

WILDLIFE ESTATES LABEL

WE act for biodiversity



Editorial

It has been ten years since a group of key stakeholders in the field of wildlife management realized that our natural capital is as much a concern for private individuals as it is for society. They therefore considered it important to take action by founding the Wildlife Estates project and demonstrate that the private offer towards nature conservation is as strong and often much cheaper, than the public alternative.

We all know that a healthy ecosystem and thriving biodiversity are the vital elements for a sustainable and prosperous countryside business. Today, the Wildlife Estates Label shows us that we were on the right track from the very beginning. This is something we can and should be proud of.

However, it is not enough to manage one's estate well and be proud of it. Landowners and managers have to show to their governments, to Europe and to their neighbours, that what they do out of concern for their estates has benefits for all. And WE need to ensure that their successes are visible, that their efforts are recognized, and that they are, rightly, seen as strong guardians of nature.

1.000.000 hectares to the table, and when we count the estates that are undergoing assessment, we go well over that benchmark.

I hope that in another ten years from now, we can say proudly that we now have 10 million hectares, and that our label is recognized by everyone in Europe as the sign for conscientious private land management.

To get there, we still have a lot of work ahead of us, particularly in Germany, in France and in the UK where the administrative structures in our local WE representations have been recently strengthened

I am very happy and encouraged to see a renewed sense of support and optimism coming from our WE colleagues in these countries.

Konstantin Kostopoulos,
COO of WE

Steps forward taken for Wildlife Estates in London

20th of June 2015

On the 20th of June, CLA organized the second WE working group meeting to which the WE team of ELO assisted as observant. The working group debated on certification's methods of WE, the benefits of the initiative in Great Britain as well as possible steering territories where to launch the label. The decision was taken to work on the elaboration of the WE assessment questionnaire in collaboration with Alastair Leake, member of the WE European Scientific Committee and expert for the Game & Wildlife Conservancy Trust, in order to adapt the document to Great Britain.

Wildlife Estates expanding on another continent: “Estancias Faunásticas” in Argentina

Since 2010, the Wildlife Estates Label project is being developed experimentally in the Neotropical region of Argentina.

In Argentina, the Wildlife Estates Label is referred to as “**Estancias Faunásticas**”. We have developed two new Objective Evaluation Methodologies (OEM). Two evaluation methodologies were developed to adapt to the particular bioclimatic regions of the Chaco Serrano humid, the Chaco dry forest and the Foggy grasslands at Andean Highlands.

There are already four territories “Estancias Faunásticas” that successfully passed the committee’s evaluation in the Catamarca and Santiago del Estero provinces at the Northwest region. As a result, a surface larger than 15,500 ha has already been labelled.

Over the past two decades, deforestation of the native forest has been the main environmental negative impact in the North West region of Argentina. Deforestation aimed at obtaining agricultural zones of a variety of crops such as the soybean. Consequently, thousands of hectares of landscape and natural habitats have been deteriorated in areas where unique species are living such as the Condor, Ocelote, Puma,



Giant anteater, Mayoato or Poma Eagle, for instance.

The first stage of the adaptation process for the OEM evaluation methodology will focus on the particularities of the local environment. The second stage is a modification of the scale of score, giving more weight to the conservation of forestry heritage and the autochthonous fauna. The target is to reach 30,000 ha evaluated and labelled “Estancia Faunastica” for 2015-2016 in the Argentinean NOA. So far, the “Estancia Faunastica” Project, has raised a lot of interest from the Provincial Government of Santiago del Estero and Catamarca as it is also encountered a remarkable success among landowners and land managers that chose conservation of the Argentinean natural heritage as a management tool.

Ing. José Luis Charro Caballero
EEFF Director Neotropical Bioregion

Welcome To The Welcoming Estates Website

a pallet of leisure activities on European estates



10th WE Plenary Session - Celebrating 1.000.000 ha of private conservation management

14th - 16th September 2015

Today, the Wildlife Estates network consists of 191 estates covering more than 1.000.000 hectares. Over the 10 years of operations of the programme, labelled hectares passed from a mere 23 000 to more than 1.000.000, and the trend in the more recent years is upward.

To celebrate this outstanding achievement and to set new targets the WE National Delegations gathered together in Trujillo, Spain on September 14th - 16th.

The plenary session included a half day conference entitled “What benefits does the Wildlife Estates Label bring to land managers and the whole of society”. The objective was to debate the role and benefits of the WE Label not only from the nature conservation point of view but also in economic and social terms. The issue of private land conservation and its integration in environmental policies at the European, national and regional level was also discussed.

After the conference the participants had the chance to visit two Spanish Wildlife Estates in the region: Santa Amalia and Valero estates. The wonderful Santa Amalia covers almost 800 hectares. It is another perfect example of careful and respectful conservation management, performed by its owners the Marquises of Valdueza, Mrs. Isabel Argüelles and Mr. Alonso Álvarez de Toledo. The estate possesses with an old native local cattle breed called the “Avileña Negra Ibérica”. The breed is still grazed according to tradition: the herd is moved from one grazing ground to another in a seasonal cycle, notably in summer from the dry pastures of Extremadura, at the Portuguese border, to the Northern side of



the “Sierra de Gredos”, in Ávila province. This way the herd moves more than 300 km a year. The estate has the typical Spanish landscape called “Dehesa” (open woodland of green and cork oaks and grasslands) that consists one of the Iberian botanical singularities the “mestos”; the hybrid tree between green oaks and cork oaks (*Quercus ilex x Quercus suber*).

Valero, is one of the reference estates of the Wildlife Estates Label in Spain. It is owned by the Marquis of Cubas, Mr. Fernando Falcó. The estate with its 4,120 hectares is a jewel of conservation from the North of Extremadura. No doubt since its 1,330 hectares lies within the Monfragüe National Park. Apart from its beautiful landscape covered with green and cork oaks, its worthy to mention the centenarians strawberry trees, “madroños” (*Arbutus unedo*), the block of rocks in the Gorge of “Cubo” with its large vultures colony, and the 600 hectares flat Mediterranean maquis (shrubland) consisting of only *Phillyrea angustifolia*, that would be certainly cultivated in other estates for more profitable agricultural uses.

Both estates have big game as well, mainly red deer (*Cervus elaphus ssp. hispanicus*) and wild boar (*Sus scrofa*). These species serve as the base and driving force of the management.

Latest Intergroup on Fitness Check of EU Nature Legislation

20th of October 2015

On the 20th of October the European Parliament Intergroup on “Biodiversity, Hunting, and Countryside” met with land managers, policy makers and NGOs in order to discuss both the current review and the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives. Together, they agreed that open cooperation between the different stakeholders was the only way forward in order to achieve the best and most accepted implementations of the directives.

"Any reform should be done in close consultation with those who manage Europe's land. Rather than introducing new legislation, maximum use should be made of the flexibility provided by the existing Directives and by a better guidance as regards their implementation." said Konstantin Kostopoulos, WE COO, during the event.

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International Land Conservation Network Berlin Conference

21-22nd of October 2015

The International Land Conservation Network (ILCN) is connecting organizations and people who are accelerating voluntary private protection and stewardship of land and water resources. A recent International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) report said "privately protected areas deserve far greater recognition and support than is the case at the moment." The report highlights the ongoing need for training and improved knowledge-sharing.

The First Annual Congress of ILCN, that took place on 21-22 of October, aimed to start making such know-how available and to share best practices, expertise and the ability to build organizational leadership and operating capacity. As a best example WE was presented by ELO Secretary General Thierry de l'Escaille to the gathering, that assembled practitioners, innovators and experts in the growing field of voluntary private land conservation and restoration, from around Europe as well as from North, Central and South America, Africa, Asia and Oceania.

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Upcoming events

- **1/12/2015 - Innovation Conference**, The Press Club, Brussels
- **9/12/2015 - Biodiversity Conference and European Bee Award Ceremony**, The Press Club, Brussels, Belgium
- **22/03/2016 - FFA2016**, the Square, Brussels
- **23/03/2016 - WE Steering Committee**, ELO Office, Brussels

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