Final Conference of LIFE PROGNOSES :

Characteristics and Ecosystem Services of European Old-Growth Beech Forests



The significance of European old-growth forests for recreation and tourism.

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Overview

- Key questions to be answered
- Methodology of the questionnaire
- Results from the field data
- First interpretation

Key questions to be answered

- Do old growth forests in Europe have the potential to motivate visitors to come to protected areas to see and experience these old forests?
- If old growth forests attract visitors, how much added value can they bring to a region economically?



Methodology of the questionnaire

- 3 Testsites:
  - Kalkalpen NP (AT), Abrozzo NP (IT), Sonian Forest (BE)
- 36 questions

- Direct interview with local visitors of the sites

Thematic groups of questions

- Information level of visitor
- Frequency, duration, travel distance, means of transport of visit
- Motivation of visit
- Perception of landscape, forest and protection regime
  - Old growth, seminatural, moderately and intensively managed forests
- Willingness to pay for 2 management scenarios
  - A: **timber production slightly reduced**; slight decrease in economic revenues; a **slight increase in natural structures and biodiversity**
  - B: **timber production significantly reduced**; significantly decrease in economic revenues; a **significantly increase in natural structures and biodiversity**

Recreation and Tourism - Questionnaires

- Choice set – old growth







Recreation and Tourism - Questionnaires

- Choice set – managed –> mixed forest







Recreation and Tourism - Questionnaires

- Choice set – managed –> intensive use





Willingness to pay questions

26. A: In Scenario A, timber production and human impact are slightly reduced. This will lead to a slight decrease in economic revenues from timber production and processing, but will result in a slight increase in biodiversity, natural structures and microhabitats in the forest.

- ○ Yes, I/we would be willing to pay € 20 per person for the implementation of this scenario every time I/we visit this region to realize scenario A (e.g. via parking fees).
  If yes, would you also be willing to pay € 40 for the implementation of this scenario every time you visit this region to realize scenarion A?
  ○ Yes ○ No
- ○ No, I am not willing to pay € 20 for scenario A.
  If no, would you be willing to pay € 15 for the implementation of this scenario every time you visit this region to realize scenario A?
  ○ Yes ○ No

Basic bid levels: 0.5, 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 €

27. If you are not willing to pay an additional tax burden for scenario A, please tell us your opinion on the following statements (1 = reject completely | 5 = fully agree):

- Natural forests and high biodiversity are not my/our priority. I am (we are) not willing to pay for the changes described in this scenario.
- The holidays are already expensive, and I am (we are) not willing to pay more.
- It is a public task to conserve nature and should not be dependent on individual contributions.
- I/we would like to await others' contributions, and then decide.
- I/we would like to pay for other conservation programmes.
- I would be willing to pay but the amount is too high.

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○

Results from the field data

Site	Number of responces
AT Kalkalpen Natinal Park	95
BE Sonian Forest	344
IT Abruzzo National Park	227

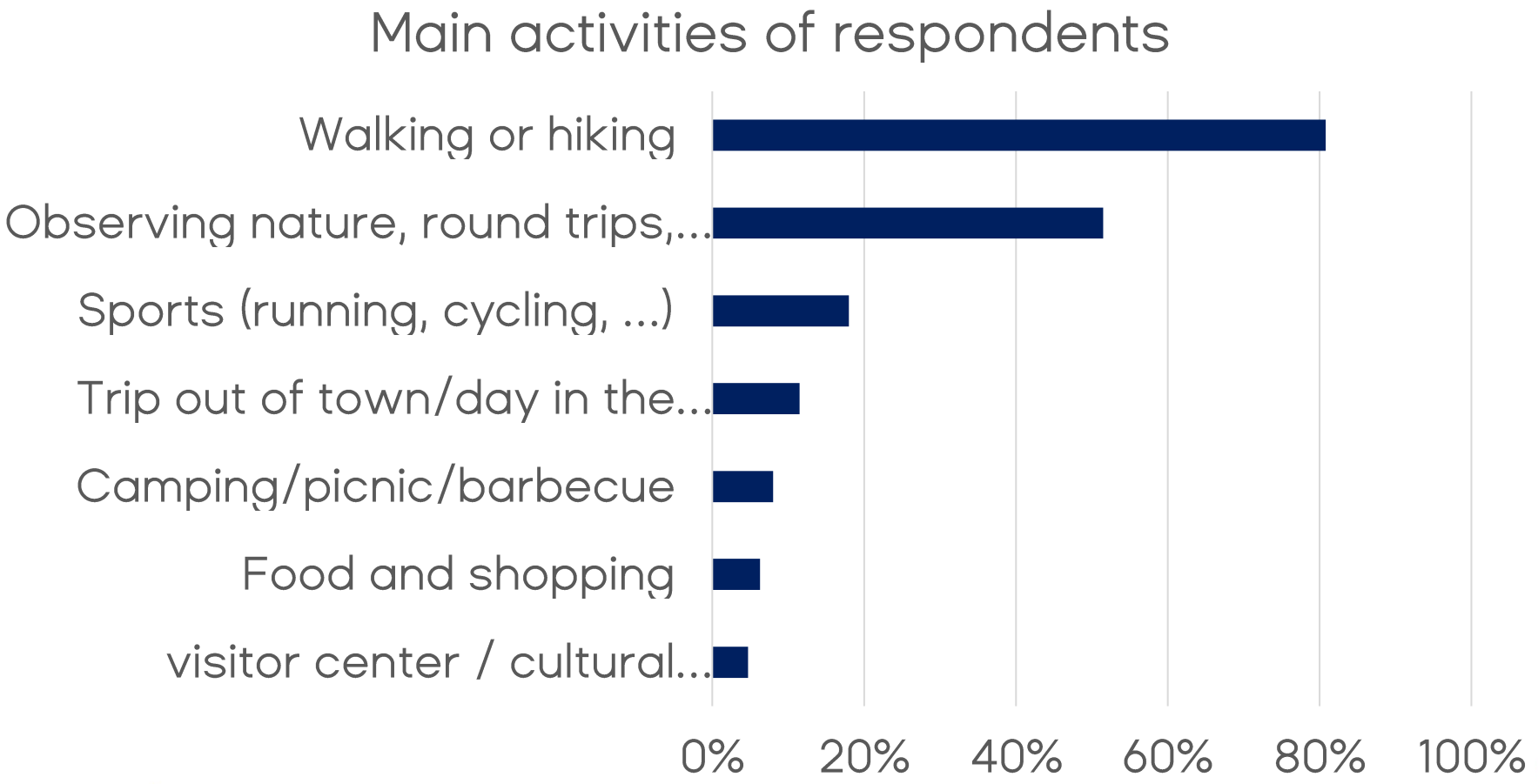
Annual frequency of trips to forests

Region of survey	*Annual frequency of trips to forests (generally)*	*Total frequency of visits to the protected area*	*Sample (n)*
Austria	85.23 (Std.-Dev.: 68.172)	9.62 (Std.-Dev.: 5.17)	96/71
Italy	28.70 (Std.-Dev.: 44.52)	7.63 (Std.-Dev.: 5.099)	223/112
Belgium	78.25 (Std.-Dev.: 85.106)	10.80 (Std.-Dev.: 2.694)	344/262
Total	62.51 (Std.-Dev.: 75.299)	9.81 (Std.-Dev.: 4.094)	663/445

Conservation category as perceived by respondents

Conservation status (%, multiple answers with n=662)	*Region of survey*		
	Austria	Italy	Belgium
National park	*97.5%	*94.6%	6.6%
Natura 2000 site	*6.3%	*22.5%	*62.0%
UNESCO WHS	*8.8%	*42.3%	*37.6%
Protected landscape area	3.8%	18.0%	*17.4%
Nature park	1.3%	10.4%	14.3%
Biosphere reserve	0.0%	1.8%	18.5%

What are the main activities?



Perceived forest type

Perceived forest type (%, multiple answers with n=966)	*Total sample*	*Region of survey*		
		Austria	Italy	Belgium
Old growth forest	38%	23%	60%	28%
Seminatural managed forest	74%	81%	70%	75%
Moderately managed forest	34%	36%	15%	46%
Intensively managed forest	2%	1%	0%	3%

Preferred forest type

Preferred forest type (%, single answer, n= 648)	*Total sample*	*Region of survey*		
		Austria	Italy	Belgium
Old growth forest	63%	70%	61%	64%
Seminatural managed forest	33%	26%	34%	33%
Moderately managed forest	4%	3%	5%	3%
Intensively managed forest	0%	0%	0%	0%

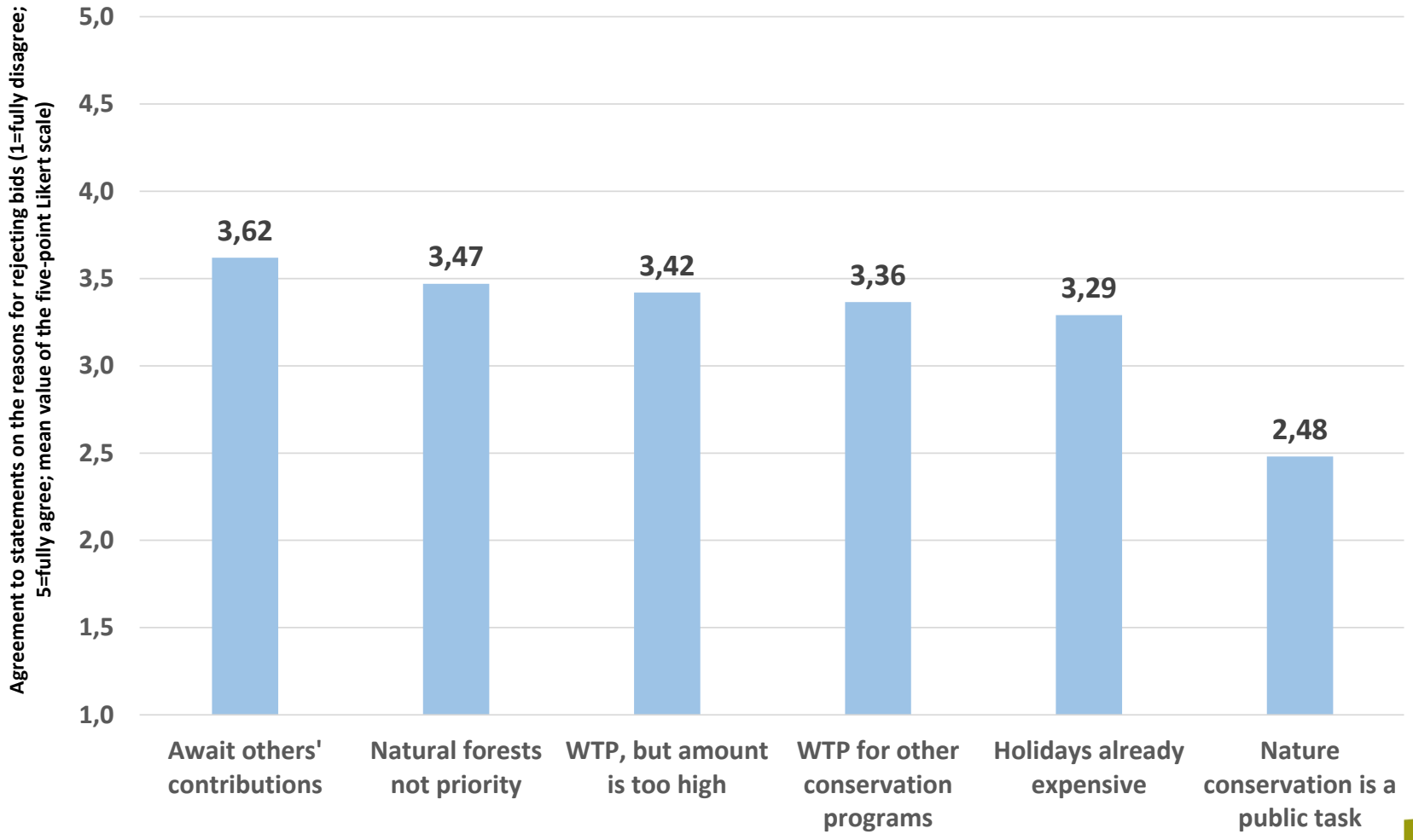
Willingness to pay

	Mean	*Std.Dev.*	*Confidence intervall (95%)*	
			Upper bound	*Lower bound*
WTP (average of both scenarios)	2.63 €	2.227	3.681€	1.588€
WTP for scenario A	1.89 €	1.596	3.391€	0.385€
WTP for scenario B	3.26 €	2.754	4.733€	1.781€

A: **timber production slightly reduced**; slight decrease in economic revenues; a **slight increase in natural structures and biodiversity**

B: **timber production significantly reduced**; significantly decrease in economic revenues; a **significantly increase in natural structures and biodiversity**

Reason for rejecting proposed WTP bids



Summary of main results

- Forest is the main target for visitors in the all of the three test sites
- 64% would prefer to visit “old growth forest” (instead of managed forests)
- Only a small number of visitors are aware of World Heritage status
- Willingness to pay for stronger protection regime 3.3 €/d

Concluding remarks

- Awareness rising on World Heritage status could be improved

- Some co-financing of site management could be risen by increase of tourism tax or parking fees (needs clear communication and “earmarking” of money)

- Increased fees need clear communication (for what purpose the money will be spent? It is not only ‘me’ paying this feed)

Q&A

Thank you for your attention

