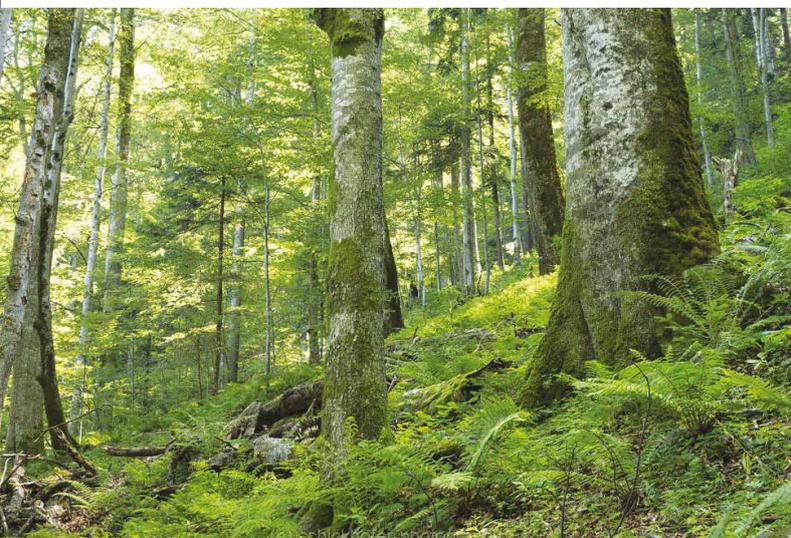




Old Growth Forest Protection Strategy Outline

CONSULTATION DRAFT ONLY



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Old Growth Forest Protection Strategy outline

This preliminary document is intended to get the ball rolling for a coordinated Strategy to protect, restore and link old growth forest (OGF) in Europe.

It results from input of organisations and individual experts across Europe, many of whom have already achieved much policy reform and action in the field.

With further feedback over the next 2-3 months, the Strategy will be finalised to address the significant gaps that still remain.

More detail is available on many of the actions proposed.



PART I

PREPARATORY ASPECTS

1. BACKGROUND

Old growth forest is the most valuable element of Europe's natural heritage, but also the most fragile. Threats are occurring across Europe: with rising timber prices, widespread illegal logging, fragmentation from new transport routes, inappropriate use for biomass wood fuel and pressure for measures to combat bark beetle as climate change takes hold.

Significant progress has been made with extending protection, for example in Bulgaria and Ukraine; but much still has to be implemented, whilst in Romania past achievements are coming under growing pressure. A substantial proportion of old growth forest lacks adequate protection, both within and outside the European Union.

There is a need to develop a coordinated strategy for protection of remaining areas of old growth forest. Challenges are often still being addressed piecemeal, and there is a lack of general awareness of the value of this resource and how to ensure it is preserved for posterity.

2. CONFERENCE

A conference¹ held in Brussels on 13/14th September, organized by Wild Europe and hosted by the EC Committee of the Regions proposed recommendations for a Protection Strategy.

Involving 148 registrations from 28 countries, the conference was attended by representatives from the EC, UNESCO, Council of Europe, national and local governments, and a wide range of participants from forestry, landowning, enterprise and ecosystem service specialisms in addition to conservation interests.

The conference was opened by Humberto Delgado, Director of Natural Capital at the Commission, in tandem with Daniel Calleja, Director General of DG Environment at the EC, and Isabel Anatole-Gabriel, Head of Department for Europe & North America for UNESCO World Heritage; both provided support thorough video.

The conference followed a lengthy consultation exercise.

3. KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE PROTECTION STRATEGY

- **Partnership.** The Strategy aims to support existing initiatives by catalyzing a joint partnership approach, as well as promoting new initiatives. That should involve all relevant elements in the conservation and other sectors.
- **A Europe-wide approach,** including EU and non EU states and associated institutions, also recognizing that much policy and law operates at national level within the EU.

¹ See www.wildeurope.org for further information on the conference.

- **Inter-sector consensus.** The Strategy aims to build on common ground to create, so far as possible, a joint approach with other interests including forestry, landholding and timber processing. OGF has multiple non-extractive values and occupies a tiny proportion of forested area, so consensus rather than conflict should be achievable.
- **A multi-specialist approach.** With intrinsic and ecological benefits at its core, the Strategy needs to involve a full range of specialisms in its working network – eg carbon, economics, enterprise, forestry, hydrology, land management etc – alongside conservation.
- **Significant geographic and temporal scales.** It is vital to aim for long-term holding structures and protection of sufficiently large areas around core OGF for restoration and, where feasible, linkage.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROTECTION STRATEGY

4.1 Short-term objectives: the next 18 months

- All key known OGF areas to be recorded and recognized, highlighting those without adequate protection [further areas will remain to be identified]
- Improved protection requirements identified and promoted for key OGF areas in EU external to the N2000 network
- Improved protection requirements identified and promoted for key OGF areas outside the EU
- Awareness of OGF benefits and threats among all key interested parties
- Effective Early Warning System under way for addressing key threats
- Recognition of OGF value and need for protection in the EU Parliament, by Resolution or equivalent, with a populist political mandate for protection
- Key funding sources identified and approached

4.2 Medium term objectives (the next 3-5 years)

- All key OGF areas identified, recognized and protected with plans for restoration and linkage where appropriate
- Management in Natura 2000, Emerald, UNESCO World Heritage and Biosphere Reserve networks recognizes, plans and coordinates for OGF forest protection within its network
- Effective funding opportunities secured from recognition and facilitation of the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) agenda
- Dedicated allocation of funding for OGF within key institutions
- Credible, incentivized protection initiatives address protection gaps on non-state owned land (private, community, corporate, church)
- Designation of new protected OGF areas, with restoration and connectivity
- OGF support from the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, with implementation of an extended successor to Target 3B, Action 12 in the 2020 Biodiversity Strategy
- Land purchase funds established
- Opportunity considered for targeted protection legislation, if needed

PART II

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PROTECTION STRATEGY

1. DEFINITION STRUCTURE

It would be difficult and undesirable to achieve a single definition.

The aim of the Strategy is to secure agreement on a practical structure of definitions² for old growth forest:

- encompassing terms such as virgin, primary and near primary – a gradient of naturalness
- based on consensus within the conservation sector
- recognized by other sectors including forestry & landowning, thus supporting inter-sector partnership
- capable of supporting, and where necessary reconciling, existing national definitions
- producing common standards for protection and restoration
- incorporating a range of principles including non-intervention management and multiple benefit opportunity.

Actions:

- Initial definition structure circulated at September conference
- Discussions since with key parties
- Further circulation in Spring 2018, aiming for consensus

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2. MAPPING FRAMEWORK

Develop an interactive framework to map the location and status of OGF, involving satellite and ground truthing, with capacity for regular updating and monitoring.

For the first time, this would give a cost-effective but comprehensive, self-updating overview of old growth forest, which can be linked to protective or incentive action.

Actions:

- Initial concept established with International Institute of Applied Statistical Analysis (IIASA), prototypes are being discussed
- Advice and linkage sought from existing initiatives (including High Nature Value forest) to ensure efficient coordination not duplication
- Initial data sets to be provided by researchers and others
- LEAF concept (Last European Ancient Forests) devised for building a network of local NGO and individual expertise across Europe, with a small secretariat to administer mapping, monitoring and liaison on actions, including management of an Early Warning System (see section 3 below)³

²Initial definition document available on request. ³Document with initial specification available on request.

3. EUROPEAN SUPPORT NETWORK

Develop the LEAF (Last European Ancient Forest) network.

Actions:

- An Early Warning System for identifying and addressing new threats ideally before they arise, and loggers or developers invest in influencing planners or decision takers
- Key elements of EWS identified and developed. The final name may change to Early Action System – EAS – perhaps less controversial for the landholders involved, with positive cooperation is a key focus
- Two different formats are being prepared: 1) involving simple administration, verification & referral of threats, and 2) a longer term version with add-on features: capacity for collective representation, training and capacity building for protection and restoration
- A preliminary listing of countries to be drafted, with prospective details of contacts (address, skills) for each – and potential interface defined with existing protected area networks

4. EUROPEAN STRATEGIC LINKAGES

Support opportunities for stronger institutional backing for OGF, through new initiatives and cooperation between organisations:

4.1 Promote linkage between the European Commission and UNESCO and their respective Natura 2000, World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve networks, at all levels: strategic and field, promoting OGF protection as a trial initiative for this.

Actions:

- Discussions with Wild Europe on linkage between EC and UNESCO networks to be built on. to
- A Wild Europe discussion paper to be circulated, based on the principle of linkage now included in the EC Action Plan for Nature (as an annex) and cited in Isabelle Anatole-Gabriel's address to the September conference
- Follow-up meetings in Spring 2018 to discuss, with reference to OGF protection, 1) overall links between EC & UNESCO and 2) requirements for OGF in World Heritage Sites and Biosphere Reserves 3) potential for further extension of coordination to include the Emerald Network

4.2 Discuss possible options for inclusion of the Emerald Network with the Bern Convention in active support of OGF protection

Actions:

- Outline discussions lead to a Wild Europe presentation to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention on 05/12/2017
- Further meetings in Spring 2018
- Collation and dissemination of best practice in OGF management, protection and restoration
- Possible linkage, should agreement be reached elsewhere, with any project for Phase II of the EC Guidelines project on management of wilderness in Natura 2000 areas, and Phase II of the EC Wilderness Register

4.3 Promotion of joint approaches with the non-state forestry sector

DG Environment and DG Agriculture, European Forest Institute, CEPF (Private Forest Enterprise), European Landowners Organisation, corporate sector and others all to be involved.

Actions:

- Finalise and promote the Conservation Capital report for Wild Europe on Incentives for Landholder (non state) Protection of OGF to be published shortly
- Discuss implementation of report recommendations
- Identify options for further development of the project
- Discuss potential for a project on usage of the non-extractive socio-economic agenda as a supplementary incentive, including the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) agenda
- Identify potential for partnerships with forestry and corporate sectors
- Liaise on OGF management, carbon and climate change mitigation, particularly with the forestry sector – ensuring clear understanding and agreement on the science underpinning logging of OGF and heavily negative net impact on climate change through accentuated net carbon release
- Discuss and promote the Association of Austrian National Parks initiative for bark beetle management⁴

4.4 Proposal of a potential set-aside initiative to EUSTAFOR

Actions:

- Build on discussion with EUSTAFOR on Wild Europe suggestions for members to audit their portfolios to assess potential for replacement of felling with a conservation agenda involving restoration and non-extractive enterprise (ecotourism and PES) in uneconomic areas and those containing OGF and HNV
- Promote model initiatives of this type already being undertaken by state forest agencies (below)
- Liaise on support for this initiative with eg: Coillte Irish State Forest Agency (Wild Nephin project)⁵ and associates, Bulgarian Executive Forest Agency, BfN and GFA (Germany), Staatsbosbeheer (Netherlands) and Forestry Commission Scotland.
- Assess possible link with funding from CAP and other sources

⁴ <http://www.wildeurope.org/images/pdf/national-parks-austria-position-paper-on-bark-beetle-management.pdf>. ⁵ Collaborative project between Irish Forest Agency and Ballycroy National Park to create 11,000 hectares declared as forest and wetland wilderness in County Mayo, North West Ireland, personally supported by Irish PM while EU President, and launched at conference co-chaired by PAN Parks and Wild Europe in May 2013.

4.5 Liaison with conservation and associated interests to establish OGF as a policy priority

Actions:

- Link with the multiple benefit agenda outlined in Communications (section 10) below
- At international European level, liaise with EC, UNESCO, Council of Europe, UNEP, Carpathian Convention and others
- At national level, liaise with government ministries and agencies, institutions on OGF protection plans and initiatives
- At local level, liaise both direct and via Committee of the Regions (venue for the September 2017 OGF conference)
- Discuss with key NGOs and other entities their plans for OGF protection and how the Protection Strategy could best support these: WWF Danube Carpathian Programme and individual offices, FZS, BLI, European Beech Forest Network etc

5. THE POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 Overall policy and legal protection within Europe

No new legislation is feasible presently at EC level, but there is opportunity to promote better implementation and enforcement of existing policy and law – and to collate and disseminate information on best practice legislation at all levels: EU, Member State and local authority. And, of course, opportunity for action at national level and in non EU countries generally.

- Finalise the ClientEarth report for Wild Europe on Protection of OGF in Europe: EU Law and Policy Analysis, assessing options for implementation of recommendations at EU and international level
- Link to other initiatives, including relevant elements in the compendium of wilderness legislation (Tilburg University)
- Finalise the report from Leeds University for Wild Europe on Protection of OGF in Europe, assessing options for reform or improved implementation at international and national level

5.2 The EU Biodiversity Strategy

- Promote implementation where relevant of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, eg Target 3B Action 12 – which calls for Member States to ensure that forest management plans or equivalent instruments include preservation of wilderness forest
- This should be linked to proactive assessment of plans at relevant Member State level (national, local authority). Catalyse the identification, promotion and implementation of protection
- Ensure a prominent profile for OGF in the 2020 EU Biodiversity Strategy

5.3 OGF profile in key international agreements and entities

Where relevant promote the profile of OGF and liaise with the following (not intended as a comprehensive listing):

- European Forest Strategy
- UNEP: Carpathian Convention
- CBD, including linkage to the Aichi targets
- The global conservation community, given Europe's influence on climate change, energy, illegal logging (EUTR), trade and aid

5.4 PES and Climate change

- Promote OGF as an icon for the PES agenda: addressing climate change with its high carbon storage capacity, ongoing sequestration facility, charismatic contribution towards forest restoration addressing flood mitigation and water purity, unique biodiversity and marketing draw for ecotourism and associated enterprise. All this generates policy profile and funding for conservation, and support from local communities and landholders who benefit from income & employment associated with the PES agenda.
- Liaise on OGF management, carbon and climate change mitigation – ensuring clear understanding and agreement on the science underpinning logging of OGF and heavily negative net impact on climate change through accentuated net carbon release: noting reports from Royal Institute of International Affairs (2016) and the European Academies Science Advisory Council (2017)
- Catalyse individual model projects to promote generation of carbon funding for OGF protection (avoided deforestation) and restoration (sequestration), in partnership with Forest Carbon and others
- Promote development of an information base in support of this: carbon storage of temperate vs boreal vs tropical forests; collation of examples of government related carbon credit use for OGF protection; assessment of the potential versus actuality of compliance and voluntary carbon markets for funding and general support of European OGF
- Promote formulation of proposals for improving funding capacity of the voluntary/CSR markets
- Promote provision of proposals for OGF to EC and European countries negotiating the Paris Agreement re carbon trading mechanisms
- Where relevant propose reforms to, and where necessary counter, those EU trade, aid and energy policies with negative external impact: EUTR, biomass, bio-prospecting
- Promote joint strategy to address the impact of climate change - including fire and bark beetle - in tandem with the forestry sector (institutions, government agencies and private landholders) and other interested parties. Allowing for dynamism of natural process while ensuring security for adjacent productive forests

5.5 Biofuels and Climate change

- Contribute effectively to ensuring forestry and timber associations are fully and publicly aware of the science that underpins why use of wood fuel biomass aggravates rather than mitigates climate change through carbon release e.g. reports from Royal Institute of International Affairs (2016) and the European Academies Science Advisory Council (2017)
- Ensure decision takers who influence trading, subsidy, energy and land use policies for this agenda are equally aware
- Link extraction to the illegal logging agenda where relevant
- Assess opportunity to incentivise landholders with an alternative non-extractive enterprise approach

5.6 Illegal logging

- Promote the use of citizens apps in Romania for tracking lorries from logging source to processing plant, and supporting their use in other countries
- Liaise with responsible timber companies to ascertain remaining weaknesses in the tracing and general address of illegal logging
- Support initiatives to ensure that wholesale and retail timber consumers, particularly those outside Europe (eg Japan) are aware when illegal timber is being sold
- Contribute to transfer of sufficient information on illegal logging to enable prosecutions by the EC
- Ongoing liaison with FSC and other certification bodies

5.7 CAP reform

Potential for supporting OGF represents a relatively small element of our CAP proposals, but there could be some key potential:

- Support OGF through proposal for a 3% Ecological Focus Area supplement to protection of OGF, tradable at regional level, thus consolidating areas for protection, restoration and connectivity that could be funded through CAP
- Reinforce this potential by linking future CAP payments to provision of ecosystem service benefits, which is applicable at the larger scale enabled by cooperation between major land users and creation of the large new protected areas resulting from trading and consolidation of the EPA supplement
- Apply CAP payments to set-aside of OGF and adjacent areas by state and non-state forest owners
- Promote improved take-up of existing CAP payments through DG Agri for forest restoration

6. OGF CONSERVATION BEST PRACTICE

6.1 Evaluation of practical requirements

- Promote evaluation of practical requirements for protection, restoration, expansion and linkage to secure long-term ecological sustainability & coherence
- Produce information by country, forest type, individual area.

6.2 Strengthen protective management

- Ensure old growth forest is well profiled in the existing EC Guidelines on Management of Wilderness Areas in the Natura 2000 Network. Identify key opportunity sites, promote direct and indirect benefits for biodiversity
- Develop Phase II of the EC Guidelines, profiling the value of OGF, how to improve protection, and linking closely with the EC Action Plan for Nature through input of an extensive programme of (non-extractive) enterprise
- Identify OGF in the existing EC Wilderness Register, and develop a Phase II of the Wilderness Register incorporating non EU countries – with linkage where relevant to individual protection plans based where possible on multi-sector consensus approach underpinned by incentives

6.3 Collate and disseminate best practice

- Identify and promote model projects for OGF protection and restoration in Nature 2000, Emerald and UNESCO World Heritage networks, and with initiatives elsewhere – eg Fundatia Conservation Carpathia (FCC) in Romania. Include examples involving 1) good practice ecological management, 2) benefit based incentive systems for local communities and landholders, and 3) zonation planning
- Promote a pioneering initiative for OGF protection that links EC and UNESCO and prospectively also Emerald networks
- Develop and promote best practice “toolkit” programmes to support protection and restoration that include appropriate combinations of representation, economic valuation, and non-extractive enterprise implementation aimed at local community, landholder and general society benefit⁶
- Identify and address requirements for capacity building, training and consultancy support 1) for NGOs - to strengthen effectiveness in OGF conservation and socio-economic and enterprise agendas and 2) for local communities and landholders to ensure maximisation of local benefit from the OGF non-extractive enterprise agenda
- Identify EC measures that could help facilitate the payment for ecosystem services (PES) agenda
- Create an online PES Enterprise Forum: highlighting and linking best practice from initiatives that can translate the economic value of OGF ecosystem service benefits into funding for conservation and local communities & landholders

⁶Drawing off existing examples e.g. the Sumava programme – and the proposed ANEEP (Audit of Non Extractive Economic Benefit).

- Promote an effective approach at EC and national level to disease management and research generally where relevant e.g. ash dieback, sudden oak death, alder canker
- Promote best practice in forestry management planning for OGF protection – eg the European Nature Trust project with BSPB in Bulgaria for District Forest Authorities.⁷

6.4 Support OGF protection and restoration initiatives

- Highlight and support examples of large scale OGF protection through action in the state sector – eg 1) the recent protection of a further 108,000 hectares of OGF in Bulgaria; support for translation of that national policy decision to implementation at field level; identification and address of areas remaining unprotected, eg in the private sector; 2) partnership work eg between FZS and Ukrainian authorities to improve protection of OGF in the national park network
- Highlight and disseminate examples of OGF protection through existing private sector contracts for OGF, eg Durrenstein in Austria⁸
- Support appropriate action where old growth forest and its wilderness principles are under threat e.g. the programme for Sumava National Park⁹, the Romanian national OGF programme, a non-extractive community enterprise alternative to logging in Bialowieza Forest.
- Catalyze restoration, expansion and linkage of old growth forest – including areas of potential trans-boundary cooperation to create long-term world class OGF locations – eg Poland-Belarus for Bialowieza Forest, Sumava-BayerischerWald on the Czech-German border.

6.5 Promote research initiatives

- More indepth study into the biodiversity value and functioning of OGF, alternative means of restoration, location and scale of restoration and connectivity required for sustainability and full ecosystem contribution
- The importance of non-intervention management to ecosystem service contribution, not least in mitigating climate change; the dynamics of carbon storage and sequestration
- The economic and enterprise benefits of OGF and capacity building required to manage this agenda effectively to serve not rule conversation objectives
- The social value of OGF and its relevance to initiatives for youth development, youth at risk, healthcare and other issues of relevance to the political arena and thus importance for conservation
- The cultural importance of OGF, its role in articulating community identity. Variance across Europe
- Different approaches to restoration: eg, with assisted restoration, the importance of an appropriate planting density – often determined by grant providers on the basis of principles derived from commercial timber production rather than biodiversity considerations, resulting in densities that are too high and unnecessarily expensive.
- Linkage to key research entities, including RIIA, EASAC and recently formed EU supported Forests and Co

⁷ A model project promoting recognition and protection of wilderness forest in the planning process. Further information available from the European Nature Trust. ⁸ Where the wilderness, non-intervention area was protected through a one-off LIFE+ payment, and more recently extended through annual funding from national sources. ⁹ Further information available on the Wild Europe coordinated programme of representation, economic and enterprise benefit.

7. FUNDING AND INCENTIVES

Proposals for improved protection can be well justified on the basis of intrinsic and ecological benefit, but to be effective and encourage sound partnership particularly with forest users, they will require a well developed range of funding and incentive support.

Actions:

- Identify existing official incentives for protection – eg: best practice with subsidy/ compensation provision at EU, national and local level. Some key preliminary feedback on this should be derived from the Conservation Capital Conservation Capital report for Wild Europe on Incentives for Landholder (non state) Protection of OGF to be published shortly
- Promote an effective incentive structure for private sector owners
- Identify requirements for more effective impact of existing incentives for OGF protection and restoration, and shortfalls in amount or provision. Formulate and catalyse recommendations for addressing this
- Seek and promote improved provision of biodiversity conservation grants where OGF management is involved
- Promote innovative funding: new sources - eg certain types of biodiversity offset, input from the PES agenda, corporate sponsorship, revolving capital funds
- Identify in particular EC measures that could help facilitate payment for ecosystem services (PES)
- Establish model carbon funding and flood mitigation projects related to protection and restoration
- Collate best practice information on existing models for securing funds for landholders and communities for forest protection (avoided deforestation) and restoration from ecosystem services: carbon sequestration, flood mitigation, pollution alleviation
- Develop and promote practical projects to illustrate the value of OGF to private landowners (PES, tourism etc), identifying what further incentives may be required (consultant and format identified)
- Implement 'business support packages' (see Wild Europe proposals for Green Infrastructure programme and CAP reform¹⁰)
- Promote concept for land purchase fund , identifying multiple sources

¹⁰ CAP reform proposal documents available on request

8. NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR LONG-TERM PROTECTION

A key aim of the OGF Strategy is to secure protection for as long a term as possible - particularly on land that is not owned by state or NGO conservation entities where conservation is often assured by short term contracts and slender incentives.

Two innovative concepts are currently being assessed:

8.1 Easements

Originally more a US concept, where it is incentivised by tax concessions. This involves placement of restrictive covenants governing land use and activities on that provide protection for an area of OFG, in return for incentives. Easements can also be incentivised with income payments, involving a series of rolling agreements if financed for example by a Sinking Fund (limited duration) or an Endowment Fund (long-term duration).

Actions:

- Assess different models to see what best practice can be disseminated. For example, where land is community held.
- Liaise with relevant entities on progress with the US model in Europe – particularly in France and Germany, although fiscal issues are derogated and no initiatives have yet been started.

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8.2 Freehold/leasehold structure

This concept is also at an early stage of assessment. It could take two forms:

- 1) arrangement with an existing freehold owner of an OGF area that he sells or donates his freehold interest, and in return receives a long leasehold interest with OGF protected by restrictive covenants. The freehold is retained by a conservation entity that ensures the covenants are adhered to.
- 2) purchase of a freehold interest, and creation of a long leasehold with restrictive covenants which can then be sold. The cost of the operation is the difference between the freehold purchase price and the value of the leasehold sale – and could be small. Again, the freehold is retained by a conservation entity that ensures the covenants are adhered to.

Actions:

- Assessment of opportunities for such freehold leasehold structure
- Calculation of potential lengths of long leases – which could be very considerable
- Review of potential for associated Land Funds financing successive purchases through rolling capital transactions

Both the above concepts relate back to fund-raising potential (section 7 above) – particularly the freehold/leasehold concept. Funds sourcing is much easier if funders can see their contributions prospectively securing long-term protection for multiple areas.

9. REPRESENTATION

A representation plan outline has been drafted.

Actions:

- Raise the profile of OFG among policy options, building on the attestations provided at the September conference by Daniel Calleja (European Commission), Humberto Delgado (European Commission), Isabelle Anatole Gabriel (UNESCO), Eladio Fernandez Galliano (Council of Europe), Luc Bas (IUCN) among many others
- Promote the non-extractive multiple benefit value of old growth forest to key institutional decision takers at the EC, UNESCO, Council of Europe with Bern Convention & Emerald Network and other entities
- Within the EC structure, link to relevant DGs: DG Environment, DG Clima, DG Agriculture and Rural Affairs (Wild Europe CAP reform proposals), DG Reggio, DG Science & Innovation, DG Social & Employment Affairs (social benefits) etc
- Promote to key EU and non EU individual governments at relevant levels
- Brief key delegations at the Council of Ministers. Establish an EU Parliament caucus on OGF and incorporate calls for OGF protection into EU Parliamentary Questions and formulate a Resolution recognizing OGF values and the need for protection; these would follow the successful Resolution in February 2009 passed by 538 votes to 19 which also endorsed the Wild Europe initiative
- Assess potential for promoting EU leverage in non EU states: Neighbourhood Agreements, transition arrangements, trade and aid agreements, exchange of best practice, linkage with local NGOs etc to determine strategy
- Promote the non-extractive multiple benefit value of old growth forest to key forest, landholding, local community and other institutions (see Communication below)
- Catalyse further development of cross-sector consensus for OGF protection strategy, using information and examples from the above objectives

10. COMMUNICATIONS

A communications plan outline has been drafted.

Actions:

- Articulate key messages on: multiple benefits of OGF with non intervention rather than active management, its uniqueness & complexity, fragility
- Identify, wherever possible in quantifiable terms, the non-extractive multiple benefit values of old growth forest: ecosystem services including carbon/GHG storage and flows, hydrological, biodiversity, social, ecotourism¹¹, education
- Relate these benefits to non-intervention OGF as against managed forests, in relation to climate change and generally, to inform policy and field projects
- Promote OGF as an icon for addressing climate change
- Promote OGF as centerpiece for forest and general restoration – with reference to Target 2 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

¹¹ New market led approaches are being developed to allow more effective value added to local communities.

PART III

CAPACITY TO DELIVER

On the basis that the strategy be implemented with focus on partnership, and support for existing initiatives, the resource required to catalyse the Protection Strategy can initially be relatively minor.

The key components needed at this stage are:

1. A SMALL EXECUTIVE

Based on dedicated coordinator, with input from mapping, website and social media specialisms. Specifications have been drafted. Further support will be provided.

2. AN ADVISORY FORUM

Establish an Old Growth Forest Protection Forum, comprising representatives from key organizations in conservation, forestry, landholding and other sectors – a mainly online entity enabling collation of expert advice and development of a joint approach on specific actions.

3. LEAF WEBSITE

The Strategy should have its own website, with related social media networking.

This would contain: 1) interactive map 2) location and type of supporting initiatives 2) profiling multiple benefits and beneficiaries of OGF with case studies 3) collating and disseminating best practice in OGF management, protection & restoration 4) funding sources and protective structures 5) key scientific and socio-economic documents 6) books, films, art illustrating the cultural value of OGF to society

4. FUND RAISING

A five year budget has been drafted, and will be published once the extent of individual activities and partnerships becomes clear.

There are a number of organisations we will be discussing this aspect with. A list has been prepared.



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