

23 Webinar
April 2026
10:00-11:15 CEST

Shaping Tomorrow's Landscapes: Land-Use Futures in the Danube–Carpathian Region



**Funded by
the European Union**

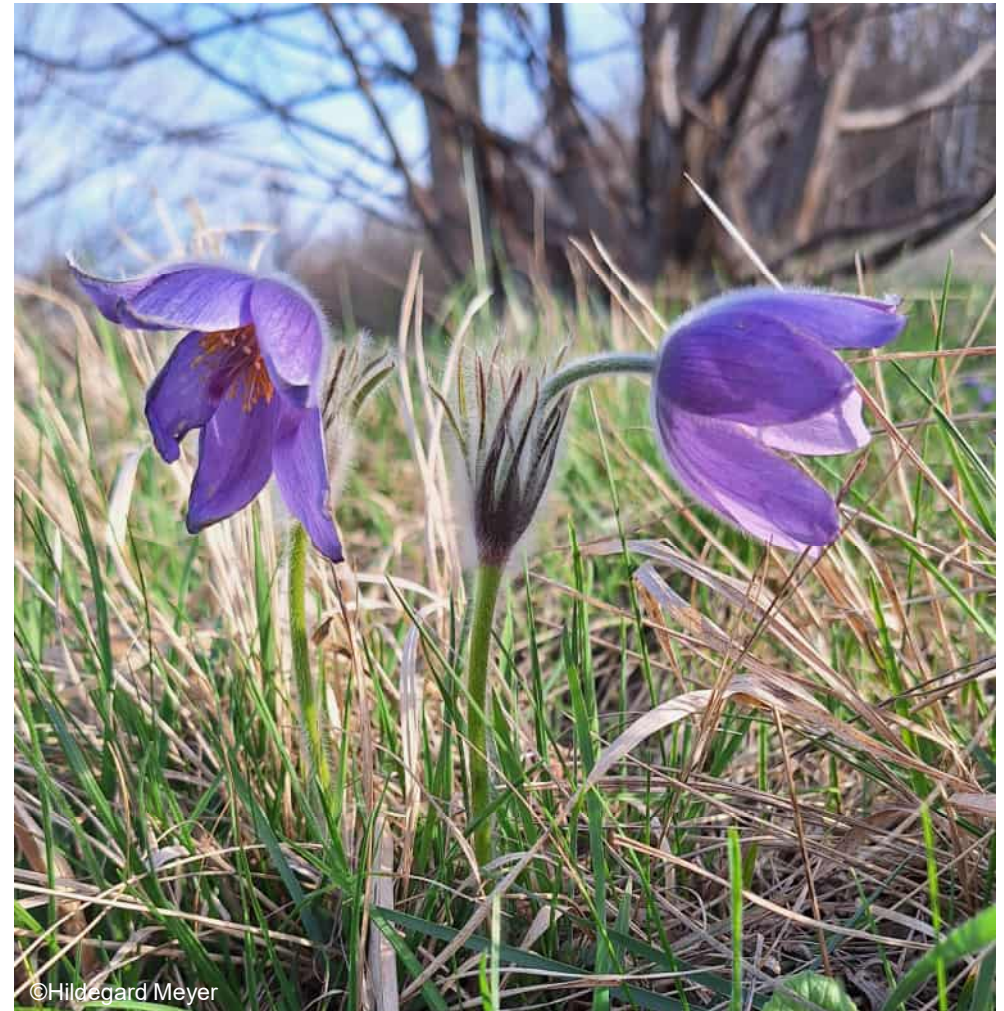
NaturaConnect receives funding under the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement number 101060429

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Welcome

Basic webinar guidance

- ✓ The webinar is being recorded.
- ✓ Write your questions and comments in the chat, indicating the speaker you address.
- ✓ All presentations, the recording and report will be available at [naturaconnect.eu/past events](https://naturaconnect.eu/past-events) and shared with registered participants.
- ✓ Feel free to rename and state your organisation by clicking on the three dots ... next to your name!
- ✓ Please start/stop your camera at your convenience :)



Agenda for today

- 1) Introduction and welcome – Hildegard Meyer (WWF-CEE)
- 2) NaturaConnect in a nutshell – Hildegard Meyer (WWF-CEE)
- 3) Welcome notes and key challenges of land-use changes in the Danube-Carpathian Region – Harald Egerer (Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention)
- 4) Land-use changes under positive future scenarios—a deep dive into scenario development - Camille Venier Cambron (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands)
- 5) Interactive check-in on different values of nature and regional challenges & discussion – moderated by Hildegard Meyer (WWF-CEE)
- 6) Closing of the webinar – Hildegard Meyer (WWF-CEE)

Brief introduction to NaturaConnect

Designing a resilient and coherent Trans-European Network for Nature and People (TEN-N)

July 2022 – September 2026

NaturaConnect co-develops

knowledge, tools and capacity

to support **countries** realizing the **EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 objectives:**

- 30% of land and sea protected
- 10% thereof strictly
- Establish TEN-N



Project consortium

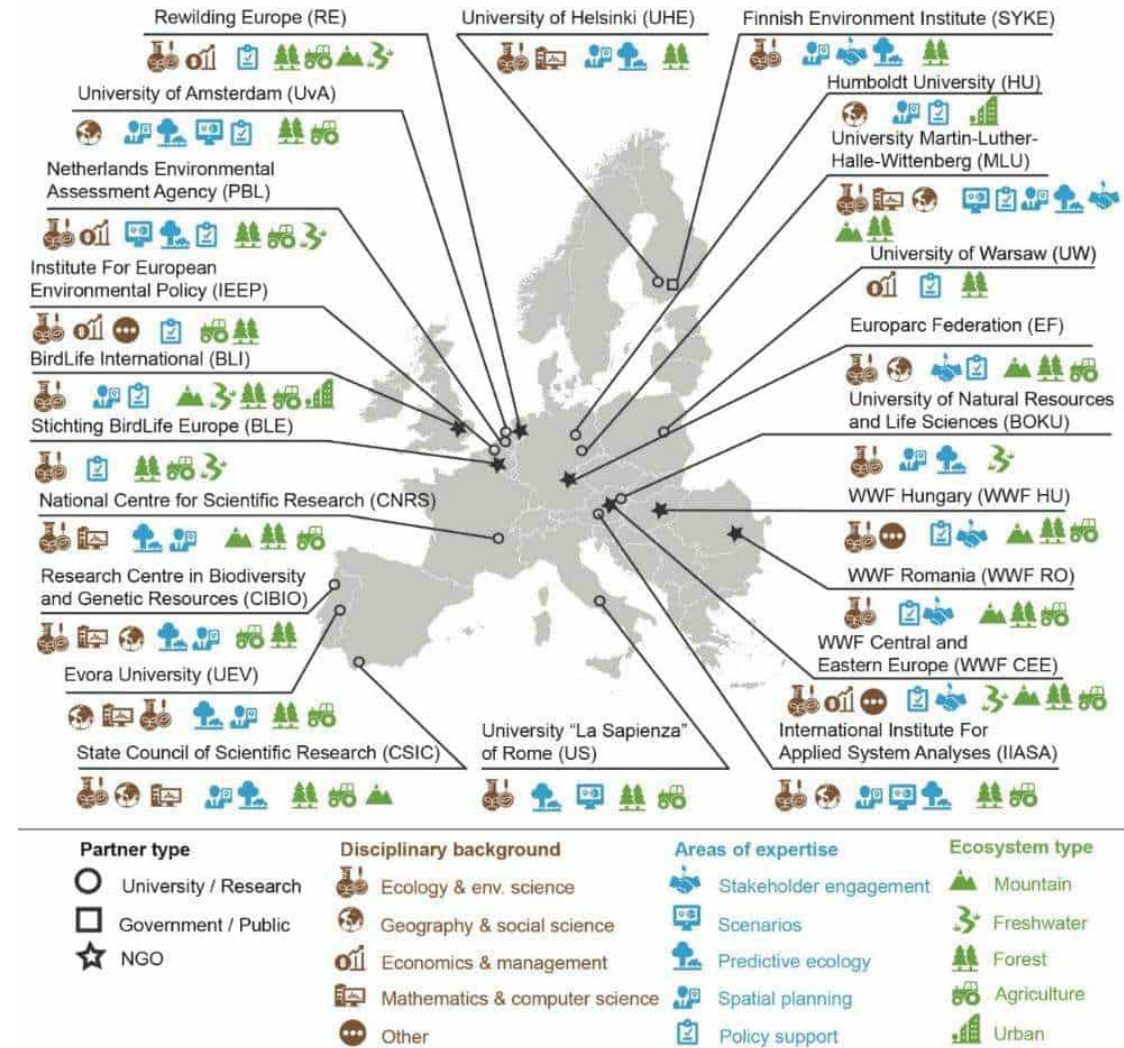
17 Research institutions

5 Policy and practitioner organisations

12 countries across Europe

Lead: International Institute for Applied System Analyses (IIASA), Austria

Co-lead: Martin-Luther-University, Germany



Source: IIASA, 2022



Key challenges of land-use changes in the Danube-Carpathian Region

Harald Egerer, Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention

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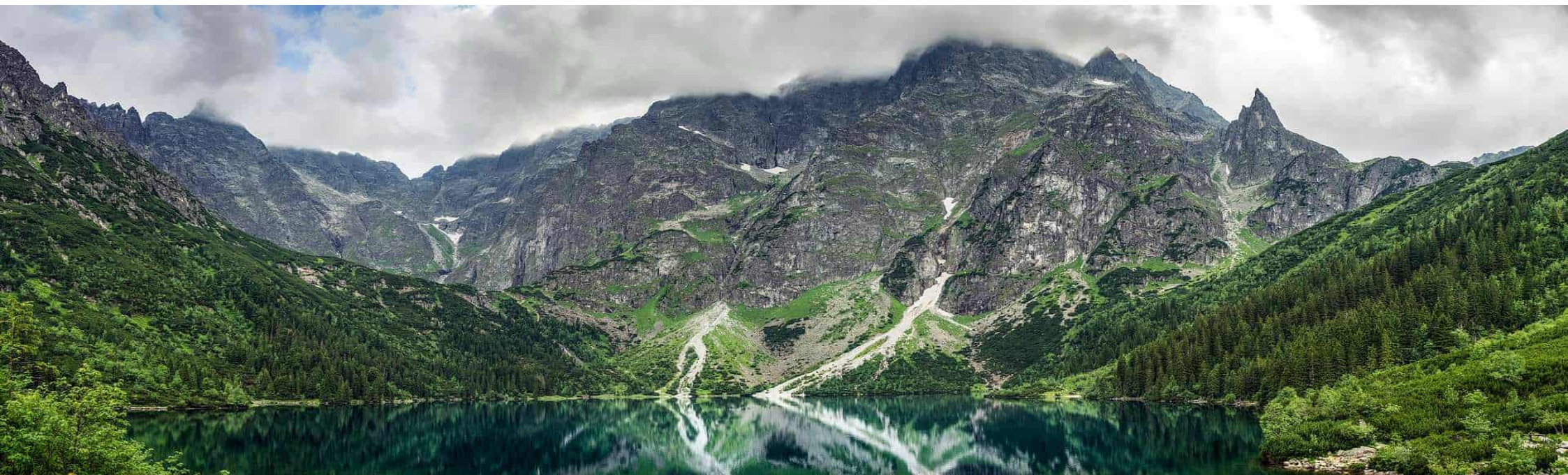


eurac
research



Land-Use Change in the Danube-Carpathian Region: Challenges and Pathways Forward

Harald Egerer
UN Environment Programme - Vienna Office
Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention



The Carpathian Mountains of central and eastern Europe are Europe's last great wilderness areas



ECO-REGION SHARED BY 7 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES



PROVIDES ESSENTIAL ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Serves 17 million inhabitants, living mostly in rural areas

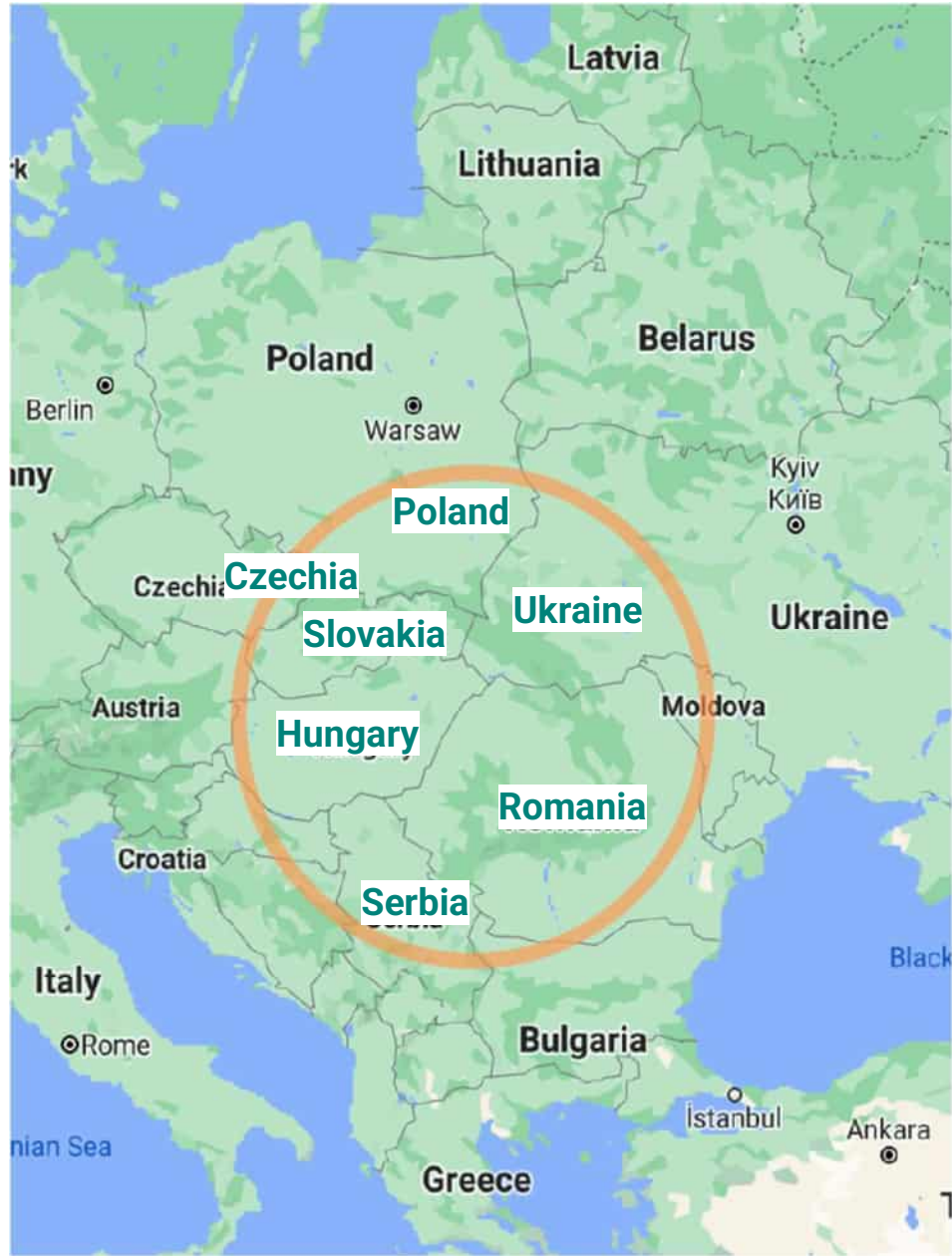


CONTAINS VAST NUMBER OF PROTECTED AREAS

Vital for a coherent European ecological network



PROTECTED BY THE CARPATHIAN CONVENTION



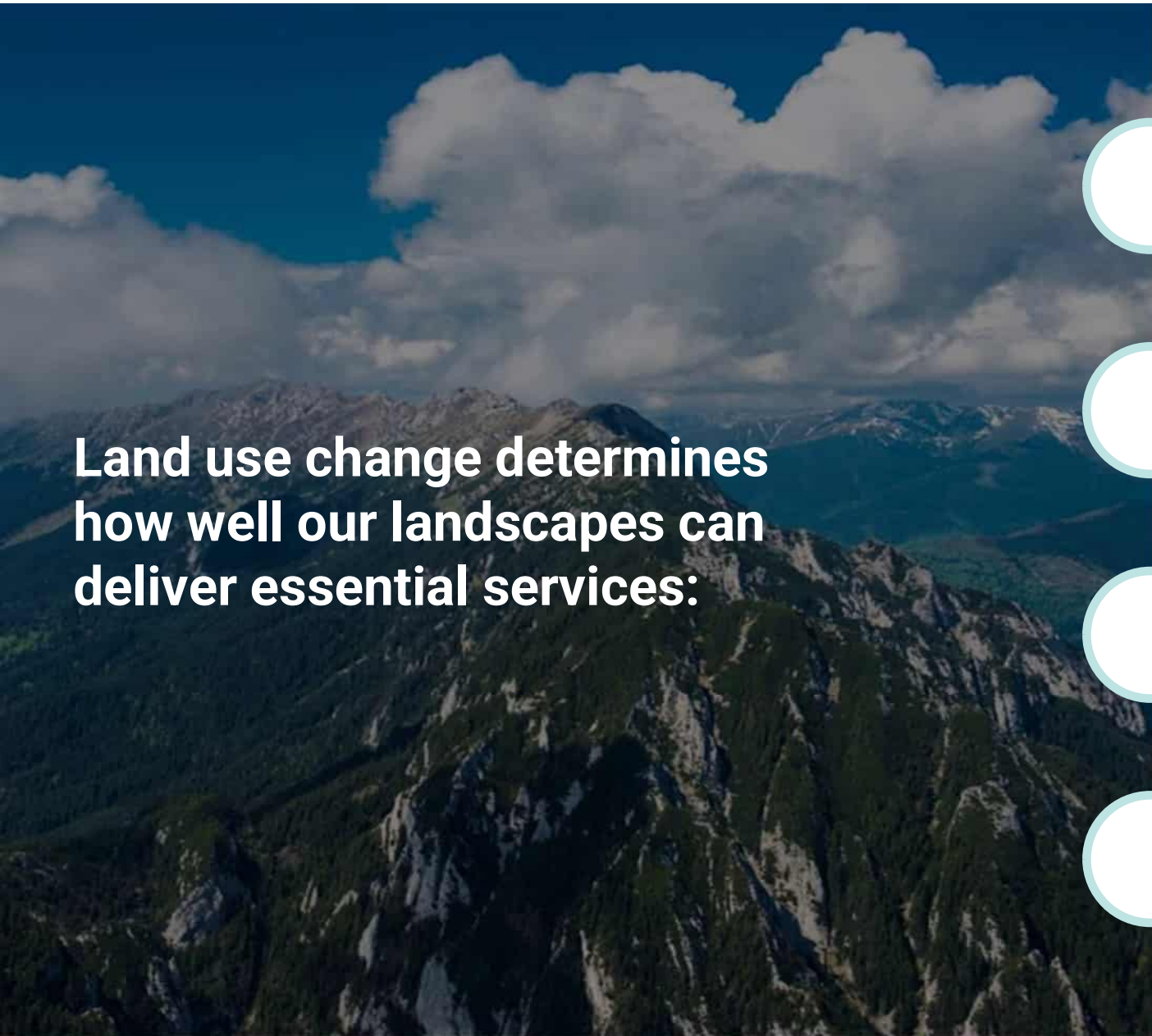
Context

A unique ecological and cultural region

Where the Danube basin meets the Carpathian Mountains

Critical for biodiversity, livelihoods, and resilience

War and invasion of one of our Parties



**Land use change determines
how well our landscapes can
deliver essential services:**



Flood regulation



Climate resilience



Biodiversity protection



Cultural identity



Why It Matters



~17 million people depend economically on these landscapes



Rich biodiversity and large wilderness areas



Key ecosystem services for hundreds of million of people: water, climate, soils

A Region at a Crossroads




Land-use decisions shape
the future



Impact biodiversity, climate
resilience, and livelihoods



Need for balanced
development and
conservation



Several land use changes are threatening Carpathian landscapes and livelihoods:



Infrastructure Pressure



Urban expansion



Agricultural intensification in lowlands



Tourism growth



Unsustainable and illegal logging



Land abandonment in mountain areas

Environmental Impacts



Habitat fragmentation



Biodiversity loss



Soil degradation



Increased risks: floods, droughts,
landslides

Governance Challenges

Multiple countries,
shared ecosystems

Need for cross-border
coordination

Different policies and
priorities

Opportunities for supporting beneficial land-use changes

LINK SCIENCE, POLICY, AND ACTION

Connect scientific evidence with policy and practice to implement the Convention's goals, align with EU and regional policies, and integrate stakeholder knowledge and expertise into governance mechanisms

SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY AND TRADITIONAL PASTORALISM

Nature-based solutions can increase the resilience of Carpathian forests and grasslands, while also helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change, if the practices are locally adapted

COOPERATE TRANSNATIONALLY

Balance economic development with ecological integrity, strengthen cooperation across borders, and ensure that land-use decisions are guided by long-term sustainability



Pathways Forward



Integrated land-use planning, spatial planning



Link science, policy, and practice



Support sustainable forestry – close to nature forest management and pastoralism



Enhanced quality of protection



Promote nature-based solutions

Role of Cooperation

- Transnational collaboration is essential
- Align development with ecological integrity
- Carpathian Convention as a platform for action, partnership
- Highest significance of Natura Connect



Key Takeaway



LAND-USE CHANGE IS NOT
ONLY A CHALLENGE



IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO
SHAPE A RESILIENT FUTURE



FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE

Thank You!

www.carpathianconvention.org
Info.carpathianconvention@un.org



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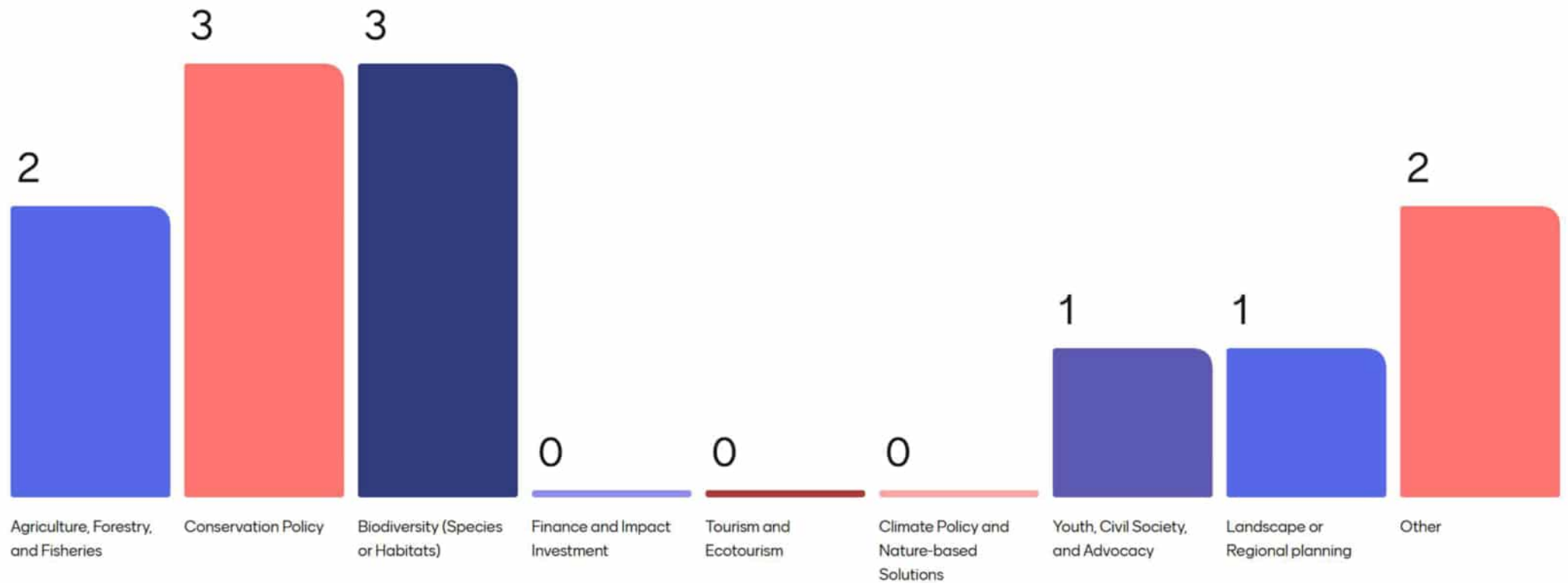


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Where are you joining from today?



What is your primary expertise or background?



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What is the goal of conservation in your region/project?
What core values is it meant to serve?

support local communities
species conservation
sustainability natural processes habitats
pollination ecosystem resilience
coexistence
balanced development and c conservation restoration sustainable development
farmland biodiversity river restoration
nature based solutions
species preservation



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What land-use policies would help support this goal?

Integration of conservation into spatial planning

CAP-agri/silvi-environmental schemes, NRL

Obligate cross-sectoral cooperation

non-contradictory; mainstreamed; enforceable

Mainstreaming biodiversity into all policies

support for local entrepreneurs

water retention measures

Support to local communities



→ Next slide

 Mentimeter



What does this mean for broader landscape transformations?

effectively halting biodiversity loss (including corruption behind it)

More conflict management

better understanding between politicians and stakeholders

focus on restoration of ecosystems

More efforts to look beyond your own horizon

Difference views on land use

Long-term planning across borders

More balanced human nature relationship

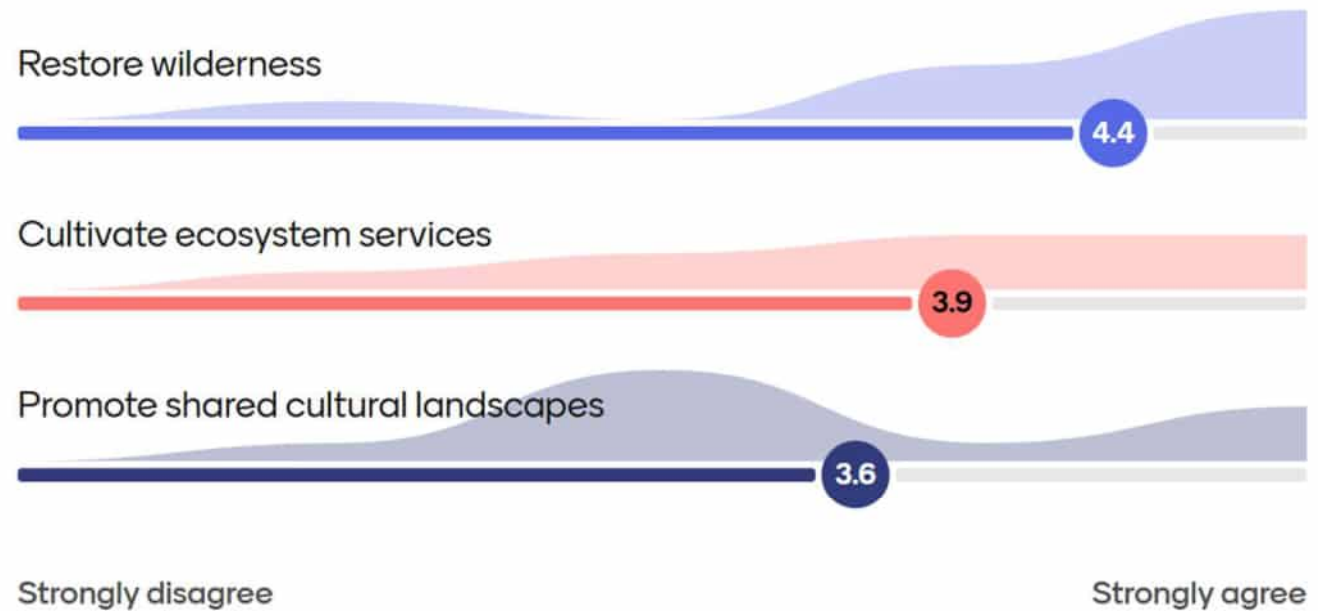




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Mentimeter

What primary land-use change would support your goal?





Shaping Tomorrow's Landscapes: Land-Use Futures in the Danube- Carpathian Region

dr. Camille Venier-Cambron

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NaturaConnect receives funding under the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement number 101060429. The contents of this material are the sole responsibility of the NaturaConnect consortium and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Union.

April 23rd 2026

How do we imagine conservation / nature management? What does this mean for how we view sustainability?



<https://www.wideopenspaces.com/yosemite-photos-gallery/>



<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/may/09/lake-district-world-heritage-site-george-monbiot>

Gains in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services from the expansion of the planet's protected areas

YIWEN ZENG, LIAN PIN KOH, AND DAVID S. WILCOVE [Authors Info & A](#)

SCIENCE ADVANCES • 1 Jun 2022 • Vol 8, Issue 22 • DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.abl9885

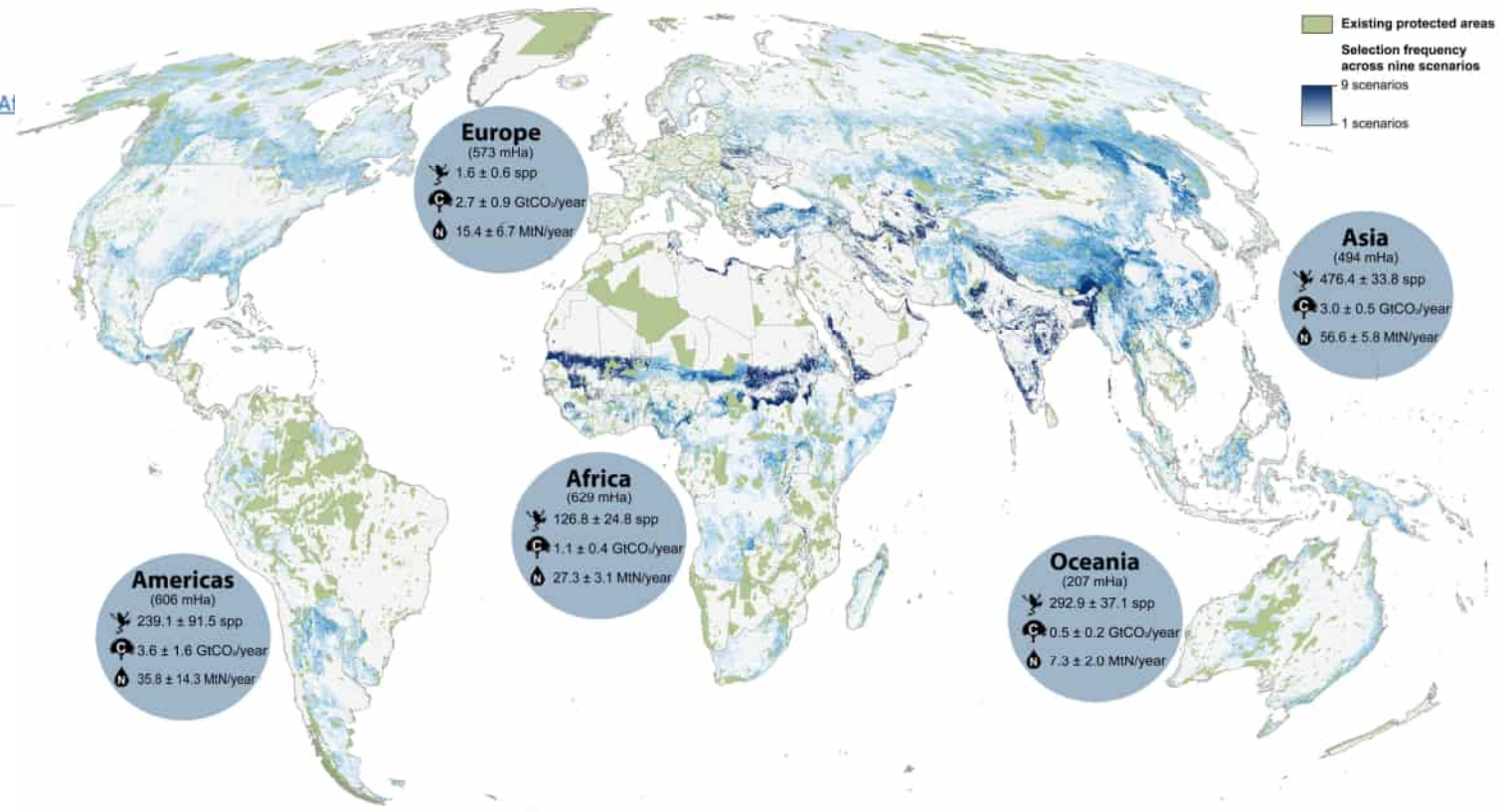
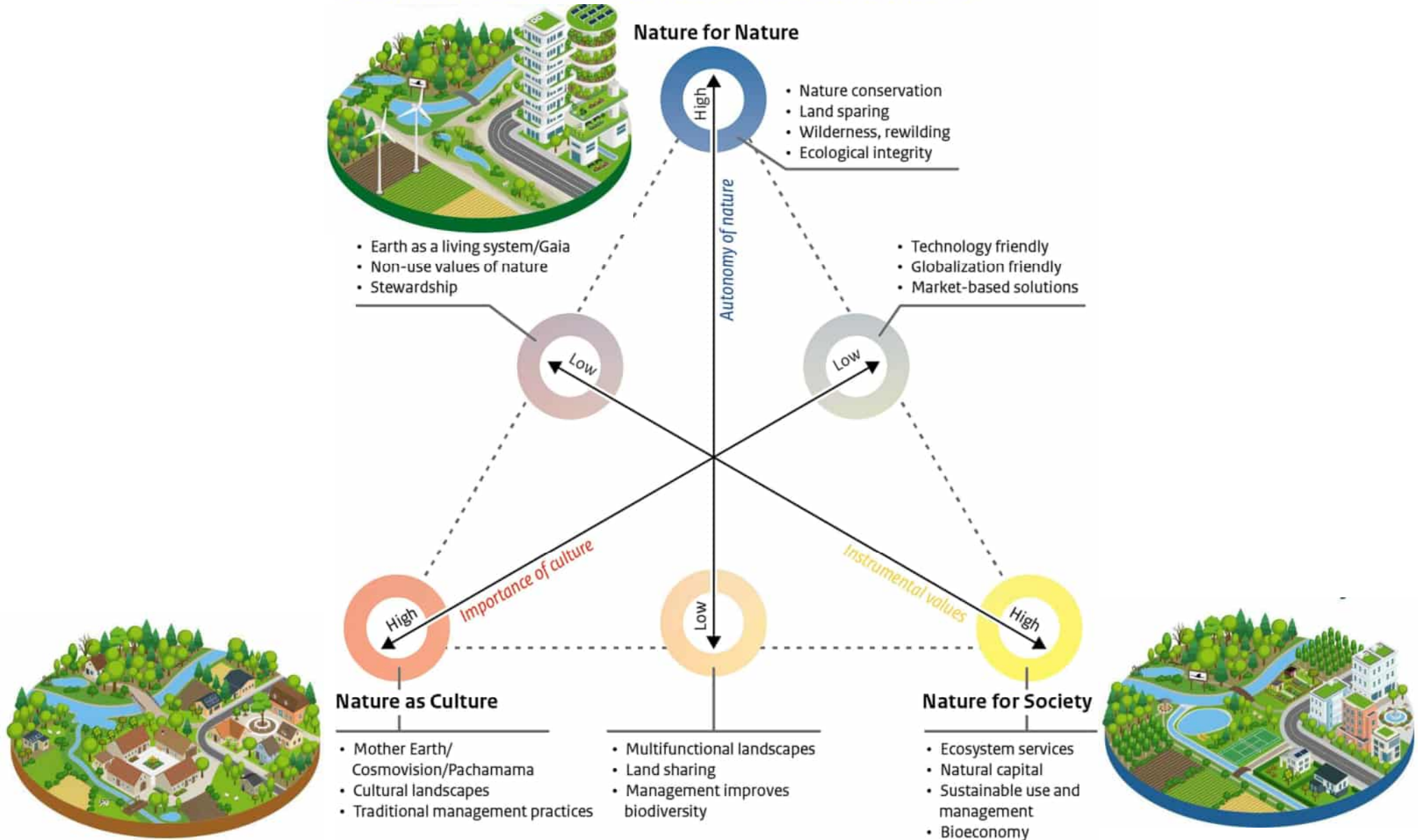
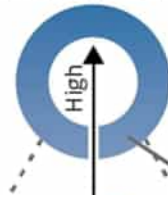


Fig. 1. Magnitude of additional biodiversity conservation, climate-change mitigation, and nutrient-regulation benefits associated with protecting 30% of terrestrial areas in 193 countries globally, across nine scenarios. Insets indicate the total potential benefits within each region's boundaries across a specific area, with values representing average and 95% confidence intervals (calculated on the basis of all nine modeled scenarios).

Descriptive characteristics of the Nature Futures value perspectives



Nature for Nature



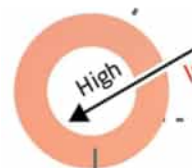
- Suppress mosaics and low intensity systems
- Cluster forests
- Cluster agriculture
- Cluster urban

Sustainable Economy

+

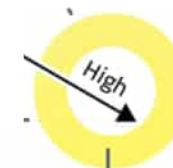
Demand for wetland restoration
Demand for tree planting

Wetlands and primary forests not
allowed to convert; encourage
restoration in protected areas



Nature as Culture

- Suppress high intensity systems
- Encourage mosaics
- Cluster co forests with mosaics and peri-urban

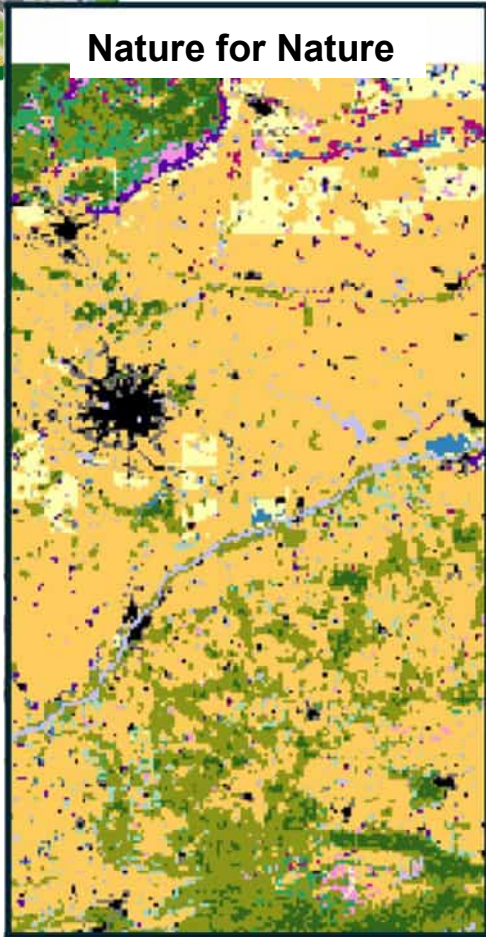


Nature for Society

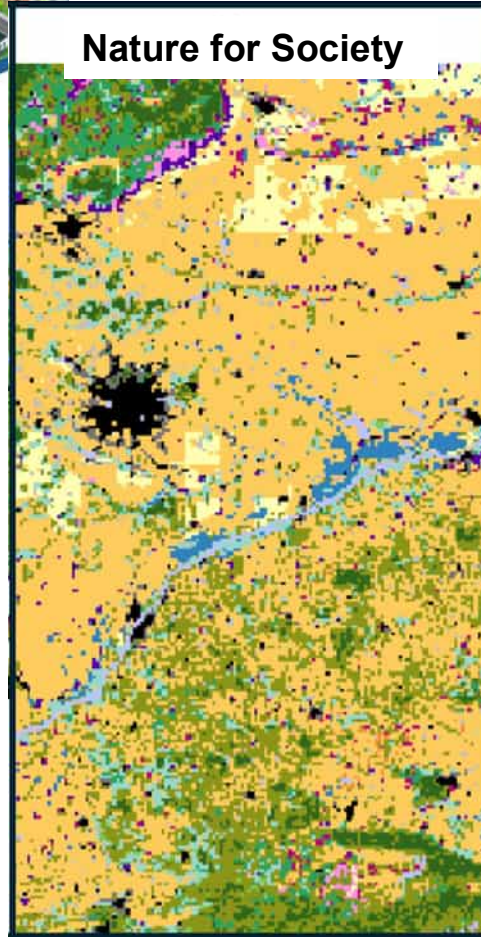
- Suppress low intensity systems
- Cluster co forests with productive systems
- Cluster urban



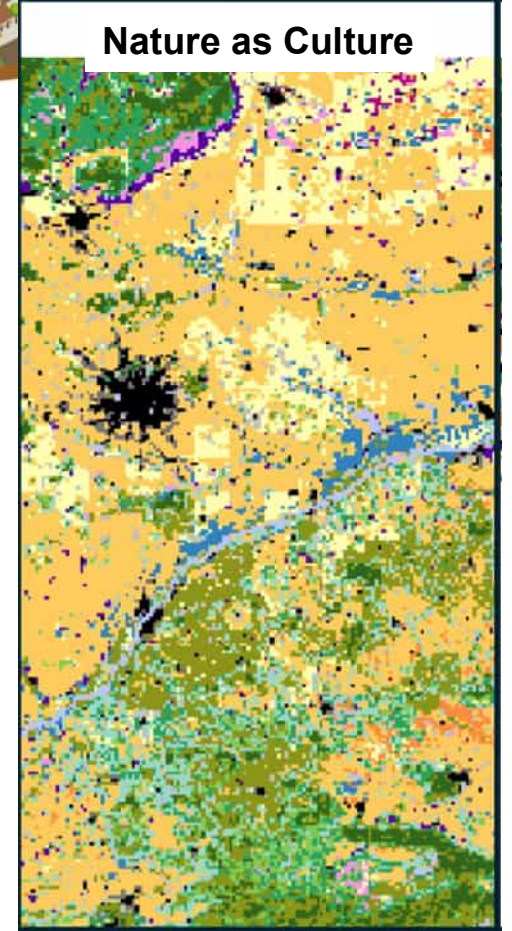
Nature for Nature



Nature for Society



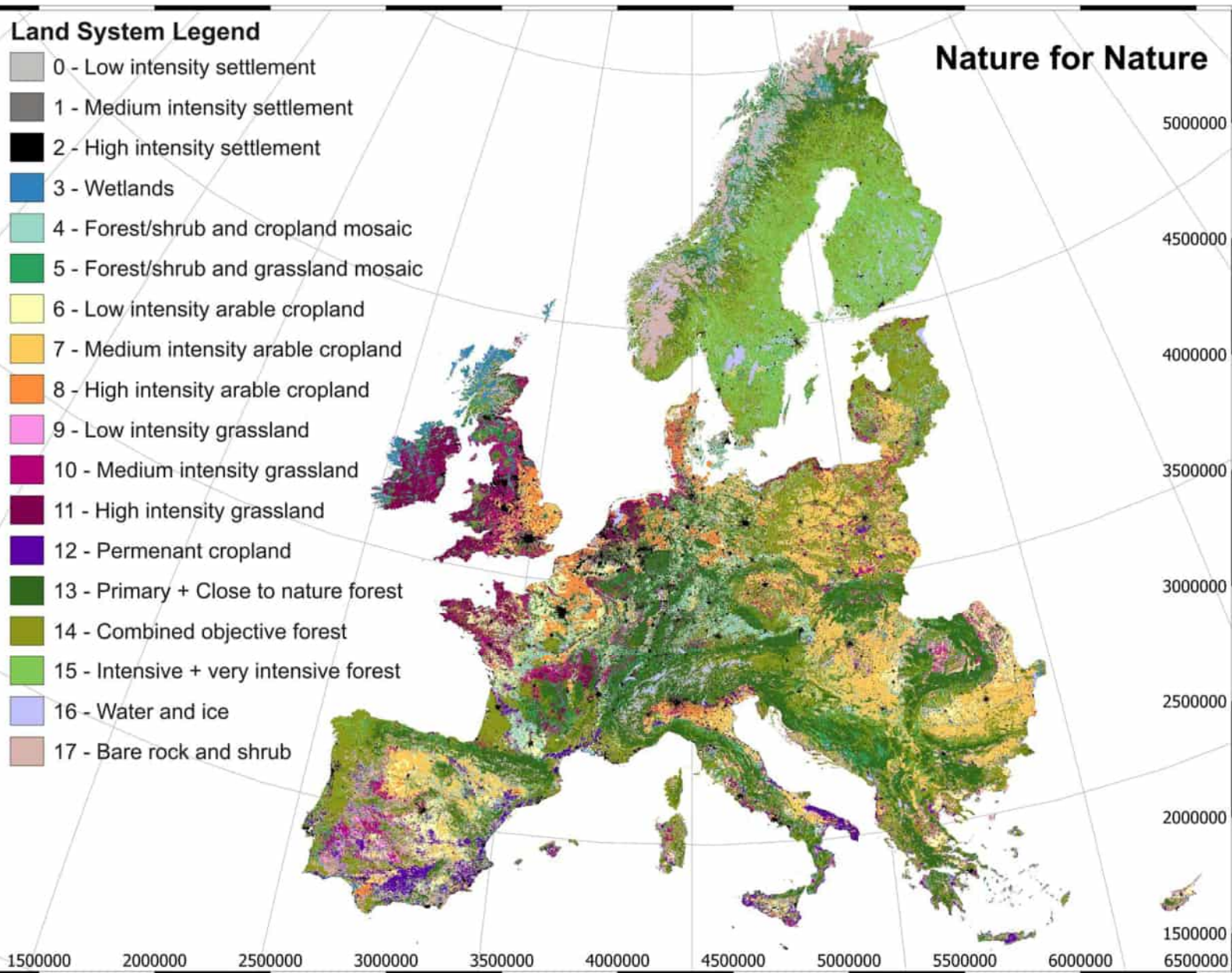
Nature as Culture



Land System Legend

- 0 - Low intensity settlement
- 1 - Medium intensity settlement
- 2 - High intensity settlement
- 3 - Wetlands
- 4 - Forest/shrub and cropland mosaic
- 5 - Forest/shrub and grassland mosaic
- 6 - Low intensity arable cropland
- 7 - Medium intensity arable cropland
- 8 - High intensity arable cropland
- 9 - Low intensity grassland
- 10 - Medium intensity grassland
- 11 - High intensity grassland
- 12 - Permanent cropland
- 13 - Primary + Close to nature forest
- 14 - Combined objective forest
- 15 - Intensive + very intensive forest
- 16 - Water and ice
- 17 - Bare rock and shrub

Nature for Nature

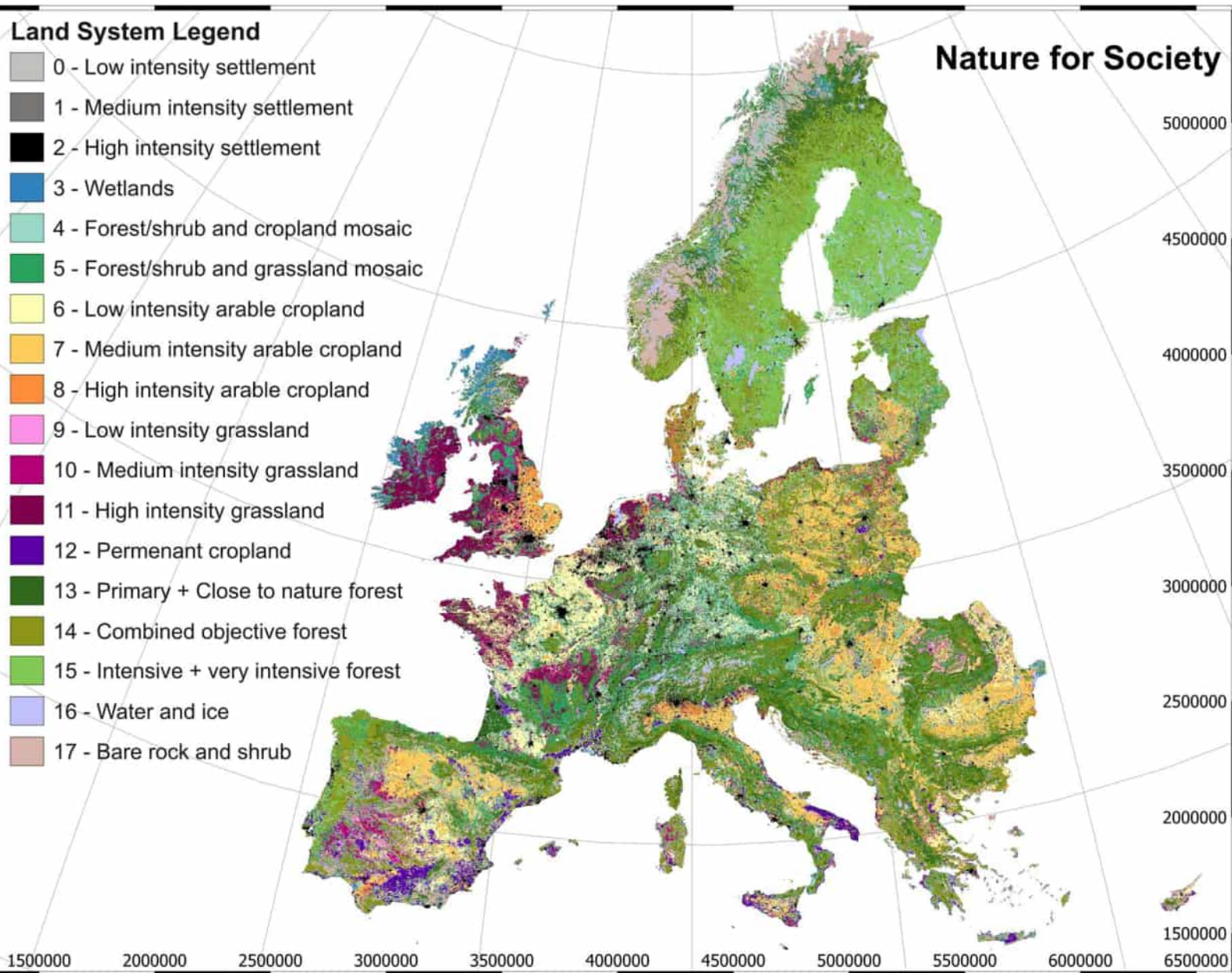


- Densely clustered natural forests
- Continuous patches of agriculture

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Nature for Society

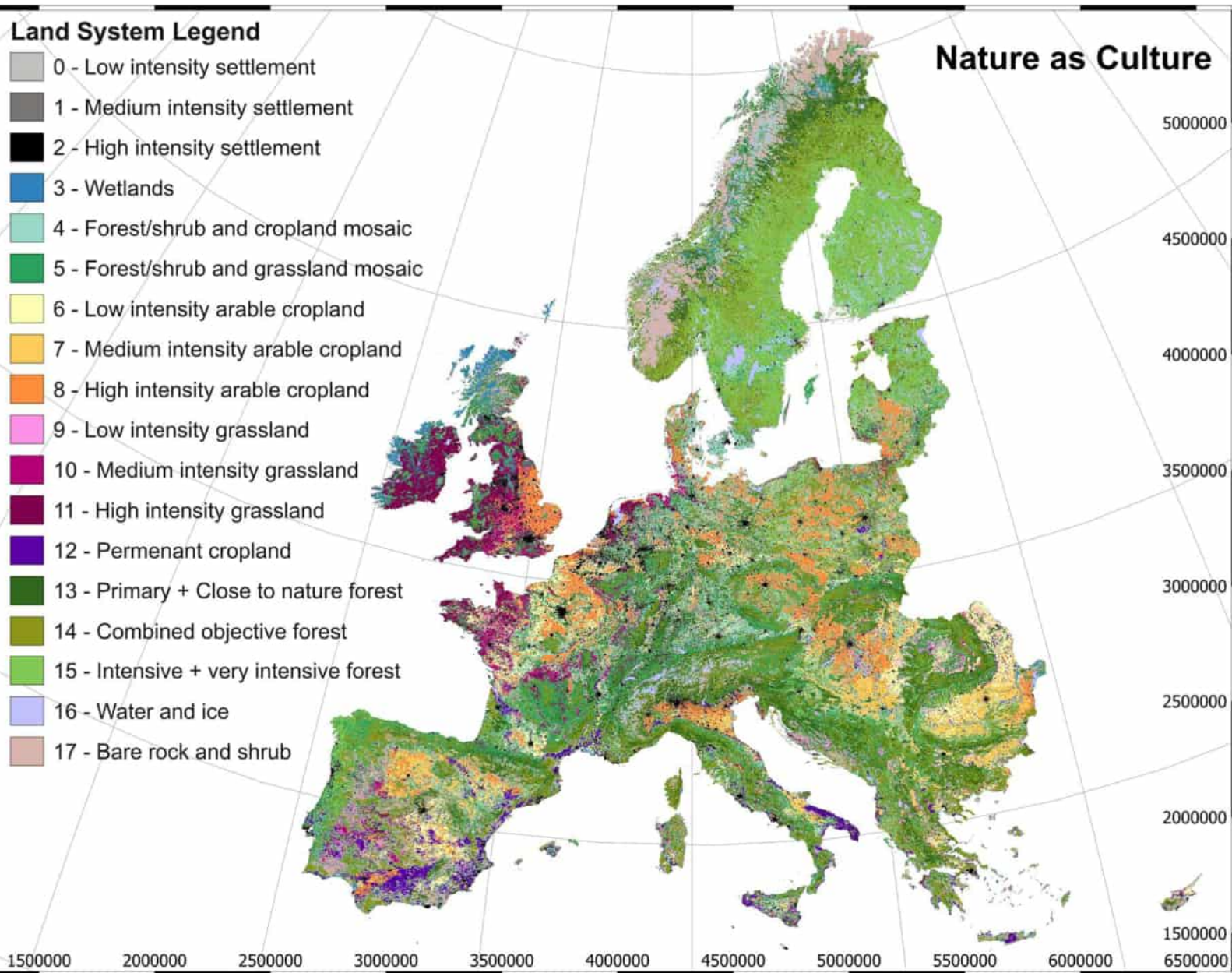


- More scattered patches of combined objective forests
- Less continuous patches of agriculture
- More mosaics

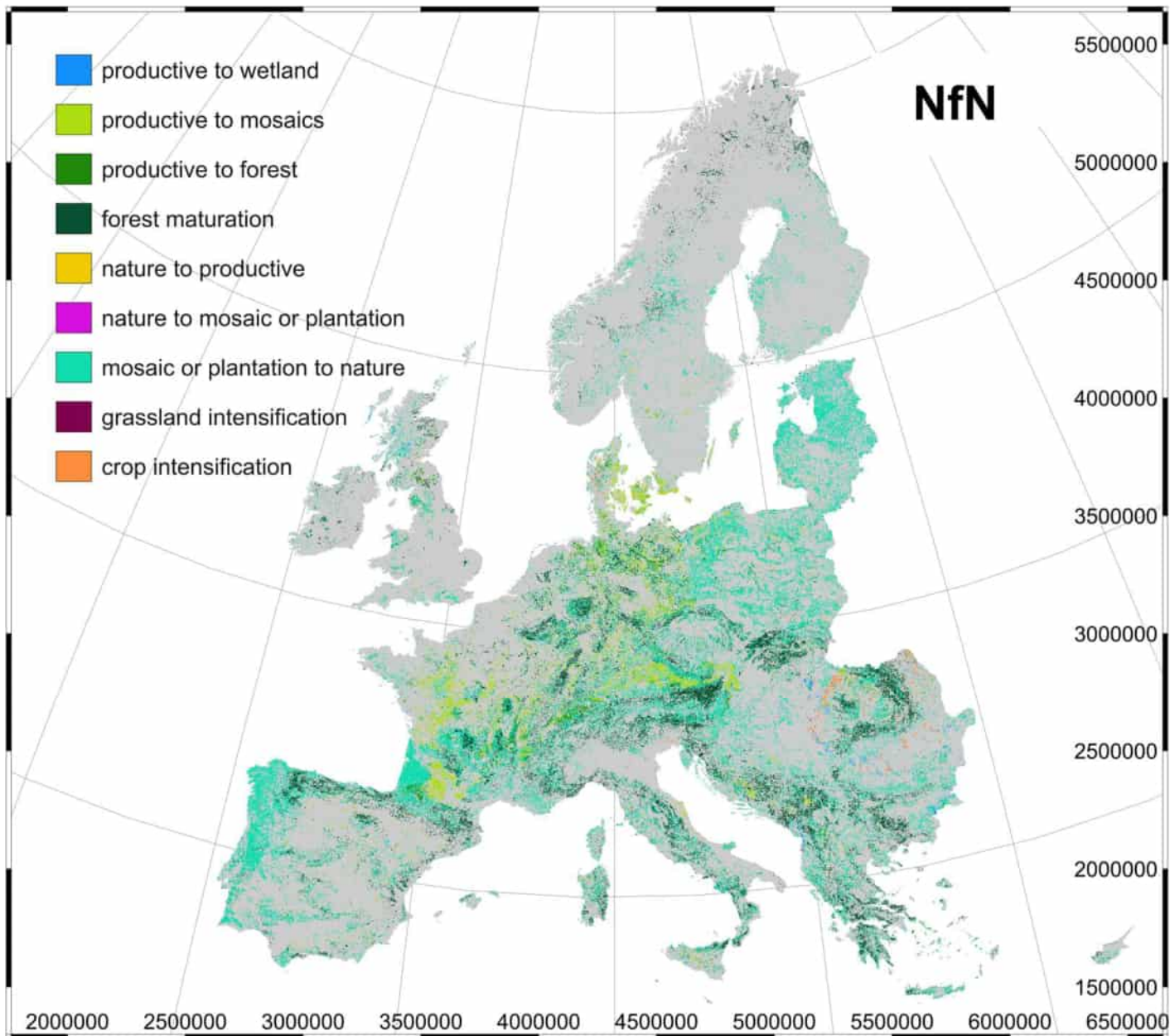
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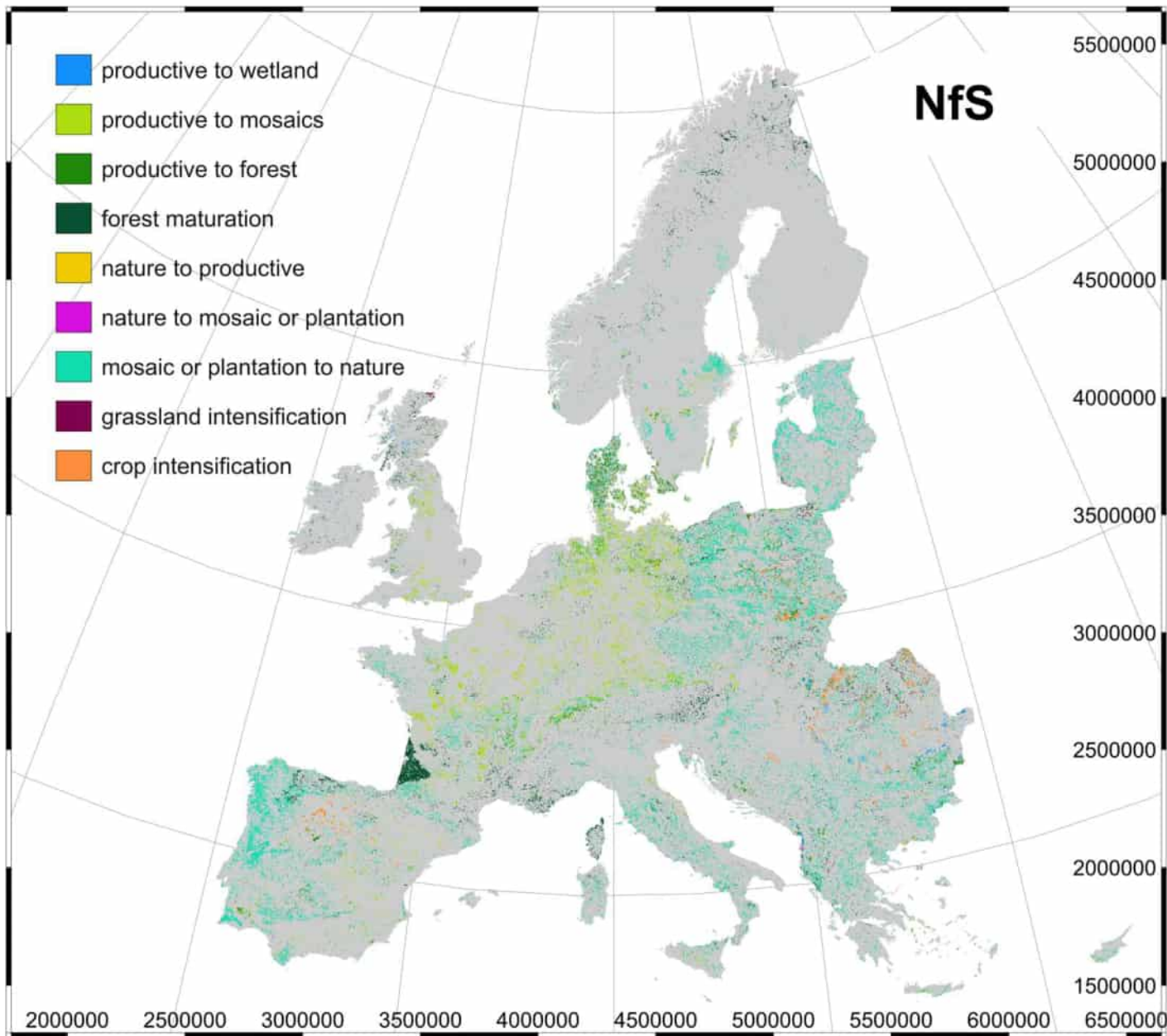
Nature as Culture



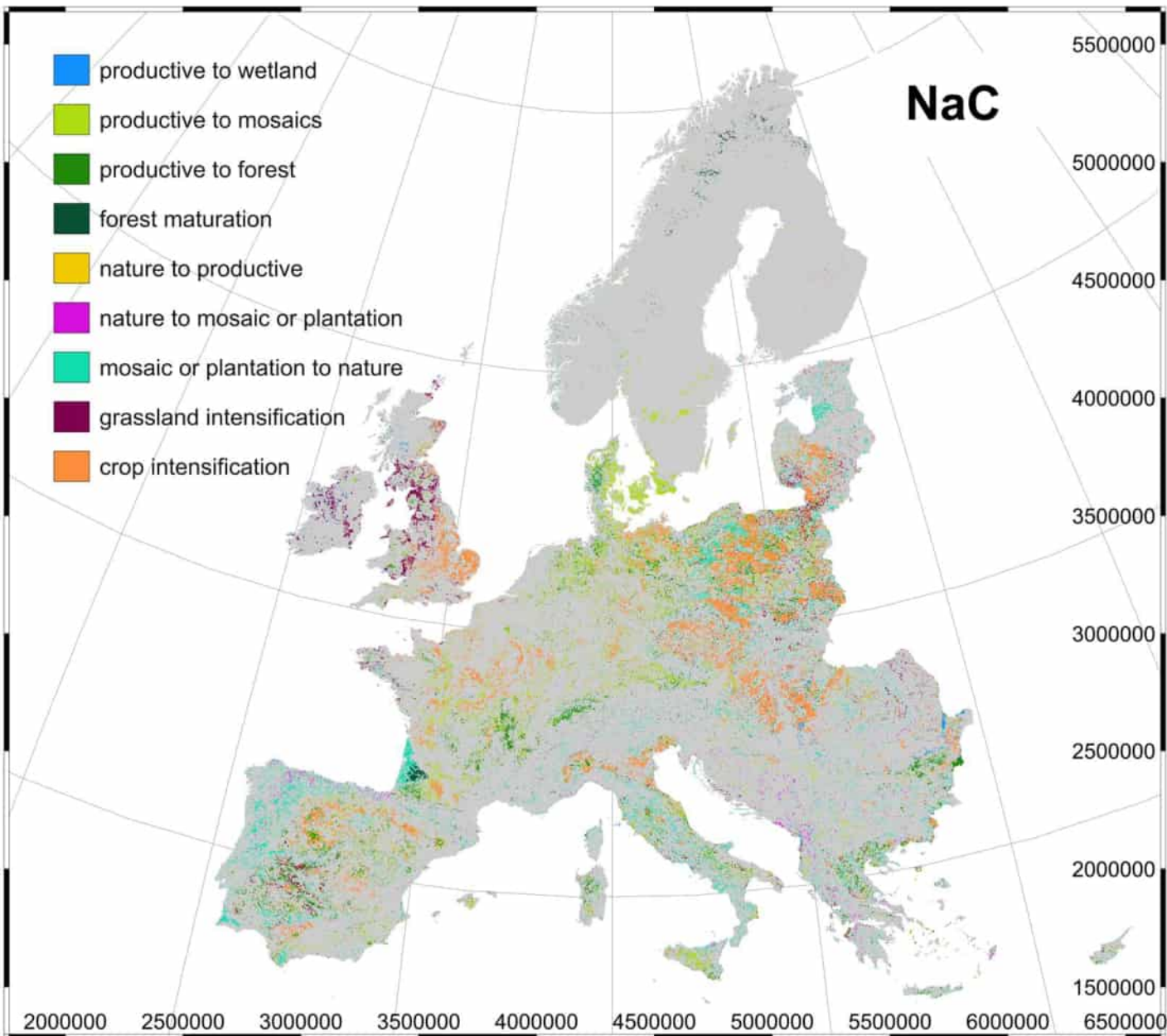
- Mixed mosaic landscapes
- Targeted intensification to meet production demands



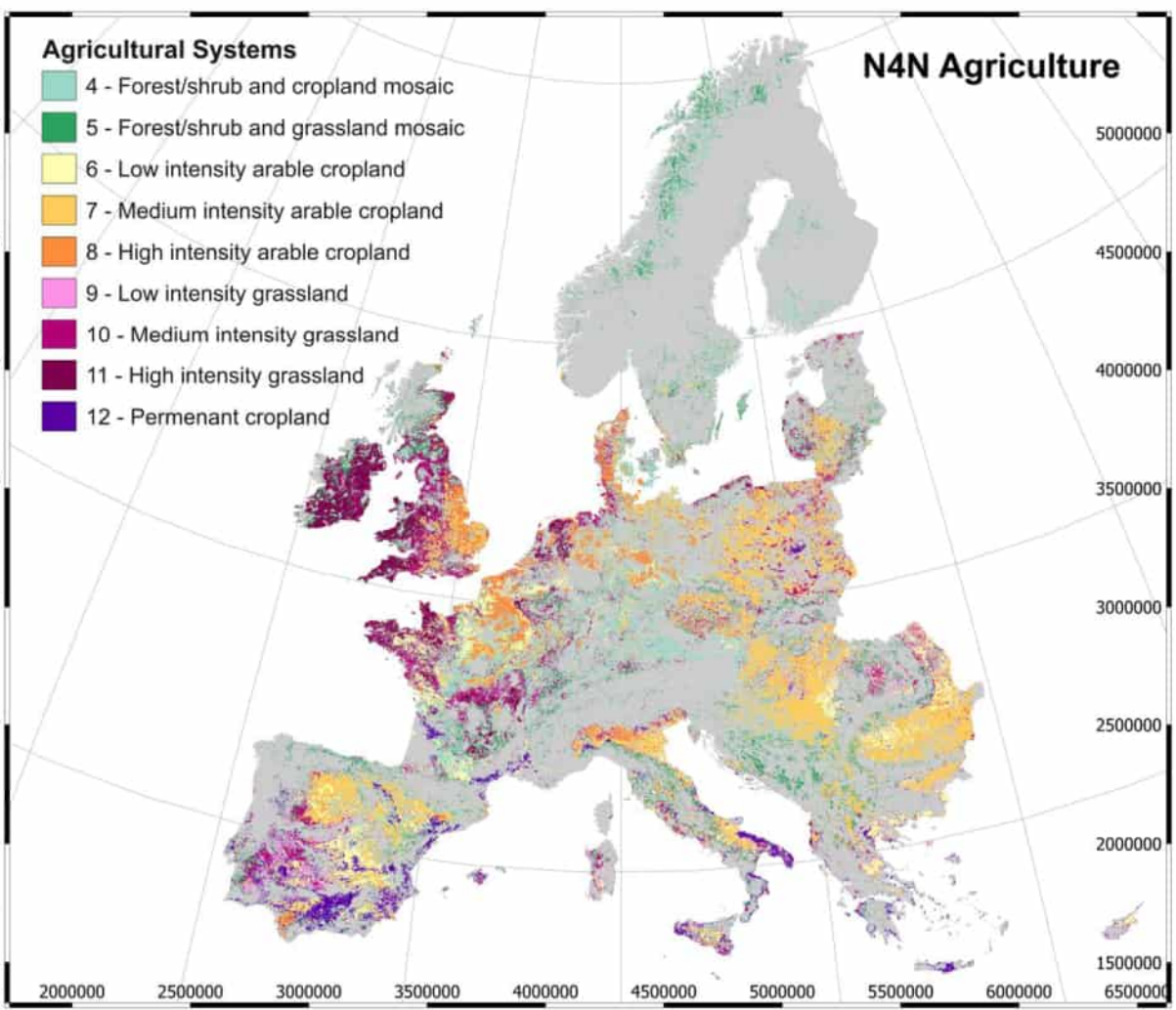
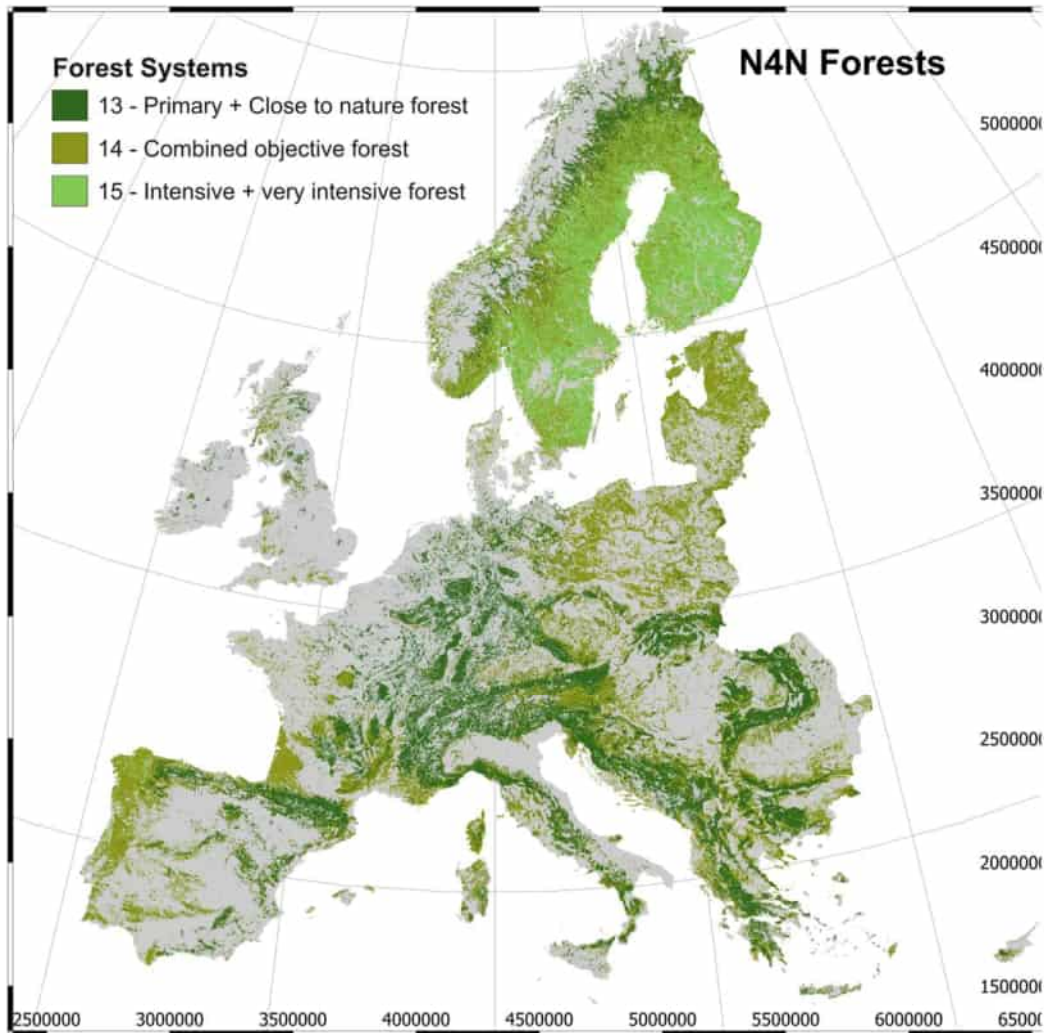
- Land use change focused on forest restoration
- Some targeted agricultural intensification

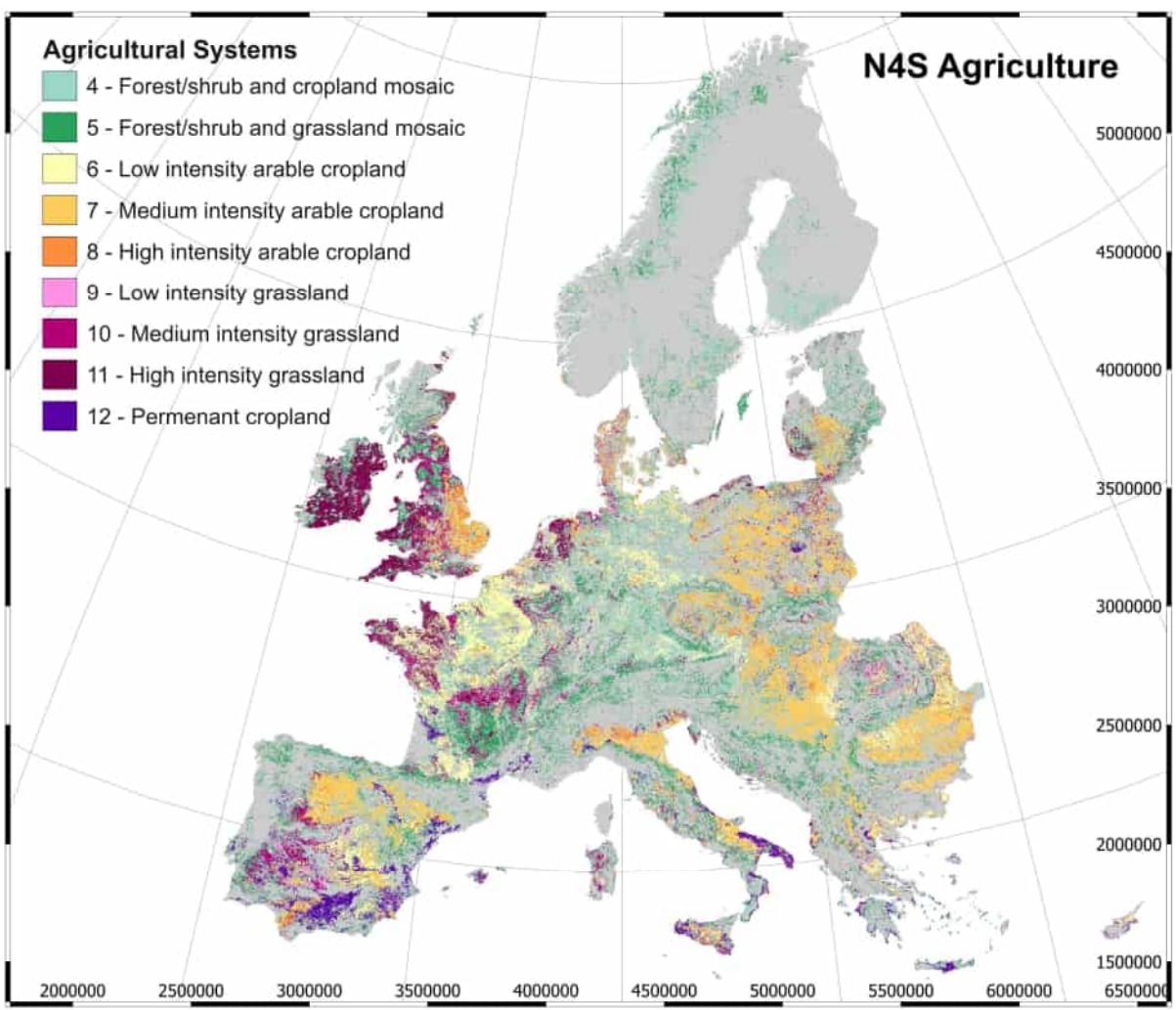
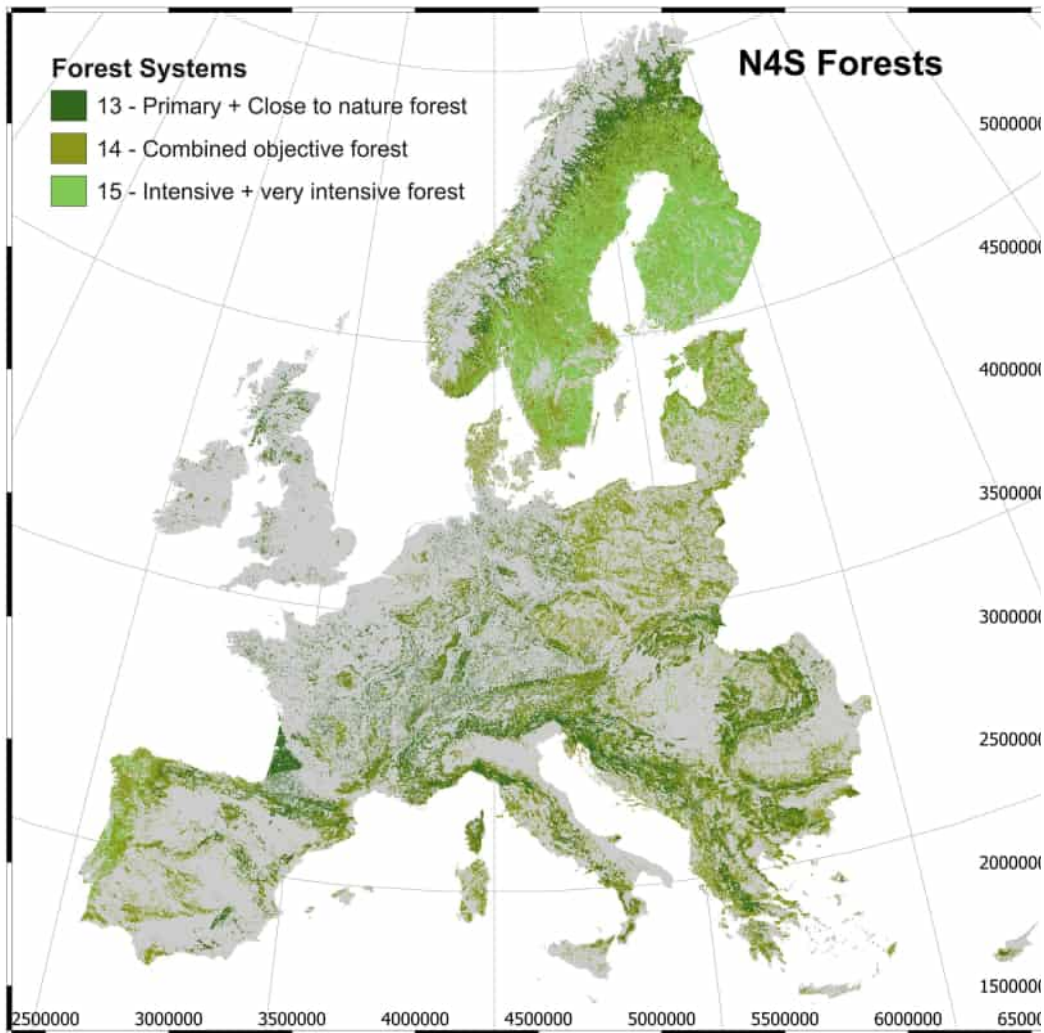


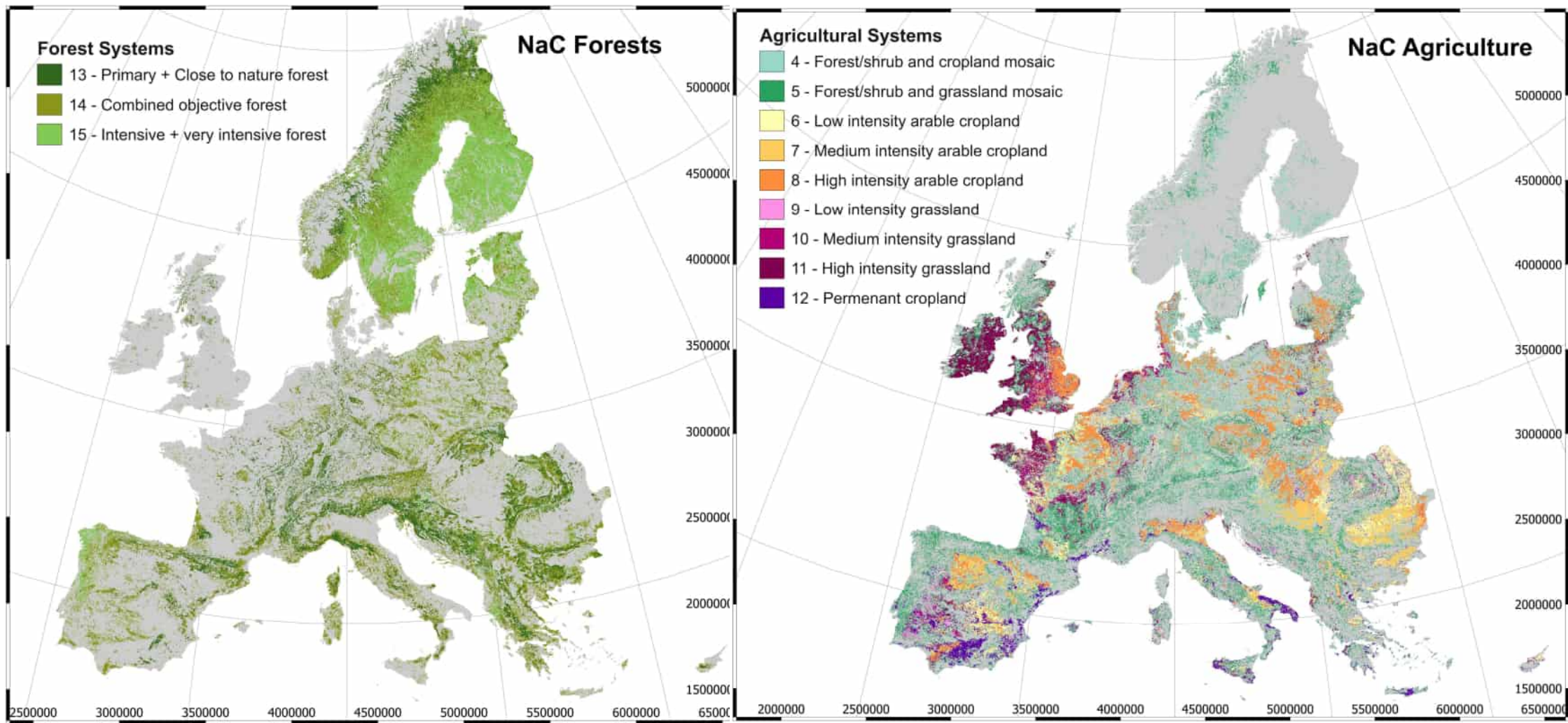
- Some forest restoration
- Some productive land to forests or forest patches
- Some scattered intensification

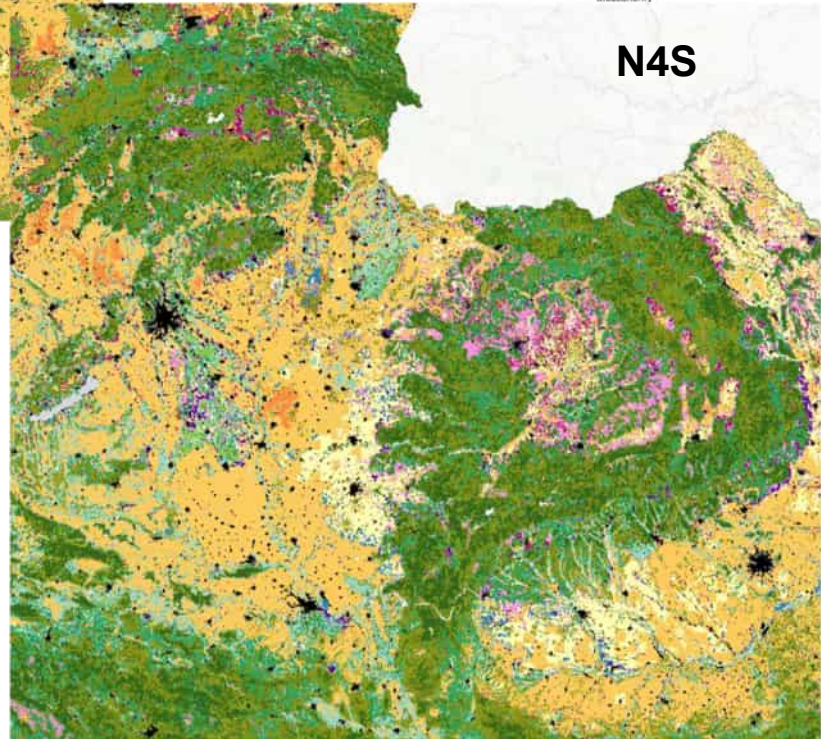
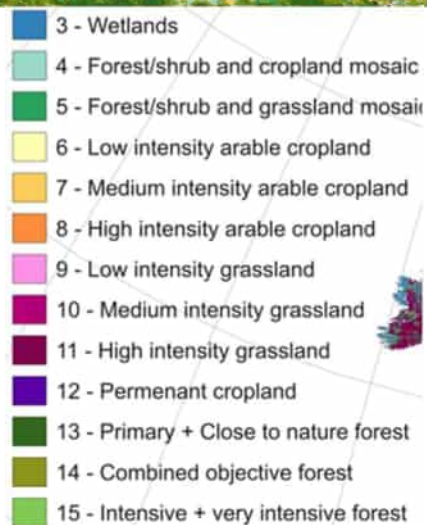
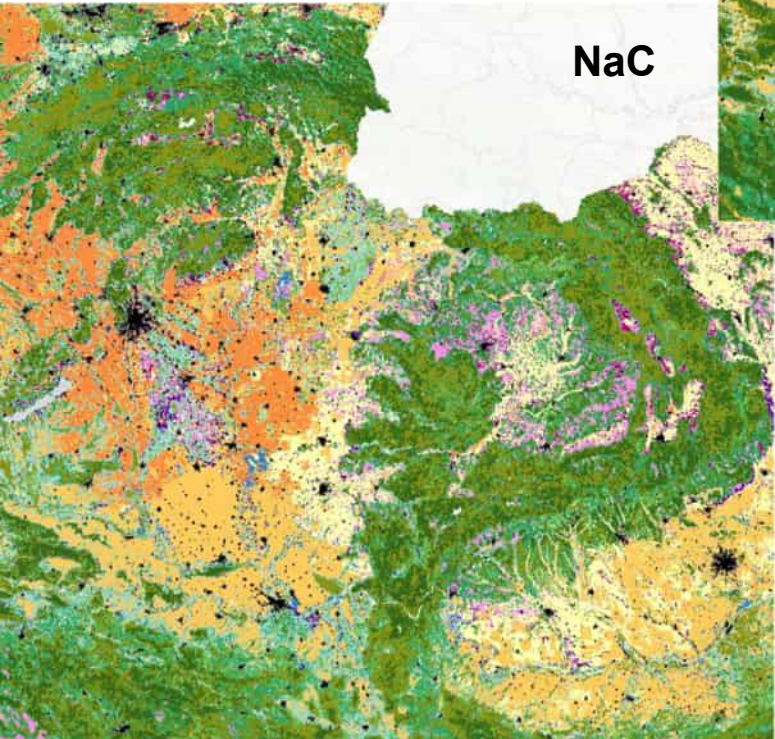
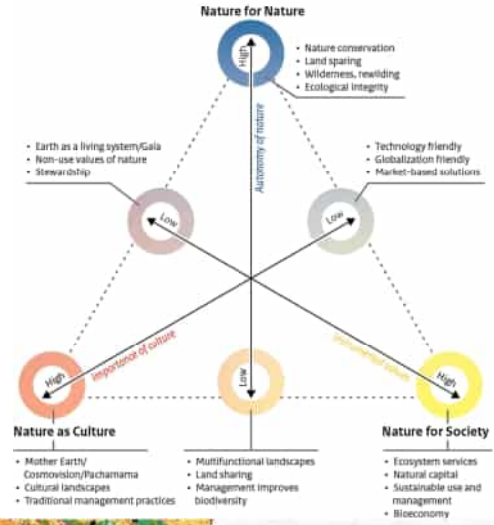
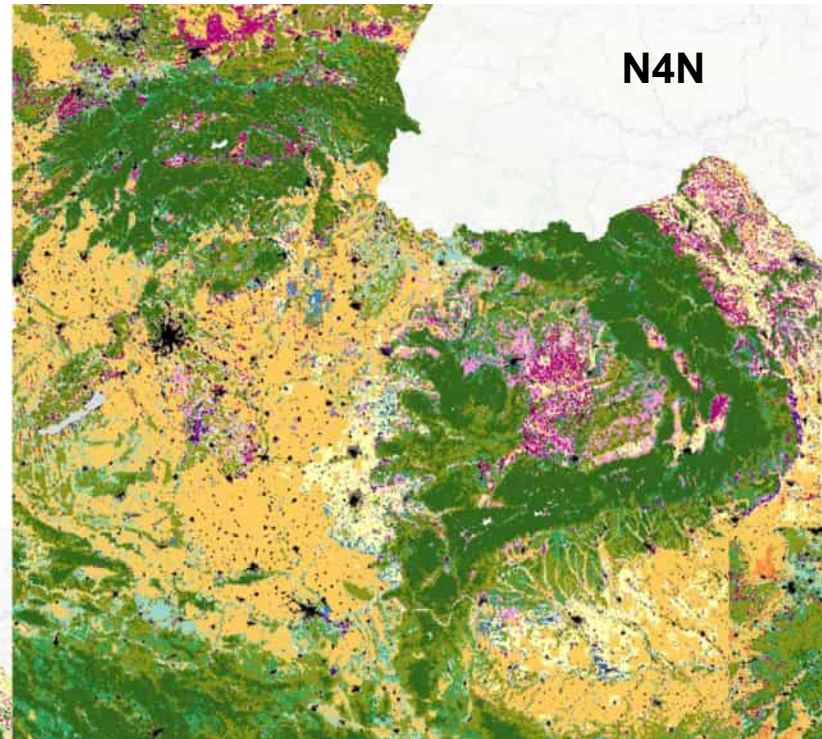
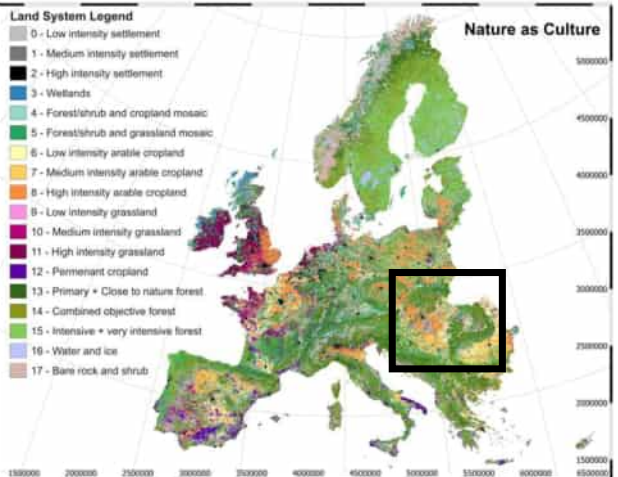


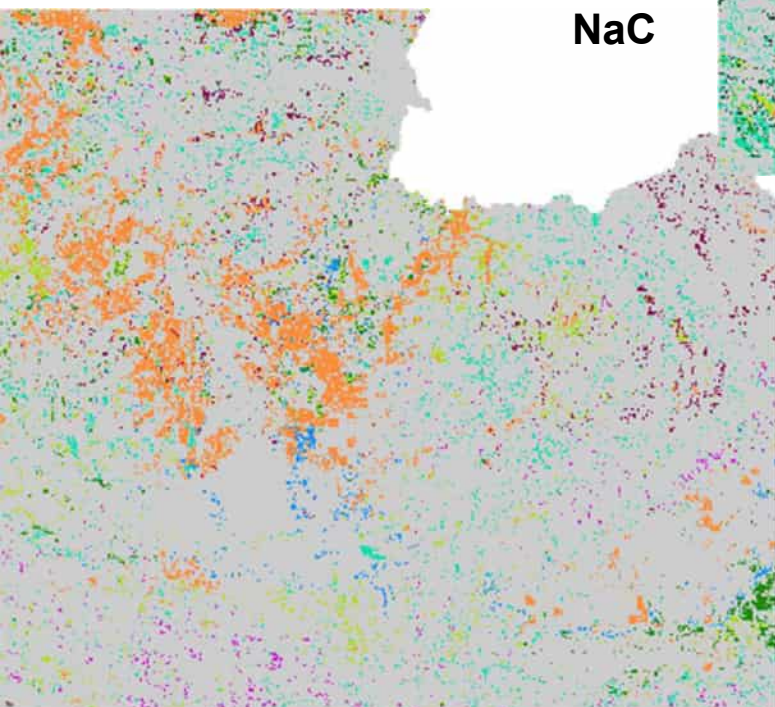
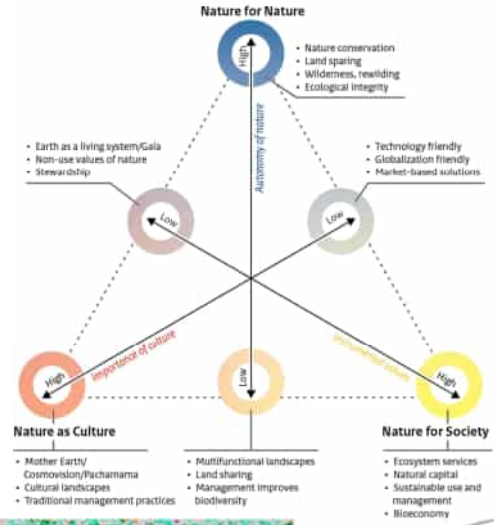
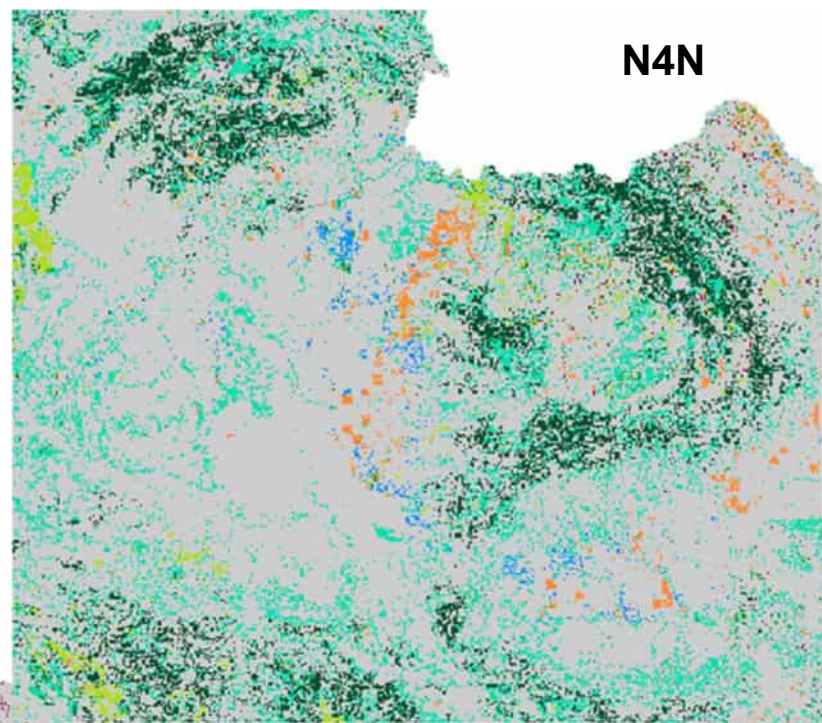
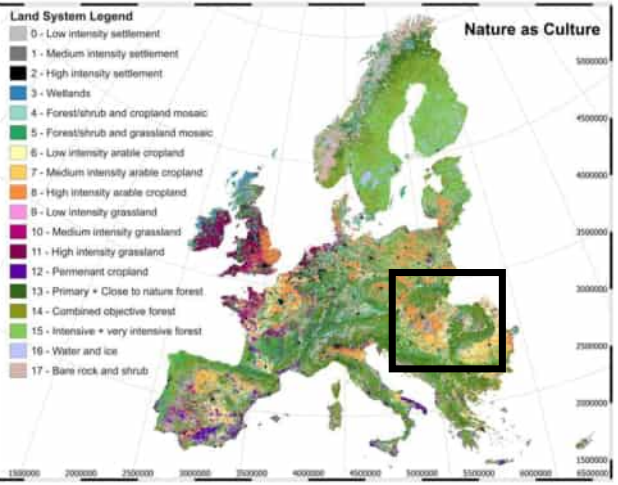
- Land use change focused on expansion of mosaics and mixed-use forests
- Less space for 'wilderness'
- Targeted agricultural intensification to balance demands



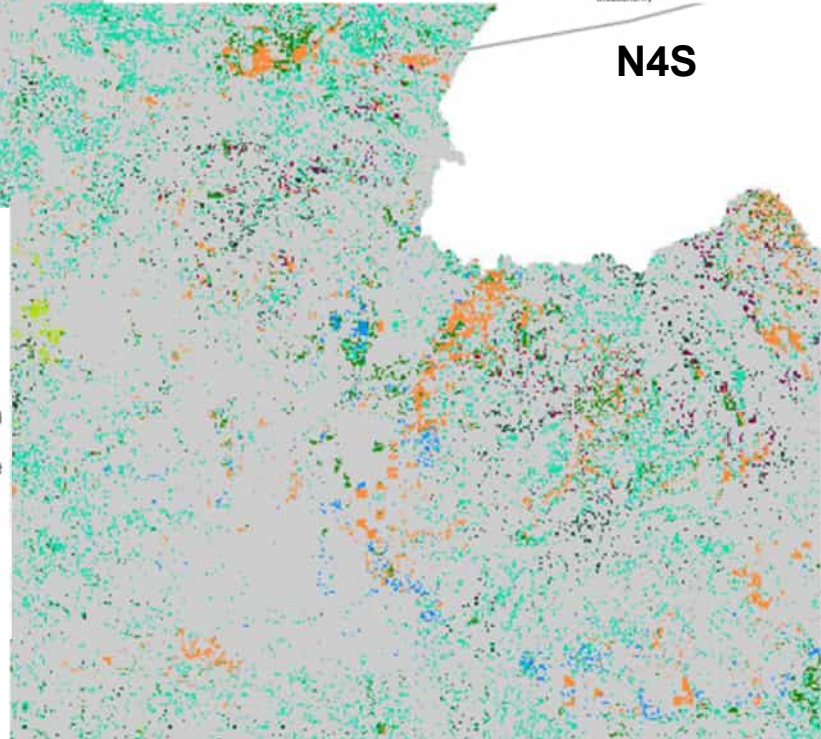








- productive to wetland
- nature to mosaic or plantation
- productive to mosaics
- mosaic or plantation to nature
- productive to forest
- grassland intensification
- forest maturation
- crop intensification
- nature to productive



Key take-aways

- The way we value nature shapes how we imagine sustainable land-use
- The way we manage forests effects how we manage agricultural landscapes
- Scenario modeling can be used to explore different potential futures
- The purpose of the scenario will determine the scale, resolution, classification, and parameterization of the model



Questions & Answers

©Hildegard Meyer



Wrap up

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Next steps & tools

- **Recording, presentations and post-workshop** briefing will be made accessible on the NaturaConnect website. Participants will be informed!
- Check out the **NaturaConnect Learning Platform** at <https://tinyurl.com/ENA-NC>
- Publication of **NaturaConnector**, a decision-support tool at <https://naturaconnector.iiasa.ac.at/> very soon!!
- **Open-access data** on biodiversity, including species, habitats, climate change and land use change scenarios at **Zenodo** at <https://zenodo.org/communities/naturaconnect/>



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 naturaconnect@iiasa.ac.at

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**Evaluation survey for this webinar:
Share your feedback with us!**



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