

Health Economy Cluster Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Healing Forests

An idea from Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is crossing the globe

Jan Schmidt, 8th October 2021 // Terme Tuhelj Turizam 365











- 1. (Health) Tourism in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
- 2. Healing forests an unique idea from Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
- 3. The International Certification Office Healing Forest
- 4. Healing Forest Klink an example from practice
- 5. Conclusions











34.3 % 19,220 km²

24.7 % 5,580 km²









... some facts about Mecklenburg-Vorpommern



- 23,211 km² surface area
- 1,610,774 inhabitants
- 69 inhabitants per km²
- GDP 42,78 billion EUR (2017)
- Unemployment rate 6,9 % (2021)











1. (Health) Tourism in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern



Tourism is an important economic factor in the region:

- Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is the most popular inner German destination
- 5.1 billion EUR gross annual gross turnover
- 173,000 people employed directly or indirectly in tourism
- 18,000 guest-nights per 1,000 inhabitants at peak
- 34.1 million guest-nights and 8.4 million arrivals in 2018









1. (Health) Tourism in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern



- 2,000 km coastal line
- More than 2,000 lakes
- Rügen & Usedom: Germanys'largest islands
- Numerous nature protection areas
- 3 national parks as part of UNESCO heritage
- Spacious forest areas
- Rich architecture and cultural heritage
- 63 spas and health resorts
- 1,648 hours of sunshine a year



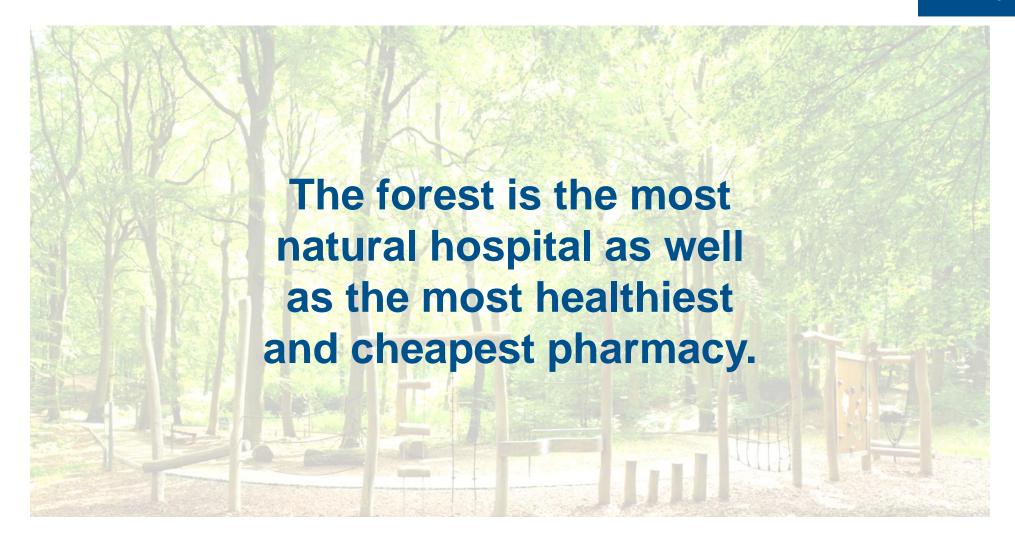








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"Healing Forests are forests that are designed for therapeutical treatment for certain indications. Treatments of deseases in the forest are suited to influence the adverse effects of desesaes in a positive manner (tertiary prevention) when accompanied by an educated therapist.

Chronical deseases can be treated in a palliative way".

National characteristics need to be taken into account (e.g. definition of therapists)

As concluded at the 1. International Congress "Forests' Potential for Health" // 13 September 2017 in Heringsdorf (organised by Spas Association Mecklenburg-Vorpommern e. V. and Heringsdorf municipality)











an unipue therapeutical active mixture: Air respiratory tract/cardio-vascular system Light Psychology/skin Surface structure musculoscelatal and cardio-vascular system **Allergies Microbes** Plant compounds **Immune status Psychosomatic** Silence



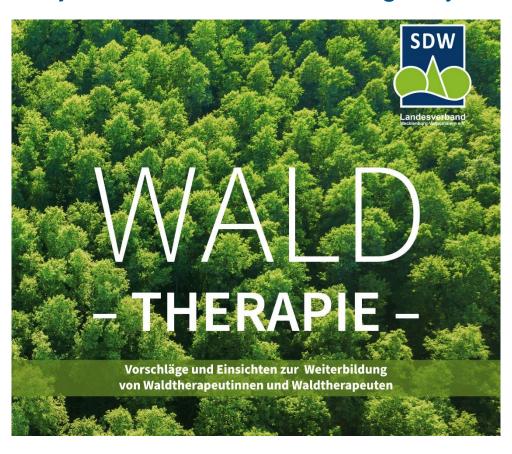








Project of the State Forest Agency Mecklenburg-Vorpommern



Educating certified Forest Therapists as additional qualification for:

- foresters
- Nursing staff
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational herapists
- Art therapist
- Psychotherapist
- doctors
- (...)











State Forest Agency MV offers two additional educational courses:

- "Forest Prevention":
 Alumni are able to plan, implement and evaluate forest based programmes for general health prevention
- "Forest Therapy": therapeutically accompanied treatment in the forest to support patients with medical diagnoses and indications

www.wald-mv.de/landesforst-mv/Wald-und-Gesundheit/













Healing Forests in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

How to internationalise a regional success story?











- Many offers related to forest bathing, forest therapy and healing forests
- But no standardised internationally recognised definition what a healing forest is
- No institutionalised approach to support the internationalisation of the healing forest idea and concept

BUT:

In 2021 the International Certification Office Healing Forest was f(o)unded with the support of the Ministry of Ecomony, Employment and Health











- To elaborate an internationally recognised certificate "Healing Forest"
- To establish international standards which are the basis for certification of healing forests around the globe
- Validation of forests regarding their potential to serve as healig forests
- Establishment of an international network of experts and interested people













What is a healing forest?

Healing forests are forest areas designed for therapeutic use for special indications. Treatments in the forest, accompanied by trained therapists, are suitable for positively influencing the treatment of diseases and the extent of the disability caused by these diseases (tertiary prevention). Chronic diseases can be alleviated (palliation).











- Preparing certification of healing forests in Austria
- Intensifying contacts to partners in Portugal, Spain, Taiwan, USA, Canada and Lithuania ... and hopefully Finland
- Prepraing participation in several congresses
 - 2nd International Conference on Forests for Public Health (s5th 28th October 2021, Korea)
 - IV International Congress "Forest Health Potential" (30th March 2nd April 2022, Portugal)











- Forest owners can receive a certificate "Healing Forest" if they present a therapeutical concept of usage
- A decision is taken based on a forestal assessment and a medical assessment
- A certificate can be issued when a forest complies with the criteria set by the International Certication Office
- The certificate "Healing Forest" garantuees a certain quality of the forest as well as a certain quality and impact of the therapeutical treatments that are offered or available in the healing forest









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- 3rd Forest identified as Healing Forest according to Forest Law MV in 2021
- 4.8 hectare coverage (48,000 sqm)
- Identification as Healing Forest in 2021
- 1 physio therapist, 1 psychologist offer forest therapeutical treatments
- 4000 clients p.a.
- Approx. 3000 clients in the healing forest + visitors, tourists, locals









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- "treatment track" of 2 km length
- 15 stations
- Different indications addressed
- General health prevention and improvement
- Pain therapy
- Stress reduction
- Musculosceletal system











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5. Conclusions



Healing Forests...

- offer an additional potential for health and well-being
- offer an additional potential for (health) tourism
- help to raise attractiveness of regions
- offer an off-season potential
- help to preserve natural resources and to better deal with climate change
- need to be certified and thus comply with standards valid internationally to guarantee a certain quality









Thank you for your attention





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