



# ANCIENT AND PRIMEVAL BEECH FORESTS OF THE CARPATHIANS AND OTHER REGIONS OF EUROPE



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# INTRODUCTION

## WORLD HERITAGE BEECH FORESTS

- the World Heritage Beech Forests form a **unique serial site across 18 countries - 93 components**.
- represent the **last remnants of Europe's ancient and primeval beech forests**.
- forests show how beech naturally spread after the last Ice Age.
- rich in biodiversity and globally valuable.
- **protection is a joint effort to preserve a natural legacy for future generations.**



- Albania
- Austria
- Belgium
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- North Macedonia
- Poland
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Switzerland
- Ukraine



# HISTORY

## FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE PRESENT

It all began in 2007 with the "Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians", **10 areas in the Slovak Republic and Ukraine** – thus a transboundary World Heritage from the very beginning.

### 2011 Expansion:

The Ancient Beech Forests of **Germany** joined the World Heritage Site, adding **5 new components**.

### 2017 Major Extension:

The WHS was expanded and renamed to "Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe."  
Newly added countries: **Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy, Slovenia, Spain, Romania**  
**+63 new components** across 10 countries.

### 2021 Further Expansion:

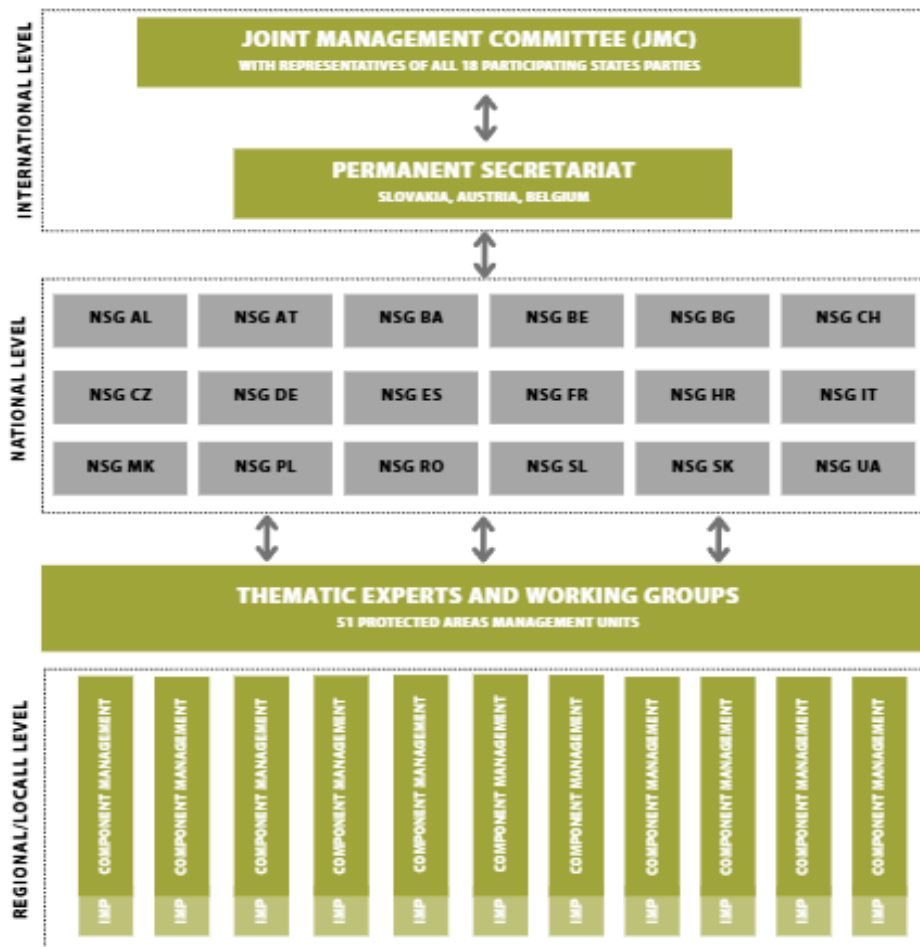
The UNESCO World Heritage Committee extended the site again to include 6 more countries: **Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, North Macedonia, Switzerland, Poland**.  
**+15 new components** in these 6 countries.

**WE GROW TOGETHER  
FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**



**Now, the WHS spans  
over 3 times the size of  
Malta.**

# GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE



**unesco**

Ancient and Primeval Beech  
Forests of the Carpathians  
and Other Regions of Europe  
World Heritage since 2007



# THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

## HISTORY OF MANAGEMENT, OUR MISSION, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



## MISSION

- **coordinate and support the protection** of the last remnants of ancient and primeval Beech Forests of Europe.
- aim to **strengthen cooperation** among participating countries, provide effective administrative and technical support, and promote awareness of these unique forests.
- through **research, monitoring, education, and transparent communication**, we work to safeguard these natural treasures and **engage communities** in their stewardship.

# THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT IN NUMBERS



**SVK - 3FTE**  
**AT - 1,5FTE**  
**BE - 0,3FTE**

The Permanent Secretariat currently consists of members from **3 States Parties**, with a maximum capacity of 5 members at any given time.



**Pictured from left to right:** Boris Bartalský (Slovakia), Martina Pipíšková (Slovakia), Caroline Celis (Belgium), Jana Mikudová (Slovakia), Anna Kovarovics (Austria), Hanns Kirchmeir (Austria), Jana Baumgartner (Austria), Polona Zakrajšek (Austria), and Michael Jungmeier (Austria).

# PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

## ROLES OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT



### ADMINISTRATIVE AND COORDINATION BODY

The Permanent Secretariat provides continuous administrative support to the Joint Management Committee (JMC), ensuring transparent, resilient, and sustainable site management. It coordinates activities within the Integrated Management System under the Joint Declaration of Intent.

### STRATEGIC ROLE

It raises public awareness and visibility of the serial World Heritage site, compiles unified reporting from 18 countries, and serves as a single point of contact for collaboration across the site network.

### INFORMATIONAL AND COMMUNICATION HUB

The Secretariat acts as a central coordination point for 18 countries, ensures smooth information exchange with UNESCO WHC and advisory bodies, and facilitates knowledge sharing, supervision, and advisory support.

# ANNUAL WORK PLAN

PERMANENT SECRETARIAT



1. COORDINATION AND SUPPORT
2. COMMUNICATION AND NETWORKING
3. COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT
4. EXTERNAL FUNDRAISING
5. CAPACITY BUILDING
6. MONITORING AND RESEARCH

**6 OBJECTIVES**



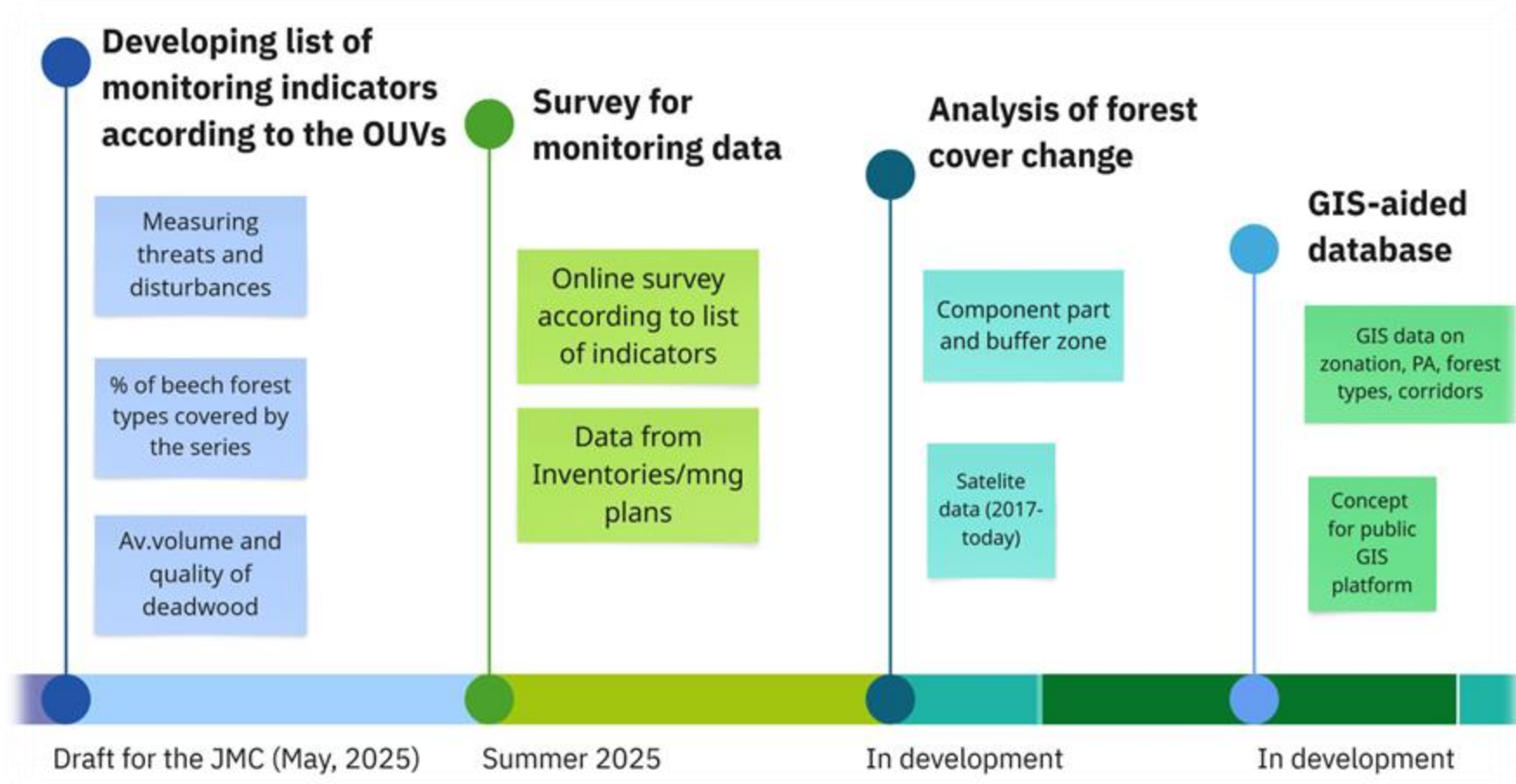
# ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2025

## TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING



# ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2025

## RESEARCH AND MONITORING



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World Heritage since 2007



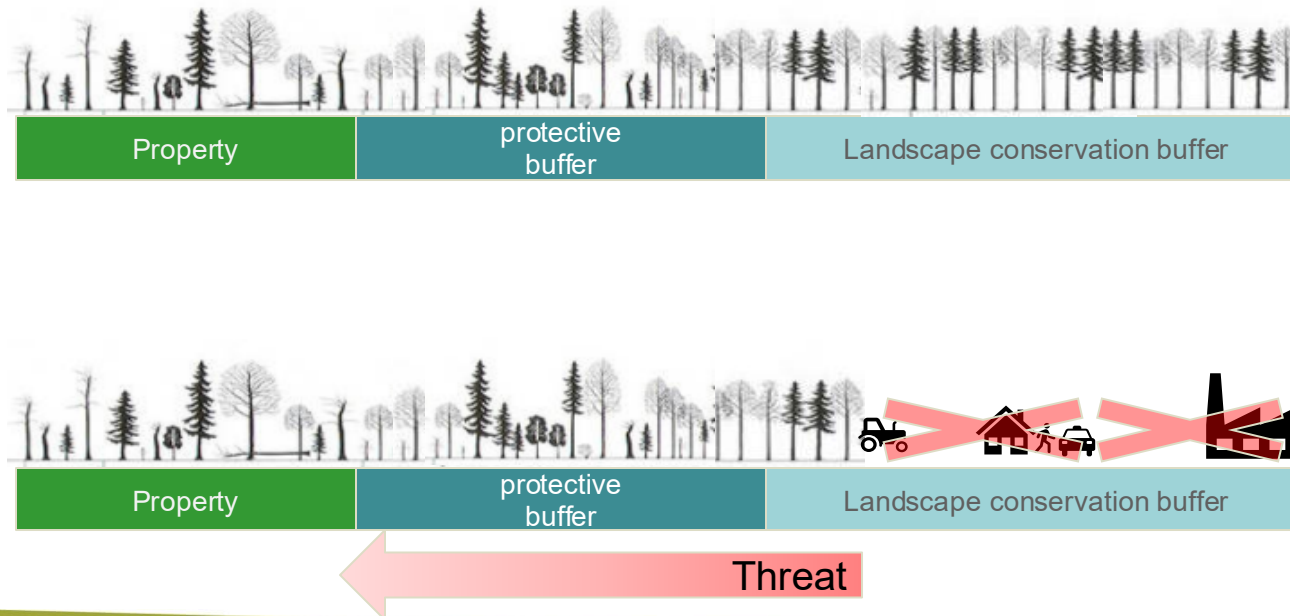


# DEVELOPMENT OF A GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

- How the regulations in the property and buffer zone should look like (Joint Target Definition)
- Specifically addresses individual land uses
- Consensual development process

Led to sub-zoning proposal of buffer zones

L-buffer should limit negative developments on landscape level





# TARGET SETTINGS FOR MINIMUM MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS

FORESTRY	PROPERTY (COMPONENT)	PROTECTION BUFFER SUB-ZONE	LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION BUFFER SUB-ZONE
Phytosanitary cuts (pest control)	Not allowed	Not allowed	Only under management plan
Individual tree selection or plenter cutting.	Not allowed	Not allowed	Allowed within the legally approved Management Plan (MP)
Clear cut	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed

# FUTURE FOCUS: MINIMIZING THREATS

## FOREST FIRES

*“Some fires occur naturally, but humans cause at least 90 percent of them, and extreme wildfires are set to become about 50 percent more frequent by the end of the century” (FAO, 2024).*

**GUIDING PRICIPLES:** Close-to-Nature Forestry - Integrated forest fire management: Relevant management options to address wildfire risk management **landscape-scale approach** to conservation management that includes **wildfire prevention**, ecological resilience, habitat conservation and resource management.

## CHALLENGES:

Variety of regulatory national frameworks

Heterogeneity of fire susceptibility (temporal vs. mediterenian)

FAO. 2024. Integrated Fire Management Voluntary Guidelines – Principles and strategic actions. Second edition. Forestry Working Paper, No. 41. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd1090en>

European Commission, Directorate-General for Environment, Staff Working Document: Guidelines on Closer-To-Nature Forest Management. Publications Office of the European Union, 2023b

Kalapodis N and Sakkas G. Integrated Fire Management and Closer to Nature Forest Management at the Landscape Scale as a Holistic Approach to Foster Forest Resilience to Wildfires [version 3; peer review: 3 approved with reservations, 1 not approved]. Open Res Europe 2025, 4:131 (<https://doi.org/10.12688/openreseurope.17802.3>)

# FUTURE INFORMAL COOPERATION

## Potential cooperation among secretariats in:

- Coordination of planned activities to avoid duplicity of work.
- Share capacities to achieve common goals.
- Inform our networks about our activities.
- Collaborate on project developments.
- Share the knowledge among our communities.



# GET IN TOUCH

## PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

 [secretariat@beechforests.eu](mailto:secretariat@beechforests.eu)  
 [www.europeanbeechforests.org](http://www.europeanbeechforests.org)

## PRESENTERS' CONTACTS

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.**

**HELP US RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE WORLD  
HERITAGE BEECH FORESTS.  
PLEASE, SCAN THE CODE TO FOLLOW AND  
SUPPORT US ON LINKEDIN!**

