



Protected area (original language and official English translation)	Biosphärenreservat Vessertal -Thüringer Wald Vessertal -Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve
Name of Administration	Biosphärenreservat Vessertal-Thüringer Wald Authority
Address	Waldstraße 1
Postal Code	98711 Schmiedefeld am Rennsteig, Germany
Website	http://www.biosphaerenreservat-vessertal.de/
Contact person	Jürgen Erdtmann
e-mail	Juergen.Erdtmann@br-np.thueringen.de
Phone (office)	++49 36782 666-0

Map of the protected area, Hyperlink to google maps	http://www.biosphaerenreservat-vessertal.de/zonierung http://maps.google.de/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=de&geocode=&q=Biosph%C3%A4renreservat+Vessertal+%E2%80%93+Th%C3%BCringer+Wald&ll=53.462095,22.665825&sspn=0.288406,0.229683&g=Nationalpark+Biebrza-Flusstal,+19-110,+Powiat+Moniecki,+Podlachien,+Polen&ie=UTF8&hq=Biosph%C3%A4renreservat+Vessertal&hnear=Biosph%C3%A4renreservat+Vessertal&ll=50.604159,10.866852&spn=0.604015,0.459366&t=h&z=11
Short description	<p>The Biosphere Reserve is situated in the middle of Germany in the Thuringian Forest between the towns Suhl, Ilmenau and Schleusingen. It was acknowledged by the UNESCO in 1979 and today has about 17,000 ha.</p> <p>The Biosphere Reserve covers mainly rural area, only at the edge it is tangent to the densely populated area Suhl-Zella-Mehlis.</p> <p>The Vessertal-Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve is dominated by the Thuringian Forest highlands, which are part of the Thuringian-Franconian highlands. Unlike other major natural sections of the Thuringian-Franconian highlands, the Thuringian Forest, a mountain ridge area, is cut by a system of deep valleys.</p> <p>The landscape, which is dominated by forests, presents itself as a largely contiguous forest system. Small upland meadows are found only in stream valleys and in certain high areas. Runoff from ridge areas has led to the formation of small raised bogs and feeds a dense network of streams.</p>
Area Size [km ²]	170

Main Area type (wetland, forest, grassland, alpine)	With 88 % forest cover, the biosphere reserve can be characterised as an almost completely forested landscape,
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area) [ha, %, if available]	<p>interrupted by agricultural land and, to a modest extent, by fens and mires, tall-perennial communities and succession areas.</p> <p>The grassland accounts for 9 % of the overall area and is confined to valleys and a few higher areas. Its water bodies (not watercourses), almost all of which are man-made, account for about 0.7 % of the total area of the Vessertal-Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve.</p>
Main land use types [ha or %, if available]	<p>The Vessertal-Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve has been shaped, and continues to be shaped, primarily by the following types of uses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forestry 2. Agriculture 3. Tourism 4. Water resources management 5. Fishing and hunting 6. Settlements, commerce and traffic/transport. <p>The agriculturally used land consists exclusively of grassland; no farming takes place within the Vessertal-Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve. The great majority of the grassland is used as meadows (approximately 60 %); only 40 % is used for grazing.</p>
Climate induced changes and problems	<p>Shifting woodland vegetation zones.</p> <p>According to present climate scenarios, temperature and precipitation levels will change. This will lead to changes in vegetation pattern and have a negative effect especially for species adapted to cold and wet growing conditions such as spruce. Main tree species in the Vessertal is spruce not only in terms of area but also in terms of economic aspects.</p>
Climate trends	<p>Less precipitation in the growing season is likely to occur as well as higher temperature levels.</p>
Technical, supportive partner	<p>Thuringian State Institute for Forestry, Game and Fishery</p>
Problems for research questions	<p>Adaptation strategies with different input levels have to be developed for the forests in order to maintain and enlarge ecologic and socio-economic values taking climate change into account. But not only direct effects have to be considered. Because of its topography, the Vessertal is part of an important catchment area and with its forests it prevents floods and high water levels.</p>



<u>Habitat Code</u>	<u>Habitat Directive Description</u>
1340	Inland salt meadows
3140	Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp.
3150	Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition - type vegetation
3190	Lakes of gypsum karst
3260	Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation
3270	Rivers with muddy banks with Chenopodion rubri p.p. and Bidention p.p. vegetation
6210	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites)
6230	Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on silicious substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas in Continental Europe)
6430	Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels
6510	Lowland hay meadows (Alopecurus pratensis, Sanguisorba officinalis)
6520	Mountain hay meadows
7140	Transition mires and quaking bogs
8160	Medio-European calcareous scree of hill and montane levels
8210	Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation
9110	Luzulo-Fagetum beech forests
9130	Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests
9150	Medio-European limestone beech forests of the Cephalanthero-Fagion
9170	Galio-Carpinetum oak-hornbeam forests
9180	Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines
91E0	Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)
9410	Acidophilous Picea forests of the montane to alpine levels (Vaccinio-Piceetea)