

Forest pasture re-organisation in Oberammergau Bavaria / Germany



Thematic Group on Forest-Dominant Rural Areas and Municipalities

Anton Burkhart

- 53 years old, married, two children (20 and 24)
- Engineer for Forestry
- 1995-1996 Bavarian State Forest, Forester
- 1997-2022 Privatwaldgemeinschaft Oberammergau, Forest Cooperative with 1800 ha land, Forester, Manager and CEO
- 2023 Bavarian Forest Owners Association, now at Brussels for CEPF



Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF)

- 24 members (mostly national forest owner associations)
- 15 M private forest owners in the EU
- 60 % of EU forests are privately owned
- Most holdings are small/very small size
- Founded 1996



Association of the Bavarian Forest Owners (BayWBV)

- 700.000 private forest owners in Bavaria
- 23 % of the forest area in Germany
- 37 % of Bavarian area is forest (2.6 M ha)
- 56 % is private

- Founded 1918, 1.700 Members, 1 M ha
- Member of AGDW (German Forest Owner Association)
- AGDW is Member of CEPF (Confederation of European Forest Owners)



History of Oberammergau

- Very old settlement area, proven since year 5 AD
- Farm based but very poor, before tourism
- Only grassland, none or very few crops (potatoes, herbs)
- 60 % forest cover
- Long winter period (elevation 900-1600 mNN) – half year
- Very little grassland to cut more than two times p.a. (wetland, dry rocks)
- Until 1803, no property owned by the farmers – from 1330, it was owned by the monastery
- Clearcut forestry, only spruce – farmed and forested with rhythm of the year

Cows, horses and sheep need to go into whole forest from May to October



Challenges faced by Oberammergau

- From the 1950s, more and more farmers abandoning their land
- Farming is still part of the identity of the area and important for tourism
- Forestry rules and practices changed, no clearcutting, other tree species, hunting increased, higher rates
- Young people leaving to work in the other places and cities because there is not much work for higher educated people in a small town
- Farm life is not a central part of society anymore

**But: We want to save the „Alm“ system for the future
and it needs to be clear for the CAP
→ We needed help from outside**



Solution

- Forest owners, Landowners, Farming organisations, Scientists, Commune, nature conservation organisations, tourism representatives and the State created a round table with a mediator that collected and assessed ideas
- We developed a concept for mountain farming that fulfils the needs of the farmers and the requirements of CAP, and respects forestry practices
- We separated pure farming and pure forestry areas and connected them with „mix“ corridors
- All was voluntary and by agreement, not mandatory by law
- It has proven itself over 12 years as a “Win-Win”

Cooperation on the mountain guarantees the future in the valley and keeps the hand and the heart on the “Heimat”



Thank you

