

Assessing conflicts related to outdoor recreation

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Background

Mountain environments are highly appreciated for recreational activities. The **growing demand** for outdoor recreation, however, leads **more frequently to conflicts**. These conflicts may arise between **different types of activities**, but also between **different users**, such as between recreationists and farmers, landowners, hunters, forestry, nature conservation and other.

Method

Based on an **online questionnaire**, local stakeholders were asked to describe the conflicts related to **recreational activities** (when do they arise, where are they located, who is involved).

Results

The results indicate that conflicts involve **both local residents and tourists**, occur more frequently in **summer** than in winter, happen mostly daily or weekly, distribute over the whole day but also night, and are mostly not limited to one location. The stakeholders stated generally a **high or very high need for action** and proposed also **various possible solutions**.

Application

Information on the value of the natural environment will be provided using the **concept of ecosystem services** to **foster public awareness** and to **sensitize residents and tourists**. Moreover, **innovative communication approaches** will be applied aiming at enhanced experiences of the mountain environment **generating a better understanding and more respect towards nature**.

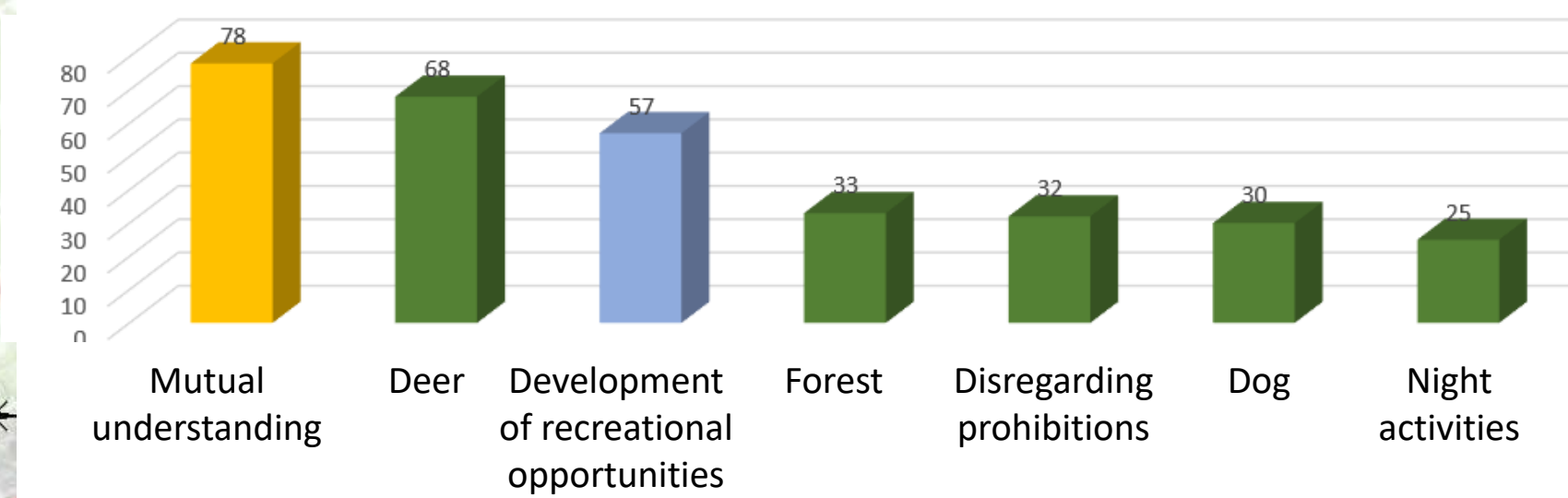
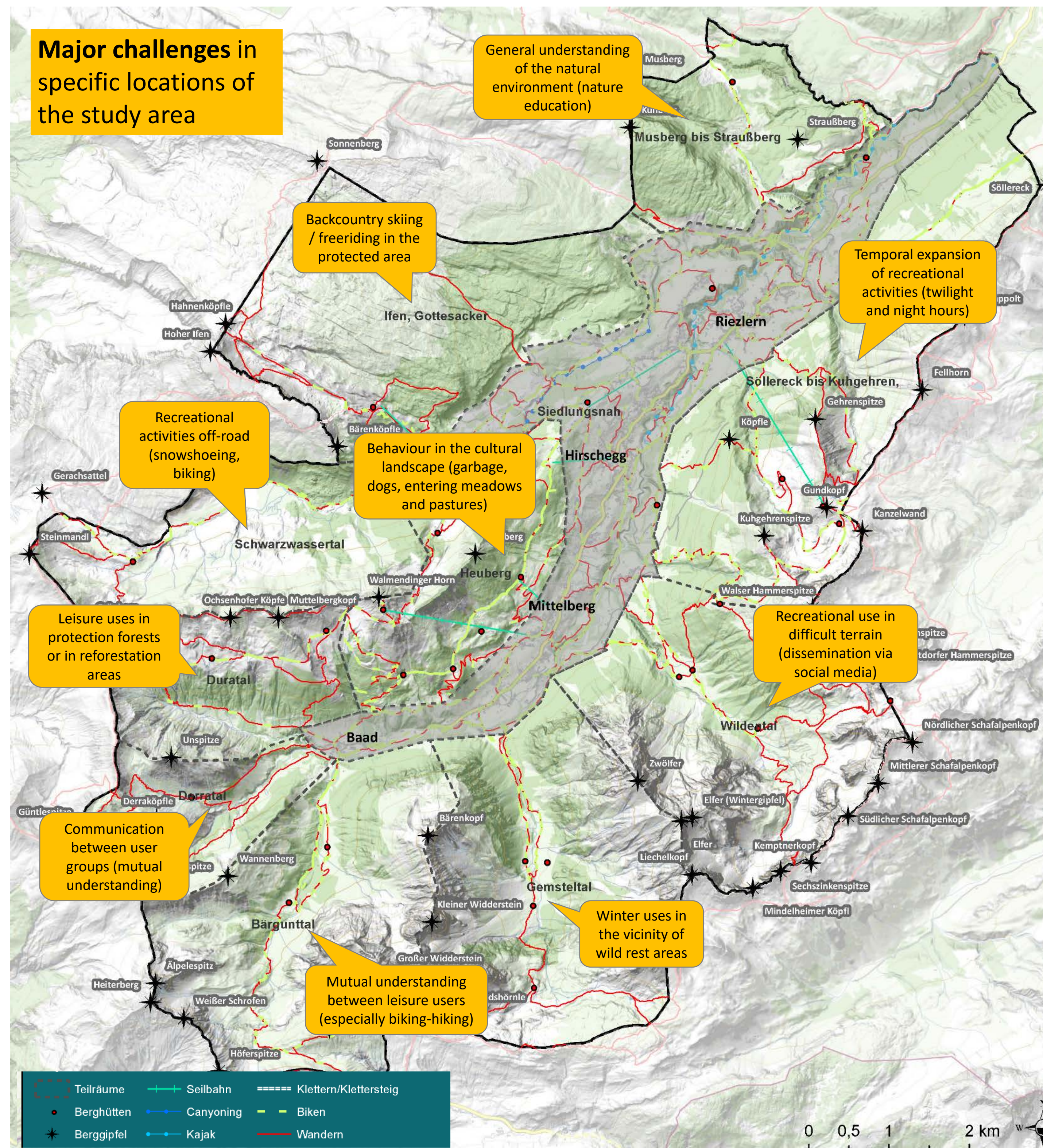


Figure: Number of mentions related to major challenges (green) as well as needs (yellow) and suggestions (blue) to scope with these challenges, based on 101 questionnaires filled out by local stakeholders (out of 160 invited stakeholders).

The project

The project “**Natur bewusst erleben (Consciously experiencing nature)**” is carried out in **Kleinwalsertal (Austria)**. It aims to highlight the **value of nature**, to **promote sustainable awareness** and preserve and optimize the **use of natural resources through an improved management**. Possible **conflicts of interest** and **conflicting uses** in sensitive landscape areas should be prevented. In this context, three focal points are developed:

- 1) **analysis of the natural environment** with a focus on **ecosystem services**, in particular for the habitats wetlands, grassland and forests;
- 2) development of a **decision-making concept** for the management different types of use, in particular recreational use;
- 3) development of **innovative knowledge transfer approaches**.

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