

Working group 3:

Sustainable Forest Management

Concluding remarks

Phd Dragan Čomić

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With support from



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Working Group 3 focused on how sustainable forest management **can support:**

1. **Resilient and adaptive** forest ecosystems,
2. **Biodiversity** protection and
3. Enhanced **regional cooperation.**

Main PURPOSE of WG 3



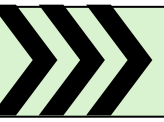
- **STRENGTHENING REGIONAL COOPERATION** on sustainable forest management, biodiversity protection and forest resilience.
- **PROMOTING** close-to-nature forest management concept, which combine different functions of forest ecosystems and climate-responsive forestry policies.
- **IMPROVING COOPERATION AND NETWORKING** between policymakers, researchers, practitioners, forest managers and local stakeholders - **NATIONAL LEVEL.**
- **IDENTIFYING JOINT REGIONAL PRIORITIES:** guidelines, monitoring, data exchange, capacity building and joint projects.

Key OPPORTUNITIES



- **ONGOING PROCESS OF REGIONAL HARMONIZATION** with the EU Forest Strategy, EU Biodiversity Strategy, Green Deal, Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, FOREST EUROPE, LULUCF, EUDR and other regulation.
- **STRONG POTENTIAL** for close-to-nature forestry as a practical model for resilient, adaptive and productive forests.
- **OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP** regional forest management guidelines, training platforms, demonstration plots and best-practice exchange.

Key OPPORTUNITIES



- **POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE FOREST MONITORING**, including continuous forest inventories, biodiversity monitoring, LULUCF reporting and remote sensing.
- **POSSIBILITY TO USE FUNDING MECHANISMS** such as IPARD, public green funds and eco-innovation funds for forest climate and biodiversity measures.

How to move from general policy commitments to operational tools, guidelines and implementation in the field??!

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Key BARRIERS



- Close-to-nature forest management **IS STILL NOT SUFFICIENTLY RECOGNIZED BY NATIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICE.**
- **REGIONAL COOPERATION AND PROJECT RESULTS EXCHANGE** still not sufficient due to lack of funding and networking option.
- **THERE ARE DATA GAPS**, especially for continuous national forest inventories, climate-impact data and biodiversity monitoring.

Key BARRIERS



- **KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER** from research institutions to forestry practice **IS NOT SUFFICIENT.**
- Regional research agenda, lifelong learning systems, vocational training, licensing of forest advisory services and best-practice exchange programmes **ARE MISSING OR UNDERDEVELOPED.**
- EU-related forestry and biodiversity requirements, including LULUCF and restoration-related indicators, **ARE NOT YET FULLY IMPLEMENTED.**



Ways Forward/ NEXT STEPS



- **PREPARE AND OFFICIALY ADOPT** regional close-to-nature forest management guidelines with a training platform.
- **ESTABLISH DEMONSTRATION AND RESEARCH PLOTS** across the Western Balkans.
- **HARMONIZE FOREST MONITORING SYSTEMS**, including NFI, biodiversity indicators, LULUCF reporting and remote sensing.
- **DEVELOP A REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE-EXCHANGE AGENDA** for sustainable forest management.



Ways Forward/ NEXT STEPS



- **STRENGTHEN THE SCIENCE–POLICY–PRACTICE INTERFACE** and cross-sectoral cooperation.
- **ANALYZE DIFFERENT FUNDING MEASURES** for forest climate, biodiversity and restoration.
- **PREPARE JOINT REGIONAL PROJECTS** on forest resilience, biodiversity monitoring, restoration, capacity building and close-to-nature forestry.

Regional cooperation is essential because forest ecosystems, climate risks and biodiversity challenges do not stop at national borders!!!





- *Perućica is a virgin forest in Sutjeska National Park, Bosnia and Herzegovina.*
- *1,434 hectares and is protected as a **Strict Nature Reserve**.*
- *There are beech, fir and spruce trees, with some trees more than **300 years old**.*
- *Skakavac Waterfall, about **75 meters** high.*
- *Since **2017**, on the **UNESCO Tentative List** for **World Heritage status**.*

Thank you for your attention!!!

PhD Dragan Čomić

Faculty of Forestry, University of Banja Luka

dragan.comic@sf.unibl.org