

Press Release

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Cooperation in joint nature conservation projects: The island in the Hautsee will float again!

In order to improve the ecological condition of waters and natural areas, K+S, Thuringia Forest, and the renowned Thuringian nature conservation associations “Verband für Angeln und Naturschutz” (VANT) and “Arbeitsgruppe Artenschutz” (AAT) have concluded a cooperation agreement. As the first joint project, the floating island in the Hautsee near Bad Salzungen (Wartburg district) will be restored to its natural state.

“We are pleased that the cooperation agreement provides us with a viable basis for working together with our partners to improve the ecological condition of water bodies and in nature conservation,” said Ingo Romoth, commercial manager of the K+S Werra plant, on the occasion of the signing of the agreement. The cooperation focuses primarily on projects with which the habitats and populations of rare animal and plant species can be promoted in order to improve the natural environment as a whole.

Long-term preservation and care concepts in place

On the basis of scientific recommendations by the Thuringian Species Protection Working Group, concrete measures are jointly evaluated, selected and implemented in practice by ThüringenForst and the members of the Association for Fishing and Nature Conservation with the professional support of K+S. “ThüringenForst also makes suitable areas available if required. In this way, long-term conservation and care concepts are to be used to achieve a structurally rich improvement of the natural environment in favor of specialized and rare species of flora and fauna in Thuringia,” explains Volker Gebhardt, ThüringenForst Board Member. At the same time, the



selected projects are intended to compensate for unavoidable interventions in the natural environment through potash production. One focus will therefore be on water bodies and water-related habitats, which should primarily be located in the area of the Hesse-Thuringia state border.

First joint project: The renaturalization of the island in the Hautsee

In a first joint project, the floating island on the Hautsee is to be made buoyant again with the involvement of the Wartburg District's Lower Nature Conservation Authority. Using special techniques, trees will be felled on the island and transported away. Their weight, in addition to the fact that they are rooted in the bottom of the lake, had the effect that the island could no longer float.

The natural monument Hautsee with floating island

Natural monuments are areas of landscape or individual natural formations that are protected because of their special features, their ecological significance, or for other reasons. The Hautsee in the Wartburgkreis is a lake of about 1.6 hectares, which was created by a sinkhole. It was first mentioned in documents in 1486 as "Kleiner Elfensee". The island floating on it is the result of siltation processes which have produced a special form of swinging grass. After an observer had compared the island with the skin on milk in 1778, the lake was given the name in common use today. Already in 1977 the lake was put under protection as a natural monument. It belongs to the FFH area "Erdfallgebiet Frauensee".

The lost buoyancy was already a problem in the middle of the 19th century, which was solved because the "curiosity" could not be abandoned. Today, the use of efficient special technology provides all the prerequisites for making the island "float" again.



About K+S

K+S considers itself a customer-focused, independent minerals company for the Agriculture, Industry, Consumers, and Communities segments and wants to grow the EBITDA to € 3 billion by 2030. Our more than 14,000 employees enable farmers to provide nutrition for the world, solutions that keep industries going, improve daily life for consumers and provide safety in the winter. We continually meet the growing demand for mineral products from production sites in Europe, North and South America as well as a worldwide sales network. We strive for sustainability because we are deeply committed to our responsibilities to people, environment, communities and economy in the regions in which we operate. Learn more about K+S at www.kpluss.com.

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