

# IENE 2014 declaration

## Protect remaining roadless areas

### We, the participants of the IENE 2014 International Conference, acknowledge that

- the mobility of people and goods is important for economic development; transportation facilities such as roads, railroads and canals bring benefit to people and are essential components of present-day human societies,
- transportation infrastructure with its associated traffic exerts substantial pressures on biodiversity that extend far from individual transportation corridors and may interact and even accumulate at network level ,
- even minor infrastructure is of significance as it prepares for exploitation of natural resources and secondary development,
- the detrimental environmental impacts of traffic and transportation infrastructure can only in part be mitigated effectively, but not entirely avoided.

### Roadless areas (RLA) are of particular importance for biodiversity conservation, because they

- are the least disturbed natural areas in the world,
- are characterized by high ecological value, integrity and connectivity,
- act as refuges for native and endangered wild animals and plants,
- provide vital ecosystem services such as clean water and air, opportunities for recreation, and protection against pests and invasive species,
- are more resistant to and resilient from catastrophic events,
- help species to adapt to new conditions created by climate and landscape change.

Thus, roadless areas far exceed roaded areas in the ecological benefits they provide.

Europe has been fragmented by transportation infrastructure for a long time. Accordingly, preserving the continent's last remaining roadless areas will significantly contribute to prevent further loss of biodiversity. Preserving roadless areas is hence necessary for reaching the UN Aichi strategic goals and EU biodiversity targets.

*Therefore we, the participants of the IENE 2014 International Conference, call for a pan-European strategy to protect roadless areas.*

### We urge that such areas are given a stronger conservation status in policy, planning and practice, both nationally and internationally, by

- mapping and monitoring roadless areas at national as well as European level,
- incorporating roadless areas explicitly as conservation targets in national and European policy and legislation,
- avoiding infrastructure development in roadless areas,
- identifying areas of particular value for restoration as roadless areas,
- regularly monitor and evaluate the efforts to protect roadless areas,
- re-creating roadless areas by means of road closure and removal.

*The IENE 2014 International Conference has highlighted the ecological and social benefits of roadless areas, outlined solutions for how transportation infrastructure can be developed without compromising these benefits, and shown that the transport sector is able and willing to contribute substantially to implementing these solutions.*