

# LIFE FOR EUROPEAN FOREST GENETIC MONITORING SYSTEM

## LIFEGENMON Inception Report

Short version

Covering the project activities from  
**1 July 2014 to 15 March 2015**



LIFE13 ENV/SI/000148



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LIFEGENMON – LIFE FOR FOREST GENETIC MONITORING SYSTEM

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Beneficiary Data

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REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
AND SPATIAL PLANNING



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LIFE FOR EUROPEAN FOREST GENETIC MONITORING SYSTEM

Slovenia:



GOZDARSKI INŠTITUT SLOVENIJE  
SLOVENIAN FORESTRY INSTITUTE

Slovenian Forestry Institute  
(coordinating beneficiary)



ZAVOD za GOZDOVE  
SLOVENIJE

Slovenia Forest Service



cnvos  
Zavod Center za informiranje, sodelovanje in razvoj nevladnih organizacij

Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs

Greece:



Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Faculty of Forestry and Natural Environment



Hellenic Republic - Decentralized Administration of Macedonia & Thrace  
General Directorate of Forests & Rural Affairs

Germany:



BAYERISCHES AMT FÜR FORSTLICHE SAAT- UND PFLANZENZUCHT  
Bavarian Office for Forest Seeding and Planting

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1. Short description of the project LIFEGENMON

The aim of the project LIFEGENMON is to support the long-term maintenance of adaptability of forest genetic resources to the changing environment through **development of the European forest genetic monitoring system**. The project is co-funded by the **European LIFE** (the Financial Instrument for the Environment) and national funding agencies. It combines the efforts of **6 partners from 3 European countries** (Germany, Greece and Slovenia); it is coordinated by Prof. Dr. Hojka Kraigher from the Slovenian Forestry Institute, and lasts **from July 2014 until June 2020**. The total budget is **€5,484,162**.

2. List of abbreviations

- SFI – Slovenian Forestry Institute
- AB – Advisory Board
- ABP – Associated Beneficiary Partner
- AL – Action leaders (Barbara Fussi, Phil Aravanopoulos, Monika Konnert, Marjana Westergren, Tina Michieli, Boris Rantaša, Hojka Kraigher)
- ASP – Bavarian Office for Forest Seeding and Planting
- AUTH – Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
- BAR – Beneficiary Action Responsible
- BFM – Beneficiary Financial Manager, responsible for LIFEGENMON
- BL – Beneficiary leaders (Hojka Kraigher, Barbara Fussi, Tina Michieli, Phil Aravanopoulos, Nikitas Fragiskakis/ Fotis Kiourtsis, Živan Veselič)
- CBP – Coordinating Beneficiary Partner
- CNVOS – Centre for Information service, co-operation and development of NGOs
- DCU – Dynamic Conservation Units (Forest Gene Reserves)
- DM – Dissemination manager (Boris Rantaša)
- EUFORGEN – European Forest Genetic Resources Programme
- FGM – Forest Genetic Monitoring
- FGR – Forest Genetic Resources
- FM – Financial manager (employed from April 2015; till then done by PM)
- FRM – Forest Reproductive Material
- GA – Grant Agreement
- GDDAY – DAMT - The Decentralized Administration of Macedonia – Thrace
- ICP – International Co-operative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests
- LoC – Letter of Commitment
- NFP – National Focal Points
- PA – Partnership agreement
- PC – Project Coordinator (Prof. Dr. Hojka Kraigher)
- PM – Project Manager (Tjaša Baloh)
- PM SOP – Project Management Standard Operation Procedures
- RC – AUTH – Research Committee Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
- SFS - Slovenia Forest Service
- SOP – Standard Operation Procedures
- TB – Technical Board





### 3. Executive summary

The project LIFEENMON has started with its highly intensive schedule on 1 July 2014. The first Technical Board and Kick-off Advisory Board – Preparatory Action Meeting (part of **Preparatory Action A**) were organized in Teisendorf, Germany, in mid July 2014, when the Technical and Financial rules of LIFE projects were presented by the Coordinating Beneficiary Partner and accepted by all beneficiaries; also the Advisory Board was formed at the very beginning of the project, due to organisational activities having started before the project contract was concluded.

The Beneficiary Partner leaders are:

- SFI (Coordinating beneficiary partner: Slovenian Forestry Institute) – Hojka Kraigher, project coordinator, Tjaša Baloh, project manager, Polona Vukovič, project financial manager, Boris Rantaša, project dissemination manager
- ASP (Bavarian Office for Forest Seeding and Planting) – Barbara Fussi
- CNVOS (Centre for Information service, co-operation and development of NGOs) – Tina Michieli
- AUTH (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) – Filippos Aravanopoulos
- GDDAY – DAMT (The Decentralized Administration of Macedonia – Thrace) – Fotis Kiourtsis
- SFS (Slovenia Forest Service) – Živan Veselič

Besides the TB members, the Advisory Board consists of experts – country National Focal Points (NFPs) from the transect between Bavaria and Greece: Heino Konrad, Austria, Davorin Kajba, Croatia, Dalibor Ballian, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Saša Orlovič, Serbia, Vlatko Andonovski, FYROM; experts nominated by the Steering Committee (SC) EUFORGEN – Mari Rusanen, Finland, Sándor Bordács, Hungary, Jason Hubert, UK; furthermore two substitute experts were nominated by SC EUFORGEN (Ricardo Alía, Spain, Bruno Fady, France). The ministries responsible for forestry from Bavaria, Slovenia, and Greece have also nominated their AB members: Despina Paitairidou, Greece, Alenka Korenjak, Slovenia, Franz Brosinger, Bavaria.

Immediately after the first AB meeting the transect drive from Bavaria to Greece, led by the NFPs from the transect countries, was organized for ABP representatives. The transect drive was found to be of utmost importance for the project team to get a first-hand information about the state of forests, forestry, forest legislation and the state of forest genetic resources in the region, to which the system for forest genetic monitoring is to be addressed for implementation.

## 4. Description of project activities per Action

### A: Preparatory Action

#### A1: Screening

##### A1.1 Define national focal points (NFP)

The list of national focal points was completed and made available in the 2014 report. A Letter of Commitment (LoC) has been signed, with all of the NFPs regarding their participation at the AB meetings, and their contribution to the project.

##### A1.2 Compile national policies and European regulations and any other relevant documents at the European and national scale

The national policies of transect countries have been compiled, and a brief list of European regulations has been drawn up.

##### A1.3 Collect information on existing plots within the transect

Collection of site information has begun and access to relevant databases has been established during the first transect drive in July 2014. Information (data standards and minimum requirements) for EUFGIS DCU are given in Koskela *et al.* 2013 and Lefèvre *et al.* 2013. By March 2015 there were 120 DGCU for *Fagus sylvatica* within the transect (Austria 78, BiH 13, Croatia 3, Germany 21, Serbia 1, Slovenia 4), 110 for *Abies alba* (Austria 75, BiH 18, Croatia 4, Germany 8, Serbia 1, Slovenia 4) and 4 for *A. borisii-regis* (FYR Macedonia 1, Greece 3). Other existing monitoring plots within the project (ICP, ManForCBD, ICOS) have been identified at the country level, but the information has yet to be reviewed during the second transect drive in July 2015.



#### A2: Definitions and concepts

##### A2.1 Compile an overview of definitions and concepts in genetic monitoring

Compilation of definitions and concepts and relevant literature has started and will be made available as a bibliography divided by relevant topics. The preliminary text has been presented at a silvicultural congress in November.

##### A2.2 Compile an overview of possible vegetation / ecological zones to be applied and considered

The list of possible vegetation / ecological zones within the transect are considered according to:

- Global Environmental Stratification (Metzger *et al.* 2012): 10 global environmental zones with 30 strata (E1, E2, F12, G7, G8, G12, G13, H5, H9, I4, J1, J3, J4, J5, J6, K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K7, K8, K9, K11, L1, L3, L5, N, C).
- Environmental Stratification of Europe (Metzger *et al.* 2005): 6 environmental zones (ALS, CON, MDM, MDN, MDS, PAN)
- EEA Biogeographic regions (EEA 2011): 3 regions (Continental, Alpine, Mediterranean)
- Map of Potential Natural Vegetation (Bohn *et al.* 2007) with 699 mapping units was not available in shapefile format and would therefore be too troublesome to use as a data layer in the selection of monitoring plots.
- Individual requests for the shapefiles had to be sent to the data owners.



### A2.3 Compile an overview of considerations regarding the choice of tree species for preparation of genetic monitoring criteria

Concepts for consideration regarding the choice of tree species for genetic monitoring have been reviewed. The work is ongoing.

### A2.4 Output: prepare an overview of definitions and concepts

ASP has created an outline for the review paper of definitions and concepts in FGM. The paper shall be sent to Šumarski list or *Acta Silvae et Ligni*. Co-authors from the project partners shall contribute to the review. The most recent reviews on FGM were prepared in 2011 and 2013 (Aravanopoulos 2011) and EUFORGEN Working Group 2 paper (Aravanopoulos, F.A., Tollefsrud, M.M., Kätzel, R., Soto de Viana, A., Graudal, L., Nagy, L., Koskela, J., Bozzano, M., Pilipovic, A., Zhelev, P., Bozic, G. 2013. Development of genetic monitoring methods for genetic conservation units of forest trees. EUFORGEN Working Group on Genetic Monitoring, Draft Report November 2013. Bioversity, Rome, Italy) and will form the basis of the new review, also considering the brief review in Slovenian (Westergren, M. and Kraigher, H. 2011. Monitoring of forest genetic diversity. Gozd.v. 69 (5/6) 322-326).

## A3: Complement the initial phase of the Management Actions

### A3.1 Refine the project's technical coordination and standardize management according to LIFE

PC and PM have participated at the kick-off meeting, and the reporting procedures were established with the external evaluator (ASTRALE – NEEMO). All Technical coordination was refined and management standardized according to LIFE requirements (see sections 4.1 and 5 E)

### A3.2 Establish the Advisory Board (AB) based on consultation with stakeholders in three countries (Greece, Germany, Slovenia)

The Advisory Board has been established, roles defined and financing of external experts clarified within Letters of Commitment (LoC).

### A3.3 Initialize a database of experts, stakeholders, and end-users at the national and international level

The database has been initialized during the first AB meeting and the report submitted to the external evaluator.

### A3.4 Output: AB established

The Advisory Board has been established and the List of national focal points has been prepared.

## B: Implementation Action

### B1: Defining of optimal criteria and indicators

#### B1.1 Testing of indicators

Action B1 started in January, based on the Preparatory action A activities.

#### Action B1.1.1 Definition of monitoring regions (areas) for seven keystone tree species

Data regarding monitoring regions (for better understanding the 2nd TB decision was to change areas to regions) for seven keystone tree species (*Fagus sylvatica*, *Populus nigra*, *Fraxinus excelsior*, *Abies alba/Abies borisii-regis* complex, *Pinus nigra*, *Prunus avium*, *Quercus petraea/robur* complex), are compiled so that monitoring regions can be defined for each country participating in the transect from the Bavarian Alps to Mt. Olympus. The crucial cooperation of the NFPs was verified during the 2nd AB meeting. This discussion – a cross-talk between ABPs

and NFPs would be beneficial for the final deliverable, therefore the final delivery date of the draft definition of monitoring regions would best be done by July 2015.

#### Action B1.1.2 Selection of genetic monitoring sites for two species

The selection of genetic monitoring sites for two species (*Fagus sylvatica*, *Abies alba/Abies borisii-regis*), will be carried out taking into account already proposed monitoring regions (continuation of Action A1.3). 67% of the selection has been completed and what remains is the selection of the *Abies* sites for SFI and FGL-AUTH. At this point, we do not anticipate any particular delays influencing other activities.

#### Action B1.1.3 Establishment of genetic monitoring sites and assessment of demographic baseline data

This Action is planned for April – June 2015 and is centred in obtaining field measurements in the relevant sites. Demographic assessment will include age and size class distribution, regeneration abundance, and phenology - phenology phases of both species on selected trees is going to be monitored (flushing, flowering etc.). Common protocols are under preparation.

#### Action B1.1.4 Sampling in the genetic monitoring sites for the assessment of genetic baseline data

Field samplings are to be taken in May – August 2015 and repeated in August 2019. Sampling of seeds will depend on the occurrence of the mast year for the two species within the duration of the project.

#### Action B1.1.5 Assessment of genetic baseline data from genetic monitoring sites

Field samples are to be assessed in a laboratory in September 2015 – September 2016 and repeated in August 2019 – February 2020. The selection of genetic parameters for the genetic monitoring indicators and verifiers is under way. Delays are not anticipated (to be done by September 2016). Activities have begun regarding the organization of technical specifications for genetic parameter analyses, and to harmonize genetic markers suitable for *Fagus sylvatica* and *Abies alba* genetic analysis. Special care has been taken to organize the processing and storage of plant tissues and seeds for analysis.

### B1.2 Selection and valorisation of indicators

#### Action B1.2.1 Cost assessment per species, level, indicator and time requirements

This action will materialize in October – November 2016 with a re-evaluation in October – December 2019. As it will be based on the estimation of labour, laboratory costs and time requirements, the recording of costs and time spent already started. We have concluded that this is a complex and crucial exercise and plan to devise a procedure for the analytical description of costs and time requirements for all partners in the same manner (although these may vary across partner situations).

#### Action B1.2.2 Indicators and criteria for further implementation

These will be defined based on the outcome of the data from the test plots and the cost-benefit analysis, considering the estimation of minimum and optimum numbers of indicators and verifiers with respect to time and cost requirements (done in October – December 2016 and re-evaluated in September – December 2019).

#### Action B1.2.3 Development of a draft Decision Support System

Based on the above actions Action B1.2.1.; Action B1.2.2; submitted to Actions B2 and B3 for finalization.

#### Action B1.2.4 Standardization of demographic data

This will be achieved by establishing common protocols after an evaluation of the monitoring exercise and its repetition. The establishment of detailed common protocols across partners is a challenge, but we are already taking measures to this effect.

#### Action B1.2.5 Standardization of genetic data

This will be achieved by establishing common protocols after an evaluation of the monitoring exercise and its repetition, by standardization of assessment procedures, and with sample standards to be used across partners.

#### Action B1.2.6 Database for genetic monitoring

A suitable database structure for genetic monitoring data will be developed considering also the operational EUFGIS database.





## B2: Preparation of Guidelines and Management Strategy

Preparation of guidelines and management strategies will start in October 2015. The first step of this action will be to expand the review conducted in the Preparatory Action on forest management practices and to contact National Focal Points (NFPs) (review of existing monitoring concepts, literature search, forest management practices and monitoring sites, elaboration of differences between them and compilation of results). The second step will be to contact institutions/people responsible for general forest monitoring in order to cross-link forest genetic monitoring to general forest monitoring. The aim is to establish standardization of genetic monitoring procedures and better integrate genetic monitoring into the existing forest monitoring activities.

The genetic monitoring guidelines will contain procedures on the definition and selection of forest genetic monitoring units/plots, the design and installation of forest genetic monitoring plots, species selection, etc. The outcome from the validation of indicators in Action B1 will be generalized for all seven species to be included into the guidelines.

## B3: Policy Guidelines

### Expert collaboration:

This work will take place (from January 2016 onwards) in close collaboration with the stakeholders and will be supported by the NFPs and other experts (see Actions A and E1). The inclusion of the stakeholders will help in identifying possible issues not considered in the compiled literature or existing legislation, resolutions and strategies, and create innovative ideas for better future strategic and legislative solutions.

## C: Monitoring of the impact of the project actions

### C1 & C2: Project and impact monitoring

The monitoring activities implemented by CNVOS focused on establishing a monitoring system that would enable the most efficient and timely monitoring of the effectiveness of project actions. The monitoring plan was developed for all (sub)actions, indicating when, what, and how the actions will be monitored.

The information was compiled in an advanced monitoring matrix, which will serve as an easy-to-use tool for all the action leaders, as well as the project coordinator and monitoring team. It presents the overview of the timeline for all the activities with indicated deadlines for milestones and deliverables and reporting periods. For each of the actions, it presents the overview of all milestones and deliverables and identifies other possible indicators of progress, sources of verification and indicators of success. It also contains a set of appropriate monitoring tools/methods, indicating their aim, form, and scope.

## D: Communication and dissemination actions

The LIFE GENMON general dissemination strategy (D1) is focused on the promotion of knowledge on forests, forestry, forest genetics and raising the awareness of climate changes impacts on forests, while targeted dissemination (D2) focuses on transferring of information and knowledge about FGM and other project topics to important stakeholders, decision makers, scientists and others.



## D1. General Dissemination

### D1.1 E-communications

The project Dissemination team's first priority was to produce the **Guide for the Harmonisation of Communication Tools of the Project, the Standard Operation Procedures for the Organisation of LIFE GENMON Events**, and the **LIFE GENMON Graphic Standards Manual**. Project document templates were created, such as the project presentation template. They form a graphical and operational basis for all future LIFE GENMON events, publications, and products.

#### D1.1.1 Home page – open access

One of the first priorities of the project was to launch the project web site. The main language of the website is English (Slovenian, Greek, and German versions are also available). The website serves as a central hub of content that is further communicated through social media and other communication channels. The **LIFE GENMON Internet Presence Guide** was prepared in order to introduce our internet-based tools to all of our partners. By March 2015, the website already had over 3000 total views and can be accessed at <http://www.lifegenmon.si>.

#### D1.1.2 e-forum

The e-forum was set up in December 2014 as part of the project's open-access home page.

#### D1.1.3 Social networks

LIFE GENMON social profiles have been active since December 2014. We are sharing interesting contents on the project topics together with information about the project. Our social media plan is still in early stages, but we are already seeing a significant upward trend in profile views. A detailed **social media strategy** has been prepared by the DM.

#### Links to social profiles:

- 1.) <http://www.facebook.com/lifegenmon>
- 2.) <http://www.twitter.com/lifegenmon>
- 3.) <http://www.linkedin.com/company/lifegenmon>

#### D1.1.4 Portal

At least 1 portal establishing workshop will be organised.

### D1.2 Printed information

LIFE GENMON presentation leaflets and business cards were produced, printed and distributed as drafts for the needs of project dissemination. The updated versions of leaflets and banners will be printed in 4 project languages. Several materials were printed for the 2nd Advisory Board Meeting in Thessaloniki. 100 copies of a yearly calendar/planner were printed at ASP.

#### D1.3.1 Training courses; D1.3.2 Teaching materials for and D1.3.3 Workshops with children

2 meetings with Institute of Forest Pedagogics from SI and LIFE ManFor CB.D about teaching materials for teachers and workshops for children have been done. Partnership has established contacts with organisations having experience in environmental education (Biosphärenregion Berchtesgadener Land, Nationalpark Berchtesgaden, Schools e.g. AKG Traunstein). From the findings, teaching materials for teachers will be produced in June 2015.

#### D1.3.4 Children's books on forestry

Preparatory meetings, networking with stakeholders, and preparing guidelines for authors for the first book, and also general guidelines and topics have been prepared for all 6 books. We are currently searching for authors and illustrators for the books.

#### D1.5.1 Notice boards for each plot

The **notice boards with project information** have been prepared in English and all national languages and placed at participating institutions. Drafts of notice boards for forest genetic monitoring plots were also prepared.

#### D1.5.2 Special groups of target audience

Special groups were chosen at the first AB meeting in July 2014. Activities carried out: 1.) IFSA: Winter meeting 2015 – presentation of LIFE GENMON project to 40 international students visiting Slovenia; 2.) Visit of ASP for project presentation with policy stakeholders (major and municipal council; 26 participants); 3.) Visit of ASP for project presentation with the general public (local pharmacy; 18 participants).



### D1.6 Open days for general public

Preparatory meetings, networking with various stakeholders. An open days for the general public will be organised during Slovenian Forest Week in May 2015 and 2016. ASP will organise the open house together with the National park Berchtesgaden during summer 2015 and 2016

### D1.7 Media

National and EU-level **media contact lists** have been procured in all project countries for communication with and through local, regional and national media. All information about the project will be distributed through these lists. Several articles on LIFE GEN MON were published.

## D2. Target Dissemination

### D.2.2.1 Home page – restricted part

Procured and established in **December 2014**. We procured an application named 4thOffice. We are conducting most of project management and communications through this application. It also serves as the project document system and is used for financial reporting to CBP.

### D.2.3.1 Internal workshops for specialists doing forest inventory

A Workshop entitled “Determining the Measures for Conservation of Forest Genetic Resources” for heads of Sections for Cultivation and Conservation of Forests in Slovenia was organised at SFI in September 2014.

### D.2.3.2 Internal workshops for forest owners, users of FRM, tree dealers, nurseries, seed dealers, silviculturists, and forest managers

- SFI: the professional symposium “Hortikultura – možnosti, priložnosti, prenos dobre prakse” at Visoka šola za hortikulturo in vizualne umetnosti Celje. LIFE GEN MON was presented to an audience of more than 50 students, professionals and decision makers among key-note presentation.
- ASP: project presentation with nursery stakeholder (21 participants from German tree nurseries)

### D.2.3.3 Internal workshop for scientists from forest management, silviculturals and forest geneticists

- Presentation to EUFORGEN Steering Committee in June 2014 by PC.
- Presentation by dr. M. Westergren at *II International Congress of Silviculture: Designing the future of the forestry sector* in Florence, 26-29 November 2014.
- Presentation at the final conference of Emonfur project by dr. M. Westergren on 23.9.2014.

## E: Project management and monitoring of the project progress

### E1: The Advisory Board and networking

Between April and July 2014 the PC prepared an information letter for the EUFORGEN Steering Committee, for experts from the SE Europe, and relevant ministries. The experts from SE Europe (National Focal Points, NFPs) were chosen among EUFORGEN national coordinators and EUFGIS national focal points (an AGRI GEN RES project lasting from 2007 – 2011, establishing a European information database on gene conservation units), all possible expert invitations were discussed among the CBP and ABP leaders, and the NFPs were nominated by the first AB meeting in July 2014. The project was presented at the EUFORGEN Steering Committee in Edinburgh in June 2014, when three SC representatives and two substitutes/experts were nominated; furthermore the SC EUFORGEN proposed that an invitation is sent to the Secretariat representative to participate at several LIFE GEN MON AB meetings as an external expert. The Advisory Board members' nominations were finalized in July 2014, and two AB meetings organized (July 2014, March 2015). The time and scope of the meetings is discussed among the CBP and ABPs, the agenda finalized before the meetings, and accepted at the meetings.

The AB meetings are chaired by the PC and helped by the BL as moderators. Rapporteurs are nominated to check the minutes, and the decisions are checked by the whole consortium before the end of the meeting.

### Networking:

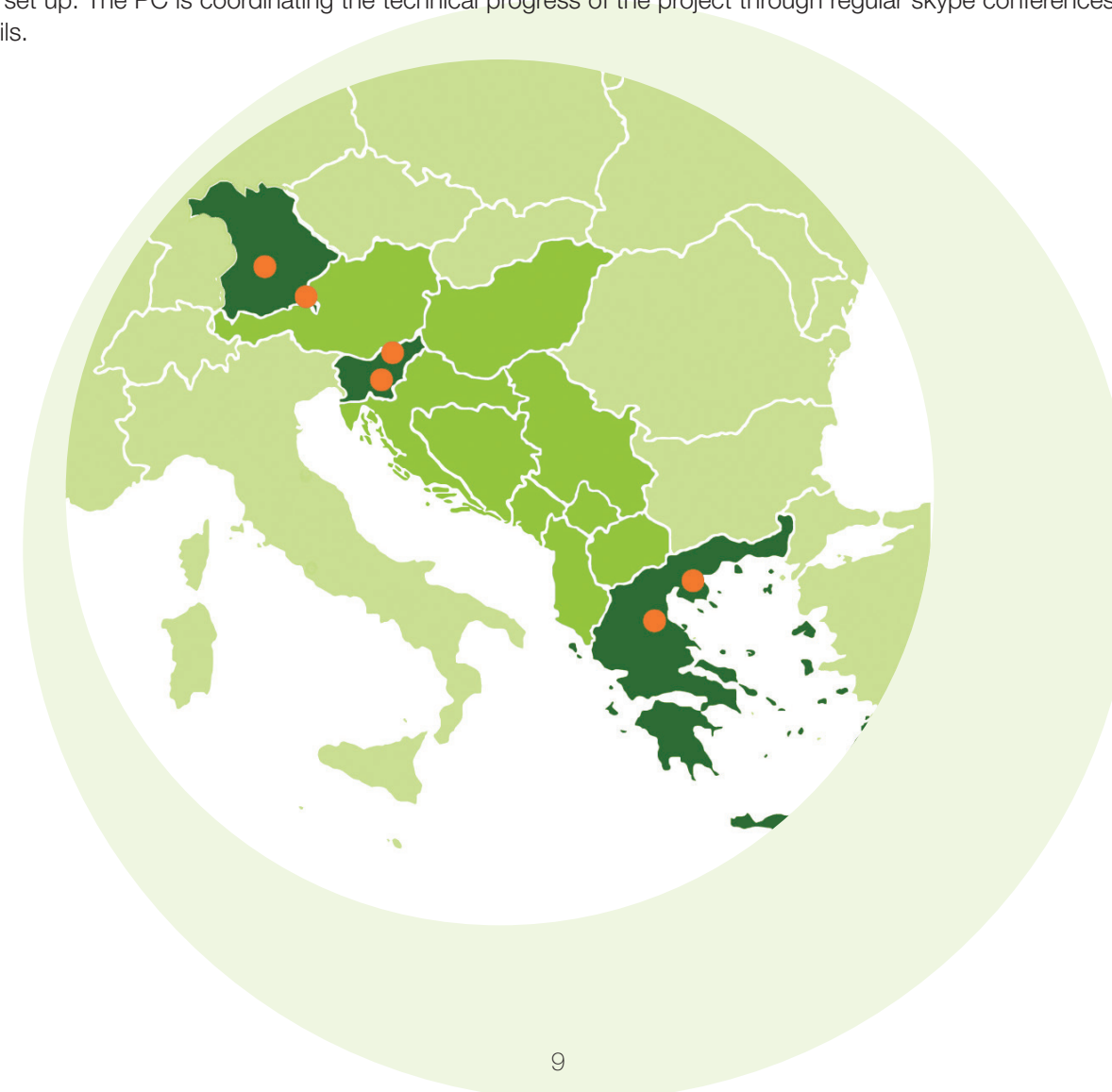
Professional networking is a combined activity of Actions A, B3, D2 and E1, organized within E1. It includes invitation of experts to AB meetings, presenting of LIFE GEN MON at other LIFE and EU projects, FAO meetings, COST actions and conferences, and inviting experts from such projects and actions to the AB meetings. An invited expert at the 2<sup>nd</sup> AB meeting was dr. Ricardo Alia from Spain, who is also a nominated substitute EUFORGEN SC member in LIFE GEN MON AB. LIFE GEN MON project has also been listed as a contributor to the EVOLTREE network of excellence, and its workshops shall be announced there.

## E2: Project management and monitoring of project progress

LIFE GEN MON project management and coordination is implemented at two levels: activity level and general project level. In addition, the implementation is ensured through the day-to-day management at each ABP as described in chapter 4.1.

The activity level management is carried out through project intranet 4thOffice, where groups have been designed according to project actions. Each activity has the main content deliverables and milestones embedded in the timeline, as well as assigned project teams, which have been set up at partner and action level. Action leaders can communicate with team members as well as Advisory Board members included in the action. Through the application all tasks can be assigned as well as deadlines. The leaders can monitor on daily basis the task progress and intervene when necessary.

The overall project management is carried out through different channels, mainly through 4th Office and direct email. On 1 July 2014 the project manager (PM) was employed (Tjaša Baloh) and the coordinators project team was set up. The PC is coordinating the technical progress of the project through regular skype conferences and emails.





## 5. Envisaged progress until next report

The project LIFE GENMON is highly demanding regarding all the implementation and dissemination activities, and several step-by-step action-based refined management procedures have started. Furthermore, according to the decision taken at the 2<sup>nd</sup> AB meeting the refined action plan shall include cross-referencing between the textual part of the project, the financing part, and all proposed modifications as pointed out in the actions' presentation (part 4). Therefore detailed activities to reach all steps leading to the overall goals of the project shall be defined by May 2015.

The prolongation of the Preparatory Action A, with the continuation of the transect drive in July 2015, shall ensure a better overview of the existing situation in forests, forestry, forest gene resource-based legislation, existing monitoring regions, and existing monitoring plots in the transect countries. This, combined with an intensive discussion line with all NFPs, shall improve the deliverables due by the end of Preparatory Action A, as well as its continuation in all three Implementation Actions.

The establishment of monitoring plots, standardization of sampling and demographic data acquisition, genetic verifiers and procedures, database and storage organization, are the first priorities in Action B1. These, together with the established discussion line with the NFPs shall allow Action B2 to start with the envisaged activities in transposing genetic approaches from the two monitoring species to the other five species under consideration into initialization of the forest genetic monitoring guidelines. Furthermore, the continuation of the transect drive shall allow a better preparation of the overview of national legislation and existing forest monitoring activities in SEE, leading to an improvement of the activities within Action B3.

The Dissemination (D) Actions have started at an exceptional intensity, and the refined action plan is well under way. The main emphasis shall be in allowing flexibility to be incorporated into all planning in order to take best advantage of any as yet unforeseen opportunities for promotion of forests and forestry as prerequisites for supporting the system of forest genetic monitoring. Also here the NFPs have been actively involved through their own initiative preparing a number of publications and broadcasting events, contributing to the future of FGM in the region.

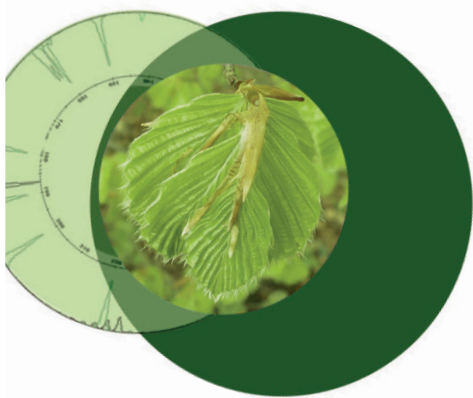
Project Management (Actions E) and Monitoring (Action C) have so far fulfilled all requirements, and the internal communication and monitoring system, the 4thOffice, has been established. It needs further structuring for the needs of monitoring, as well as for communicating with external AB members and any invited experts.

Further co-funding opportunities shall be sought in all three participating countries, the stakeholders consulted, and contributing national or regional project proposed.

At CBP the project Financial Manager shall be employed by April 2015. Any opportunity for further education of the existing team, even though it has already shown its value in management and dissemination capabilities, shall be considered.

The risk management matrix shall be prepared. All risks will be assessed according to their probability of occurrence (1 - very unlikely to occur to 5 - very likely to occur) and its severity (1 - very low potential impact to 5 - very high potential impact). The combination of probability of occurrence and severity will generate a classification of risks. The pathways of their reporting and the procedures undertaken shall be prepared. These shall include an exhaustive description of what and how to do under every circumstance, either typical (technical follow-up, internal communication and reporting, etc.) and exceptional (risk management).





LIFE FOR EUROPEAN FOREST GENETIC MONITORING SYSTEM