a one-off campaign but has effects that reach far into the future. Follow-on projects have been triggered, workable networks were created, research partnerships were called into being. The economic effect is tangible: the SiTaR regions have created tools to utilize their existing resources and to market these profitably.

SiTaR is a widely calculated project which covers many important areas of life: health, culture, cuisine, experience of nature, environmental protection and energy production. SiTaR has contributed to accelerated development in this areas.

And just as when a stone falls in the water and ripple after ripple is created, so SiTaR’s stimulation of the regions’ development is not only short term but will reach far into the future.

### 3.1. SITAR LED TO THE FOUNDING OF A COMPANY

Due to the stimulus of the SiTaR project, a company was founded in Burgenland to produce fuel from vegetable oil.

In the following interview Ing. Leo Riebenbauer of the Office for Renewable Energy in Pinggau reported on the success story of this project:

The SiTaR project provided the spark for the founding of a firm that produces fuel from vegetable oil. Can you explain how this came about?

Ing. Leo Riebenbauer: “The basic idea of the project was the utilization of cold-

pressed vegetable oil as fuel in the agricultural industry, which up to now has been 100 % dependent on fossil fuel. Through the conversion of tractors and other agricultural machinery to vegetable oil cultivation, the agricultural industry can become free of its dependence on fossil fuel. A further intention of this project was the creation of new income sources for the agricultural enterprises of the region through the production of vegetable oil. At the center of the project work was the design of a feasible concept for the professional organization of all steps in the process of vegetable oil production. Through the transregional cooperation which was striven for, experiences and know-how on the subject of vegetable oil production and sales were exchanged. An additional goal was the construction of a local network of producers, vendors and purchasers in the agricultural industry. A new income source for the farmers of the region was to be cooperatively created and a long-term utilization to be provided.”

How is vegetable oil produced?

Ing. Leo Riebenbauer: “Vegetable oil is a fuel based on raw material which grows again (such as rapeseed, sunflowers, flaxseed, etc.) These plants are grown by farmers in the region. The vegetable oil is mechanically extracted, i.e. cold-pressed. Afterwards filtering is always necessary to minimize the amount of undesirable solid matter and additional material. Vegetable oil which is to be used as fuel for motors which run on it cannot have been used previously for any other purpose (frying foods, lubrication, etc.).

Not only the cold-pressed vegetable oil but also the remaining material which is



The oil which has been produced can be drawn at this filling station. Agricultural vehicles which use this fuel are environmentally friendly and well accepted in the region.

(Photo: Working Group for Vegetable Oil as Fuel)

Economic stimulation of the regions.

Company name: Pflanzenöl Produktions- und Verwertungsges.m.b.H.

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Rapeseed, sunflowers and other plants provide fuel.

obtained must be taken into consideration in the economic evaluations. The solid material which is left over after the cold-pressing is a high quality animal feed for the animal industry and thus can replace imported feed such as soybeans from South America, for example. When this feed is regionally produced it is free of genetic modification! The solid material can also be used for the production of biogas and thus can be used to produce heat and electricity. Purchasers of the vegetable oil and for the solid matter are agricultural enterprises in the region as well as private persons. A network of farm-yard filling stations is being constructed. At the production location a public filling station will be erected.”

Which important knowledge has been gathered during the life of the SiTaR project from which other regions or projects could profit?

Ing. Leo Riebenbauer: “For the success and the feasibility of such a project, its goal must be clearly defined, and in this case it was not only basic research and drawing up reports, but most importantly a project where a production plant was actually constructed. Increased awareness in the agricultural industry is very important, for nothing hampers the course of a project more than anxieties, fears, and uncertainties. The first commandment is to inform, inform, inform: inform the potential producers, vendors, customers - that takes a long time – has often been successful – and can never be done too much! It was also important that the essential criteria for

the location of the company’s headquarters and the transparency of the decision making for all participants was emphasized! Preconditions for success are economy and consideration within business circles of the aspect of regional added va-

lue. Last but not least: the provision of capital, choice of company form, financing framework and financing possibilities.”

How does the future look for regional enterprises that dedicate themselves to the production of renewable energy forms? Ing. Leo Riebenbauer: “The production of renewable energy represents a strengthening for the regions, because the value added remains in the region. New income sources and jobs for local agriculture will be created. At the same time, agriculture will become independent in the use of fuels. All the participants sincerely thank the responsible people at SiTaR for the care they gave the project, because without their competent support it would not have been possible to realize the project.”

### 3.2. PURIFICATION PLANTS: THANKS TO SITAR, POTENTIAL FOR SAVINGS!

WHR Dipl.-Ing. Gerhard Spatzierer is Chairman of Department 9 - Water and Refuse Industry of the Province of Burgenland. He was in overall charge of the project “Mixed Water Treatment in Purification Basins“.



The method of mixed water treatment in purification basins helps the treatment plants to save money.

(Photo: Office of the Burgenland Provincial Government, Department 9 – Water and Refuse Industry)

The mixed water treatment in purification basins has already been used at the Treatment Plant Wulkatal in North Burgenland for many years. Which steps were taken during the SiTaR project to research the steps in the process and the effectiveness of the method?

Dipl.-Ing. Gerhard Spatzierer: “Up to this point it was not known which purification effects took place when sewage was mixed with and removed from the activated sludge.

Several processes take place simultaneously, such as:

The solid material which remains after the cold pressing can be used, among other purposes, for animal feed.

Project goals must be clearly defined.

Added value remains in the region.

Methods were scientifically tested.

- the partial decomposition of organic carbon compounds and ammonia in the presence of oxygen,
- the incorporation of particles in the sludge,
- the adsorption of dissolved material onto the sludge, as well as
- the return of a part of the material in the bypass with the returning sludge in the stimulation basin.

In laboratory experiments the deposit of particles, of dissolved COD and of ammonia was researched. In further investigations in a half-technical experimental plant in the treatment plant in Dresden all decomposition processes which occur during dry weather as well as during rainy weather conditions were analyzed practically using different variables, and building on these experiments, an arithmetical process was designed.

Parallel to this project at the Treatment Plant Wulkatal, through an intensive investigation programme with support from online analyses, fifty-five mixed water incidents were recorded and evaluated using measurement technology. The results showed that in the large plant the results of the investigations in the laboratory and half-technical plant were not only confirmed but excelled."

In which ways has the SiTaR project smoothed the way to make this successful method also known in other regions?

Dipl.-Ing. Gerhard Spatzierer: "The investigations and the practical application of the method in one plant in each of the partner regions have made important contributions to this process, which in comparison to the previous technical rules makes it possible to treat up to 50 % more mixed water in the purification basins, can now be generally applied. Proof in practice that the limits can be kept even in mixed water incidents was of course decisive.

During the investigations the process was already being presented at various nation-

nal and international conferences and events and recognized by sewage treatment experts as state of the art. Later the bypass procedure was also recommended by authorities in several German federal provinces, in Hungary and South Tyrol, even in South Africa."

In which treatment plants was the mixed water treatment in purification basins implemented during the SiTaR project? What knowledge were you able to gather during the project phase?

Dipl.-Ing. Gerhard Spatzierer: "During the investigation the process had already been installed and checked using measurement technology at the Treatment Plant Sarntal in South Tyrol. This permitted a far-reaching purification of the accumulated mixed water to be achieved in a simpler and more cost-effective way. The Treatment Plant Sopron was rebuilt immediately after the first investigations. Through the knowledge which was gained it became possible to build the bypass into the project at a later date with only a minimal alteration of the project, and thus the remaining load of the water during rainfall was clearly reduced.

Through the measurements at the Treatment Plant Bergheim it became possible to alter the conversion project so that in future the need for construction of an additional rain overflow basin can be eliminated. Through the project the prerequisites were set that the reconstruction of the plant to incorporate this process will take place in 2008 and, moreover, will be subsidized by the Administrative District. In summary, it has been shown that the process during rainfall can also be built very simply into existing plants.

The implementation is possible with or without existing rainfall overflow basins. In each case the process must be adapted to local conditions, which is also usually very simple."

In what ways do the participating treatment plants also profit economically? Can

The practical test was successful.

Mixed water treatment in purification plants also in the other partner regions.

the improvements be expressed in figures?

Dipl.-Ing. Gerhard Spatzierer: "In each case the process can eliminate the need for construction of additional volume for rain overflow basins. Concrete calculations are available for the Treatment Plant Bergheim, where a total of € 300,000 was saved. The additional reduction of the water load is, however, hard to evaluate financially.

The potential for similarly high savings exists at the Treatment Plant Sarntal. The investment for the implementation of the process were in the region of € 10,000. At the Treatment Plant Sopron € 40,000 was invested in the implementation of the bypass. The result is a 70 % reduction in the amount of sludge in the redirected waters. A further conversion at the Treatment Plant Annaberg-Buchholz has taken place in the meantime (Germany, 50,000 inhabitants).

Moreover, it has just been announced that the process has been used successfully at the Treatment Plant of the RHV in the Central Lavant Valley (Austria, 120,000 inhabitants) for twenty years. If the bypass is shut down, the sludge builds up. So a rain overflow basin had to be constructed and operated there."

### 3.3. CULTURE: MOMENTUM FOR LONG-LASTING EXCHANGES

In Component 3 - Culture and Ecotourism - initiatives were supported which gave regional projects the opportunity for interregional exchange. Workable partnerships and networks resulted which represent a basis for further cooperation.

Dietmar Baurecht, contact person for the

area of creative economy in Burgenland and the colleague who is responsible at the Center for Creative Economy as a part of the Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH, describes the effects of the cultural activities within the SiTaR project:

What brings about interregional cooperation in the area of culture and creative economy?

Dietmar Baurecht: "It is first and foremost an exchange, which must be for the benefit of all. This may be a first personal contact or already completed projects which were very successful in other regions and could fall on equally fruitful soil in one's own region.

Especially for regions which lie somewhat outside the cities, an interregional cooperation can do a great deal to create new products. Here I am speaking not only about goods in the usual sense, but especially about services in the area of art, culture and creative economy."

Where have improvements taken place as a result of the SiTaR project?

Dietmar Baurecht: "I believe that meeting project partners personally is the first step toward a good project.



The artist Janos Beres at the International Sculpture Workshop in Stadtschlaining (Burgenland) in Summer 2005.

(Photo: Office of the Burgenland Provincial Government, Department 7 - Culture, Science and Archive)

That is the highest priority, to enable people to go beyond limits in new projects. A good example is certainly the project "Cooperative Structures in Art and Culture", which provided exchanges regarding organizational structures in art and culture and thus served as a basis for further work in the future.

But things have also happened in the area of marketing possibilities for agriculture and arts and crafts products. In addition to the arts and crafts database a competition for a mobile sales stand was announced."

Significant potential for savings.

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Exchange for the benefit of all.

What were the reactions of the participating artists and creative artists?

Dietmar Baurecht: "I believe that the projects which were realized brought advantages for all the participants, and that as a result of these exchanges, long-term partnerships and projects have developed and will continue to develop.

One sees this in the area of creative economy, where I am active: We have had to do with widely varied partners in Component 3, and in several areas we hope for

a continuation of the cooperation."

Is it possible to recognize whether some projects have become independent through the impulse of the SiTaR project?

Dietmar Baurecht: "The contacts to the partners remain intact and that is the first step: Because - and this is the important thing about interregional project - those who have already worked together and have for the most part harmonized their mutual results, will continue to work together. I am convinced of this."

SiTaR created contact opportunities.

Further cooperative activities emerge.

## 4. What comes after SiTaR?

**W**HR Dr. Heinrich Wedral, Head of the Department Europe Office and Statistics of the Office of the Burgenland Provincial Government, launched Project SiTaR together with the representatives of the other partner regions.

Many of the ideas which were realized in the framework of interregional cooperation can be traced back to him. As “father” of Project SiTaR WHR Dr. Heinrich Wedral speaks in the following chapter about how the project came about and its highlights. He then takes a glance into the future.

### 4.1. HOW DID PROJECT SITAR COME ABOUT?

In numerous conversations among representatives from Waldeck-Frankenberg and Burgenland the ideas of how cooperation between the regions could be expanded and how subsidies from the European Union could be used for this purpose were discussed.

The proposed goals were to exchange experiences among the regions and to make the added value of the European Union more clearly visible. Touchable results and, in the end, investment as a basis for regional cohesion were in the forefront of these discussions.

Each region was meant to profit from this cooperation in ways reaching far beyond the purely financial. The form of interregional cooperation in the Interreg IIIC programme offered itself as a way to convert these ideas into reality.

### 4.2. HOW WERE THE PARTNER REGIONS CHOSEN?

Project SiTaR arose from the basis of the partnerships which the Province of Burgenland had cultivated with the participating regions before the project began. First contact had been made with the Admi-

nistrative District of Waldeck-Frankenberg more than twenty-five years previously. At a meeting with a representative from Burgenland in the Hessian district a discussion arose on the subject of water supply and sewage disposal.

Contact with South Tyrol existed on a political level and in professional exchanges especially in the area of culture, as well as in the use of South Tyrol’s experience as a longstanding member of the European Union in the agricultural sector.

The connections to the neighboring region in Western Hungary were not only historical but also well-founded in the cooperation within the EuRegio Westpannonia in the time before Hungary’s entry into the European Union, and were deepened through the cross-border cooperation in the Interreg Cross Border Cooperation programmes.

### 4.3. WHICH AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE SITAR REGIONS ARE ESPECIALLY OBVIOUS?

When the partners agreed the content points of Project SiTaR, they concentrated on those areas in which so-called core competencies for regional development had already been built.

All the regions feature unspoiled environments and landscapes worthy of protection in the form of nature parks and national parks.

In tourism there is also a common area of emphasis - water. This element is the basis for tourism in many ways, namely for sport, relaxation and health tourism.

The subject of water also appears in sewage treatment. All of the regions are active partners in the realization of European energy policies. In various forms they build on the strengthening of renewable energy and the utilization of this resource for regional development.

Goal: to intensify the cooperation among the regions.

There was already contact among the partner regions before SiTaR.

Core competencies of all SiTaR regions: unspoiled landscapes, protected scenic regions, a concentrate on water.

#### 4.4. HOW CAN ONE BEST RECOGNIZE THE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH SITAR HAS SET IN MOTION?

For me personally SiTaR's most impressive success consists of the demand for the practical realization of the results of SiTaR and its subprojects.

The participating institutions and enterprises in the partner regions were and are seeking new services and products which in competition can evidence unique qualities translating into high recognition. Some of these were developed in Project SiTaR. I am thinking here of services in health tourism, of the mutual support in the construction of networks in the area of cultural tourism, and of the exchange of solutions for the optimum and protective utilization of natural resources in the nature parks and national parks. The founding of one firm in the area of renewable energy and the proven effects of bypass control in waste water treatment show the sustainability and the financial usefulness of the project long after its own lifetime.

#### 4.5. HOW DO THE NEXT STEPS LOOK?

One important goal of Project SiTaR was to demonstrate innovative regional solutions for questions of European dimension and to prove that learning regions can make a contribution to these solutions through cooperation. These stimuli have also found their way into the programming of the new Structure Support Fund 2007 – 2013.

For the coming period, however, an intensive integration of West Hungary is desirable, which was only able to take a small part in SiTaR's activities due to limited financial means.

As areas of concentration for future transnational and interregional cooperation, the regions worked out the important

areas which it is hoped will all make a contribution to innovative solutions and future investments and to the creation and preservation of jobs:

- use of renewable energy in all its various facets (from organic substances to solar power), to minimize dependence on fossil fuels
- development and implementation of innovative products and services in the area of health tourism
- innovative cultural tourism brand building as a basis for marketing activities and development of destinations

#### 4.6. WILL THERE BE A SIMILAR INTERREGIONAL EU PROJECT IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

The conditions for support are changing constantly, and the regions must adapt themselves to these changing conditions. This type of cooperation will therefore take place in the future only in modified form, if the participating regions wish.

Ensuring high standards in health tourism in the partner regions and the continued expansion of services with unique selling properties are at the center of a mutual activity in the tourism sector.

Health and exercise in connection with the natural resources water and nature, complemented by high quality regional products, form the background for the future innovative development of the regional economy. This could serve as the basis of a mutual project.

Another topic is the contribution of the regions to the achievement of the Kyoto goals under consideration of optimal regional creation of added value. It encompasses the area of replenishable raw materials as well as energy efficiency and the reduction of dependence on fossil fuels.

The regional highlights and the establishment of the areas of concentration result

Newly developed products demand competitive capabilities.

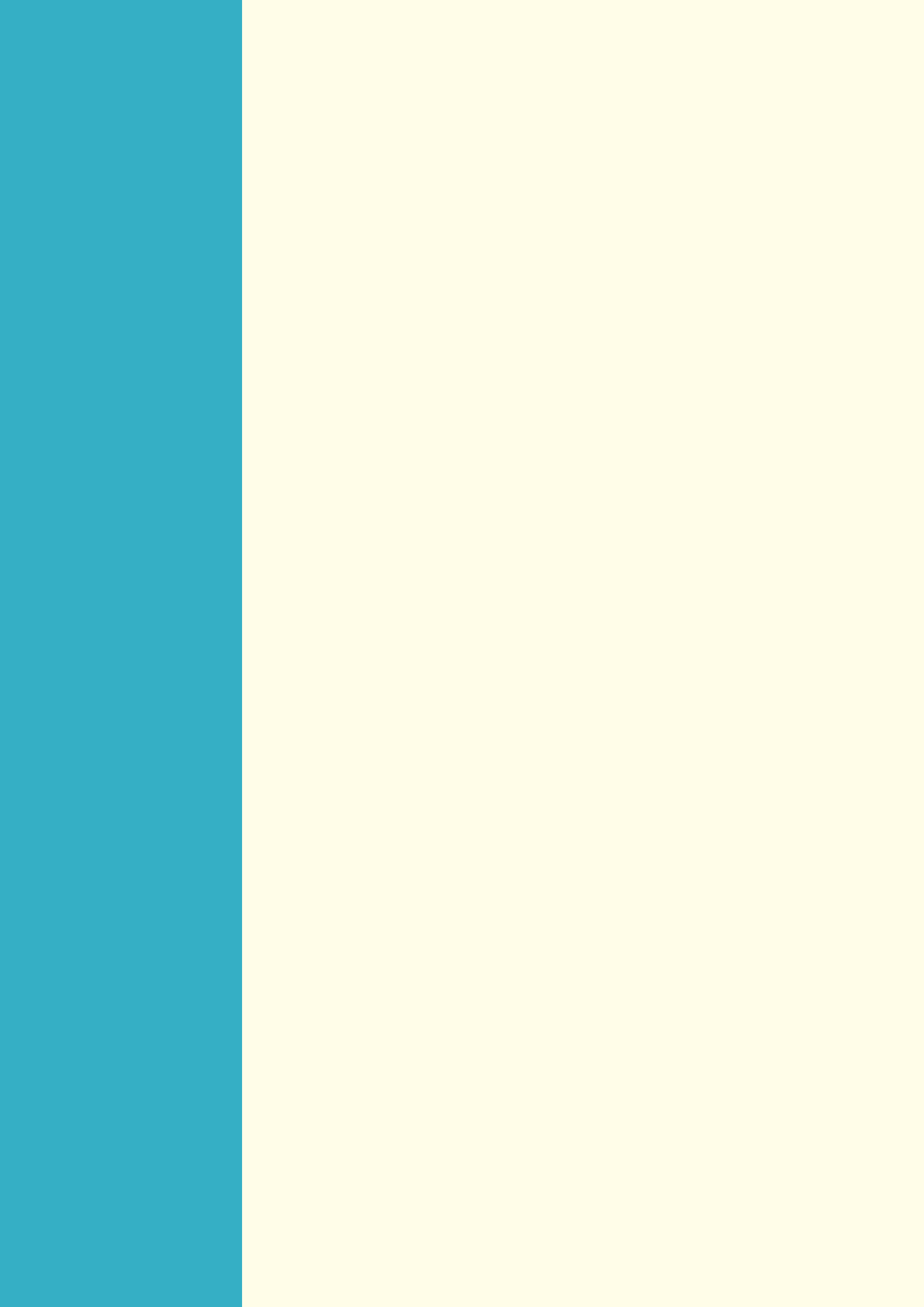
The next steps relate to the areas of renewable energy, innovation in health tourism and brand building in cultural tourism.

There will also be mutual activities in the future.

from the various natural and climatic conditions.

These subjects are not exhaustive, but

rather a first answer from the regions to the results of SiTaR and the changing conditions for support of transnational and interregional projects.



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**WEST-TRANSDANUBIA**

**West-Pannon Development Agency**

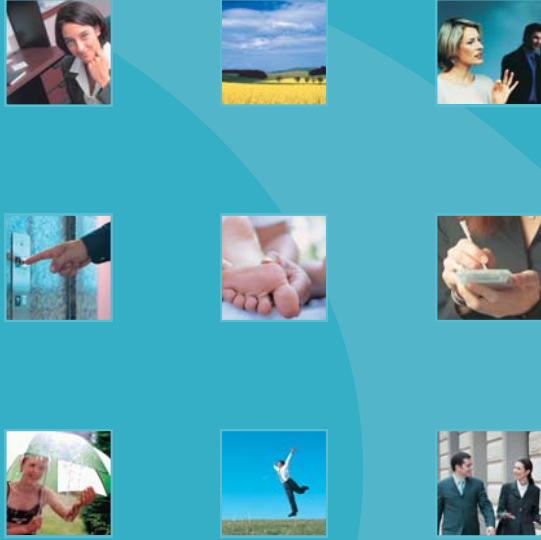
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