Collection of best practices from EU Member States

Best practice 1. Continuous cover forest management – Celje Park Forests State Forest Service, Slovenia

The forest management practices with the common approach to the hilly and mountain forests continuous cover forest management (selective cutting, and group selection, based on the Pro Silva principles), with the respect of all stakeholders related to the forests. The clearcuts were banned by law since 1949. The management practices are implemented evenly in Natura 2000 and non-Natura 2000 forests in the same high level.

Best practice 2. Involvement of people to the forest management Celje Park Forests State Forest Service Slovenia

The legal environment of the forest management: 80% of the Slovenian forests are privately owned, but planned, managed, and controlled by the professionals of the state forest service with the high level principles, with close connection with the owners and local people.

Best practice 3. Environmental education in the forests of Celje: Celje Park Forests State Forest Service Slovenia

All classes of the primary and high schools of Celje town are invited at least once by the experts of the forest service to introduce to the children the role, and importance of the forests, forest management and nature conservation. After this the young generations could change their parents approach to the forests also.

Best practice 4. Small scale water retention in Donau Auen National Park, Austria

The water regime of this important floodplain forest is changing very rapidly because of the dropping water lowering water level of the Danube. The small scale water retention methods, what they applied changed the situation: The transformation of these forests were halted with the newly opened river tributaries.
Best practice 5: the involvement of volunteers to the management of 91E0 Riparian oak forests - Germany. The local nature conservation manager, the Auenzentrum im Schloß Grünau complemented its lacking resources with the voluntary contribution of local nature protection NGOs and citizens to their work.

Best practice 6: Das Trittsteinkonzept (the stepping stone concept) Ebrach city forest, Germany

The elaboration and demonstration of a forest management concept by Ulrich Mergner, which involves a very high level of nature conservation management elements, such as the continuous cover forest management with selection cutting methods, biotope trees, microhabitat conservation, active development of microhabitats such as wood cavities, and a network of high natural value habitats, deadwood management.

Best practice 7: Game control based on the browsing effects in the regeneration level of the forest Ebrach city forest, Germany

The population control plan of the red deer, roe deer and wild boar is based on their effect measured in the forest and not on the estimations of the population. With this approach it is easier to support the natural regeneration of the forest with close to nature forest management techniques.

Best practice 8: the marteloscope method. The Integrate+ Marteloscopes; a chain of training sites for virtual forest management. Germany, France

A Marteloscope is a forest stand of roughly one hectare, in which every single tree has been inventoried and numbered. In the Integrate+ marteloscope network, information is collected on (1) tree species, (2) tree status as dead/alive, (3) forest mensuration data (dbh, tree height and crown base height), (4) timber quality and (5) tree related microhabitats using the tree microhabitat catalogue field guide. This information is then linked to a software application that can be used on-site to guide management decisions and to spur constructive discussion. Marteloscopes serve as a meeting point for many events and training of the practice network.
Best practice 9: – Nature conservation management of Bialowieza National Park - Biosphere Reserve, Poland

The key element is the strict zonation of the park: The total area is 10 517 hectares, from this 5726 hectares (more than 50%) is strictly protected core zone. On this part of the park only nature conservation activities are allowed, no timber harvested at all, the surrounding 3224 hectares buffer zone is managed by the Polish States Forest Service with very strict protective approach, but from this area timber harvesting is possible. The remaining areas are meadows, which are key important habitats of the european bison.

Best practice 10: tourism utilization of Bialowieza forests besides protection, Bialowieza National Park - Biosphere Reserve, Poland

The national park receives 170,000 visitors a year. The strictly protected areas can be visited only for small, max 12 people groups with professional guide. These professional guides trained by the NP, but they are employees of external tourism SME-s of the region. The quality of their work is well controlled. This solution is also helpful for the nature conservation experts of the NP, as they can concentrate all of their capacity to nature conservation work, and research.

Best practice 11: Floodplain invasive species (Ampropha fruticosa) control, River Maros, Romania. The removal of A. fruticosa on floodplain areas were done with the following method.

**Step 1.** if it’s necessary - leaning the area from the high growth invasive vegetation cleaning saws machines, wich can reach more than 3 metres.

**Step 2.** root tearing and removal of the majority of the invasive amorpha roots.

**Step 3.** Alfalalfa sowing to the prepared soil.

**Step 4.** machine mowing with frequent returns, as it is important to not let the amorpha getting strong again and growing too high.

**Step 5.** after the trasformation and reduction amorpha infection i cattle can be used to maintain these meadows as wooden pasture lands as the traditional land use

After one year of grasing use with cattles the land managers achived the complete rehabilitation of the good condition wooden pasture.
Best practice 12: Veteran tree protection and management, Pol’ana Biosphere reserve, Slovakia

Within the natural reserve they managing a 68 hektars Sessile oakt stand where they can protect 350 year old veteran oak trees. These trese are the remnants of the historical wooden pasture use, but after than the meadows were transformed bac to semi neutral forest vegetation. These kint of trees are very important habitats for many protected species linked to old, high diameter trees, woodcavities, or deadwood. The protection of these trees done by individually applied measures. Each trees are registered in a geoinformatics database, which is important for the traceable management also. it is necessary to improve the vitality of these treas with certain measures, such as opening the surrounding stand canopy, to let more light to the wide crowns of these old trees. The maintenance of the remain pasture land done by grazing cattles, and machinery mowing. It is also important that despite the really high nature conservation value, the area is not managed as stricly protect reserve: the local people can visit these areas for traditional uses, like mushroom picking, and recreation, thus it is also useful for environmental educational purposes

Best Practice 13. Application of Pro Silva Forest Management principles in sessile oak forests, Pocuvadlo, and Plastovce, Slovakia

Pro Silva promotes forest management strategies which optimise the maintenance, conservation and utilisation of forest ecosystems in such a way that the ecological and socio-economic functions are sustainable and profitable. The general approach to management which is advocated by Pro Silva, includes market and non-market objectives, and takes the whole forest ecosystem into consideration. The Slovakian example of application of Pro Silva principles in oak stands is really important, as most of the forest engineers claim that this approach cannot be used in the oak stands effectiveli. The Slovakian State Forest enterprise using this approach on bigger areas among their daily forest management methods. These examples are extra important to demonstrate that close to nature forest management can be done in profitable way.