

CountrySide

N° 169

European Landowners' Organization

MAY-JUNE 2017 - BIMONTHLY - EN

Fitness check on the Nature Directives and the Commission Action Plan





Editorial

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, *Secretary General*

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The Bear and the Policy

Now that the European Commission has revealed its ten point action plan for the Birds and Habitats Directives, we must make sure that these changes benefit not just biodiversity, but also rural communities.

These are, after all, the places where nature and humanity must co-exist closest. A good example of this can be found in Romania, where the ELO has been helping local villages manage and maintain the local brown bear population. While our citizens are right to say that such magnificent creatures must be protected, we cannot at the same time allow them to come into the local community and attack both people and property in search of food.

Such co-existence is at the core of the Nature Action plan. We were therefore pleased to see that the Commission has now acknowledged that those who manage or own the land are not alike most stakeholders, but should indeed be considered as the main partner. With around 95% of Europe's land in private hands, it is obvious to us that any substantial action should involve the landowner.

However, we must make sure that the Natura 2000 programme and others are properly funded. The European Court of Auditors has already found that these are currently heavily underfunded. Europe cannot simply write the legislation and then not back it up; such an empty promise suits neither those who manage the land nor all those who love nature.





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Fitness check on the Nature Directives and the Commission Action Plan

Now that the political process as to whether the Nature (Birds and a Habitats) Directives are fit for purpose and how best to apply them in the future has ended with the decisions adopted by the EU Environment Councils of December 2016 and June 2017 it is time to take stock of the situation and assess the benefits as well as potential future difficulties that the above decisions entail for landowners.

Konstantin KOSTOPOULOS, Adviser, ELO - CEO of Wildlife Estates Label

Some words on the past stages in the process may be helpful. Readers will probably recall that the fitness check was launched in 2015 as a result of a specific provision in the mandate of the new Commissioner for the Environment and as part of the overall process for better regulation. After a long process of consultations with the wider public, a report document summarizing the results of these consultations was made public. It concluded that although the Nature Directives were fit for purpose, some obstacles prevented their effective implementation in certain areas. On the basis of this report the European Commission recommended to the Council of Ministers for the Environment to maintain the current legal framework of the two Directives. To remedy the inefficiencies in the im-

plementation identified in the report the Commission proposed the preparation and submission to the Council of an Action Plan (AP) with specific recommendations for measures. The EU Environment Council in December 2016 unanimously approved the Commission recommendations. In late April 2017 the Commission submitted a draft AP which was debated first with stakeholders and then with the Member State (MS) representatives.

The ELO took an active part in these consultations from the outset of the launching of the fitness check. In particular, as regards the AP, ELO insisted that the landowner should be seen as the "main partner" for a more efficient implementation of the nature and biodiversity policy of the EU because or she bears the cost of

this policy which provides benefits to society in the form of eco-system services or public goods.

In this context we welcome the distinct reference to the role landowners and land users can play in Actions 5 of the AP on the structured dialogue, 8c on the successful management of Natura 2000 sites and 14 on the establishment of management plans.

In the part of the AP referring to private land conservation it is stated that "As a large share of the Natura 2000 network is privately owned, an increased involvement of private owners is essential for successful management of the network" and that "In the framework of the LIFE programme, the Commission is co-fund-



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Thierry de l'ESCAILLE took part in the Conference on the EU Action Plan for Nature, People and the Economy, organised by the Committee of the Regions on the 6th June

ing a first targeted preparatory project, the aim of which is to set up a European network of private land stewardship organisations". The Commission will "Support additional pilot projects, specifically targeted at landowners' organisations and their constituency, that significantly contribute to testing the applicability of tools for private land conservation in Natura 2000 sites under the LIFE programme (2017-2019)". ELO is now preparing to submit a project titled "Providing support for tailoring innovative private land conservation tools to the national and regional contexts in the EU Member States" to be funded by LIFE.

There are, however, some actions in the AP for which ELO had expressed some doubts and reservations.

Action 3 envisages a more efficient monitoring, through the use of recent technical advances in the availability of high resolution satellite imagery of the European Space Agency for the Copernicus programme. The information thus obtained will help the Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA) to update the Natura 2000 Standard Data Forms, the availability of data on conservation status and trends in species and habitats and the contribution of Natura 2000 to the achievement of the objectives of the Directives. Amongst others the EEA will update the Natura 2000 viewer, support the creation of a Global Earth Observation System allowing citizens' access to data relevant to the Natura 2000, use progress in "satellite-based remote sensing as a support for better implementation of the Nature Directives, develop a pilot online tool for a near real-time tracking of changes to high-nature value grasslands

in Natura 2000 sites and support the generation of relevant spatial datasets to monitor land use and land use changes in and around Natura 2000 sites under the EU Space programmes".

These action clearly indicate an intention to intensify controls through the use of modern techniques of surveillance. During the consultations ELO expressed concern as regards the level of detail in the information thus collected that citizens will have access to.

In Action 8a, reference is made to the European Court of Auditors (ECA) finding that the approved programming documents under different EU funds in the various Member States "did not reflect all the needs for Natura 2000 identified in the Prioritised Action Frameworks (PAFs)" foreseen in Article 8.4 of the Habitats Directive (as a tool and a programming document for the coordination of co-financing of Natura 2000 conservation measures from different sources i.e. state funding and EU through the Rural Development Funds, the Regional Development Funds, the Cohesion Fund and LIFE+). The Action proposes that the Commission and the MS should "review the PAFs under the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)"; "update the PAF format in agreement with Member States to ensure a more harmonised approach to calculation of costs and identification of conservation objectives and measures including clear priorities and possible synergies with other sectors and policies (such as green infrastructure) to reflect socio-economic benefits of investing in Natura 2000, e.g. in relation to its climate change mitigation and adaptation potential, human health and wellbe-

ing (by 2017)" and "launch a process with MS for updating the PAFs ahead of the post-2020 MFF in line with Article 8 of the Habitats Directive".

Although we support the principle behind this Action as it aims to allay the costs from the implementation of the Directives and in particular of the Natura 2000, we recalled that there are many difficulties which will have to be surmounted if this action is to produce the expected results (one of them being that the bulk of the available funds come from the Rural Development Fund managed by the Ministries of Agriculture, not always in agreement with the respective Ministries for the Environment; another problem is that some funding programmes apply at the regional level and others at the national level making co-funding difficult).

All the above recommendations in the Commission AP were integrated in the 19th of June Environment Council Conclusions.

Another important issue which still requires clarification and for which the AP and the Council conclusions appear to use somewhat different language (probably reflecting differences of opinion among Member States during the debate in the Council) relates to the "flexibility" in the interpretation and implementation of the provisions in the Directives. I recall that the notions of identifying "flexibility" in the Directives and the value of ecosystem services (public goods) were an integral part of ELO response during the consultation process. In this regard, ELO was supported by a number of other organizations and some Member States.

The Action Plan, under the actions relating to improving guidance and knowledge and ensuring better coherence with broader socioeconomic objectives, and in particular in Action 1 (under a) foresees that an update of the already existing "guidance documents on the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive on Natura 2000 and on the permitting requirements for plans and projects likely to have an impact on Natura 2000" are amongst the measures to be taken" with the aim of clarifying the flexibility provided by the Nature Directives, etc." Also (under b) the development of guidance and a set of practical tools to support the integration of ecosystems and their services into the planning and decision making at the EU, national and sub-national level.

Josef Hofer (1801–1877), Detail from "View of Palais Rasumofsky from the garden pavilion," after 1837
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The wording in the Council Conclusions (quoted below) is much more explicit:

"para 6. Without jeopardising the conservation objectives and requirements set within the Nature Directives, RECOGNISES that the flexibility of implementation approaches that take into account the specific national circumstances contributes to the reduction and progressive elimination of unnecessary conflicts and problems between nature protection and socio-economic activities, as well as to addressing the practical challenges resulting from the application of the annexes to the Directives;

para7. In this context, WELCOMES the fact that the Commission, in close cooperation with the Member States, will update, develop and actively promote clear guidance and knowledge in all official languages of the EU to support the implementation of the Nature Directives, including updating by 2018 the guidance document on species protection rules and species action plans, whilst ensuring greater coherence between Europe's broader socioeconomic objectives and nature policy and engaging with stakeholders, land and marine users to explore smarter participative approaches;". Therefore the Council considers that "national circumstances" is a factor to be taken into account, lays emphasis on the link between nature protection and socioeconomic activities and the challenges resulting from the application of the annexes. It is also significant that particular reference is made to "land and marine users". The interpretation of the above will become clearer when the guidance documents will be updated but it is already of some importance that the Council has laid emphasis on the issues that ELO and others have underlined during the consultations.

A final comment on the June Council conclusions relates to the specific reference to the engagement of landowners for the success of the AP and to the links between natural and cultural heritage:

"para 27. UNDERSTANDS that the success of the Action Plan ultimately depends on the awareness and engagement of Europe's citizens and all other stakeholders, including land-owners, and on the strengthening of links between natural and cultural heritage, and hence SUPPORTS the Action Plan's objective of strengthening and promoting such engagement at all levels, particularly at the local level and through the involvement of young people with the European Solidarity Corps;".

25 years of EU supporting Nature, Environment and Climate Action through LIFE

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the LIFE programme and of the EU Habitats Directive, both approved on 21 May 1992. To recognise their major contribution to the preservation of Europe's natural heritage, the European Commission together with the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions proclaimed the 21 May 2017 as 'European Natura 2000 day' at a special event in Brussels.

For more information: <http://life-25.eu/>

Natura 2000 Award

This pan-European Award recognises excellence in the management of Natura 2000 sites and conservation achievements, showcasing the added value of the network for local economies, and increasing public awareness about Europe's valuable natural heritage.

This is why the European Commission has launched the annual Natura 2000 Award. The aim is to show people what the network is, how it works, and what it does to preserve Europe's biodiversity. The award recognises good practices at Natura 2000 sites in five different categories: Communication, Socio-Economic Benefits, Conservation, Reconciling Interests / Perceptions, and Cross-border Cooperation and Networking.

For more information, check the website of DG Environment





The need to involve representative stakeholder in the management and monitoring of large carnivore in Romania

The EU Large Carnivore Platform organised a regional workshop in Bucharest, Romania on Coexistence between people and large carnivores: Sharing good practice in monitoring and communication.

The workshop brought together the different actors involved with large carnivore management in Romania to discuss how they can better communicate and work together to improve management in the future. As well as examining monitoring methods, it aimed to contribute to resolving current tensions between some stakeholders, generated in part by a decision in October 2016 by Romania's then Minister of Environment, Water, and Forests not to issue harvest quotas for brown bears, grey wolves, lynx, and wildcats.

The workshop was organised by the EU Platform members WWF European Policy Office and the European Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation (FACE) and their national members General Association of Romanian Hunters & Anglers (AGVPS) and WWF Romania with the support of the Platform co-chairs (European Landowners 'Organization and the European Commission) and the Platform Secretariat. At the end of a day and a half of information gathering and facilitated discussion, the workshop participants agreed a statement on recent developments in large carnivore management in Romania.

For more information please check the website of the DG Environment



The Wildlife Estates Initiative expands in Estonia

The ELO had the honour to award two Estonian estates, Irjas and Korkare, with the Wildlife Estates Label at the ELO General Assembly in Tallinn.

Florian HOFBAUER, ELO

Both territories are best practice examples of nature and wildlife conservation on a small-scale level in the coastal area which show well preserved biodiversity with very low human impact and almost no agricultural activity. Both owners have a high-level professional background on environmental issues.

The diplomas were presented by Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, Secretary General of ELO and Pierre-Olivier DREGE, President of the ELO to Andres TARAND (Korkare) estate and Ants VARBLANE (Irjas).

The **Wildlife Estates (WE) Label** has been developed as a means to acknowledge the exemplary management of landowners and managers of territories in Europe and to make them more visible to society as strong guardians of nature. This initiative is based on a voluntary approach in order to highlight the key role of land managers in protecting biodiversity. It also makes the link between biodiversity and sustainable hunting to facilitate a better communication between land managers, hunters and local authorities and it engages the private and public sectors in mutual cooperation to halt the loss of biodiversity.

The WE Label accredits landowners as a front-runner for best management and conservation practices and compliance with the Birds and Habitats Directives. It offers a communication network to further develop and implement new and innovative management techniques by sharing ideas and management strategies and provides relevant information about upcoming events and eco-political changes at EU level.

For more information please visit our website www.wildlife-estates.eu or contact us by e-mail: wildlife@elo.org

The proper Risk Assessments of the Invasive Alien Species

Together with ELO, ENA, ZVG, Copa and Cogeca expressed their concerns about the EU Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Committee vote which took place on the 21st June, on adding species to the EU Invasive Alien Species' list, warning that the socio-economic impact of this has not been properly assessed. The EU IAS regulation aims to protect nature biodiversity and ecosystems, as well as to minimize and mitigate the impact on human health and the economy that invasive alien species can have. It includes three types of actions: prevention, early detection and rapid eradication, and management. The Committee vote this week aimed to amend the list of invasive alien species to take account of the EU's concerns.

Following this vote, 12 new species are being added to the EU list of IAS that was adopted in July 2016. Among these 12 species, 3 species are of socio-economic importance to the horticulture sector, namely *Asclepias syriaca* (Common milkweed); *Gunnera tinctoria* (Chilean rhubarb); *Pennisetum setaceum* (Crimson fountaingrass).

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, ELO Secretary said "We generally consider that the scientists who are carrying out the risk assessments for the species are not able to properly assess the socio-economic benefits. In order for the Risk Assessments to be robust and fact based, they should also include economic experts alongside the environmental ones".

Source: Joint Press release, for more information please contact Valentin OPFERMANN (valentin.opfermann@copa-cogeca.eu)

The Value of Private Land Conservation

On the 10th of May 2017, the Intergroup Biodiversity, Hunting, Countryside, addressed the question of “The Value of Private Land Conservation”. The chairman of the Intergroup Karl-Heinz FLORENZ asserted the importance of a holistic approach towards sustainability in the rural sector. His vision is to unite farmers and public authorities as their collaboration can contribute to better environmental quality.



Delphine DUPEUX, ELO

Keynote speaker Humberto DELGADO ROSA (DG Environment, Director of Natural Capital) explained the importance of engaging differently and more widely with landowners. More precisely, he gave the example of ELO and its involvement in several projects such as LIFE programs and its strong network through the Wildlife Estates Label. Both demonstrate the work of private land managers can achieve high standards of biodiversity conservation. He further mentioned the “Natural Capital Financing Facility” financial instrument which can help private owners to have access to loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB) as it supports projects promoting the preservation of natural capital.

Els MARTENS (Flemish Government, Agency for Nature and Forest) presented the new “Integrated Management of Nature” plan, which aims to achieve better nature and environmental quality by implementing more efficient resources, increasing investment and by promoting better cooperation with private landowners. Based on a multifunctional approach consisting of ecological, social and economic elements, the programme sets

four ambition levels with specific objectives to reach. Under the new regulation, private landowners will have the same access to financial resources as NGOs and other public bodies.

Andras KROLOPP (Senior Policy Advisor, The Nature Conservancy) highlighted his association’s achievements to protect approximately 21 million acres in the United States and more than 103 million acres globally. He explained how specific instruments such as conservation easements and conservation donations can be attractive solutions for landowners to contribute to land conservation as they can be rewarded with compensatory payments, tax credits or tax breaks.

Jan WINTERS (Vleemo NV, Senior Project Manager) stressed the importance of private landowners’ capability to develop and implement nature management plans based on science, with the recognition of public authorities, as the best way to succeed in land conservation. In the case of Vleemo NV’s project “Polders Investeringsfonds”, in the Port of Antwerp, he explained how they designed a plan consisting, among other measures, on the installation of small islands with

reed marshes within the agricultural land in order to comply with the Birds and Habitats Directive.

Finally, Jakob LEIDEKKER (Head of Corporate Management) presented the work of the privately owned De Hoge Veluwe National Park. He pointed out the importance of his management system based on a consistent, active, pragmatic and practical approach including an economic model as key reason for the increased exploitation from 5€ million to 8€ million in only 12 years – despite low State subsidies (around 10%). The park invests in the maintenance of the landscape, nature conservation, and maintains hunting activities. More than 100 hectares of ecological connections were created in the Park through the reunification of Natura 2000 areas with ordinary biodiversity areas. Jakob LEIDEKKER concluded that private landowners are capable to contribute to European Nature goals on a long-term basis. He invited public authorities to turn to private managers when it comes to halt the loss of biodiversity by providing specific support being financial, administrative or project orientated.



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Launch of a new report by the RISE Foundation: CAP: thinking out of the box. Further modernisation of the CAP – why, what and how?'

In 2016, the RISE Foundation became increasingly aware of the need to refocus its efforts on the CAP and bring new ideas to the table to shift what had become a stagnant debate. The European budget is under increasing pressure. It is having to deal with growing immigration and security challenges when many Member States are still experiencing a glacially slow economic recovery and high levels of youth unemployment.



RISE Foundation

The CAP will have to have a strong and robust argument to retain its large share (nearly 40%) of the European budget. Yet at present it is not enabling current environmental standards to be met or dealing effectively with volatility. Progress on containing water and air pollution, soil and biodiversity degradation, have further to go and climate protection remains a key challenge. Unless agriculture's GHG emissions can be further cut it will be exposed as contributing a steadily higher share of total EU emissions. Improving water use efficiency, and nutrient use efficiency by plants and animals continues to be priority challenges and therefore RISE believes that it is increasingly difficult to argue the value for money of today's CAP.

The CAP must be modernised to help EU farming become a better-structured industry which is economically viable and environmentally sustainable. Indeed, agriculture has a crucial role to play in addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring that European Union lives up to its commitments to these goals. However, the last reform process of the CAP disappointed most stakeholder groups resulting in frustration and ever polarised positions on what the future of agriculture should look like.

Understanding the magnitude of the challenges the EU is facing, the RISE Foundation invited a small group of experienced CAP analysts to think about how the CAP evolved to better help farmers rise to today's challenges. The task force members were Emeritus Professor Alan MATTHEWS, David BALDOCK, Professor Erik MATHIJS and Emeritus Professor Allan BUCKWELL (the academic director of the report). Additional input was received from Dr. Janez POTOČNIK and Dr. Corrado PIRZIO-BIROLI. To ensure rigorous scrutiny and questioning during the development of ideas, RISE appointed a high level Advisory Committee which included



Alan MATTHEWS, Erik MATHIJS, David BALDOCK, Allan BUCKWELL and Janez POTOČNIK

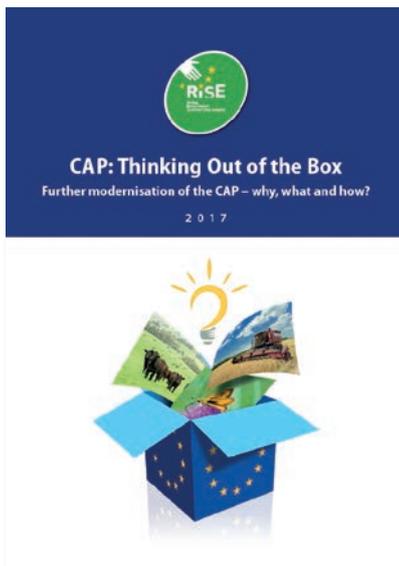
Professor Tim BENTON, Professor Heino VON MEYER, Professor Joachim VON BRAUN, Mikael KARLSSON And Professor Sophie THOYER.

The final report, 'CAP: thinking out of the box – Further modernisation of the CAP – why, what and how?', was presented as part of the Forum for the Future of Agriculture at a launch event on 27th March in Brussels and as part of the conference on the 28th March. Responding to the report at its launch event were Nadia CALVIÑO, Director General, Directorate General Budget, European Commission, Alan JAGOE, president of CEJA and Professor Harald VON WITZKE, from the Humboldt University in Berlin. The event was chaired by Janez POTOČNIK, the RISE Foundation's chairman.

The report, focusing specially on pillar 1, clearly details WHY evolution of the current CAP is imperative and how it fails to

meet its policy objectives. According to the authors, 'the largest instruments of the CAP, the pillar 1 direct payments, which account for over 70% of CAP funds are ineffective, inefficient and inequitable'.

The report argues that the two principal aspects of the CAP requiring the most attention are land management and risk management and recommends ways to address each. Where land management is concerned, the greatest worry is that the current environmental standards are not being met. The report therefore proposes a redesigned, more integrated tiered structure of supports with clearer targets on the environmental outcomes sought and should be done by replacing the concept of payment entitlements with contracts for services. It is proposed that more targeting of the right measures, in a programmed, multi-annual approach is needed. But that this also requires a new culture with more attuned



modes of delivery emphasising engagement of the parties rather than heavy controls, inspections and sanctions.

The core issue concerning risk management is that the present approach in the CAP towards market orientation has not gone far enough. Indeed, the sheer scale of direct payment inhibits farmers from better mitigating the risks they face. The report outlines the full range of instruments that are most appropriate for managing risk at the farm level, market level and nationally at times of catastrophic risk.

Finally, considering the weaknesses of the last reform, it suggests that further procedural changes and more work on conditioning the climate of opinion for reform would be helpful to increase the chance of the sort of reforms envisaged in this report. The most concrete such idea is that the necessary integration and coherence of these proposals will only be achieved if they are initiated by the joint inputs of several DGs within the Commission and then negotiated by joint agricultural and environmental Parliament Committees and Councils. This would enable each DG, Committee and Council to defend their natural constituency but within an integrated procedure better allowing trade-offs to be explored and settled.

The report can be freely downloaded at:
<http://www.risefoundation.eu/publications>

A Romanian Sense of Pride

On May 2017 more than 1000 Romanian farmers gathered for their annual General Assembly in Bucharest. The main topic was the summary of 10 years spent as a member in the European Union, especially relevant at a time where the reform of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) is fully underway.

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, ELO Secretary General, underlined how important it is to have the voice of ELO's members such as LAPAR heard in Brussels. He noted that after Brexit Romania will have the opportunity to play even a bigger role in the EU agriculture sector as the country is one of the EU's largest agricultural producers, together with France, Spain, Italy and Poland. The Secretary General also called for the full respect of the Four Freedoms of the EU by all its Member States, including in their agricultural sectors.

LAPAR President Laurentziu BACIU summarised the debates, noting the discussions on land access and proper registration, irrigation and trade. However, he was most excited by the new opportunities for Romania's agriculture such as "*smart valorisation*"; for example developing the Romanian livestock sector to be more competitive on global markets; by doing so, the country could import less from outside the EU and create a positive trade balance.

The event was attended all day long by the Petre DAEGA, Romanian Minister of Agriculture and Rural development.

Emmanuelle MIKOSZ, ELO



Thierry DE L'ESCAILLE speaking at the GA of LAPAR

Will 2018 be the Year of Private Cultural Heritage?

Tibor NAVRACSICS, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport: "Cultural heritage is not only a means to understand our past, but also an asset that can help us build the Europe of the future. The Year will help bring the richness of our European cultural heritage to the fore, highlighting its many social and economic benefits."



Lucie MARET, EHHA

On May 11, the Council casted the final vote endorsing 2018 as the European Year of Cultural Heritage, which should be officially launched at the European Culture Forum on December 7, in Milan. This vote concludes a thorough process within the EU institutions started in 2007 when cultural heritage was labeled as a priority within the European Agenda for Culture.

Through this means, the European institutions finally recognize the important role of cultural heritage, including private heritage, in the life of their citizens. Numerous documents have already highlighted its economic, social and environmental impact in the fabric of our lives and societies, notably the Commission's Communication Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe, the 2015 Report Cultural heritage counts for Europe or the late Rome Declaration.

Endowed with an 8 million euro budget – mainly targeted towards the Creative Europe Programme, the Year will engage European citizens with their heritage through the organization of events; information, education and awareness-raising campaigns targeting especially the young and children. It will also support 10 initiatives at the European level, focusing around four axes: engaging people with cultural heritage, promoting its value, fostering its protection and stimulating innovation. The Year will promote all types of heritage: tangible, intangible, and digital thus covering from monuments to natural landscapes or archeological sites, at every level (European, national, regional, local). We thus have to be careful, and make sure that private heritage is not set aside and will be supported as well.

The European Year of Cultural Heritage offers a unique, one-time opportunity to shift the narrative relating private heritage to a positive, dynamic, forward looking one; highlighting its dynamic, innovative, entrepreneurial nature. In order to change the sometimes stuffy image of the private sector, we should engage with the public through awareness-raising campaigns and targeted actions, to make the public care for its heritage – especially that which is privately owned or managed. Young generations of private heritage managers will also be involved, which the European His-



toric Houses Association is committed to do through its Next Generation group and the Young Friends of the Countryside.

To achieve maximum visibility for private owners, the European Historic Houses Association will organize Private Heritage Days between the 24th and the 27th of May 2018, with the motto *Our house, Your heritage*. During this event, for which we have already secured partnerships with ELO, the Friends of the Countryside and the UIPI, private owners from all over Europe will – partially or wholly – open their houses and host a variety of activities and events. Besides the Private Heritage Days, the European Historic Houses Association plans to hold both a high-level kick-off and closing event, in partnership with its many sponsors and partners.

The key to making 2018 a success is working together by increasing synergies and collaboration. The European Historic Houses Association has already started to coordinate with its partners from the Alliance 3.3, a powerful alliance gathering 43 heritage organizations, including Europa Nostra and ELO. Yet, the Association is also looking to create new, innovative partnerships, while also liaising with relevant public authorities, notably the National Coordinators for the Year.

The approval by the institutions of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage is great news for heritage stakeholders across Europe who have worked hand in hand with the institutions. Yet, it is only the first step to make this Year a great success, and enable private owners to make their voices heard at the European level by sharing their challenges, struggles and expectations. In the meantime, we have to stay focused on our objectives, notably by fully engaging in the Commission's stakeholders group, under the umbrella of the *Voices for Culture*. Let us all join forces to make the voice of private owners heard in 2018, and beyond!

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The Next Generation Support the European Year of Heritage!

The European Historic Houses Association's NextGeneration group has also started to prepare for the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage.

The group met for their third Conference Weekend from the 24th to the 26th of March in Siena, Italy, under the patronage of the European Historic Houses Association and its President Rodolphe de LOOZ-CORSWAREM, and of Gaddo della GHERARDESCA, President of the of the ADSI (Associazione Dimore Storiche Italiane) – the Italian member organization.

The 100 attendees of the Conference, coming from 12 different countries, debated on the theme of social capital, with Peter ENGLISH, Global Leader for Family Business at Ernst & Young, delivering the keynote speech on the *trends and challenges for succession, values and social capital in family business*. The group also discussed community engagement. Robin HEREFORD from Bonhams International Auctioneers outlined how appropriately curated family art collections can help to ensure that heritage remains relevant and connected to the community.

The spectrum of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage has been stimulating the debates, as the gathering took place in Italy, the country that is supposed to see the launching event of the Year in December 2017 in Milan.

No doubt our young members will fully engage their dynamism, energy and enthusiasm so that the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage will truly be the European Year of Private Heritage!

Lucie MARET, - European Historic Houses Association



Young generations, the future of wildlife



The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation calls for action to mobilize young people worldwide to create positive changes with real impact on wildlife conservation.

Hunting is a phenomenon that is often perceived in a negative way in public notion, and there are many reasons for this; the predominant reason lies in the sad fact that today's children have little basic knowledge about the interrelations and ramifications of nature. Most of our youngsters learn about nature through the media, in other words: via second hand and not from the source.

Another crucial point is the pathetic fallacy or humanization of nature and its animals. This is the main reason why, the CIC believes that children should have the possibility to approach hunting on the basis of a better and more in-depth knowledge of nature suitable for their age. They have to learn that death is part of the natural cycle and, consequently, that hunting is part of a natural process.

The CIC Working Group Young Opinion (CIC-YO) initiated a project with the aim to offer information days for kindergarten and elementary school kids, with different stations about nature's interrelations, and about today's hunting practices, such as falconry, dogs, shooting, ethics, and conservation where children get introduced to hunting and its principles in a playful way. In addition, the goal is to explain that sustainable hunting is an acknowledged and legitimate basis for conservation.

As Benedict HAMMER, President of the CIC Young Opinion stated "CIC Young Opinion has a strategic focus on children's education in nature, hunting, and wildlife conservation. We believe that this education for the coming generations is crucial to promote our values of game and wildlife conservation. As Young Opinion we see it as our responsibility to have a lasting impact on the younger generations."

Hunting teaches children the importance of the connection between conservation and the environment. Another aspect of the project is to convey to our children the basic philosophy from Platon to Nikolas von der Kuys: man has a basic instinct, a moving force of always trying to acquire something. Without this instinct, there is no progress, no development. Hence, hunting is one of the basic elements of mankind – although few actual experience shows hunting in its original context; almost everybody hunts for something - success in sports, business, day-to-day life as a hunted trophy.

The CIC-YO Working Group is implementing this project in order to bring wildlife conservation and hunting closer to the future generations.

Get involved! If you are interested, please contact CIC Headquarters at office@cic-wildlife.org.

New Space for Biofuels

Through the support of the EU's Horizon 2020 programme the FORBIO research consortia is aiming at finding sustainable value chains and market barriers of advanced biofuels that would enable or disable bioenergy projects take off.



Peter GYURIS, Geonardo

The main driver behind the research spanning from 2016 to the end of 2018 is finding and assessing land suitability in Europe where industrial crop production is not in competition with other land uses, land utilized for food, feed, recreation etc. In the 36-month long project 12 partners are conducting agronomic, techno-economic studies, sustainability assessments and run intensive consultation with relevant stakeholders. At half time of FORBIO project implementation the accumulated know-how containing biomass value chains, including economical and agronomical calculations is ready to be shared via workshops, field visits, webinars for targeted spectators.

Three case studies across Europe

FORBIO project is organized along target countries (Germany, Italy, Ukraine) where detailed studies are completed and outreach countries (Ireland-UK, Belgium, Poland, Hungary, Romania) where instant knowledge transfer is primarily envisaged. The objective of the main project activities is to foster the market uptake of sustainable bioenergy projects in target and outreach countries.

Germany

In Germany reclamation sites of lignite mining in the Eastern German Lignite District (Lusatia, South Brandenburg and North-East Saxonian Lowlands) and former sewage irrigation fields in the Federal States Berlin, Brandenburg, and Saxony were identified as target areas. Reclamation sites of about 15,000 ha are designated for agricultural land use and are suitable for the cultivation of conventional energy crops. Sewage irrigation fields of more than 10,000 ha are designated for phytoremediation through the cultivation of special undemanding energy crops and woody biomass species. The case study areas are scattered, which creates a challenge for economic biomass feedstock production.

Italy

In Italy, 22,000ha in the Sulcis area of Sardinia were identified for the case study. The area used to have intensive industrial activities and so far, no restoration measures were implemented here. In bits of this land agricultural cultivation is forbidden due to high levels of contamination. The areas experienced de-industrialization and abandonment of industrial production. Sustainable biomass feedstock production could be a solution for the restoration of abandoned areas. Arundo Donax was identified as potential feedstock for second generation bioethanol production.

Ukraine

In Ukraine about 4 million ha are under the status of set-aside land. 10% thereof (400,000 ha) could be used to produce advanced biofuels from willow and the rest could be used to produce solid biofuels and biogas. The case study area (2,000 ha) is in the region of Kyiv, Ivankiv municipality. The FORBIO project assesses sustainable bioenergy production potential in the case study areas on available underutilized lands

Sustainability assessments of value chains

For the comprehensive planning of feedstock production and processing a thorough sustainability assessments which covers all steps of the chain should always be carried out before project implementation. In addition, monitoring bioenergy sustainability throughout the lifespan of a given investment is a necessary condition to understand whether there is alignment with the intended direction of the management measures and actions undertaken. The assessment of sustainability in bioenergy must encompass all three dimensions (i.e. pillars) of sustainable development including economic growth, environmental protection, and social equality.

The assessment of the sustainability of advanced bioenergy value chains studied in FORBIO is based the set of Sustainability Indicators for Bioenergy developed by the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP). In the context of FORBIO, the approach is to adapt the calculations of sustainability performances of bioenergy planned (i.e. ex-ante) at the local level (i.e. sub-national). Specifically, with regards to the local level character of the assessments, in FORBIO a novel concept was introduced. The target area is an area to be identified by the sum of geographical features (e.g. watersheds), or political features (e.g. municipality borders), or cultural (e.g. regions as identified by cultural heritage of an area) that contain the entire bioenergy value chain or its most relevant components and that are used to define the borders of the analysis.

The assessment of sustainability in the context of FORBIO project aims at determining the actual change between the current situation (i.e. baseline) and a hypothetical future scenario in which bioenergy is produced (i.e. target). The differences between these two points in time are evaluated to establish their performances under the selected sustainability indicators. The changes are, where possible, checked against existing EU regulation and directions, to assess whether



they contribute or not to achieving the intended targets for sustainable development set by the European Commission.

Policy barriers and market uptake

A major part of the FORBIO project is to analyse economic and non-economic factors as well as identify best practices for bioenergy policies, regulations and support schemes which allow the most sustainable and efficient use of bio-resources from under-utilized land in the target and outreach countries. A collaborative study was performed by all project partners that uses country specific information.

The initial task of this work identified three major strategies provide the framework to the EU approach to renewable energy. They determine specific targets and goals for the Member States to achieve until 2020, 2030 and 2050 respectively.

The biofuel legislation is based on the Directive 98/70/EC on the quality of petrol and diesel fuels. Its latest amendment of 2015 determines that „Member States are (...) to require suppliers of fuel or energy to reduce by at least 6 % by 31 December 2020 the life cycle greenhouse gas emissions per unit of energy of fuels used in the Union by road vehicles, non-road mobile machinery, agricultural and forestry tractors and recreational craft when not at sea.” Another pillar to biofuels is the sustainability criteria laid down in Directives 98/70/EC and 2009/28/EC which requires the Member States and the Community to increase the use of biofuels in a way which brings a net benefit to the environment.

A White Paper from 2011 presented another relevant Roadmap which aims at achieving a resource efficient transport system. This strategy foresees a 60 % GHG reduction in the transport sector by 2050 and to halve the conventionally-fuelled cars in urban transport by 2030. The Commission released in 2013 a strategy on the use of alternative fuels which is non-binding.

Action in the frame of FORBIO project will largely focus on knowledge sharing and finding opportunities and identify replicability potentials across Europe in 2017 and 2018.

Information on events as well as further project reports and documents will be publicly available via the project website (<http://www.forbio-project.eu/>).
 figure - FORBIO project study sites

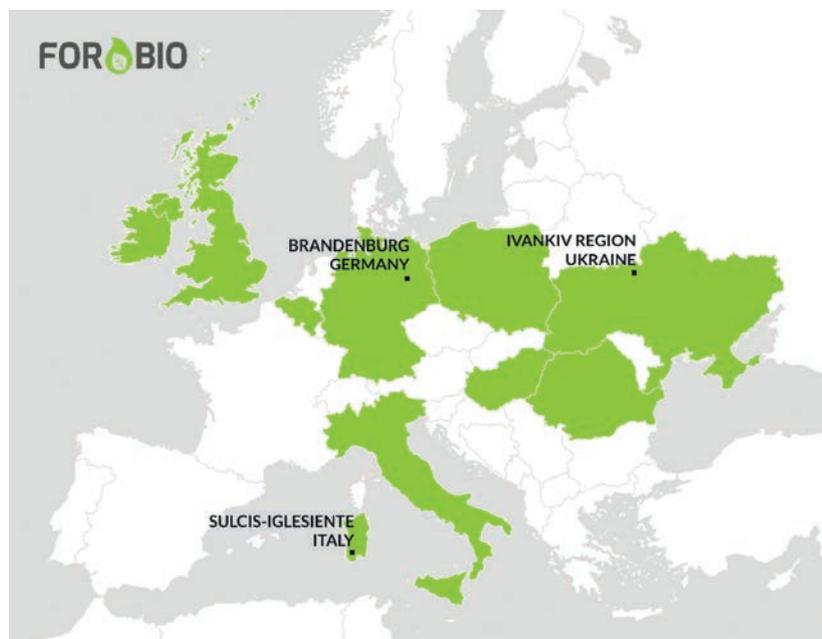


Figure - FORBIO project study sites

FORBIO BIOENERGY SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS		
ENVIRONMENTAL	SOCIAL	ECONOMIC
Life-cycle GHG	Land Tenure	Productivity
Soil Quality	Change in Income	Net Energy Balance
Non GHGs	Jobs in Bioenergy Sectors	Gross Value Added
Water Use and Efficiency	Modern Energy Access	Trainings
Water Quality		Infrastructures and Logistics for Bioenergy Distribution
Biodiversity		
Land Use Change		Capacity and Flexibility of use of Bioenergy

Figure - FORBIO sustainability indicators (FAO)



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No691846.



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Diary dates

26 June, Brussels

6th edition of the European Week of Bees and Pollinators
www.beeweek.eu

27 June, Biodiversity, Hunting and Countryside

Intergroup, European Parliament, Brussels
 Perspectives on Combating Illegal Killing: The Role of Hunters
www.elo.org

28-29 June, Papenburg, Germany

Congress "Eco Innovations from Biomass"; followed by 6th Lower Saxony Algae Round Table
<http://biobased-business.eu/1880-2/#.WU010OvjIU>

5-6 July, Parma, Italy

Open Plenary meeting of the Panel on Plant Protection Products and their Residues
www.efsa.europa.eu

7 July, Brussels

The CAP: Have you say; conference organized by DG Agriculture
<https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/cap-have-your-say>

26-28 September, Belgrade, Serbia

The annual meeting of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks
www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/home

28 September- 1st October, Barcelona

European Historic Houses General Assembly; with as theme of the conference : European Year of Cultural Heritage
www.ehha.eu

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CountrySide

is a publication of the ELO in English and French

5 Euros

Publisher : Thierry de l'Escaille
Chief editor : Emmanuelle Mikosz
Text editor : Robert de Graeff

Communication & proof readers: Ana Canomanuel, Jehanne de Dorlodot - Verhaegen, Clara Moreno, Clémence Garnier
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