

„On the MIC with Petra Hedorfer“ – Episode #5 Holidays Amidst Nature

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Guest: Dr. Michael Braun (Chairman of the Federal Association of German Low Mountains)



Intro: „On the MIC with Petra Hedorfer“ - the podcast of the German National Tourist Board. With experts from all over the world.

Schaubrenner: Hello and welcome to "On the MIC with Petra Hedorfer", the podcast of the German National Tourist Board. Petra Hedorfer, as CEO of the GNTB, you are of course once again talking in this series with international experts. And I, Thorsten Schaubrenner, have the pleasure of assisting you again as moderator. It's a pleasure to sit down with you again today, dear Petra.

Hedorfer: Yes, thank you very much, Thorsten. I'm delighted, too.

Schaubrenner: Today we're talking about nature. More precisely, on how natural landscapes and national parks can draw the attention of foreign tourists. Against the backdrop of climate change, protected areas are becoming increasingly significant. In Germany, about 30 percent are protected. But first, let me welcome our guests. Marjon Kaper is with us from the Netherlands. She is the Director of ANWB Travel at ANWB, the Dutch ADAC with almost five million members. Welcome, Marjon Kaper.

Kaper: Thank you very much.

Schaubrenner: Nice to have you on board. And joining us from Eastern Bavaria: Dr. Michael Braun. He is a member of the board of the Eastern Bavaria Tourism Association and chairman of the Federal Association of German Central Uplands. Hello, Mr. Braun.

Braun: Hello, Mr. Schaubrenner. Greetings.

Schaubrenner: Today we would like to examine the question of the importance of nature trips for incoming travel today, and how the offer has developed. We want to talk about best practice examples and discuss topics that still need to be addressed. Petra Hedorfer, to start with, what is the importance of Germany as a nature destination?

Hedorfer: Yes, you often encounter a frown there. When you think of Germany, you think of city trips, you think of an industrialized country, you think of a lot of attractions. But in fact, when it comes to Germany, it has always been about nature, about protected natural areas. Think of the Black Forest, which attracted travelers to southern Germany 100 years ago. In fact, we are already the second most popular destination for Europeans as a nature destination, behind Austria. And it's always about enjoying the landscape, relaxing, disconnecting yourself, cycling, hiking, being active in nature. And you can do that very well in Germany. For our listeners, I would like to remind you once again: One third of the area is a protected area in Germany. That means they are national parks, nature parks, biosphere reserves, which are large protected areas that actually have a special focus as national natural landscapes for travelers as well. Thorsten, how much time do I have for the intro? I could rave all around the topic. Maybe we'll narrow it down for a moment: National parks are areas - not everyone knows that exactly - in which no economic use, i.e. by agriculture, forestry, water management, hunting or fishing.... This is largely prohibited. The nature parks and

biosphere reserves are about harmony and preservation and development as preservation of nature, but also connected with human use. So, I think that's the distinction. Biosphere reserves are recognized by UNESCO as model regions for developing concepts that sustainably protect nature. And that's what we're talking about today. We talk a lot about climate protection, about reconciling tourism and nature. Respect on both sides. Balancing this so that we can still admire nature tomorrow and make travel experiences possible. Perhaps that's enough to get us started.

Schaubrenner: Yes, it is very important to keep these figures in mind and also these distinctions. I think we should also keep that in mind. If we now talk about the market for nature tours to Germany, then of course we want to know: What's the actual situation like? Who, for example, particularly likes to come to enjoy nature in Germany?

Hedorfer: Yes, we have a guest from the Netherlands today. And indeed, the Netherlands - Marjon knows it - is not only the most important source region for Germany as a touristic site. We have the most guests from the Netherlands. And about half of the trips from the Netherlands to Germany are actually also nature trips. So trips to the low mountain ranges, to green Germany, to the Sauerland, to the Thuringian Forest, to the Bavarian Forest. Mr. Braun can certainly provide details on this in a moment. But we also have a lot of Swiss guests who are looking for this green Germany, nature-oriented travel. And another important neighbor was Poland. Here, too, it is really about nature travel. At least a third of Polish travelers indicate that. That's topical. But Thorsten, let me say to you, we are talking about the new travel, the "New Normal" post-Corona. After two years of pandemic, it's more and more about mindfulness, about sustainability, about the longing for intact nature. People want to immerse themselves in these protected areas and make a sustainable contribution to their vacation behavior. So, this is definitely a growth segment. And in Europe alone, there is a potential of 44 million potential travelers. So, Italians, French, Spaniards have

also long been looking for this form of vacation. At least that's what they say when they think about traveling.

Schaubrenner: Great, that's an interesting aspect. And we will talk about it once more with Dr. Michael Braun in a moment, as you have correctly summarized. But first of all, I wanted to turn to Marjon Kaper on the subject of the Netherlands. This is the country that, as we have heard, already has incredibly impressive figures. Marjon, your organization has set itself the target of welcoming 650,000 new members under the age of 35. What do you know about the interest of both young target groups and families in nature-based vacations? What can German service providers in particular do to welcome even more travelers in this sector?

Kaper: Thank you, Thorsten. And for the listeners: I'm sorry I will reply on all the questions in English, because I'm a little bit more fluent in English than in German. I'm sorry for that, but... As you already told we are really longing to get more younger members as ANWB. And in general, if we look to Germany as a destination, as Petra already said: Germany is the top-one-destination for Dutch tourists. And so I'm very happy to be your guest today. And 60 percent of all Dutch tourists love to visit nature. So it's really an important reason to visit Germany. And when we jump into the younger section of all tourists, it's actually an interesting thing to tell you, because when we look to the average age of the tourists, it's mainly the little bit older people who travel to Germany right away. So I think there is a chance to get more in favor of the younger part of the Dutch tourists when you propose the German nature a little bit more. Because I really think that they would love to go there on an active family holiday for example. You have so many nice parcs and things to do in nature. So I think there's a big chance for Germany.

Schaubrenner: Do you have an idea what especially we can offer for the young people and for the families? What are they concretely looking for when they come to German nature?

Kaper: In general that's something we see - I think, it's the same in Germany – post covid, hiking is more popular than ever. But I think – we see this also in Austria for example – that active family holidays, where you go climbing or canoeing or things like this together as a family are really attracting more and more people. So maybe to organize from a hotel or an active family week where you do a lot of activity every day, that is something that's really popular in the Netherlands.

Hedorfer: I totally agree, Marjon. And that's why we are just during this summer addressing the younger targets with our campaign "Embrace German Nature". "Embrace Nature." And there are specific ways on how we are addressing: Canoe tours, hiking tours, hikes. There are great hiking trails. Dr. Braun can perhaps also wax lyrical about them. There are quality hiking trails, premium hiking trails. Mr. Braun, help me. There are great offers for young people.

Braun: Certainly. I think that the Dutch hardly differ from the behavior of the Germans. So also these trends, as it was just mentioned, we see in Germany as well. And you're right, Ms. Hedorfer, when you say that the range is so diverse. When I think about our landscapes here in Germany - and I am also responsible for the German low mountain ranges - there has also been an enormous amount of investment in the issue of quality, particularly in the last 10, 15, 20 years. That is also important. We have always had many, thousands of kilometers of hiking trails in Germany. But it's important that they can be experienced with a high level of quality. And I think a lot has been done in that respect in recent years. And that's paying off, and you can see this outdoor wave, as it used to be called. 15 years ago, we were still talking about the Jack Wolfskin new generation. Today it's become far, far more. And that has also spilled over into cycling. And I would say we are in a top position there. And it's important that we have the offer, and that people can also experience the offer and find out that it's there.

Hedorfer: Yes, and Mr. Braun, not only the quality, but also the digital offer is very important. Marjon, we know the Netherlands as a high-tech country: customer journey, digitized, touchpoints that are digital. I think these are also aspects, dear Thorsten, that we can talk about today. Digitization plays a very important role, also and especially in nature vacations. If you also want to detox, perhaps, one or the other. But I think the quality of experience, especially for younger people, also depends on the digital offer. And Eastern Bavaria - here comes the advertising block for Mr. Braun - he is surely also a pioneer in this respect. So, Marjon is an interesting target group for its customers.

Kaper: Yes, for sure. You're right, the Dutch population is used to digital options. And the younger part of the population especially, of course. So, it's really more important to have a digital customer journey than maybe to enjoy nature without digital experience. That's...

Hedorfer: Bits and bites.

Kaper: Yes, without bits and bites. That's the real destination. But when organizing, they really want to have it in a few clicks. So, if you want to have the Dutch guests, you really should invest in the digital experience.

Schaubrenner: Yes, that's a great tip, because we also have up-to-date figures on this: The Dutch book two-thirds of their trips to Germany over the Internet. In three out of four vacation trips, services are even booked in advance. And that, of course, is the question, Marjon Kaper: Do the German offers already have sufficient digitalization? Or are the Dutch still missing something?

Kaper: That's a good question. That's difficult for me to answer, because I don't know what is not on the internet. But in general I would say: If you have a hotel which is not possible to book online or if you have an activity – be it canoeing or whatever – or if there's routes you can't find online, it's hard, I think, to attract the Dutch

population, the Dutch tourists. That would be my recommendation, to invest mainly in the digital experience.

Braun: So here, if I may interfere, we really have to say that there is a lot of catching up to do. Particularly in rural areas, the bookability of accommodation providers is around 30 percent, i.e. genuine online bookability. I'm not talking about any e-mail inquiries or the like, but genuine online bookability. That is, of course, very below average. And if you take a look, once a year the DTV and BTE together survey the German managing directors, tourism business managers, as to where they have the greatest need, in which areas should digitization progress. And then it's right at the top: The digitization of tourism services. So, we're talking about both accommodation services and experiences. And in the same survey, the managing directors are then asked: What have you done in the last year in the area of digitization? At the top of the list is online marketing and, currently, central databases of master data. And at the bottom is the digitization of tourism services. So, I think we have a lot of catching up to do. You have to look at it that way. And especially if you want to address a target group like the Netherlands, which is very digital, you can't do it if you're still so middling. Unfortunately, that has to be said. We still have a very large deficit in this country.

Hedorfer: Dear Mr. Braun, for me the glass is always half full. Let me put it this way: The smaller the unit, the greater the need for consulting and the more important these topics of destination management are in order to provide assistance precisely in this digital destination development. You could give good examples of how you can make this bookable for Dutch people.

Braun: Yes, that's one of my favorite topics, the digitization of tourism services. Those who know me know that, too. And we have been laying great emphasis on this in eastern Bavaria for twelve years now. In our region, 60 percent of all service providers in rural areas can now be booked online. And on all major booking platforms. That's a great value. And in cooperation or with the support of the Free State of Bavaria, we

have now begun to roll out and digitize the topic of experiences across the board. But as you rightly said, Ms. Hedorfer, this is of course a tough one. And the smaller the service providers, the more difficult it is to get them on track. To be honest, that has to be said. As a destination manager, you can deal well with online marketing, but you don't have to take anyone else on board, just hire an agency. When it comes to the tourism service providers, it's a bit more difficult. They are often not professionals, but amateurs, and you have to take them by the hand to make progress. And at the end of the day, it's a case of "constant dripping wears away the stone". So that's just the way it is.

Hedorfer: Accepted.

Braun: But you have to do it that way. I see it as a destination management task to address this issue. And I'm very pleased that we now have someone from the Netherlands on board who is really extremely digital and not only wants to see services digitally on the web, but also wants to book them. And that's where we have the biggest gap, I'd say.

Hedorfer: So I agree with you, with both of you. Competitiveness and connectivity of German destinations, especially in rural areas, in the countryside: Top priority for sure, the topic of digital offers and digitization of the entire customer journey. Bookability of accommodations, but also making experiences bookable. Thorsten, if you would like, maybe we could make the connection with Open Data again.

Schaubrenner: This suits well at the point. Let's briefly explain the project.

Hedorfer: Open Data is the largest data infrastructure project that a sector of the German economy, namely us, tourism, is actually undertaking together across all federal borders. With 16 federal states, we are creating a data standard, a data ontology that does not keep data in silos, in the destination alone, and makes it difficult to access, but opens it up and makes it possible worldwide for artificial intelligence, for

new business models, for start-ups, for new innovative offer development. The so-called CC0-STANDARD... Technical nerds listening to us will know what it means. It means that this data belongs to no one. Originally yes the idea of the internet. A democratic information network, just accessible information. Why, in conclusion, do I think it's so important? Not only do many destinations and neighbors already have it, but it is also an opportunity for customers to actually receive real-time online information about opening times, prices, etc. This is not the kind of information that can be found in the Google carousel. Not one that is advertised in the Google carousel, for example with the note "opening hours may be temporarily different". We read a lot of that in the course of the pandemic. But actually the real-time data is transmitted. So, I think this is a very important step. Especially for the area.

Kaper: I think you're right! Yes!

Schaubrenner: We have heard that the Dutch are extremely affinitive when it comes to booking and finding destinations. What tips can we take away from you to catch up and move forward in this field?

Kaper: I think this is really important that you have this open source data program going on. Also for the commercial chances in the future, because ... First of all, not only the individual tourists really like to have an online experience, but also if you want to connect to all these kinds of platforms it's of course important that you are easy to connect as a tourist industry. You can really use and learn from the data, get even more experienced together. So I think this is very important. And more in general, Germany really has a big chance for the Dutch tourist market. First of all because you are such a nice and beautiful country with so many nature parcs and so many nice people. But also because it's very close to the Netherlands. And we see that in this time, where of course due to the war in the east but also because of covid and increase of costs, people are more willing to... They want to go abroad, but they also like to be close to home. So therefore, Germany will grow as a destination for

the Dutch market. And if you invest in this nature proposition, I think you will even attract more people in the coming years.

Hedorfer: Thank you Marjon for applauding us Germans. But we have to try harder. But I think we should also talk about the advantages. Especially in nature, where it's about eco-balance and, let's say, no over-tourism, we need Digital to guide visitors for seasonality extensions, for length-of-stay extensions. This combination of different offers, experiences and online bookability is certainly also an important topic for environmental protection and climate protection. Because we must not forget: These are intact, protected natural areas where tourism can also cause damage. Mr. Braun, what is Eastern Bavaria doing about this?

Braun: Yes, of course we have a very heterogeneous starting position. I have to consider almost all of Bavaria when it comes to visitor management. Because in the foothills of the Alps in particular, we naturally already have hotspots, as they say. To be honest, however, we have to add that the ones who are the straw that breaks the camel's back are actually the local population, i.e. the classic day-tripper. And the foothills of the Alps, if you want to put it that way, suffer a great deal from the metropolis of Munich, where people naturally get into their cars on good weather days or weekends and drive to the foothills of the Alps. There it is to be mentioned that if there are problems, usually it is actually the mobility, which makes here problems. Namely the parking management and so on. Or then, unfortunately, it has to be said that this is also somewhat due to the social media topic, that there are some influencer hotspots, as photo locations, and then everyone wants to have that. And that's also possible in national parks. We have experienced this here in the Berchtesgadener Land National Park, where there were also enormous problems, because influencers have chosen a few hotspots and then some streams of pilgrims think that they also have to take a picture here for their social media appearances. Yes, and there are problems. In eastern Bavaria itself - Ms. Hedorfer, you mentioned eastern Bavaria - we only sometimes have problems in the national park. Especially in autumn, when

the weather is nice. And when the day-trip guest and the overnight guest come together at the same location, that can sometimes lead to conflicts. But you have to be careful that we don't just talk about "there's too much going on". Because viewed broadly, it's not. And we have many, many regions in Germany - especially when I think of the low mountain ranges - where there are no problems at all. The question is whether we can actually intervene with the digitization of experience offerings. Perhaps one more thing: I would also like to mention the topic of open data. Ultimately, we have two challenges. Firstly, the technical challenge of aggregating data across the 16 federal states at the higher level of the GNTB. The question that really still arises for me in the end is ... Because one challenge is the technical solution, which is of course feasible. The other challenge is: We have those at the bottom who are supposed to maintain high-quality data - and preferably with the CC0-STANDARD. And I'm curious to see how we get on. Because we have to explain to the people outside who maintain the data why they should do it. And quite often the answer is: Yes, why should I maintain it? Google already does. Or they say: Yes, when the guest looks up a restaurant, he enters "restaurant" and georeferences where he is with his smartphone. Google then delivers the results. Whether the opening hours are correct or not, we don't know. Or maybe sometimes they don't exist, because it says that they may differ. But of course we also have the question with data we have collected ourselves, whether it is always correct. We have great challenges in creating awareness at the various levels so that they actually maintain the data in such a way that you, Ms. Hedorfer, at the level of the GNTB, also have great added value.

Hedorfer: Therefore, I think the GNTB level somehow describes an architecture, as if the GNTB is a house. Mr. Braun, I don't want to be a house, but I want to be permeable in such a way that this data is related and structured and accessible to all systems, especially to artificial intelligence and algorithms, in such a way that it is not protected by one provider and thus stuck in a funnel, but rather the range of the offer and the information is available worldwide. And you are a good example of cross-border

tourism, of regions that go beyond federal borders. Classic vacation regions, where Google can't simply play out all the information along a vacation route. And it becomes smart when the customer also gets weather information, integration of public transportation data - which is an important topic for destination development - when it is compressed and played out via a so-called graph. In my opinion, this is a customized solution and what the customer is looking for.

Braun: Yes, I don't want to do anything to detract from the idea itself, but it is a great challenge that has been set. And as you know, we are currently in the process of implementing the so-called Bavarian Cloud in Bavaria. And Bavaria is very heterogeneous in terms of data technology and systems. They are currently trying to fill this pot. But of course, they only want the CC0-licensed data. Of course, I understand that. And our task in the destinations is to explain to our colleagues, let's say at the local level, why it is meaningful to make data available in this way. We have a hard time doing that, and that has to be said openly. Because they say: Yes, we have work like this and like that, and we're up to our necks. And now you come along and want to have it. Thousands of data records, which we have actually already maintained as master data, have to be reworked, licenses have to be issued. We don't even know what rights we have to the photo and so on. Then we say: Yes, okay, at least everything that you maintain should be maintained accordingly. And then they say to us: Yes, where is my added value if I make everything freely available and everyone can then use it? It would be good to have a few examples and then say: Here, look, if you make your data available, your location or the information you have maintained about your hiking trails or whatever else you may have maintained, it will then be found, for example, at ADAC Germany. Or you get coverage, it's still free. You just have to provide your data with the CC0 license. Such tangible examples. That would be quite great if we could provide that to the tourists out there.

Hedorfer: Yes, open-data-germany.org: our platform where the frequently asked questions and hopeful smart answers can be found. There is new content on the site. Thank you for the opportunity to point that out to our listeners. Indeed, there are always these questions and you can find some things there. And other than that, it's a team effort to create a sustainable future together, in my view. Yes, it's laborious. It's also complex because we are a big country. Marjon, you may tell us again: In the Netherlands, you say, we are the most popular destination. When Dutch people look at Germany, your customers, on the topic of sustainability, sustainable travel. I know there are many e-cars and charging stations, electric charging stations in Amsterdam along every street.

Kaper: Yes.

Hedorfer: What look do we take at Germany?

Kaper: Of course it's the near future, that all tours will come by electric vehicle. And it's really increasing, the number of electric cars in the Netherlands. And it's also stimulated by the government. And when we make our holiday packages for our customers, we really ask the hotel owners if they have loading capacity. Or if they plan to have it. Because it's an important factor. Like the other sustainable items that were already mentioned a few minutes ago. I think, sustainable holidays will be even more important in the near future. And electric vehicles is one of that. And, well, every quarter of the year there are more and new places – also in Germany of course – where people can load their EV. Germany is doing better than France. But I think we have to do it together in Europe more and more.

Hedorfer: Yes, Thorsten, we've covered a lot of ground there.

Schaubrenner: Absolutely, we have. I can also think of this aspect of sustainability. I would like to ask again the question to Dr. Michael Braun: What opportunities are actually being used to focus even more strongly on this issue of sustainability? And how are these opportunities being adopted, for example, by the smaller units, the smaller companies that were discussed at the beginning of this article, which are perhaps still finding it difficult here and there when it comes to digitization?

Braun: Yes, the topic of sustainability... I think it is very important that when you talk about sustainability, you also tell the service providers that this is not just about environmental protection or environmental policy, but that sustainability embraces much more. We know that we have three interlocking pillars here. We also have the topic of regional economy, regional products, regional value creation. We also have the issue of local social compatibility. And what is very exciting, without the topic of sustainability was carried so or tourism so high first time: It is a result, I would say, of the Corona pandemic that we have experienced a certain boost here, that many businesses have actually already positioned themselves. Often from a business perspective, or because they know that they have to provide a service. We have just heard about charging stations. Here, the companies are already very well positioned, and I'm also happy that the federal states are also massively supporting the charging infrastructure at the tourism service providers with subsidy programs - and here in Bavaria it's like this - with 90 percent subsidies currently in Bavaria, and this is being actively used by the service providers. I believe that they have gradually understood that guests attach great importance to this. And for me, sustainability is simply a kind of quality issue at the end of the day. We all know from market research that sustainability may not be a sales argument or a purchase argument for guests, but when they are there, they want to see that sustainability is practiced. That there is not a plastic bottle on the table or a plastic cup, but that there is a glass bottle or glass, that perhaps regenerative energies are used. Today, when you look at the global political situation, that's all the more important. I believe that we are on the right track.

And if I then - this was already mentioned at the beginning of the conversation - really see the large areas under natural areas, so whether that is the nature parks, biosphere reserves, national parks and so on, we have a lot to offer here. And the service providers are also gradually becoming familiar with the topic of sustainability. Even if you were to ask them directly, they would say that this is not a current topic for me, but actually they are doing it. And you just have to tell them or support them in showing them how they can better showcase what they are already doing and, on the other hand, maybe achieve a lot more with small things. I believe we have succeeded in penetrating the tourism regions, even among the service providers. All we actually need to do is nudge them along and help them along the way. Then we'll be on the right track.

Hedorfer: So that's what I would support. If I may again here share some insider knowledge: We have an Expert Industry Panel, in which tour operators, online and offline tour operators, sit and give us answers to questions every quarter. The topic "How sustainable are we already considered in sales?": 73 percent said at the beginning of April, of the tour operators that have Germany in their program, that they market Sustainable Holiday Destination and Germany together. And they say that actually the trend is growing to have sustainable bookings therefore more and more. It is still the smaller part, but at least more than 30 percent of the bookings also have this aspect. So I can only agree with Mr. Braun here. We have the offer. We are one of the market leaders here. We have 20, 30 years of legislature, environmental protection, conservation. We have very high water/air quality. We have inclusion. We are an accessible destination in many locations. So I'm with you all the way. The social aspect is an important one and we're finally getting employees to be paid better as well. Appreciation for people who work in tourism. This is also a sustainable destination issue. I believe that we are on the right track.

Thorsten: We have also spoken in the middle of the discussion about the issue of visitor management, Petra. Because quite often, even in the Corona period, protected

spaces on one side and tourism on the other side are conflicting goals or can become conflicting goals. If suddenly the protected spaces are overrun by too many people in one place. And you told me in the preliminary discussion, Petra, that there is an interesting project in Bavaria, funded by the Bavarian Nature Protection Fund, to intervene in the theme of visitor guidance in a more exciting way. Would you like to elaborate on that?

Hedorfer: So there is the excursion ticker. I think you pointed that out, Mr. Braun. Attempts are being made to equalize travel flows and to feed this with real-time data. There have been regional managers in Bavaria for 20 years. After all, there are 70 of them who qualitatively develop this topic of training, education, guided tours, signage, in order to sensitize places and topics that are sensitive to disturbances and also to find clever projects on how to develop something like this together. In other words, together with the municipality, with tourism and nature conservation associations. And there are more and more traffic light systems where people actually try to model peak times through visitor sensors. And also to provide information online as to whether this lake, this destination, this attraction might have run out of parking spaces this morning or Saturday afternoon, so that it can be routed accordingly to avoid such an overcrowding of spaces. But there I am completely with Mr. Braun. It is a big country, as Marjon says, and there are always alternatives. And I think there is also a need to focus on what is small and not yet so well known and to make it possible to tell stories about it here. "Germany simply inspiring" is our brand claim abroad. A substantial brand promise, in my opinion, that seeks digital solutions to ensure that the quality of the experience is as trouble-free and diverse as possible.

Braun: Yes, I would like to agree with Ms. Hedorfer. Indeed, we do have a few regions... In Bavaria, there is currently a pilot project at Lake Tegern. That is indeed a hotspot, without a doubt. Finding the ideal solutions there is not easy. You have to tackle different aspects. There are, of course, some kind of rangers who try to have a controlling effect. Of course, there are also digital systems, as Mrs. Hedorfer has

already pointed out. There are different approaches. However, and I would also like to say this, there are also many regions, whether in Bavaria or throughout Germany, where the guest can really move around and have the feeling: Man, I am almost alone in nature on the way. We must not forget that. So we have a lot of space, we have a lot of great nature to explore. And that just has to be managed properly. Of course, there's no ideal solution yet for how to do that. There are different aspects where you have to start. But I would say that Germany is a great country, amazing, inspiring, and there are so many places where you can really explore nature. So I'm not worried that we'll be swamped with visitors.

Hedorfer: Good, then we have a common understanding. There is plenty of room for more tourists in a balanced way, Marjon. And we are looking forward having Dutch people in the country, in the countryside, in the nature. And there is fresh content for you to market and also to enlarge your product. Thank you so much for joining us today. Thank you very much, Marjon. And to you, dear Mr. Braun, please let us work on it. I think there's a lot to do, and there' s a lot of fun to be responsible for such a beautiful country in terms of tourism as well. Thank you very much for being our guests today.

Braun: With pleasure.

Kaper: Thank you very much.

Thorsten: Well, a big thank you from me to our guests, and above all, a big thank you, to you, Petra. At this point, I would like to point out the podcast series itself and the subscription options, because there is much more. And we have spoken about, for example, the US market or the specifics of travelers from the UK. And we are of course particularly pleased if you, dear listeners, subscribe to "On the MIC with Petra Hedorfer". You can listen to the GNTB podcast on Spotify, Apple, Google and

anywhere else there are good podcasts - and of course on our website www.germany.travel. I would like to thank you very much, and wish you happy listening and safe trips.

Hedorfer: Then I say thank you, dear Thorsten. And my regards to Hamburg, Bavaria and the Netherlands.

Braun: Thanks.

Kaper: Thank you.

Hedorfer: All the best and stay healthy. Thank you!