



## **Association Francis Hallé** pour la forêt primaire

---

# **The creation of a vast primary forest in western europe**

**The ambition of the Francis Hallé Association is to re-introduce a large scale primary forest in Western Europe.**

We want to allow the development of an old-growth forest, that is to say, a large area in which nature can "re-wild", grow and develop its flora and fauna in an autonomous way without human intervention. Our objective is to accomplish this in Western Europe starting in France.

Our mission will be to create the appropriate scientific, legal, and technical conditions that will allow us to constitute a European primary forest.

Primary forests are being plundered in the tropics. They have almost disappeared from Europe. France has no primary forests left since 1850.

**The Francis Hallé Association** harbors these objectives and remains open to all persons sharing our concern with the environment and those wanting to help us realize these objectives.



# Why are we taking this action?

France lies between the 43° and 50° latitude North. At this same latitudinal position, several other countries have preserved their primary forests. The scientific, cultural, environmental, touristic, and poetic values of these spaces are undeniable.

These countries are:

The United States of America, Russia, China, and Japan, in the northern hemisphere.

Argentina, Chile, Tasmania, and New Zealand in the southern hemisphere.

In Europe, several countries are more advanced than France in the "re-wilding" of their forests, Germany being a good example

***«There is a real global emergency to protect our environment »***

All over the world, primary forests are on the brink of extinction. Those forests which still exist are exposed to grave dangers. Close to France, the last remaining primary forest in Europe, Białowieża in Poland, is in danger of disappearing due to projected commercial exploitation.

The very concept of an intact primary forest near to us is not much more than a distant memory. Those teaching forest management

today consider that a forest which is not managed by humans is incapable of surviving on its own. The Francis Hallé Association is committed to setting the record straight on this subject.

***«We have waited too long to take action»***

A primary forest is richer in life forms than secondary forests such as the over-gardened, over-exploited, pathetic examples we live near to in Europe.

At the beginning of the 21st century, human activities in a post-industrial civilization are accelerating at an ever faster rate. The media, digital revolution, rapid logistics, changes in technology and production, and an informational overload are all contributing to this acceleration. It is alarming to observe that the natural sciences are all disappearing from our school's curriculums.

Our life styles are affected by this and life is more and more hectic.

**Trees and the floral and faunal environment that they thrive in are vital to us.**

The origin of humanity can be intrinsically traced back to the canopy of the equatorial African forests. The ecosystems in these forests, i.e., plants, animals, living beings of all kinds condition the existence of human life.

***It is essential and urgent that we reconstruct vast areas of wild, free , and diversified nature.***



# Today...

---



Our project is at loggerheads with the predatory economy that is exhausting our natural resources, destabilizing our climate and ecosystems and threatening to destroy our environment.

## **Our project will have a vital role in the struggle to combat global warming and preserve our precious environment**

A re-wilded primary forest in France will be more efficient than the existing ones which are too small<sup>(1)</sup>. They will offer:

- **A weapon in the combat against global warming because of the decarbonizing capacities** inherent to trees, especially large ones, as well as the carbon storing they operate in the soil.
- **An expansion of a new, large, and reconstituted reservoir of biodiversity** which is essential to life on our planet. It is fundamental that we re-create extensive spaces free from human presence or predation in order to insure the success in our efforts to preserve flora and fauna. In this way we will be able to restore the wildlife linked to old-growth forests and produce a large variety of micro-habitats for small and large mammals, insects, fungi, cavity nesters, etc.
- **The possibility to improve the quality of our water resources.**
- **A gradual establishment of a European network** of large wild and re-wilded forests that will link existing forests with new ones.

## **A leverage to scientific research**

- **For example, research and development** in plant and animal biology, botany, pharmacology, etc. will be positively effected in these new forests. The observations and discoveries made in environments left free from human intervention are much richer than simple monitoring of statistical studies.
- **On-site laboratories and residences will provide significant observational platforms** in which to do data analysis, process evaluation, ("flux tower" for the monitoring of greenhouse gases, for example) an accelerated production of knowledge, etc.



## **Local development, enhance citizenry, and will be open to artistic projects**

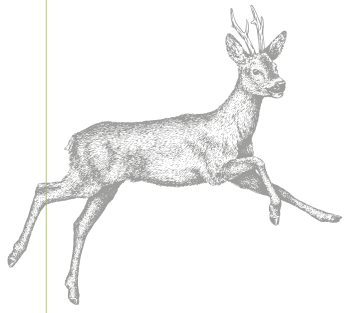
- **Our project will give the public the opportunity** to have direct contact with their environment thus encouraging their concern with its preservation and protection. Hopefully all of this can be consolidated by incorporating artistic programs which will elucidate and illustrate our objectives.
- **Teaching and discovery activities will be offered to the public**, which will enable the development of a harmonious co-existence with our natural environment and its flora and fauna.
- **We will propose the creation of structures** necessary to promote limited and sustainable eco-tourism<sup>(2)</sup>.
- **We will install conference, exhibition, and meeting spaces** that will be devoted to wildlife and primary forests. These spaces will be dedicated to the transmission of scientific and artistic projects focusing on our natural world to the general public. They will also offer a pole for scientific research, exchanges.

## **«Our project reconciles humanity with its ecosystem»**

**The ambition of this project will be to consolidate scientific, cultural, and artistic initiatives that can be used to enhance the public's awareness of the necessity to re-imagine our co-existence with our natural world.**

The success of this will depend on our capacity to encourage and motivate the participation of all citizens.

New economic and legal structures will need to be implemented. Isn't it high-time that we consider that non-humans can benefit from protection by our legal codes? Shouldn't we accept that flora and fauna have natural legal rights? Our forests will become the forum in which we discuss, imagine, evaluate, and define the place nature rightfully has in our democratic institutions.



## ... and tomorrow

**This project has long-term dimensions and is a ground-breaking undertaking that is designed to last for centuries.** The millenary perspective of this visionary and multi-disciplinary initiative offers the possibility to encourage **the transmission of our natural heritage to future generations.** The re-wilded forests will become a message to future generations and will be existentially beneficial to their well-being. **Our engagement will encourage the preservation of this and other re-constituted natural areas.**

### **This is a cost-effective project needing minor investment**

Far from being a utopia, this project will begin in an existing environment such as a forest subject to exploitation and harvesting, or an abandoned forest. These locations can provide the starting points for a pilot project. Once procured, the forest will re-create itself in time.

Guarding costs are to be expected.

**The cost of this project is mainly a question of land tenure. Obtaining the land necessary for a vast forest will be the most important part of our projects investment budget.** Once the land has been acquired, the forest manages itself in an autonomous way as it has done for thousands of years.

The cost of maintaining the forest and our infrastructures will be limited and largely self-financed. Gradually, and within reasonable limits, according to the specifics of each location, amenities for the general public can be added that will encourage the transmission of scientific, cultural, and artistic research. These will eventually create new financial resources for our project.

### **This project can begin immediately!**

This is a project that we can create today and it will have an incredible impact on the environment with a positive return on investment.

The Francis Hallé Association wants to engage itself immediately in the design and realization of this project. To make this happen, short, middle and long-term plans must be defined in conjunction with local, national, and international authorities and institutions. The first step that we must accomplish is to locate and acquire the vast space necessary to allow the forest to re-generate itself.

**The Francis Hallé Association is open to all who want to participate with us and we call upon all public and private institutions willing to give us the means to make our objective a reality.**

(1) In the short term, this project would start from an existing natural forest which will be left to itself. A larger area will be necessary for the second phase which will allow the diversification of biological, geographical, and topographical aspects such as the sufficient dissemination of animals and seeds, the genetic recombination of species, the development of large size trees, the presence of dead wood, etc. An area of about 60,000 hectares is considered the minimum necessary for the re-introduction of large fauna.

(2) If tourist visits are authorized, it will be essential to limit the number of visitors allowed. The trampling of soft soil within the primary forest would be damaging to tree life. Diverse technical innovations need to be designed and implemented in order to avoid all degradations. For example, wooden walkways should replace trails. Any contact with the groundfloor needs to be avoided. Another example is the "Accrobranche" (rope walkways) which can be used to spend the night on top of the canopy.

**«A large primary forest restored in Europe, it's possible.  
It's a question of will»»**

**Association Francis Hallé pour la forêt primaire**  
Mairie, 8 place de la Collégiale 87120 EYMOUTIERS

**Mail : [fhalle.assoc@posteo.net](mailto:fhalle.assoc@posteo.net)**

**[www.foretprimaire-francishalle.org](http://www.foretprimaire-francishalle.org)**

**[f](#) FrancisHalle.ForetPrimaire [t](#) assofhalleforet [@](#) francishalleforetprimaire**

