

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE
PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE



**MCPFE Information Document
on Data Collection
and Compiling the Statistics
On Protected and Protective Forest
and Other Wooded Land in Europe**

Warsaw, 2006

Authors:

Jari Parviainen, Finnish Forest Research Institute (Metla), Joensuu

Georg Frank, Austrian Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests, Natural Hazards and Landscape (BFW), Vienna

Copyrights: MCPFE 2006

Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

Liaison Unit Warsaw

Ul. Bitwy Warszawskiej 1920r. nr. 3

00-973 Warsaw, Poland

Tel.: + 48 22 331 70 31

Fax: + 48 22 331 70 32

e-mail: liaison.unit@lu-warsaw.pl

www.mcpfe.org

Introduction

The MCPFE Assessment Guidelines for Protected and Protective Forest and Other Wooded Land (2003) are elaborated and adjusted especially with view of the European circumstances where the protected forests are often small, located mainly in fragmented landscapes with other land-use categories, and protected under various management options and regimes. The preliminary information on protected forest areas in Europe collected pursuant to the MCPFE guidelines for the Vienna MCPFE Conference 2003 illustrate that the minor differences in the interpretation could produce wide variation in the results. Harmonization and further clarification of the application of the MCPFE Assessment Guidelines is needed in order to provide reliable and comparable data, and that is the reason why this information document has been produced.

This document is based on discussions held among 100 experts from 25 European countries in the framework of the EU COST Action E 27 (Protected Forest Areas in Europe - analysis and harmonization) during the years 2002–2006.

MCPFE ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Protected and protective forest and other wooded land" have to comply to the following general principles in order to be assigned according with the MCPFE Assessment Guidelines:

- Existence of legal basis
- Long term commitment (minimum 20 years)
- Explicit designation for the protection of biodiversity, landscapes and specific natural elements or protective functions of forest and other wooded land

"Explicit designation" in the context of these Guidelines comprises both:

- Designations defining forest and other wooded land within fixed geographical boundaries delineating a specific area.
- Designations defining forest and other wooded land not within fixed geographical boundaries, but as specific forest types or vertical and horizontal zones in the landscape.

Data on forest and other wooded land according to these two designation types should be distinguished in the reporting.

In addition to the regimes complying with these principles, the MCPFE takes account of protected and protective forest and other wooded land based on voluntary contributions without legal basis. As far as possible, these forests and other wooded land should be assigned to the same classes as used for the legally based regimes. However, data on these forests and other wooded land should be compiled separately.

Source: ANNEX 2 to the Vienna Resolution 4. Vienna Declaration and the Vienna Resolutions adopted at the Fourth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, 28 – 30 April 2003, Vienna, Austria
<http://www.mcpfe.org>

Explanatory Notes on General Principles of the MCPFE Assessment Guidelines for Protected and Protective Forest and Other Wooded Land

By assessment of protected/protective areas according to the management objectives all the three general principles (legal basis, long term commitment, and explicit designation) need to be fulfilled in parallel.

Legal basis: All protected/protective areas must have an official and permanent status of the protection: governmental (**Federal, State “Länder” or on EU level**) decision under nature conservation act, law or statute, forest act, law or statute or official written contract between the state authorities and the forest owner. The single protected area (name) or group of areas (protected habitats) should be mentioned in the national/regional legal documents. Other protection means are to be considered as voluntary contribution into the conservation.

Examples:

Austria: Landesgesetz vom 5. Dezember 1996 über die Errichtung und den Betrieb des Nationalparks „O.ö. Kalkalpen“ (O.ö. Nationalparkgesetz – O.ö. NPG); Gesetz vom 12. März 2002 über den Nationalpark Gesäuse (Nationalparkgesetz Gesäuse, Stmk. NPG)

The Czech Republic: The Czech National Council Act No. 114/1992 on the Protection of Nature and Landscape, The Czech National Council Act No. 218/2004 on Nature and Landscape Protection

Finland: Nature Conservation Act 1096/1996 Finland, Act on Wilderness Reserves 62/1991, Act for Koli National Park L 581 /1991

Lithuania: Law of Protected Areas, 2001, No IX-628

Romania: Governmental Ordinance regarding the regime of the natural protected areas, conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna species (OUG no. 236/2000), approved by the Parliament in the law no. 262/2001

Switzerland: Federal Forest Law (WaG 1991) and related Federal Forest Ordinance (WaV 1992)

Long term commitment: Legal basis automatically involve a long term commitment status as “*ad infinitum*” approach. By contract with management commitments the time period is 20 years, as minimum, in order to be included into the category of the official protected/protective areas.

Forest management plans are necessary as the maintenance guidelines for protected areas, but they are flexible in their applications and have normally the time span shorter than 20 years in order to achieve long term commitment. Forest management plans are considered technical documents. Due to the lack of legal basis exclusive management plans which do not relate to a protection regime of the individual site based on a national or regional law, governmental ordinance or ministerial decision, cannot form any ground for accounting the areas into the classes of protected/protective forests and other wooded land. Where the management plans are considered the basis for classification and delineation of a protected forest area, they must include a clear statement of and a relation to the long term legal basis of the protection regime.

Example of contract with long term commitment:

Austrian Forest Reserves Program (Forstliche Grundsätze des Bundes für die Errichtung eines österreichweiten Netzes von Naturwaldreservaten, Bundesministerium für Land und Forstwirtschaft, Zl. 55.700/20
VB4/95, General principles for the establishment of the Austrian network of natural forest reserves)

Explicit designation: A clear delineating made on a map is the prerequisite for accounting the area for the designation type with fixed geographical boundaries. For the designation type without fixed geographical boundaries, the prerequisite for inclusion is as strict interpretation as for type with fixed boundaries, which means clear descriptive definition of the vertical or horizontal zones in the landscape.

Reporting on these two designation types indicated in the General Principles (with or without fixed boundaries) must be done separately.

Examples:

Normally, the National Parks in various vegetation zones in Europe are designated and marked on the map, that also means visible and recognizable boundaries in the field (explicit designation with fixed boundaries). Many of those National Parks include also zones such as the core areas, buffer zones, and recreational zones, which have been marked and separated in the field. These zones can deliver more accurate data on the protected/protective areas for data collection over the MCPFE classes. By interpretation the various zones of protected areas can be assessed separately when the data is available, the boundaries exist, and the restriction differences are clear.

In Finland, the Act on the Protective Forests to preserve the tree line in the North (Act 196/1922, amended into the Forest Act 1094/1996) defines those forests growing more than 300 meters above sea level near the Polar Circle line (explicit designation without fixed boundaries).

Additional General Remarks:

1. Terms and Definitions

The same definitions and terms for forest and other wooded land as used by MCPFE-UNECE/FAO data collection guidelines for national reporting have to be used for reporting on the MCPFE classes for protected/protective areas (see Terms and Definitions for the Enquiry on MCPFE Indicators for SFM, 10 October 2005. MCPFE-UNECE/FAO Data Collection, <http://www.fao.org/forestry/fra2005-terms/eng>, and <http://www.mcpfe.org>). If the national definition for forest or various scales are used, this deviation from the international definitions must be described and illustrated.

2. Assessment of Management Objectives, not Effectiveness

MCPFE classification is focused on assessment of the management objectives and restrictions on interventions (strictness of management). The classification does not evaluate the management effectiveness or the biodiversity aspects/quality of protected/protective areas. This means that various forest types, characteristics or naturalness classes can be included into the MCPFE classes. For instance, forests undisturbed by man, semi-natural or even plantation forests can be included in the same MCPFE class depending on the national circumstances. In that sense, there is no value ranking between the classes MCPFE 1.1 to 1.3; these categories are complementary by evaluation of the acreage of forests and other wooded land protected for biodiversity. The biodiversity aspects of forests including protected areas will be described by other biodiversity indicators of MCPFE reporting.

3. Voluntary contributions without legal basis must be reported separately.

The voluntary contributions can include, for instance, the protected forest areas on private land without official statutes, the areas of special ecological network, the short term contracts for biodiversity/groundwater protection, the Natura 2000 sites not included into the national protected categories and networks with priority object for biodiversity, the cultural objects within multifunctional forests, or biodiversity objects included in landscape ecological planning. The forest areas certified against various schemes should not be included in the reporting, while voluntary, market driven forest certification as a technical tool is aimed at multifunctional forests. Protected areas included in certified areas can be reported through normal procedure as described in these Guidelines.

4. The linkages between MCPFE, IUCN and EEA (CDDA list).

The CDDA list (“Common Database on Designated Areas”) coordinated by EEA is an important database since it collects all the designations types (A, B and C) of every individual protected site with national names, numbers and acreages. More than 800 various individual designation types over 48 European countries are specified in CDDA list. The total of about 50,000 sites are recorded, the estimation of all areas for Europe being around 65,000–70,000 nationally designated areas.

The CDDA list groups the records according to the statutory requirements, but the classification does not involve any differentiation between the management rules and the strictness of protected areas. More information about the protection objectives, habitat types, forest distribution and proportions of forests within the areas is needed. On the whole, CDDA is seen positive, if completed and regularly updated. The CDDA designation groups support the MCPFE data collection and reporting.

IUCN categories are approaching a global, worldwide view, and include six categories. The IUCN classification has been applied in describing protection in vast untouched, continuous and state owned forest areas. IUCN categories include all types of ecosystems, and have not been especially well suited for classifying forest protection where forests are often only a part of the larger protected areas.

Because of the long historical use of forests in Europe, that has led to altered forest ecosystems forest fragmentation into small, isolated areas inside other land use classes and heterogeneous forest ownership structure, the European concept of forest protection has become more complex and differentiated than in other continents with huge areas of primeval forests. MCPFE classification is thus adjusted especially for European circumstances.

The major interpretation difference between IUCN and MCPFE classification systems lays in the main definition and the minimum size of the areas. The IUCN classification includes the areas protected under “legal or other effective means”, whereas that of the MCPFE makes a clear distinction between legally binding and other protection means. In IUCN classification, the minimum size of a single protected area is often 1,000-2,000 hectares. In Europe, however, the protected forest areas are often small, typically just between 30 and 1,000 hectares.

5. The Biosphere Reserves.

The biosphere reserves are the areas of terrestrial and coastal ecosystem promoting solutions to reconcile the conservation of biodiversity and its sustainable use. Conservation, development and logistic support are the three functions of the biosphere reserves. The reserves are organized into three zones: the core area, the buffer zone and the transition area. Only the core area requires its legal protection.

The biosphere areas cannot be included as a total cover area into the MCPFE classification, but the legally protected forest and other wooded land zones within the biosphere reserves can be included in the MCPFE classes under the normal assessment procedure, as described in these Guidelines.

Explanatory Note to Natura 2000:

Natura 2000 is very important European tool aimed at conservation of habitats and species. Natura 2000 Network is established to ensure preservation of biodiversity throughout the European Union. A network of sites is being formed in the Member States according to the EU Habitats and Birds Directives (Habitat Directive 92/43/EEC and Birds Directive 79/409/EEC) with the aim of preserving the most important habitats, natural habitat types and species. Besides forests, the Natura 2000 network also includes other ecosystems, such as waters, marine areas, fields and meadows, and the Alpine areas.

Natura 2000 is not any classification system, and it does not exclusively focus on the protected forest areas, while it also includes the areas with multi-purpose use of forests and other ecosystems. Therefore Natura 2000 as such is not included in the MCPFE reporting on protected/protective forests and other wooded land. The legally binding and long term protected areas included in Natura 2000 networks will appear according to the normal assessment rules through these interpretation guidelines into the MCPFE classes. Selected and designated Natura 2000 sites can be accounted for the MCPFE class 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 or 2, according to the strictness of management. In some circumstances a Natura 2000 site can also be situated in a multipurpose forest.

In certain EU countries, Natura 2000 network is based mainly on the existing network of protected areas, supported with additional areas designated especially for the Natura 2000 purposes. This designation can also be made besides nature conservation law on Federal or State level according to other laws such as water conservation law, law on land use restrictions, and law on recreation or environmental protection with obligation to guarantee the maintenance of the habitats. Any activity which could threaten the conservation status of the area in terms of the preservation of natural habitat types or the habitat of certain species is prohibited. In some countries, the Natura 2000 network only includes strictly protected areas, while in some other ones, also multi-purpose landscapes are included, and the continuation of practices like commercial forestry, farming, fishing or hunting is allowed, and sometimes even considered essential for the preservation of the site.

The Natura 2000 sites (designated under both the EU Habitat Directive and Birds Directive) are to be accounted for the MCPFE classes where individual sites are also protected under the national (Federal or State) legislation. The protection status must fulfil the General Principles of MCPFE classification as described in Annex 2 to the Vienna Resolution 4. Since the management activities on individual Natura 2000 sites range from unrestrained development without any intervention through intensive restoration measures, the categorisation pursuant specific classes must be decided for each individual site under normal assessment procedure following these Guidelines.

DEFINITION OF MCPFE CATEGORIES AND CLASSES

The following table presents the MCPFE Classes with their linkages to the IUCN and EEA categories:

THE STRUCTURE OF THE MCPFE ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

MCPFE CLASSES		EEA*	IUCN**
1: Management Objective "Biodiversity Conservation"	1.1: "No Active Intervention"	A	I
	1.2: "Minimum Intervention"	A	II, (IV)
	1.3: "Conservation Through Active Management"	A	IV, (V)
2: Management Objective "Protection of Landscapes and Specific Natural Elements"		B	III, (V, VI)
3: Management Objective "Protective Functions"		(B)	n.a.

* References as identified in the Standard Data Form of the Natura 2000 and Emerald networks, and used in the same way in the framework of the Common Database on Designated Areas (CDDA), managed by the EEA on behalf of two other organisations (Council of Europe and UNEP-WCMC). The groups (A, B) are related to the designation types, but not to any individual sites.

**Indicative reference:

- The equivalence of IUCN Categories may vary depending upon specific management objective (of the forested part) of each individual protected area. A technical consultation process with IUCN and its World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) is under way to ensure full comparability between the MCPFE and the IUCN systems.
- IUCN Categories III, V and VI have biodiversity conservation as their primary management objective. However, they fit more easily under 2 than 1 MCPFE Class.

To avoid double counting, the area of forest and other wooded land assigned to the classes 1 and 2 should not be summed up with the data collected under class 3.

Source: ANNEX 2 to the Vienna Resolution 4. Vienna declaration and Vienna Resolutions, as adopted at the Fourth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, 28–30 April 2003, Vienna, Austria. Liaison Units, Vienna and Warsaw. <http://www.mcpfe.org>

MCPFE Class 1: Main management objective “Biodiversity Conservation”

Definition: Conservation of biological diversity in forests includes the conservation of rare genetic resources, protection of species, ecosystems and habitats, and also the maintenance of natural ecological processes.

Class 1: Main management objective “Biodiversity Conservation”

MCPFE Class 1.1: No Active Intervention

Guidelines :

- The main management objective is biodiversity
- No active, direct human intervention is taking place
- Activities other than limited public access and non-destructive research not detrimental to the management objective are prevented in the protected area
-

Explanatory Notes:

No active, direct human intervention: Focuses on the conservation of natural dynamics. In order to allow natural processes occur in full extent, no interventions such as management measures or tree felling are allowed. Exceptional interventions are possible in order to prevent serious calamities (fire, pest/insect outbreaks) to spread outside from the protected forest areas, in case when other means, e.g. in buffer zone, are ineffective. These exceptional interventions must be decided by the authorities on a case by case basis.

Limited public access: These areas are normally protected for scientific and untouched conservation purposes. The access for visiting the sites requires a permission to be given by administration of the protected forest areas, and can only be organised so that it does not contravene their protection goal. No organized public pathways, traditional existing pathways may be kept without any maintenance or safety measures.

Non-destructive research: Any research action on those areas requires always permission to be given by the protected forest areas authorities or other respective bodies. Scientific sampling is allowed in small extent: the number of sampled fauna individuals falls within the range of natural population fluctuations, taking soil samples or making few bore-holes on stems. Not allowed are as examples: felling or killing the trees, permanent removal of logs or deadwood component, digging of profile-pits or use of pesticides by sampling. Radio-tracking without removal of animals is not detrimental to the goal of the protection category.

Examples:

- In the Nordic Countries, normally Strict Nature Reserves, old growth forest protection areas, and strictly protected natural forest zones of wilderness areas.
- In the Central European Countries, specifically dedicated core areas of the National Parks, scientific reserves such as Réserve intégrale, riserva naturale integrale, integral bosreservaat
- In the Mediterranean Countries, Riserva naturale integrale.

Class 1: Main management objective “Biodiversity Conservation”

MCPFE Class 1.2: Minimum Intervention

Guidelines

- The main management objective is biodiversity
- Human intervention is limited to a minimum
- Activities other than listed below are prevented in the protected area :
 - ungulate/game control
 - control of diseases/insect outbreaks*
 - public access
 - fire intervention
 - non-destructive research not detrimental to the management objective
 - subsistence resource use **

* in case of expected large disease/insect outbreaks control measures using biological methods are allowed, provided no other adequate control possibilities in the buffer zone are feasible.

** subsistence use to cover the needs of indigenous people and local communities, in so far as it will not adversely affect the objectives of management

Explanatory Notes:

Often the forest areas of National Parks or their protected zones are included in this category.

Human intervention is limited to a minimum: it focuses also on natural dynamics, but interventions are allowed to some extent. Due to their small size, many protected forest areas are influenced by their surrounding areas and require occasional or continuous intervention in order to prevent development of imbalances in natural ecosystem structures. The allowed interventions should not disrupt natural dynamics and must be small in scale. Similar small scale temporary restoration interventions, such as ensuring the maintenance of single key habitats against withering, are allowed in this category (removal of individual trees, adding deadwood component). Interventions are only allowed to the extent that they are required to mitigate non-natural imbalances or negative external influences. They are therefore limited to the minimum.

Allowed interventions in this category are elimination of exotic species (e.g. *Prunus serotina*, *Quercus rubra*, *Robinia spp.*, *Ailanthus spp.*, *Pseudotsuga menziesii* and *Acer negundo*) and also the control of fauna species (e.g. muskrat, grey squirrel, Sika deer and raccoon, and Canadian beaver).

Large scale restoration and conversion operations cannot be included in the definition of limited intervention (see also the Explanatory Notes for class MCPFE 1.3).

Fire interventions: An active fire control programme is allowed. Fire control can be organized to prevent calamities spreading outside from the reserves, and also to protect vegetation and trees inside the protected area. Preventive measures such as removal of deadwood inside the reserves are

excluded. Fire prevention tracks should be established preferably in the buffer zones or in the equivalent areas, exceptionally on extremely rare and fire-sensitive sites (the Mediterranean area: in forest such as isolated natural broadleaved remnants or *Juniperus thurifera* forest) the tracks can be located inside the reserves.

Public access: Under the rule of minimum intervention, the access of the public is allowed in so far as it does not adversely affect this Objective. Guided tours, ecotourism and educational tours on public tracks are encouraged. These tracks can be maintained by necessary felling of dangerous trees. Mass or sport events, or motorised recreation are not allowed.

Ungulate/game control: In protected areas where no natural control of game populations exists (due to disappearance of large predators, or presence of alternative anthropogenic food sources in winter feeding of game) the game populations within the protected areas may rise to a level that could be detrimental to the site. In this case, game control is allowed in order to keep the population in balance with the ecosystem. Such game control is exclusively focused on the biodiversity goals of the site. Winter feeding in the protected forest area of MCPFE class 1.2 is not allowed.

Subsistence resource use: This intervention is focused on the resources use to satisfy the needs of both the indigenous people and the local communities. Regional differences such as population density and the size of the protected areas within Europe mean that the interpretation varies depending upon the activity types.

The following examples illustrate the activities which can be included in this definition:

Due to the large areas and the inherent low population pressure in the northern protected areas of the Nordic Countries, the reindeer husbandry, subsistence hunting, firewood collection, and non-commercial/commercial collection of berries and mushrooms by indigenous people (Sámi-people) are allowed in this category. These activities are not considered detrimental and do not have any significant adverse effect on the primary object.

Similar activities would have strong negative impact on the protected areas in densely populated territories. Firewood collection by the local communities from protected areas may disturb natural succession of the stands, and this type of activity is therefore considered ineligible for inclusion into this category. Sparse local, old and small villages or populations living inside protected areas may be the exception where use of the resources (e.g. wild fruits, roots, leaves or other parts of plants used for medicines) is very limited. The supply of firewood for shelter huts used by local people or staff is allowed in this category. Sheep, goat and cattle grazing in the Alpine and Mediterranean regions often seriously affect the natural dynamics and species composition, and therefore are detrimental to protected areas.

Examples:

- In the Nordic Countries: the majority of the National Parks
- In the Central European countries: the core areas of the National Parks, core areas of Biosphere Reserves, Naturwaldreservat, Bannwald
- In the Mediterranean Countries: the Riserva naturale integrale

Class 1: Main management objective “Biodiversity Conservation”

MCPFE Class 1.3: Conservation Through Active Management

Guidelines:

- The main management objective is biodiversity
- A management with active interventions directed to achieve specific conservation goal of the protected area is taking place
- Any resource extraction, harvesting, silvicultural measures detrimental to the management objective, as well as other activities negatively affecting the conservation goal, are prevented in the protected area

Explanatory Notes:

These guidelines leave a wide spectrum for interpretation ranging from conservation management through multifunctional forest practices, with special focus on biodiversity. Therefore, the key elements are the three aspects of the general principles. In case where various goals for management on one particular site are pursued (such as recreation, landscape, protection or biodiversity) the judgement should be made according to the priority and the original objective. All other goals are to be subordinated to the primary goal. The priority conservation objective “biodiversity” should be clearly stated through the conservation status of the site under legal basis and long term commitment. Active management is consequently focused only on the priority goal. Management activities may produce marketable goods which cannot however be the primary reason for management.

Natura 2000 sites do not automatically fulfil the requirements of the class 1.3. Where the Natura 2000 sites comply with the General Principles stated in Annex 2 to MCPFE Resolution 4 and are situated within the protected areas, the eligibility for classes 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 or 2 of each individual site has to be examined separately.

Examples: The active forest management will be focused on the forest restoration activities, forest stands rebuilding and the management activities for specific biotopes and species. Forest restoration is understood as activities such as transformation of plantations into natural forest stands, restoration of natural groundwater regimes, or elimination of populations of invasive exotic species. These forest management activities can be large-sized and have a limited time-horizon, for instance 10–20 years. Where these transformation operations are performed the site can be transferred into the 1.2 MCPFE category.

Active management for specific biotope often consists of ancient management regimes that are vanishing and hence also the species relating to those biotopes are endangered. The Natura 2000 habitats (sites) situated in multipurpose forests can be reported separately under this 1.3 MCPFE class.

Examples:

- prescribed burning and ‘slash and burn’ agriculture as a specific measure for protection of threatened species in the Koli National Park, in Finland, and maintenance of protected herb-rich forests, or protected valuable habitats;
- coppice with standards management for conservation of rare butterfly species and vegetation in nature reserves in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom;
- cutting and mowing of the forest tracks and glades for conservation of rare light-demanding species in nature reserves in the United Kingdom, Belgium, and the Netherlands;
- grazing in forest for creation or conservation purpose of open forest landscapes and the diversity relating to it in the Nature Reserves in Belgium, in the Nature Reserve of Borkener Paradis (Germany), the Netherlands, and in the National Park of New Forest (UK);
- mowing of mixed larch-spruce forests to create specific open Agro-Forestry Systems of “Lärch-Wiesen” in the Alpine regions for conservation purpose of light demanding species (Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland);
- elimination and combating of invasive species e.g. *Rhododendron spec.*, in Ireland.

Examples of the protected areas which are not eligible for accounting into the 1.3 MCPFE category:

- management options typical for multipurpose forests such as close-to-nature, nature or biodiversity oriented silviculture, cannot be interpreted as inclusion into the MCPFE class 1.3;
- the landscape protection areas or Nature Parks as expressed also with this title in legislation or statutes should be classified in category MCPFE 2, although in these areas more attention has to be paid to the increase in biodiversity values in line with those of landscape and recreation. Also, the buffer zones and transition zones of Biosphere Reserves fall in MCPFE 2 category;
- coppice, and coppice with standard management in multifunctional forests without specific conservation status;
- transformation of man-made stands into natural ones as part of a management goal within the local or national forest strategies or within the framework of a local management plan;
- grazing in forest, as a commercial activity, even when in harmony with forest and conservation goals, but outside explicitly protected areas (pig and cattle grazing in Dehesa-landscapes outside protected areas in Spain and Portugal).

MCPFE Class 2 : Main Management Objective ‘Protection of Landscape and Specific Natural Elements’

Guidelines:

- Interventions are clearly directed to achieve the management goals landscape diversity, cultural, aesthetic, spiritual and historical values, recreation, specific natural elements
- The use of forest resources is restricted
- A clear long-term commitment and an explicit designation as specific protection regime, defining a limited area is existing
- Activities negatively affecting characteristics of landscapes or/and specific natural elements mentioned are prevented in the protected area

Explanatory Notes:

Only the areas which conform to the three aspects of the general principles are to be included. It should be noted that this category includes only forests and other wooded land within the boundaries of specifically and legally designated protected landscapes. It means that the whole landscape area can only be included in the reporting when it consists of forested area. In a fragmented landscape, consisting of forests and other vegetation/habitat types, only the included forests areas are considered eligible for this category.

The area should be managed as the primary goal for landscape protection or conservation. All other functions are subordinate to the conservation of the aesthetic, socio-cultural or historical values of the landscape, of which the forest is an integral, essential component. Commercial forestry operations are possible in these sites, as long as they comply with the primary objective of landscape protection. The regulation by protection of landscapes may therefore include important restrictions on forest management (by tree species composition, harvesting methods or use of clear cuttings methods, road construction), or even forbid the continuation of specified commercial forestry activities.

Examples:

- In the Nordic Countries: managed zones of wilderness areas
- In the Central European Countries: protected landscape (Landschaftsschutzgebiet), protected part of a landscape (Geschützter Landschaftsteil)

MCPFE Class 3 : Main Management Objective ‘Protective Functions’

Guidelines:

- The management is clearly directed to protect soil and its properties or water quality and quantity or other forest ecosystem functions, or to protect infrastructure and managed natural resources against natural hazards
- Forests and other wooded lands are explicitly designated to fulfil protective functions in management plans or other legally authorised equivalents
- Any operation negatively affecting soil or water or the ability to protect other ecosystem functions, or the ability to protect infrastructure and managed natural resources against natural hazards is prevented

Explanatory Notes:

According to the General Principles of the MCPFE guidelines only forests which are specifically designated for “Protective functions” under legal basis with long term commitment should be included in this category. The expression on these specific guidelines for class MCPFE 3 as “... designated to fulfil protective functions in management plan...” may result in confusing interpretation. While the management plans are considered technical documents, they do not create

any long term commitment. If the management plans are used as the basis for classification and delineation of a protected forest area, they must include a clear statement on the long term legal basis for the protection regime. See also clarification in the General Principles page 3 (under long term commitment).

This type of protective forests is prevalent for instance in Austria, Slovenia, and Switzerland, and require always an extra, separate explicit designation. The delineation can be made in a management plan, but it is additionally confirmed in the explicit designation.

Examples:

- forests within the borders of official ‘protective forests’, explicitly designated by means of a Ministerial Act, law or decree. Specific restrictions on tree fellings or on the size for the clear cutting areas.
- forests within the borders of state endorsed watershed areas: specific restrictions on tree species composition or on the use of herbicides.

In the Nordic Countries: the protective forests to protect tree line in the north

In the Central European Countries: Objektschutzwald, Bodenschutzwald, Bannwald

The areas which do not fulfil the requirements:

- the protective zones identified in the framework of a management plan, while these have not been endorsed legally on the national level and are not considered explicit enough,
- the forests which are under specific management regimes declared by forest administration, such as forests bordering streams as buffer zones where no plantation of conifers or clear cuttings are allowed these designations are not explicit, rather they are considered ‘good forest practice’ guidelines.

Appendix

Overview of the relations between the proposed categories and management objectives and restrictions on interventions

1. Management Objective: Biodiversity Conservation			2. Management Objective: Protection of Landscapes and Specific Natural Elements	3. Management Objective: Protective Functions (soil, water, natural hazards)	
1.1 No Active Intervention	1.2 Minimum Intervention	1.3. Management for Achieving Conservation Objective			
x					public access restricted
	x	x	x	x	public access allowed
x					no direct human intervention
	x				no significant human intervention
	x	x	x	x	ungulate/game control
	x	x	x	x	fire intervention
(x)	x	x	x	x	use for research purpose
	(x)	x	x	x	hunting
x	x				timber harvest not allowed
	(x)	x	x	x	timber harvest restricted
		x	x	x	other resource extractions / operations restricted
		x	x	(x)	active management to achieve the conservation objective