PROTECTING PRIMARY AND OLD-GROWTH FORESTS

MAPPING AND STRICTLY PROTECTING PRIMARY AND OLD-GROWTH FORESTS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

PROJECT PROPOSAL TO
AAGE V. JENSEN CHARITY FOUNDATION

EuroNatur's partner in Montenegro, CZIP, visited Zeletin, by all appearance a primary forest, yet so far neither mapped, nor confirmed, nor strictly protected. © Marija Šoškić Popović

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THE PROJECT IN A NUTSHELL

The Western Balkans still host tracks of primary and old-growth forest but in many cases, they are unknown, insufficiently identified, unmapped, unprotected. The speed at which such valuable forests are lost throughout Europe poses a great threat on these forests.

The purpose of this project is to map and strictly protect primary and old-growth forests (PF/OGF) in the Western Balkans, according to the new EU's "Commission guidelines for defining, mapping, monitoring and strictly protecting EU primary and old-growth forests", published in 2023. The present EU legislation on primary and old-growth forests is expected to provide great leverage to strictly protect every hectare of primary and old-growth forest that can be mapped according to the "Commission guidelines".

A previous project on the Western Balkans' primary and old-growth forests, funded by the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation in the years 2021-2024, has created good starting conditions for this endeavour: In this predecessor project,

a) seven regional partners in seven Western Balkan countries have been identified, assessed in their abilities and provided with initial training;
b) a network of environmental NGOs, scientists and other stakeholders has been established;
c) the differing legal situations of forestry and forest protection have been analysed;
d) a remote sensing tool has been developed and a first map showing great *PF/OGF potential* in each country has been created and evaluated.

The follow-up project proposed here is intended to build on this basis with the following strategies (also called activity packages):

1.) <u>Map presently unknown and unconfirmed PF/OGF using the EU "Commission guidelines" (main strategy)</u>
- Narrow down the present *PF/OGF potential map* by consulting national forestry data
- Establish scientific advisory boards for national PF/OGF recognition thresholds
- Train staff for field-inventorying PF/OGF
- Field-inventory and map PF/OGF hectare by hectare
- Publish findings in scientific journal

2.) <u>Ensure natural disturbances are being respected within strictly protected areas</u>
- Inform the public, train forestry staff, enter dialogues with the Ministries of Environment, regarding the biodiversity value of natural forest disturbances
- End the practice of "salvage logging" after windbreaks and bark beetle events in strictly protected areas

3.) <u>Win the public by protecting one lighthouse case PF/OGF per country (PR strategy)</u>
- Work for the strict protection of one selected PF/OGF per country as a "lighthouse case"
- Use the selected case to inform the public about PF/OGF and about the project activities

The project will lay the groundwork for further efforts to safeguard and ensure proper protection of primary and old-growth forest in the Western Balkans and thus also feed into the EU´s ambition in biodiversity protection. Furthermore, the outcomes may support non-EU member states in their accession negotiations and will support the implementation of the Green Agenda for the

Western Balkans.

The project period is planned for 3 years, starting on 1 March 2025. The total budget amounts to [redacted] and we kindly ask the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation to fund this project entirely. We would need for the first project year an amount of [redacted] for the second year [redacted] and for the third year [redacted]

INTENDED PARTNER SETTING

Experiences and analyses of the predecessor project suggest reducing the number of regional partner countries from seven to five, i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Additionally, the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences of the Czech University of Life Sciences (CULS) could be gained as a new science partner with great expertise in primary forest mapping.

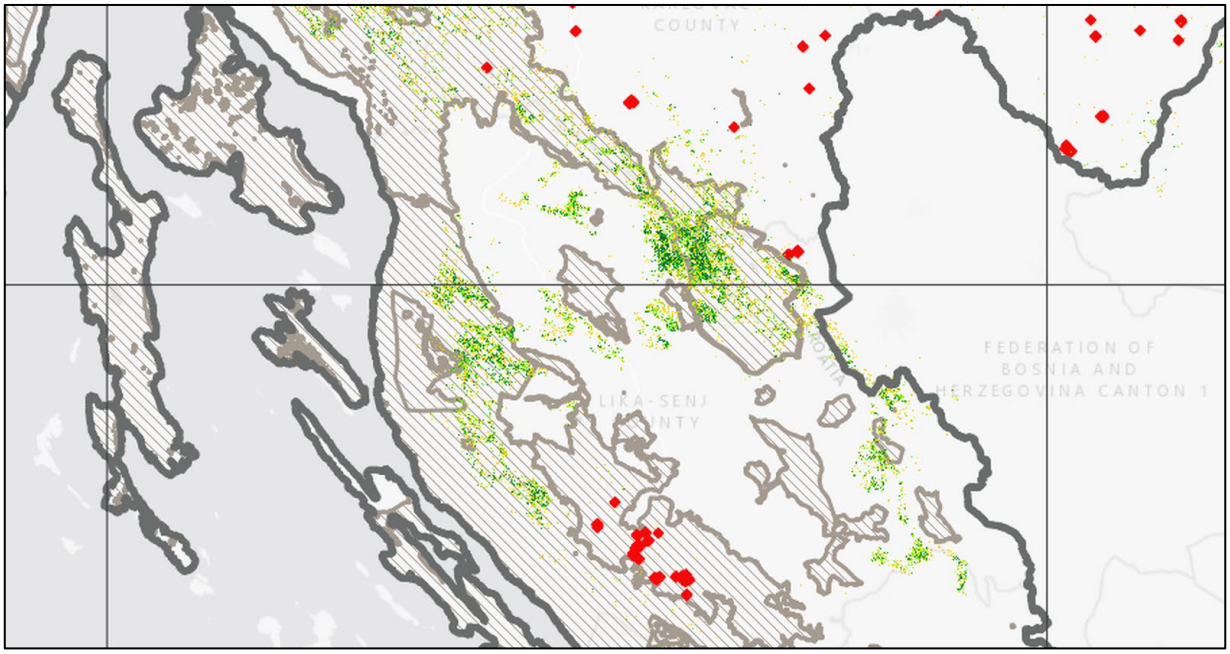
This new partner has direct experience in the complete mapping and strict protection of Slovakia's primary forests, thus ensuring feasibility and effectiveness of this project proposal's core approach.

50% of the budget will be spent by the five regional partners in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia on their numerous local activities. Our Czech university partner (CULS) will spend another 13 % on delivering their primary forest expertise into the project. EuroNatur will spend the remaining 37 % on key overarching activities (including overheads).

STARTING SITUATION

There are only few primary and old-growth forests (PF/OGF) left in Europe. These forests are **hot spots of biodiversity** and home to many rare, endangered and endemic species. As for example the Balkan is home to the subspecies Balkan lynx (*Lynx lynx balcanicus*) for which reproduction is only proven in two countries (Albania, North Macedonia). Furthermore, they are important **storages of carbon** and thus necessary for climate security.

Large tracks of these few remaining primary and old-growth forests (PF/OGF) are found in Scandinavia and the Carpathians. But also, the Balkan Peninsula and mainly the **Western Balkans still hold valuable tracks of these ancient forests**. Unfortunately, the exact locations and amount of them are still largely unknown. At the same time forests on the Balkans, are **under great pressure and logging has accelerated in many areas**. Thus, the identification and mapping of these forests is crucial and highly urgent to have a basis for their protection. A predecessor project carried out by EuroNatur and funded by the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation has underscored the wide-spread existence of PF/OGF in the Western Balkans and their actual threat by a rough *PF/OGF potential map* based on remote sensing (RS) technologies (see map cutout below).



Cutout from the Croatian remote sensing-based PF/OGF potential map *that has been created in the predecessor project funded by Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation: potential primary forests (green dots) both inside and outside protected areas; deforestation (red dots) in close vicinity and in overlay with potential primary forests.*

The target of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to strictly protect all primary and old-growth forests marks a clear way forward for these valuable forest in Europe. And the **EU "Commission guidelines for defining, mapping, monitoring and strictly protecting EU primary and old-growth forests"**, published in 2023, now spell out what needs to be done in detail on this pathway. Proper **identification and field-verified mapping** of these forests, precisely following the "Commission guidelines", will pave the way for strict protection. Even though most countries in the Western Balkan are not EU member states (yet), EU forest rules are nevertheless of high relevance for them and will play an important role in their accession negotiation processes.

Furthermore, many regional stakeholder on all levels – from the general public to forestry operators to the Ministries of Environment – still have a very limited understanding of primary

forests, looking at them through the distorted lenses of production forestry: **Natural disturbances**, such as windbreaks or bark beetle outbreaks, from the perspective of biodiversity are good natural dynamics that diversify the structure of the forest and multiply species richness, while regional forestry stakeholders often perceive them as "calamities" and "pests". As a result of this misunderstanding, most Western Balkan countries either allow or even oblige forest enterprises to enter "strictly" protected areas (e.g. national park core zones) for "salvation logging" or "sanitary logging". Awareness-raising, capacity building and political work against this destructive practice is urgently needed on all stakeholder levels.

LEVERAGING OUR EXPERIENCE AND EU RULES FOR STRICT PROTECTION

EuroNatur has been working on the protection of primary and old-growth forests in the Western Balkans since 2021, in a project funded by the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation. Besides our general experience in that field, we will profit a lot from a *PF/OGF potential map* created by remote sensing in that predecessor project.

This remote sensing map can by no means be misunderstood as the final PF/OGF map based on which new protected areas could be delineated. In fact, it rather gives a rough impression of forests that look natural from bird's eye view, and sometimes it is wrong.

Still, this map is a very good starting point. It can be refined and further improved by combining it with forestry data, a necessary intermediate step, yet the result will still be a *potential map*. Finally, the EU "Commission guidelines" require specific field data that can only be collected on the ground, hectare by hectare, and only then will we have the final map based on which strictly protected areas can be delineated.

The effectiveness of this strategy has been proven by our intended project partners from the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences (CULS) who took a similar approach in the past, successfully mapping and strictly protecting all primary forests of Slovakia.

REGIONAL SCOPE, VISION, TARGETS AND THREATS

REGIONAL SCOPE

The regional scope of the project will be the **five Western Balkan countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia.** We chose these five countries, as our *primary forest potential map* (established in the predecessor project under the kind funding of Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation) reveals great primary forest potential here, and our five regional partners in these countries have proven highly effective. Serbia will be included only in a reduced extent, focussing on law adjustment and not taking part in the focal mapping effort, as the current Serbian forest law cannot guarantee permanent protection on any forest site, thus potentially rendering any mapping success useless.

VISION

By the end of the project, there is more precise knowledge about the last persisting primary forests and old-growth forests of the Western Balkans: the current PF/OGF potential map is refined and narrowed down and about 15,000 ha of potential PF/OGF have been field-inventoried according to EU standards, giving hard prove of their value, and paving the way for strict protection.

The current regional practices of "sanitary logging" and "salvation logging" within strictly protected areas are understood as a problem by forest stakeholders on all levels, and first steps to illegalise them are on the way.

The relevance of PF/OGF is more commonly understood in the Western Balkans, and some first additional PF/OGF areas have come under strict protection.

CONSERVATION TARGETS

The project's conservation targets are the **primary and old-growth forests of the Western Balkans** a) as important habitats and ecosystems in the biodiversity crisis, b) as part of our natural heritage and c) as important sinks and buffers in the climate crisis.

CRITICAL THREATS

Main critical threat for primary and old-growth forests is the huge pressure from logging, mainly driven by the demand for timber products as well as wood for biomass for energy production. As long as primary and old-growth forests are not identified as deserving highest protection status, logging will continue to take place in these rare and ancient ecosystems. In many cases also regional environmental NGOs are not aware of all primary & old-growth forests and thus struggle to push for proper protection.

Additional threats are:

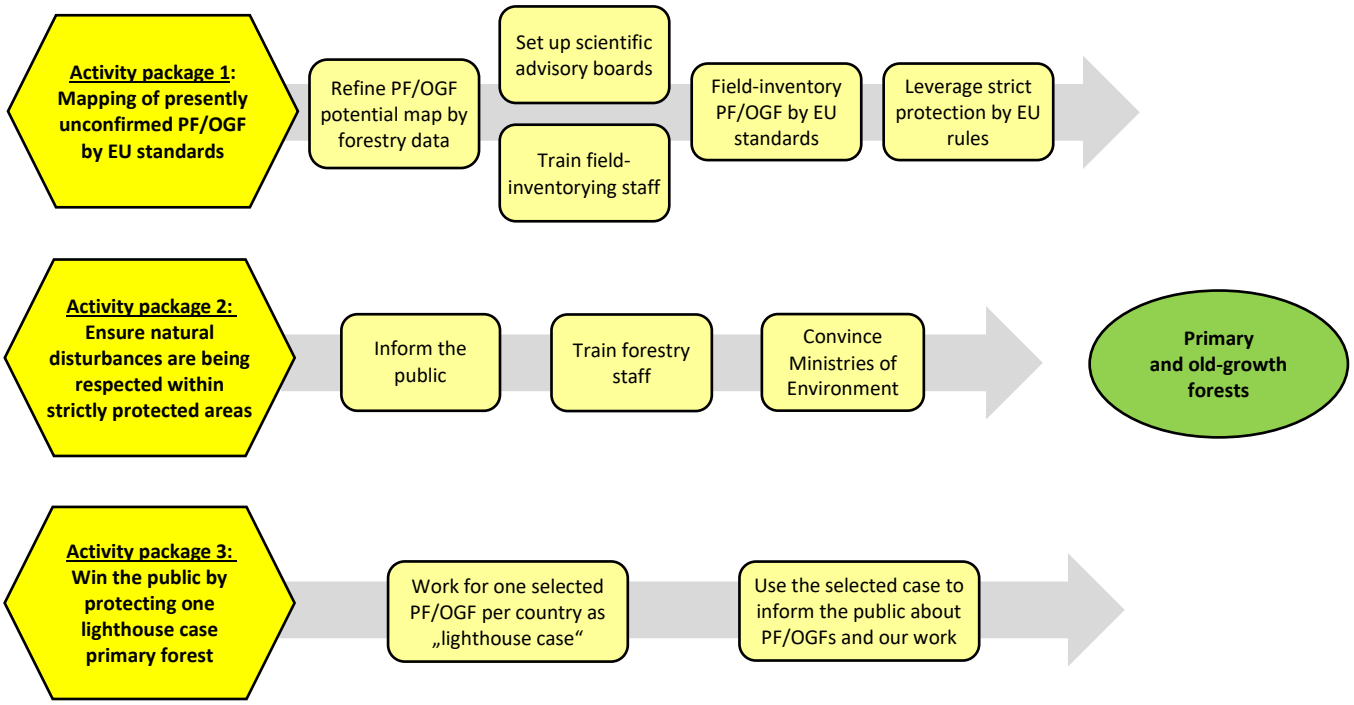
- Logging for land use change
- Primary & old-growth forests are not identified and/or not strictly protected

- Possibly legislations are not strict enough or provide loopholes for illegal logging

The assessment of the main threats is based on statements from our regional partners in the predecessor project (funded by Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation) and by our experience from Romania. All main threats are addressed in the activity packages listed below.

ACTIVITIES

Our activities follow three main strategies (also called activity packages), all contributing to the same goal, as shown in the following simplified flow-chart:



ACTIVITY PACKAGE 1 – MAPPING OF PF/OGF BY EU STANDARDS

Preliminary remark: Mapping primary forests and old-growth forests by EU standards (according to the "Commission guidelines") is deemed to be the most direct path to strict protection under EU law. This activity package is the main strategy of the project. It applies only to the four regional partners in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro, as in Serbia the forest political situation is not favourable for this activity: In Serbia, local forest governors can define and redefine strict protection areas at will, and these governors are rotating in short terms, thus currently making permanent strict protection unlikely. Serbian partners will have to work on this political issue instead, with a smaller share of the overall budget.

1.1 Forestry data acquisition for establishment of a refined *PF/OGF potential map*

Regional partners in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro get in contact with their national forestry stakeholders to acquire specific forestry data, such as forest plot boundaries, tree age per plot, last interventions etc. National forestry agents must share this information according to the Aarhus Convention, but partner experience shows them to be sometimes difficult about it. Cooperating with regional universities for forestry data acquisition is a promising work-around. Additional resorts lie in either buying this data from third parties or paying an expert to aggregate this data.

1.2 Create refined *PF/OGF potential map* by combining RS map and forestry data

Our university partner, the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Science at the Czech University of

Life Sciences Prague (CULS) will combine our remote sensing-based *PF/OGF potential map* (established in our predecessor project funded by Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation) with the newly acquired forestry data, resulting in a refined and narrowed-down PF/OGF potential map. This work step gives a more precise estimate of prevailing PF/OGF, and it thus reduces the number of hectares that need to be field-inventoried according to EU standards.

1.3 Establish four scientific advisory boards for four target countries

Combining the expertise of the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Science (CULS) and our regional partners, we will identify about five respected primary forest experts in each of the four target countries and set them up in four national PF/OGF scientific advisory boards. These national scientific advisory boards will legitimise the mapping process and the mapping results (see below).

1.4 Discuss and set up PF/OGF thresholds with advisory boards and national institutions

According to the EU "Commission guidelines", the general guidelines must be specified according to national ecological conditions. Each national scientific advisory board, supported by our regional partners and the primary forest experts from CULS, will discuss and define appropriate national PF/OGF thresholds (in terms of tree age, diameter, dead wood, indicator species etc.), beyond of which a forest must be regarded as primary or old-growth.

1.5 Train staff for PF/OGF field-inventorying, including kick-off workshop

Our university partner, the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Science at the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS) has in the past field-inventoried all primary forests of Slovakia (and subsequently brought them under strict protection). It will first train our regional partners in their field-inventorying method, and then calibrate the partners' first autonomous mapping results. Training will require meeting on the ground in the Balkans, and we intend to make use of this meeting for a kick-off and networking meeting.

1.6 Field-inventory PF/OGF

The four regional partners, assisted by the Czech primary forest experts, will field-inventory hectare by hectare those forest plots that are indicated in the refined and narrowed-down PF/OGF potential map. The planned budget for this activity ([redacted], 32% of the total budget) is estimated to allow for field-inventorying of 17,200 ha of potential PF/OGF. This is the project's most costly activity, yet the unit price of [redacted] cannot be considered expensive. (The price estimate is based on CULS' past field-inventorying speed and our regional partners' averaged field work costs).

Please note: We are expecting to identify a *PF/OGF potential* considerably bigger than 17,200 ha. This would imply, that this project would not be able to field-inventory *all* PF/OGF of the four countries. Although this may sound unsatisfying, it is still the most reasonable approach in a project with limited funding, for the following reason: The extent of *PF/OGF potential* will become visible only after activities 1.1 and 1.2 (see above). The prevailing uncertainty regarding the extent of the PF/OGF potential would require a huge financial buffer, if we were to promise field-inventorying *all* PF/OGF of the region. Instead, we are promising the first 17,200 ha for this proposed project, with the intention to cover the (still unknown) left-over area in a subsequent follow-up project.

1.7 Assemble field-inventorying data, aggregate all PF/OGF, delineate to-be-protected areas, create map

Our four relevant regional partners will report their field-inventorying data to our Czech university partner (CULS), who will aggregate the data in a joint field-inventory map. This map will be discussed with the four scientific advisory boards (see above) for delineation of areas to be strictly protected. These areas can be bigger than the mere field-inventoried PF/OGF plots, e.g. in the instance where several PF/OGF fragments need to be protected in one

umbrella area. Finally, CULS will produce a "to-be-strictly-protected" map.

1.8 Submit one joint scientific paper on methodology and findings to an academic journal

Experience from the past has shown that NGO-driven mapping initiatives may be disregarded by political actors, unless they can proof to be scientifically sound a) by a scientific advisory board backing it, and b) by publication in an academic journal. Our Czech university partner (CULS) will lead this activity, under close cooperation of all other partners.

ACTIVITY PACKAGE 2 – ENSURE NATURAL DISTURBANCES ARE BEING RESPECTED WITHIN STRICTLY PROTECTED AREAS

Preliminary remark: Natural disturbances, such as windbreaks or bark beetle outbreaks, from the perspective of biodiversity are good natural dynamics that diversify the structure of the forest and multiply species richness, while Western Balkan forestry stakeholders often perceive them as "calamities" and "pests". As a result of this misunderstanding, most regional countries either allow or even oblige forest enterprises to enter "strictly" protected areas (e.g. national park core zones) for "salvage logging" or "sanitary logging". This activity package aims at ending this harmful practice.

2.1 Publicly expose ecological damage of "sanitary" and "salvage" logging

"Sanitary logging" and "salvage logging" after natural disturbances (such as windbreaks or bark beetle outbreaks) will be debunked as harmful human invasion into healthy natural cycles, by public relation activities deemed appropriate by the five regional partners (including our Serbian partner). Our Czech university partner (CULS) will help provide suitable scientific background information.

2.2 Awareness-raising, education, training for regional forest stakeholders about natural disturbances

We will establish cooperations with regional forestry departments at the universities, in order to root the idea of natural disturbances and ecological cycles deeply into the educational system. Workshops of similar content will be held for leading staff of the regional forestry companies. In each of the five countries, one excursion to an ecologically interesting natural disturbance site will be organised for top environmental officials (e.g. from Ministries of Environment) and top forestry services staff, explaining the necessity of natural disturbances for biodiversity.

2.3 Change the legal framework of "sanitary" and "salvage" logging within strictly protected areas

We will analyse the legal situation regarding forestry interferences in "strictly" protected areas, and we will observe the actual logging practice in "strictly" protected areas in the five partner countries. Communicative efforts will be made to convince the five respective Ministries of Environment to change the current rule set, to the effect that *under no circumstances* wood can be extracted from strictly protected areas. The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 with its 10% strict protection goal will provide leverage in this effort.

ACTIVITY PACKAGE 3 – WIN THE PUBLIC BY PROTECTING ONE LIGHTHOUSE CASE PRIMARY FOREST

Preliminary remark: This activity package has a double purpose – the fight for one selected beautiful primary forest shall a) bring this forest under strict protection, and b) produce tangible pictures and stories that catch attention in the media, thus supporting the public relation work.

3.1 Identify lighthouse case primary forests to work for, establish cooperations

Each of the five regional partners selects at least one "charismatic" primary forest in their country, whose ecological features are easy to identify with, but which is not yet strictly protected. Optimally, it has an already existing local initiative trying to protect it. Cooperations with the local initiative or other local actors will be established and joint primary forest-related activities will be conducted, underscoring the value of primary forests and promoting the idea of strict protection.

3.2 Conducting a primary forest valorisation study by test-applying the Slovakian ground-inventorying methodology

We will conduct the first ground-inventorying test runs in the selected "charismatic" primary forests, thus providing scientifically sound and EU-stamped evidence of their being primary, underscoring the case for their strict protection, and raising them to the attention of the media, finally creating public awareness for our cause of the primary forests in general.

3.3 Designate the lighthouse case primary forest as strictly protected area

We will establish a discussion forum about each lighthouse case primary forest with other regional institutions, such as universities and environmental stakeholders, up to the Ministries of Environment, leveraging the relevant public institutions (e.g Ministries of Environment) to designate a new strictly protected area.

3.4 PR activities

Each step we take for our lighthouse case primary forests will be used to raise the awareness about primary forests in the Western Balkans. A colourful range of additional PR activities will be undertaken, as appropriate by country and partner NGO (e.g. social media activities, promotion of monumental trees, creation of community engagement, education sessions with children, publications such as a national primary forest book publication, an overarching Western Balkan primary forest campaign, etc.)

BUDGET OVERVIEW & PROJECT DURATION

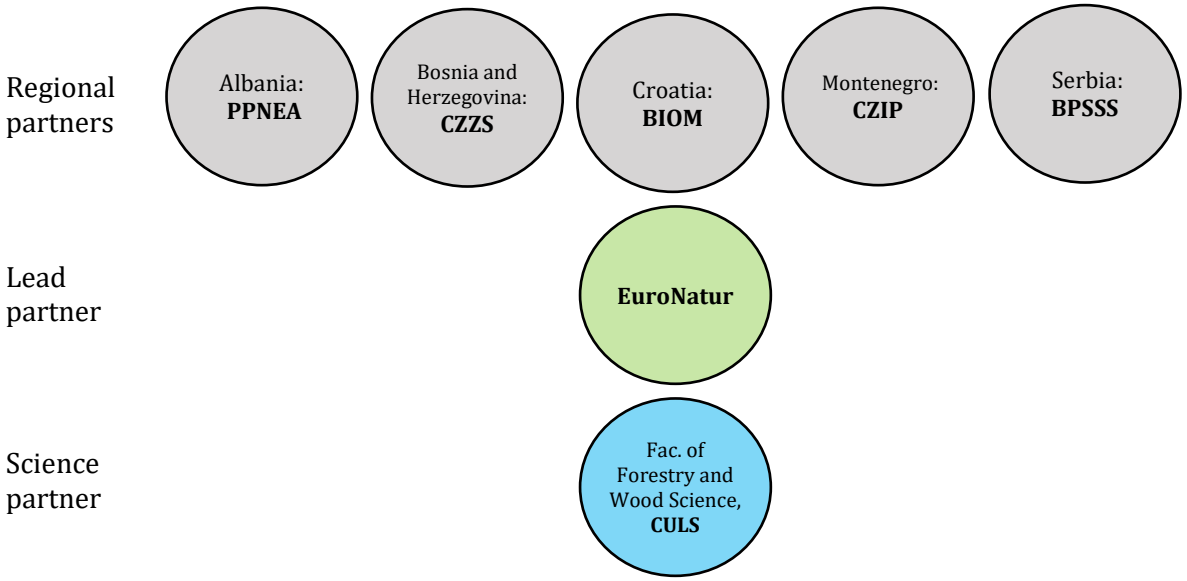
For the implementation of the proposed activities, we foresee the following project costs:

Activity package	Budget
Activity package 1	[redacted]
Activity package 2	[redacted]
Activity package 3	[redacted]
Total direct costs	[redacted]
Overheads [7% of direct costs]	[redacted]
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	[redacted]

In total, the project budget hence sums up to [redacted] for an envisaged project duration of three years. We kindly ask the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation to fund the entire project budget. We would need for the first project year an amount of [redacted], for the second year [redacted] and for the third year [redacted]

The budget overview with a very rough timeline is presented at the end of this proposal, and the corresponding Excel cost calculation will be attached to this application.

PROJECT TEAM



Lead Partner

EuroNatur (European Natural Heritage Fund), the intended lead partner, is a non-profit foundation committed to preserving Europe's natural heritage at many levels. Its portfolio includes projects for the protection of individual species, renaturation and territorial protection projects as well as lobbying at the political level and environmental education. EuroNatur projects are long-term and often cross-border. They are aimed not only at protecting nature but also at sustainable development of rural areas. EuroNatur projects are designed for the long term and involve the needs of local people.

Regional NGO partners

EuroNatur has a broad network of environmental NGOs working on the Balkan Peninsula and thus in the Western Balkans. With most of them, EuroNatur cooperates for more than ten years. These partners will be included in the broad network of this project and will continue specialising in primary forest protection, with the support of EuroNatur and our Science partner from CULS (see below).

We aim to involve the following regional NGOs in the project:

Albania: **Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania (PPNEA)** is a non-governmental environmental organization established in 1991 that operates nationwide, known to be the first environmental organization in Albania. The thematic working areas are species protection (e.g. Balkan lynx, vultures) and protection of areas with high biodiversity, scientific research on wildlife and habitat, education, awareness raising, advocacy work as well as development of Environmental Civil Society Organisations. PPNEA has implemented projects in all key biodiversity areas of Albania. Furthermore, they have and still are working on several transboundary areas, cooperating on a regional level with other organizations for preserving

crucial ecosystems, such as the region of Prespa and Sharr/ Korab-Koritnik area.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: **Center for the environment/Centar za životnu sredinu (CZZS)** is an organization that is focused on environmental issues since its foundation in 1999, with the aim to influence and contribute to the improvement of the environment through its active and proactive actions. It is recognized as an organization that tries to influence the relevant public policies in a reasoned and active way, raise public awareness of environmental issues, and achieve constructive cooperation with other associations, networks, institutions and international organizations. Its mission is a non-profit and non-partisan association that arguably advocates changes in society by influencing relevant policies and public awareness of the environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina and internationally. The vision is a just society that is responsible for acting in accordance with nature.

Croatia: **BIOM** is a voluntary, non-governmental organization dedicated to nature conservation, promotion and popularisation. They are involved in many nature preservation initiatives in Croatia and cooperate with numerous organisations and institutions on different nature protection activities. In 2018, BIOM became a full partner of BirdLife International but feels an additional responsibility not only for bird protection but the preservation of biodiversity to the benefit of both nature and society. Furthermore, the association is also a member of the IUCN (The International Union for Conservation of Nature).

Montenegro: **The Centre for Protection and Research of Birds of Montenegro (CZIP)** was founded in December 2000 by professional ornithologists of the Republic Institute for Nature Protection, Natural History Museum, PE National Parks and by students of the Department of Biology (Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics) from Podgorica. CZIP is a member of IUCN and BirdLife International. CZIP's mission is to protect birds and other animal and plant species, their habitats, biodiversity monitoring of Montenegro, citizen education, popularisation of scientific research, as well as cooperation with other organizations at home and abroad, dealing with the protection of nature.

Serbia: **The Bird Protection and Study Society of Serbia (BPSSS)** is the Serbian BirdLife partner, working on different projects of biodiversity protection. Recently, in our predecessor project funded by Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, BPSSS has advanced its expertise in the forest sector.

Science partner

The **Faculty of Forestry and Wood Science at the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS)** has been chosen as a new science partner, due to extensive experience in primary forest research e.g. in their "REMOTE Primary Forests" project, their primary forest ground-inventorying experience, and their successful strict protection of all Slovakian primary forests after ground-inventorying. They have already provided key inputs to the predecessor project, without having been a partner by then.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities will be shared, whereby **EuroNatur** will be the main coordinator, providing guidance regarding the contents of the project, steering the project processes, assisting and

consulting the national partners in the implementation of activities on national level, communicating project results, and reporting to the project donors.

The **Faculty of Forestry and Wood Science** at the Check University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS) will have their main role in activity package 1, establishing the refined PF/OGF potential map, helping set up the national scientific national advisory boards, training local partner staff in their field-inventorying method, and publishing the results in an academic journal. In activity packages 2 and 3, they will have mainly an advisory role.

The **five regional partners** will conduct most activities in their respective countries on their own, but profiting from EuroNatur's coordination and input, as well as from CULS' scientific advice and training. Activity package 1 is very cooperative and very timing dependent, and here all partners will need to follow a strict schedule set and monitored by EuroNatur, whereas activity packages 2 and 3 leave more freedom to local partners to define their own pace and configuration of the activities, as they see fit within their national, cultural, and ecological settings.

FURTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Over the past three years of the predecessor project funded by Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, EuroNatur as well as their regional partners have built relationships with many other stakeholders in the forestry and forest protection sectors, some regional partners have also established contacts into their national ministries. Our new Czech university partner (CULS) brings in their scientific network, that reaches from Central Europe all the way south to the Western Balkans, as CULS is maintaining primary forest long-term observation sites all over the Balkan Peninsula.

These connections will help greatly to carry out our complex activities in a cross-cutting working field. The project activities, in turn, are expected to bring us in touch with many new actors, thus further increasing our valuable forest network.

BUDGET OVERVIEW (IN €) AND ROUGH TIMELINE

PHOTO GALERY

Biogradska gora primary forest, visited by CZIP, our partner from Montenegro. © Bojan Zeković

All intended partners of the present project proposal met this winter in Čorcova uvala primary forest, Croatia, under freezing conditions, discussing the applicability of the EU "Commission guidelines" on Western Balkan forests, and finally outlining the present project proposal. © Damir Trnovac

Forest in Shebenik-Jablanca National Park, Rajca in Albania. © Gabriel Schwaderer