

## **Conflicts between nature protection, tourism and other stakeholders (Germany)**

**By Milena Kreiling**

Germany has 15 national parks. Tourism plays always an important role for these areas and that also can lead to some conflicts.

After school I did a voluntary ecological year in one of the, at this time only 14, national parks of Germany. I worked for one year at the island Neuwerk in Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park in North Germany. During my work there I was confronted with tourists, monitoring of waste and birds and environmental education. Two times a year the around 40 habitants of Neuwerk and the administration of the national park and an association for protection of birds "Verein Jordsand e.V." meet for an island meeting. There they talk about different problems like that the geese, which stop at Neuwerk every spring and autumn eat all the grass which the locals need for their horses and that they are also a thread to the dike protection. For the administration also the management of tourist in the core zones, for example for the protection of breeding sandwich terns in the salt marsh, and the compliance of the rules is an important point. Also the inhabitants sometimes neglect the national park legislation. But all in all the collaboration is quite good.

Since beginning of 2014 we have another national park in South Germany, the Black Forest National Park. Before it was already a protected area but not under the national parks label. Now there are hopes to attract more tourists under this label. On the other hand there exist some fears from the locals that it can lead to a loss of timber because of no management in the core zone and the possibility of bark beetle outbreaks, which would heavily affect the local saw economy.

It is a kind of interesting discussion going on and during my researches I also found articles which say that the label of a national park doesn't really attract tourists more to a special region. But at least, soon I will go back to Freiburg, Germany and then I definitely will have a look on what is going on in our new Black Forest National Park!