

Editorial by Brigitte Scott & Valerie Braun



eco.mont's listing in the Web of Science is beginning to make itself felt. We are very pleased to report that the range of contributions coming in is opening out both geographically and thematically. The July issue of eco.mont brings you articles covering a wide range of geographical areas, types of protected areas and topics. Major themes are freshwater systems and socio-economic issues.

Hu et al. studied mountain streams in the Jinggangshan National Nature Reserve and found a fair number of endemic species and favourable conditions in the headwaters. However, they also identified several threats: in the nature reserve itself they found dangerous fishing methods using poisons, plus water degradation from mining and agriculture in the adjacent areas. They end by suggesting measures for the protected areas to ensure the continued thriving of the ichthyofauna in this area.

In their paper, von Fumetti and Felder looked at springs in the Swiss National Park and neighbouring Val Müstair Biosphere Reserve to characterize the macroinvertebrates of this unique habitat, which is practically free from human impact. They found great differences between springs, with electrical conductivity and oxygen saturation identified as the main environmental factors differentiating the springs and their macrozoobenthic assemblages. They also point out the importance of protected areas as sanctuaries for species endangered outside them. Here, biosphere reserves with high

altitude springs, such as the Val Müstair, might take on a vital role in contributing to the protection of the undisturbed springs.

In their report, Spahic et al. concentrate on the physical-geographical conditions in the upper part of the Una river with its characteristic tuff cascades and the natural development regime needed to protect them.

Ernst Steinicke and Kabann I.B. Kabanankye have studied social tensions and political developments around the creation and implementation of Rwenzori Mountains National Park in Uganda, near the border with the DR Congo. Here, restrictions on the expansion of settlements beyond a specified altitude have triggered migrations that in their turn have sparked ethnic tensions. At the same time, new forms of governance in the shape of recently created kingdoms have further complicated matters. The authors demonstrate how what starts out as a conservation project may create impacts well beyond the boundaries of a protected area.

Katharina Conradin and Urs Wiesmann focus on how World Natural Heritage status contributes to sustainable regional development and which factors influence this contribution. They conducted a global online survey and face-to-face interviews. On the one hand, WNH status promotes sustainable regional development but finding the right balance between conservation and development is a challenge.

Günter Köck reports about the EuroMAB Conference in October 2013 in Ontario, Canada, which gathered more than 190 delegates from 27 European and North-American countries. The aim of the conference was to identify core themes and recommendations to be considered in the future Man and the Biosphere Programme strategy, confirming that biosphere reserves should be learning platforms for sustainable development.

Michael Kuttner, Anna Scheidergruber and Thomas Wrbka test if protected areas provide a higher share of environment-related ecosystem services than their surroundings. The outcome of the study supports this claim but also indicates that large and effective protected areas support ecosystem services supply beyond their borders.

In protected areas the loss of traditional landscape elements is a particular challenge. In the Alps civil society organizations coordinate voluntary efforts for collective land care. Marianne Penker, Pamela Mühlmann and Andreas Muhar analysed 20 volunteer organizations and identified different types of these organizations.

Szymon Ciapala and his co-authors report on tourism-related threats that Natura 2000 areas in the Alpine Bioregion of Slovakia are facing.

The editors hope you like the new publishing intervals January/July. With this issue we introduce another change to eco.mont: the editorial team has been widened to include us, Valerie Braun and Brigitte Scott, as managing editors. We are very happy about this recognition of our work for the journal.

Brigitte Scott and Valerie Braun

Related projects according to the **European Mountain Pool**

At the editorial office of eco.mont, we maintain the **European Mountain Pool** on research in European protected mountain areas.

<http://www.alparc.org/our-actions/research-platform/european-mountain-pool>

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Does World Natural Heritage status trigger sustainable regional development efforts? *by Katharina Conradin & Urs Wiesmann*

Do landscape patterns reflect ecosystem service provision? – A comparison between protected and unprotected areas throughout the Lake Neusiedl region *by Michael Kuttner, Anna Schneidergruber & Thomas Wrбка*

Freshwater fish species richness and conservation of mountain streams in the Jinggangshan National Nature Reserve, China *by Maolin Hu, Huiming Zhou, Zhiqiang Wu, Shan Ouyang & Chunquan Chen*
Faunistic Characterization of Alpine springs in the Swiss National Park *by Stefanie von Fumetti & Susanne Felder*

Related projects in the **European Mountain Pool**:

Elmi Marianna: Challenges for sustainable tourism management in a UNESCO serial World Heritage Site. The case of the Dolomites. CH-5081

Voll Frieder: Suggestions to increase the local awareness for the UNESCO World Heritage in the region of the Tektonikarena Sardona. CH-5134

Walser Roger: Benefits of using the official logo of an UNESCO World Heritage Site. CH-5139

Grêt-Regamey Adrienne: HydroServ – Vulnerability of hydrological ecosystem services: Integrative analysis under changes of climate and socio-economy with an emphasis on adaptation. Project Number: 406140_125926

Ingold Karin: Ecosystem Services in the wilderness park Zürich. CH-4562

Laube Patrick: Participatory Mapping Ecosystem Service Potentials PARMESAN. CH-4921

Füreder Leopold: Freshwater monitoring in the Hohe Tauern Nationalpark. CH-1336

Rey Peter: Monitoring of fish stocks in the Swiss National Park (Macun). CH-3855