

Huawei Austria Celebrates Five Years of TECH4ALL Nature Conservation at Biodiversity Forum

[Vienna, Austria, October 9, 2024] Huawei hosted the Innovations for Biodiversity Forum this week to commemorate the fifth anniversary of Huawei's TECH4ALL digital inclusion initiative and share insights into how technology is revolutionizing biodiversity protection.

Launched in 2019 and aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, TECH4ALL leverages technology and partnerships to create a positive impact in four domains: environment, education, health, and development. In the environment domain, Huawei TECH4ALL has run nature conservation projects in 53 protected areas with global and local partners in forest, wetland, and ocean ecosystems around the world.

"Over the past five years, Huawei's TECH4ALL program has demonstrated how technology can be a powerful force for good, addressing global challenges in environmental protection, education, and digital inclusion," said Harvey Zhang, CEO of Huawei Austria.

The Innovations for Biodiversity Forum focused on TECH4ALL nature conservation projects in Europe, including findings of biodiversity monitoring in the wetland ecosystem around Austria's Lake Neusiedl.

The quality of the reed bed habitats in this ecosystem is declining, negatively impacting amphibian species, mammals, and bird life. Since 2021, audio monitoring devices have collected more than 2 million individual audio files of 69 bird species.

The vast dataset will help develop a conservation management plan for the ecosystem, including controlled fire management to rejuvenate aging reed beds and strengthen overall biodiversity by understanding the habitat preferences of the individual species studied.

"Hardly any reed harvesting has been done in recent decades, which has had a negative impact on the state of the reed belt. The study investigated whether targeted fires could have an effect similar to that of harvesting. To do this, areas that show different age conditions due to fires were compared," said Dr. Christian Schulze from the Department of Biodiversity Research at the University of Vienna. "The research showed that older reed beds harbor the greatest diversity of bird species. However, the analysis of individual species also shows that controlled reed fires have positive aspects."

The forum explored a similar TECH4ALL monitoring project in Poland to build a more complete picture of biodiversity in the Białowieża National Park ecosystem, also with the aim of developing targeted conservation measures.

Greek startup PROBOTEK introduced a forest fire-prevention solution that uses sensors, drones, AI, and 5G to detect and transmit real-time video-footage of fire risks, which are on the rise in parts of Europe due to climate change and rising temperatures. The project is designed to enable emergency response in the first 'golden 15 minutes' of a forest fire being detected, notify residents of evacuation routes, and plan routes for fire trucks and ambulances.

The forum also looked at the success of an AI-based filtering system designed to protect Norway's wild Atlantic salmon from possible extinction due to the invasive pink salmon species. The pilot project in

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2023 successfully filtered out 6,000 invasive salmon, and expectations are high that the solution, the world's first of its type, can be scaled out across Norway's river systems.

On day two of the forum, the media delegation in attendance visited Lake Neusiedl to learn how the TECH4ALL solution works in practice and the transformative effect that intelligent digital technologies can have on nature conservation.

About Huawei

Founded in 1987, Huawei is one of the world's leading providers of information and telecommunications technology (ICT) and smart devices. The global company has 207,000 employees in over 170 countries worldwide and supplies more than three billion people with technology. In 2023, Huawei posted a revenue of CNY 704.20 billion (EUR 90.3 billion). Almost a quarter of revenue flows back into research and development, and more than half of the employees work in this area. Huawei has been present in Austria since 2007 with an office in Vienna, where it employs 140 people and is actively involved in supporting students and providing its technology for nature and species conservation projects.

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