

PRESS RELEASE

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Pro Silva in Slovakia 2024

“Upscaling Close-to-Nature forestry practices for wider application”

Myjava, Slovakia – Forestry professionals from 24 countries gathered for the 35th anniversary of Pro Silva, the organisation promoting close to nature forest management as a way of reconciling timber production and nature conservation across Europe. The conference is supported by the Technical University of Zvolen and the Slovak state forest enterprise, who will introduce examples of close to nature forest management in the West Carpathians, a mountain range with well-preserved biodiversity.

Pro Silva close-to-nature principles have been, into a greater extent, up taken by the voluntary Guidelines on Closer-To-Nature Forest Management published by the European Commission in all European languages in 2024 following the European Forest Strategy.

Pro Silva, through its network of 130 demonstration stands and more than 120 exemplary forests, provide the most important realisation of these guidelines through their practical silvicultural training courses, peer-to-peer knowledge exchange through webinars and their annual meeting, which this year is being held in Slovakia for the first time.

“I hope this year’s conference will stimulate discussions on how Pro Silva, now celebrating its 35th anniversary, may effectively promote close to nature forestry to address current global crises and growing societal demands on European forests”, Michal Tomčík, Chairman of Pro Silva Slovakia.

Continuing the legacy of Prof. Štefan Korpel, who co-founded the Pro Silva movement 35 years ago, Michal Tomčík will present the current challenges and opportunities of wider adoption of close to nature forestry in Slovak and European forests. Pro Silva Slovakia will share their successes in state-owned beech and oak forests, as well as municipal forests in Stará Myjava, where a more integrated approach to forest management provides recreation and firewood for locals, alongside sustainable income for the municipality from timber production.

“Our long-term goal is to share our practical forestry knowledge from the close to nature silviculture with other colleagues across the Europe and other regions using our training forest stands. Our strength does not come from the financial support of corporate companies and intensive lobbying in Brussels, but from concrete results in the forests managed by our members, because they fulfil the European Forest Strategy for 2030 more than anyone else”, Tomáš Vrška, newly elected chairman of Pro Silva.

In the Annual Meeting *Eckart Senitza* (Austria) after seven years handed the presidency over to *Tomáš Vrška*, director of the 10.000 ha training forest of Mendel University in Brno (Czech Republic).

Pro Silva is increasing its presence in the Western Balkans with the recent acceptance of Pro Silva Montenegro as a full member, which along with participation in numerous projects with partners, strengthens its role in promoting closer-to-nature as the preferred approach for integrating all functions of the forest.

Pro Silva

Integrated forest management for resilience
and sustainability across 25 countries



Who we are

Pro Silva is a European organisation which promotes close to nature forestry and continuous cover forestry concepts. It was established in 1989 in Slovenia. At present there are 22 full members of the organisation and there are also several other countries with associate membership. Since 2018 we have associated members from the United States (Forest Stewards Guild, New England Forestry Foundation), India (ForEco India), Brazil (ACEF St. Catarina), from Kosovo (CNVP), from New Zealand (Tane's Tree Trust) and IFSA (International Forest Students Association) and this marks the beginning of the formation of a global network. More than 6500 professionals and forest owners are involved in Pro Silva.

Pro Silva promotes its principles and concepts through a Europe wide program of silvicultural education involving seminars, excursions and practical training for the conversion of even-aged to uneven-aged forest stands. Increasingly the members are also involved as partners in national or international research and networking projects. A European network of best practice demonstration forests has been developed.

www.prosilva.org

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Images here: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/1oydivqjm8ovt7l/AAAITkmpO7gZ2PXxOlyqQE1a?dl=0>

