

# Abstract

Very often, environmental and nature conservation are associated with prohibitions and negative information, leading to low acceptance of and low willingness to support environmental and nature conservation. Therefore, it is interesting to see which kind of slogans or campaigns motivate people to support conservation projects. Since "biological diversity" or "species diversity" are terms that people perceive as positive, the term "biodiversity" could have the potential of becoming a successful marketing instrument for nature conservation (considering that biological diversity and biodiversity mean the same and species diversity represents only one out of three aspects of biodiversity). The question is whether biodiversity works as a selling point for nature conservation and for regional products or if the topic is too abstract. In detail, it was examined if the term "biodiversity" can serve marketing purposes, how well the topic of biodiversity can lead to action and whether positive or negative wording has an impact on people's willingness to act. ALBGEMACHT, a regional brand from the biosphere reserve Swabian Alb, was chosen as a case study. The brand core of ALBGEMACHT is the promotion of biodiversity on the production sites of the participating businesses. ALBGEMACHT's marketing goals are to increase the media's and consumers' interest for species diversity in the biosphere reserve and to position species diversity as a new consumer trend, thereby convincing consumers to buy ALBGEMACHT-products.

To answer the research questions of this thesis, a quantitative online survey on biodiversity as a marketing instrument for nature conservation and ALBGEMACHT's marketing strategy was carried out. The participants of the study were grouped into different levels of nature awareness through a cluster analysis (according to the nature awareness studies of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation in Germany) and correlations were established between the thematic questions on biodiversity and ALBGEMACHT and the sociodemographic and nature awareness parameters.

The analysis of the survey shows that biodiversity or rather species diversity is well on the way to becoming a new consumer trend. People increasingly understand the importance of biodiversity, however, it is not yet as well anchored in the public's consciousness as specific environmental conservation topics. The fact that people are discouraged by negative wording in nature conservation communication and prefer positive wording was not confirmed in this work and therefore seems less relevant for communication purposes. This study indicates that the term "species diversity" is better known by the study's

participants than the terms "biological diversity" and "biodiversity". It is striking that the terms "biological diversity" and "biodiversity" are less well known to students, trainees and unemployed people, thus in this case predominantly younger people with (still) low educational qualifications and rather low income. Often, biodiversity or biological diversity are equated with species diversity, and aspects of ecosystem diversity and genetic diversity are unknown to many people. The term "biodiversity" is too complex for many people, doesn't evoke emotions and is therefore not suitable for marketing purposes at the moment. However, the term is in the transition from such a low level of awareness that it must be promoted, to such a high level of awareness that it can be used for marketing purposes. The term "species diversity" is familiar to most people, is accepted as a marketing instrument and can mobilize to action.

The marketing strategy of ALBGEMACHT aims to encourage people through the topic species diversity to consume ALBGEMACHT-products and to make them aware of the topic at the same time. ALBGEMACHT deliberately confines itself to the aspect species diversity of biodiversity. At the moment, this is just right from a marketing point of view. Directly after the launch of ALBGEMACHT, some consumers have understood the concept of the brand, but not all. Until now, ALBMEMACHT mainly addresses the groups of people who already have some prior knowledge and interest in the subject. Therefore, further communication is needed in that regard.