

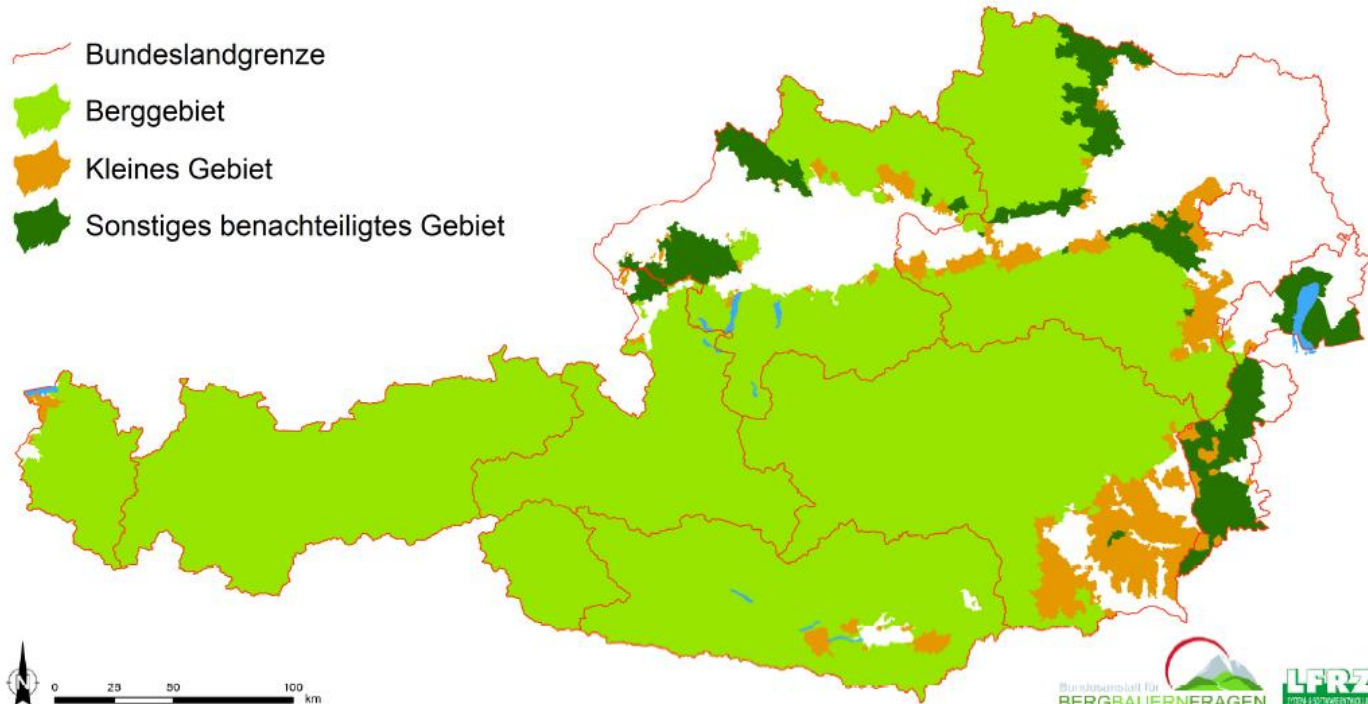
Mountain agriculture and its economic and social relevance

Präsident Franz Eßl



Berg / benachteiligte Gebiete - AT

Mountain / Less Favoured Areas - AT



What does society expect from farmers?

- **High quality food products in sufficient quantities**
- **A living, working and recreational space that ensures a high quality of life**
- **A multifunctional agriculture**

Multifunctionality means diverse services

Production function:

Provision of healthy food, materials and energy

When making a purchasing decision, the origin of products and the method of production are becoming deciding factors for consumers

Multifunctionality means diverse services

Ecological function

Sustainable farming practices, and thinking and acting keeping future generations in mind ensure a stable habitat (in terms of biodiversity, water conservation, protection against avalanches and erosion, etc.).

Cultural function

Village life in rural areas would be unimaginable without farmers.

Social function

Several generations live at the same farmhouse.

Multifunctionality means diverse services

Population function:

The cultural landscape, shaped by the work of farmers, is a prerequisite for the permanent settlement of people.

Recreational function:

Rural areas offer a recreational space for everyone.

Economic function:

Each job in the agricultural industry generates at least two more jobs in the upstream and downstream sectors.

The management of the landscape is the basis for other economic sectors, such as tourism.

What do mountain farmers expect from politics?

In order to ensure - as a general goal - widespread farming, food production should not be separated from the provision of public services.

Prerequisites to fulfil all the functions

Mountain farmers must earn an income

➤ Reasonable product prices

- A market system with elements of control

➤ Compensation for the provision of public services:

- This compensation shall be covered with public finances

Prerequisites to fulfil all the functions

- **Compensation for permanent natural handicaps**
 - Compensatory amounts are an effective instrument

However: adaptation and further development are necessary

- **Feasible forms of employment combinations**
 - Removal of regulatory barriers