

## History and dynamic of the Maramureş fir-beech forests

Mélanie SAULNIER<sup>1\*</sup>, Vincent LABBAS<sup>1</sup>, Martin DUŠÁTKO<sup>2</sup>, Evan FISHER<sup>1</sup>, Vanessa PY-SARAGAGLIA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ANR BENDYS (ANR 19-CE03-0010), CNRS UMR 5602 GEODE laboratory, Maison de la Recherche de l'Université Jean Jaurès, 5 Allées A. Machado, 31058 TOULOUSE Cedex 9

<sup>2</sup> Česká zemědělská univerzita v Praze, c, Kamýcká 129, 165 00, Praha 6, Suchbát, Czech Republic

\* Corresponding author: Mélanie Saulnier. E-mail: [melanie.saulnier14@gmail.com](mailto:melanie.saulnier14@gmail.com)

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The Maramureş mountains, located in the Eastern Romanian Carpathians, are of growing interest to researchers because of the great patrimonial forest that the region hosts (Fărcaş, Tanţău, Mîndrescu, & Hurdu, 2013). As a result, some of these forests, considered Old Growth Forests (OGFs) or even primeval forest, have been classified as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO, placed under strict protection, and/or included in the Natura 2000 site list (OMMP 2387, 2011).

However, the reasons for characterizing a forest as OGFs remain obscure, relying primarily on the absence of recent human activity, on structural and compositional characteristics, and on abstract human perceptions. Moreover, it seems strange that this region, which has had a long history of intensive mining activity, can host primeval forests.

To test the robustness of the OGF and primeval identification criteria, we decided to compare two OGFs (one of which is classified as primeval) to two managed forests (MFs) through an interdisciplinary study combining historical, ecological and social approaches (Py-Saragaglia et al., 2020).

In this presentation, I will present some initial results relying on the long-term history of these forests and on their sub-recent dynamics. These preliminary results reveal that MFs and OGFs are very similar and therefore raise several questions such as: were these forests judiciously chosen or is their classification only due to political aspects? On the other hand, might not the Strâmbu-Băiuţ forest as a whole be considered an OGFs, due to the very low human impact?

It is important to answer these questions in order (1) to assist in the future identification of OGFs and (2) if the entire Strâmbu-Băiuţ Forest meets the criteria of an OGF, to propose the establishment of a specific management policy to promote its preservation.

## References

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