

Forest movement Europe

Appeal to Foria-ÖBF Forstmanagement GmbH

Benediktbeuern 22nd of May 2003

The undersigned Non-Governmental organisations, working on forest issues all over Europe express their deep concern about companies like Foria-ÖBF Forstmanagement GmbH getting ready to step into forest management in Central and Eastern Europe.

Central and Eastern European countries are home to some of the most valuable and the most extensive ancient and other high conservation value forest treasures in Europe. Lots of these forests have up to now stayed largely intact and unimpacted by man.

Forests in Central and Eastern Europe have traditionally been of outstanding importance for the livelihoods of people in these countries. The same is true for viable populations of large carnivores like wolf, lynx and bear as well as threatened birds and hundreds of endemic plant species.

The future of these people and their forest ecosystems must not be left to the language spoken by pure economic considerations from large companies, often taking the revenue out of the country. Decisions on the future of these forests must take into consideration the social and environmental concerns of local stakeholders and other relevant players.

As a first step in order to acknowledge the above concerns and needs we demand that Foria-ÖBF Forstmanagement GmbH agrees to a moratorium on management of and logging in any ancient and other high conservation value forests in Central and Eastern Europe now. The moratorium should apply to any upcoming projects, until the precautionary principle and a prior informed consent are implemented on the ground. That means until preliminary information determining the location of ancient forests and high conservation value forests in the concerned countries, acknowledged by the relevant players, is available.

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