
EU submission to the CBD notification 2011-014 on incentive measures

Following the successful outcome of CBD COP10, in May 2011 a new European Union (EU) Biodiversity strategy to 2020¹ was presented by the European Commission, which is aimed at reversing biodiversity loss and speeding up the EU's transition towards a resource efficient and green economy. The strategy responds to the EU 2020 headline target for biodiversity, which calls for halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, restoring them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.

The strategy is built around six mutually supportive and inter-dependent targets with corresponding actions to reach them. The targets are focused on anchoring biodiversity objectives into other key sectoral policies, such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries, stepping up efforts to fully implement existing EU nature legislation, and closing important policy gaps.

The results of the The Economics of the Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) initiative have guided the development of the EU strategy, which sets out how valuing nature's potential will contribute to a number of the EU's strategic objectives, including that of becoming a resource efficient, low-carbon and climate resilient economy. It also seeks to mainstream biodiversity across sectors and stakeholders, including those beyond the traditional environmental constituency in order to integrate biodiversity concerns into their policies and decision-making to encourage action to conserve biodiversity and enhance ecosystem services and illustrate to them the benefits of doing so. In addition, several EU Member States are carrying out national TEEB assessments.

The strategy proposes actions that are currently discussed by Member States aimed at the removal or mitigation of perverse incentives, and the promotion of positive incentives for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, including:

- Taking measures (demand and/or supply side) to reduce negative impacts on biodiversity resulting from EU production and consumption patterns, as part of the EU's flagship initiative on resource efficiency.
- Providing the right market signals for biodiversity conservation, including work to reform, phase out and eliminate subsidies harmful to biodiversity at EU level.
- The development of guidance documents for key sectors to improve their understanding of how to meet the requirements set out in EU nature legislation and its value in promoting economic development.
- Financial and other incentives encouraging farmers, forest holders and fishermen to protect and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services.

¹ COM (2011) 244 final. "Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020".

- Fostering innovative mechanisms, such as Payments for Ecosystem services, to finance the maintenance and restoration of ecosystem services.
- Action to map and assess the state of ecosystems and their services in EU Member States, and promoting the integration of these values into accounting and reporting systems at EU and national level by 2020.

The strategy makes clear that the full engagement of different levels of government, a broad range of stakeholders and the public is needed to ensure effective implementation. As such, a number of key partnerships will be expanded and promoted to support the strategy, including the EU Business and Biodiversity Platform, which currently brings together businesses from six different sectors (agriculture, extractive industries, finance, food supply, forestry and tourism) to share their experiences and best practices. The European Commission will further develop the Platform and encourage greater cooperation between businesses in Europe, including small and medium-sized enterprises, and links to national and global initiatives.

The European Commission has also committed to continue working with partners to publicize and implement the TEEB recommendations at EU level and support work on valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services in developing countries.

The Environment Council endorsed the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 at its meeting on 21 June 2011 and considered it, together with its targets, to be a key instrument to enable the EU to reach its overall 2020 headline target, whilst emphasizing the need to further discuss its actions so as to ensure its effective and coherent implementation. The Environment Council at its meeting on 19 December 2011, called on the European Commission to include, as part of its work to reform, reorient and/or eliminate environmentally harmful subsidies by 2020, criteria for identification of subsidies harmful to biodiversity at EU level, and to prepare a road map for the achievement of this objective, taking into account the specificities of each Member State.

Finally, the EU calls for a clear focus in further addressing this subject, as it is formulated in Target 3 of the Strategic Plan. Although other important issues such as values of biodiversity and ecosystem services and engagement of the business sector are undoubtedly linked to the issue of positive and negative incentives, the latter justifies a specific and targeted approach.

Information from Member States on progress made, difficulties encountered, and lessons learned, in implementing the work spelled out in the decision X/44

Contribución Española en respuesta a la Notificación 2011-014 sobre Incentivos.

En respuesta a la Notificación 2011-014 sobre incentivos, a continuación se mencionan algunas de las actividades desarrolladas por España en materia de incentivos, y en particular en relación con las labores descritas en la Decisión X/44:

a) Medidas y mecanismos para dar cuenta de los valores de la diversidad biológica y de los servicios de los ecosistemas en la toma de decisiones, incluyendo la revisión y actualización de NBSAPs;

El 16 de septiembre de 2011 el Consejo de Ministros adoptó el **Plan Estratégico del Patrimonio Natural y de la Biodiversidad 2011-2017**, mediante el Real Decreto 1274/2011. Este Plan Estratégico constituye el instrumento de planificación de referencia para la conservación de la biodiversidad y el patrimonio natural en España e incorpora los compromisos derivados del Plan Estratégico para la biodiversidad 2011-2020 del Convenio sobre Diversidad Biológica.

El Plan Estratégico del Patrimonio Natural y de la Biodiversidad incluye numerosos objetivos y medidas específicas para el desarrollo y puesta en marcha de elementos que incentiven la conservación, restauración y uso sostenible de la diversidad biológica.

La integración sectorial de los objetivos y metas para la biodiversidad y la responsabilidad compartida con el sector privado son dos de los principios directrices del Plan Estratégico. De este modo, este nuevo marco de referencia contribuye a generar un mayor compromiso de los diferentes sectores públicos y privados en materia de conservación y uso sostenible de la biodiversidad, de conformidad con el párrafo 6 de la Decisión X/44.

Una de las metas del Plan Estratégico consiste en fomentar la integración de la biodiversidad en las políticas sectoriales. Para el cumplimiento de este objetivo se plantean, entre otras, las siguientes acciones:

- Identificar las prácticas agrarias que a escala nacional pudieran suponer impactos significativos sobre la biodiversidad y proponer y fomentar medidas para su prevención, incluyendo la utilización de incentivos a la generación de externalidades positivas.
- Seguir los efectos de los principales elementos de la política agraria sobre la biodiversidad, y evaluar la eficacia de sus instrumentos específicos de apoyo, incluida la condicionalidad y las medidas agroambientales.
- Colaborar activamente con el sector pesquero e incentivar las modificaciones necesarias de las artes y métodos de pesca para adecuarlas a la gestión sostenible de los recursos pesqueros.
- Promover el desarrollo sostenible en las áreas de influencia socioeconómica de la Red de Parques Nacionales y evaluar el efecto de las subvenciones concedidas con este fin.
- Incluir en las ayudas que conceda el Ministerio de Medio Ambiente, y Medio Rural y marino criterios específicos de valoración relativos a la conservación de la biodiversidad.

b) realizar estudios similares a nivel nacional;

Otra de las líneas de acción previstas en el Plan Estratégico consiste en promover la consideración de la biodiversidad y los servicios de los ecosistemas, incluyendo su valor económico, en el diseño de políticas públicas y en las actividades del sector privado, así como establecer la Contabilidad del Patrimonio Natural en el marco de las cuentas nacionales.

El Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino elaboró el **proyecto VANE** sobre Valoración de los Activos Naturales de España, que supone una primera aproximación al valor de los bienes y servicios proporcionados por los recursos naturales en todo el territorio español, expresado en unidades de flujo (€/año).

Más recientemente se ha desarrollado el **proyecto de Evaluación de los Ecosistemas del Milenio de España** (<http://www.ecomilenio.es/>), promovido por la Fundación Biodiversidad del Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Medio Rural y Marino desde el año 2009. Este proyecto ha generado información robusta, validada científicamente, para que los gestores, los políticos y el público en general conozcan que los cambios en los ecosistemas del planeta tienen un efecto directo sobre el bienestar humano. Este proyecto ha sido de gran relevancia para evaluar el coste económico y social de la pérdida de diversidad biológica y servicios de los ecosistemas asociados.

c) Detectar, eliminar o reformar los actuales incentivos perjudiciales para los sectores que potencialmente pueden afectar a la diversidad biológica;

Otra de las líneas de trabajo abiertas por el Plan Estratégico del Patrimonio Natural y la Biodiversidad incluye medidas encaminadas a promover incentivos que contribuyan a la conservación y uso sostenible de la biodiversidad, para lo cual se prevén, entre otras, las siguientes medidas:

- Desarrollar sistemas de incentivos a las externalidades ambientales positivas.
- Estudio de mecanismos fiscales que favorezcan la conservación de la biodiversidad.
- Analizar los subsidios estatales con efectos perjudiciales sobre la biodiversidad y sus posibilidades de supresión o reconversión.

d) promover el diseño e implementación de los incentivos positivos para la conservación y la utilización sostenible de la diversidad biológica.

En el Plan Estratégico también se prevé estudiar el establecimiento de sistemas de pagos por servicios ambientales y estudiar y regular, si procede, la puesta en marcha de bancos de biodiversidad. Estos trabajos pueden contribuir a la implantación de sistemas de incentivos eficaces para contribuir a la conservación de la biodiversidad.

e) colaborar con las empresas sobre las formas y medios para contribuir a la aplicación nacional del Convenio.

En el Plan Estratégico del Patrimonio Natural y la Biodiversidad se dedica también especial atención a fomentar las alianzas entre el sector privado y las Administraciones Públicas para contribuir a la conservación y el uso sostenible de la biodiversidad. Entre las medidas propuestas, se pretende impulsar nuevas formas de colaboración con empresas a través de la Responsabilidad Social Corporativa y desarrollar instrumentos para fomentar la consideración de la biodiversidad en las actividades empresariales.

En línea con estos objetivos, el Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y de Medio Rural Marino ha celebrado reuniones con representantes de las organizaciones empresariales, a fin de explorar opciones para mejorar la integración de los aspectos de la biodiversidad en la

actividad empresarial. También se está trabajando en la difusión de metodologías y guías existentes sobre evaluación corporativa de ecosistemas, a fin de promover el conocimiento y la aplicación de estos instrumentos, con el objetivo final de contribuir a la protección de la biodiversidad y a los objetivos del CBD.

f) consumo y producción sostenible para la conservación y la utilización sostenible de la diversidad biológica.

España cuenta con un **Plan de Contratación Pública Verde** de la Administración General del Estado y sus Organismos Públicos y las Entidades Gestoras de la Seguridad Social, aprobado por Acuerdo de Consejo de Ministros.

A fin de contribuir a su aplicación y a reducir el impacto de la compra y de la contratación pública sobre la biodiversidad, el MARM está trabajando en desarrollar y promocionar el Plan de Contratación Pública, por ejemplo mediante el desarrollo de manuales específicos sobre los aspectos a tener en cuenta para la compra verde de determinados productos.

Asimismo, de acuerdo con lo previsto en el Plan Estratégico del Patrimonio Natural y de la Biodiversidad, se estudiará la conveniencia de revisar el Plan de Contratación Pública Verde para incorporar criterios específicos sobre biodiversidad, con el objetivo de garantizar que el desarrollo y aplicación del Plan de Contratación Pública integre adecuadamente los aspectos relativos a la protección y conservación de la diversidad biológica.

Réponse de la France à la Notification 2011-014 du secrétariat de la CDB sur les mesures d'incitation

1. Rapport sur les aides publiques dommageables à la biodiversité

Le Centre français d'analyse stratégique (CAS), qui dépend du Premier ministre, a publié en octobre 2011 un rapport sur les aides publiques dommageables à la biodiversité et identifié des pistes de réformes potentielles.

Le rapport, à l'attention du gouvernement français, s'inscrit dans les recommandations formulées par l'OCDE et les dispositions du Grenelle Environnement, qui demandent d'évaluer l'impact des politiques publiques sur l'environnement. La loi d'août 2009 de programmation relative à la mise en œuvre du Grenelle Environnement prévoit en particulier un état des mesures fiscales défavorables à la biodiversité, pour adapter progressivement la fiscalité aux nouveaux enjeux environnementaux. La France a aussi adopté en mai 2011 une nouvelle Stratégie nationale pour la biodiversité (SNB), dont le 7ème objectif consiste à inclure la préservation de la biodiversité dans la décision économique.

Le rapport rappelle tout d'abord l'importance des « services écosystémiques » rendus par la biodiversité, remarquable comme ordinaire : fourniture des aliments et de matériaux de construction ; purification de l'air et de l'eau ; modération des inondations et des sécheresses ; renouvellement de la fertilité des sols ; maintien des ressources génétiques ; production de biens récréatifs, esthétiques et culturels.

Le rapport s'intéresse ensuite aux subventions, aux dépenses fiscales, aux avantages d'origine réglementaire, à la non-application ou l'application partielle de la réglementation ainsi qu'aux subventions implicites. Une aide publique a été considérée comme dommageable à la biodiversité à partir du moment où elle augmente une ou plusieurs des cinq pressions suivantes : la destruction et la dégradation des habitats, la surexploitation des ressources naturelles renouvelables, les pollutions, le changement climatique et la dissémination d'espèces exotiques envahissantes.

Le rapport recommande d'agir dans 5 directions :

- lutter contre l'artificialisation des sols, en réduisant les dépenses fiscales favorables à l'étalement urbain, pour plutôt privilégier la densité urbaine ;
- inclure le coût de la biodiversité réduite, lors de l'évaluation socio-économique des projets d'infrastructures de transport ;
- réformer la taxation rejets industriels dans l'eau en intégrant les 13 substances dangereuses prioritaires de la Directive Cadre sur l'Eau dans une redevance pour pollution non domestique;
- réduire les émissions atmosphériques de métaux lourds;
- rendre les redevances plus incitatives, par exemple celles perçues par l'État pour toute occupation ou utilisation privative du domaine public.

Le rapport, en français, est disponible à l'adresse suivante :
http://www.strategie.gouv.fr/system/files/2011-21-10-cas_rapp_biodiversite.pdf

2. Mesures fiscales en faveur de l'environnement

Les principales mesures fiscales environnementales adoptées en loi de finances rectificative pour 2010 (loi n° 2010-1658 du 29 décembre 2010) refondent les taxes d'urbanisme de manière à lutter contre l'étalement urbain et financer la trame verte et bleue, renforcent le malus automobile et certaines composantes de la taxe générale sur les activités polluantes et précisent certains dispositifs (redevance pollutions diffuses et taxe poids-lourds). Cela étant, certaines impositions (notamment TGAP déchets) sont réduites.

Ainsi, la réforme de l'urbanisme a vu la création d'une taxe d'aménagement se substituant à des taxes préexistantes, due pour « les opérations d'aménagement et les opérations de construction, de reconstruction et d'agrandissement des bâtiments, installations ou aménagements de toute nature soumises à un régime d'autorisation » ; la création du versement pour sous densité institué pour lutter contre l'étalement urbain ; l'extension des possibilités d'affectation de la taxe départementale sur les espaces naturels sensibles à la protection des aires d'alimentation des captages les plus menacés et aux dépenses et à la préservation ou à la remise en état des continuités écologiques prévus dans les schémas régionaux de cohérence écologique et la taxation des aires de stationnement.

Par ailleurs, d'autres mécanismes ont visé à encourager les comportements favorables à l'environnement. Les seuils du bonus-malus automobile ont été abaissés et l'éco-taxe poids-lourds a été juridiquement sécurisée et certains (NOx, bioréacteurs) taux de la taxe générale sur les activités polluantes ont parfois été revus à la hausse.

Toutes ces mesures viennent s'ajouter à celles déjà existantes, notamment celle en faveur du patrimoine naturel qui datent de la fin des années 2000, comme l'exonération de taxe sur le foncier non bâti pour les zones humides, les zones Natura 2000 et dans les cœurs de parcs nationaux ; l'exonération partielle des droits de mutation à titre gratuit pour les zones Natura 2000, les cœurs de parcs nationaux, les réserves naturelles, etc ; la déduction du revenu net pour travaux de restauration et gros entretien dans les zones Natura 2000, les cœurs de parcs nationaux, les réserves naturelles, ; l'imputation sur le revenu global des déficits fonciers afférents aux dépenses de préservation et d'amélioration du patrimoine naturel.

A noter qu'en 2012, le ministère de l'environnement français compte mener des opérations de sensibilisations des acteurs qui pourraient participer à la meilleure gestion du patrimoine naturel à l'existence de ces mesures fiscales, notamment en formant les différentes personnes qui interviennent dans ces dispositifs.

3. Fonds de dotation pour la gestion d'espaces naturels

Le fonds de dotation est une personne morale de droit privé à but non lucratif qui reçoit et gère, en les capitalisant, des biens et droits de toute nature qui lui sont apportés à titre gratuit et irrévocable. Les revenus issus de la capitalisation de cette dotation en capital sont utilisés pour financer la réalisation d'une œuvre ou d'une mission d'intérêt général (« fonds opérationnel ») ou redistribués pour assister une personne morale à but non lucratif dans l'accomplissement de ses œuvres et de ses missions d'intérêt général (« fonds relais »).

Le fonds de dotation s'accompagne d'avantages fiscaux, qui portent à la fois sur le montant donné au fonds de dotation (réduction d'impôt à hauteur de 60% du montant, dans la limite de 5% du chiffre d'affaires) et sur le fonds de dotation lui-même.

Ce type d'instrument est notamment utilisé en France par les acteurs de la gestion d'espaces naturels (ex : Conservatoires d'espaces naturels).

Cette soumission complète celle portant sur les activités mises en œuvre par la France en matière de mobilisation des ressources, qui ont été signalées dans la réponse nationale à la Notification 2011-071. Elle ne constitue pas une compilation exhaustive de toutes les mesures prises dans ce domaine.

Le 16 décembre 2011

FINLAND

Getting more and better from less: Proposals for Finland's national programme to promote sustainable consumption and production

- Finland has developed a national strategy on SCP together with all relevant stakeholders which was approved by the government in 2006.
- The programme's 73 proposed measures focus on solutions for the issues with the greatest impact on society's overall eco-efficiency. The programme also defines who takes responsibility for these specific actions. The proposals comprehensively cover the ecological, economic and social dimensions of sustainability, and forge new links between environmental policies and business policies.
- The committee's starting point was the search for means to meet society's basic needs in sustainable ways. These needs include housing, food, transportation, welfare and leisure. The programme strongly emphasises the need to use natural resources responsibly. This approach differed from earlier integrated product policies and from the EU's SCP Action Plan, which largely focused on providing consumers with reliable and comprehensible information, and on bringing all product policies under one umbrella emphasising life cycle thinking. These issues were part of Finland's programme, but not the starting point.
- The first step after the approval of the strategy was to establish a material efficiency centre, which provides services for businesses and advice for consumers and public sector organisations on various ways to improve material efficiency. The centre is for time being piloting a tool on material auditing. The results from the pioneering companies show that it is easy to reduce material-use by 10-20 % and at the same time save resources and money and cut CO₂ emissions. The intention is to one day set sector-specific targets and conclude material-efficiency targets with key sectors.
- The Government passed in April 2009 a resolution that encourages all public actors to adopt sustainable procurement. The Government expects measures from those responsible for public procurement, particularly in the areas of energy, construction and housing, transport, food services, energy-using equipment and services.
- Environmental impacts of material flows caused by the Finnish economy have been analysed and will be used as a basis for discussion on the environmental impacts of private consumption and possible means to reduce the impacts of consumption.
- Finland's SCP programme will be reviewed during spring 2012.

Getting more and better from less: Proposals for Finland's national programme to promote sustainable consumption and production (2005)

Available in English: <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=149254&lan=en> and in Finnish: <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=137221&lan=fi>

Payment for ecosystem services (PES) is a type of environmental policy instrument that gives the owner of a natural resource direct incentives to manage it in society's best interest.

A report on PES was commissioned by the Working Group on Environment and Economics under the Nordic Council of Ministers (<http://www.norden.org/fi/julkaisut/julkaisut/2009-571>)

The report provides an overview of current theory and experiences from the use of PES. Several examples of PES already exist in the Nordic countries, most of which aim to preserve biodiversity or reduce nutrient runoff. The report shows that there is scope both to improve and expand the use of PES in the Nordic countries.

Targeted and differentiated payments, for example by using competitive tendering where land owners have to reveal their compensation levels and ecosystem services they can offer, is a promising approach. The use of PES may also be expanded, for example into areas where regulation traditionally is perceived as very negative by land owners, or used in combination with existing regulation.

Finland - Forest Diversity Programme METSO

1. Introduction

The Forest Biodiversity Programme METSO, initiated in 2008 and running until 2020, enhances Southern Finland's network of protected areas and safeguards forest biodiversity in privately-owned forests across the region. METSO aims to halt the ongoing decline in forest biotopes and species and establish stable favourable trends in forest biodiversity by 2020. METSO is both an acronym for the programme and the Finnish name of the capercaillie, a primitive old growth forest bird. It is based on the experience gained during the implementation of the programme's pilot phase in 2002-2007 and encourages stable favourable trends for Southern Finland's forest ecosystems. METSO was approved in 2008 together with a new National Forest Programme for 2015. It is a collaborative effort between Finland's Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.²

The programme is an example of a payment for ecosystem services (PES) scheme where protected areas are designated based on voluntary conservation agreements between authorities and forest owners. Conservation is based on forest owners' voluntary competitive tendering. Authorities compare tenders and choose the most suitable sites and negotiate conservation agreements with the forest owner. Agreements can be of temporary or permanent nature, depending on the nature of the conservation site in question.³

In total, the programme defines ten forested habitats to be potentially preserved. The site selection criteria define which habitats are to be protected under the programme. It covers the most important habitats and structural features in Finland's forests in terms of biodiversity. Another important criterion is the proximity of potential sites to the current network of protected areas and impacts on economic or social activities.

Measures under the METSO Programme:

- Ecological site selection criteria
- Restoration and nature management of habitats in protected areas
- Development of Finland's network of protected areas
- Safeguarding biodiversity in privately-owned forests
- Cooperation networks
- Organisation of natural values trading and related cooperation
- Habitat management measures in commercially managed State forests
- Ensuring biodiversity in municipal recreation forests and national hiking areas
- Advice to forest owners and training of forest professionals
- Communications
- Improving the knowledge base
- Developing monitoring, information systems and statistics
- Inventories of habitats and species
- Monitoring and evaluation of the Programme

Forest owners are compensated according to the Nature Conservation Act (1096/1996) or the Act on the Financing of Sustainable Forestry in the Finnish legislation (1094/1996). Some areas can also be purchased by the State to be designated as permanently protected areas. Measures under the programme are financed through the annual framework budgets allocated to the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. To date, funding of up to €182 million until 2012 has been put in place. As over 75% of forests are owned by 600.000 non-industrial private forest owners in Southern Finland (61% of the whole country), the funds

² METSO Factsheet 2010, Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland, 2010.

³ Government Resolution on the Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland 2008-2016 (METSO), Finnish Government, 2008.

of the programme are mainly channelled to private forests owners, forest companies, municipalities and congregations.⁴

2. Benefits

The METSO Programme has applied new forestry methods for commercially managed forests based on a forest-owner-centred approach. It represents a departure from centralised governing of nature conservation to an emphasis on voluntary conservation contracts between forest owners and authorities. Forest owners benefit from independent decision-making and the possibility to retain their property rights in the available conservation schemes.

The aim is to:

- Advance social acceptability of forest biodiversity conservation and minimize conflicts between landowners and nature conservation authorities;
- Improve the forest owner's attitudes towards biodiversity conservation;
- Increase economic cost-efficiency in biodiversity through a PES mechanism, as the bidding system by forest owners for conservation agreements with authorities lowers information rents and thereby the size of PES.⁵

3. Impacts

The programme aims to protect over 96.000 hectares of ecologically valuable forests by establishing permanent conservation areas and making fixed term conservation contracts (20 years) on private lands or by acquiring land by the State. In addition, 82 000-173 000 hectares of sites with natural values will be preserved in commercially managed privately owned forests by making environmental forestry subsidy agreements (10 years) or by nature management work. Up until 2010, over 30.000 hectares of state-owned forests and mires inside conservation areas have been restored. METSO also has increased the number of existing protected areas to include a total area of 10.000 hectares of state-owned commercially managed forest previously designated for conservation. The state forestry agency Metsähallitus also drafted land use plans to prioritise the conservation of biodiversity in ecologically important areas, aiming to expand and interlink forest areas of value to biodiversity.⁶

From 2008 to 2009 alone, METSO yielded 3,661 hectares of strictly protected areas, totalling a compensation of €17 million. This includes former commercially managed forests owned by the state and areas offered for protection voluntarily by landowners. During this period, another 18.900 hectares have been conserved in privately-owned forests with other policy instruments. These include the financing of sustainable forestry, nature management of commercially managed forests, and environmental subsidies. The restoration and active management of ecologically valuable forest habitats within protected areas is another important way to help safeguard forest biodiversity in Southern Finland. During the period 2008–2009 Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services has purposefully managed and restored 6.400 hectares of forest habitat in protected areas. Ecological inventories of protected areas have additionally continued, covering 18.000 hectares over the two-year period.⁷

METSO also supports forest conservation in municipalities. An increasing number of municipalities have started mapping valuable natural sites in their forests according to the programme selection criteria. METSO offers financial support to protect these sites.

The collaboration between forestry and environmental organisations will be further improved and official advisory services for forest owners will be developed. Forestry-related training and communications will be enhanced. Additionally, research and monitoring will be advanced to improve the knowledge base on forest biodiversity and to help in determining the best ways to preserve it. Under the programme, €2 million per year are allocated to support both basic and applied research on forest biodiversity.⁸

4. Way forward

⁴ The Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland (METSO) 2008-2016, Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland, 2010.

⁵ The Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland (METSO) 2008-2016, Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland, 2010.

⁶ Interim assessment of the METSO Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland – English summary, Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland, 2010.

⁷ Results of the Evaluation of the METSO Programme 2008-2009, Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland, 2010.

⁸ Interim assessment of the METSO Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland – English summary, Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland, 2010.

The METSO Programme has shown the benefits a flexible harmonisation of different forms of forest use and voluntary, state-subsidised protection of forest resources. Its new bottom-up and voluntary approach to conservation in return for financial compensation has raised the interest of private forest owners.

The large pool of involved actors (i.e. private forest owners, forest industry, NGOs, forestry organisations and interest groups, researchers and authorities) has increased acceptance, importance and political reliability of the programme.