



Sengirès
fondas

Annual Report 2024

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Thank you for 2024!

The 5th year for the Ancient Woods Foundation have been marked by all-round growth, the successful implementation of the set objectives and the achievement of significant scientific and conservation results.

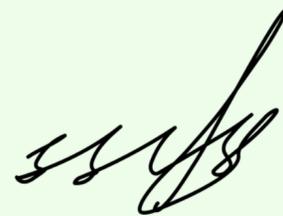
9 new mushroom species have been discovered. Hunting has been banned in all of the Foundation's protected areas. Great impact has also been achieved in cooperation with science, art, business and environmental initiatives. The opportunity to donate deposit return amount at the taromats has increased public engagement and the level of support.

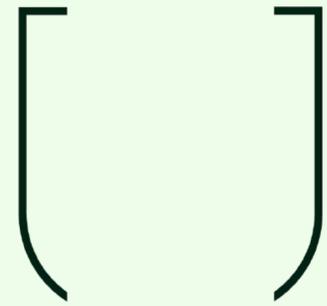
Thank you to the growing community of the Foundation - the team, the scientists, the donors, the partners, the ambassadors and all the other friends who have contributed to the mission of preserving the old-growth forests.

This mission is a hope that we will embrace the forest, with all its natural cycles and diversity of life, as an intrinsic value, as an important part of our identity, necessary to preserve the past as well as to safeguard for the future of nature and ourselves.

Thank you for the inspiration to work together.

On behalf of the team,
Mindaugas Survila and
Rimantė Paulauskaitė-Digaitienė



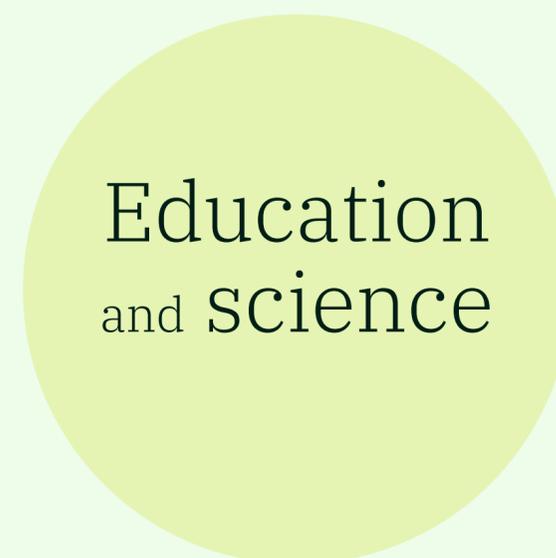


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Mision – to preserve the most valuable old-growth forests and protect their biodiversity, and to create long-lasting examples of sustainable nature - old-growth forests open to the public.

Vision – where nature belongs to itself and is allowed to develop without any human influence, where all organisms are equal, and no one is thought of as harmful.

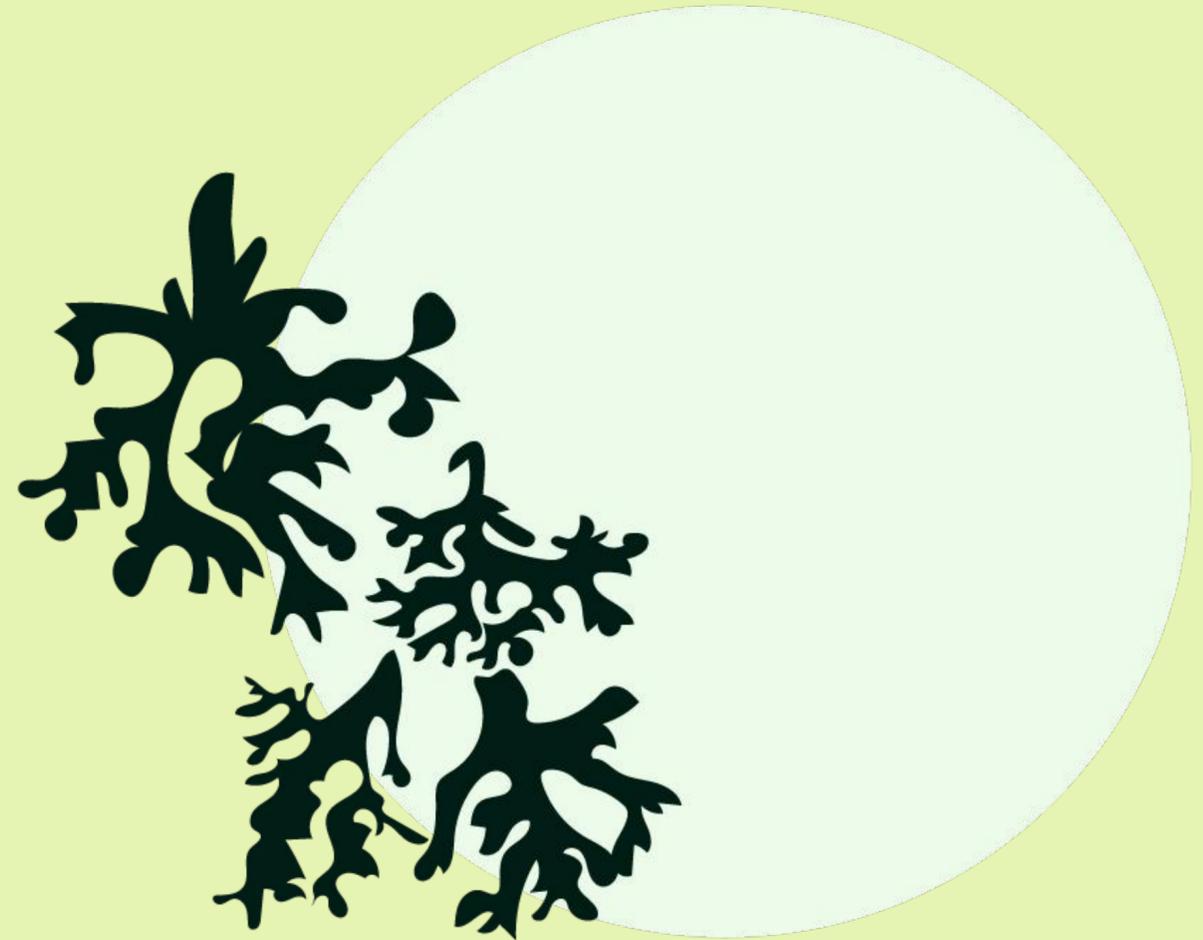
Key activities:



Forests:

preservation with all the life in them

Where nature belongs to itself
and is allowed to develop
without any human influence.



Search and selection of the forests

More than 550 plots:

In 2024, while searching for the future old-growth forests, we worked with a database of over 550 forest plots. Negotiations are ongoing with ~87 plot owners.

Public engagement:

In 2024, we received 8 bids for valuable plots, and one of the previously offered plots – the Pagraučės (Pašekščių) forest plot – was bought out, making it the largest parcel of land acquired by the Ancient Woods Foundation so far.

Thank you to those who offered valuable plots, helped to find their owners or visited the forests promptly. People's active involvement in forest conservation is crucial.

In 2024, we also received a huge from gift Mrs Vita Ona Nivinskienė – she has gifted the forest plot she inherited from her grandfather to the care of the Foundation. This is the fourth donation of a forest.

Share information

If you know that an old, biologically valuable forest is for sale – be sure to share the information with us there:

www.sengiresfondas.lt/misko-anketa

We are constantly looking for effective methods to find and acquire plots – so the public's help is very welcome.

How future old-growth forests are selected?

To preserve the most valuable fragments of old-growth forests that still remain, we use 40+ scientific criteria to select plots that have the greatest potential to develop into old-growth forests full of life and diversity.

Structural criteria:

- Diversity in age;
- Mosaicism;
- Recovery potential, craze, undergrowth;
- Diversity of micro-habitats;
- Relief;
- Soil;
- Hydrological regime;
- Dead wood;
- Ancient trees;
- Forest sites;
- Climaxicity.

Biodiversity criteria:

- Species composition of trees;
- Number and abundance of old-growth forest species;
- Species included in the list of protected animals, plants and fungi of the Republic of Lithuania;
- Species and habitats protected under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives;
- Indicative species of key woodland habitats & habitats of EU importance;
- Animal habitats (nests, roosts, caves, bathing sites, beaver habitats).

Territorial, legal criteria:

- Affiliation to a protected area;
- Buffer zone;
- National location;
- Anthropogenic criteria;
- Forest management projects;
- Historical development;
- Price.

We are looking for private, biologically valuable self-sustaining forests that already contain old-growth forest elements. These are mixed, multi-stemmed, mosaic-structured stand. They are usually full of dead wood or old, slowly dying trees, with a new generation of trees or a rich understorey of shrubs sprouting up all by themselves.

The biodiversity of a site is greatly enhanced by the variety of topography and hydrological regimes, so an intervening wetland, coastline, slope, promontory, hill or ravine adds further value. In many cases, the sites to be searched are also betrayed by the greater biodiversity already present, the more difficult passage, the identification of core or European habitats.

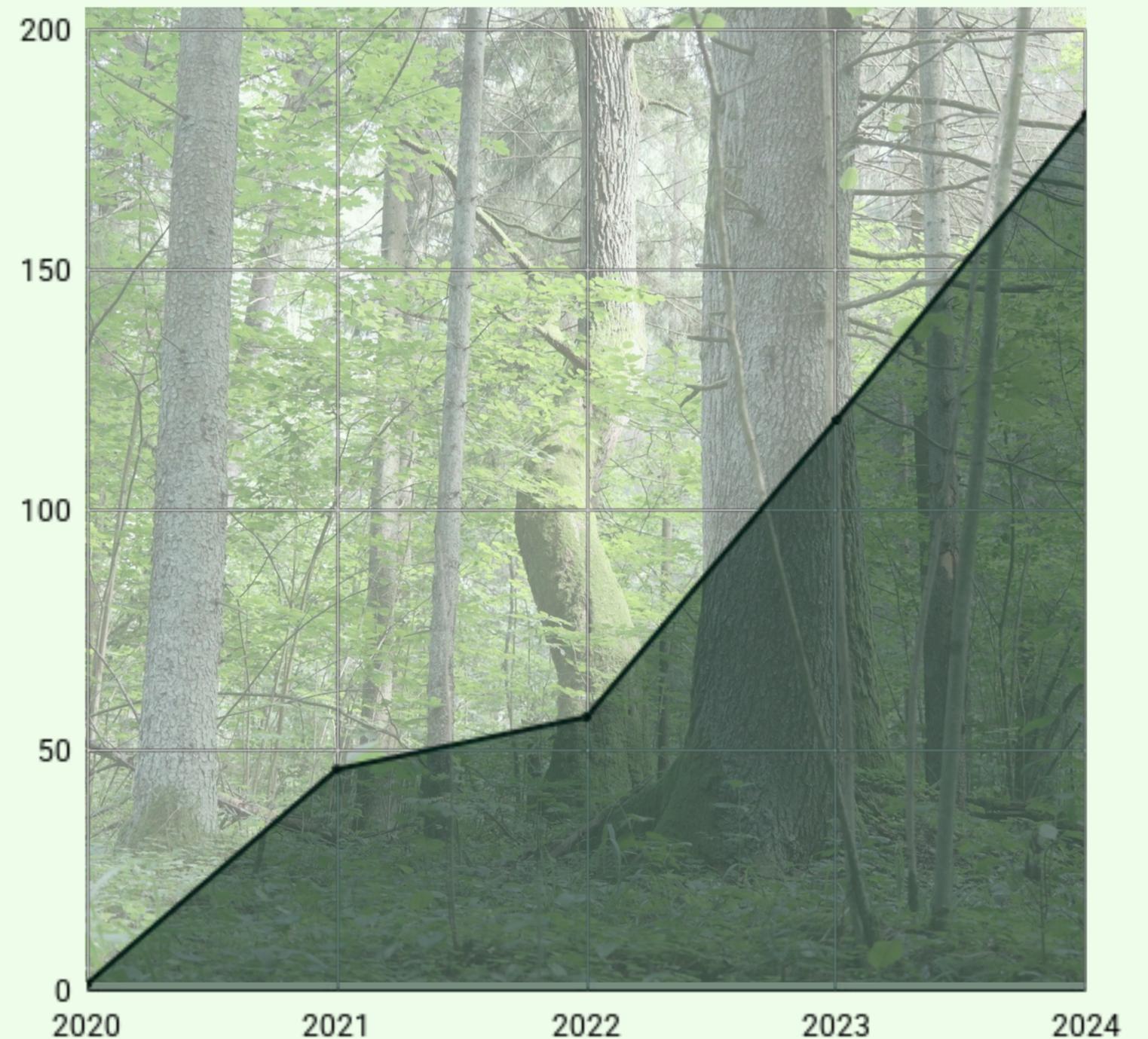
Forests preserved by the Foundation

By the year 2024, we have expanded the area of protected forests to **182,42 ha** (+63,55 ha) by newly purchasing 7 future old-growth forests plots. Making it 25 forest plots in 17 massifs in total.

2 forest massifs have been expanded: the Raigardas valley and Balbieriškis.

Each forest plot is special in its own way, selected according to the Fund's criteria and visited before purchase.

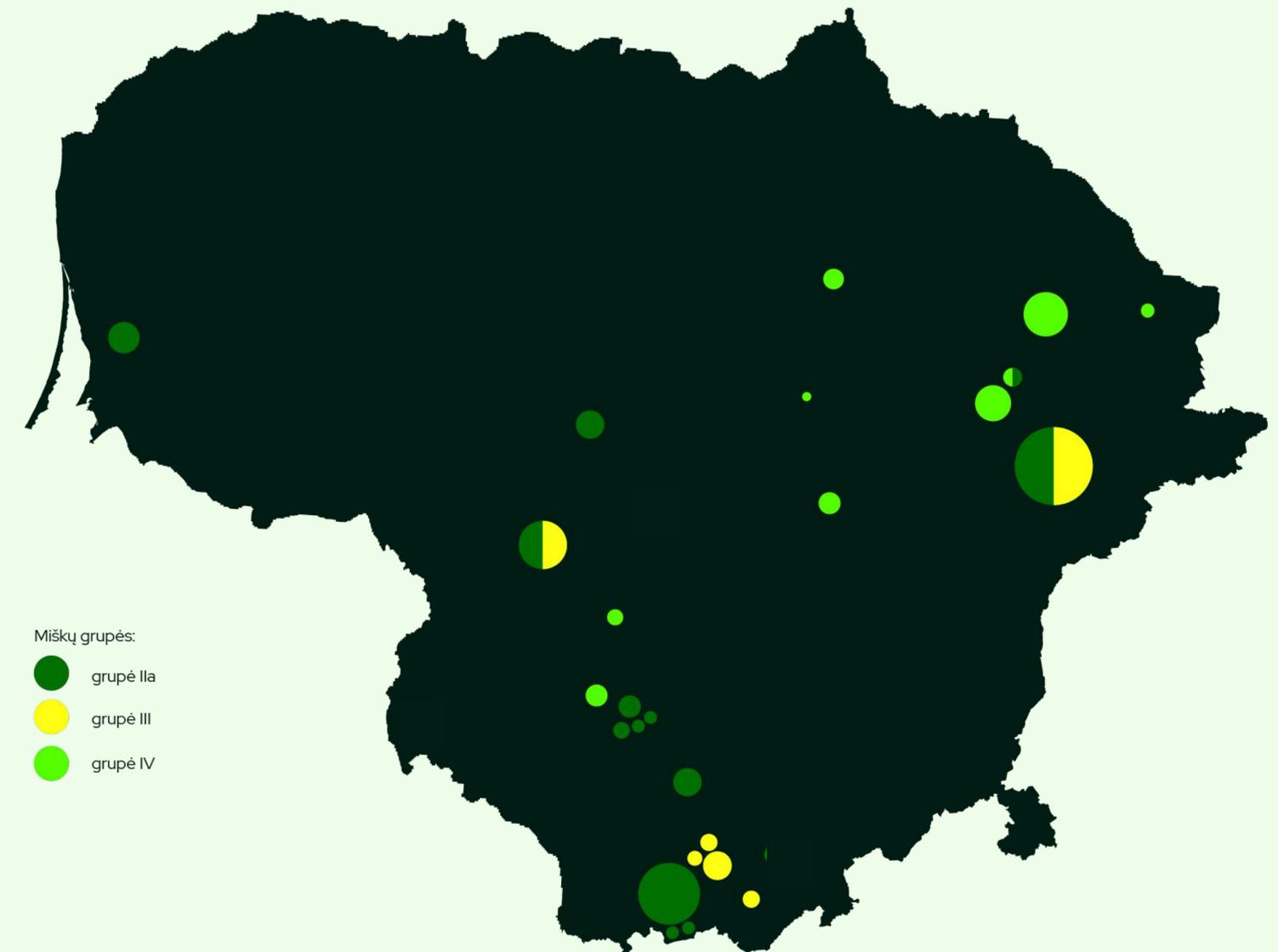
Ancient Woods Foundation's protected forests, in hectares



Forests preserved by the Foundation

6 forests out of 7 have been purchased and one has been donated:

- 2.3 and 3.7 ha plots in the Raigardas valley, forming a total protected area of over 33.5 ha;
- An old pine forest of 4.75 ha in Kapiniškiai, Varėnos district, preserving the source of the Čirkštai spring;
- A 5.86 ha oak forest in Kaulakiai, Raseiniai district, where 130-150 year old oak trees stand on the hillside;
- The large 39.2 ha plot between the lakes in Pagraučė, Molėtai district;
- The fifth plot, 6.2 ha, in Balbieriškis Oak Grove, where we want to preserve every single surviving oak tree;
- A special gift from Mrs. Ona Vita Nivinskienė - a 1.54 ha family forest in Plavėjai, Ignalina district, named „Jurgio pėda“ („George's foot“) in honour of her grandfather.



Forest „Jurgio pėda“ (“George’s foot”), a gift from Mrs. Ona Vita Nivinskienė

Location Ignalina district, Žagarinė, Plavėjai village

Size 1,54 hectares

History Mrs. Nivinskienė decided to entrust the forest inherited from her grandfather to the Foundation. The forest was named „Jurgio pėda“ (“George’s foot”) after her grandfather, because “Many footsteps by my grandfather’s have been there”.

Forest This is a mixed forest patch, IV forest group, in Gražutė Regional Park. The plot is dominated by spruce, birch, some pine and alder. The oldest trees are 109 years old.

It is classified as a Habitat of European Community Importance – 9080 deciduous swamp woods.

A small stream runs through the site. The site is always wet, rich in dead wood and is often visited by animals and woodpeckers.



Raigardas Valley forest



Location Druskininkai district, Švendubrė forest massif

Size 6 hectares (2,3 hectares and 3,7 hectares)

History The vast forest area of the Raigardas Valley, which has been protected since 2023, has been expanded by another 6 hectares thanks to the campaign "Rustle" initiated by the Public Enterprise Deposit System Administrator, during which Lithuanian citizens can choose to donate the amount of deposit recovered at the deposit system to the activities of the Ancient Woods Foundation. Thanks to active citizens, an area has been preserved and named Rustle Forest.

The whole area of the forest in the Raigard valley is now 33.5 hectares. It is a culturally and naturally special place, steeped in legend, in the Raigard Landscape Reserve near Druskininkai.

Forest The valley is surrounded by pine forests, with the Beržalapis forest in the centre, and the Nemunas River valley is full of old riverbeds and streams. Ornithologist Marius Karlonas has recorded about 120 species of breeding birds in the valley alone, and over 160 different birds in total.

The site is full of mature alder trees (161 years old spruce forest and 150 years old pine forest) and streams running through. The site has been designated Habitat H1 - Underground caves, waters and sinkholes, Habitat of European Community Importance 9010 - Western Taiga. Species, that are included in the list of protected animals, plants and fungi of the Republic of Lithuania, were found there too.



Kapiniškės forest



Location Varėna district. Kapiniškės village

Size 4,75 hectares

History The source of the Čirštai spring is in the centre of the Kapiniškės parcel. This spring is the source of groundwater discharge from the Bakanauskas swamp with a small lake to the Skroblas brook. The good condition of the Čirštai spring is very important for the unique Skroblas stream, most of whose valley is protected in the Skroblas reserve.

According to botanist Mindaugas Lapelė:

"All rivers start from their sources, and by protecting the forests at their source, we are also protecting the springs that carry their waters to the rivers, the lagoon and the Baltic. The Skroblas stream is unique in Lithuania for its water content and abundance of springs. The Čirštai spring is one of the most impressive, flowing from a headland deeply cut into the sun-warmed Dzūkija forest, and its source is cool and misty even in summer. It is also one of the few springs flowing from west to east, and its water is considered magical and enchanting by the locals."

This forest was acquired thanks to support by carVertical company.

Forest

It is part of a large forest massif, which is notable for its changing altitude – the elevation from the edge to the bottom of the headwaters reach over 30 metres. It create diversity of micro-habitats attracting biodiversity.

This forest is an old, mature pine forest with some pine trees being as old as 123 years. A large part of the site belongs to the Western Taiga, a Habitat of European Community Importance, and to the Natura2000 network area.

The area belongs to the Kapiniškės Landscape Reserve, Dzūkija National Park, and Skroblas Reserve. However, the surrounding forests have been subject to logging, making the protection of this area even more important.

Kaulakiai Oak Grove



Location Raseiniai district, Kaulakiai village

Size 5,86 hectares

History This forest has long been loved and respected by the local community - the oak woodland and streams have been looked after generations of nature-loving children.

It has been redeemed thanks to the campaign „Rustle“ by the Public Institution “Užstato Sistemų Administratorius”, thanks to the donations made by the public at the deposit system. This is the third Rustle Forest.

Forest This forest plot is located in central Lithuania, in Lyduvėnai Landscape Reserve, close to Dubysa Regional Park and Dubysa River itself. The mature, mixed forest is rich in white alder, birch, aspen and coniferous trees such as spruce and pine. There are some 130-150 years old oak trees, that not only create micro-habitats for rare species, but also ensure their stability, as they can live for centuries. A stream with high slopes runs through the forest, and such topographical changes create many diverse habitats for a wide variety of plant, fungi, arthropod and bird species.

Biologist Ainis Pivoras says: "Historically, the fertile soils have been the least forested in the country. Accordingly, such regions have the fewest national protected areas. However, it is in such areas that forest biodiversity is perhaps among the richest. Rare and endangered forest species are also proportionately more abundant here. This is because fertile soils are naturally dominated by broad-leaved tree species (oaks, maples, elms, ash), which have significantly more associated species. The oak tree is unequivocally ranked by scientists as the king of biodiversity in terms of the number of species associated with it."

Pagraužė forest



Location Molėtai district, Pagraužė, Pašekščiai village

Size 39,2 hectares

History This is the largest single area of forest to purchased by the Foundation thanks to a public offer and active funding. The purchase of this forest plot was funded by the 2023 Personal Income Tax donations, as well as by the companies Žalia giria, Mano bankas and Raštinė.

Forest The plot is mostly mature pine forest, with some pine trees as old as 134 years! There are also mature birch, alder and spruce trees. Historical maps show that the forest in the northern part of the plot has been there for a long time. Most of the parcel belongs to forest group II and the rest to forest group III.

The forest is located in the Labanoras Regional Park, Labanoras Forest. The forest belongs to areas of importance for the protection of birds and habitats (PAST, BAST).

This unique forest area is also the first under the protection of the Foundation to have a very large lake shoreline - it is surrounded by Galuonis and Šaminis lakes and belongs to the Dumbliis Telmological Reserve, the aim of which is to preserve the characteristic marshland with a boggy swamp lake with rare species of flora and fauna. The forest is also adjacent to Lake Šaminis, a naturally dystrophic lake (habitat of European Community importance).

During the initial investigation, several rare species of beetles and fungi, that are included in the list of protected animals, plants and fungi of the Republic of Lithuania have been found.



Balbieriškis Oak Grove

#5th parcel



Location Prienai district, Balbieriškis forest.

Size 6,2 hectares

History **This is the fifth parcel of land in Balbieriškis Oak Grove under the Foundation's care - strategically important for the Foundation in order to continue to build a larger protected forest estate here, where mature oak forests still remain.**

This forest parcel was purchased by a loyal philanthropist, doctor Mykolas Dumčius.

Forest The Balbieriškis forest massif is a large island of broad-leaved and mixed forests in fertile fields between the Žuvintas Reserve and Nemunas Loops Regional Park.

The site belongs to the IV category, it is already outside the oak botanical boundaries of the reserve, so some parts of it is cleared, regrowing, but there are large oak-aspen trees, over 130 years old, and a self-growing mixed deciduous forest of 55-80 years old.

Habitat of European Community importance 9160 - European Hornbeam Woodland is designated here. Contains indicator species, varied topography, with a perennial stream.

Forest protection in 2024

Hunting has been banned in all 25 forest parcels

We have used our right as a private forest owner to ban hunting, making all these forests an even safer place for animals.

The forests of the Foundation were managed by 24 rangers

Their role is to monitor the condition on a regular basis to ensure that there are no harmful human impacts on nature.

4 forests were marked with sustainable, nature-friendly labels for philanthropists.

The forests of Moniškis, Prof. V. Smailis, D. Gedviliene's grove and the forest in the Raigardas valley were marked. The stamps are intended to commemorate the generosity of philanthropists and the existence of the forests under their care.

They were made by reusing old wood from old homes, prepared by burning the inscription and impregnated with linseed oil. The installation is also done using only trommable gravel, so no additional, non-local materials are introduced.



Education and science

„You protect when you love, and
love when you know”
– Mindaugas Survila



Education activities in 2024

44 educational lectures, presentations, film screenings for business, public, students, children, Foundation community with over **2,455** participants.

18 Educational trips to old-growth forests with scientists for the Foundation's community and supporters, where **405** people had a profound educational experience.

3 Educational institutions have been presented with the initial version of the programme for Lithuanian schools, reaching **532** children of all ages.

100+ Educational articles, social media posts, material for projects, reports and collaborative initiatives.

1 The first educational event for the business community is held, attended by **38** business representatives.

2 Educational lectures for the internal Foundation's community has been organised.



Collaboration with Lithuanian schools

Educational programme for Lithuanian schools

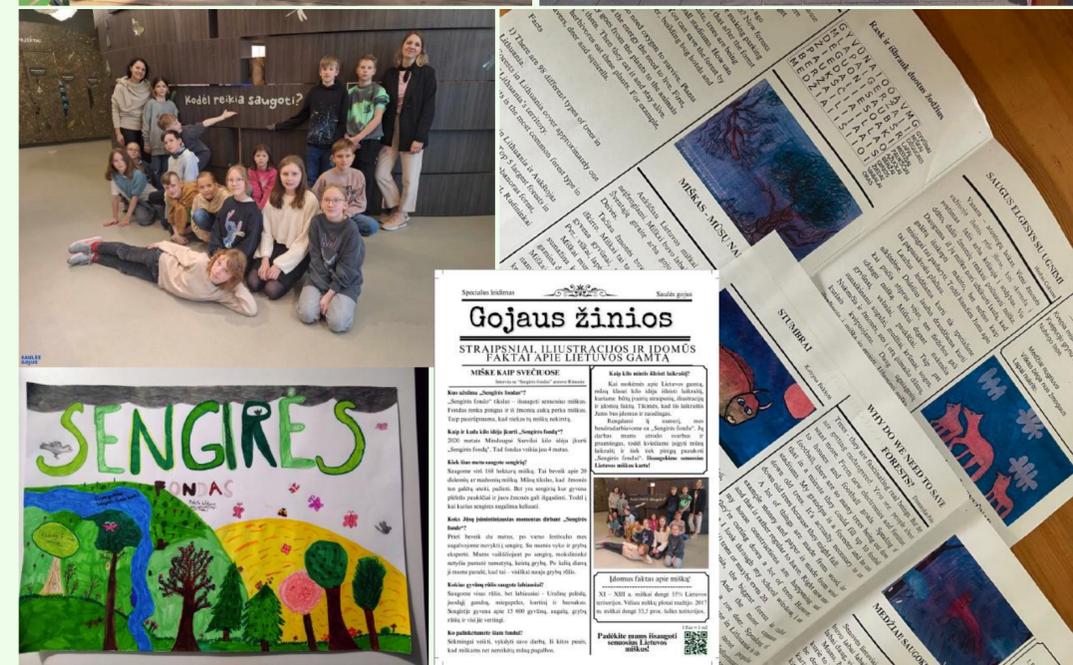
The initial version of the educational programme was delivered in 3 educational institutions, to 532 children of different ages, and feedback was received for further development. The presentations took place in biology, geography and ethics lessons and in classroom sessions. Antakalnis Gymnasium, Eruditas Lyceum, Utena Kindergarten "Ažuolų vaikai" extended these presentations with additional activities such as field trips and support initiatives. Thanks to the schools, their staff and pupils for their involvement.

Education and support initiatives

Thanks to the Eruditas Lyceum community, which raised ~€3000 for the preservation of old-growth forests through the "Pie Day" initiative.

Thanks to Klaipėda kindergarten "Ažuoliukas", together with Klaipėda Gedminių progimnazija, Kaunas kindergarten "Svirnelis", Vilnius kindergarten "Viltėnė", Norwegian kindergarten „Betania“, which has already become a tradition with the nature conservation project "Give a book you have read and contribute to the preservation of Ancient Woods", during which they collect ~900 EUR for preserving the forest.

Thanks to the teachers of the Vilnius school "Saulės gojus" who organise annual lessons on the topic of old-growth forests and support initiatives. In 2024, the fourth graders published a school newspaper dedicated to forests, and the third graders' Christmas play raised €275 for the future old-growth forests.



Educational initiatives for young people

Slam poetry / Sengirės slemas

The creative slam workshop for the youth of the Merkinė region was organised by Barbora Valiuk, violinist and ambassador of the Foundation. The workshop was inspired by the mission of the Foundation, and began with a guided tour of the old oak and pine forests of Dzūkija, the Čepkelių Raiste, and the Skroblas River, led by Dr. Mindaugas Lapelė, carefully recording thoughts and ideas for future works. The creative process of the 16 young people was guided by mentors Algimantas Rokas Černiauskas, Paulius Gadeikis, Rokas Kašėta, and for the final performance at the Merkinė Factory, they were hosted by Ambassador Vytautas Radzevičius.

Neringa forest class

VDA Nida Art Colony, together with Kuršių Nerija National Park and Ancient Woods Foundation, organised the first series of educational outdoor activities focused on the study of ecosystem dynamics in the Kuršių Nerija, with a special focus on biodiversity and the understanding of the human impact on nature. The students of grades 1-4 were introduced to the subtle ecological processes in the old-growth forest by the Foundation's experts – mycologist Aurelija Plukė and botanist Vilma Gudynienė.

Lectures and classes at VDU

At the Vytautas Magnus University students' camp, Dr. Žydrūnas Preikša and PhD student and lecturer Laura Laurynaitė gave a lecture-class to 33 students about the importance of the conservation of old-growth forests. Also, 12 VDU students were given a remote lecture by Kristina Skindelytė, a member of the Board of the Foundation, on communication and promoting engagement.



Public education

Partnership with environmental cinema project Sengirės Kinas

„Sengirės kinas“ – is a new project combining cinema and ecology education, initiated by Silvija Duoblytė and Aistė Račaitytė, which will light up the screens of libraries in Lithuanian towns and cities every month, inviting viewers to pay attention to nature. The Ancient Woods Foundation is pleased to be a partner in this important nature education project.

„Jaunieji liūtai“ contest

The Ancient Woods Foundation has become a partner in the 2024 competition for young advertising talents, organised by 15min group and The Atomic Garden, a school of advertising and creativity, presenting the challenge of the competition – the problem of forest conservation – and inviting people to find creative solutions to strengthen the public's perception of the importance of the nature and the future of it.

Best practice seminar at Merkinė Factory

The seminar was on the theme "The Ancient Woods Foundation. When an idea becomes reality. How to create a foundation that works and protects nature?". The co-founders of the Foundation, Mindaugas Survila and botanist PhD. Mindaugas Lapelė, shared their experience.

6th International congress "Forests and its potential for health"

The Foundation's representatives and scientists have participated in the 6th International ISFT Congress "Forests and its potential for health, sharing their insights.



Education for business

Event for the business community

On 4th of June, 2024, the Ancient Woods Foundation invited the business community not to the forest, but to the event "Biodiversity and Ancient Forests. What is unique in Lithuania, why is it important to preserve it and how to make an impact by working together?".

Over 40 people attended the event at the Lithuanian National Drama Theatre. It focused on education and collaborative solutions, and included presentations on old-growth forests, biodiversity and how business, climate and biodiversity are linked.

Presentation at the conference "A Green Vision for Lithuania"

Organised by the Green Finance Institute, the conference focused on the economic dependence on nature and the importance of biodiversity conservation. Rimantė Paulauskaitė-Digaitienė, Foundation's manager, gave a presentation on "Biodiversity and ancient forests. Why is it important to preserve it for the future?". Around 70 experts in the fields of finance and sustainability attended.

Lectures for corporate teams

In order to reach out to the widest possible range of the public, we shared our educational knowledge with employees of various organisations and businesses - the Climate Change Centre of the Bank of Lithuania, the LTG team, the members of the Rotary Club of Klaipėda, as well as the staff of Euromonitor International and Boozt Technology Baltics.



Scientific activities in 2024

Scientific discoveries

During the scientific expeditions in the forests of Moniškis (Žirgė) and Balbieriškis, the mycologist Dr. Reda Iršėnaitė has discovered as many as 9 species of fungi that are new to Lithuania.

Inventory

The inventory of the protected forests continues – mycological and botanical surveys have been carried out in 3 arrays – Moniškis, Balbieriškis and Raigardas.

Cooperation

Cooperation with the zoology team of the Life Sciences Centre of Vilnius University, led by Prof. PhD. Virginija Podėnienė, has started. Educational communication activities and scientific research in the forests of Moniškis (Žirgės) and Balbieriškis have been planned, including research on insects found in dead wood. It is hoped to develop a tool that will allow a very rapid assessment of the diversity of insects in such woods. Areas that will not be deforested are crucial for the long-term sustainability of such studies. The establishment of the Foundation has also enabled researchers to carry out long-term studies without hindrance. In 2024, the Foundation has also worked with 7 other potential research initiatives for possible cooperation.



9 new
mushroom
species
discovered for
Lithuania.

9 mushroom species new for Lithuania

During the scientific expeditions in the forests of Moniškis (Žirgės) and Balbieriškis, mycologist PhD. Reda Iršėnaitė discovered nine more species of fungi that had not been found in the country before. This is a significant discovery, revealing the scientific potential of an untouched forest.

These include the *Xerocomus ripariellus*, which grows in wet areas and forms a mycorrhizal association with willows and alders, and the *Parasola leiocephala*, a short-lived species that self-destructs after a few hours of life.

At the same time, other species that thrive only in natural forests were also found: the *Homophron camptopodum*, which is abundant on decaying aspen trees, the *Agrocybe firma*, and the *Cystoagaricus lepidotoides*. Although these species are very rare, their vital activities support the forest ecosystem.

In addition, the microscopic species *Bactridium flavum* and the little-studied, and after their discovery, freshly named Lithuanian species *Polyporus parvivarius*, *Cortinarius fuscogracilescens* and *Clitopilus baronii*, have also been discovered.

"The Moniškis Forest, with its untouched soil and abundant dead wood, is like an open-air laboratory.

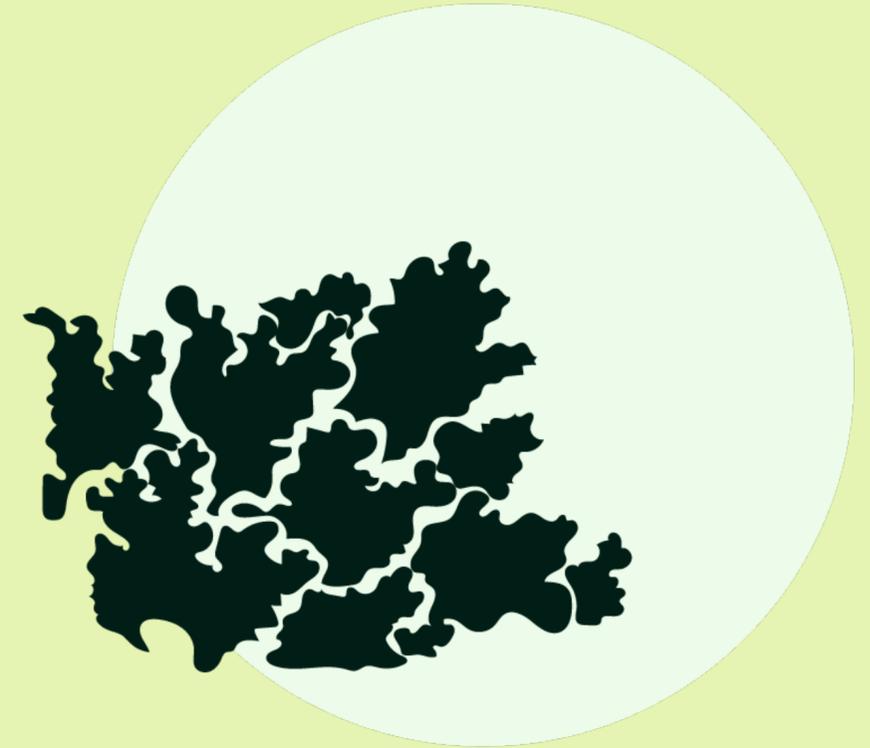
Here you can find species that are declining or already extinct in other forests. These discoveries not only enrich Lithuania's biodiversity inventory, but also confirm that each newly discovered species is living proof of the importance of protecting natural forests."

- says PhD R. Iršėnaitė, the lead of this scientific expedition.





Our impact and
public interest
advocacy



Ecological impact on biodiversity

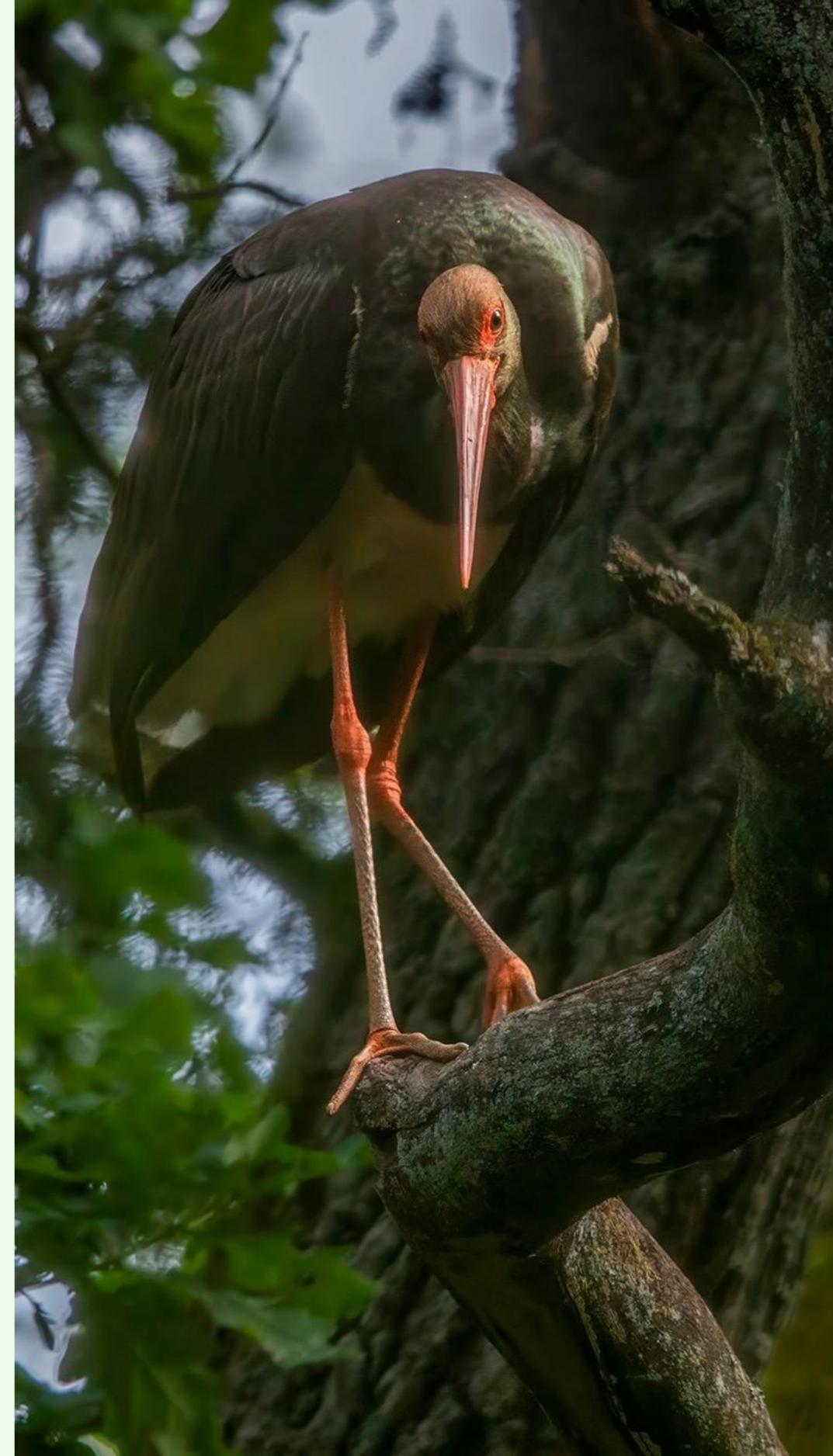
182,42 hectares of protected old-growth forests, safe from negative human activity. We have **banned hunting** in all these areas.

35 habitats under protection (ECI or Key Forest Habitats).

23 Habitats of European Community Importance (45.33 hectares) and 12 Key Forest Habitats (27.89 hectares) have been identified in protected forests.

Dominant habitats : EC 9160 (Oak-hornbeam forests) 12,99 ha, EC 9020 (Broad-leaved and mixed forests) 11,45 ha, EC 9010 (Western taiga) 9,93 ha.

All these forests are home to rare, protected species of animals, plants and fungi listed in the protected list of the Republic of Lithuania, as well as an abundance of natural dead wood, which is essential for sustaining life, and which is home, food and fertiliser for thousands of different organisms.



Ecological impact on the climate

~2538 t CO₂ – approximately the amount of CO₂ absorbed by the Foundation's forest area from the date of acquisition until the end of 2024.

~72968 t C – about 182.42 hectares of old-growth forests are locked up by carbon in their vegetation and especially in their soils.

Around a third of mitigation targets can be achieved by halting deforestation, preserving or restoring forests.

Forests are one of the main sinks of greenhouse gases (GHGs). In our region, 1 hectare of old-growth forests absorbs about 6.25t CO₂e per year*.

Old-growth forests are also one of the most important sources of locked carbon (C), with more than 400 tonnes of carbon locked up in their vegetation, and especially in their soils, per hectare**.

* Harris, N.L., Gibbs, D.A., Baccini, A. et al. Global maps of twenty-first century forest carbon fluxes. Nat. Clim. Chang. 11, 234–240 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-020-00976-6>

** IPCC, NASA data.



Social – educational impact

405 – people had a profound educational experience on field trips to old-growth forests with scientists.

>2455 people attended educational lectures and presentations.

>360 thousands people reached with educational and informative content on social media.

532 schoolchildren were presented an initial version of the educational programme for Lithuanian schools.

The inclusion of the Traditional Man-Forest Relationship in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in March 2024 has been of national significance.

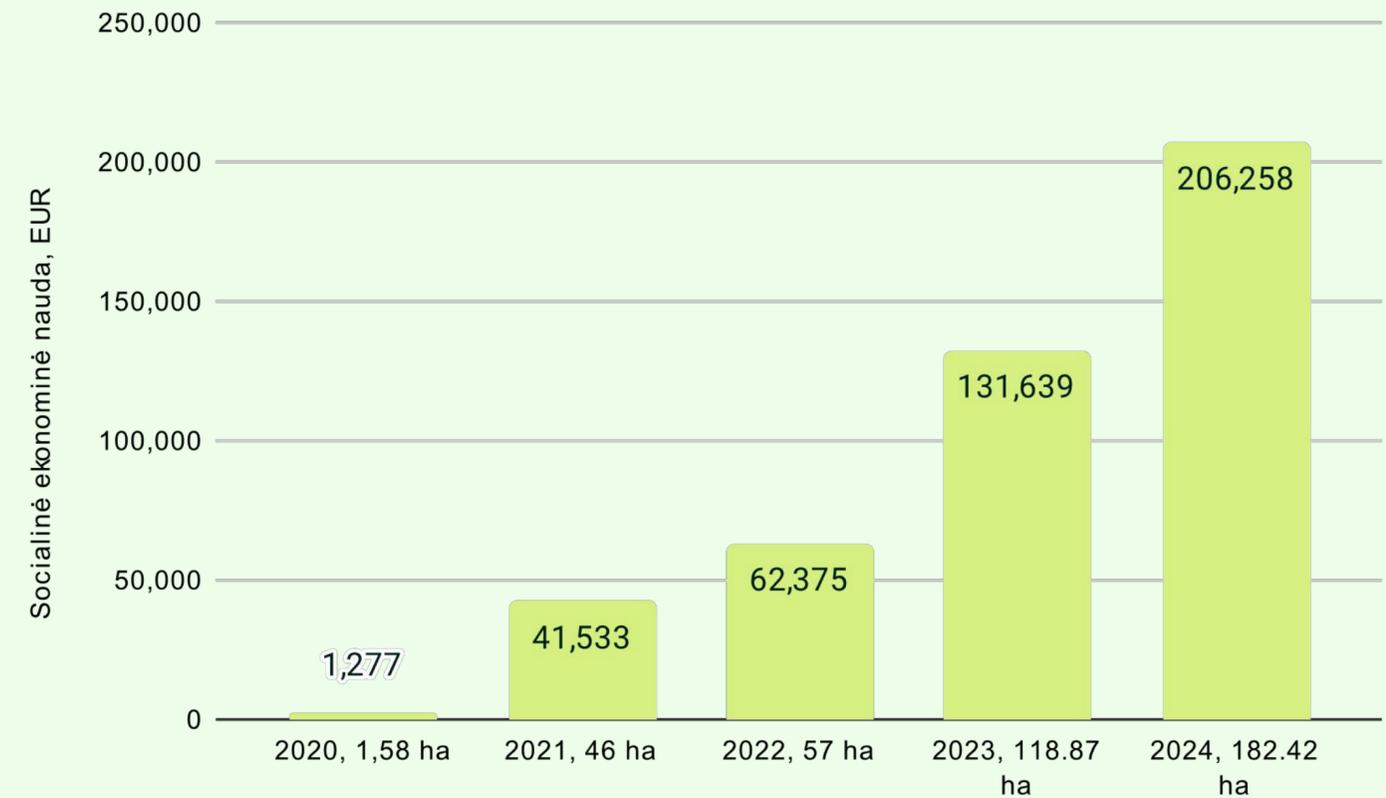
The impact on science is also important: the forests under the Foundation's care are not only ecologically relevant, but are also important for science, as they provide an opportunity for continuity of research.



Socio-economic impact

Every 1 Eur donation* has contributed to:
2,13 m² of old-growth forests preserved,
0,52 Eur socio-economic value created,
2,96 kg CO₂ absorption,
85,11 kg carbon locked.

Yearly socio-economic value created by protected forests



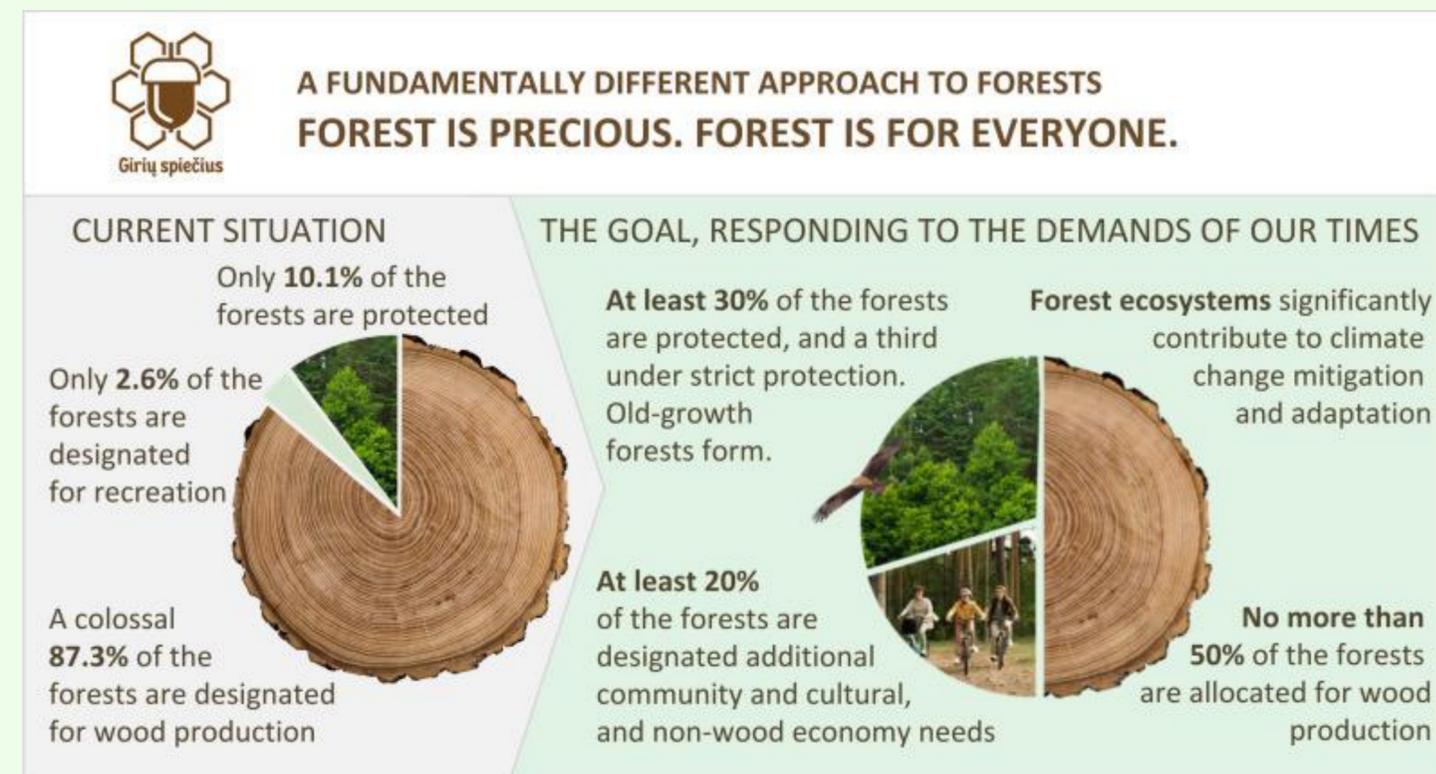
443 thousands of euros – the socio-economic benefits generated by the forest area under the Foundation's care from the acquisition of the plots until the end of 2024, based on the Foundation's 2022 analysis project.

The socio-economic benefits of 1 hectare of old-growth forest amount to around €1,131 per year.

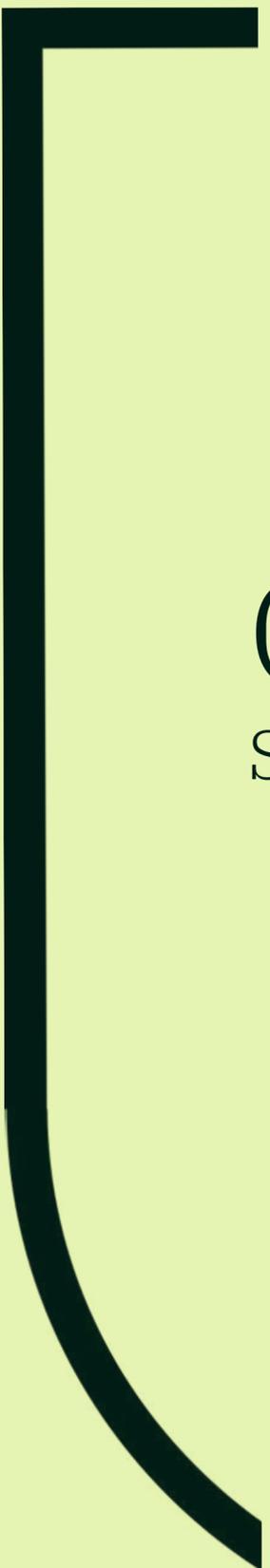
* - calculating the impact generated by the funds used, from the creation of the Foundation until the end of 2024.

Defending the public interest. Social impact.

In 2024, the Ancient Woods Foundation, as part of the Girių Spiečius (Forest Swarm) - group of organisations, scientists, NGOs - addressed the authorities on forest policy issues.

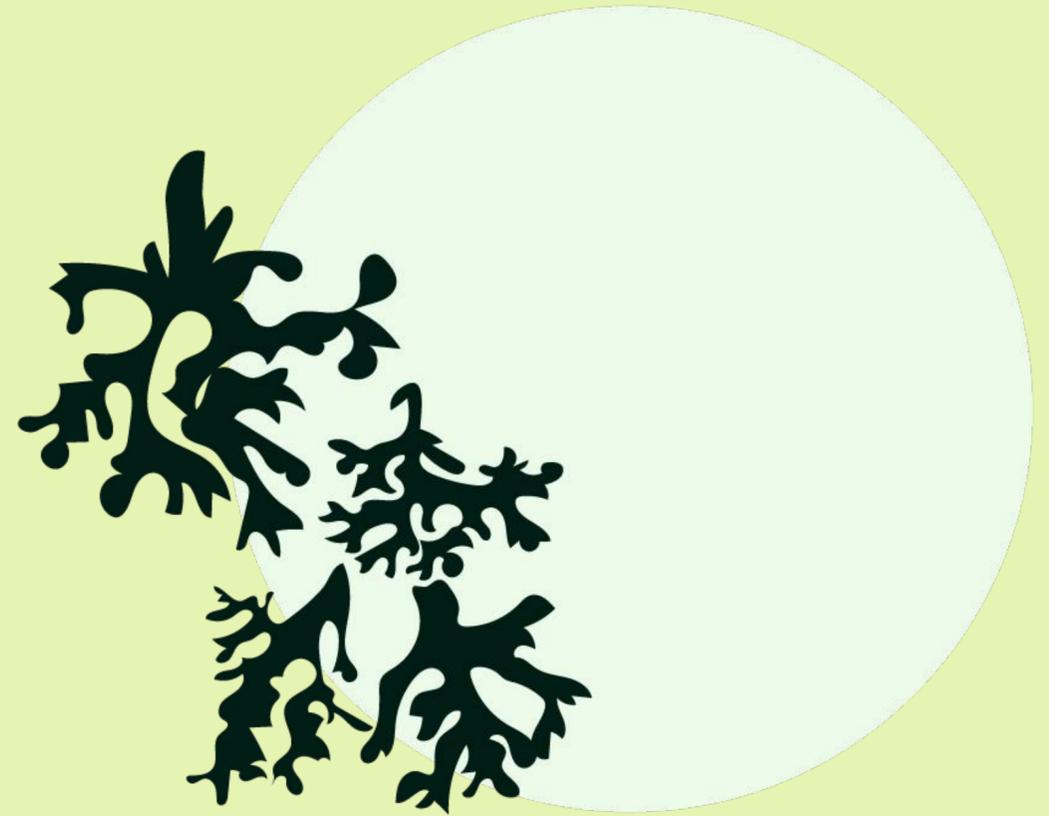


- Joint statement on the future of forests, 2024-04-22.
- Statement, opposing the transformation of The Lithuanian State Forest Enterprise into a joint stock company, 2024-05-24.
- Joint statement for inaction in Lithuania's forest policy, 2024-06-03.
- Comments on the Draft National Energy and Climate Action Plan 2021-2030, 2024-08-05.
- Suggestions for the draft amendment to the Forest Law, 2024-09-13.
- Joint statement on the future of forests to those preparing the Government programme, 2024-11-12.



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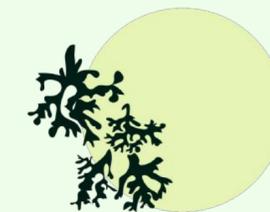
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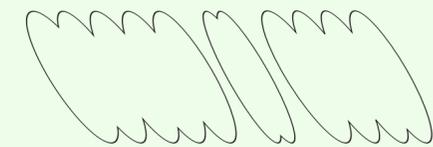


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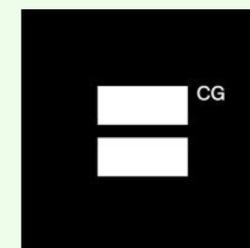
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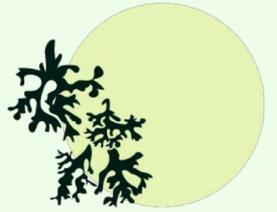
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Public Institution Deposit System Administrator (USAD) the support initiative "Rustle" invites people to return packaging to the deposit system and donate the received amount to the Ancient Woods Foundation and to contribute to the preservation of Lithuania's old-growth forests. slamantys.lt



1% for the Planet – an international network of business, environmental organisations and individual members focused on the planets environmental issues. [Our profile on this platform.](#)



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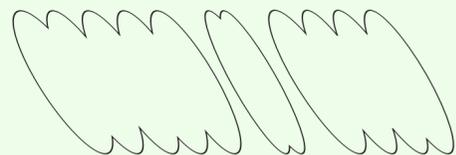


Environmental Coalition – partner in environmental public interest advocacy related to forest policy and biodiversity protection. www.akoalicija.lt.



Girių spiečius (Forest Swarm) – a group of organisations and individuals working towards a naturally, socially and economically sustainable forest policy. giruspiecius.lt.

Saulė ir jūra



Saulė ir jūra (Sun and Sea) – a contemporary opera-performance by director and cinematographer Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, librettist Vaiva Grainytė and composer Lina Lapelytė, which supports the Foundation's community engagement activities. sunandsea.lt

„Rustle“ campaign

One of the most important sources of support for the Foundation in 2024 was the initiative “Rustle”, launched by the Public Institution Deposit System Administrator (USAD), inviting people to return packaging to the deposit system and donate the received amount to the Ancient Woods Foundation and to contribute to the preservation of Lithuania’s old-growth forests. The initiative continues in 2025.

In 2024, the public donated as much as 1.4 million deposit units to the Foundation's activities, amounting to €144,153.80.

It is thanks to the donation at the deposit system that the acquisition of 3 forest plots was financed in 2024, making a total of 11.86 hectares of forests protected from harmful activities. These are two forest plots in Raigardas valley, Druskininkai district, and an oak forest in Kaulakiai, Raseiniai district.



[Rustle song in Youtube](#)

[Slamantys.lt](#)



Sun and Sea opera-performance session for old-growth forests

Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, Vaiva Grainytė and Lina Lapelytė, creators of the opera-performance Sun and Sea, awarded the Golden Lion at the Venice Art Biennale, organised a special screening dedicated to the preservation of the old-growth forests.

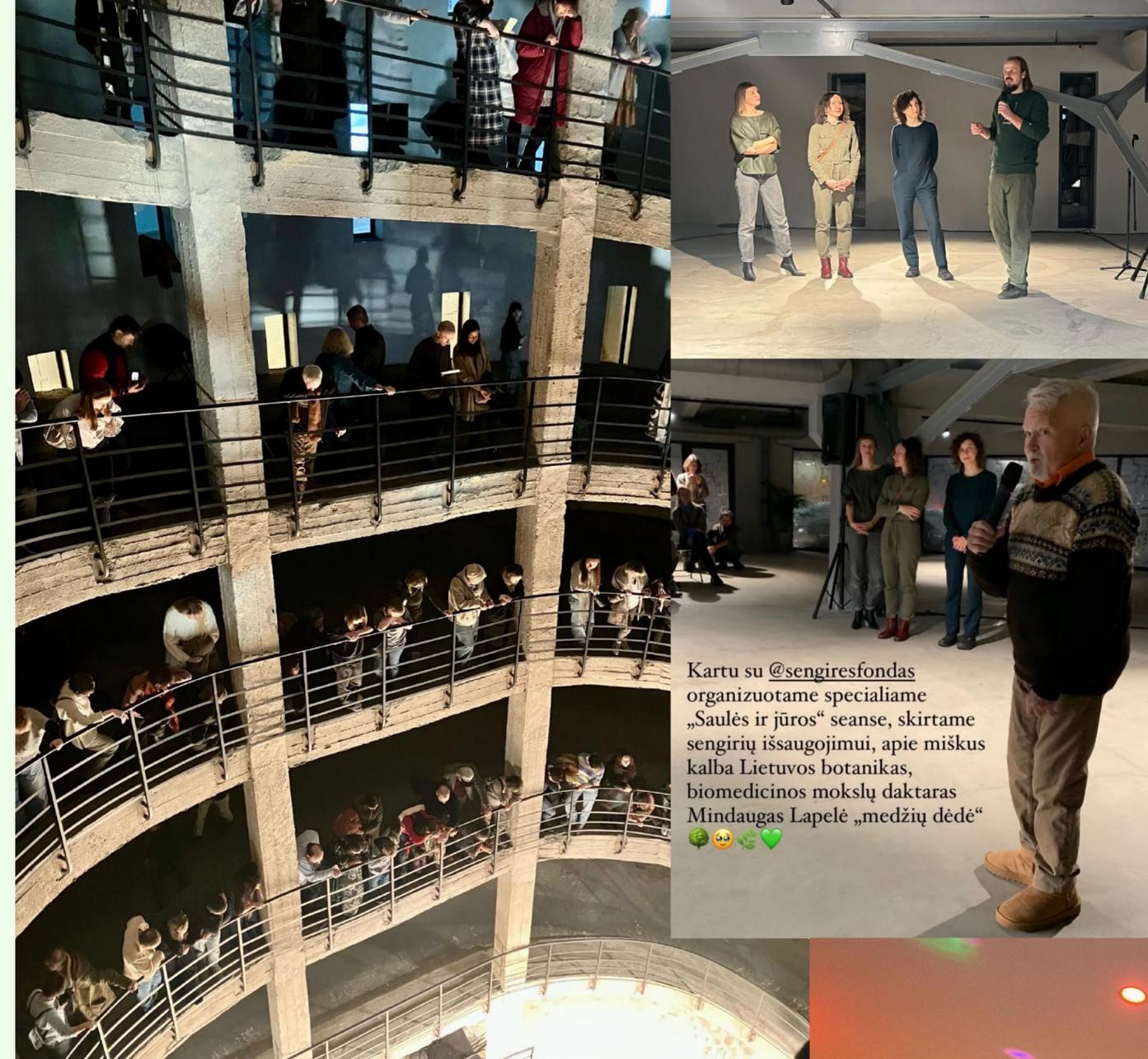
The event brought together people who share similar values and are actively working for the future of both nature and humanity. The team made a generous donation, which contributed to the acquisition of a specific 9.21 hectares parcel of the Skaistgiriai Forest in Kėdainiai district. Thank you to the Sun and Sea team, and to AcalaDrinks, Žalia Giria for contributing to the event.

Charity and Support Fund SATORI

SATORI fund, which has been contributing to the preservation of the forests for many years, organised a generosity event before the Christmas.

During the event, an impressive donation of 11,000 thousand euros was raised, which contributed to the purchase of a specific 9.21 hectares plot of the Skaistgiriai Forest in Kėdainiai District.

Thank you!

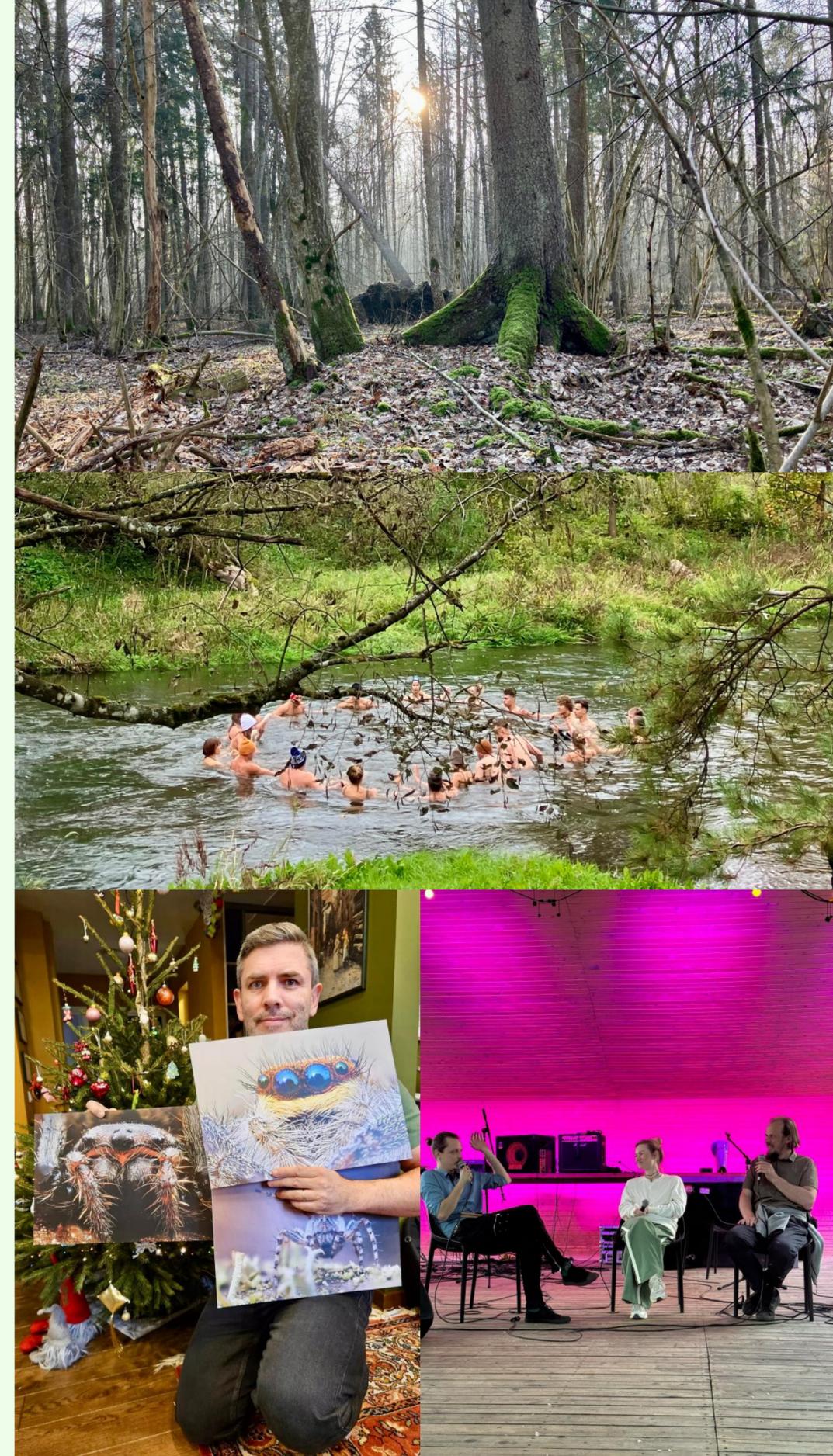


Support from the public

In December, we invited the public to contribute to the financing of the purchase of a leafy forest in Kėdainiai district. The purchase of this 9.21 hectares forest in Skaistgiriai rallied long-standing and new supporters of the Foundation, both individuals and organisations, and the required amount was raised in two and a half weeks!

Thanks to the ambassadors of the Foundation who organised the support initiatives:

- JAMFEST for the old-growth forests - a musical support initiative on the Street Music Day, held by Mantas Meškauskas and his team.
- Kaunas University of Technology support initiative on Earth Day, thanks to Giedrė Lapinskienė and the whole community.
- Support initiative at the opening of the Vilnelė punk swimming season, thanks to the initiators Ignė Degutytė, Dominyka Šutavičiūtė and the whole community.
- JAGGG Student Council for the support initiative during the night volleyball competition.
- LuzLove for organising the donation initiative during the Christmas Fair in Halė Market.
- Rugilė Matusevičiūtė, who announced the "I will work for a donation" campaign in December, contributing to the Ancient Woods Foundation and other organisations.
- Photographer Maris Čepulis for his donation campaign with his spider photos.



The team is our strength

Thanks to each person who has contributed in 2024!
More than 117 people.
Over 6000 hours volunteered.

In 2024, around 36 volunteers were always active, 16 new volunteers joined, and over 117 volunteers contributed in one way or another!

These contributors come from all over Lithuania and the world, contributing their professional skills, time and energy, scientific insights, creations, ideas and their voice. The help of forest rangers is important, as well as those who help to view the forests to be purchased, and those who contribute to education, visual material or support initiatives.





Board members, shareholders



Mindaugas Survila

Author and main initiator of the foundation, documentary filmmaker



Dr. Mindaugas Lapelė

Botanist, dedicated his life to nature conservation and public education



Ainis Pivoras

Biologist, working in botany, forest ecophysiology



Aurelija Urbonavičiūtė

Organisation design and development strategist



Dr. Birutė Galdikas

The Patron of the Foundation, Anthropologist, Environmentalist



Kristina Skindelytė

Public relations expert



Rimantė Paulauskaitė-Digaitienė

Foundation's manager



Simonas Bastys

Technology solutions



Vilius Striužas

Lawyer, legal issues



Adelė Banelienė

Forest team lead

Scientists & biologists



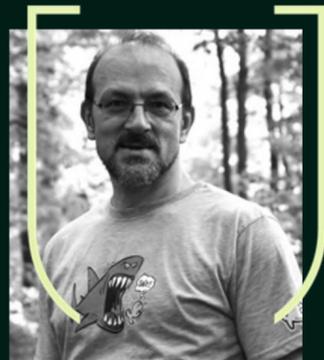
**Dr. Jurga
Motiejūnaitė**

Mycologist



**Dr. Žydrūnas
Preikša**

Ornithologist



**Dr. Eduardas
Budrys**

Entomologist



Vytautas Uselis

Entomologist



**Dr. Darius
Stončius**

Ecologist



**Giedrius
Vaivilavičius**

Malacologist



Justinas Kilpys

Climatologist



**Marius
Karlonas**

Ornithologist



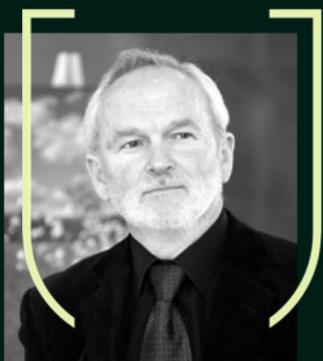
**Dr. Reda
Iršėnaitė**

Mycologist



**Dr. Radvilė
Rimgailė-Voicik**

Botanist



**Dr. Eugenijus
Drobelis**

Ornithologist



**Dr. Bronius
Šablevičius**

Ornithologist



**Dr. Ieva
Misiūnė**

Geographer



**Doc. Dr. Ričardas
Skorupskas**

Geographer

Scientists, biologists, nature photographers



**Vytautas
Knyva**

Biologist,
Nature
photographer



**Renatas
Jakaitis**

Naturalist,
nature
photographer



Darius Babelis

Naturalist,
nature
photographer



**Romualdas
Barauskas**

Naturalist,
nature
photographer



**Eugenijus
Kavaliauskas**

Nature
photographer

Also:

Onutė Grigaitė

Jurga Stoškutė

Andrejus Gaidamavičius

Dr. Virginija Podėnienė

Dr. Aistė Lekoveckaitė,

Dr. Maria Fernanda Torres Jimenez

dr. Jekaterina Havelka

dr. Ina Gorban

Austėja Černiauskaitė

Simona Bekeraitė

Tomas Selickas

Dr. Jonas Volungevičius

Dr. Paulo Pereira

Dr. Dalia Bastytė-Cseh

Saulius Adomavičius

Rokas Butkus

Jurijus Danilovas

And others.



**Dr. Vilma
Gudynienė**

Botanist, Research
Coordinator



**Dr. Gintarė
Grašytė**

Ornithologist



Marius Čepulis

Naturalist,
photographer



**Dr. Laura
Malinauskaitė**

Environmental
scientist



Almantas Kulbis

Naturalist

A team of professionals

Contributed to Foundation's activities in 2024



Brigita Mosiejauškė

Forest Acquisition
Specialist



Jonė Pivoraitė

Forest Information
Specialist



Ina Mosiejauskaitė

Forest Acquisition
Coordinator



Eglė Plytnikaitė

Illustrator, creator



Silvija Duoblytė

Sponsorship and
Events Coordinator



Justė Kulikauskaitė

Public relations,
social media
specialist



Gediminas Užkuraitis

Strategas, Synthesis
Consulting Group



Aleksandr Čaplia

Programmer



Marius Valasevičius

Programmer



Linas Jankaitis

GIS Specialist



Saulius Žemaitaitis

Programmer



Rūta Rosson

Educational trips and
events coordinator



Kotryna Valiukevičiūtė

Educational Programme
Coordinator



Gabija Savickytė

Forest, GIS project
coordinator

A team of professionals

Contributed to Foundation's activities in 2024



Laura Laurynaitytė

Content developer,
coordinator



Kamilė Lileikė

Team coordinator



Karolina Čizaitė

Sponsorship
coordinator,
programmer



Edgaras Baltrušaitis

Forest marking,
coordinator



Ugnius Narutis

Forest marking,
content developer



Paulius Trakymas

Forest Information
Specialist



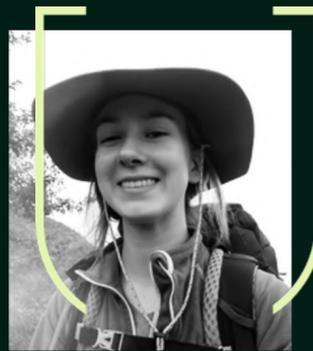
**Vykintas
Labanauskas**

Animator



Uldė Vaiginytė

Communications
Coordinator



Milana Zarianova

Newsletter
Coordinator



**Toma Šilinaitė-
Subačienė**

Designer



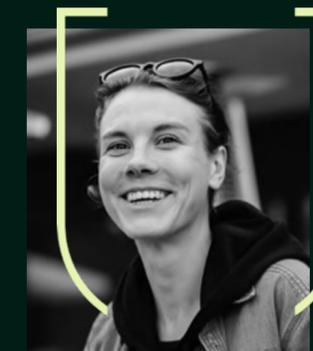
Agnė Stirnė

Designer, social
media specialist



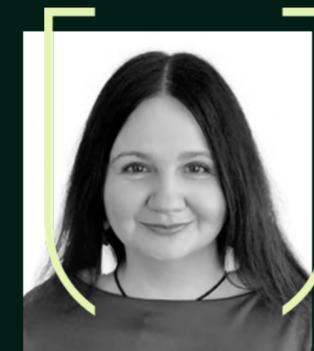
Elena Korytė

Social Media
Coordinator



Viktorija Gauronskytė

Ambassador
Coordinator



Diana Vaitkevičienė

Forest photographer

A team of professionals, rangers, friends

Contributed to Foundation's activities in 2024



Rasa Janickienė

Content Creator



Linas Staliūnas

Guide for listening to the sounds of forest bathing, ranger



Simas Gradeckas

Biodiversity credits expert



Simona Bekeraitė

Forest Information Specialist

Other team members, forest rangers, friends:

Aurelijus Banelis

Ažuolis Kasperavičius

Denis Vėjas

Erna Domres

Ilona Antonovičiūtė

Indrė Matulevičiūtė

Kamilė Maslauskaitė

Kęstutis Dikas

Laima Plėšnytė

Lina Pivorienė

Mantas Sinkevičius

Melanija Vasiliauskaitė

Rimas Pranskus

Robertas Aleksa

Simonas Čiūta

Tomas Martinkėnas

Ugnė Balčiūnaitė

Vilius Kaulinskas

Virginija Masalskienė

Arvydas Sviderskis

Audrius Kliševičius

Birutė Lemkė

Gabrielė Jauniūtė

Gedvilė Baniulienė

Kęstutis Čepėnas

Lina Paškevičiūtė

Milda Laužikaitė

Mindaugas Kanišauskas

Mindaugas Kavaliauskas

Paulius Šafranauskas

Povilas Aušra

Rasa Lakytė

Rimvydas Markevičius

Ūla Markevičienė

Vaidas Balys

Viktorija ir Evaldas Maculevičiai

Amelija Kuzmarskė

Almantas Dulkys

Dainius Jakučionis

Diana Šileikienė

Dovydas Korba

Egija Unzule

Goda Raibytė-Aleksa

Ignas Klėjus

Ignė Degutytė

Indrė Sapagovaitė Briedelienė

Jogintė Bučinskaitė

Lina Vaitiekūnaitė

Marius Lucka

Miglė Vilčiauskaitė-Migloko

Silvestras Dikčius

Tomas Narkevičius

Vaida V.

Ambassadors

Contributed to Foundation's activities in 2024



Rugilė Matusevičiūtė
Environmental activist



Dalia Blažulionytė
Culturologist



Sandra Pangonytė
Photographer, entrepreneur



Kotryna Stankutė-Jaščemskienė
Social activist



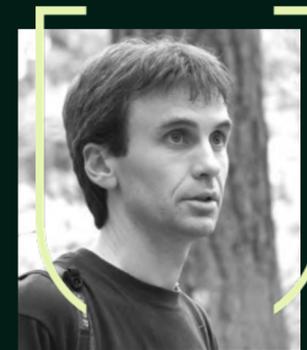
Neringa Rekašiūtė
Photographer, developer



Aurelija Plūkė
Mushroom enthusiast



Mila Monk
Forest bathing guide, forest therapy and education



Vykintas Vaitkevičius
Historian



Giedrius Širka
Artist



Vaiva Rykštaitė
Writer



Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė
Director



Lina Lapelytė
Artist, performer and composer



Vaiva Grainytė
Writer, playwright and poet



Rūta Meilutytė
Swimmer



Kamilė Gudmonaitė
Director, performer



Berta Tilmantaitė
Photographer, journalist



Barbora Valiukevičiūtė
Violinist



Communication

Public information and media



What was done in 2024?

197 mentions in media (+64% per year)

7 press releases

70,9 million audience reached

23 interviews, conversations

10 newsletters for the community

Achievements: dissemination of messages on major portals and media channels, mentions in partners' and sponsors' initiatives (in particular the USAD's "Keisk tarą į šlamančius" campaign, as well as support from Mano bankas, carVertical), consistency in communication, original and high-quality campaigns visible in the public space.

Thanks to Lithuanian media channels:

15min, Delfi, Lietuvos Nacionalinis Radijas ir Televizija (LRT), Bernardinai.lt, Kauno diena, Lietuvos Rytas, alkas.lt (online), BNS spaudos centras, Žmonės, TV3, Vakarų ekspresas, Žinių radijas, Alytaus naujienos, Etaplius.lt, Diena, Klaipėda, Voruta.lt, TV Europa ir partneriai, Init TV, Regionų naujienos and others.

Also for magazines: Savaitė, Raseinių krašto ir kultūros žurnalas, Kelionė, Raktas, Nemunas, Endobiogenika, Sodo spalvos.

Key messages

Most popular in Lithuania:

- Foundation achievement of its annual 2023 target to protect over 118 ha of old-growth forests.
- The untouched forest surprises scientists: 9 more fungi species new to Lithuania discovered.
- A record-size 39 ha forest plot has been acquired with the help of the community and donors.
- Less than 1% of all such areas in Lithuania: this untouched forest plot surprised even scientists.
- Preserving Lithuania's old-growth forests is important to the public: €1 million in donations.

Notable mentions:

- Interview on RFI, a French radio station with around 11.2 million visitors every month.
- LRT Plus "Science Soup" report on the discovery of the Moniškis fungi.
- Interview with PhD Reda Iršėnaitė on LRT "Labas rytas" about the discovery of Moniškis fungi.
- Vilma Gudynienė's interview about Moniškis fungi on LRT radio.
- Interview with M. Survila on LRT Radio about environmental protection.
- Interview with M. Survila on the SEB programme "Silent benefactors".
- A series of talks on Dzūkija forests on Init TV "Skambantys šilai".
- RadioVilnius interview with Rimante Paulauskaite-Digaitiene, manager of the Foundation.



Educational content - key projects

Never touched soil of Moniškis forest

A story about the soil profile study carried out by the scientists Assoc. Prof. PhD. J. Volungevičius and Assoc. Prof. PhD. R. Skorupskas, which revealed that the land of this forest has never been disturbed by the human activities (illustration by E. Plytnikaitė, content by L. Laurynaitytė, J. Šalkauskė).

The relationship between humans and forests

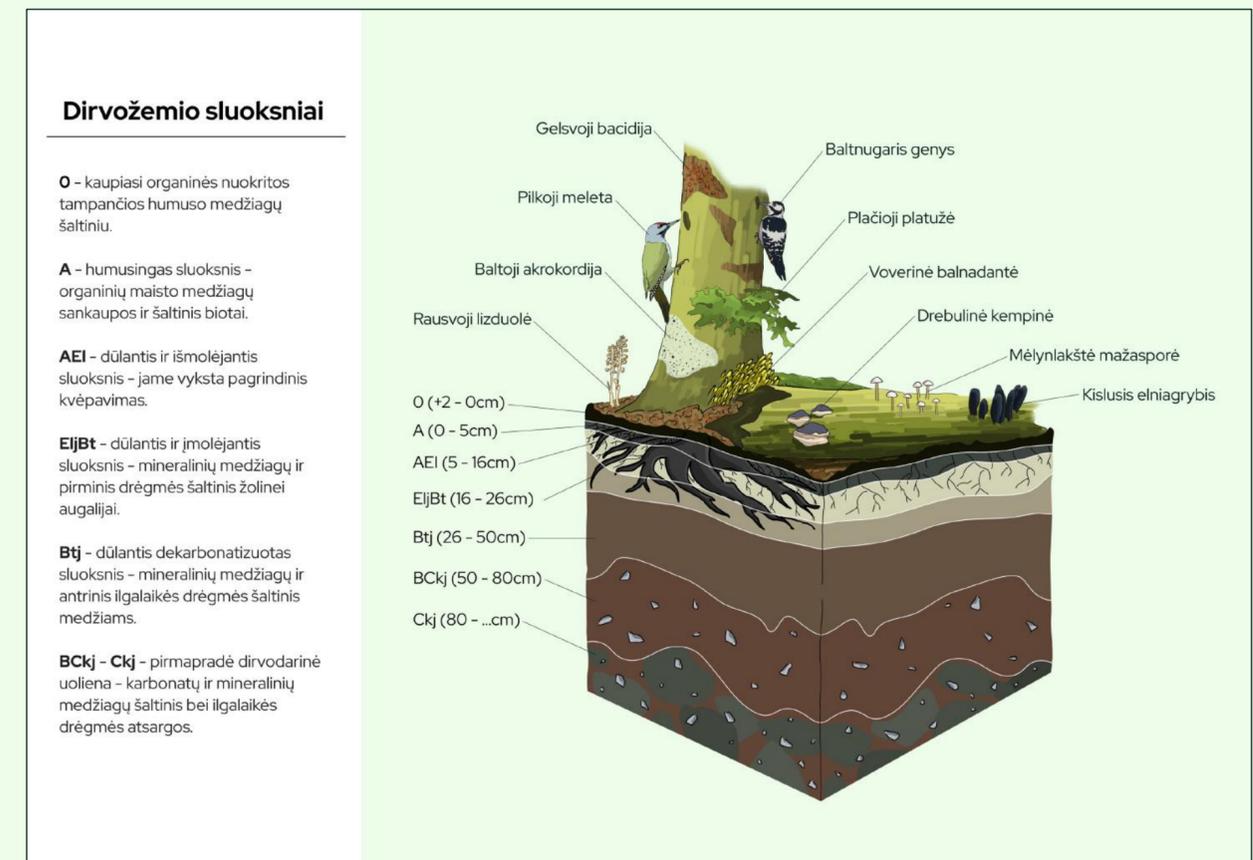
A series of stories revealing the Lithuanian connection to the forest, recognised as an intangible cultural heritage value (D. Blažulionytė, PhD. Vykintas Vaitkevičius, R. Janickienė, and others).

Living wood, insects and fungi

Thanks to the help of scientists from Vilnius University Life Sciences Center, an educational series on life associated with dead wood has been developed (PhD. A. Lekoveckaitė, PhD M.F.T. Jimenez, PhD. J. Havelka, PhD. I. Gorban, A. Černiauskaitė, V. Masalkskienė).

Global processes

Educational articles on CO2 sequestration in old-growth forests, resilience of old-growth forests to climate change, ecosystem services of old-growth forests (P.D J. Kilpys, PhD. I. Misiūnė, PhD. L. Malinauskaitė).



Social networks

Most popular posts:

- The largest forest area to date, 39.2 hectares, is acquired in the Pagraučės Forest.
- An oak grove in Kaulakiai purchased thanks to the „Rustle“ initiative.
- Lithuanians are a nation of mycophiles (mushroom lovers) – an ethnomycological study.
- Protect the forest forever – Ancient Woods Foundation's goals for 2024.
- The relationship between human and the forest is recognised as intangible cultural heritage.
- Entomologist PhD Eduardas Budrys on the bark beetle, an important ecosystem species.
- The social networks of fungi – not only with trees, but also with herbaceous plants and insects.
- About the Foundation on Radio France Internationale (RFI) in France.
- Naming and marking the forests, protected thanks to philanthropists.
- Visiting the Kapiniškės Forest, which protects the source of the Čirkštai spring, with the business community.

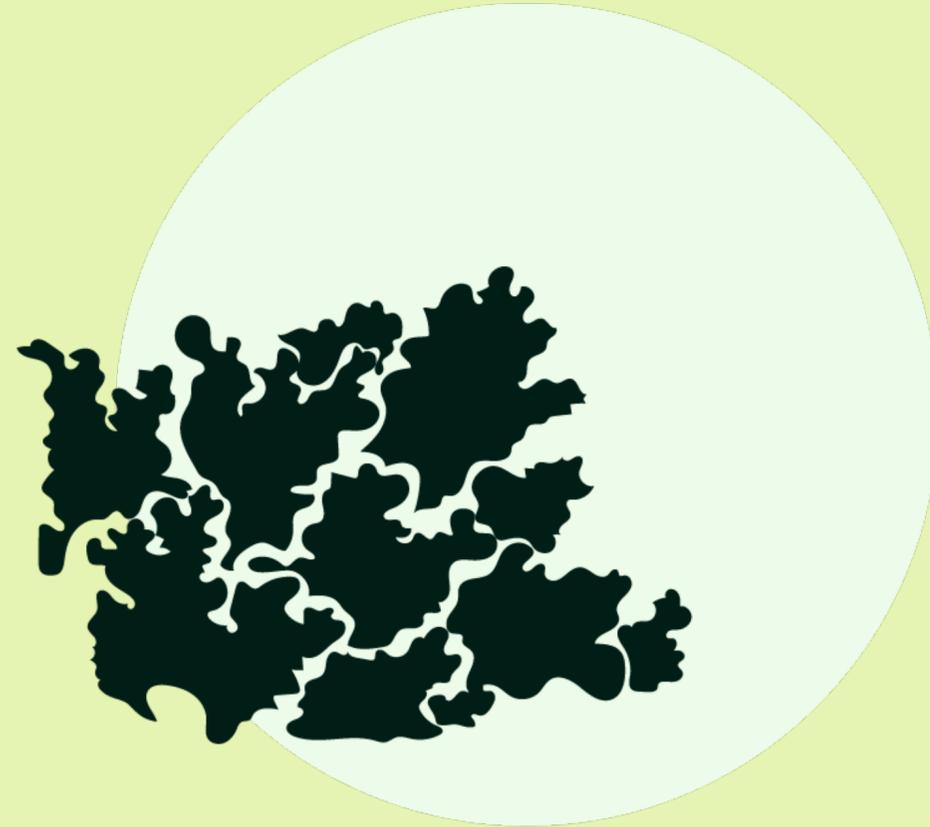
Audience reached

- Facebook 360 787(+62%)
- Instagram 22 436 (+122%)
- LinkedIn 28 697 (+43,49%)



Financial report

Support and costs



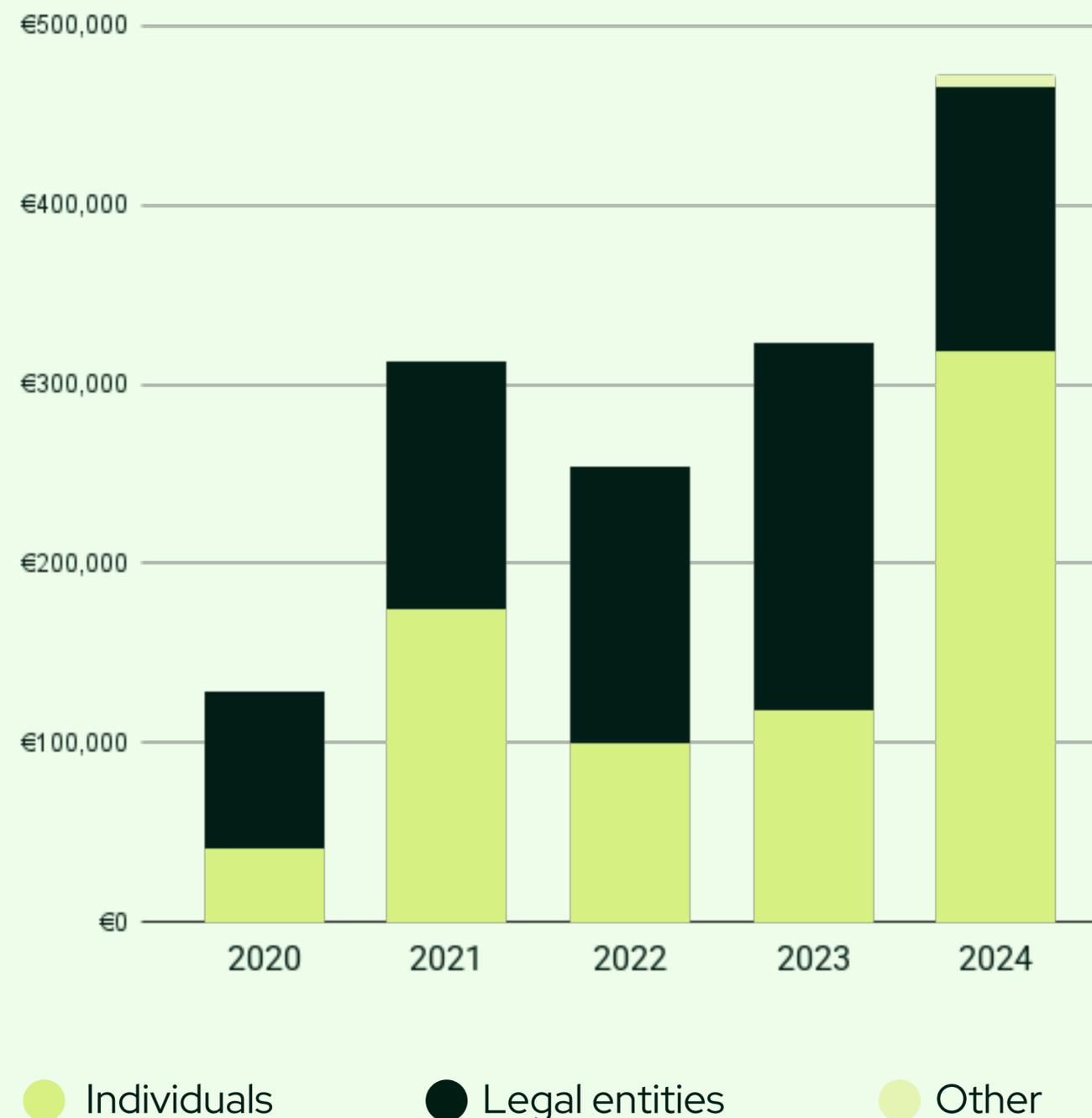
Support for the Foundation's activities in 2024 - EUR 472.219

In 2024, the Foundation's activities received strong financial contributions from regular supporters - individuals, businesses and other organisations, and from newcomers.

The public's contribution through the deposit system of the Public Institution "Deposit System Administrator" has been particularly strong.

The support of individuals accounted for 67.44% of the total support, while the support of legal entities accounted for 31.07%. Support for Natura2000 sites was also received from the National Payments Agency.

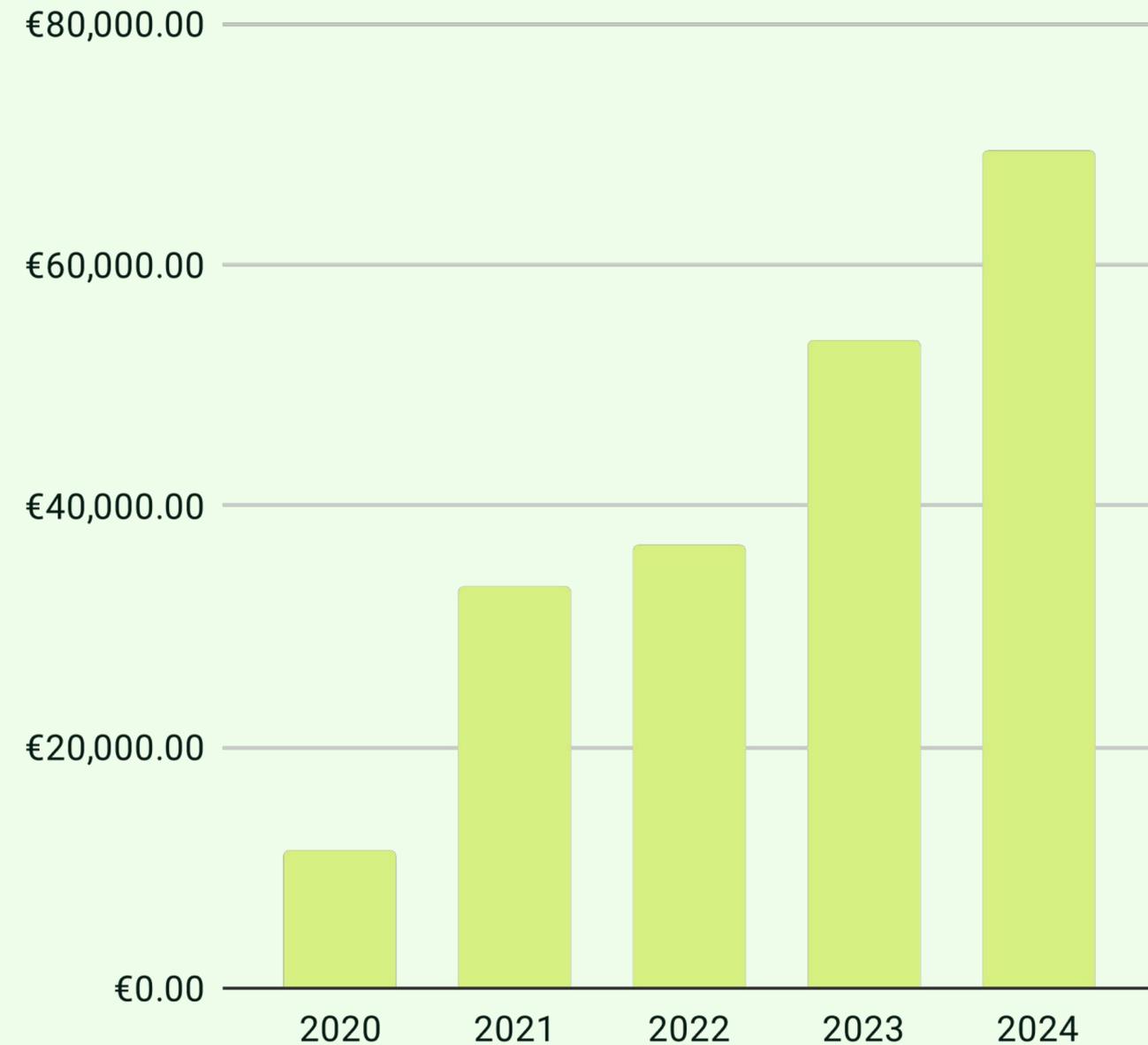
Public support for the conservation of ancient forests and for the activities of the Ancient Woods Foundation has reached EUR 1.4 million in the 5 years of operation.



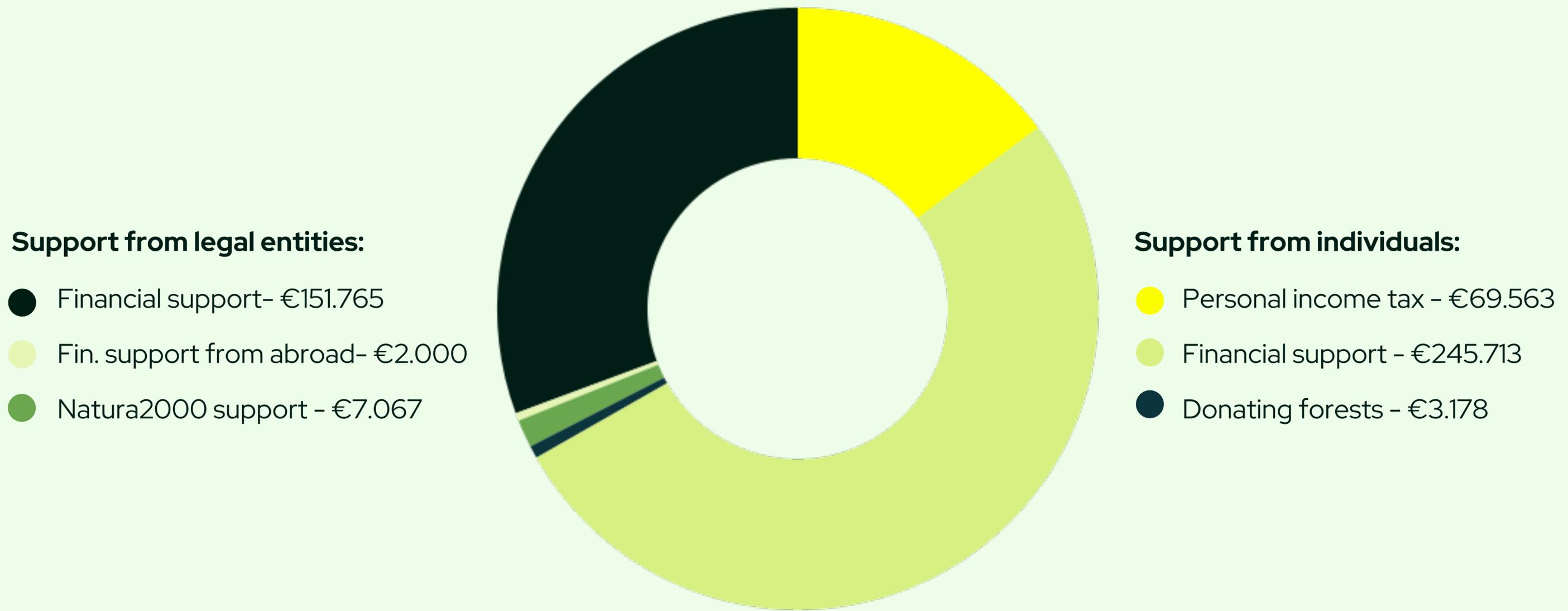
The share of the Personal Income Tax allocated to the operation of the Foundation in 2024 was **EUR 69,563**

The 1.2% share of the personal income tax is growing every year and is a crucial source of support.

In 2024, as many as 1,097 people contributed in this way. This support is planned to finance the acquisition of a forest plot in Labanoras Forest (2025).



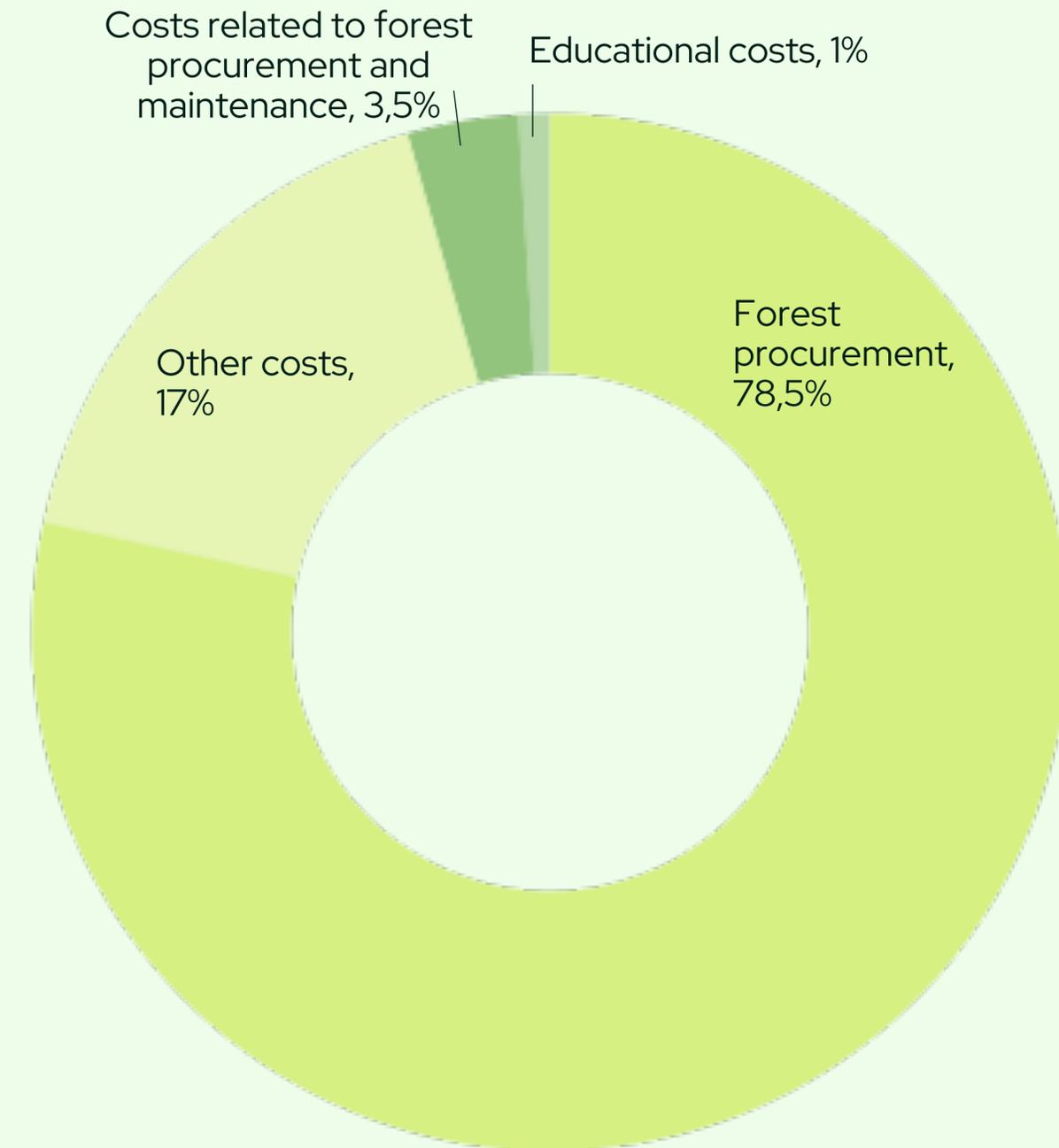
Support for the Foundation's activities in 2024 - EUR 472.219



Costs and purchases in 2024

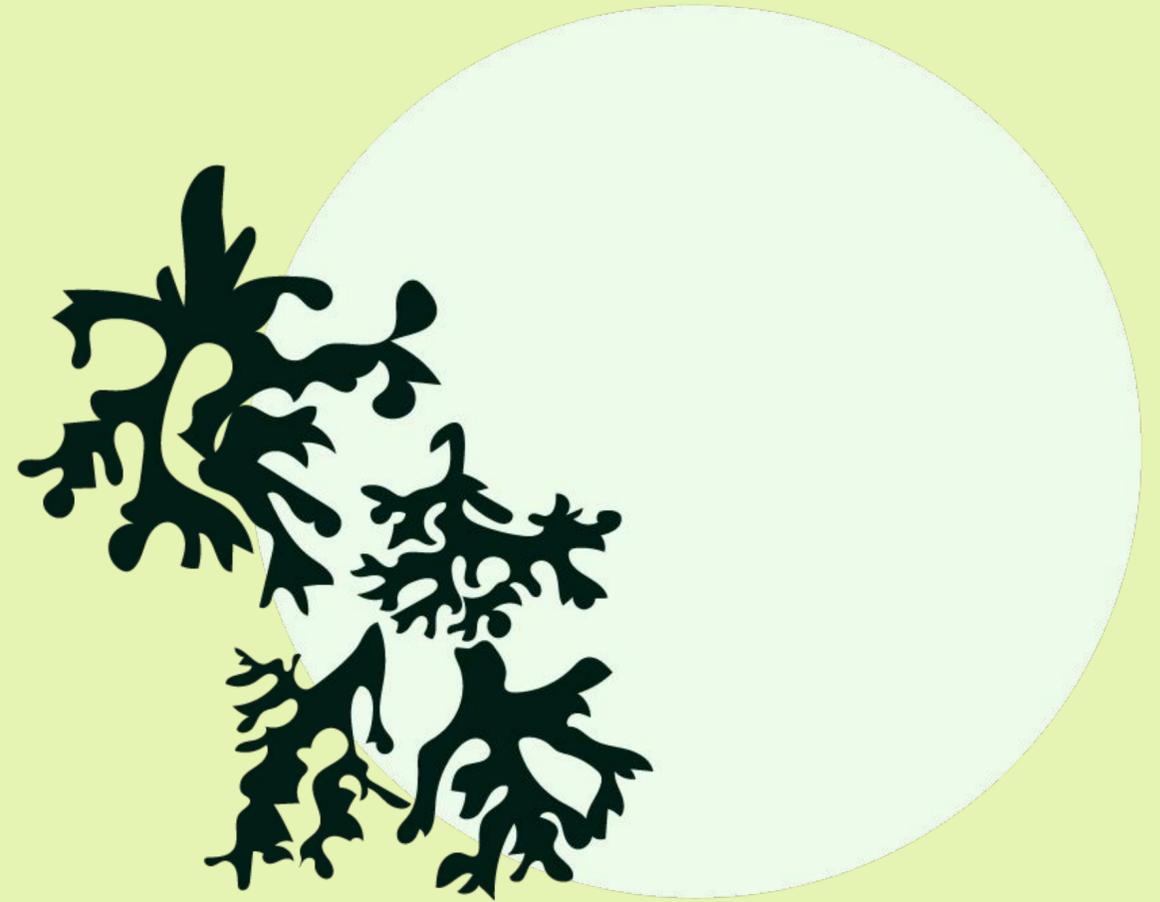
- EUR 228,855.89

- Purchases of forest plots - €179.443,00
- Salaries - €35.119,44
- Brokers' fees (auctions) - €6.336.77
- Educational costs (education, research) - €2.250,00
- Other operating costs (advertising, technology, etc.) - €1.657,84
- Notary services - €1.106,04
- Taxes to the Social Security - €1.032,40
- Accounting services - €720,00
- Bank fees - €634,02
- National Land Service fees (consents to acquire) - €296,00
- Costs at the Registry Center - €99,29
- Land tax - €75,00
- Exchange rate costs - €64,90
- Income tax - €22



Goals for 2025

Key activities



Goals for 2025

- Setting an example for nature conservation **by protecting more than 270 hectares of future old-growth forests**, while expanding existing ones.
- **Increase knowledge and understanding of old-growth forests** by carrying out or initiating at least 5 scientific studies per year in protected forests.
- **Educate the public about the importance of conserving old-growth forests and biodiversity** - initiate an educational project for schoolchildren, continue educational communication in the media, social media and in collaboration with developers.
- Expand the team and organisational capacity of the Ancient Woods Foundation.



Everyone can contribute

Allow the forest to develop naturally

If you have a forest, don't cut it down, let it grow.

Share information

Educate yourself and others about the importance of preserving old-growth forests.

Support financially

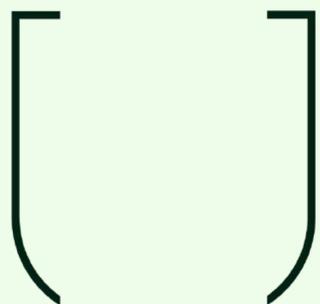
Contribute financially - as a business, personally or through donations at the deposit system.

Donate a forest

The Foundation will make sure that life flourishes there.

Join the team

Contribute your professional knowledge or services.



Sengirės
fondas

www.sengiresfondas.lt
info@sengiresfondas.lt

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Photos by: Ainis Pivoras, Algimantas Rokas Černiauskas, Aurelijus Banelis, Dalia Blažulionytė, Darius Babelis, Emilija Brusokaitė, Erna Domres, Jonas Barzdėnas, Linas Staliūnas, Milda Lomanienė, Mindaugas Survila, Nat Arts, Renatas Jakaitis, Rimantė Paulauskaitė-Digaitienė, Silvija Duoblytė, Simonas Čiūta, Vilma Gudynienė and other Foundations community and media partners.

Illustrations by: Toma Šilinaite-Subačienė, Eglė Plytnikaitė.

