



AREAS UNDER STRICT PROTECTION (10% TARGET) CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION & STRATEGIC APPROACH


A. INTEGRATED STRATEGIC APPROACH (KEY ELEMENTS)


B. PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL STRICTLY PROTECTED AREAS

A.1 COMPENSATORY MECHANISMS - LEGAL FRAMEWORK

 First major step, to create the national legislative framework to ensure the **functionality of compensatory payments and facilitating** and **facilitating** green investments as an alternative for the **sustainable development of local communities**. *“It is especially important to respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities when designating new protected areas.”* ([EC working document - Criteria and guidance for protected areas designations](#)¹, Chapter 3.5, page 17).

 **Mechanisms that must be preliminary activated:** National Strategic Plan under the EU CAP; Setting national schemes of payments for environmental services; National Budget; Environmental Fund, etc.

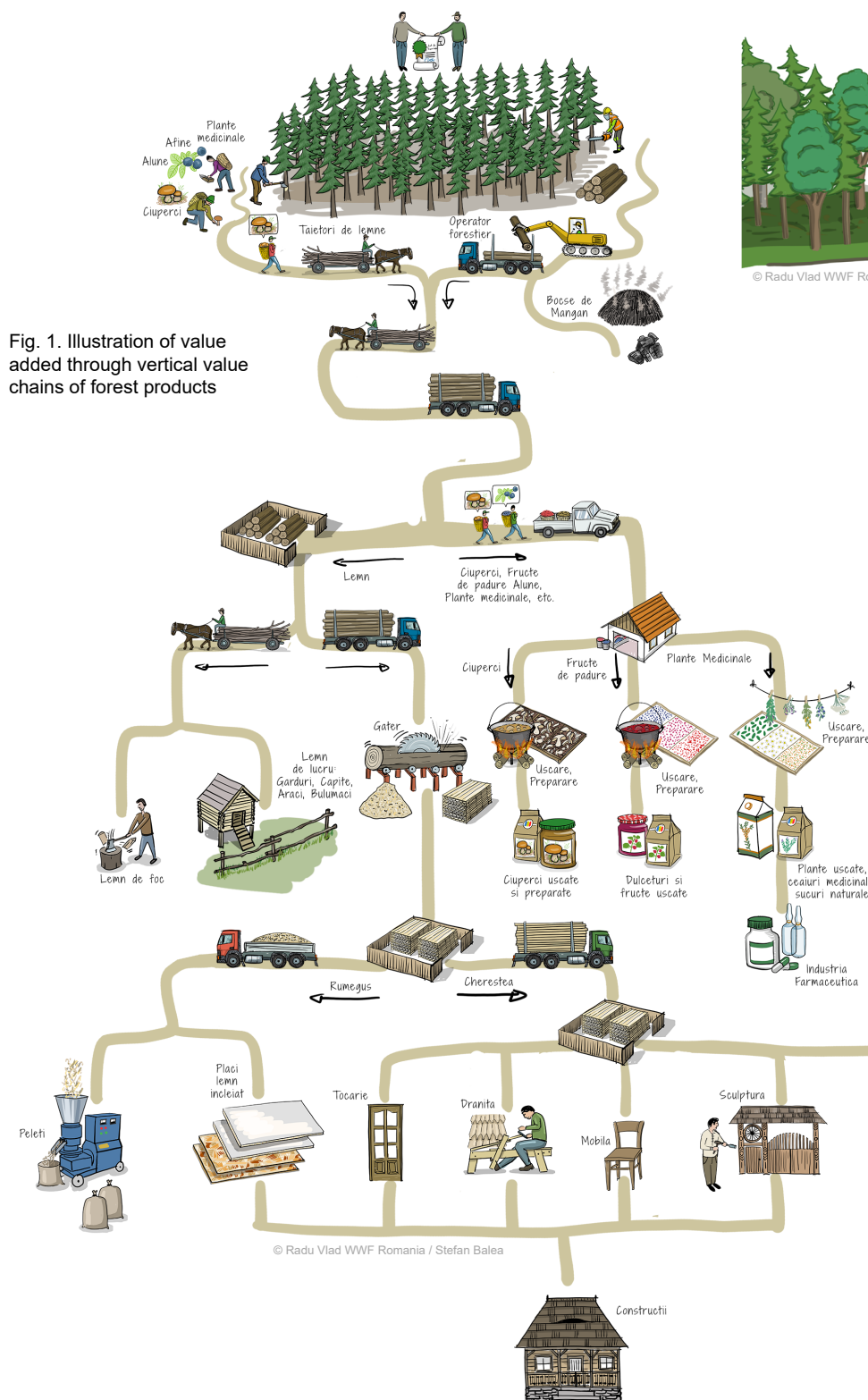
 **Dedicated EU Funds for Forest Conservations**, having a “fair share” budget allocation, based on clear outcome indicators related to forest conservation targets and conservation efforts; considering the EU mechanisms, “additionality” rule have to be also revised”.²


 Establishing preliminary private land conservation commitments through a participatory process, where the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles is closely followed (with a special focus on vulnerable forests dependent communities). *“In particular, designation of protected areas in private land, when envisaged, should be done with the full involvement of the landowners and adequate compensation mechanisms, in accordance with national law.”* (EC working document - Criteria and guidance for protected areas designations, Chapter 3.5, page 17)

¹ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/criteria-and-guidance-protected-areas-designations-staff-working-document_en

² Revising the EC rules, when calculating the level of the compensation payments that are eligible from EU funds since MS can only consider the conservation measures that are exceeding the requirements of the national legislation framework. The current situation could undermine the existing best practices (e.g. forestry norms / OECM - Other effective area-based conservation measures), implemented under the national legislation framework.

 Just compensating the rightful owners who will be subject to restrictions, it is NOT enough.



 A fair transition for all shall be ensured, **including the forest dependent communities** disadvantaged by restricting the use of natural resources (these communities are traditionally engaged in the harvesting and processing of these resources). *N.B.* See the logic behind the EU concern for embedding “just transition” for long-term decarbonisation strategies (same strategy should be applied also for natural resources offered by forest ecosystems considering that under the EU Biodiversity Strategy, it is expected that for certain regions, significant forest area will fit under strict protection regime).

**Mechanisms that must be preliminary activated:**

- ✓ Identification of vulnerable forest-dependent communities
- ✓ Forest-dependent communities are included in transverse legislation on disadvantaged communities
- ✓ The legislative framework requires consideration of the impact on vulnerable local communities - dependent on forest resources - in the preparation of development proposals at programme document level before the final decision on their promotion is taken;
- ✓ Alternative green business /professional reconversion should be supported / incentivized by EU & national funds to replace the jobs previously generated by forest products harvesting and processing



Without a functional mechanism in place, to financially support conservation efforts, nothing sustainable can be built (see the 30 years of experience in the Protected Natural Areas, following the restitution process).

A.2 DEVELOP THE IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA - ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK



GAP analysis of the PA system performance;



Identifying the **gaps in site designations** toward Nature 2000 Network;



Identification of **high conservation values representative at national level**, including the representative typology of forest habitats for the conservation of biodiversity and genetic resources, that are compatible with the strict protection regime;



Identification procedures (including **prioritization criteria**) should be developed and assumed by the CA based on a sound scientific and technic assessment of **representability and functionality criteria**, following a **participatory process**.



Proposals for nationally applicable criteria (tested in priority conservation areas) can be found in **Chapter B**.



A.3 IDENTIFICATION PROCESS OF POTENTIAL AREAS THAT MEET THE ESTABLISHED CRITERIA - ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK



A consortium of experts' delegate and coordinate by CAs should be empowered to **collect and processed** the relevant information for the identification of the **potential areas** that meet the established criteria;



Identification of potential protection areas to meet the "10%" target - should be done through a **transparent and participatory process**, in which the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (**FPIC**) are closely followed; a regional/national public consultation of stakeholders would be useful/necessary;



CAs to develop and transparently maintain a **GIS database** including detail description of **potential areas** compiled

A.4 DESIGNATION – ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK


Final **validation** of the strict protected area by CAs through a broad participatory process, based on the following **PRINCIPLES**:


- ✓ **Proportionally**, should be considered **representative** areas from **all Biogeographical Regions**;
- ✓ Should **also** target high conservation values that are **not currently included in Protected Areas**;
- ✓ **The ownership should not be considered as criteria**; the final validation should only consider the representativeness of biodiversity values, critical ecosystem services provided and the functionality of the network established accordingly;
- ✓ **The MULTIPLE ROLES OF PROTECTION** provided by the forest areas; in particular, priority should be given to ecosystems that in addition to representing biodiversity values also provide **ecosystem services in critical situations** or those that need increased resilience to **adapt to climate change** (including areas that could fit under the **OECD criteria**);
- ✓ Designed a **mixture** of (i) **new designation / consolidation of existing large /compact protected** areas large enough for key natural processes to take place essentially undisturbed and (ii) **a network of strict protection areas with large impact** (i.e. “**pacemakers**”), considering also the areas deficient in biodiversity, even outside the forest fund;
- ✓ The areas under strict protection have to be **functionally meaningful**, so that their strict protection regime can produce the expected results in terms of conservation and ensure the **self-regulating capacity of the ecosystems**; Thus, the network of strict protection areas with large impact (i.e. “**pacemakers**”) should consider areas of natural habitat types of conservation interest having a minimum area of 10 ha , with a distance between two opposing boundary points of the forest plot does not fall below 20 m; for **wetlands** (including the riparian zones on which they depend) a minimum area of 1 ha could be also considered (being considered as carbon-rich ecosystems where appropriate);
- ✓ Areas that do not currently meet the designation criteria considered may also be included in the strict protection zone, where appropriate, in order to ensure the **ecological connectivity function** of high conservation value forests but also to streamline management efforts.



A socio-economic and environmental **impact assessment on local communities** should be considered for the final designation / distribution of the strict protection zones

A.5 RESULTS AND MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS- LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

 **Outcome: Catalogue of protected ecosystems**, covering 10% of the forest area - a **consolidated form of the dataset** undertaken by CAs at national level based on **contractual commitments with private landowners**. Strictly protected areas should be designated “*through specific national legal instruments, such as some existing nature reserves, through specific long-term contractual agreements, or through zoning in the management planning of wider areas. In these cases, the strictly protected areas have to be clearly identified in the management plans and those plans have to have a legal standing*” ([EC working document - Criteria and guidance for protected areas designations](#), Chapter 4.3).

 The forest regime / forest norms should incorporate the new conservation concepts included in the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 in the form of “forest conservation” (Forest management integrates biodiversity conservation).



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A.6 KEY ELEMENTS ABOUT “STRICT PROTECTION” REGIME TO BE CONSIDERED

General consideration and recommendation concerning the implementation of “strict protection” regime:

≡ **functional type (TI)**: Special functions for the nature protection, where the law prohibits any kind of exploitation of wood or other products, applicable for (i) Old Growth Forest (i.e. Virgin and Cvasi-virgin Forest) and (ii) Forest areas included in scientific reserves, nature reserves, and areas declared nature monuments, fully-protected areas or strict nature reserves within the natural areas protected in compliance with the environmental legislation in force.

≡ **functional type (TI + TII)**: Special protection functions where commercial logging is not allowed and where harvesting interventions may occur only for special conservation reasons if required:

- The production process is not regulated and planned - there are no premises for harvesting interventions for commercial purposes;
- The harvesting interventions can only be justified in order to maximize the protection role assigned for the conservation of biodiversity and additional ecosystem services; compatible with active management design for ([EC working document - Criteria and guidance for protected areas designations](#), Cap. 4.1):
 - natural disaster prevention (e.g. wildfires);;
 - the restoration and/or conservation of the habitats and species followed by strict protection;
 - invasive alien species control;
 - non-intrusive and strictly controlled recreational activities;
 - non-intrusive activities and installations;
 - population control of wild ungulates to ensure a good status for the habitats and species;
 - scientific research;
 - include activities linked to small-scale subsistence resource use for forest dependent communities (e.g. HCV5 – traditional sheepfold basic needs in critical situations, such as the need for firewood at stables).
- “**left essentially undisturbed**” = “sustaining and enhancing natural processes”.

 When such activities are **compatible with the conservation objectives** of the areas, on the basis of a **case-by-case assessment** ([EC working document - Criteria and guidance for protected areas designations](#), Chapter 4.1)

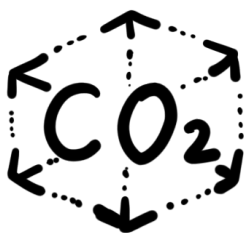
B. PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION OF AREAS UNDER STRICT PROTECTION (10% target)



(1) NATURAL PROCESSES



(2) PRIMARY AND OLD GROWTH FORESTS



(3) CARBON RICH ECOSYSTEMS



(4) OTHER ECOSYSTEMS OF HIGH BIODIVERSITY VALUE (OR POTENTIAL)



(1) Natural processes

Concentrations of biological diversity*, that are significant at global, regional or national levels - Forest areas included in **strictly protected areas in compliance with the environmental legislation in force** (i.e. scientific reserves, nature reserves and areas declared nature monuments, fully-protected areas or strict nature reserves within the natural protected areas).

- The update of existing management plans is considered: **250 management plans** for natural protected areas are expected to be **reviewed and updated** in accordance with EU legislation by June 30, 2026 (Investment 3.1. NRRP)
- The forthcoming revision of the **Protected Areas Law** will be also considered (OUG 57).

Estimation of existing area:

Around 170 000 ha are already included in such PA categories;

Synergies with the current functional categories used FM according to forestry norms:

- 1-5c - Stands included in nature reserves, with strict protection regime
- 1-5d - Stands in forests established in scientific reserves
- 1-5f - Stands declared monuments of nature
- 1-6a - Stands in national parks included, through the management plans, in the SPZ
- 1-6b - Stands in national parks included, through the management plans, in the IPZ
- 1-6f - Stands in nature parks included, through the management plans, in the SPZ
- 1-6g - Stands in nature parks included, through the management plans in IPZ
- 1-6j - Stands in geoparks, included in the management plans, in the SPZ
- 1-6m - Stands from biosphere reserves included in the strictly protected area



(2) All remaining primary and old growth forests

Virgin and quasi-virgin forests that fit under the definitions and identification criteria developed by EC Working Group on Forests and Nature under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

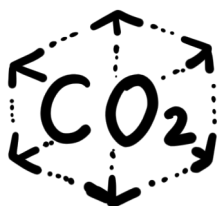
- Completing the identification studies and establishing the legal protection procedures for the Virgin and quasi-virgin forests that fit under the definitions and identification criteria provided by EC Working Group on Forests and Nature under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.
- The governance schemes and adequate Management Plan for UNESCO WHS are developed through a participatory process; the management strategies are in line with the transnational guideline approved by IUCN.

Estimation of existing area:

- National Catalogue (NC): 71.000 ha (already included and % overlapping with category 1);
- UNESCO World Heritage: + 6000 ha (24.000 – 18.000 already included in the National Catalogue)
- Protection buffer subzone (IUCN Guidelines): + cca. 5.000 ha;
- OGF already identified, but not yet included in the NC: + 15.000 ha
- Other OGF to be identified: ongoing priority activity under national legislation.

Synergies with the current functional categories used FM according to forestry norms

- 1-5j - Stands from virgin forests (TI);
- 1-5o - Stands from semi-virgin forests (TI);
- 1-6q - Stands in the UNESCO universal heritage natural sites;
- 1-6r - Stands in the buffer zone of the UNESCO universal heritage site (TI /TIII).



(3) Carbon-rich ecosystems ("significant" areas, not necessarily all wetlands)

TAll significant wetlands - permanent wetlands, over 1 ha, (including the protection buffer zone that depend on).

- **Wetlands**, (including the protection buffer zone that depend on), to be mapped and included in the functional category of marginal habitats and ensure a long term and adequate protection regime (N.B. the concepts used such as "land for game feeding" (Vs) or "non-productive forest land" (Ns), do not reflect their exceptional value for biodiversity and can't guarantee their protection status).

Estimation of existing area:

Marginal habitats (e.g. Ns, Vs, etc.) and land with permanent swamping: approx. 20.000 h.

Synergies with the current functional categories used FM according to forestry norms:

- 1-2.i - Stands located on land with permanent swamping;
- Marginal habitats (Ns, Vs, Ts,).



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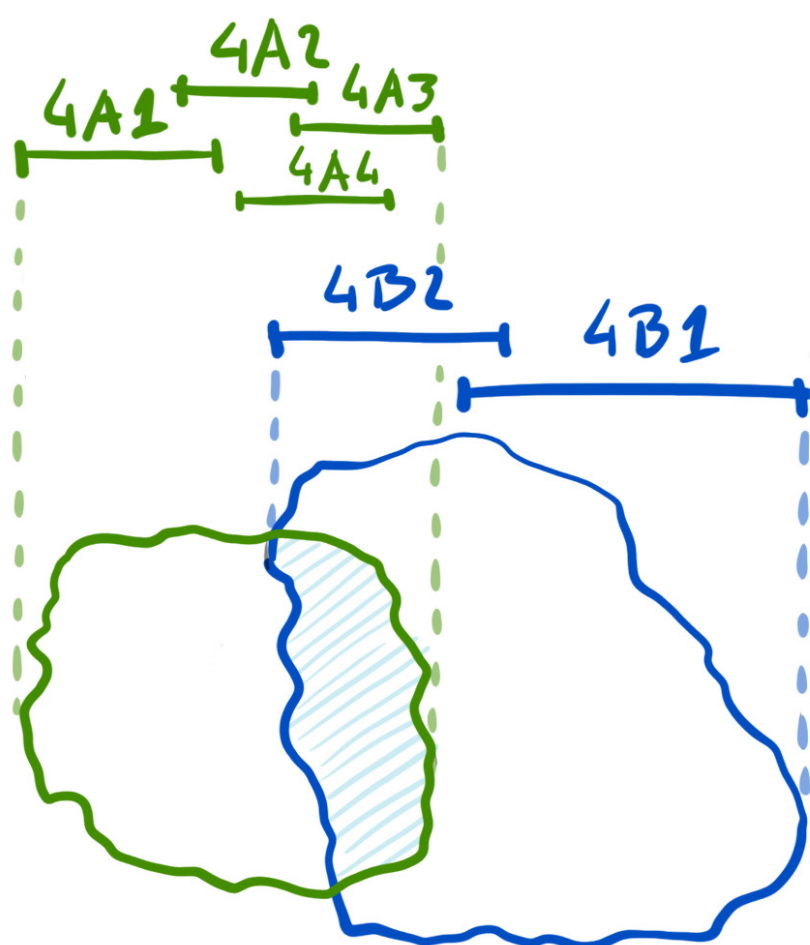
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(4) Other ecosystems of high biodiversity value (or potential)

Samples of Representative Natural Forest Ecosystems³ in a favorable conservation status that meets MULTIPLE ROLES OF PROTECTION.

Aiming for a proper areas prioritization during the designation procedures, should be **cumulatively** considered: (A) **the presence of representative biodiversity values*** and (B) **other area-specific protection objectives* (OASPO)** - **critical ecosystem services** provided by a certain area, and that are compatible with strict protection regime (N.B. *"In particular, ecosystems that provide important ecosystem services or those that need increased resilience to adapt to climate change should be prioritized"*, (DG Env. guidance, Chapter 4.1.4)



MULTIPLE ROLES OF PROTECTION

=
presence of representative
biodiversity values ⁴ (4.A)
+
other area-specific protection
objectives ⁵ (4.B)

(4.A) Representative biodiversity values*

- 4.A.1 Forest Genetic Resources;
- 4.A.2 Rare, threatened and endangered forest ecosystems including natural marginal habitats with high conservation value
- 4.A.3 Forests which are habitats for rare, threatened and endangered plant species
- 4.A.4 Critical seasonal use (breeding areas, refuge areas, ecological connectivity)

(4.B) Other area-specific protection objectives* (i.e. areas that might also fit the OECMs criteria)

- 4.B.1 Ecosystem services in critical situations;
- 4.B.1 Urban and peri-urban areas .



Key assumption

Priority will be given to areas that meet other area-specific protection objectives* (OASPO).

³ Including both forest habitats of Community interest and specific at regional /national level.

⁴ 4.A.1 and/or 4.A.2 and/or 4.A.3 and/or 4.A.4

⁵ 4.B.1 and/or 4.B.2 (i.e. OASPO 1 and/or OASPO 2)



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REPRESENTATIVE NATURAL FOREST ECOSYSTEMS

Inclusion in the **strict protection zone (10%)** of **samples representative of the national habitat typology** for the **conservation of biodiversity and genetic resources**.

- contributes to halting the decline and **conserving/restoring biodiversity** and **critical ecosystem services** that are essential for human survival;
 - ensures the conservation of **genetic resources and the adaptability of populations** and species in the context of climate change by maintaining an appropriate level of **genetic variability**;
 - preservation of **the evolution of natural ecosystem dynamics, the functionality of critical ecosystem services** they provide in the context of climate change;
 - safeguarding a **scientific and cultural resource**.
- We propose the conservation of **representative natural habitat types** since:
 - The phytocenoses are the faithful expression of the **specific conditions of the biotope** (climatic, edaphic, geomorphologic);
 - Phytocenoses are the stable skeleton of ecosystems, the base of the trophic pyramid - food and shelter for **all the characteristic species** that can occur naturally;
 - In this way **the conservation of about 4000 species of flora**, etc. can be effectively and sustainably supported.



The exceptional biodiversity of the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic area is also due to the diversity of biogeographical regions: 5 biogeographical regions (357 habitat types).

4.A Representative biodiversity values*

(4.A.1) Forest Genetic Resources

Ensures the adaptability of populations and species in a changing environment by maintaining an appropriate level of genetic variability (Enescu et al., 1997).

- Development of the National Catalogue of Forest Genetic Resources covering several regional/nationally characteristic species of conservation interest.

Estimation of existing area:

- National Catalogue of Forest Genetic Resources ⁶ (in situ core): 12,000 ha (TII);
- Seed reserves: 38,000 ha (TII).

Synergies with the current functional categories used FM according to forestry norms

- 1-5.h - Stands established as seminological reserves
- 1-5.l - Stands in forests intended for the conservation of genetic resources
- 1-5.n - Stands established as a buffer zone for forest genetic resources (%)

⁶ <https://www.icashd.ro/Catalogul%20National%20al%20RFG.pdf>

(4.A.2) RARE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED FOREST ECOSYSTEMS INCLUDING NATURAL MARGINAL HABITATS WITH HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE

Rare, threatened and endangered ecosystems representing high conservation values at national /regional level for which should be granted special care in the form of strict protection regime as a **precautionary condition** for maintaining the compositional and structural complexity

Presence of an ecosystem included in the Annex RTE Forest Ecosystem, with a favorable conservation status and a compact area that can ensure the self-regulating capacity of the ecosystems (stand or group of forest stands, of **at least 10 ha**).

- High Conservation Values (HCV) 3 - over 50 types of RTE forest habitats including **natural marginal habitats**:
 - A.1. Complex ecosystems of sparse forests, scrubs and oligotrophic and eutrophic swamps;
 - A.2. Complex ecosystems of sparse forests and scrubs from the sub-alpine level;
 - A.3. Complex ecosystems of forests, sparse woodlands and scrubs from the forest steppe and steppe;
 - A.4 Complex ecosystems with forests, sparse woodlands, scrubs and herbaceous vegetation on continental or marine sands;
 - B.1. Rare forests and scrubs (usually endangered);
 - B.2. Relict (and rare or endangered) forest ecosystems;
 - B.3. Forests and scrubs endangered by human activities;
 - C. Natural Marginal Habitats⁷ with high conservation value.



This list also covers **Natura 2000 priority habitats*** of community interest.



Estimation of existing area:

- HCV 3: 90.000 ha;
- Natural Marginal Habitats with high conservation value (including protection buffer zone): 20.000 ha.

Synergies with the current functional categories used FM according to forestry norms:

- 1-3a - Steppe and silvosteppe stands with difficult regeneration conditions
- 1-3b - Pedunculate oak stands in the lowland area, with difficult regeneration conditions
- 1-3c - Downy oak and brumarium stands, from the silvo steppe, with difficult regeneration conditions
- 1-3f - Salvage located along the forest stands in the plain and low hills area
- 1-3h - Stands located in very difficult regeneration conditions
- 1-3i – Junipers
- 1-3m - Forests located in the vicinity of the Black Sea and coastal lakes
- 1-5u - Stands from rare, threatened or endangered forest ecosystems
- Natural marginal habitats with high conservation value (e.g. Ns, Vs)
- HCV 3 - FMUs
- Protected Areas Management Plans

⁷ Marginal natural habitats of high conservation value included in/protected by the national forest fund: wetlands, anthropogenically endangered tree and shrub thickets, cliffs and groyne, ecosystems built by herbaceous species (forest glades), depleted soils, etc. (e.g. Ns, Vs).

(4.A.3) FORESTS WHICH ARE HABITATS FOR RARE, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED PLANT SPECIES

Forests which are habitats for rare, threatened and endangered plant species, including over 65 plant species (e.g. HCV 1.2, see Annex G of NFSS RO) and only for the species for which the ecological requirements are compatible with strict protection regime.



The most representative sites that contain a viable population of these species are already included in Protected Areas. Therefore, we are only referring here to those surfaces that are not already included in strictly protected areas.

Estimation of existing area:

- Based on protected area management plans and Natura 2000 standard forms;
- Based on HCV 1.2 already identified/assumed by forest management units;
- Based on Biodiversity Elements Register identified /assumed by forest management units.

Synergies with the current functional categories used FM according to forestry norms:

- 1-5.a - Stands included in nature reserves with active management aimed at conservation;
- 1-5.e - Stands established in natural monument protection zones;
- 1-6.n - Stands in biosphere reserves, included in the buffer zone;
- 1-6.c - Stands in the national parks in the sustainable conservation area consisting of the first row of plots adjacent to the strict/integral protection area;
- Protected Areas Management Plans.



(4.A.4) CRITICAL SEASONAL USE (BREEDING AREAS, REFUGE AREAS, ECOLOGICAL CONNECTIVITY)

Forests providing shelter for high concentrations of species during critical periods/ stages of their lifetime.

Estimation of existing area:

- nesting and resting areas for migratory and/or colonial species
- capercaillie and birch grouse lekking areas;
- rocky areas, biotope trees having hibernating and breeding bat colonies;
- chamois winter refuge areas
- wetland areas for breeding of amphibians;
- areas with several bear dens;
- critically significant ecological corridors.



Estimation of existing area:

- Based on Protected Areas Management Plans: (TBD);
- Based on HCV 1.3 already identified /assumed by forest management units: (TBD);
- Based on Biodiversity Elements Register identified /assumed by forest management : (TBD);
- Based on Forest management plans

Synergies with the current functional categories used FM according to forestry norms:

- 1-5.i- Stands intended for the protection of some protected fauna species;
- 1-5.t - Stands in forests established in ecological corridors (TIV);
- 1-5.s - Stands included in wetlands of international importance (RAMSAR sites);
- Protected Areas Management Plans;
- HCV 1.3 assumed by Certified FMUs.

4.B Other area-specific protection objectives* (i.e. areas that might also fit the OECMs criteria [OECM](#))

Other effective area-based conservation measure means “a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values”⁸ / / / OECMs may therefore include areas which have some form of legal protection that is not related to the protection of habitats and species (e.g. areas designated for water protection, flood prevention areas, agroforestry landscapes, military areas with restricted access, fisheries restriction measures, underwater cables sites) but indirectly promote the conservation of biodiversity ([DG Env. guidance](#), Chapter 3.3.2).

4B.1 ECOSYSTEM SERVICES IN CRITICAL SITUATIONS (OASPO.1)

Forests which are critical for water sources, erosion prevention and control, agricultural land and air quality:

- Forests located in the protection zones of water springs, mineral springs used as drinking water sources for local communities and forests from slopes of reservoirs and natural lakes that represent drinking water sources for local communities;
- Forest located in watersheds with torrential events and with excessive transport of sediments;
- Riparian forests which protect riverbanks and reduce the impact of floods;
- Forests that have a critical role for protecting soil resources: forests located on rocks, screes, on land with obvious erosion and land with steep slopes ($\geq 35^\circ$ on any type of geological substrate, $\geq 30^\circ$ on flisch and $\geq 25^\circ$ on sands and gravels);
- Forests around the alpine /sub-alpine regions widths of 100-300 m, depending on the geomorphology, geological substrates, soils, as well as the forest structure;
- Forest vegetation around the avalanche corridors and the land covered with dwarf pines in their vicinity;
- Forest belts around agricultural land in areas with harsh environments for agriculture;
- Forests area providing protection against air or soil pollution.

⁸ See : 62 CBD/COP/DEC/14/8 of 13 November 2018, <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-08-en.pdf>.

Estimation of existing area:

- Based on Forest management plans (see table below);
- Based on HCV 4, already identified /assumed by forest management units.

Synergies with the current functional categories used FM according to forestry norms:

- 1-1.a - Stands located in the protection perimeters of springs, deposits and mineral and drinking water sources;
- 1-1.b - Stands located on the direct slopes of reservoirs and natural lakes;
- 1-1.e - Stands located in major river beds;
- 1-1.g - Stands from torrential basins or with excessive alluvium transport;
- 1-2.a - Stands located on rocks, on debris and on the lands with a greater slope;
- 1-2.c - Stands/forest strips around alpine zone;
- 1-2.f - Stands located in avalanche formation areas and on their corridors;
- 1-2.k - Stands located in karst areas;
- 1-2.l - Stands located on lands with lithological substrates very vulnerable to erosion and landslides;
- 1-3.f - Salvage located along the forest stands in the plain and low hills area;
- 1-3.j - Stands located in areas with heavily polluted atmosphere;
- 1-3.k - Stands located in areas with weak and moderately polluted atmosphere.

HCV 4 undertaken by certified forestry offices.



Only cases where the strict protection regime is compatible with the achievement of the conservation objectives considered for the areas concerned will be considered.



4.B.1 URBAN AND PERI-URBAN AREAS (OASPO.2)

"Greening" of cities

Other urban and peri-urban areas, without being legally protected, are important components of green or blue infrastructure, adding to urban biodiversity and providing connectivity among protected areas and therefore contributing to the coherence of the protected areas network (as part of ecological corridors that aim to increase the coherence of the Trans-European Nature Network. ([DG Env guidance](#), Chapter 3.3.3).

Urban and peri-urban green areas should be counted towards the EU target if they are designated as protected areas or are recognized as OECMs and comply with the criteria for OECMs listed above. ([DG Env guidance](#), Chapter 3.3.3).



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- Stands established in park forests, recreational, thematic or educational parks;
- Stands around balneo-climatic resorts, climatic resorts and sanatoriums of national importance established by the central public health authority;
- Forest strips made up of whole sub-plots located along communication routes of national and international importance;
- Stands from forest bodies essential for preserving cultural identity of local communities;
- Stands in forests that protect special objectives.

Estimation of existing area:

- Target of the National Forest Strategy: 100.000 ha excluded from commercial logging (as a baseline) ;
- Based on Forest management plans ;
- Based on HCV 6 already identified /assumed by forest management units.

Synergies with the current functional categories used FM according to forestry norms:

- 1-4.a - Stands established in park forests, recreational, thematic or educational parks;
- 1-4.b - Stands around the localities, as well as the stands in the inner city;
- 1-4.c - Stands around balneo-climatic resorts, climatic resorts and sanatoriums of national importance;
- 1-4.e - Forest strips made up of whole sub-plots located along communication routes of national and international importance;
- 1-4.g - Stands from forest bodies essential for preserving cultural identity of local communities;
- 1-4.h - Stands in forests that protect special objectives.



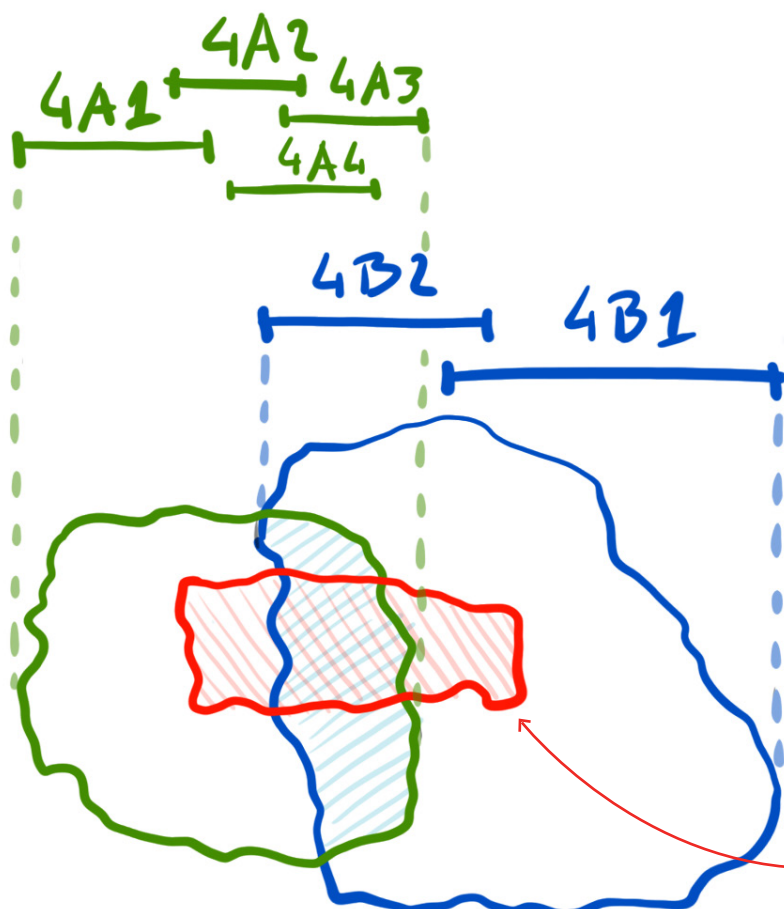
Only cases where the strict protection regime is compatible with the achievement of the **conservation objectives considered** for the areas concerned will be considered.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

ADDITIONAL PRIORITY!

Within the overall potential area identified & selected under Criteria 4. - Other ecosystems of high biodiversity value or potential (N.B. following the multiple roles of protections), additional priority should be considered for forests areas that **doesn't** qualify as OGF (i.e. do not comply with all criteria and indicators established considering the national specific), **but which still fulfill the following criteria:**

- Phytocoenosis are native to the site-specific environmental conditions;
- Ecosystems with complex structures in various development stages forming a horizontal mosaic and with a stratified vertical structure;
- Presence of "veteran trees" / "habitat trees" that have reached senescence is important (dying trees from the oldest cohort because of senescence);
- Presence of very old trees having above the half of the physiological age (i.e. over 150 - 250 years for main species), which are dominants (i.e. min. 35% of the area should be represented by such "very old trees");
- Occurrence of standing and fallen deadwood in all decay stages and across the entire forest area;
- Natural density (According to the natural forest type and geological conditions);
- Large and compact areas (including stands < 30 ha but preferably > 10 ha, taking into account local seasonal conditions)



(4.A) Representative biodiversity values*

- 4.A.1 Forest Genetic Resources;
- 4.A.2 Rare, threatened and endangered forest ecosystems including natural marginal habitats with high conservation value;
- 4.A.3 Forests which are habitats for rare, threatened and endangered plant species;
- 4.A.4 Critical seasonal use (breeding areas, refuge areas, ecological connectivity)

(4.B) Other area-specific protection objectives* (i.e. areas that also fit the OECMs criteria)

- 4.B.1 Ecosystem services in critical situation;
- 4.B.1 Urban and peri-urban areas.

Additional priority