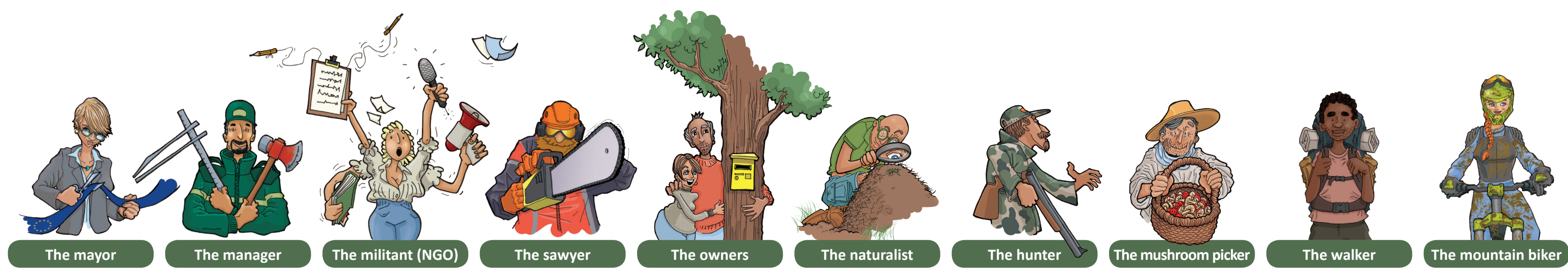


ALPINE FORESTS CALL FOR DIALOGUE

Alpine forests are rich, fragile ecosystems where various interests converge. While global warming is changing the balance of mountain environments, the future of forests is a matter of concern for society. What balance should be struck between real threats and society's expectations? How can they be reconciled? What role can forest management play?



The forest has many uses and there are many stakeholders involved! This creates a wide range of practices, realities and expectations... To share the forest of the future, let's put aside preconceived ideas and compare our perceptions.



The mayor

The manager

The militant (NGO)

The sawyer

The owners

The naturalist

The hunter

The mushroom picker

The walker

The mountain biker

A PROTECTING FOREST

FOREST MANAGEMENT AS A SHIELD

For mountain communities, maintaining healthy and resilient forests on the mountainsides is crucial, as it protects roads, villages and people. The forest cover prevents soil erosion, while roots help water to infiltrate the soil and secure sediment and rocks. This reduces the risk of storm floods and landslides. Densely-packed trees hold back snow to prevent avalanches. Carrying out forestry work to reconstitute forests with trees of different ages and species, and thus more resistant, reduces vulnerability to fire and pests. Leaving stumps and trunks on the ground also helps prevent landslides. Both avoidable damage and savings are there for the taking!



A HERITAGE ROLE (Social and Cultural)



FORESTS THAT MEET HIGH SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS

The biodiversity of Alpine forests is rich but in decline. However, the greater the diversity of habitats and species, the more resilient the forest is to damage (disease) and the more pleasant and safe it is for traditional activities and leisure. Forest management enables us to provide this environment, both through facilities to welcome the public and by conserving this nature. This involves limiting invasive populations, scheduling felling according to the reproduction and keeping dead trees.

CLIMATE CHANGE

ALPINE FORESTS ARE IN TURMOIL, ALL STAKEHOLDERS NEED THEM TO ADAPT

In the Alps, temperatures are increasing twice as fast as they are globally*. In forests, trees are dying under the combined effect of droughts and parasites, as well as being hit more often by storms and forest fires. Species are moving up in altitude and latitude, and biodiversity is being eroded. This vulnerability to climate change calls into question the relationship that stakeholders have with the forest, as well as their outlook and practices. Are they threatened? Are they compatible? Sustainable forest management is one answer to reconciling these interests, but it is also a matter of concern to all stakeholders

*+ 1.5 to 2°C since 1900 and a sharp acceleration from the 1980s onwards, +5°C in the best case scenario by 2100



DIALOGUE

AVOID TENSION AND RESOLVE CONFLICTS TO MAKE FORESTS THAT ARE MORE RESILIENT TO CHANGE

Raising awareness of the many benefits of mountain forests allows us to measure the common interests that are at stake. Climate change is disrupting our habits and landscapes: let's help forests express all the solutions they can offer us. Let's be pro-active in sustainable management, each at our own level. Let's put listening, consultation, respect for uses, and dialogue back at the heart of the forest. When well thought out and part of a long-term, multifunctional approach, forestry work regenerates and protects the forest.

A PRODUCTIVE, ECONOMIC ROLE

MAKING BETTER USE OF RESOURCES

The economic activities derived from Alpine forests are of increasing importance. Wood is used for construction and energy, and the bio-economy is strategic for energy transition. The resource is abundant and under-used, but in order to sustainably maintain these forests, to plant, thin and harvest the wood, accessibility must be improved. Another aspect is the development of non-wood forest products and tourism (e.g. forest therapy), which generate economic spin-offs. Wood can no longer finance all the maintenance of the forest, so new economic models are emerging.

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