

Mountain tourism in Post Mining Region - Case study Lusatian Lignite Region

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INTRODUCTION

Lusatia (Lužice) is a historical region in Central Europe. It stretches from the Bóbr and Kwisá rivers in the east to the Elbe valley in the west, today located within the German states of Saxony and Brandenburg as well as in the Lower Silesian and Lubusz voivodeships of western Poland.

As Lusatia is not and was never a single administrative unit, Upper and Lower Lusatia have different but in some aspects similar histories. The city of Cottbus is the largest in the region; it has however been a Brandenburg exclave since 1445. Historically, the administrative centers of Lower Lusatia were at Luckau and Lübben, while the historical capital of Upper Lusatia was Bautzen.

ANALYSIS

1. Brief view on mining in Germany

Mining in Germany has come through big changes as well as mining in the whole Europe. Especially it was changes which have led to diversion from mining and have tended to quality environment.

1.1. Problems in transition of mining in the Lusatia region

- decrease of industrial production (coal, energy, chemistry, ...), e.g. coal output 1989: 200 Mt, 2000: 60 Mt,
- Closure of 30 surface mines and 50 coal using plants decrease of jobs, e.g. in mining: 1989: 100 000, 2000: 5 000,

- bad live quality: contamination of air, soil, water,
- perspectives less situation ,
- Reduction of inhabitants, e.g. city Hoyerswerda 1989: 70 000, 2000: 45.000.

2. Characteristic changes from mining region to touristic region

Hardly any other city in Lower Lusatia has changed as much in the past twenty years as the former mining town of Grossräschen. The south of the town was almost completely destroyed by open-cast mining – ironically paving the way for Grossräschen's future as a lakeside town. The IBA Terraces, the Seebrücke, and the Seehotel on the banks of the nascent Lake Ilse make the »IBA start site Grossräschen-Süd« the foremost example of the region's structural transformation – »from a miner to a lakeman.«

Grossräschen was a mining town until 1999. The Meuro open-cast mine was in the south part of the town, separating Grossräschen from the neighbouring town of Senftenberg. The one-time road to Senftenberg was bulldozed, together with the southern part of the town – including the separate village community of Bückgen. Shortly before re-uni-fication in 1989/90, around 4,000 of the town's inhabitants were relocated – many of them to the new panel construction development Grossräschen-Nord. Today, very few of south Grossräschen's buildings remain to tell of the town's mining history.

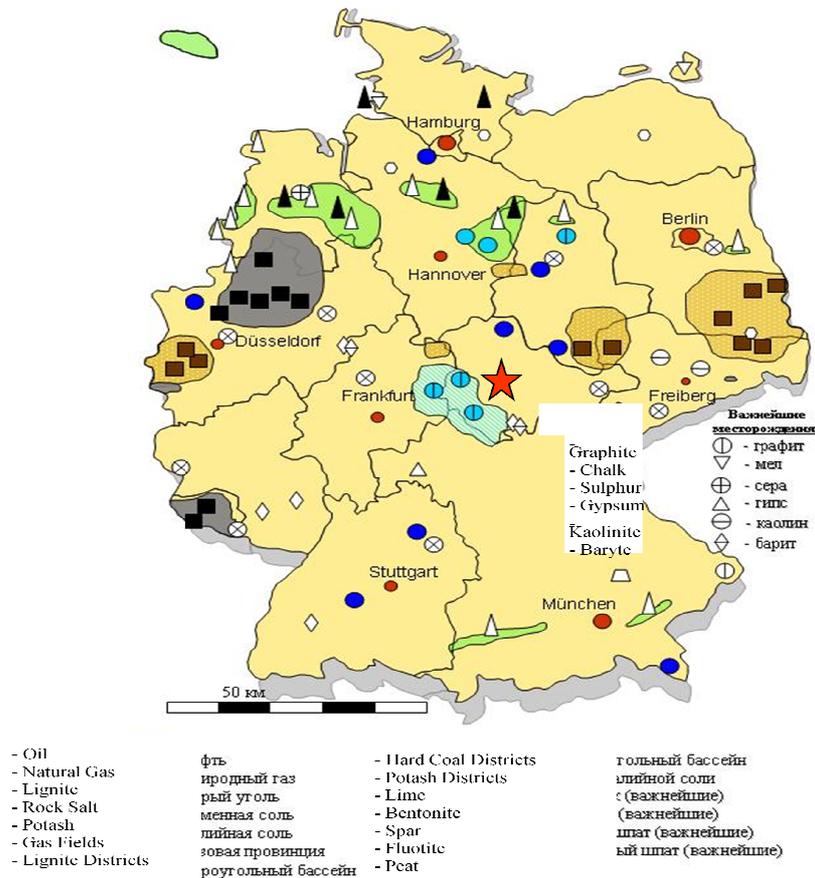


Fig. 1 Mined materials in Germany in present time

2.1. Ilse Bergbau-Actiengesellschaft - I.B.A. idea

It all began in 1888 with the founding of the » Ilse Bergbau-Actiengesellschaft « (I.B.A.) in Bückgen. The I.B.A. started the first diggings at »Ilse« and built the »Victoria« briquette factory, a brickworks, several company buildings, and housing for its workers and employees. But 100 years later, the buildings created by mining were themselves sacrificed to lignite, leaving the so-called Ledigenwohnheim (accommodation block for single workers) and the accommodation block for officials at the Ernst-Thälmann-Strasse. Both buildings were scheduled for demolition – together with a handful of neighbouring buildings – and were evacuated. But in 1993, however, the original mining claim boundaries were redrawn, saving the (now listed) buildings. They had been left to fall derelict, been damaged by vandals and suffered several

fires. The whole town – including its decayed historic town centre – had become bleak and dreary. In 1999, open-cast mining in the region finally stopped.

2.2. International Construction Exhibition (I.B.A.)

- show opportunities and potential of post mining landscapes,
- increase attractiveness for people to live, invest and recreate (tourism) in such regions (profile of the region “SEE”),
- demonstrate integrated solutions for development of mining regions after mine closure,
- include: industry (work), nature, culture, art, museums (living quality), settlements (live),
- development of initial demonstration projects, infrastructure,
- Actors: communities, federal state,

federal government, EU mine closure company LMBV, mining company ...

2.3. I.B.A. – changing tool from mining region into mountain tourism region

The aim of I.B.A. is to show possibilities and tools with which is possible to change character of devastated territory into touristic destination.

On the figure 3 is presented typical view of country with surface mine for lignite mining in Lusatia, which takes more than 100 km².

The example of recultivation for this type of surface mine by water field is on the figure 4. This change can modify all appearance of whole country.

I.B.A. project presents already done or planned changes, which are typical products of mountain tourism, what contains:

- Conservation of mining technologies

and its presentation to public by accessible, attractive form.

- Presented method brings sufficient amount of working occasions and pleasant environment.

3. Results

On other figures are presented several interesting attractions which come from stern mining environment, which can be defined as geo or mountain tourism.

3.1. Visiting mine

The huge monster, founding machine F 60, which has left after mining activity as a witness of unaesthetic activity in country can become attractive visiting place for tourists. Tourist can by walk in its inside can see the countryside from height. Tourists have country right under their foot and feel themselves as a part of huge mechanism, which has repel recently.

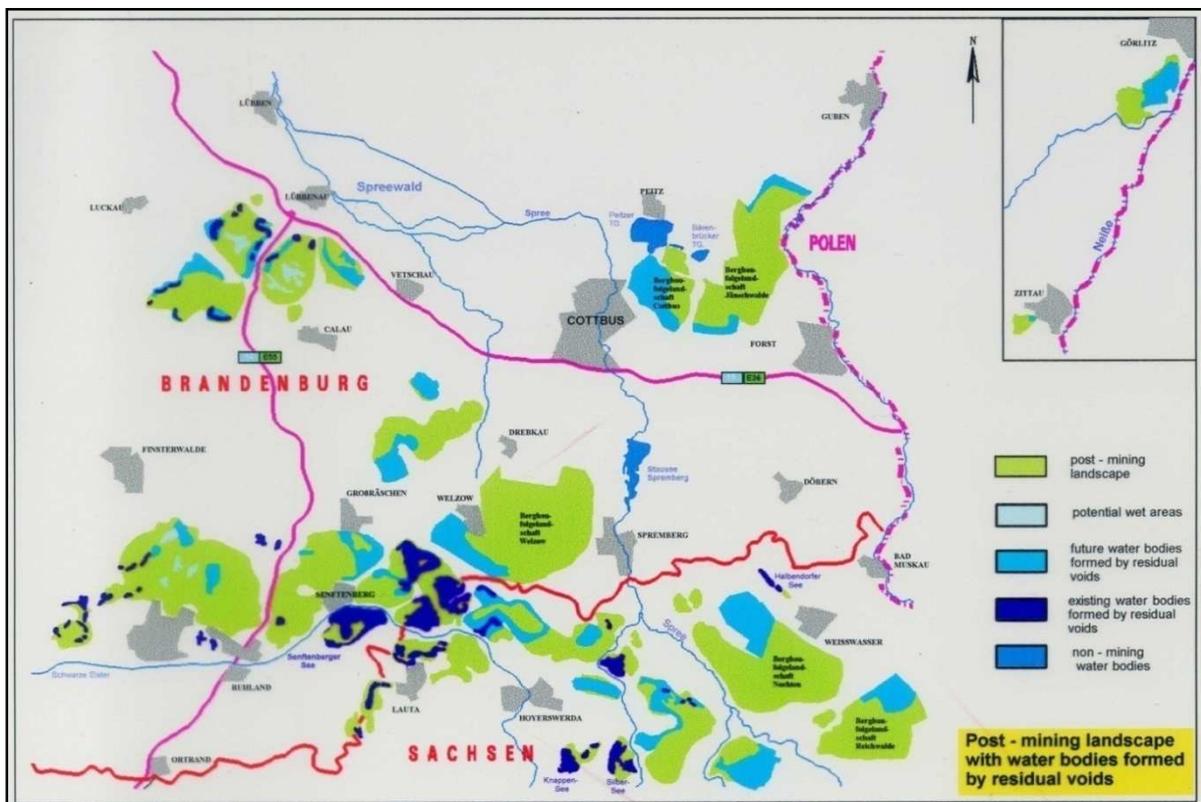


Fig. 2 Lusatian Reclamation Plan



Fig. 3 Single Mining Impact (Lusatia)



Fig. 4 Single Post Mining Landscape (Lusatia)



Fig. 5 Founding machine F 60 in original condition [1,2]



Fig. 6 A light founding machine F 60 in the night [1,2]



Fig. 7 Founding machine F 60 ready for adventurous walk for visitors [1,2]

3.4. Floating pontoon in Lake Sedlitz

Floating pontoon is another technical element which can attract enough visitors to former mining area. Floating pontoon is inviting for a walk on the lake surface. Lake has risen after recultivation of surface lignite mine. The walk offers lot of visual experience connected with boat floating on

the lake Sedlitz surface, which can also become centre of water sports.

3.5. Geo Park Muskau - Coal Crescent

Another possibility offer of geo and montain tourism in Lusatia is the visit of geopark Muskau. This geopark can explain to the visitors' genesis of lignite deposits.



Fig. 8 The Floating Discovery Center „The Sun“ Bergheider Lake on lake surface in the former surface mine [1,2]



Fig. 9 The Floating Discovery Center „The Sun“ Bergheider Lake –view from Founding machine F 60 [1,2]



Fig. 10 Floating pontoon in Lake Sedlitz [1,2]



Fig. 11 Walk through Floating pontoon in Lake Sedlitz [1,2]



Fig. 12 Geo Park Muskau - Coal Crescent [1,2]



Fig. 13 Geo Park Muskau - Coal Crescent [1,2]

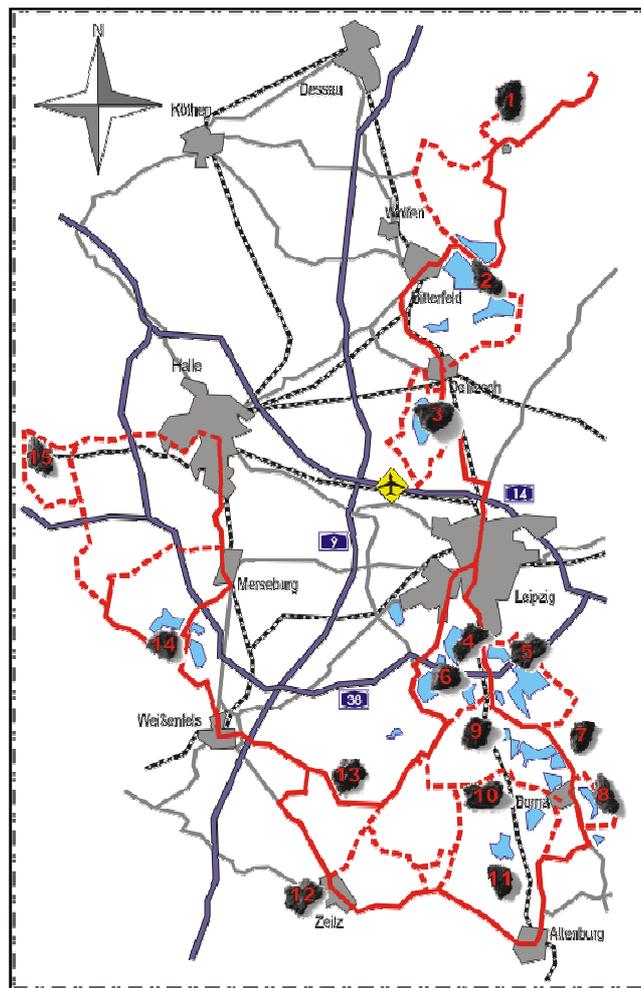


Fig. 14 Middle German Lignite Region

CONCLUSION

At the end is presented Middlegermain lignite region as a montan tourism attraction

ready and waiting for visitors. In the time of mining industry development was the region consider by today visitors as a source of support and also source of bad

environment. After mining closure were opinion changed and today is the former mining region accepted area suitable for visit and study of technical and social features connected with mining activities. This trend in public thinking about former mining is generally spread in several Europe countries also in Australia and Nord America.

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