

Peter Heyne

Partnering with Camili Biosphere Reserve

Camili is the first biosphere reserve in Turkey. It is situated in the northeast of the country on the border to Georgia. In 2005 UNESCO included it in the world network of biosphere reserves. The Upper Lausitz Heath and Pond Landscape biosphere reserve has supported the Turkish colleagues right from the onset.

The partnership came about as a result of a conference in the southern Turkish town Adana in 2004. EUROPARC Deutschland, the German association of protected areas, initiated the participation of a fair number of representatives from German biosphere reserves at this conference; they were able to report on their experiences in implementing the MAB programme to local politicians and stakeholders. A central focus was on the cooperation with the population and the integration of sustainable development in the management of protected areas.

The Turkish colleagues showed great interest in close cooperation. In 2005 a delegation of Turkish scientists and nature conservationists visited some German reserves. In the same year cooperation between the Turkish MAB

National Committee and the Upper Lausitz Heath and Pond Landscape biosphere reserve was agreed upon at the EUROMAB conference in Vienna.

Since 2006, this partnership has come to life. Local officials of the seven villages of the Camili biosphere reserve visited Upper Lausitz in November for a week and used the opportunity for in-depth discussions with the inhabitants and farmers of the Upper Lausitz Heath and Pond Landscape. Local problems and solutions like the disposal of sewage or the winter road service, the consequences of demographic change or the acceptance of non-usage in the forest were discussed. Visits were made to fishermen and farmers initiating discussions about economic development and how this could be integrated into the conservation strategy of this young Turkish biosphere reserve. This productive exchange of views also showed that the idea of 'Man and the Biosphere' is about dialogue and friendship between nations. The people in Upper Lausitz have come a long way towards realising this idea through the partnership with the Turkish biosphere reserve Camili. The staff of the biosphere reserve administration is looking forward to a return visit in Turkey, which is scheduled to take place in late 2007; this will serve to intensify the cooperation even more.

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Pond Landscape Gutttau

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