



[Integrate Network](#)

[European Forest Institute](#)

Issue 9 - December 2025

News from the Chair

Dear Friends of the Integrate Network,

Ireland's time as Chair offered us a valuable opportunity to reflect on how **collaboration**, **shared learning**, and **open dialogue** can support the wider adoption of integrative forest management across Europe.

Following Austria's excellent work in 2024, we continued with a **focus on private forest owners' experiences** – inviting them to join the Network and engage in open dialogue with researchers, educators, practitioners, and policy makers during our Chairmanship year.

This approach was reflected in our webinar [“After the Storm: Pathways to forest recovery and restoration in Ireland and beyond”](#) in June to discuss storm Éowyn's impact on Irish forests – featuring a forest owner as keynote speaker. Furthermore, during our [11th Integrate Network Annual Meeting in Dublin](#), we invited a number of leading forest owners involved in close-to-nature management to bring their perspectives, thoughts, aspirations, achievements, and challenges forward and share the discussion space with policy actors, researchers, practitioners, and educators. Over 4 days, we took an interactive approach to encourage dialogue, including a [World Café workshop](#) that focused on successes and challenges in applying Integrative Forest Management (IFM) and a practical group exercise in the forest, testing the [Index of Biodiversity for Potential \(IBP\)](#) survey protocol.

Through the experiences of Irish forest owners, we have seen how practical engagement in the forest can foster a deeper understanding of the balance between wood production, biodiversity conservation, recreation, and long-term sustainability.

During our time as Chairs, we also enjoyed representing the Network at many **national and European events** with relevance to the promotion of integrative forest management on a wider scale. As we conclude our term, Ireland hopes that our reflections inspire Member Countries to further promote integrative forest management by:

- valuing the experience and perspective of **forest owners**,
- supporting **knowledge exchange** through field days, networks, and peer learning,
- and applying **practical tools** like the IBP to build capacity and drive positive change.

With continued cooperation, the Integrate Network can help ensure that European forests remain productive, resilient, and rich in biodiversity for generations to come.

We now look forward to contributing to the Integrate Network's further development under the Hungarian Chairmanship in 2026.

Finally, we would like to thank the Integrate Network Secretariat for their continued support during 2025 and to wish our friends and colleagues in the Network a **Merry Christmas** and a **Happy New Year!**

Dermot Dunphy and Jonathan Spazzi – Integrate Network Co-Chairs 2025



News from the Secretariat

In 2025, the Integrate Network continued to advance its mission of promoting integrative forest management that balances biodiversity conservation with sustainable forest use across Europe.

Under the **Irish Chairmanship**, our co-chairs *Dermot Dunphy* (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine) and *Jonathan Spazzi* (Teagasc) provided strategic leadership, bringing fresh perspectives rooted in Ireland's evolving forest context and prioritising stronger engagement with forest owners and practical implementation of integrated practices.

A major highlight of the year was the **11th Integrate Network Annual Meeting in Dublin** – an event that brought together participants from across Europe and fostered dynamic exchanges on how integrative forest management can enhance biodiversity and resilience in managed forests. Expert sessions, engaging World Café discussions, and field excursions that showcased native woodland restoration enriched the programme and strengthened cross-national collaboration.

Another cornerstone event was the **three-day workshop in Zurich**, which gathered over 50 forestry professionals, researchers, and policymakers to discuss resilient, species-rich forest management through interactive presentations and outdoor sessions – reinforcing the Network's commitment to hands-on learning.

This year, **our practice network has grown by 40 sites**: The United Kingdom joined the marteloscope network as a new member, while Ukraine, represented by Ukrainian National Forestry University in Lviv expanded its training Network substantially. Marteloscopes and the I+ training software continued to be in high demand in European and national projects.

We extend our heartfelt **thanks to the 2025 Chairs** for their dedicated leadership throughout the year and for elevating the profile of integrative forest management across Ireland and the Network. Looking ahead, 2026 will be a milestone year, with preparations underway for the **10-year anniversary of the Integrate Network and Hungary taking on the Chairmanship** – preparing to host us mid-October for our next Annual Meeting.

We wish all of you a happy holiday season, warmly welcome *Gergely Zagyvai* (University of Sopron) as our **Chair for 2026**, and look forward to continued collaboration, innovation, and exchange as the Network moves into its next decade.

Yours sincerely,
Integrate Network Secretariat



Past events and activities



SUPERB expert workshop "Bridging people and policy in forest restoration initiatives" in Basel, Switzerland (2 December 2024)

SUPERB project gathered policymakers, landowner and civil society association representatives, NGOs, and researchers, including our Integrate Network Chair Dermot Dunphy in the beautiful city of Basel to share and discuss research findings related to policies, conflict management and stakeholder

perceptions around restoration to tailor their outputs to the needs of Europe's restoration community.



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ProSilva Ireland 25-year anniversary conference (14 March 2025)

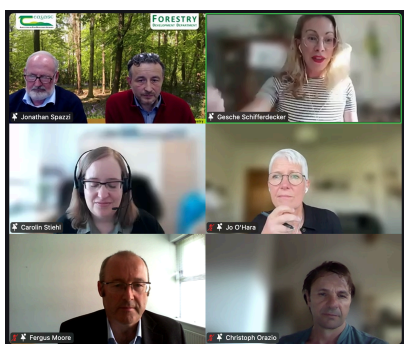
Pro Silva Ireland hosted a landmark conference bringing together experts in Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF). Chairs representing the Integrate Network attended the event and celebrated the launch of a new CCF Handbook – a practical guide designed to support forest managers in implementing close-to-nature practices. The handbook emphasizes resilience, biodiversity, and sustainable management, marking a significant step toward climate-smart forestry across Europe.



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Integrate Network Workshop in Zurich, Switzerland (2–4 June 2025)

How can we promote forests that are more resilient and species-rich? This question guided the recent Integrate Network workshop, where experts explored strategies for adapting forest management to climate change and biodiversity challenges. Discussions focused on close-to-nature practices, mixed-species stands, and innovative approaches to strengthen resilience across Europe's forests. [Watch the recordings of this workshop](#), or [discover more about the Waldlabor Zurich](#).



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Webinar "After the Storm: Pathways to forest recovery and restoration in Ireland and beyond" (11 June 2025)

The Forest Restoration Talks returned with a timely and pressing question: **what happens after a severe windstorm in the forest?** This webinar, co-organized by the Integrate Network, explored lessons learned from recent storm events and offers practical strategies for restoring damaged forests while enhancing resilience and biodiversity. It highlighted approaches that combine ecological principles, adaptive management, and stakeholder collaboration to ensure forests recover stronger and more sustainable.



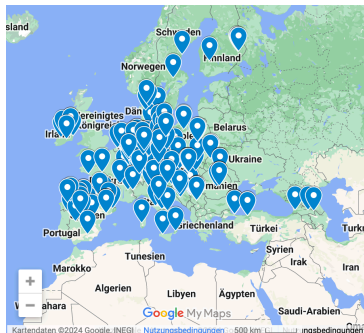
11th Integrate Network Annual Meeting in Dublin, Ireland (7-10 October 2025)

The 11th Integrate Network Annual Meeting in Ireland brought together forest owners, practitioners, scientists, and policy actors to strengthen collaboration around the implementation of **integrative forest management**.

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Participants shared insights on diverse management approaches, explored tools such as the Index for Biodiversity Potential in field training, and engaged in peer-to-peer exchanges that highlighted the importance of co-learning, evidence-based practice and collaborative solutions for resilient, biodiversity-supporting forests.

Updates from Practice



Demonstration site Network

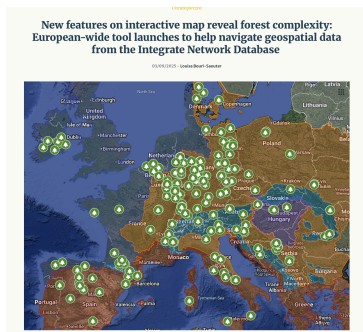
The demonstration site network continues to expand. **During 2025, the number of sites grew from 245 to currently 285.** More than 10 countries provided new sites. Two marteloscopes were established the United Kingdom (Scotland) making it now 27 countries that are part of Integrate demonstration site network. Additional five new sites were set up in the Ukraine by the Ukrainian National Forestry University in Lviv making it now seven altogether. Noteworthy is that one more site has been provided by Georgia.



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Integrate Network involved in award-winning project

EFI, acting as the Integrate Network Secretariat, supported the project *PlanBirke plus C – Citizens Explore Forest Change* – implemented by the Research Institute for Post-Mining Landscapes (FIB) – including the establishment of two marteloscope sites in Gelsenkirchen, Germany. These “living forest classrooms” provided unique opportunities for citizens to simulate forest management decisions and assess their ecological outcomes within the project. The project was awarded first place in the “**Wissen der Vielen – Research Award for Citizen Science 2025**”, recognising outstanding scientific achievement in citizen science. EFI and the Integrate Network warmly congratulate FIB on this achievement.



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Geospatial data from the Integrate Network demonstration site database

To allow a closer look into the existing data behind all the Integrate Network marteloscopes, we created an [interactive map](#) that uses the geospatial data from the site database. It allows for a better insight into the extent of data for all **27 European countries** that host marteloscope sites. One can zoom into seven biogeographical regions and get summary tables and graphs based on far more than 100,000 individually recorded trees.



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Two day outdoor forest training in Ireland

In September, **Teagasc Forestry Development Department** in collaboration with the **Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) Forestry Division** brought together forest owners, forestry professionals, and nature conservation managers at the marteloscopes Oak Park. The field training focused on how to enhance biodiversity through forest management practices while balancing timber production aims with biodiversity goals.



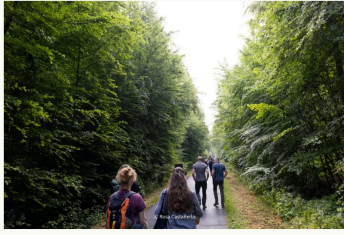
Marteloscope visit by 8th grade school students (Germany)

In July 2025, Andreas Schuck from the Integrate Network Secretariat introduced 25 eighth-grade students to forest ecosystems during a **field visit to the Mooswald marteloscope near Freiburg**. After a short introduction to ecological and economic forest values, students assessed selected trees and validated their choices using the I+ software, which

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stimulated lively discussion and further exploration. A similar visit with twelfth-grade students in April 2025 focused on forest ecosystem services, climate change impacts, and management alternatives, again using the I+ software to support informed group discussion.

Between forest and living room – Encounters in the Kottenforst



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Between forest and living room – Encounters in the Kottenforst

Foresters, scientists, educators, and other interested parties came together to learn – not just about forest management and biodiversity, but also about communication. The final workshop of the [Martelkom project](#) was more than just a conventional expert gathering: it created space for dialogue between people and the forest, between ecology and economy but also between emotions and silvicultural decisions.

Tree species	Count	Wood	Branches	Foliage	Roots	C in soil	C in A	C in B	C in C	C in D	C in F	C in H
Scots pine	707	54.813	6.11	2.006	0.322	36.129	17.483	1.07	0	0	0	0
European beech	1	0.006	0.001	0.001	0.003	0	0	0.006	0	0	0	0
Common hornbeam	11	0.908	0.115	0.021	0.215	0.67	0.19	0.038	0	0	0	0
Plot	720	55.726	6.227	2.027	0.54	36.8	17.677	1.118	0	0	0	0

Access I+ software

Software development and application

The I+ training software and marteloscopes find application in both national and EU projects. The EU-HE [HoliSoils](#) project ended in October 2025 and developed a soil carbon training module open for the use in marteloscopes. For the [Martelkom](#) project (funded by FNR, Germany) the I+ software was adapted to characterize the forest stand and trees in a marteloscope based on emotional features. Ongoing are software developments in the EU-HE project [OptFORESTS](#) (genetic module), the Interreg Alpine Space project [MOSIAC](#) (forest protection module) and in the Velux Foundation project SimInForest in which exercise training results are linked to a forest simulation software. Further the HE-EU project [TRANSFORMIT](#) has adapted marteloscopes for training in a few of its Living Labs, with Styria in Austria establishing three sites exactly for such purposes.



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The ForDiL App

The ForDiL project, funded by the European Erasmus+ program, brings together partners from Belgium, France, and the Czech Republic with a shared goal: to develop an innovative digital application that helps current and future foresters train independently in continuous cover forestry (CCF) silviculture.

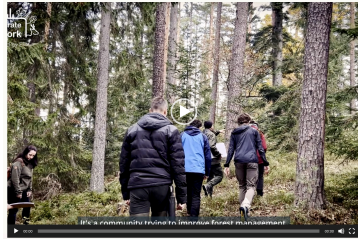
This app is built around educational tools – marteloscopes and travailloscopes – installed in each partner country. These tools allow users to explore the principles of CCF in real-world forest settings, offering a hands-on and contextualized learning experience.

Updates from Communications

Welcome to the Integrate Network!

Working at the policy, practice and research level

With 15 member countries and around 280 demonstration sites, we promote the integration of nature conservation into sustainable forest management.

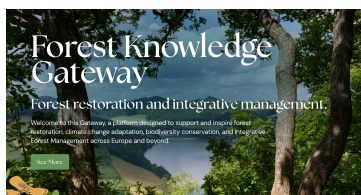


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Integrate Network at a Glance: Watch our New Trailer

Joining the Integrate Network means becoming part of a **growing community built on cooperation and dialogue** – that is the message of our [new promotion video](#), featuring the voices and perspectives of our Member Country representatives.

Based on the interviews conducted in Austria last year, we also created a [feature story](#) on how the network cultivates cooperation.

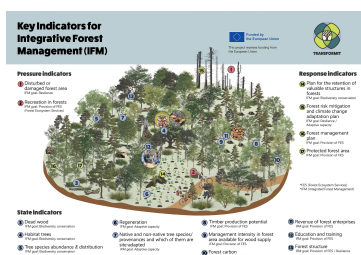


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Launch of the Forest Knowledge Gateway

The [Forest Knowledge Gateway](#) is a knowledge-based platform designed to support forest restoration, climate change adaptation, and integrative forest management across Europe and beyond. Led by the European Forest Institute, the Gateway is developed through the EU-funded [SUPERB](#) and [TRANSFORMIT](#) projects in close collaboration with a wide range of forest research, practice organisations and key stakeholders, and is supported by policy actors.

Designed as a long-term, dynamic knowledge base, the platform is continuously updated with new insights, tools, and practical guidance to reflect evolving restoration knowledge and IFM practices.

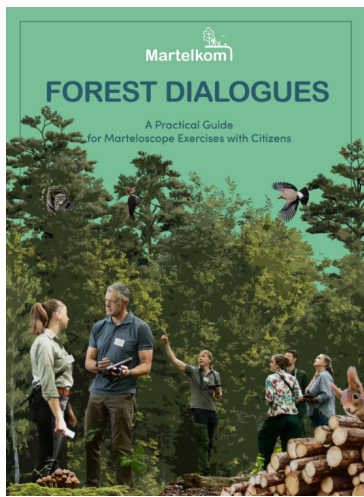


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17 Key Indicators for Integrative Forest Management

TRANSFORMIT project worked closely with forest managers, researchers, and local stakeholders across our Living Labs to develop a framework of 17 key indicators for Integrative Forest Management.

These indicators – ranging from forest structure and regeneration to climate-risk planning, biodiversity features, and social values – were developed to give Europe a shared, science-based way to track how well our forests are being managed in an integrative, adaptive, and climate-smart way.



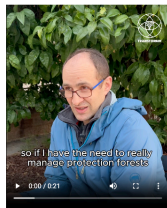
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Balancing forestry and biodiversity conservation: “It’s important to showcase how things can work”

9 APRIL 2025

“We have the need to improve biodiversity on every scale,” says Dr. Frank Kumm, researcher at the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research and co-editor of the book [How to balance forestry and biodiversity conservation: A view across Europe](#) (2020). “This is what we know from research. It’s one of our tasks. But we also need to see where our forests come from.”

This means considering different forest traditions, different socio-cultural backgrounds, and diverse ownership structures – placing efforts for biodiversity conservation within these contexts.



“So, if I have the need to really manage protection forests, maybe biodiversity conservation is stepping back to a certain extent to provide this ecosystem service of protecting people and infrastructure against natural hazards. And it’s the same for other requests or demands on forests.”

Dr. Frank Kumm
Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research

Not a black-and-white issue

Striking a balance between forest management and biodiversity conservation is not a simple task, nor a black-and-white issue, says Dr. Frank Kumm. Rather, it’s a negotiation that needs to happen between local forest managers, forest owners and communities living in close relationship to a specific environment. Balancing different needs is therefore always a contextual endeavor.

By showcasing 32 case studies of forest enterprises, forest owners and regional initiatives, all implementing forest management approaches that integrate biodiversity conservation, the book [How to balance forestry and biodiversity conservation: A view across Europe](#) (2020) aims to merge theoretical knowledge with practical examples ranging across different forest types and traditions across Europe.

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Forest Dialogues – A new practical guide

The **Martelkom research project** (Marteloscopes as a research and communication tool for integrative forest management) investigated the extent to which marteloscope sites can be used as places for dialogue. This new guide summarises the key project findings and offers **practical recommendations for foresters** on planning and conducting marteloscope exercises with citizens.

IFM case study campaign

Together with TRANSFORMIT project, we worked on a **multimedia campaign** to feature the Integrate Network related book: [How to balance forestry and biodiversity conservation: A view across Europe](#). As part of this series, we published 4 different case study stories:

- [Local voices shape forest future: Auberive case study](#)
- [Ecoparks: Can protection, production and recreation coexist?](#)
- [Valuing educational and social functions of forests in Woziwoda, Poland](#)
- [20 years of Close-to-Nature Management in Langau, Austria](#)

Waldlabor – A forest laboratory for experimental research, discovery and education

We were delighted to explore **Waldlabor**, Switzerland’s first outdoor *Forest Laboratory* designed as a dynamic space for **experimental research, discovery and public engagement**. Nestled near Zurich, this 150-hectare mixed woodland serves as an open classroom where scientists, practitioners, forest owners and the public can investigate historical, current and future forest management practices, share knowledge and conduct interdisciplinary research on biodiversity, climate responses and forest ecosystem services.

Updates from Research

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- Wilson, E., Clinch, B., Warren, T., Schuck, A., Zudin, S., 2025. [Learning by doing: A novel approach to training in Continuous Cover Forestry](#). FORESTRY & TIMBER NEWS. Issue April/may 2025. 46-47.
- [EFI "what is" series](#): "What is a habitat tree?"; "What is a marteloscope?"; "What is closer-to-nature forestry?"
- In the course of the HE-EU TRANSFORMIT project the Integrate Network publication "[How to balance forestry and biodiversity conservation – A view across Europe](#)" is translated to Chinese

Outlook 2026



Looking ahead to 2026, the Integrate Network will be under a **Hungarian Chairmanship** and celebrate its **10-year anniversary**, marking a decade of advancing integrative forest management. Building on this strong foundation, we will focus on **securing the continuity of a vibrant member network**, welcoming additional countries and further strengthening collaboration among practitioners, researchers and policymakers.

At the same time, we will aim to **increase the visibility** of the Network's topics, activities, publications and tools, while reinforcing Integrate's role as a **trusted reference** in European projects, initiatives and policy-relevant fora. To maximise impact, we will actively pursue **strong synergies with complementary networks, facilities and projects**, including FoRISK, FOREXT and TRANSFORMIT, ensuring that Integrate continues to contribute meaningfully to forest policy, practice and research across Europe.

Upcoming Integrate webinars

One or two webinars will be organized in 2026 – stay tuned for updates! They will be announced on the [Integrate website](#).

For any information on events and communications activities please contact [rahel.konen \(at\) efi.int](mailto:rahel.konen@efi.int)

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