

# CountrySide

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## Wolves in Europe





# Editorial

Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, *Secretary General*

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## The courage to act

*This end of year remains unprecedentedly insightful – while Ursula von der LEYEN revealed the "European Green Deal", it is still unclear after COP25 how we will achieve a net-zero emissions target by 2050 on a global level.*

*Keeping in mind that we have a long road ahead, the ELO has advocated for many years that one of the key tools to fulfill all these old & new commitments, including the SDGs, is to promote an active forest management. In this regard, we will be very attentive to the actions that the EU undertakes regarding the recently adopted conclusions of the Council providing political guidance on protecting and restoring the world's forests. As underlined in the statement: "(Member States) agree that enhanced EU action is needed, and encourage the Commission to urgently prioritize and implement the actions set out in its communication, together with the member states, industry, organizations and institutions, civil society and partner countries as part of the European Green Deal".*

*Let's be clear: it is urgent that politicians and officials consider the experience from the field of the forest managers and realize that the last 20 years' policy of inviting forest owners "to grow indigenous trees" has been affected by a massive forest dieback linked with climate change. Much of those indigenous trees are dying as they most probably should be grown in currently more temperate or Nordic regions. Our trees cannot migrate north as such from one day to the next, and as growers we have the feeling to be a lost generation. Decision makers have to be more open-minded and accept that some species, even not local ones, can fare much better against global warming than others.*

*Last but not least, I wish us all to remain optimistic during this forthcoming special time of family gatherings; but for the Year to come - to speed up our commitments for change, as I firmly believe that we have all an active role to play.*





# Wolves in Europe

*In September 2019 the European Commission published the report “Assessment of current knowledge on wolves in Europe with a view to their effective conservation and management, a partial review of the scientific literature on the wolf in Europe”.*

*The study was commissioned to the European Landowners’ Organization within a strict framework described by the tender specifications. Here is an overview of the most important results.*

Jurgen TACK, ELO Scientific Director

## Actual population numbers

In addition to the assessment and reporting carried out under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, in 2012 the conservation status of European large carnivores was assessed, for each population, by a group of experts from each country where large carnivores were present. This information has been updated for 2012-16 (<https://www.lcie.org/Largecarnivores/Wolf.aspx>; retrieved on 10 March 2019). Although the available data and the methodology used varied greatly from country to country, this information represents the latest available assessment of the status of large carnivore ([http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/conservation\\_status.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/conservation_status.htm); retrieved on 10 March 2019). In 2016, continental Europe

(excluding Russia and Belarus) was home to approximately 17,000 wolves of which 13,000 to 14,000 were present in the EU.

One of the wolf populations became extinct (Spain, Sierra Morena) while the other nine are generally stable or increasing. In terms of their extinction threat, three populations are assessed as “least concern”, three are “vulnerable” and three are “near threatened” (according to IUCN criteria).

Member States will provide new updated data (up to 2018) by October 2019 in the framework of their reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.

## Distribution

The wolf is a habitat generalist with a preference for woodland. It has a high dis-

persal potential and colonizes new areas relatively easily. Recently, wolves have naturally re-established breeding populations in Finland, Sweden, Norway, France and Germany. The wolf is also present in Luxemburg, Denmark and Belgium covering all EU Member States with the exception of the island states. We can expect a further expansion of the existing populations.

In Europe the wolf population is, in general, **expanding westwards following areas of high ungulate concentrations.**

## Monitoring

Data gathered in EU Member States make use of many different monitoring systems. Several authors have stressed the importance of improving the quality and

harmonization of the different monitoring systems.

Relevant data on range, population (numbers and trends), habitat, threats and pressures are collected according to a common methodology for all species covered by the Habitats Directive.

Monitoring programs are either based on a systematic study design, or on passive monitoring where the public and volunteers were asked to report signs of grey wolf presence. In the latter case, distrust between groups may limit the availability and the reliability of data. Involving hunters and other stakeholders in data gathering makes them aware of underlying problems, such as the number of livestock kills and their impact on deer.

### Favorable Conservation Status

**The wolf is well protected in the European Union.** Two international legislation systems contribute to this protection:

- the **Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats** (the Bern Convention), and
- Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the **Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora** better known as the Habitats Directive

The Habitats Directive requires measures to maintain or restore the concerned habitat types and species (including the wolf) at favourable conservation status (FCS) in their natural range. FCS for a species is defined by the Directive in relation to population dynamics, range, habitat and future perspectives of the species. Every six years, Member States assess and report to the Commission on the conservation status of all habitats and species covered by the Directive. In the latest reporting (for the period 2007-2012) the wolf was already reported as being in FCS for some Member States and biogeographic regions. The next reporting is taking place in 2019 (till October) with reference to the period 2013-2018.

### Derogation

Favourable Conservation Status is measuring a nature protection objective. However, the measures taken to implement the Habitats Directive need to consider the economic, social and cultural requirements and the regional and local characteristics. In order to address any possible social or economic conflict associated with wolf conservation, Member States may use several tools (e.g. prevention and

mitigation measures, compensations, technical assistance, information and communication, dialogue and involvement of relevant stakeholders). Where the wolf is listed as a strictly protected species, Member States may grant ad-hoc derogations from the strict protection provisions in certain situations and under specific conditions, as described by the Directive.

Derogations may not be the only or the main tool to address conflicts. This issue will be dealt with by the forthcoming update of the Commission guidance document on species protection.

### Social conflict

**Negative attitudes towards predators have been found with livestock keepers, hunters, and residents in areas with predators. Some people see predators as a threat to their way of life, including economic interests, personal safety, the safety of pets and hunting dogs, as well as competitors for game.**

As the **wolf populations are recovering and expanding to new areas** the likelihood of humans encountering wolves also increases rapidly and **more social conflicts can be expected.**

### Economic conflict

France and Norway lose over 30 sheep per wolf present. For the other EU Member States this varies between 1 and 14. The total sheep population in Europe is 86 million. The high loss of livestock we see in France, Norway (and Switzerland) are linked to their husbandry systems. Sheep graze freely in mountain habitats and forests without the use of fences, shepherds or dogs.

The most common protection against the wolf includes electrified fences and/or guarding dogs. Protection measures are often funded by national governments, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and LIFE.

Compensation payments are widespread. While they protect farmers against economic loss they do not stimulate farmers to take protective measures.

In many regions of Europe, the wolf **feeds on hunted species** including ungulates, such as the moose. Wolves are also known **to occasionally kill hunting dogs.** Several inhabitants of the **countryside** consider **hunting as the most important method for improving coexistence** whilst at the national level more alternative

methods to improve coexistence are favoured.

### Hybrids

Hybridization can affect wildlife in a number of ways. **Negative impacts include loss of reproductive potential, lowered fitness of individuals that hybridize, introduction of maladaptive alleles into wild populations, loss of genetic integrity, potential for disease transfer, and legal consequences that may affect the individual or population's conservation status.**

### Wolf management plans

Most of the current **wolf management plans focus on recovery and actions related to it.** Wolf management plans propose **compensation methods for livestock** (incl. sheep, goats, cattle, and horses), verified to have been killed by a wolf, and the opportunity to acquire subsidized fences built specifically to keep wolves out.

Management plans are “dynamic”, meaning they **can be adjusted** in response to increased experience, e.g. from specific conflicts.

**Many management plans do not specify a range, maximum number, or density of wolves as an aim for the plan.** They do, however, state that individual wolves causing problems may be subject to derogation from protection.

**Most of the wolf management plans are in reality wolf recovery plans.** With increasing wolf populations throughout Europe, management actions become a more important aspect of the plan.

**The complete study can be found on the following web address: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b11a6cd5-bd90-11e9-9d01-01aa75ed71a1/prodSystem-cellar/language-en/format-PDF>. ELO is preparing an illustrated version of the study complemented with policy recommendations based on the study but integrating the concerns of its membership.**

Josef Hofer (1801–1877), Detail from, "View of Palais Rasumofsky from the garden pavilion," after 1837  
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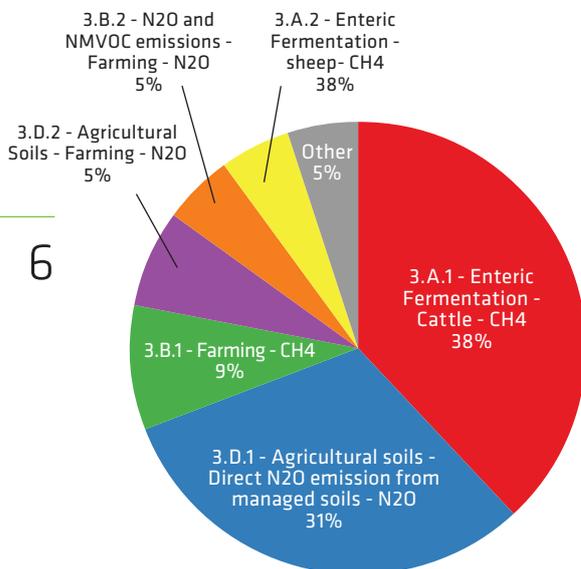
# Climate Mitigation Policies for Europe:

## The Net Zero Target and the Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use Sector - ELO Policy Proposals for UNFCCC COP25 at Madrid.

Michael SAYER, ELO Special Adviser

1. The point of departure for this note is the AFOLU gap between annual agricultural emissions (CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O) and annual net sequestration under LULUCF. For the EU in 2017, this gap amounted to 191 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq, (440 - 249 net LULUCF sequestration).

For some countries (such as the UK), the gap is relatively bigger than the EU gap because of the relative lack of forest cover. In 2015, 21 Member States had over 30 per cent forest or other woodland cover, Hungary 24 per cent and Belgium 23 per cent, compared with Denmark 15 per cent, UK 13 per cent, Netherlands and Ireland 11 per cent (Eurostat). Moreover, the inclusion of revised estimates for emissions from peatland may indicate a net UK LULUCF source.



1. Annual EU GHG Inventory 1990-2017 and Inventory Report 2019, Fig. 5.3

It will be seen that the weight of livestock in the emissions is 3.A.1 (CH<sub>4</sub> from enteric fermentation from cattle, 38 per cent) plus 3.A.2 (CH<sub>4</sub> from enteric fermentation from sheep, 5 per cent) plus 3.B.1 (CH<sub>4</sub> from manure management, 9 per cent) plus 3.B.2 (N<sub>2</sub>O and NMVOC emissions from manure management, 5 per cent), the 3.B emissions being overwhelmingly

attributable to cattle. However, because arable land is also used in part to grow livestock feed, a proportion (unquantified) of 3.D.1 (direct N<sub>2</sub>O emissions from managed soils, accounting for 31 per cent of emissions) and 3.D.2 (N<sub>2</sub>O from atmospheric deposition, N leaching and run-off, accounting for 7 per cent of emissions) is also attributable to livestock (and principally cattle) systems. **The livestock sector will require significant support in the transition to Net Zero. (...)**

3. Detailed figures are not readily available for the proportion of crops from arable land that become livestock feed, but Figure 5.2 (b) from *Climate Change and Land* (IPCC, 2019), indicates the global growth in use of crop production for animal feed since 1960.

All this would suggest that livestock numbers, and especially cattle numbers, which according to A.BUCKWELL, *Safe Operating Space for European Livestock* (RISE, 2018) are, conservatively, twice as high in the EU as needed for grazing permanent pasture, are central to reducing GHG emissions from agriculture.

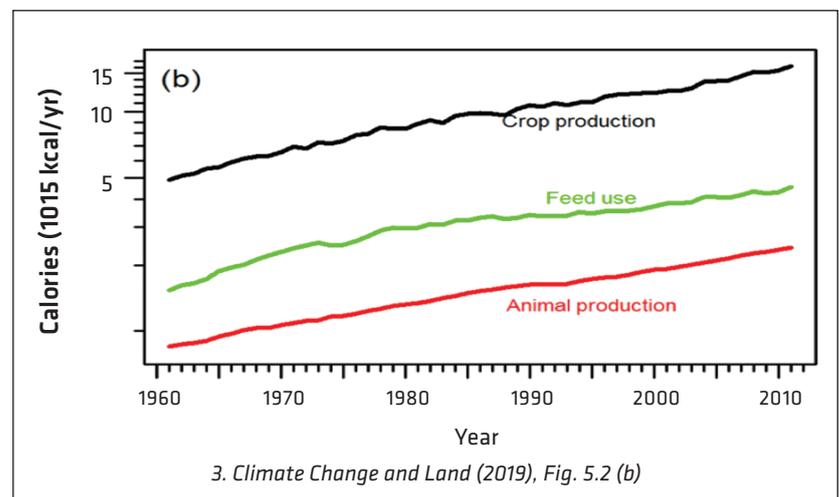
This might be done, potentially, by bringing numbers of cattle into line with permanent pasture, reducing as far as possible prior cycles of emissions from the use of arable land for growing livestock feed, and

reallocating the arable land in question either to bioenergy (typically within the annual cropping rotation) or LUC (principally afforestation).

Manipulation of the C: N balance in diet, and manure management, are good complementary measures but fundamentally are probably too marginal to be game-changers, in particular because of difficulties of measurement, verification and permanence. Moreover, intensification locks livestock systems into prior cycles of emissions.

4. Reducing use of N-based fertiliser would also be an option. This might be achieved by longer arable rotations. For example, the Holkham estate (Norfolk, UK) has lengthened cropping rotations to improve fertility, using a six-year rotation avoiding consecutive straw crops (winter barley, oil-seed rape, winter wheat, potatoes, spring barley, sugar beet) while the Esterházy estate (Burgenland, Austria) converted to organic agriculture in 2003, introducing a nine-year rotation which includes lucerne and oats or another fodder crop for grazing livestock (currently 120 animals). (...)

5. Increasing Carbon Sequestration Bearing in mind the need for additionality, verification and permanence, the most at-





tractive measures will involve LUC through afforestation or, where appropriate, a switch from arable to permanent pasture. Afforestation ought to be treated also as a climate adaptation (resilience) measure, while locally (e.g., restoration of flood plains) conversion to permanent pasture would be more appropriate.

However, the design of silvicultural systems will be very important in order to optimise resilience, carbon stock and potential for substitution. There must be a preference for mixed and, eventually, uneven-aged, continuous cover structures, coupled with use of a periodic forest inventory (setting out standing volumes by species and age classes) for management.

There is, however, considerable scope for improving undermanaged small woodlands.

Restoration (re-wetting) of peatland is, bearing in mind the size of the carbon stock in peat, and therefore the potential sink in re-wetted peat, another essential, albeit localised measure.

It should be noted that the C benefits, while significant, are not rapid, and the CALM methodology developed as an adjunct to D. VINER et al., Climate Change and the European Countryside (Climatic Research Unit, University of East Anglia, ELO and Country Land and Business Association, 2006, Annex I) averaged C gain in peaty soils over 300 years in UK conditions.

**Because of the time-lag in optimising additional sequestration and substitution, it is necessary to take a view of 2100 as well as 2050, because the structure of net zero will potentially change over this time.**

#### 6. Energy and Material Substitution

This is very much part of afforestation and moving land within the arable rotation away from supporting housed livestock systems. At one end of the scale, the scope is indicated by wooden blocks of flats being built in, e.g., Sundby (Stockholm) and elsewhere. The need to develop strong markets here is clear. One way would be through appropriate building regulations.

#### 7. A summary of some available measures

##### Afforestation

Planting grants to establish new afforestation

Thinning grants for management to enable optimum growth

Annual stewardship grant (comparable, e.g., to Higher Level Stewardship in UK)

Trading of carbon in post-1990 afforestation on the basis of timelimited certificates linked to the periodicity of the forest inventory. Under such a system, the onus would be on the buyer to renew.

**Introduction of a requirement for a forest inventory** as a condition of C trading and of grants for above a given area (say 0.5 ha).

##### Agroforestry

These are essentially complementary measures which will increase local resilience, e.g. hedgerow planting and/or management, and planting trees on permanent pasture. Additional carbon benefits could be obtained by planting hedgerow trees.

Stewardship-type grant for the above, depending on level of ambition

##### Livestock

Buy-out of excess livestock numbers (herds or part herds). This could be timed to coincide with normal replacement. It would be for consideration whether this might be also structured as a kind of capital/retirement payment.

Stewardship grants for livestock on permanent pasture at agreed stocking rate

Compulsory manure management for housed livestock, including when seasonally housed

Complementary measure: adjust feed balance of housed livestock, where additional emissions are not generated

##### Peatland restoration grants

There will already be some experience of this, and there are about 100 schemes of different sizes in Scotland.

##### Reducing use of artificial N fertiliser

Support of N-fixation through the inclusion of leguminous crops within a lengthened arable rotation

Precision farming. This is an important but essentially complementary measure.

##### Bioenergy

Development of the bioenergy option **for break crops within the annual arable rotation and for cereals failing to reach milling or malting quality**, e.g. bioethanol as a use for feed-quality wheat or barley and for sugar beet.

Support for *Miscanthus* and short-rotation coppice.

**The full version of the paper is available on ELO website.**

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## Pro Planet Apples from Lake Constance and AI technology Apisfero winning projects of the 2019 European Bee Award



*On the 10<sup>th</sup> of December, 2019, in a ceremony hosted by MEP Franc BOGOVIČ at the European Parliament in Brussels, the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the European Bee Award once again acknowledged the great commitment of private and public organizations, as well as the involvement of the research community, to enhance pollinators' wellbeing and support bee-friendly farming practices in Europe.*

Athena LEFEBVRE, ELO & Beatriz ARRIBAS, CEMA

With the aim of acknowledging innovative, efficient and scalable projects that protect pollinators in Europe, the European Bee Award, established by the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and the European Agricultural Machinery Industry Association (CEMA), was handed over last night to this year's winners:

**Category 1: Land Management Practices:** 'Pro Planet apples' from the Lake Constance Foundation

**Category 2: Application of innovative technological solutions**

**Patrick TRÖTSCHLER** presented the project 'Pro Planet apples' from the Lake Constance Foundation. They set out to motivate as many farmers as possible

to enhance the food and habitat situation for pollinating insects in and around lake Constance's orchards whilst developing, testing and implementing measures to improve the volume nectar and pollen plants. The PRO PLANET label was introduced in 2010, its used to characterise products which have considerably less impact on the environment in the process of manufacturing, processing or utilisation. Since then, the project has seen positive results with the concept being transferred to other apple producing regions in Germany and Austria.

**Davide BASSIGNANA** presented the Bee Varroa scanner. The Varroa parasite is the greatest driver for honeybee health de-

cline. Apisfero wanted to create a technology which could counter the threat of these deadly mites. Whilst exterminating the Varroa is a relatively simple procedure, detecting their presence is where the challenge lies, especially with a high number of hives. Through the progress of the researchers at Apisfero, they have managed to develop a scanner capable of scanning the mites on the paperboard inside the hive within 30 seconds. Their prototype, reviewed by the University of Turin and the Austrian Federation of Beekeepers "Biene Österreich", operates with a precision superior to the human eye. The data is then easily accessible, connecting directly with a phone application.

**Michael GARRATT**, the Chair of the Jury gave a special mention to 'Green-roofed bus shelters in Utrecht' for its innovative and original way to provide shelter and feed for pollinators in urban areas where their natural habitats are scarce. "It combined habitat creation for pollinators with other environmental activities such as saving resources", he continued, "You can see that there is real scalability there, and we hope it will be upscaled and implemented elsewhere".

**Franc BOGOVIĆ MEP and host of the ceremony** stressed "The European Bee Award is a necessary recognition to the very valuable projects which year-on-year show there is a shared commitment to protecting pollinators in European agriculture. It fills me with joy to see the number of applications to the Bee Award competition rising from year to year. This year there were 36 applications all together, which shows that the European Bee Award is indeed gaining its importance and is also a generator of new ideas, which promote solutions that improve the state of the biodiversity in EU."

Noting the ceremony of the EU Bee Award was taking place on the eve of the European Green Deal's launch, **former European Commissioner for R&D and Environment Janez POTOČNIK** said "because it is really hard to imagine a future without the bees, let's respect and treat them in a responsible way, the way they deserve due to all the good things they are providing to us humans and the rest of Nature."



**Alain SCRIBAN**, special adviser for ELO said "For land managers, pollinators are our friends in the field. Without thousands of bees, butterflies and other insects, our crops would not grow and flourish. Together with farmers, they are among the hardest workers in the countryside, and they all deserve our support."

**Gilles DRYANCOUR**, Chairman of the CEMA Strategic Committee and member of the Bee Award Jury, pointed out "initiatives such as the European Bee Award are showcasing bees and pollinators are an essential part to enhance more sustainable farming practices in Europe. Indeed, there is a strong willingness from the European

agricultural equipment industry to support innovative projects which could be scaled up for protecting bees' and pollinators' life."

In 2019, the European Bee Award competition received 36 applications from 11 different European countries. The prize ceremony gathered over 100 participants: bee-keepers, policy makers, land managers, academia and representatives of the agri-food sector exchanged best practices, while getting inspired by new ideas on how to protect bees and enhance biodiversity in Europe.



# ELO General Assembly in Croatia - “A strong Europe in a world of challenges”

*Croatia's first-ever presidency in the European Union will come at a challenging period for all the Member States. Less than seven years after its accession, it has to assume the rotating presidency of the Council.*

Emmanuelle MIKOSZ, ELO

Therefore, also for the first time, ELO members gathered for their General Assembly (GA) in Zagreb, a bi-annual meeting that always takes place in the country that is preparing to take over this role. We were warmly welcomed by Nikola ADAMOVIČ and Nikolaus DRASKOVIČ representing Croatian private forest owners and land managers. They reminded us that Croatia has 1.3 million hectares of agricultural land and about 2.2 million hectares of forest. Also, rural territory represents around 92% of the country and about half of Croatia's population lives in rural areas. They highlighted that around 26% of the forest is in private forest ownership, the rest being publicly owned woodlands. They pointed out that most of the privately owned woodlands are of minimal sizes. The presumed average size of around 1 ha per owner is probably too low, but even if it were around 5 ha, this is not sufficient for professional woodland management by the average individual owner. It was (and is) only via restitution that a very limited number of larger woodland estates re-emerged in the past 10 years.

In addition, data concerning land ownership needs to be specified as Croatian agriculture struggle with land book and cadastral issues. This topic was largely presented by Tajana RADIĆ, representing the Croatian Chamber of Agriculture. She underlined



Plitvice Lakes National Park (UNESCO site)

© Jürgen Tack

that with an average farm being 10 hectares, restructuring policy are of high importance, including family inheritance laws. She stressed how important is the involvement of the civil society representatives in future works to achieve the needed changes.

These were also the topics we had the opportunity to discuss during the GA with the representatives of the Croatian government: Tugomir MAJDAK, State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture; Igor KREITMEYER, Assistant Minister and Ivana JELENIĆ, Head of Biodiversity and strategic affairs, Nature Protection Directorate, Ministry of Environment and Energy. Presenting their Presidency's motto “A strong Europe in a world of challenges”, they explained how they plan to address these four key priorities: “an influential Europe”, “a Europe that protects”, “a Europe that connects”, especially concerning the economic development within the EU, climate and demographic challenges. There followed a very engaging discussion on agricultural and environmental priorities for the near future, among others the need to unlock the potential of land-based sectors for an EU Green Deal and to consider the specificities and needs of rural businesses in Europe. All agreed the CAP regulates Europe's agriculture and remains

the best tool for land managers across the EU – and important point to keep in mind when shaping the National Strategic Plans. All agreed that rural areas need a necessary infrastructure and technology, being aware that the financing will depend on the agreement reached on the next Multiannual Financial Framework, 2021-2027. A special point concerned the necessity to recognize Sustainable Forest Management with the key role of forests contribution to climate change mitigation.

This intense day was closed by a walking tour to discover the charms of the Zagreb Old Town, and continue the discussions while appreciating local food and huge varieties of Croatian wines.

**The next General Assembly will take place in Berlin (Germany) from 15 to 17 June 2020.**

The ELO would like to thank you the Croatian Union of Private Forest Owners Associations and the Croatian Chamber of Agriculture for their support in putting this event together.

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## Owners and livestock breeders: Guardians of biodiversity

Jose GOMEZ-ACEBO, ELO

On November 5, a round table organized by ELO and the UCTL (La Unión de Criadores del Toro de Lidia) took place in the European Parliament where farmers and private owners from Spain, Portugal and France discussed their role as protectors of biodiversity.

The event was hosted by MEP Juan Ignacio ZOIDO, and began with an extraordinary welcome and went on to outline the problems faced by the owners and ranchers every day. The event was attended by Daniel CALLEJA CRESPO (Director-General DG Environment), Álvaro AMARO (member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Parliament), Carlos NÚÑEZ (President of the Lidia Bull Breeders Union), Jeremy DECERLE (*Renew Europe* MEP and President of the young farmers of France), and Karl-Heinz FLORENZ (former MEP) among others.

This framework served to present different points of view on how private and livestock owners contribute to rural development. One of the priorities of the agenda of the President of the European Commission, Ursula VON DER LEYEN, in the “European Green Deal” that establishes two defined lines: the challenges against climate change and the challenges for the loss of biodiversity. Both challenges are perfectly aligned in the defence of livestock rearing by their socio-environmental contribution. It was however also concluded that making farms viable is extremely relevant and that a strong and supportive CAP with farmers and agricultural managers must be guaranteed.



## Famigro Award

call for applications is open  
until 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020

Alberto HERMOSEL, YFCS

Created by Karl GROTFELT in 2013, the Famigro Award aims to reward the best European rural entrepreneurship project of the year.

The Famigro Award rewards each year an innovative entrepreneurial project. Thanks to the initiative of Mr GROTFELT, each year the YFCS can support a start-up project that answers to the current challenges of the rural sector.

Entrepreneurial projects contribute to the evolution of our rural countryside, while the respect of the environment and social responsibility is endorsed by each rural entrepreneur. The aim of the Famigro Award is to increase the chances of this kind of valuable projects to succeed and grow, letting them benefit from the support of the network of the Friends and Young Friends of the Countryside.

For more information please contact:  
[alberto.hermosel@elo.org](mailto:alberto.hermosel@elo.org).



## “2020 CIC Hunting in Art” Prize

Hunters and Biodiversity: sketching biodiversity through cartoons

The “CIC Hunting in Art” prize was established with the aim to reward an artist, museum or cultural organisation, which promotes the values of hunting. The “2020 CIC Hunting in Art prize” will aim to showcase the contribution of hunters to biodiversity through the lens of comics. We want to show the world how much hunters do for nature and biodiversity.

Help us to promote our values and to support wildlife conservation through your art! This implies drawings / illustrations only. Please do not use text in any comic strip / cartoon.

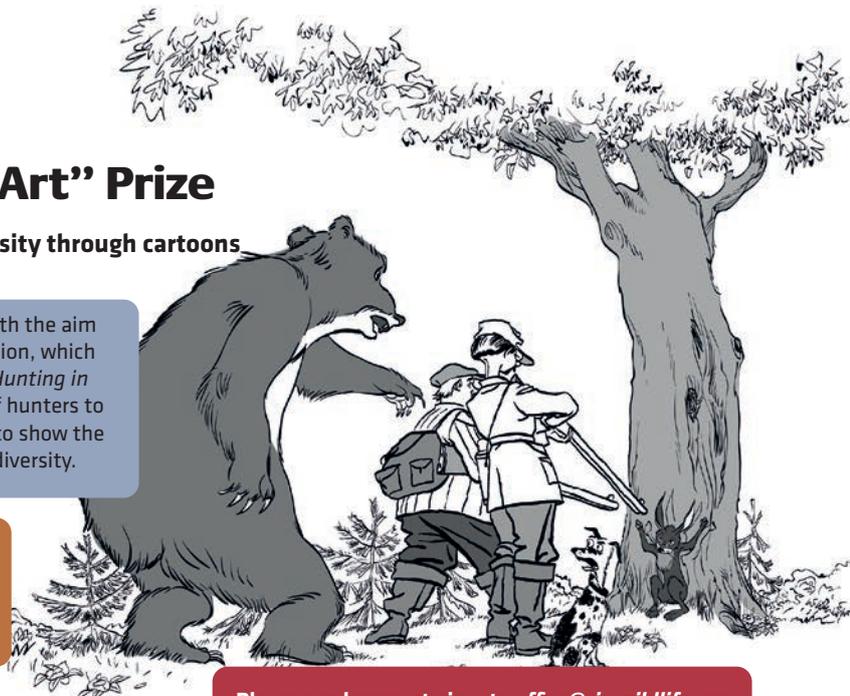
The pre-selected cartoons will be exhibited at the 67th CIC General Assembly (13-17 May 2020) and the winners will be announced at the closing ceremony of our assembly.

1st prize: 700 EUR  
2nd prize: 500 EUR  
3rd prize: 300 EUR

Please send your art piece to [office@cic-wildlife.org](mailto:office@cic-wildlife.org)  
(A4 size, min. 150dpi resolution)

Deadline for submissions: 29 February 2020

For more information please contact the CIC Headquarters.





# SYSTEMIC: towards a circular economy



Veneta PANEVA, RISE Foundation

The SYSTEMIC project – funded under the EU's Horizon 2020 programme – is running between 2017 and 2021. It aims to demonstrate **new approaches to nutrient recovery from bio-waste**, such as animal manure, sewage sludge and food waste.

The RISE Foundation is part of a consortium of 15 partners from academia, industry, and other organisations who have joined efforts to test new circular solutions for the valorisation of bio-waste as a means of sustaining future food production while decreasing environmental impacts.



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One of the SYSTEMIC partner biogas plants, Acqua & Sole, Italy.

## What is the value of SYSTEMIC?

To achieve its objective, the project has enhanced several large-scale biogas plants throughout Europe with **novel nutrient-recovery technologies**. Each of the plants processes a different kind of bio-waste – animal manure, sewage sludge or food waste – which results in a specific, nutrient-rich product.

These products will then be extensively tested in field trials to determine their environmental impact and agronomic efficiency. Additionally, the composition and quality of the recovered products will be refined to meet the requirements of regional markets, as well as to add economic value for the plant itself. This **market-driven approach** is needed to develop a viable and sustainable industry.

The wider uptake of the approaches and transition towards a circular economy will be stimulated through:

- creation of business opportunities for ten additional plants;
- dissemination of economic and environmental benefits; and
- policy recommendations.

## Progress to date

The project has been working on addressing policy barriers to the greater uptake and re-use of recovered nutrients for agriculture, most notably targeting EU's Fertiliser Regulation and Nitrates Directive.

The project has already produced a num-

ber of valuable resources related to its key objectives. All of these are accessible from the 'Downloads' section of the SYSTEMIC website: <https://systemicproject.eu/downloads/>

### Business case evaluation report

The report addresses the current EU policy, legal and economic frameworks, and analyses six individual bio-gas plants in terms of their respective policy, agricultural and food industry environments.

### Bio-gas plant factsheets

The factsheets explore in detail the bio-gas plants that the project collaborates closely with and has enhanced with different nutrient-recovery technologies. The factsheets include updated monitoring data, status of construction, summaries on performance, as well as elements specific to each plant.

### New technology for phosphorus recovery

The RePeat technology for phosphorus recovery from digestate was recently built at one of the project bio-gas plants on the basis of the results of a study conducted by three of the project partners. Information on the technology and the study itself are available on the website.

### Product factsheets

The factsheets explore some of the main products of nutrient recovery, including their main characteristics, agronomic and environmental aspects, as well as their standpoint in the EU.

### Article on bio-based fertilisers from agricultural waste

The study explores production and performance of bio-based mineral fertilisers from agricultural waste using ammonia (stripping-)scrubbing technology.

## Keep up-to-date and follow SYSTEMIC online



Visit the project website at [www.systemicproject.eu](http://www.systemicproject.eu)



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SYSTEMIC receives funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation under Grant Agreement no. 730400.

## Smart information, governance and business innovations for sustainable supply and payment mechanisms for forest ecosystem services



Lindsey CHUBB, ELO

On 29 October-1 November 2019, the Horizon 2020 project, InnoForEST held its 3<sup>rd</sup> Consortium Assembly in Schlierbach, Austria hosted by project partner, STUDIA.

The goal of InnoForEST is to spark a transformation in the European forest sector by steering policies and businesses towards the provision of a wide range of forest ecosystem services. InnoForEST has established six real world pilots that represent a range of successful coordination approaches and business models. These case studies, or Innovation Regions (IR) have been developed as examples that offer different kinds of forest ecosystem services with the help of different policy and business approaches.

The consortium visited the local Austria innovation which focuses on value chains for wood and timber and tourism and recreation through the Waldness® project. At a regional level, the innovation is expected to lead to a more sustainable forest management and an increased collaboration of stakeholders from forestry, public administration, regional planning, tourism, and traditional craftsmanship in order to create value and support local jobs.



The consortium will scale up the results to the European level by making use of Europe's social-ecological landscape as well as the sustainability impacts of different governance mechanisms. The lessons will feed into a roadmap for the provision of forest ecosystem service bundles and a broad range of dissemination and communication activities. Ultimately, this will lead to better policy coordination, improved well-being of EU citizens and the ecological integrity of forest ecosystems.

The final meeting and conference will be held in Brussels, Belgium in November 2020.

 @InnoForEST  
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 InnoForEST

 The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 under the Grant Agreement number 763899, InnoForEST project, within the Innovation Action.

## BIOPLAT-EU: to promote the market uptake of sustainable bioenergy in Europe



Lindsey CHUBB, ELO

On 26 September 2019, the Scientific Engineering Centre "Biomass" (SECB) hosted the **BIOPLAT-EU** project consortium in Kiev, Ukraine, where ELO joined for the second progress meeting of the project. The overall objective of the project is to promote the market uptake of sustainable bioenergy in Europe using marginal, underutilized and contaminated lands for non-food biomass production through the provision of a web-based platform.

The consortium is in the process of collecting GIS land data on Marginal, Underutilized and Contaminated (MUC) lands in European and neighboring countries and developing the online public user-friendly STEN tool. The STEN tool (STEN: Sustainability Tool for Europe and Neighbouring countries) will provide the user specifica-

tions about MUC lands in an area of their interest to determine whether the land is suitable and/or feasible for a specific type of biomass production. STEN is based on existing recognized and tested methodologies for the assessment of 9 environmental indicators (GHG emissions, Air Pollutants Emissions, Soil Quality, Water Quality, Water Use and Efficiency, Biodiversity, and LUC). The database of maps of MUC lands in Europe and STEN tool will be shared on a web-based platform as a core source of information and utility related to this topic for stakeholders.

The next meeting will be held March 2020 in Bucharest, Romania. ELO will continue to collect existing MUC land data from each Member State until the database is complete. Interested persons with rele-

vant information are encouraged to contact the ELO Projects Team at [lindsey.chubb@elo.org](mailto:lindsey.chubb@elo.org).

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# REWARD - 3<sup>rd</sup> Transnational Meeting

Juliette OLIVIER, ELO



On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2019, the partners of the project REWARD met in Naklo, Slovenia to hold their 3<sup>rd</sup> trans-national meeting hosted by the Biotehniški center Naklo. Each partner presented a selection of 5 case studies of women entrepreneurs in European rural areas who also develop activities fostering rural development linked to cultural heritage. The following day included a visit to the family farm Policarjeva Kmetija owned by

Andreja JAGODIC who inherited it from her parents. On this self-sufficient farm, she works with her husband, her sister and one other employee. The main activity of the 52ha farm is milk production from which they produce various types of dairy products. They also grow crops used to feed the animals such as pigs and chickens. All their products, ranging from cheeses, milk, eggs, meat to potatoes, are sold in the farm

shop on site. Alongside their agricultural activities, the farm maintains the cultural heritage of the site by preserving the 200 years old house and promoting traditional crafts through its unique outdoor stone mill museum. For 300 years, stones present on this farm were used to create millstones that were sold all over Slovenia and Croatia. Today, some of them are still used to ground cereals in Croatia.

The next step of the project is the development of the case studies chosen and create short interviews for the training material. The next meeting will be on the 9<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> March in Krakow, Poland.

Follow REWARD on Social Media:



<http://reward-erasmus.eu/>



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## FARMID 4<sup>th</sup> meeting

Branwen MILES, ELO

The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting for the FARMID project took place in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains in Granada, Spain. Within the picturesque landscape, the meeting was an opportunity for partners to discuss and view the training modules that had been prepared.

The following day, partners visited el Parque del Seminario which is partly managed by the Centro Especial de Empleo Municipal Jardines y Naturaleza'. An employment centre that employs people with mild intellectual disability with the aim of securing paid work and the provision of personal and social inclusion services. The centre was established in 1994, and currently employs around 100 people and manages 80% of public gardens in the Jaen municipality.

Whilst the centre employs people with a range of different disabilities across their organisation, from gardens to administration staff, one of the biggest challenges is the lack of training provided to this group. Therefore, the centre provides internships, vocational training and work experience in various forms in order to facilitate a transition to employment.

The main goal of the training and work experience provided by the employment centre is to enable them to find work in the private sector. In line with the FARMID project objectives, it is hoped that the barriers and prejudices surrounding people with mild intellectual disabilities will be broken to show that they are hard workers and can be fully active members of the workforce.

The next project meeting will coincide with the final conference held in Brussels, more details to follow.



FARMID



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**FARMID**  
FARMing as an employment opportunity for  
people with Mild Intellectual Disability  
Project N°: 2017-1-SI01-KA202-035535

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## Diary dates

### 20 January 2020, Salzburg

Regional meeting of the Large Carnivores platform

[www.elo.org](http://www.elo.org)

### 22 January, Paris

Paris International Agricultural Show

[www.salon-agriculture.com](http://www.salon-agriculture.com)

### 29 January, European Parliament, Brussels

Climate Positive Farming - What solutions to make the EU agriculture climate positive?; yearly ELO Innovation conference hosted by Martin HLAVÁČEK MEP, co-organized with Corteva Agrosience

[www.elo.org](http://www.elo.org)

### 4 - 5 February, Brussels

international Conference on Forest for Biodiversity and Climate Change - organized by DG Environment

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/international-conference-forests-biodiversity-and-climate-change-2020-feb-04\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/international-conference-forests-biodiversity-and-climate-change-2020-feb-04_en)

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### 21 February, Committee of the Regions, Brussels

Halting the loss of pollinators: the role of the EU agricultural and regional development policies

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/halting-the-loss-of-pollinators-the-role-of-the-eu-agricultural-and-region-registration-84616061919>

### 17 March, European Parliament, Brussels

European Tree of the Year Award Ceremony

[www.treeoftheyear.org](http://www.treeoftheyear.org)

### 8 - 12 June, Brussels

15<sup>th</sup> International Heritage Rose Conference  
[www.rosabelgica2020.com](http://www.rosabelgica2020.com)



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