



# TOOLS AND INCENTIVES FOR PRIVATE LANDS CONSERVATION

**Gathering opinions from private land owners on how to support voluntary nature conservation actions**



**Within the Project “Land Is For Ever” we want to increase awareness of nature conservation programs that benefit private landowners and the environment.**

Critical to success is learning from landowners across the EU involved in conservation programs. This bottom-up approach to policy development makes this project unique. Your experiences and opinions will inform recommendations for effective nature conservation policies at regional, national and European levels.

**The EU is committed to halt biodiversity loss by 2020. Much of Europe's biodiversity is found on privately-owned land. There is an urgent need to recognize the private landowners' leadership and engagement to achieve the nature conservation goals.**

Most EU Member States have created voluntary programmes whereby landowners and land managers can receive financial and other benefits for participating in nature conservation activities. However, many of these conservation programmes are relatively new and awareness of them is low amongst many landowners and managers.

The EU "Land Is For Ever" Project aims to assess and adopt new conservation tools and incentives to support private land managers in achieving their maximum conservation impact.



### **Project "Land Is For Ever" – Learning from You**

**Promote** nature conservation as a valuable type of land management

**Create** a network of European private landowners involved in nature conservation

**Expand** the use of private land conservation methods in the EU

## **Focus Groups - YOUR VOICE MATTERS!**

We are seeking input from private land managers through the use of focus group meetings. Unlike interviews or public polling, a focus group discussion allows for participants to learn, interact and share their opinions.

The meeting will be guided by an independent, unbiased research expert that is not advocating for any particular viewpoint. S/he will provide information, ask questions and provoke conversation. Participants will be encouraged to speak candidly, without fear of judgment or retribution. As such, respect and confidentiality are key tenants of participation and no attribution will be given to any statements expressed during the discussion.

### **Discussion topics will include:**

**What restrains you from adding conservation practices to your land currently?**

**What do you want (local) policy makers to know about current barriers and opportunities to better incentivize private land conservation?**



# Conservation Incentives for Private Landowners

“Conservation incentives” are a payment or public subsidy, tax benefit, public recognition, access to information, or the relief from an otherwise obligated action, to support and stimulate private landowners undertaking nature conservation actions.

Currently most common conservation incentives in the EU can be subdivided under providing “**Information and On-the-Ground Support**” and “**Financial Compensation**”. The incentives can be delivered to the land manager through legal arrangements. These arrangements reflect rights that a landowner may give up to obtain the benefit of an incentive. Examples are:

- *Land leasing or management agreements*
- *Safe harbor agreements*
- *Natural Area Designations*
- *Land exchange for conservation*
- *Right of the first purchase for land*
- *Conservation easements*

## Incentives providing information and on-the-ground support

These are incentives to offer management assistance, information about best practices and data to support private landowners to improve the land management for conservation outcomes. Examples include:

- *In-field support*
- *Information and knowledge sharing*
- *Conservation labelling to enable market access*
- *Awards, certificates and networks to increase public recognition for conservation efforts*

## Incentives providing financial compensation

Financial mechanisms and sources are used to incentivize landowners’ participation in land conservation arrangements. Examples include:

### Public sources of financial benefit

- *Direct payments/Subsidies*
- *Benefits provided through tax reduction*
- *Relief from otherwise required regulations*


### Private sources of funding

- *Grants*
- *Social impact investment*
- *Market-based investment*



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