

# National meeting of the Wildlife Estates Label 2025



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On Monday, 8 September 2025, the Wildlife Estates (WE) Steering Committee met at the Fondation François Sommer in Paris to review the label's challenges and priorities. European delegates shared recent achievements, while the Scientific Committee, now chaired by Professor Klaus HACKLÄNDER, led a focused discussion on methodology and future biodiversity objectives.

The Wildlife Estates steering committee met in Paris at the Fondation François Sommer on Monday 8 September to discuss about the challenges the label is facing, the big majority of our European delegates assist and could present their last achievements, the Scientific committee with his new elected chairman Professor Klaus HACKLÄNDER was present as well, so interesting discussions took place regarding our methodology and biodiversity issues towards the future.

Today, the WE network spans nearly 100 territories in France and 600 across Europe, representing over 2 million hectares—the largest network of private landowners in Europe—where biodiversity and rural economies progress side by side.

This message resonates strongly in France, where private owners hold around 75% of forests and 85% of agricultural land. By valuing exemplary management, the WE Label shows that conservation outcomes improve when daily stewards of the land are empowered, recognised and connected through a shared framework.

Field visits on Wednesday, 10 September, in Seine-et-Marne brought these principles to life. More than 50 participants from across Europe discovered the Châtillon-La-Borde forest (Peugeot Frères) and the Maison Suisse (Foundation for Nature Conservation), two candidates for the label.

On site, they observed concrete actions: restoration of ponds to support aquatic and amphibian habitats; hedge planting to reinforce ecological corridors; and systematic naturalist and ecological monitoring to guide adaptive management. Each project reflects active partnerships—owners, hunters, managers and naturalists working together—so that evidence, experience and stewardship translate into durable gains for wildlife.

Looking ahead, the WE community's mandate is clear: raise the bar for measurable results, deepen collaboration and scale what works. Paris 2025 confirmed both the momentum—and the method—to do exactly that.

On Tuesday, 9 September, over 115 participants gathered in the Auditorium Jacqueline Sommer for a high-level symposium bringing together public decision-makers, private environmental stakeholders, researchers and certified landowners.

The exchanges centred on three priorities:

- (1) Recognising the leadership of private landowners in European biodiversity;
- (2) Strengthening science-based management through the WE methodology;
- (3) Accelerating cooperation between authorities, managers, hunters and conservation experts.



Partners panel at the Auditorium Jacqueline Sommer with Thierry de L'ESCAILLE, Philippe JUSTEAU, Alban DE LOISY et Olivier THIBAUT moderated by Pierre DUBREUIL.