



The exhibition: Lively silence – naturally!

From the mysterious bogs to a dialect quiz – the exhibition invites visitors to explore many things. In lyrics or via multi-media, visitors can immerse themselves in the lives of “land and people” and to think about the forest in all its complexity.

The wind in the trees, the rippling of a brook, bird calls and insect buzzing – lively silence. Large, quiet forests, colourful flowering mountain meadows, dreamy little valleys with clear brooks, high bogs and mountain peaks dominate the Biosphere Reserve. Forests make up a large part of the total area here.

Since 1979 this landscape has represented the German up-lands in the world network of UNESCO biosphere reserves. These “global players” are unique in their cooperation. Together they show examples of sustainable development in the recognized model regions: ecologically, economically and socially. There are numerous pilot projects in Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve, in which examples of the co-existence of man and nature are developed, tested, and then implemented. The close cooperation between the various stakeholders has the goal of filling the Thuringian Forest biosphere reserve model region with life in new, creative and sustainable ways.

Hiking on the mountain ridges, climbing on the highest tower of Thuringia or mountain biking with a climb of 500 metres – active holiday makers coming to the Biosphere Reserve will not be disappointed. The Rennsteig, Germany’s oldest long distance ridge walk, leads 30 km through the Biosphere Reserve and offers stunning vistas



of the Thuringian countryside. Sporting highlights, such as various World Cups or the largest cross-country race in Europe, attract people to this course.

Even for those who are looking for relaxation, this is the place to be. Culture lovers walk in Goethe’s footsteps. “Over all of the hills peace comes anew”, wrote Goethe (transl.: John Whaley), who wrote many of his finest poems in the Thuringian Forest. Traditional crafts and customs can be experienced in many small museums and glassblowers. Exhibition mines tell the story below the ground. With all of this we can say:

*Explore a world of experience in
Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve!*


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BIOSPHERE RESERVE INFORMATION CENTRE

Exhibition Lively silence – naturally!



**Biosphere Reserve
Thuringian Forest**



Exhibition Plan

Welcome to the exhibition:
Lively silence – naturally!



- FORESTS AND BOGS
- MEADOWS
- BROOKS
- LIFE AND EXPERIENCE
- FOR CHILDREN
- WORLDWIDE NETWORK OF UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVES

FORESTS AND BOGS

Forests cover a large part of the Biosphere Reserve. Therefore the forest is an important economic and cultural component of the region. Over the centuries, the demands on the forest have continuously changed and become more diverse. Today the trio of economic, protection and recreation functions are the focus of modern sustainable forestry. Global warming is also bringing changes to the forest ecosystem with its many habitats, animals and plants. Therefore, management concepts in the Thuringian Forest need to be developed under these changing climatic conditions. Otherwise there may be serious damage in the medium to long-term.

The most mysterious parts of the landscape in the region are found in the cold and humid higher land. They are the Thuringian Forest bogs. The bogs of the Thuringian Forest were used as a raw material source from the 18th century. In order to extract the peat, ditches were dug and the water was drained. Today they are strictly protected. The bogs have been restored through a combination of hydraulic engineering measures with the complete or partial removal of tree cover on the moorland areas to reduce dehydration and forest succession in their catchment area.



LIFE AND EXPERIENCE

Old crafts such as charcoal burning and glass blowing, as well as the typical regional settlement structures, reflect the centuries-long coexistence of humans and biosphere in this region. Alongside the typical regional crafts, tourism has also significantly influenced life in the Thuringian Forest. Numerous visitors escape the hustle of the big cities and seek clear, fresh air amongst the locals. Winter sports also have a long tradition, with ideal conditions for cross country skiing. The first skier in the German-speaking world was Johann Christoph Friedrich GutsMuths, a teacher from Schnepfenthal. As early as 1795 he was on homemade skis in the Thuringian Forest. The Rennsteig, Germany's oldest and most popular ridge walk, attracts more than one hundred thousand walkers every year. Tourism is still an important economic factor today. With a Rennsteig ticket you can travel sustainably by bus and train in the Biosphere Reserve. Overnight guests enjoy free access to the Rennsteig buses and the Rennsteig Shuttle.

WORLD NETWORK OF UNESCO BIOSPHERE RESERVES

Biosphere reserves are UNESCO recognized model regions which show examples of how sustainable development can be implemented: ecologically, economically and socially. The UNESCO biosphere reserves form a global network for the exchange of knowledge. Thus, they are special reference points for research, environmental monitoring and education. The success of projects in biosphere reserves around the world shows that ecology, economics and sociology are compatible. In June 2015, there were 651 biosphere reserves in 120 countries. In Germany, 16 biosphere reserves have been designated.

MEADOWS AND BROOKS

The meadows in the Thuringian Forest are not natural: they are manmade habitats. Their formation is closely linked to the settlement of the Thuringian Forest. In the Biosphere Reserve it is possible to discover more than a dozen grassland communities. Whether unimproved grassland or wet meadow, their character is largely determined by water and nutrients, as well as by land use.

The Thuringian Forest is a major water source area due to high levels of precipitation in the high land, as well as the subsoil. Numerous clear mountain brooks flow through the forests and meadow valleys. For millions of years, erosion and transportation has gradually carried finely ground up rocks from the Thuringian Forest to the North Sea. Opportunities are being explored and tested in practice in the Biosphere Reserve, for example to restore the continuity of rivers. This will benefit species in the upland brooks, and diversity will increase.

