

## Submitted Abstract

ID IMC22-FSAbstr- 367

<b>First Author</b> First Name Last Name	Christine (1) Klenovec
<b>Submitting Author</b> First Name Last Name	Valerie Braun
<b>Correspondence</b>	valerie.braun@oeaw.ac.at
<b>Co-Authors</b> >> E-Mails will be not listed	Braun, Valerie (2)
<b>Organisations</b>	1: Biosphärenpark Grosses Walsertal 2: Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria
<b>Country</b>	Austria
<b>Region</b>	Western Europe
<b>Title</b>	Virtual Participation Processes In The Biosphere Reserve Grosses Walsertal.
<b>Keywords</b>	Participation Processes, Biosphere Reserve, Virtual Workshop
<b>Type</b>	List Of Focus Session
<b>Focus Session ID</b>	18

## Abstract

UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (BRs) are internationally recognized model regions for sustainable development and used to conducting participation processes. With the start of the lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic the Biosphere Reserve Grosses Walsertal in Austria had to hold its four fixed and board meetings for the first time online. At the beginning this was met with resistance and reluctance, then approved and partly voluntarily chosen as format. Additionally, project meetings and board member elections were held online. We will present our experiences with this new format and we will also present how a virtual workshop with citizens on wild bees was conducted in the BR. This workshop includes three elements, i) a virtual lecture with "Introduction to wild bee diversity" with possible measures to create habitats in public and private spaces for this endangered ii) breakout sessions in small groups to interactively work on possible measures to strengthen wild bee diversity in one's own garden or on one's own farmland and iii) a plenary discussion to collect concrete measures. The role and effects of electronic support for civic participation and the effects on BR management and decision-making need to be evaluated on a wider scale, as well as the wider impacts on local democracy and sustainable development. We thus hope to contribute with our experiences to a fruitful discussion and future projects to contribute to virtual participation.