

AlpWeek 2024 Nova Gorica

Session 4: Coping with multiple climate risks: a governance challenge

Input: Risk governance: experiences from the MultiBios project

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Nova Gorica, 24.09.2024

Talking about governance ...

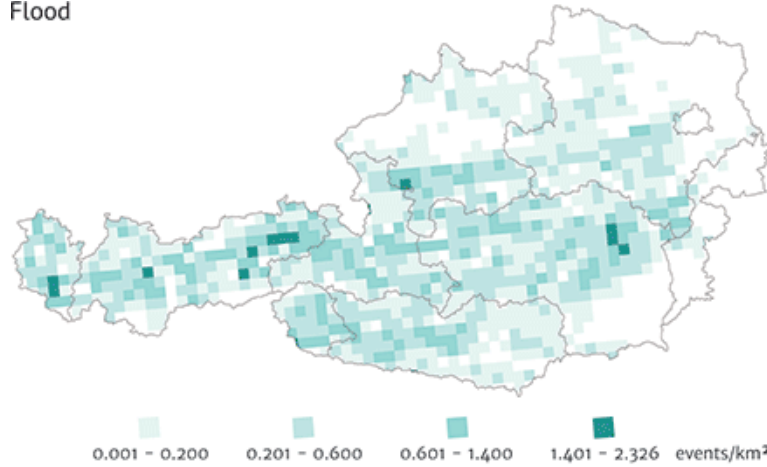
- Cooperation and co-ordination among different actors
- Horizontal: Between sectors
- Vertical: Between levels: local / regional / national / trans-national
- Structures: Who does what: tasks, responsibilities
- Procedures: How interaction is organised, communication rules and flows, steering mechanisms

MultiBios

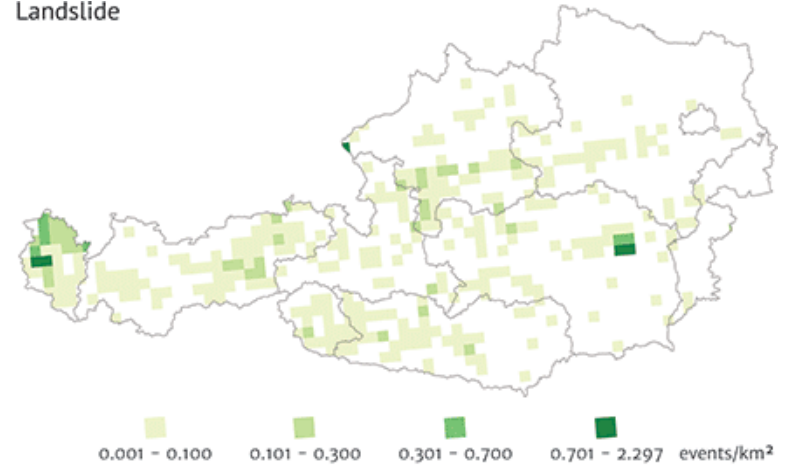
- Trans-disciplinary research project AT
- Governance of multiple hydroclimatic risks:
“Too much water, too little water”
- Research partners: BOKU University, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), CIPRA
- Pilot areas: Biosphere reserves in AT (5), CH (1), DE (1)
- Trans-disciplinary (= non scientific) partners from different sectors from all biosphere reserves

Spatial distribution of geomorphological hazards causing damage between 1850 and 2014 in Austria

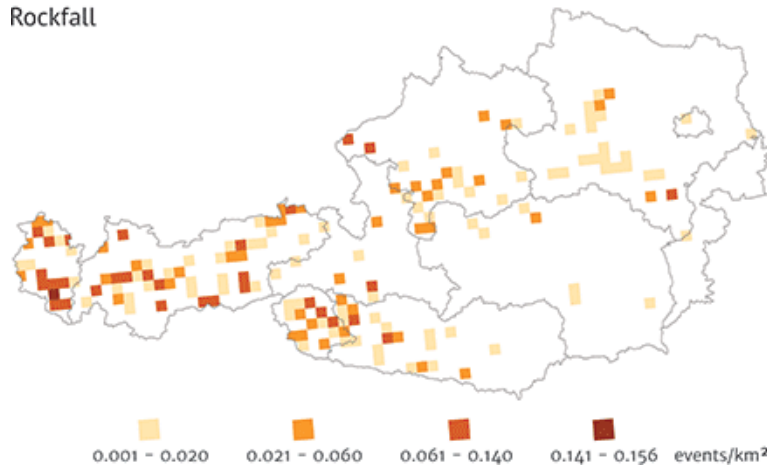
Flood



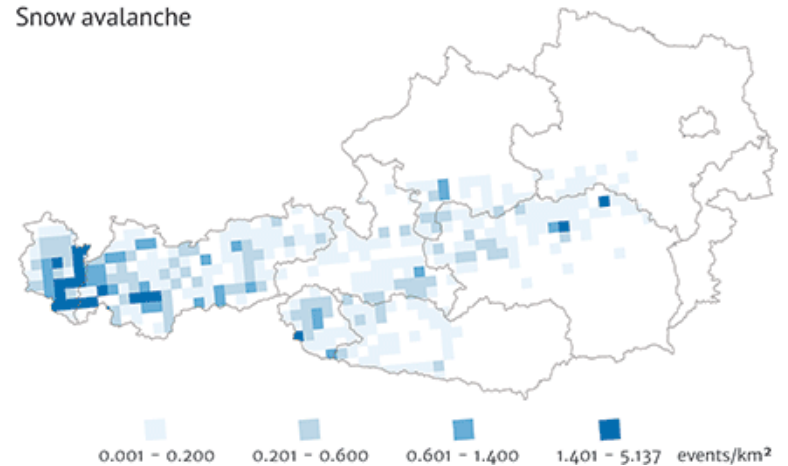
Landslide



Rockfall

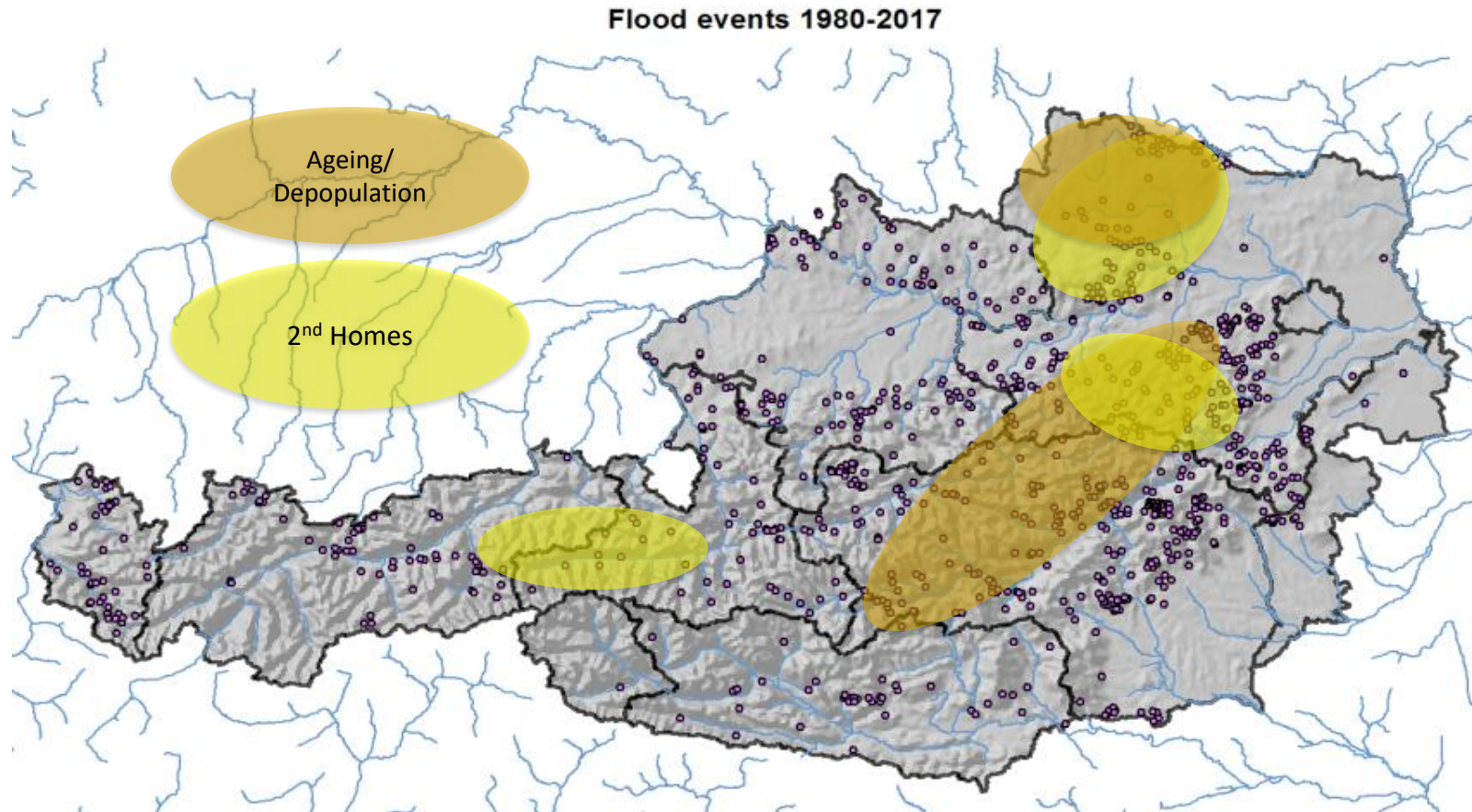


Snow avalanche

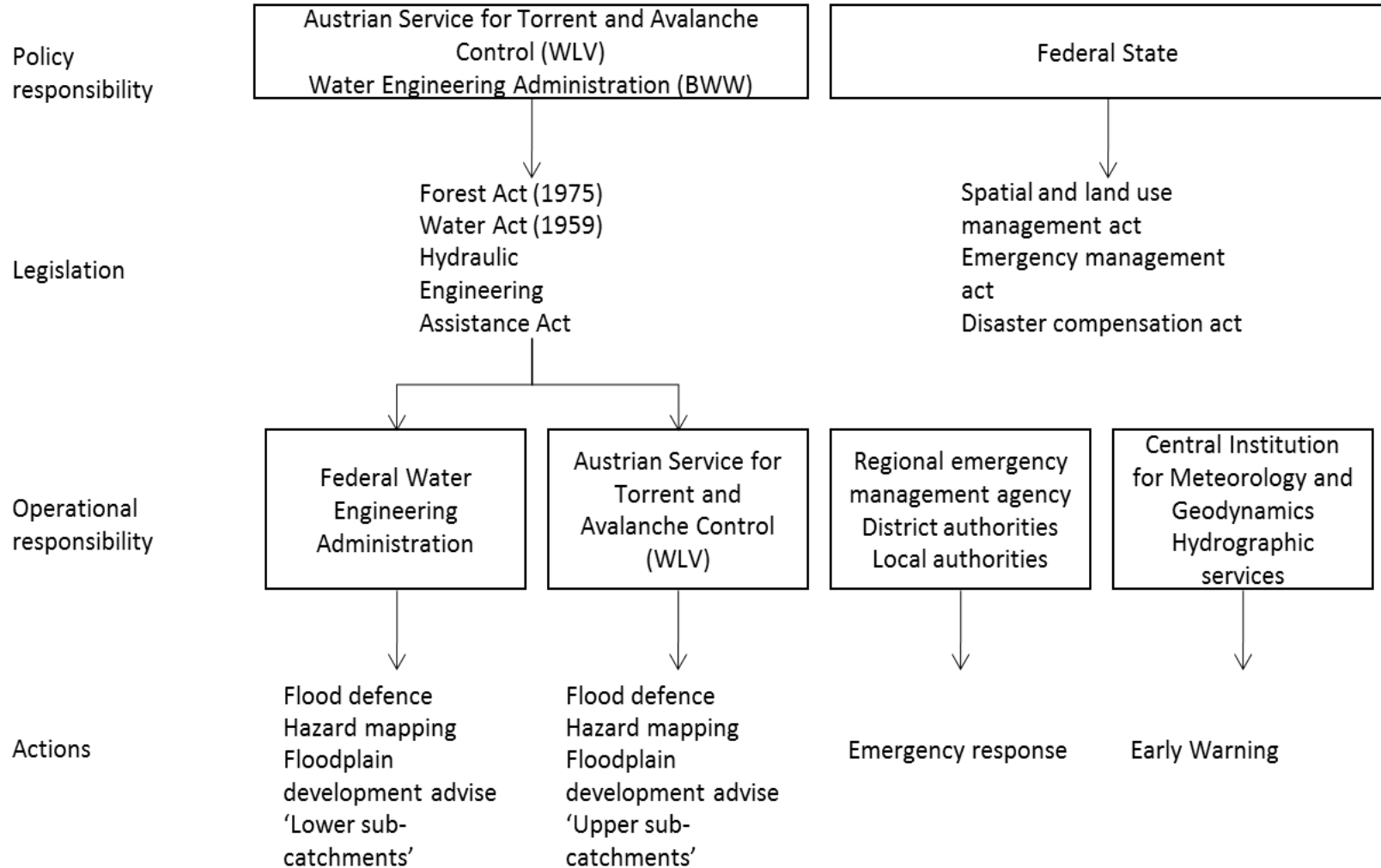


Source: Thomas Thaler, 2024

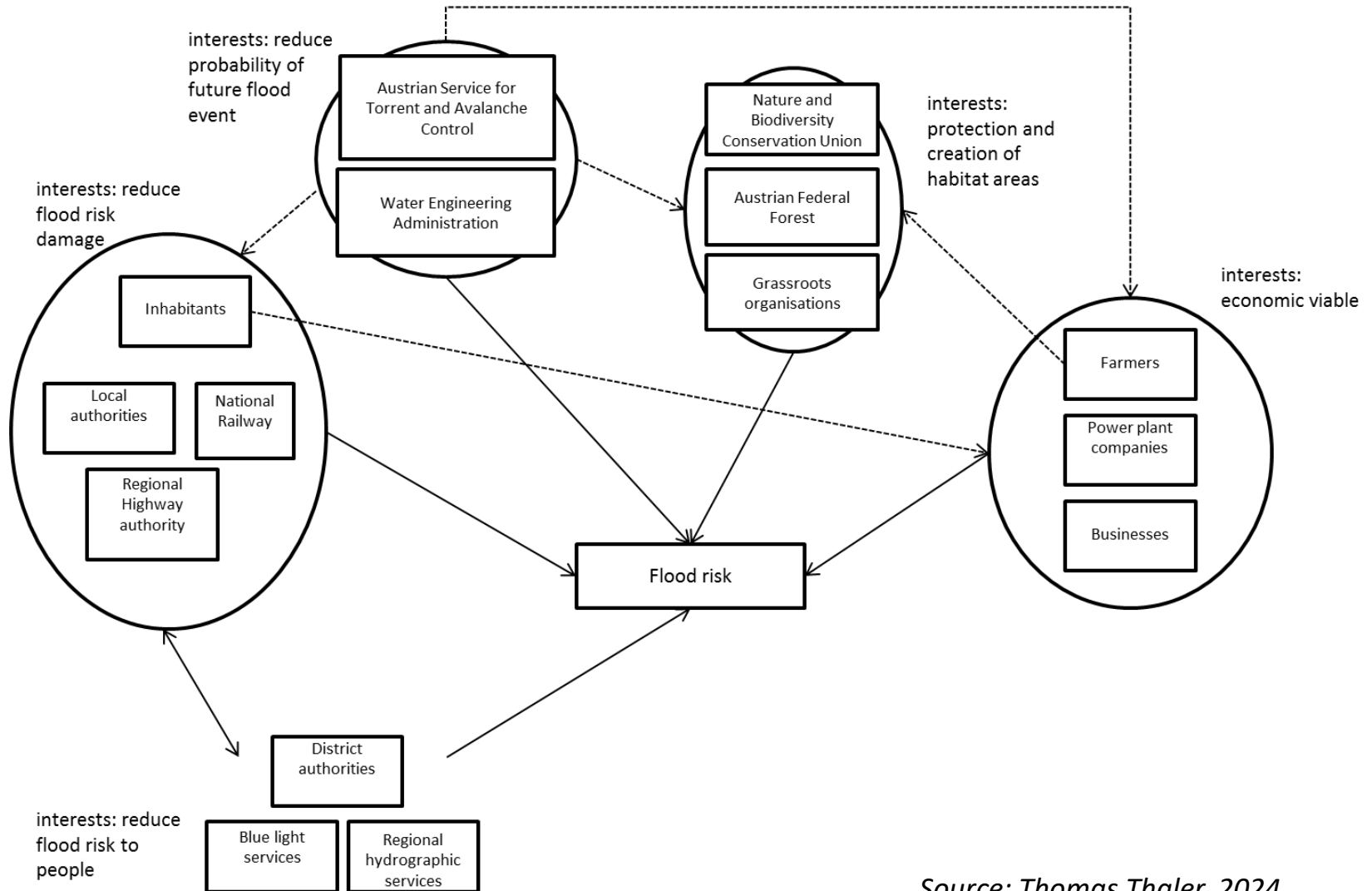
Flood events in Austria (1980-2017)



Flood Risk Governance in Austria

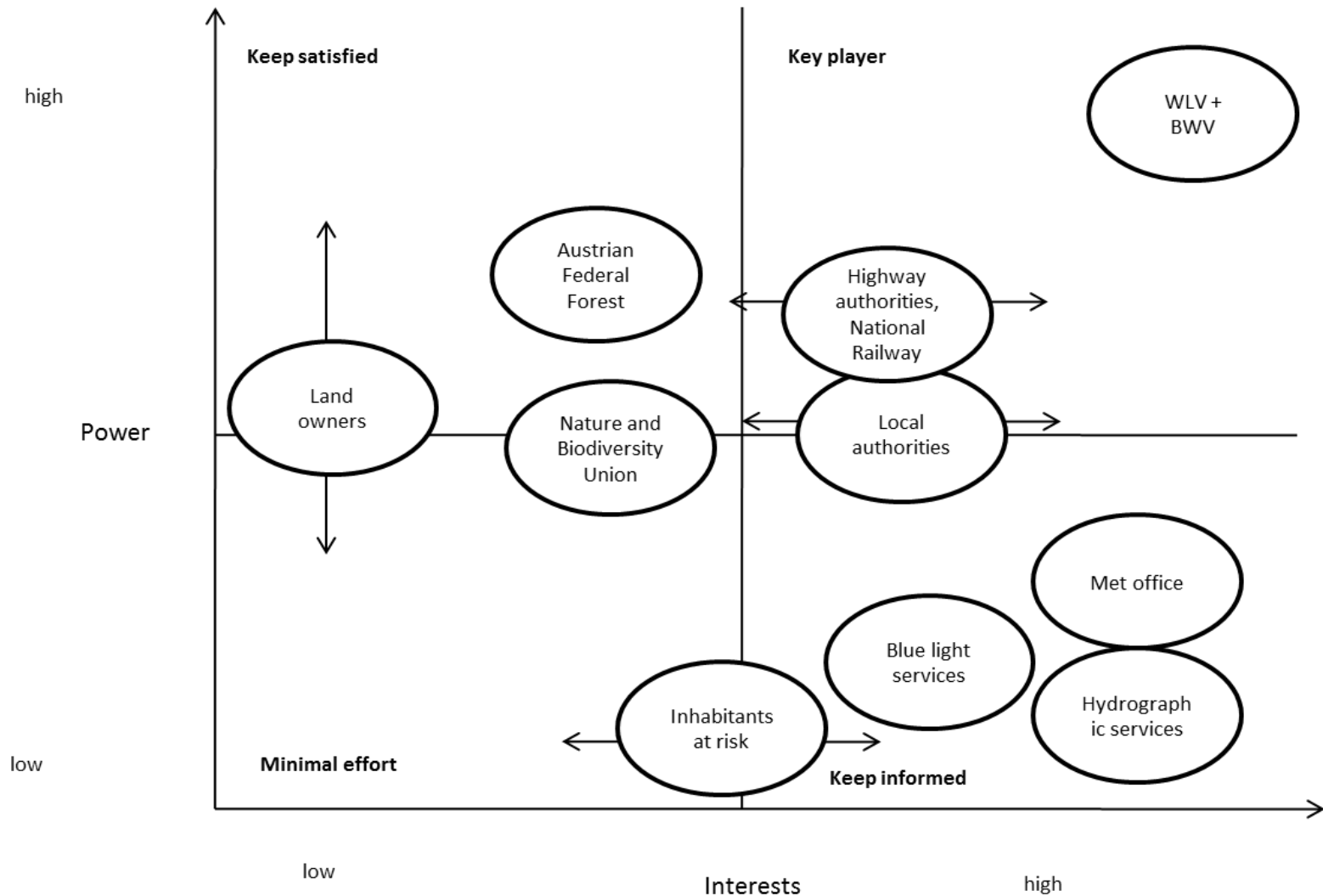


Flood Risk Governance in Austria, Interest Groups



Source: Thomas Thaler, 2024

Flood Risk Governance in Austria, Interest and Power



Some findings and answers from MultiBios

- Too much water: complex and long-lasting governance arrangements
- Lack of water, drought: much less experience, regulations in AT
- Flooding crisis situation: key actors well organized, well functioning interaction
- Multiple risks: overstrain of actors, governance system
- Role of biosphere reserves:
 - Prevention phase!
 - Continuous contacts to land owners -> confidence
 - Awareness raising, communication, schools, training programmes

Learnings from the recent flooding in Lower Austria

- Austrian population highly exposed to flood risk (3. in Europe after CH, SK ... OECD Report 2024, soil strategy missing!)
- Much better prepared than in 2003, 2013: protection measures, scientific models and prediction services
- Debate on **compulsory insurance** for elementary damages (examples BE, CH)
- Land use debate: **technical measures versus nature-based solutions (NBS)**
- NBS are still in their infancy ... long term, need space, governance!
- Specific debate on soil sealing, restoration of nature, agricultural production ... renewable energy ... -> **increasing competition for land!**
- **Serious criticism from Conference of Austrian Universities:** political leaders of conservative and right-wing parties deny reality and mock the Austrian population, in parallel they criminalise those who draw attention to the climate crisis ... stronger role for science needed