



Managing Forests for the Future

Challenges and Opportunities for Private Forest Owners in Ecosystem Service Provision

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FORESTS' FUTURE 2025

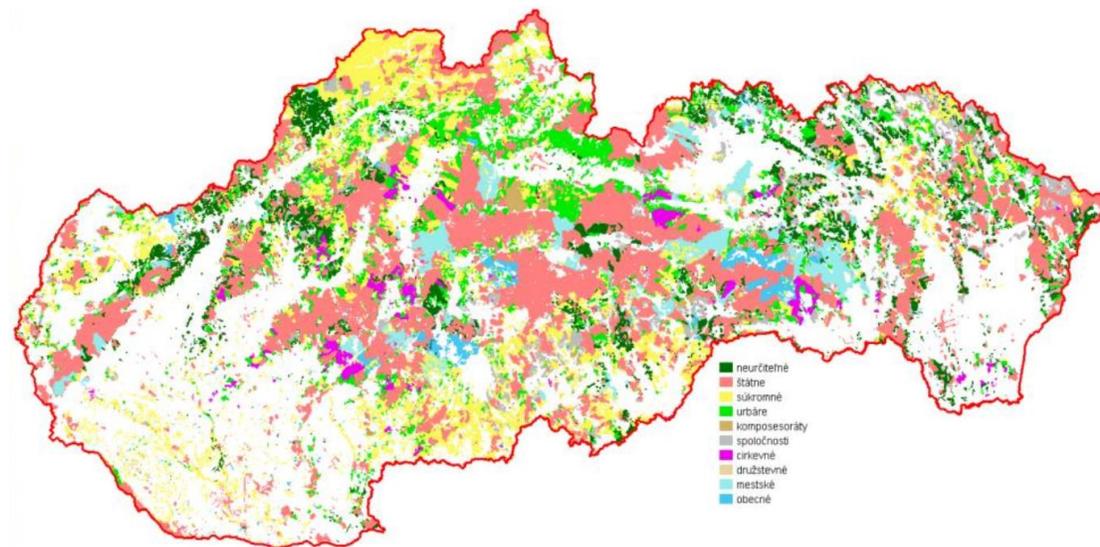
Session 4: Social and economic impacts,
challenges for forest policy

Průhonice, September 22nd – 26th 2025

Background & Context

Climate Change, Disturbances & Governance Pressures

- Increasing instability of forest sector
- Diverse demands: economic, ecological, social
- New forest policy and governance
- Fragmented cooperation



→ ***Non-state forest owners manage 50% of Slovakia's forests but remain underrepresented in governance debates.***

Problem Statement

Key Challenges for Non-State Forest Owners:

- Climate adaptation and water in the landscape
- CNF management
- Increasing forest resilience and restoring its potential
- Nature tourism and visitor capacity
- Green financing and project



Research Aim & Method

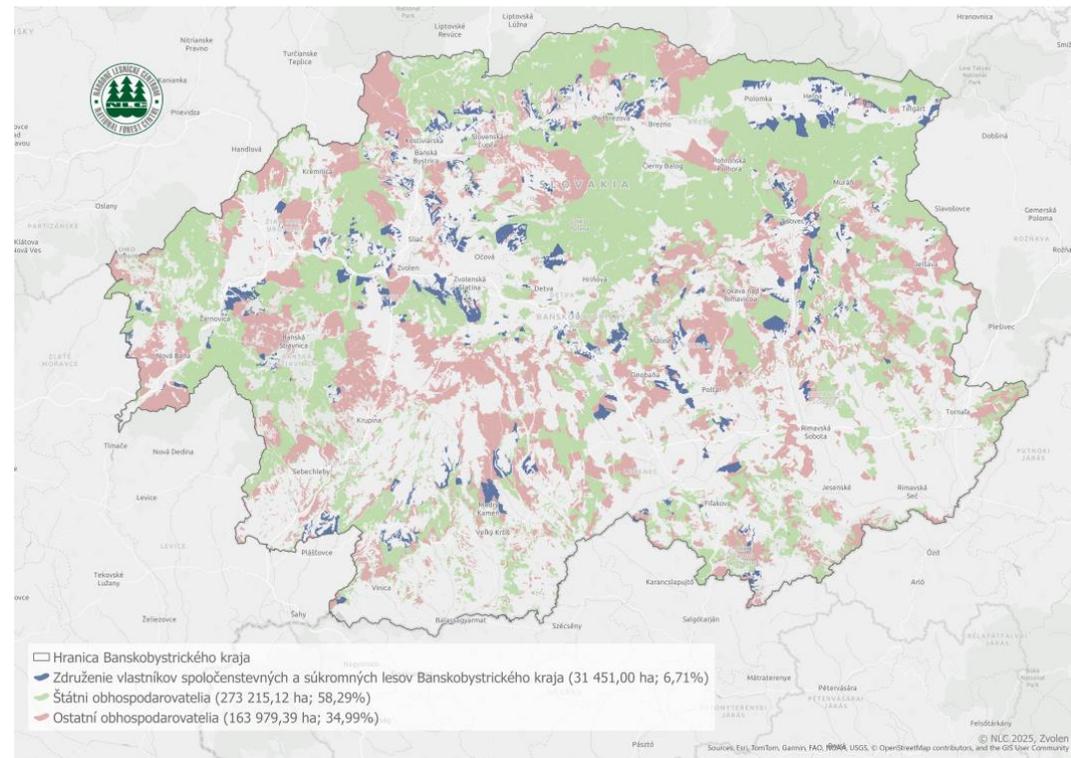
Understanding Private Forest Owners' Perspectives

👉 **RQ:** What is the role of private forest owners in ecosystem-based forest management?

📍 **Case Study:** Banská Bystrica Region

🎯 **Objective:**
Assess owners' **values, priorities, and attitudes** towards ecosystem services and adaptive management

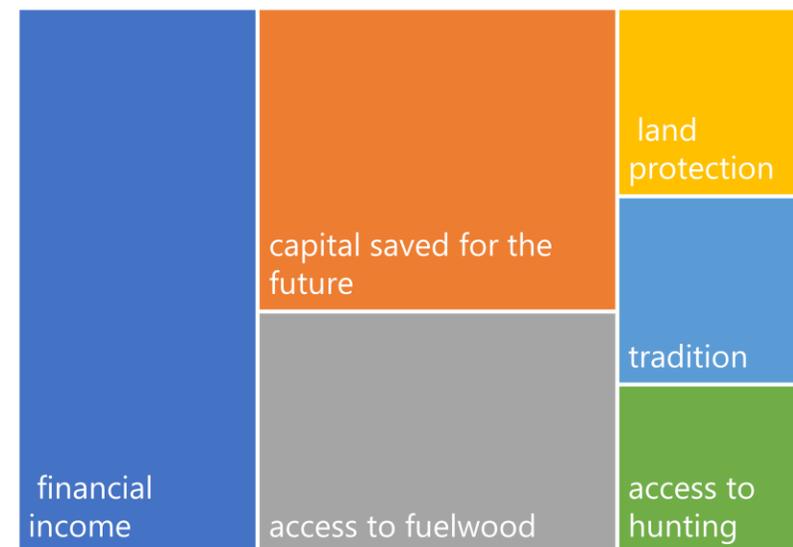
📊 **Method:** Survey of **70 members** (April 2025)



Results

Forest Ownership Motivations

- 58% inherited their forest land
- Majority indicate **economic motivations**
- Paradox: forest as **employment/income source** rated lowest among perceived benefits

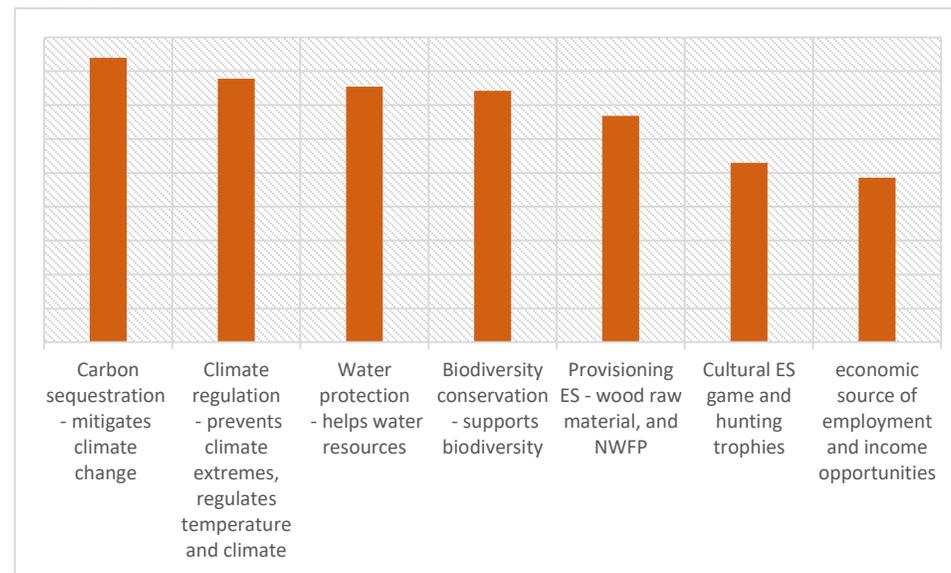


→ *Indicates mismatch between economic expectations and practical returns*

Valued Ecosystem Services

What Ecosystem Services Matter Most?

- Top-rated services:
 - Carbon sequestration
 - Climate regulation
 - Water protection
 - Biodiversity conservation



- Provisioning ES (wood, game, NWFP) and cultural ES ranked lower

→ ***Growing recognition of social and ecological FES***

Readiness to Adapt Management

What Are Owners Willing to Do?

- co-finance alternative management plans 31%
- reduce harvesting if financially compensated 38%
- reduce harvesting for specific ES (e.g., water, climate) 46%
- collaborate with research institutions 60%



→ ***Strong interest in innovation and shared solutions***



Key Barriers Identified

What's Holding Them Back?

-  *Policy gap* → Lack of targeted policy support for ES provision
-  *Knowledge gap* → Weak knowledge-transfer mechanisms
-  *Incentive gap* → No formal incentives for innovative management
-  *Governance gap* → Limited participation in governance processes

→ ***Targeted support and engagement are the way forward***

Policy Implications

Towards Inclusive & Adaptive Forestry

-  Recognise and support non-state owners as key stakeholders in governance
-  Design public funding PES
-  Create a research–practice platform
-  Promote education and participatory planning

→ *Inclusive policies are the cornerstone of resilient and future-oriented forest management*

Conclusion

Managing Forests for the Future

- Private owners are willing, but not fully enabled
- Climate and societal pressures demand responsive forest policy
- Bridging science, practice, and policy is essential
- Future sustainability lies in dialogue, incentives, and innovation



→ *Forests are not only a resource*
— *they are our shared responsibility.*



Thank you for your attention!

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