

Guiding Principles of the Austrian Protective Forest Policy

1. Intact protective forests are the most sustainable and the cheapest contribution to the security of Alpine habitats.
2. The protective forest policy in Austria is based on rigid legal provisions which serve as models on an international scale and are in compliance with the principle of sustainability.
3. Sufficiently regenerated and structurally rich protection and mountain forests provide - going far beyond the tasks of timber utilization - sustainable and cheap contributions to employment, tourism, the safeguarding of drinking water reserves and to climate balance.
4. The maintenance and improvement of their condition constitutes a crucial task of forestry and environmental policies and a core element of rural development.
5. In the process of planning protective forests permanent coordination between the forestry authorities, the Federal Government, the Federal Provinces, the Austrian Service for Torrent and Avalanche Control, as well as research and administration is taking place.
6. The necessary funds for measures in protective forests - with focus on object-protecting forests - are safeguarded on the long run and the acceptance of subsidies for protective forests on the part of forest owners and partners is reinforced.
7. The measures in the field of tending of protective forests are process- and effect-oriented, comply with the state of the art and are being permanently subjected to success control.
8. The interests of target groups outside agriculture and forestry in protective and mountain forests and the interdisciplinary cooperation within the whole field of protective forests are being permanently strengthened.
9. Sustainable solutions for problem areas in protective forests (forest-game problem, local overexploitation by tourism, etc.) are aimed at within the framework of a constructive dialogue and by means of interdisciplinary cooperation. (Forestry & Hunting Dialogue).
10. Protection forest policy in Austria is integrated into all important policy programmes with clearly measurable goals and indicators (→ Austrian Forest Dialogue)