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Press Release

Climate change and nature conservation – IMPACT conference presents adaptation strategies for protected areas

Climate change is one of the biggest problems of our time and adaptation to it is of the highest priority. This is the conclusion the Sustainable Development Summit drew in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012. The EU-project HABIT-CHANGE developed adaptation strategies for large protected areas. The project is led by the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development and its results will be presented among other best practice examples at the „International Conference on Managing Protected Areas under Climate Change (IMPACT)“ from 24 to 26 September 2012 in Dresden, Germany.

Climate change and land use are threatening the world's protected habitats, such as national parks. This is especially true in regards to the expected climate change impacts on nature and will challenge the administration of protected areas since they need to monitor changes and revise their management strategies to be prepared for the environmental consequences.

In response to these challenges HABIT-CHANGE developed adaptation strategies for large protected areas in cooperation with several European conservation agencies and research institutions, such as the Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK). Their results will be presented and discussed during IMPACT from 24 to 26 September 2012 in Dresden, Germany.

IMPACT provides a platform for dialogue to exchange knowledge and experience in the field of climate change and biodiversity preservation. Lectures by renowned experts will show the importance of adaptation strategies to climate change for the preservation and development of protected areas. The conference's guest speakers are Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Cramer, member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Dr. Rob Jongman of Alterra, Wageningen (Netherlands), Dr. Alejandro Iza of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and Dr. Martin Sharman of the European Commission.

Seven different workshops are going to present results from HABIT-CHANGE and other projects and discuss the following topics:

- Monitoring of climate-induced impacts,
- Assessing sensitivity,
- Modeling of climate-induced impacts,
- Actual and future management practices,
- Climate change impacts on species and invasive species
- Awareness raising, communication and stakeholder involvement
- Legal aspects and policy recommendations

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IMPACT allows for an exchange of experiences of adaptation strategies' implementations. Amongst other case studies, IMPACT will present two best-practice examples chosen by UNESCO because of their adaptation strategies.

IMPACT is bringing together researchers, conservation managers and decision-makers in the field of nature conservation in order to develop a better understanding of the complex impacts of climate change on biodiversity on a local level and, thus, the means to adapt management in protected areas.

Registration is open until 7 September 2012. If you register before 31 July the fee is 50 €, afterwards it is 75 €.

More information about the conference, the workshops and field trips to Bohemian Switzerland and the Upper Lusatian Heath and Pond Landscape are available at: www.habit-change.eu/Impact

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