



EU LIFE Programme project  
"Optimising the Governance and Management of the  
Natura 2000 Protected Areas Network in Latvia"  
(LIFE19 IPE/LV/000010 LIFE-IP LatViaNature)



# Working Together for Nature LIFE-IP LatViaNature

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25/09/2025



Pasaules  
Dabas  
Fonds



in association with



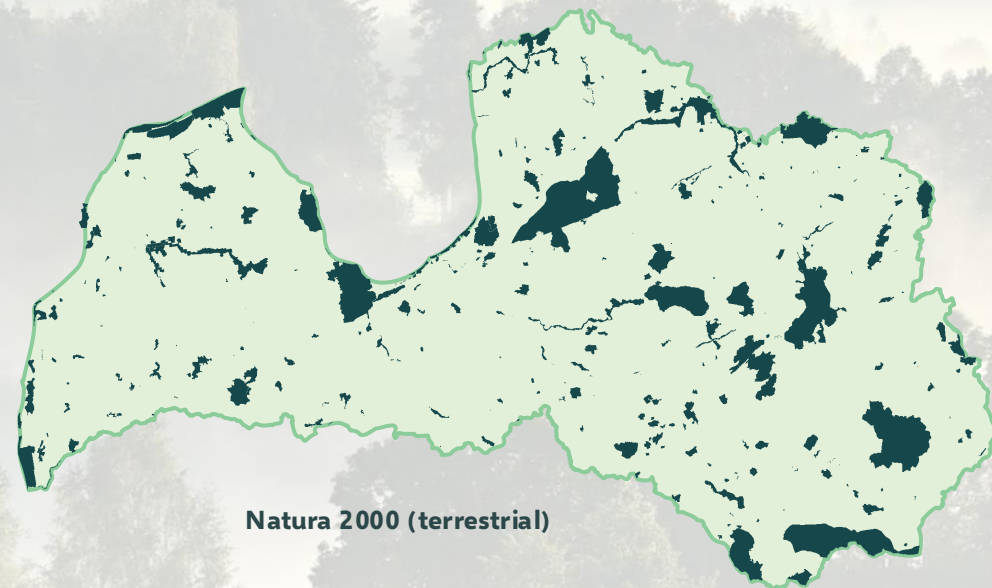
VIDZEME UNIVERSITY  
OF APPLIED SCIENCES





# LIFE-IP LatViaNature

- ▼ with the main goal to improve the conservation status of habitats and species of EU importance
- ▼ by ensuring implementation of the Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000 in Latvia



Natura 2000 (terrestrial)

Duration: **2020 – 2028**

Total budget: **19 484 173 €**

EU LIFE cofunding: **11 690 504 € (60%)**

Complementary funding: **>114M €**

## PHASE 1

August 1, 2020 – December 31, 2022

## PHASE 2

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024

## PHASE 3

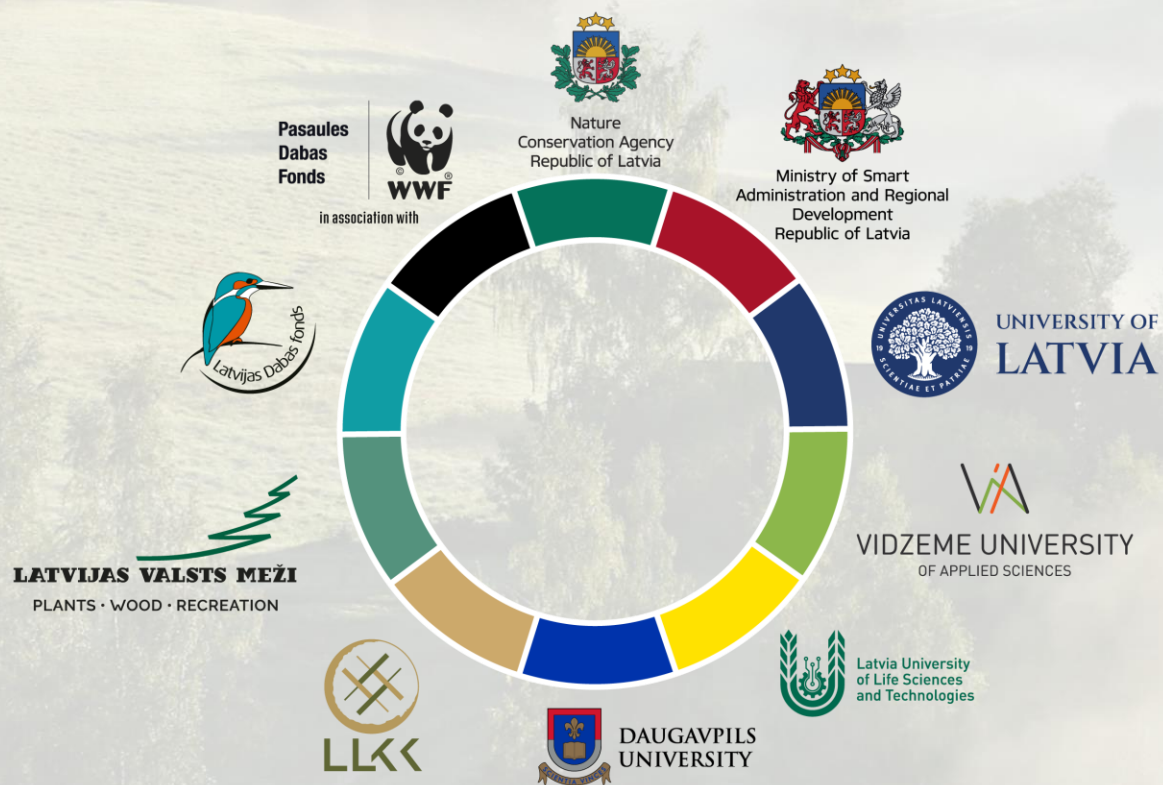
January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2026

**Today**

## PHASE 4

January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2028

# Project partnership



## Public bodies (2):

1. Nature Conservation Agency (Coordinating beneficiary)
2. Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development

## Educational organizations (4):

3. University of Latvia
4. Daugavpils University
5. Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences
6. Latvia University of Life Sciences and technologies

## Enterprises (2):

7. JSC "Latvia's state forests"
8. Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre

## NGOs (2):

9. Latvian Fund for Nature
10. Pasaules dabas fonds

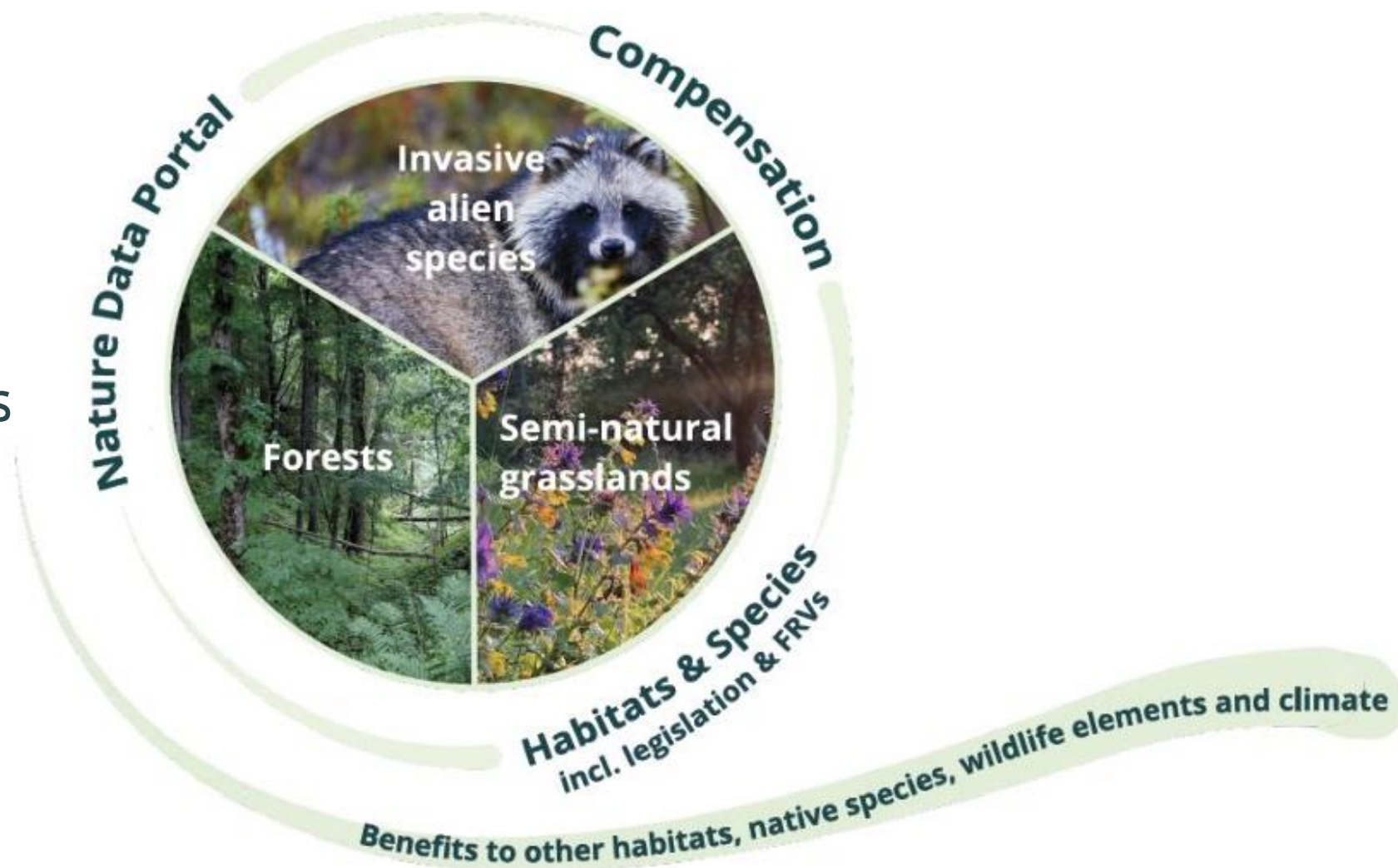


# The core of the Project

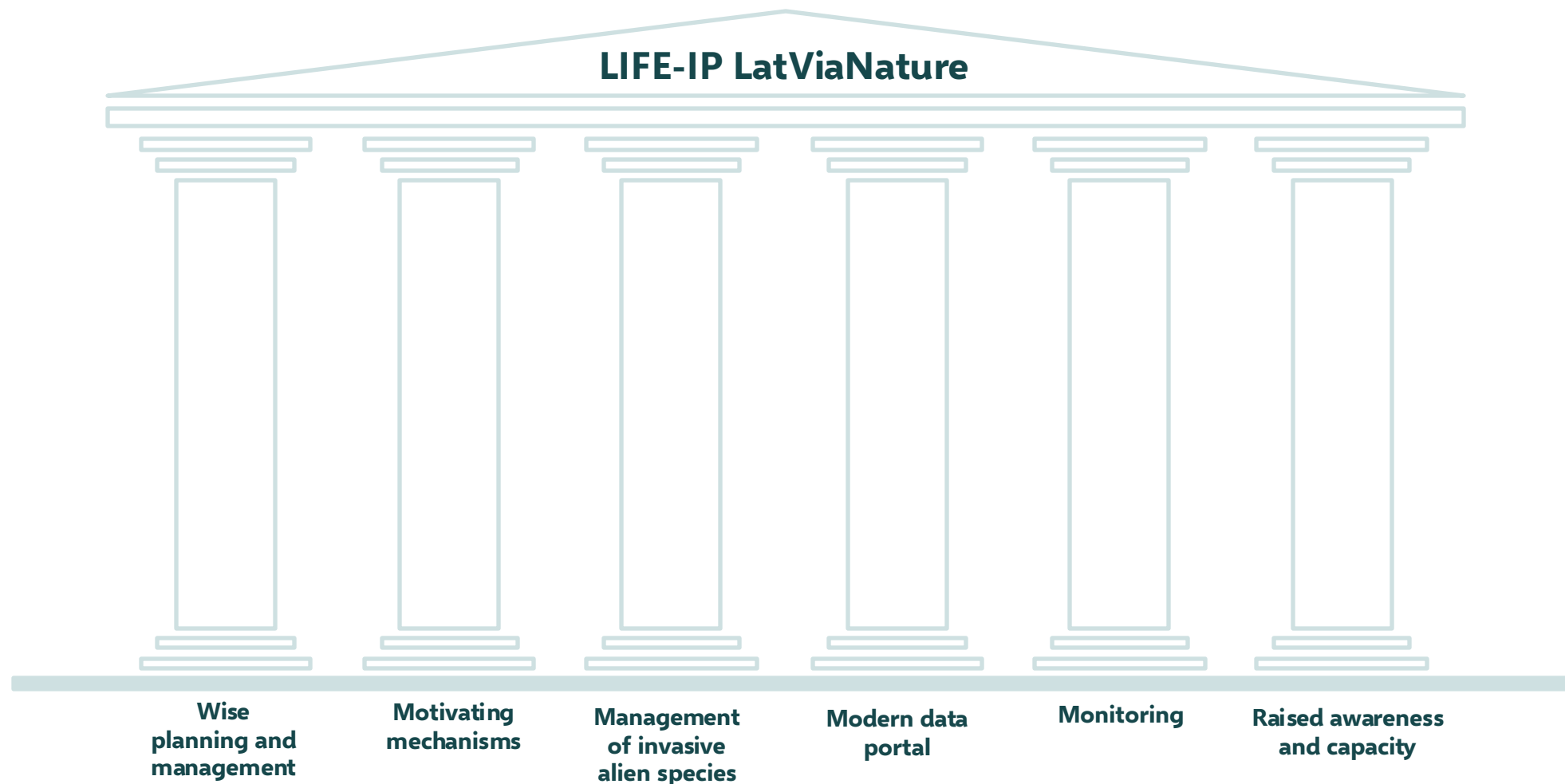
- ✓ Comprehensive, knowledge-based, sustainable nature management planning
- ✓ Focus on forest and grassland habitats, invasive alien species
- ✓ Compensation mechanisms and voluntary involvement in biodiversity conservation
- ✓ Linking biodiversity and business
- ✓ Creation of a modern, centralized data portal for the nature conservation sector
- ✓ Increasing the administrative capacity and supporting long-term inter-sectoral collaboration
- ✓ Raising awareness on nature conservation issues
- ✓ Comprehensive involvement of stakeholders in all stages of the project (surveys and regular discussions in consulting committees)

# The two 3s

- ✓ 3 focus groups
- ✓ 3 thematic blocks

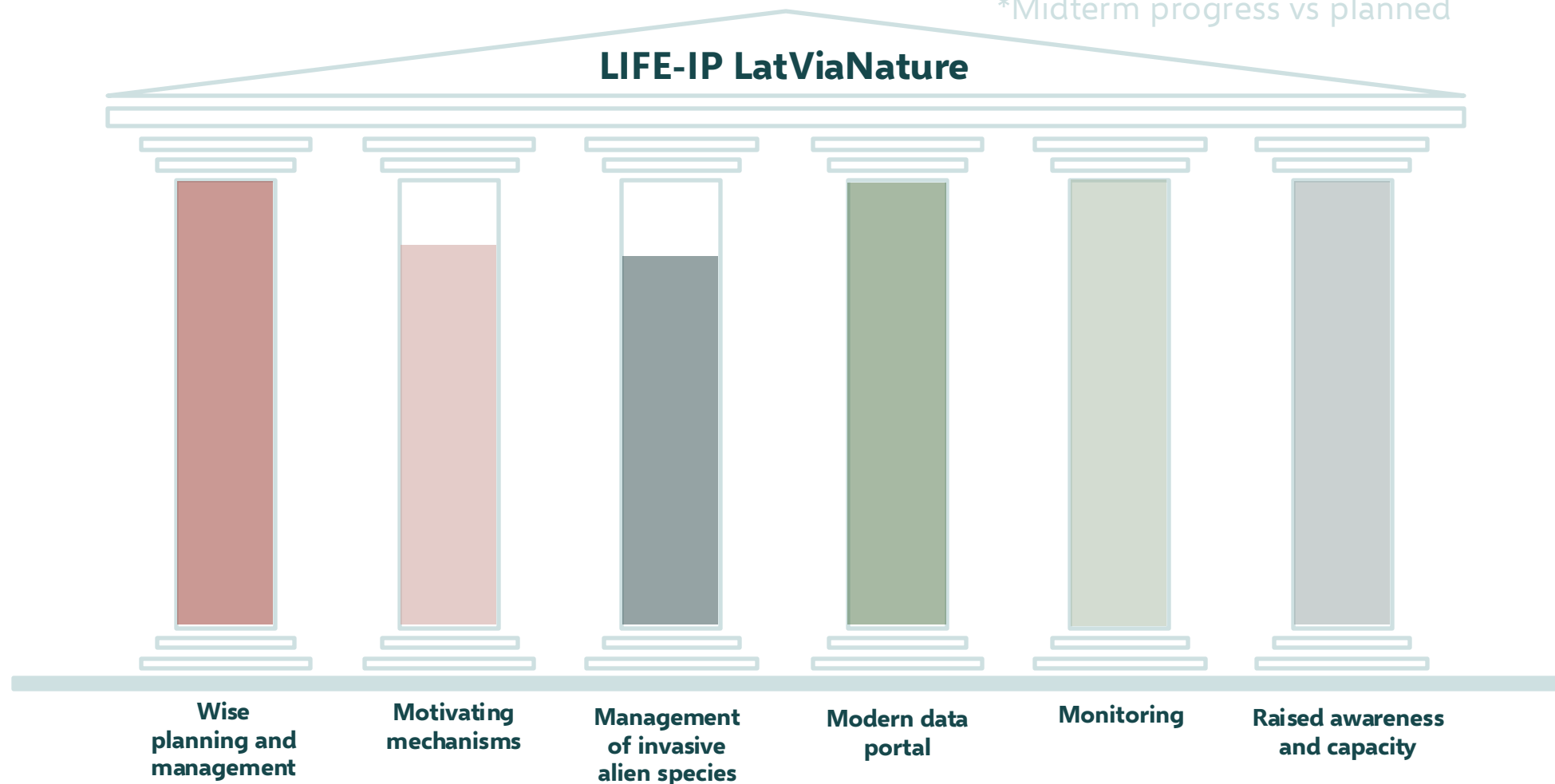


# Project pillars – 51 project actions



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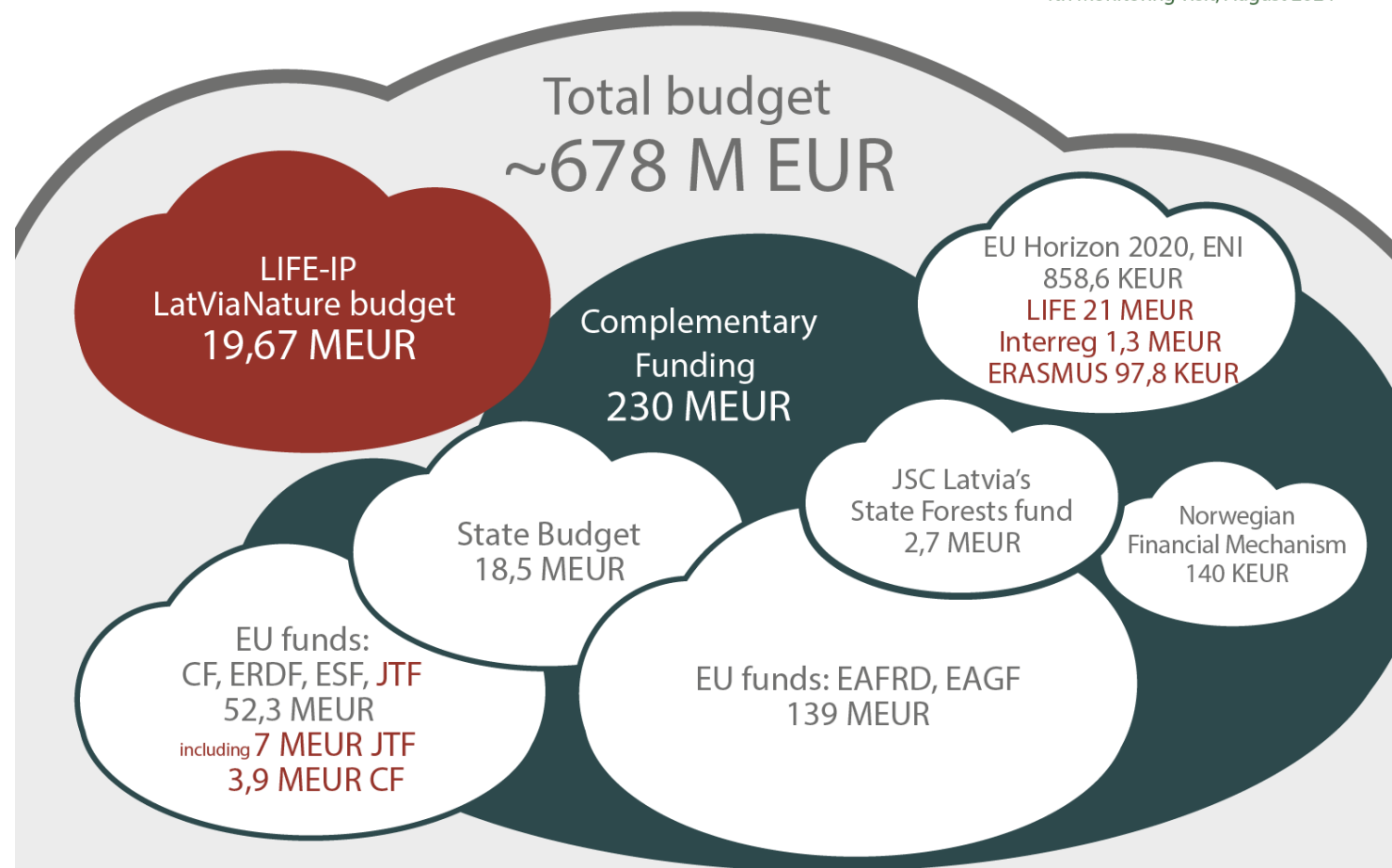
\*Midterm progress vs planned



# Complementary funding

## Planned budget for the implementation of the Priority Action Framework for Natura 2000 in Latvia (2021–2027)

4th Monitoring visit, August 2024



The aim is to maintain and restore, at a favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of EU importance, whilst taking account of economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics.

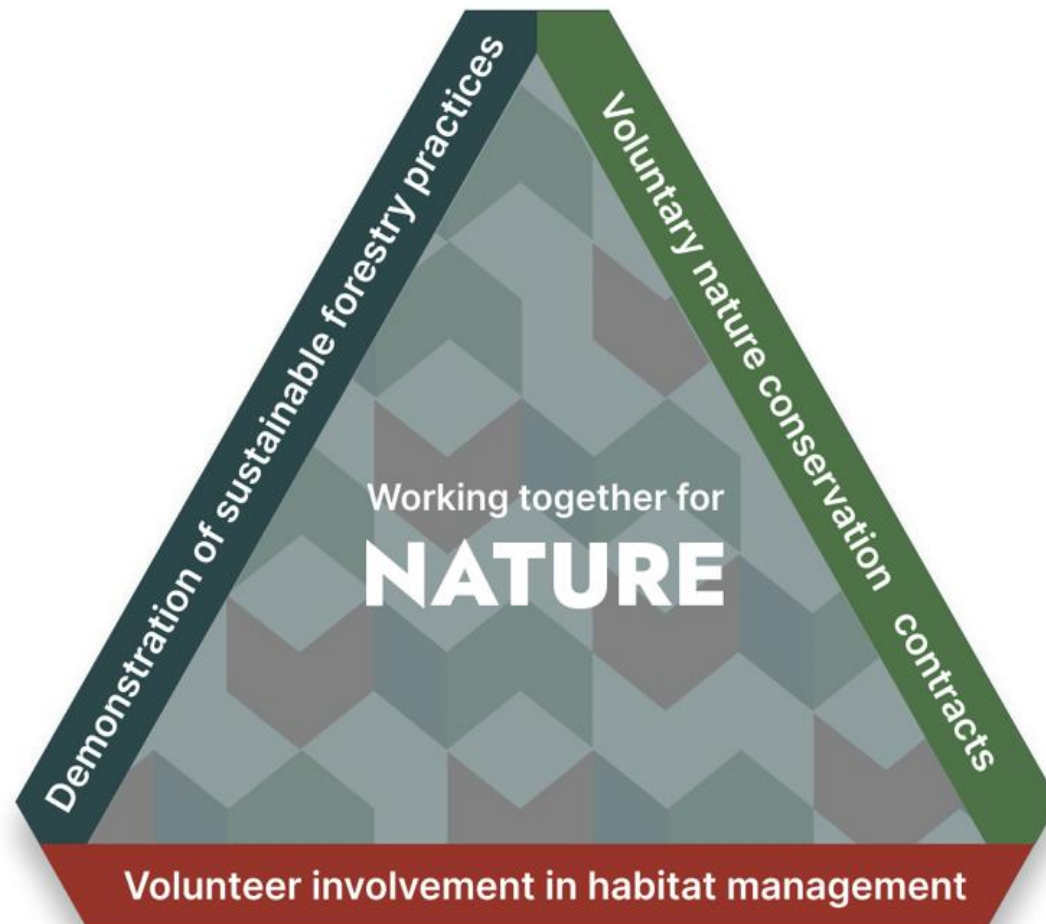
EAFRD – European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development  
 EAGF – European agricultural guarantee fund  
 CF – Cohesion Fund  
 ERDF – European Regional Development Fund  
 ESF – European Social Fund  
 ENI – European Neighbourhood Instrument



# The most important results of the IP itself

- ✓ Improved conservation status of habitats and species through wise planning and effective management (FRVs for 115 species and 59 habitats; management plans for 56 habitats)
- ✓ Improved Natura 2000 network
- ✓ Improved nature management planning system (testing 3 site management plans)
- ✓ Effective motivating mechanisms to support biodiversity on private lands
- ✓ Effective system for control and management of invasive alien species (5 target species, >100 ha)
- ✓ Modern, centralized data portal for nature conservation sector
- ✓ Increased capacity of stakeholders, enhanced collaboration among governmental, non-governmental and scientific institutions
- ✓ Increased stakeholder involvement and awareness regarding nature conservation

# Stakeholder Engagement







## Project`s nomination as a finalist of the European Natura 2000 Award 2024



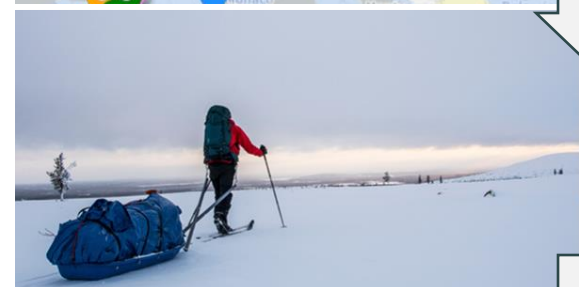
### Working together to improve biodiversity on private lands in Natura 2000 in Latvia

Countries involved:  
Latvia



This initiative is the first time that voluntary mechanisms for biodiversity conservation have been put into practice for private lands in Latvia. Its results are expected to be incorporated into national policy.

Main applicant:  
Nature Conservation Agency; Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre; Pasauls dabas fonds; Ministru





Wise communication turns knowledge into understanding –  
and understanding into action...

## Autobiographies of Habitats listed in the Habitat Directive



Freshwater habitats

## Letters by plant species listed in the Habitats Directive



Lady's slipper



Sand pink



PUBLIC  
INITIATIVES

PRIVATE  
INITIATIVES





## **PUBLIC INITIATIVES**

- ✓ SSCO for 59 Habitats & 115 Species
- ✓ 56 Habitat management plans
- ✓ Site management plans

## **PRIVATE INITIATIVES**

- ✓ 140 private landowners in pilot-programmes more 1000 ha
- ✓ 5 demonstration sites of nature friendly forestry
- ✓ Volunteer events



## Biodiversity conservation on private land?

- ❖ 50% of forests and more than 70% of grasslands are privately owned
- ❖ Private landowners play a crucial role in biodiversity conservation
- ❖ Regulatory conservation context (hence trust issues)
- ❖ Gap: limited voluntary mechanisms
- ❖ Focus on actions rather than results



# Designing pilot-programmes

## Opinion of landowners

- ✓ Forest owners' survey (2022; n=599)
- ✓ Grassland owners' survey (2022; n=442)
- ✓ Public opinion on nature conservation in Latvia (2021; n=1064)

+

## Best practices of other countries

+

## Cooperation with diverse stakeholders



**LIVING FOREST**



**BLOOMING MEADOWS**





## Landowners' opinion

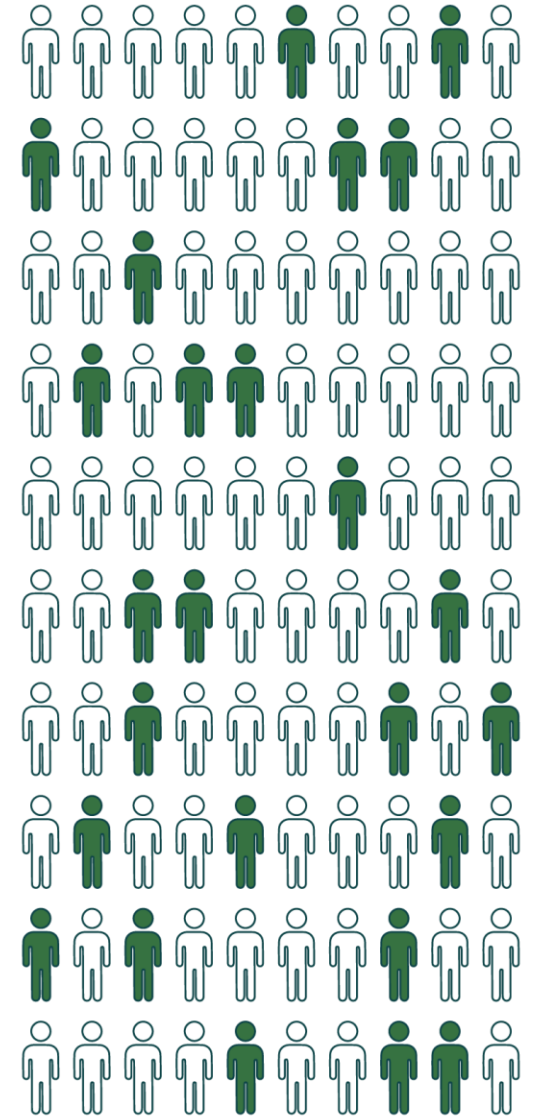
- ❖ Landowners are highly heterogeneous community
- ❖ Importance of on-site consultation
- ❖ Landowners' right to make their own decisions

### Forests:

- ❖ Size of forest property; female forest owners; income from forestry; forestry education
- ❖ 80% of forest owners are unsatisfied with the amount of financial support

### Grasslands:

- ❖ Economic viability of grassland management
- ❖ Lack of equipment
- ❖ Demand for hybrid (action + result-based) approach



20–25% of private landowners  
have a very positive attitude towards  
biodiversity conservation measures



# LIVING FOREST

- Voluntary (contract-based) approach
- 4 years (2023-2026)
- Private forests outside protected areas
- Trees >25 cm diameter
- Diverse forests (0,6-15 ha)
- Significantly over final felling age
- Consultative and financial support
- Forest habitats of EU importance:
  - 9050 Fennoscandian herb-rich forests with *Picea abies*
  - 9010\* Western Taiga
  - 91D0\* Bog Woodland
  - 9080\* Fennoscandian deciduous swamp woods



Habitat Conservation

Habitat Creation

Nature-friendly Forestry



## Demonstration of sustainable forest management on private lands

- ❖ 5 forest management demonstration territories
- ❖ forest owner's perspective
- ❖ peer-to-peer learning
- ❖ education and experience exchange platform
- ❖ nature friendly forest management practices
- ❖ forest owners, forestry advisors, biodiversity experts, consultants, forest management companies, students



Īpašums "Zvejnieki"



Īpašums "Riekstiņi"



Īpašums "Pūpoli 2"



Īpašums "Mazjāņi"



Īpašums "Rūķmuiža"



# BLOOMING MEADOWS

- Results-based (hybrid) approach
- 4 years (2023-2026)
- Perennial, potentially biologically valuable grasslands outside Natura 2000
- Smallest grassland: 0,6 ha; largest: 30 ha
- Meadows and pastures
- Different botanical and structural quality
- +7 voluntary participants
- Consultative and financial support



Level	1. level	2. level	3. level	4. level	5. level
Points	1-20	21-40	41-60	61-80	81-100
Rate (euro/ha)	87	115	150	179	203



## Farm Ozoliņi: participant of forest biodiversity conservation programme Living Forest and Grassland Product label holder



Locations of Living Forest areas in Latvia

Farm Ozoliņi



Biodiversity friendly forest management

### Farm Ozoliņi



**Farmers:** Evita and Mārtiņš Lūkins  
**Address:** Zaube parish, Cēsis district  
**Farm profile:** biodiversity friendly forest and grassland management, organic herbal teas, mandala workshops  
**Living Forest area:** 15 ha  
**Webpage:** <https://www.ozolini.lv/>

Ozoliņi is where the rich beauty of nature is cared for and allowed to flourish. Evita and Mārtiņš Lūkins tend to the forests and grasslands, craft herbal teas and invite everyone to the farm to reconnect with the source of strength – nature. Over the past 25 years, continuous cover forestry has been practiced on the farm.



Ozoliņi is a holder of the Grassland Product label. It is the first label in Latvia to mark products with a direct impact on nature conservation. The label is awarded to producers who manage semi-natural grasslands and produce products such as honey, herbal teas, meat and dairy products, rural tourism objects and craftsmen. By choosing products with this label, consumers support the preservation and restoration of natural values, the producers who manage semi-natural grasslands.

## Farm Atēnas: participant in the result-based grassland conservation scheme Blooming Meadows

### The *Blooming Meadows* pilot programme:

- helps farmers to increase biodiversity in perennial grasslands (meadows and pastures) aiming to reach the status of grassland habitats of EU importance;
- implemented within LIFE-IP LatViaNature project and coordinated by the Nature Conservation Agency of Latvia;
- designed in a diverse partnership between nature conservation and agriculture experts, universities, non-governmental organizations;
- includes 65 farms from across Latvia with a total area of 675 hectares;
- participants assess grassland conservation success annually;
- tests the results-based and hybrid approach;
- provides financial support (87-203 euro per hectare a year) according to results – the higher the biodiversity achieved, the larger the financial support.
- Discover more: <https://latvianature.daba.gov.lv/ziedu-plavas/>



Locations of *Blooming Meadows* in Latvia  
 ZS Atēnas

### Farm Atēnas



**Farmer:** Aelita Runce  
**Address:** Zaube, Cēsis district  
**Farm profile:** Beef cattle  
**Blooming Meadows area:** 30 ha

Grassland challenges: distribution of expansive species, e.g. *Dactylis glomerata*, *Phleum pratense*, *Taraxacum officinale*, lack of species richness

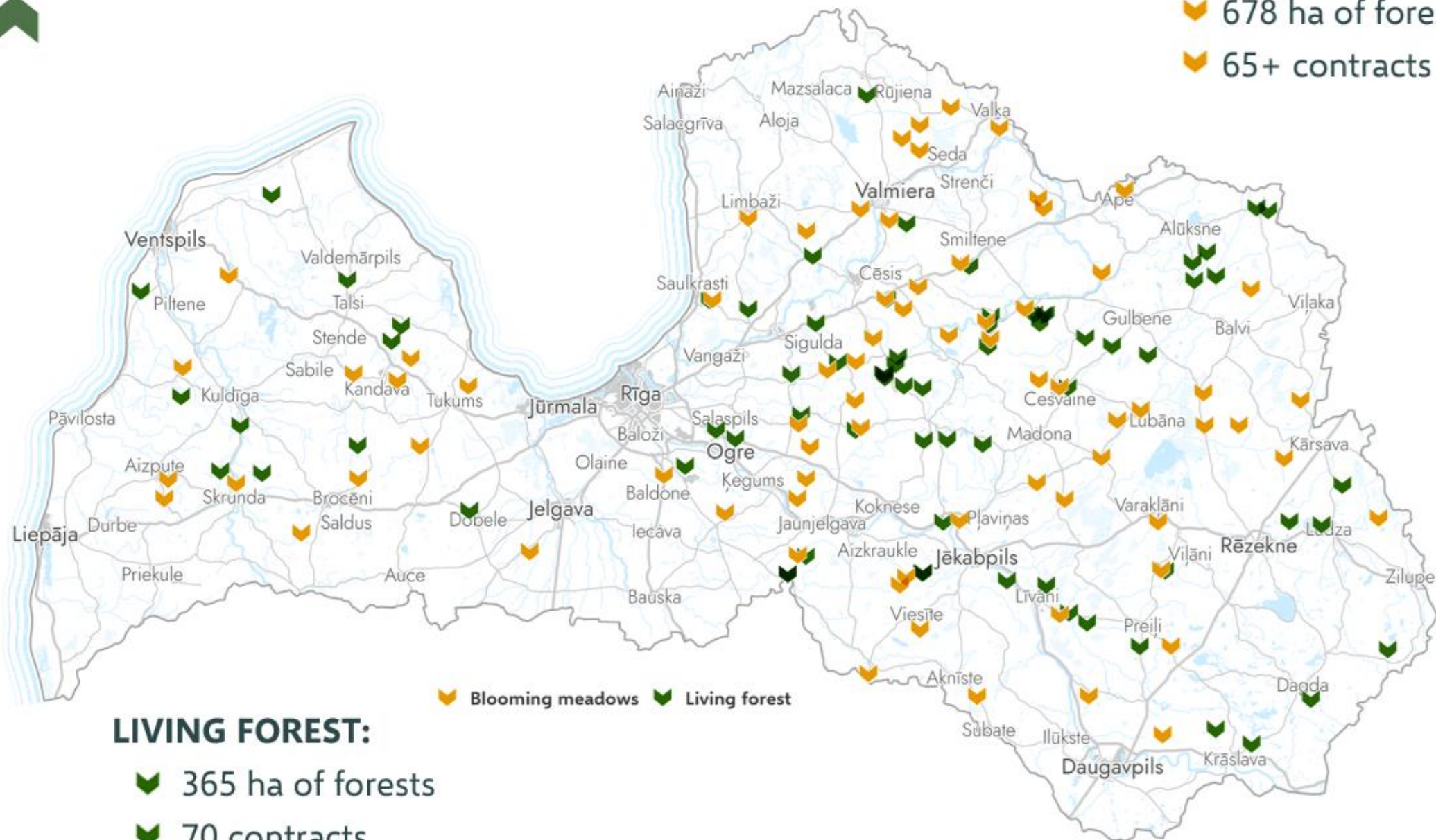




## BLOOMING MEADOWS:

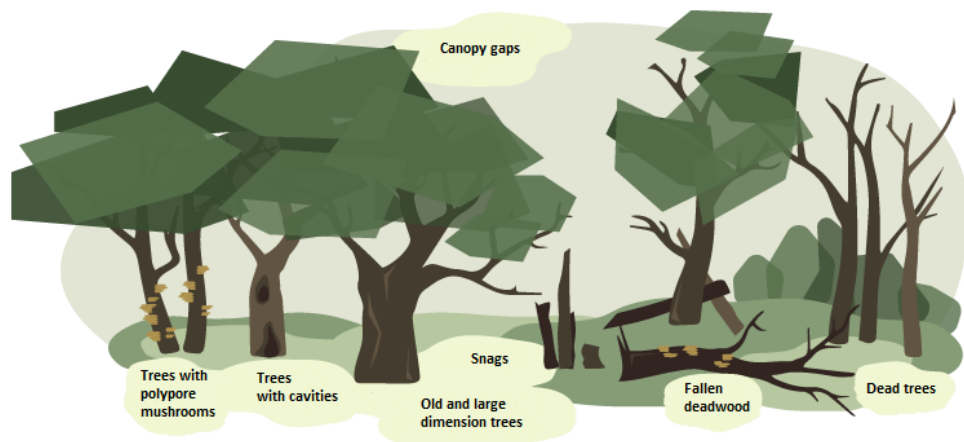
678 ha of forests

65+ contracts





# Monitoring (landowner + biodiversity expert)



Forest stand area: 1.42 ha						
Elements of the forest structure	Amount		Quality assessment			
	In polygon	Per ha	Low	Average	Good	Excellent
			1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points
Large-dimension trees ( $d \geq 70$ cm; $d \geq 35$ )	1	1	< 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	15 <
Snags ( $d \geq 25$ cm; $d \geq 20$ )	20	14	1 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 10	10 <
Dead (standing) trees ( $d \geq 25$ cm; $d \geq 20$ )	1	1	1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	15 <
Fallen deadwood ( $d \geq 25$ cm; $d \geq 20$ )	57	40	1 - 10	11 - 30	31 - 40	40 <
Small canopy gaps	12	8	1	2 - 3	4 - 5	5 <
Large canopy gaps	3	2	1 or 4 <	2	3	4
Trees with cavities	27	19	1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	15 <
Trees with polypore mushrooms	5	4	1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	15 <
Points:			3	2	3	12
Total points (sum):			20 points			

×

SUGAS

☰

▼ TOP 8 augu sugas

Madaras \*

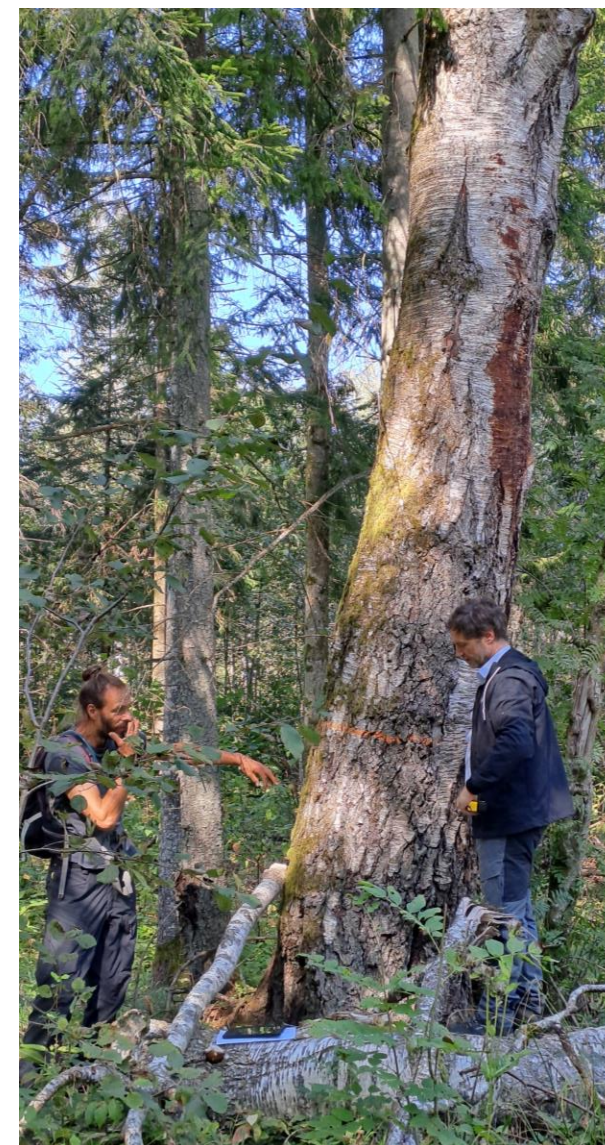
Jā

Nē

Dedestīņas, vanagnadziņi (arī rozā ziedi) \*



- ▼ Theoretic and field seminars
- ▼ Individual consultations

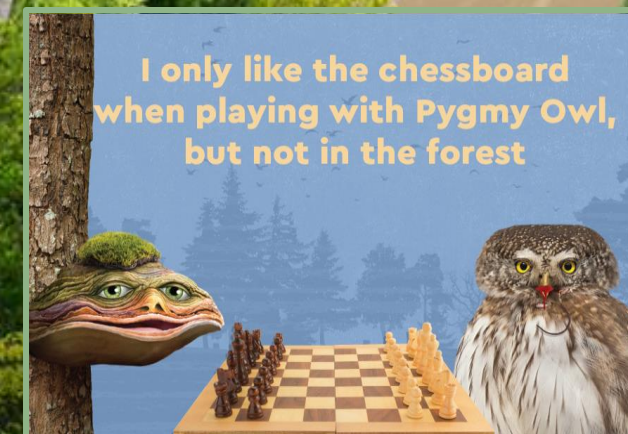




[https://youtu.be/oN3THgfeXng?si=t8LsoAb53ygPh5\\_x](https://youtu.be/oN3THgfeXng?si=t8LsoAb53ygPh5_x)

# Savienotā dzīve

## VECĀS PIEPES STĀSTI





# Mobile nature education class







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# Paldies!

latvianature.lv

