

Stubaital Tourism project for BSc Student



- Project suitable for a BSc student as part of the 743708 EU Interdisziplinäre Exkursion mit Übung zu einem Lebensraum course, supervised by Prof. Ulrike Tappeiner.
- Working with PhD student to gather data on thresholds for change in Alpine Forests for tourism in the Stubaital in July 2024.
- All expenses will be covered by the project.

Summary

As part of the 'Future Mountain Forests' PhD research group, I am analysing stakeholder standpoints of different groups in the Stubai Valley. Tourism is a very important aspect of the economy in the Stubai valley, however the perceptions tourists' have of the landscape are likely to change over time in accordance with the impacts of climate change. In this project, I hope to understand more about the aspects of Alpine Forests that Stakeholders value and what are their thresholds for change. I plan to do this by carrying out a questionnaire of tourists in the Stubai valley in the month of July at different tourism hotspots or beauty spots.

Context

Tourists are typically a difficult group of stakeholders to study as they are transient. They tend to not have long term relationships with a place or in-depth knowledge of it. However, as tourism becomes an increasingly important source of income in the Stubai valley, and traditional farming techniques continue to decline, tourist perceptions, preferences and visions of the future will increasingly influence land management. Understanding and accounting for these is therefore imperative to protect the livelihoods of local people.

The marketability of the Stubai valley as a tourist destination is likely to be affected by climate change. Therefore, it is important to understand at what point visitors will be discouraged from coming to the valley, or as it is otherwise known: the threshold for change. Defining where the threshold for

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change allows locals who rely on income from tourism to be resilient and responsive to adapt to these changes.

Methods

To collect this social data, we will carry out a questionnaire of tourists in different tourism spots in the Stubai valley. As we are trying to assess a broad view of the different types of tourism within the valley, this will include a range of sites. Questionnaires will be conducted in person, and this should be a positive experience for the visitors that leaves them feeling empowered and heard by the research community.

Requirements

- Fluent German (preferably native speaker) and good level of English.
- Moderate level of physical fitness and outdoor experience as we may be hiking up to Alms and huts to survey respondents.
- Good interpersonal and communication skills as questionnaires will be conducted in person.

This should be a fun way to collect data for your BSc thesis and better understand the impacts of climate change on a highly important aspect of the Stubai valley community!