



# Project Apuseni

## Team Development and Training to Support Interdisciplinary Co-operation

About Project Apuseni

**The Apuseni Project:**  
This project develops a concept for sustainable land-use in forest and agriculture for the Apuseni Mountains (Western Carpathians) in Romania. This is an extension of the pilot project „Modellvorhaben Kulturlandschaft Hohenlohe“ in Germany and transfers the experiences gained here to a traditional landscape in Eastern Europe.

**Members of the Project**  
- sponsored by: BMB+F (Federal Ministry of Education and Research), Germany  
- supervising authority: Projektträger Jülich GmbH (PTJ)  
- approximately 50 scientists from 8 German and 9 Romanian institutions, the **core team** comprises 14 German and 2 Romanian scientists.  
- about 40 students working on their diploma thesis, as scientific assistants, or trainees and technical personnel.  
- local and regional authorities and institutions, local people involved.

**Organisational Structure**

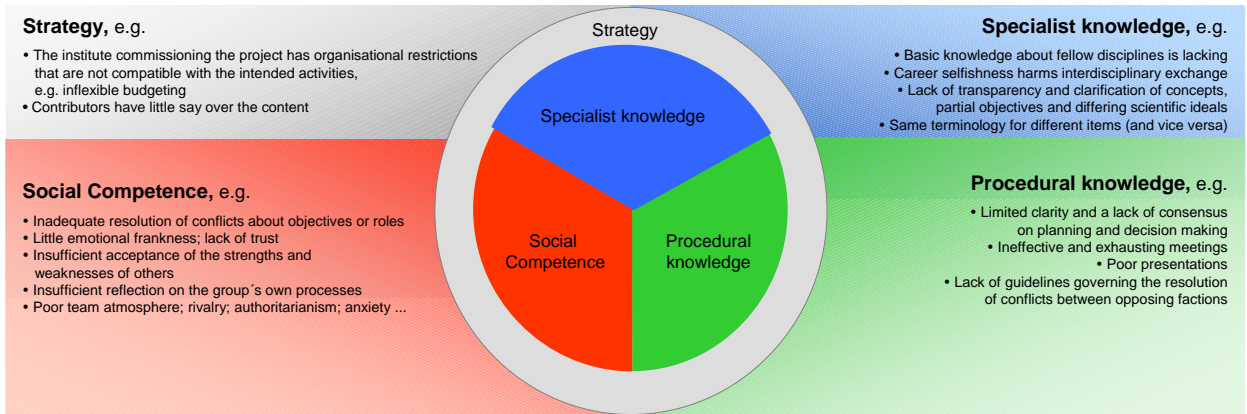
**4 topics of interest:**  
> landscape, agricultural techniques  
> social economy in rural regions  
> potentials for the sustainable development of landscape and regional economy  
> participation, project communication and monitoring the process

**Concept for sustainable land-use**

Interdisciplinary Co-operation

### Problems and Constraints of Interdisciplinary Co-operation - Target Areas for Measures to Promote Competence

Interdisciplinary projects aim to solve complex scientific problems that cannot be solved by a single discipline. To be successful in this kind of project the teamwork must be highly intensive and embedded as an autonomous organisation form between the scientific institutes each having their own disciplinary culture. Interdisciplinary projects frequently lead to dissatisfying results and unpleasant interpersonal experiences, which usually cannot be read in the publications about the projects. Information about these negative aspects rather can be found in informal reports. What are the typical constraints that make interdisciplinary co-operation so difficult?



Objectives of the Psychological Team Coaching

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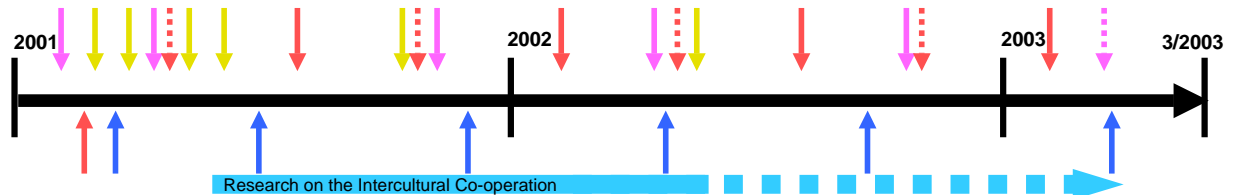
Core Team	Individuals	Leadership
 All <b>members</b> agreed about ...  ... common understanding of traps and barriers to interdisciplinary co-operation ... roles and rules ... reflection and optimisation of communication process on a regular base ... tensions, disturbances and conflicts get addressed early	 All <b>individuals</b> are prepared for ...  ... the project demands in the essential fields of methodological competence (e.g. planning, presentation, moderation, visualisation, documentation; ... the concerns of participation and social competence (e.g. dialogue conduct, intercultural communications, criticism, conflict management)	 The <b>project co-ordinator</b> ...  ... is prepared for changes in the overall framework. ... has negotiation strategies for the many different partners ... is prepared for the demands of leadership in the areas of methodological competence and social competence.

Intervention...

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Team Building (Core Team)	Training Measures	Coaching
- Kick-off meeting on project start - Feedback sessions (every six months)	<b>Training courses on:</b> - interpersonal communication - visualisation, professional presentation - intercultural communication - conflict and negotiation - conflict management and mediation	to support the project co-ordinator in the development of social skills necessary for leadership.
<b>Supporting Measures</b> - Individual discussions on various topics - Conflict moderation - Linked research on intercultural co-operation		

Timeline



Results

### Experiences and consequences

- ☞ The intensive consultation of the core team in the initial phase (team development and training courses) was successful and seems to be necessary.
- ☞ The time budget for the psychological support of the project was too small. More time should be planned for the support of project members that are not part of the core team.
- ☞ Team building is an effective means of strengthening the capability of the team as a whole.
- ☞ To deal adequately with the complexity and the dynamics of the projects feedback sessions is necessary at least 3 - 4 times a year.
- ☞ The qualifying (procedural knowledge and social skills) of team members in projects of this type is important for the success of the project
- ☞ Concrete reasons for and extent of consulting is difficult to predict and therefore is difficult to justify when making an application.

