



To
Commissioner for Environment
Janez Potočnik
Avenue de Beaulieu 5
1160 Brussels, Belgium

Brussels, 9 January 2014

Ref.: Financing Natura 2000 workshops hosted by WWF and the Commission

Dear Commissioner,

The European Commission contracted WWF to organize a series of national workshops on Financing Natura 2000. The first results of the ongoing workshops were presented during the open session of the Biodiversity and Nature Directors' meeting in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 5th December 2013 by Mr Peter Torker from WWF Germany.

According to the webpage, <http://www.financing-natura2000.eu/events/>, the workshops are held in the Member States with a view of providing information about the possibilities for improving the uptake of Natura 2000 financing from 2014 onwards, as well as to facilitate discussions across ministries responsible for the different funds. Furthermore these workshops aim to engage a wider audience in the discussion on the future funding of Natura 2000.

Thus far, more than 16 workshops took place since early September 2013, hosted by the respective WWF national branches in close collaboration with the respective Ministries of Environment on behalf of DG Environment and WWF.

Unfortunately, in many instances national organisations representing forest and land owners, farmers as well as other land managers and users were not invited to participate in this important process and to attend the national workshops. If invited, they only received it on a short notice and, consequently, in several cases they could not participate in the workshops. It became evident that only in those Member States in which there is a good basis for collaboration between the different stakeholders for Natura 2000 management, a broader level of participation of various interest groups was achieved.

Funding for Natura 2000 is, amongst others, aimed at supporting implementation of the EU Nature Directives. Intrinsically, forest and land owners, farmers, are crucial for implementing Natura 2000 on the ground and making it a success. Therefore, it is self-evident, that the respective resource holders and their organisations should be closely involved in such workshops.

CEPF, Copacogeca, and ELO urge both the Commission as well as WWF responsible for organising the 'Financing Natura 2000' workshops to make sure that for the remaining meetings the respective national and regional forest and land owner, farmers, manager and user

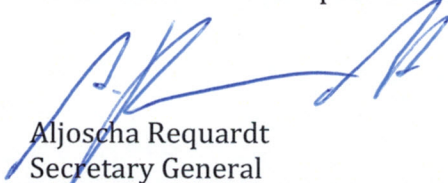


organisations are invited and informed in time to ensure participation and cooperation in this matter.

Furthermore, we urge the Commission to make better use of the Natura 2000 Users' Forum for ensuring successful participation and information flow for both the remaining workshops as well as for other future occasions.


Sincerely,

Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF)



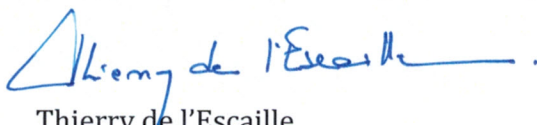
Aljoscha Requardt
Secretary General

European farmers and European agri-cooperatives (Copa-Cogeca)



Pekka Pesonen
Secretary-General

European Landowners' Organization (ELO)



Thierry de l'Escaille
Secretary-General

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