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greenbelt

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# The contribution of the European Green Belt to EU-level Green Infrastructure

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in collaboration with  
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\*in accordance with UNSCR 1244 and opinion of ICJ.

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## European Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy Enhancing Europe's Natural Capital



GI: a **strategically planned network** of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to **deliver a wide range of ecosystem services** [...] is present in rural and urban settings. [COM/2013/0249 final]

GI is contribution for protecting biodiversity, promoting ecosystem services, societal health and well-being. [EC DG ENVIRONMENT 2012]

[European Union 2013: Building a Green Infrastructure for Europe]

Local ↔ Regional ↔ National ↔ Transnational (EU-Level)

## Relevant EU policies and documents

- EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (European Commission, 2011): one of the six main targets is GI development
- Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy – Enhancing Europe’s Natural Capital (European Commission, 2013)
- Supporting the implementation of Green Infrastructure – Final Report (European Commission, 2016): Assessing costs and benefits of a possible TEN-G (making GI a policy and funding priority)
- EU Action Plan for nature, people and the economy (European Commission, 2017): Provide guidance to support the deployment of GI for better connectivity of Natura 2000 areas
- In progress: Guidance on a strategic framework for further supporting the deployment of EU-level green and blue infrastructure. To be published by EC at the end of 2018

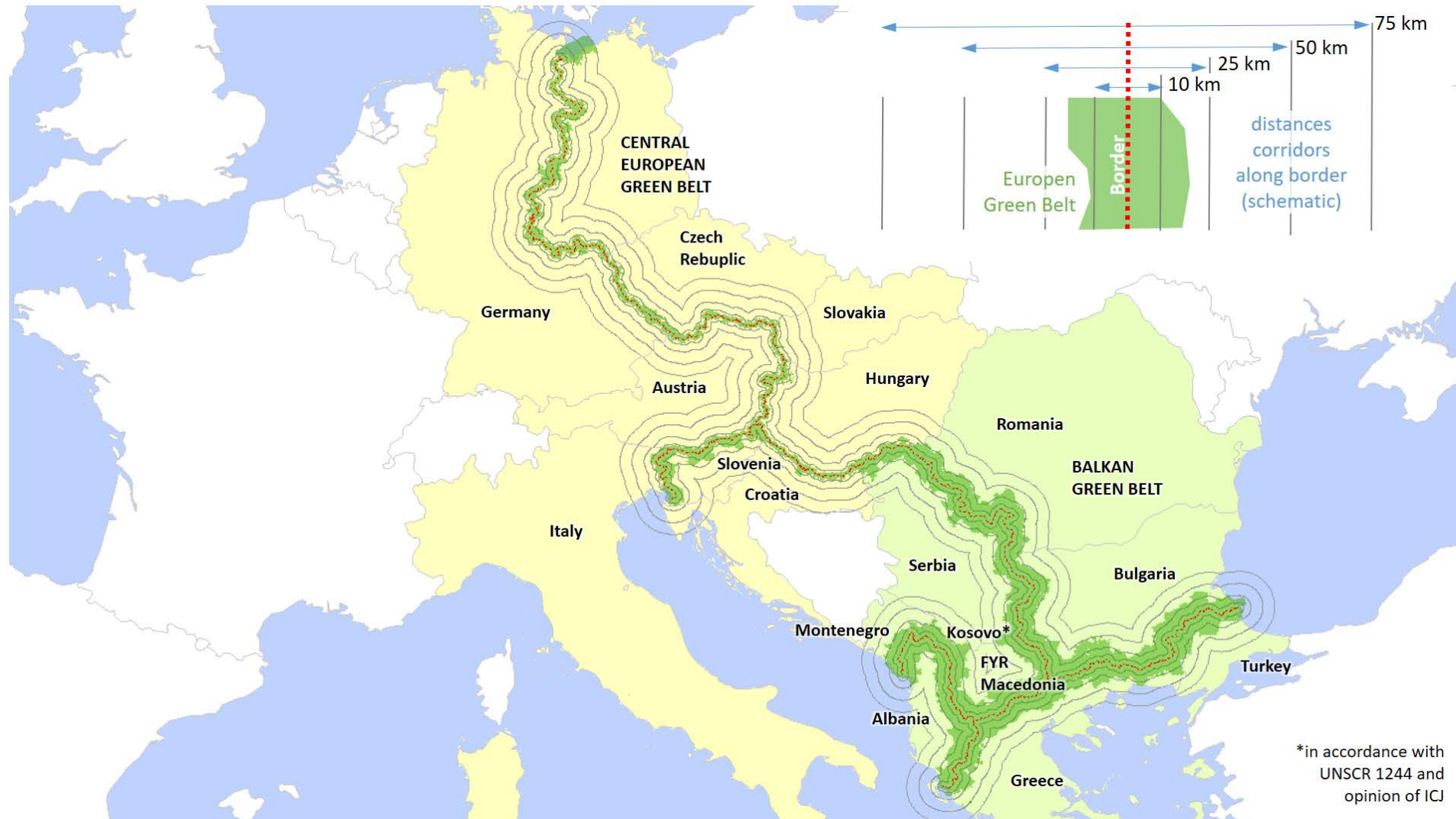
## Core criteria and European added value:

Such projects should fulfil the following **cumulative criteria**:

- i) Enhance the delivery of **multiple ecosystem services**;
- ii) Significantly contribute to the **goals of EU Nature legislation**;
- iii) **Strategic approach with an EU-level impact**: either a scale which is significant and transcends administrative boundaries; or involve a minimum of two Member States; or implement a national GI strategy or a national restoration prioritisation framework



# Analysis Approach

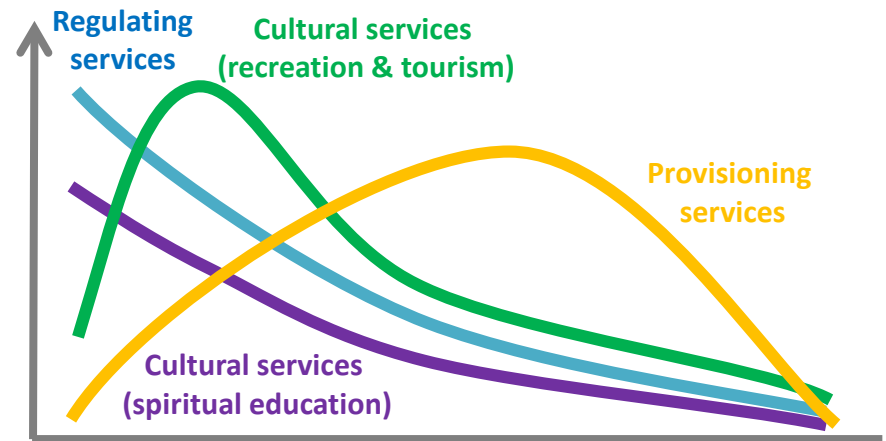




# i) Contribution to multiple ecosystem services



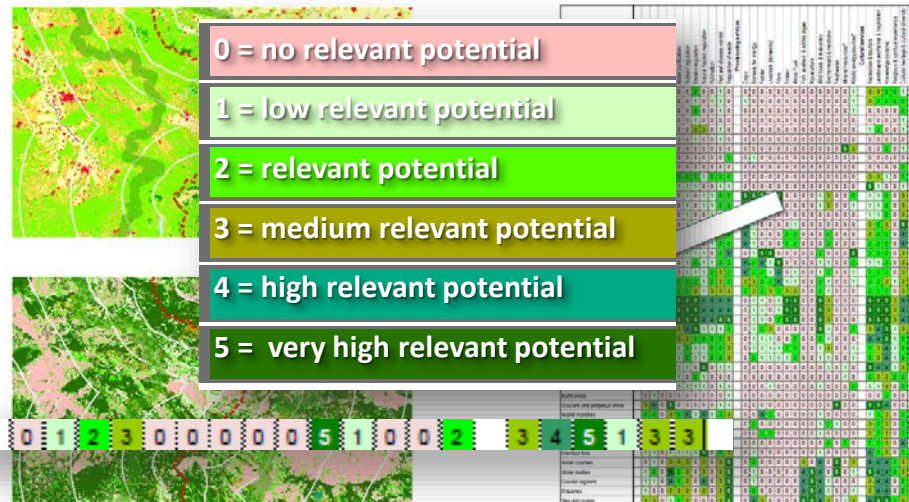
The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA, 2005)



Natural – Light Use – Extensive – Intensive – Degraded

Adopted and changed from: Braat & ten Brink 2008:128f.

**Method Approach:**  
Assignment of  
potential Ecosystem Services to

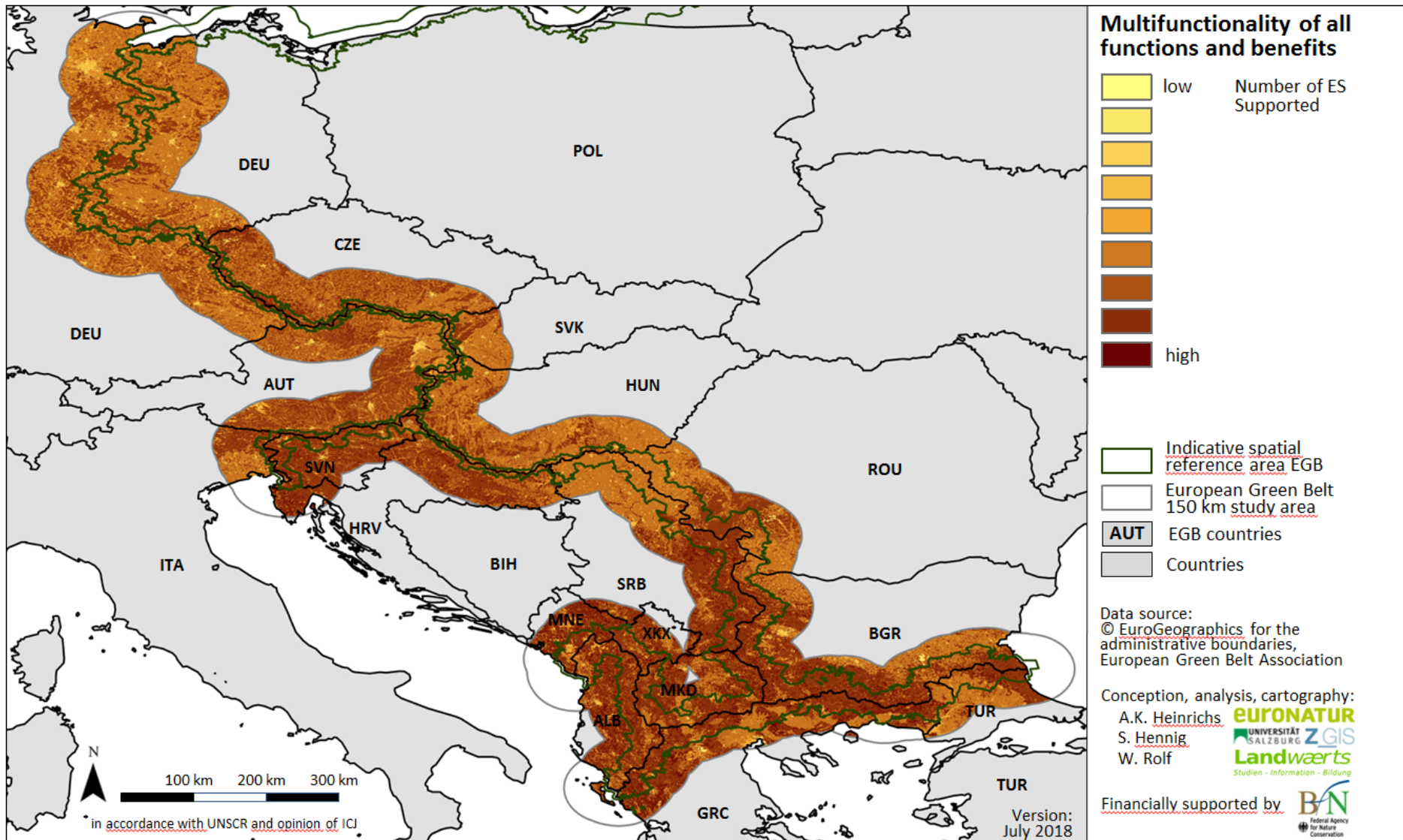


Natural grassland | 5 2 0 1 3 4 5 1 1 1 2

Burkhard et al., 2014



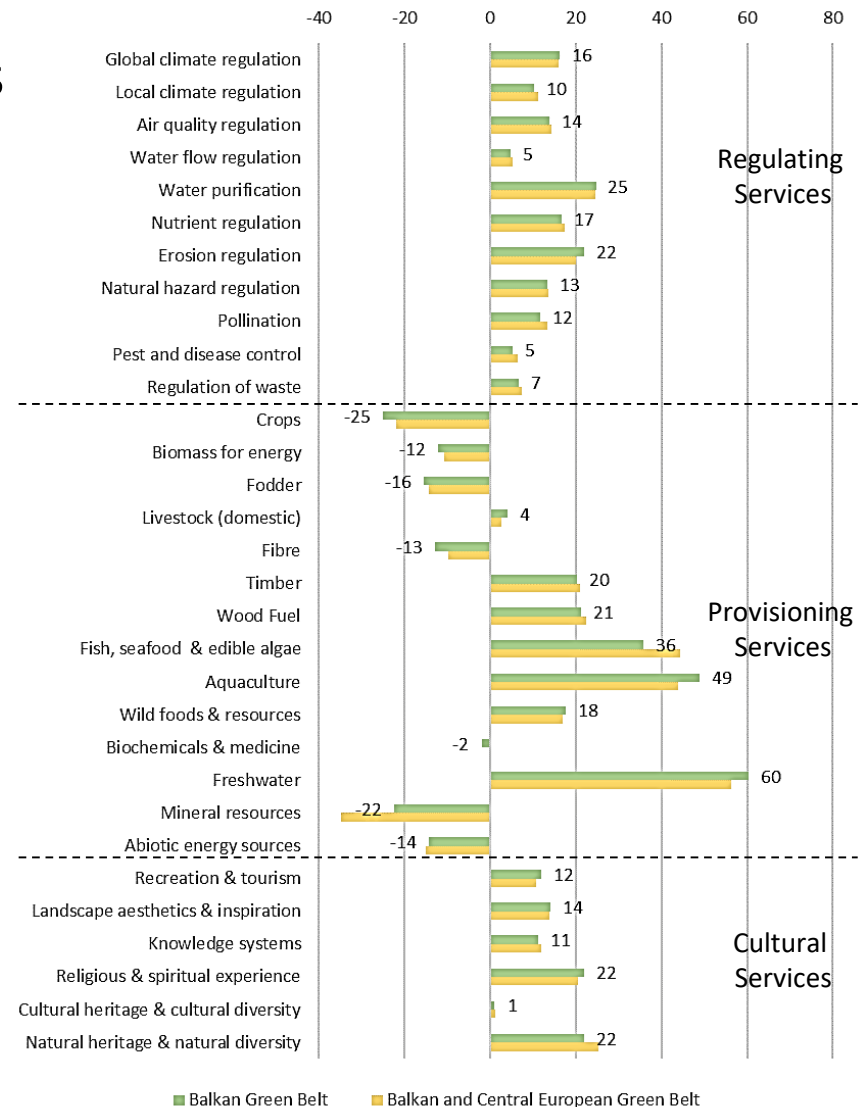
# i) Contribution to multiple ecosystem services





# i) Contribution to multiple ecosystem services

## Contribution to functions and benefits

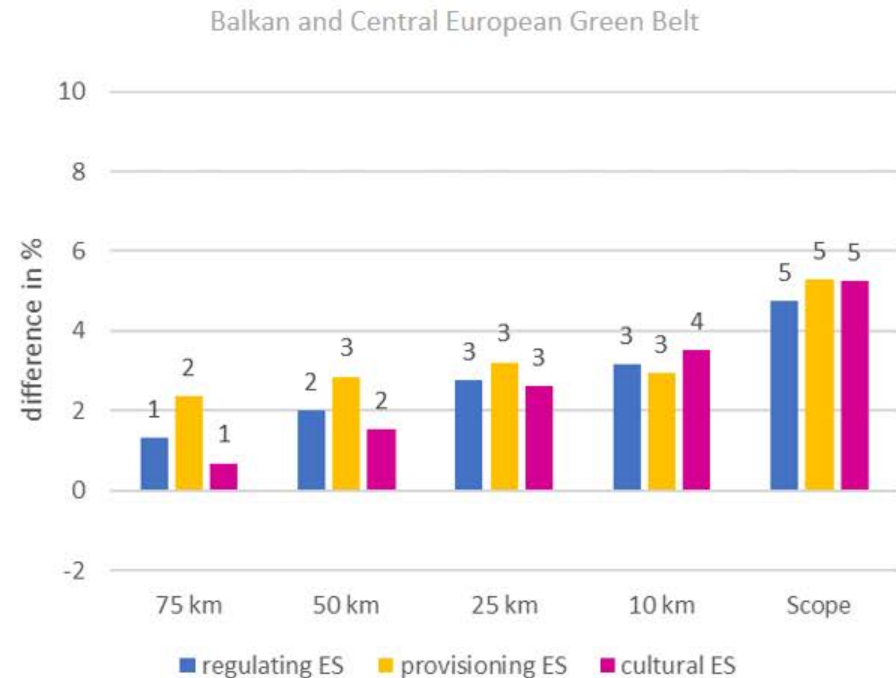






## i) Contribution to multiple ecosystem services

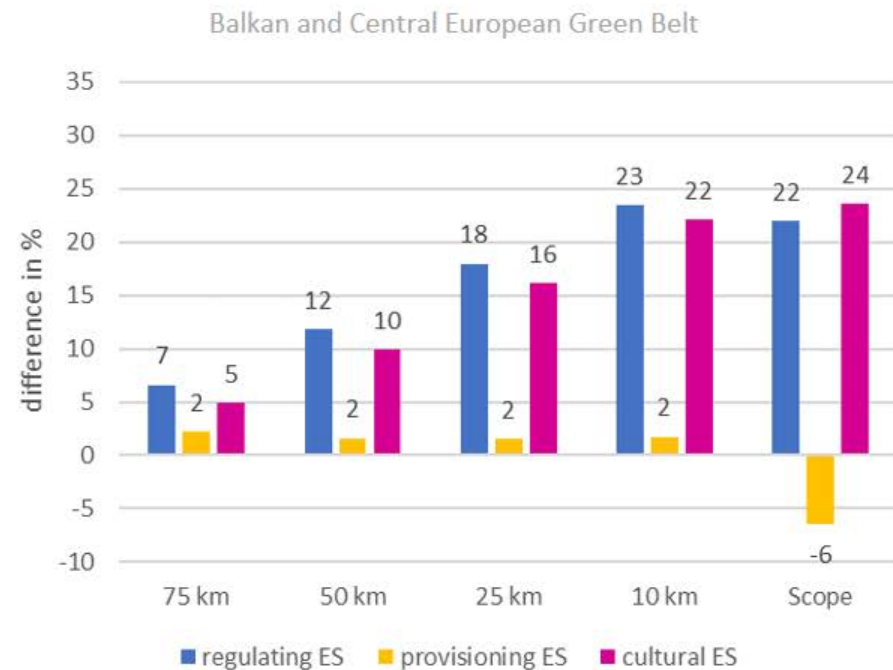
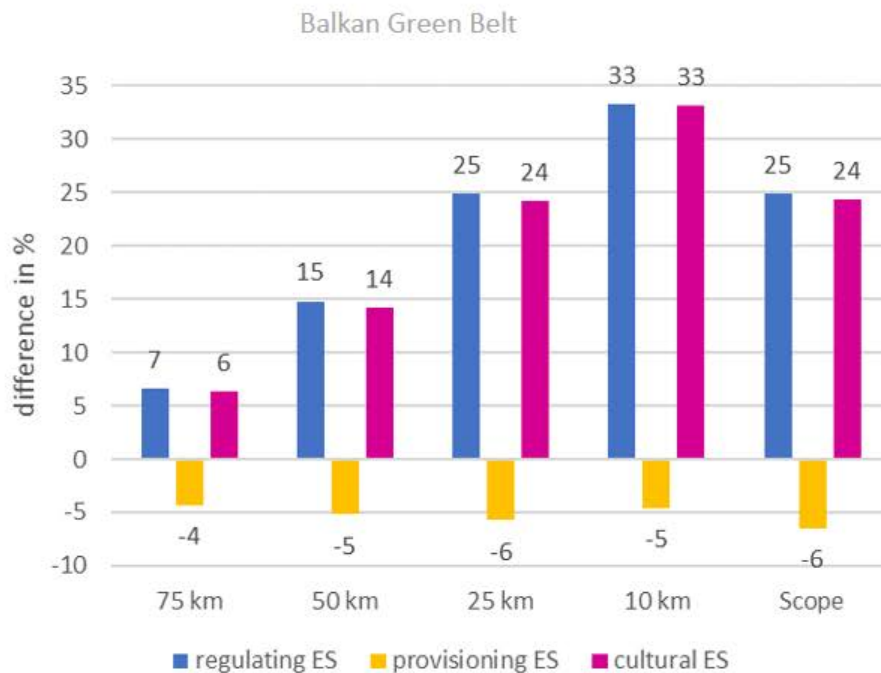
### Contribution to multifunctionality of all functions and benefits





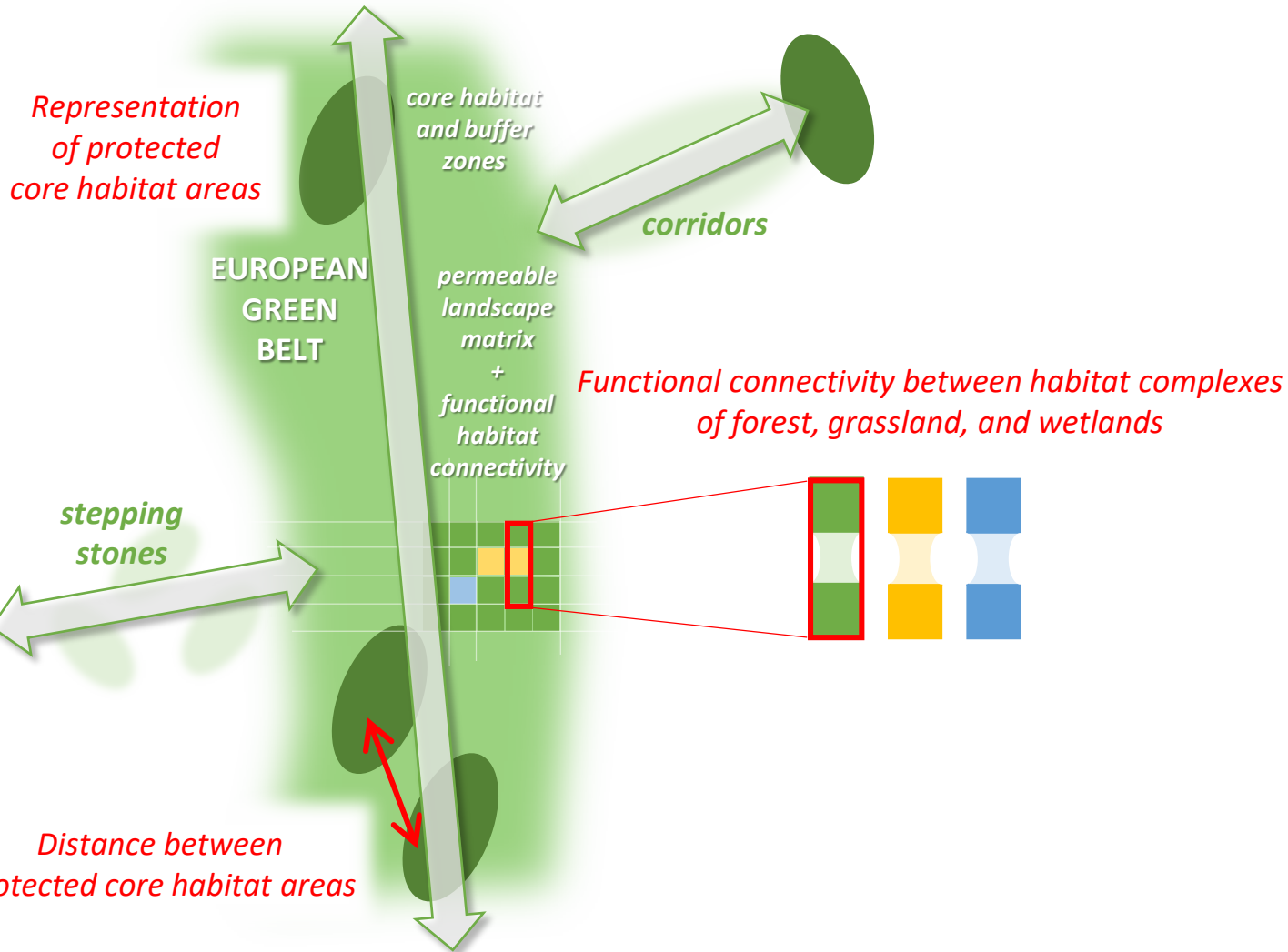
## i) Contribution to multiple ecosystem services

### Contribution to multifunctionality of high functions and benefits





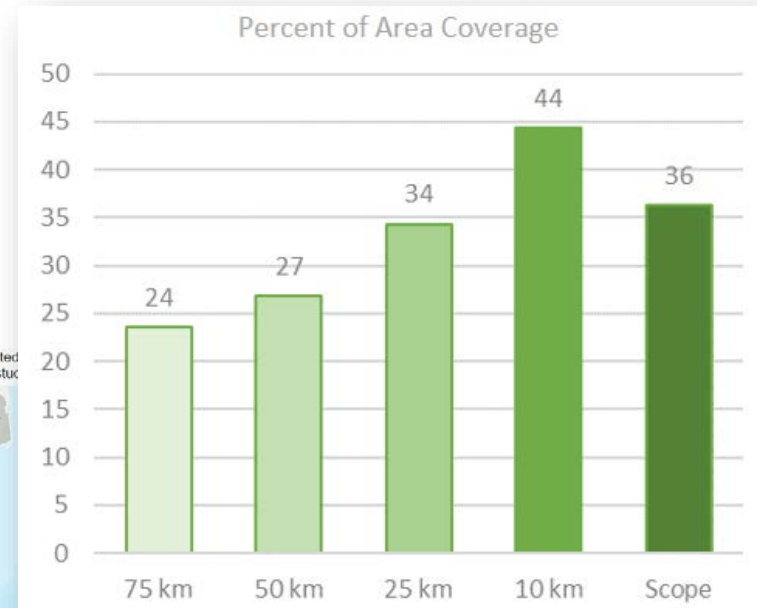
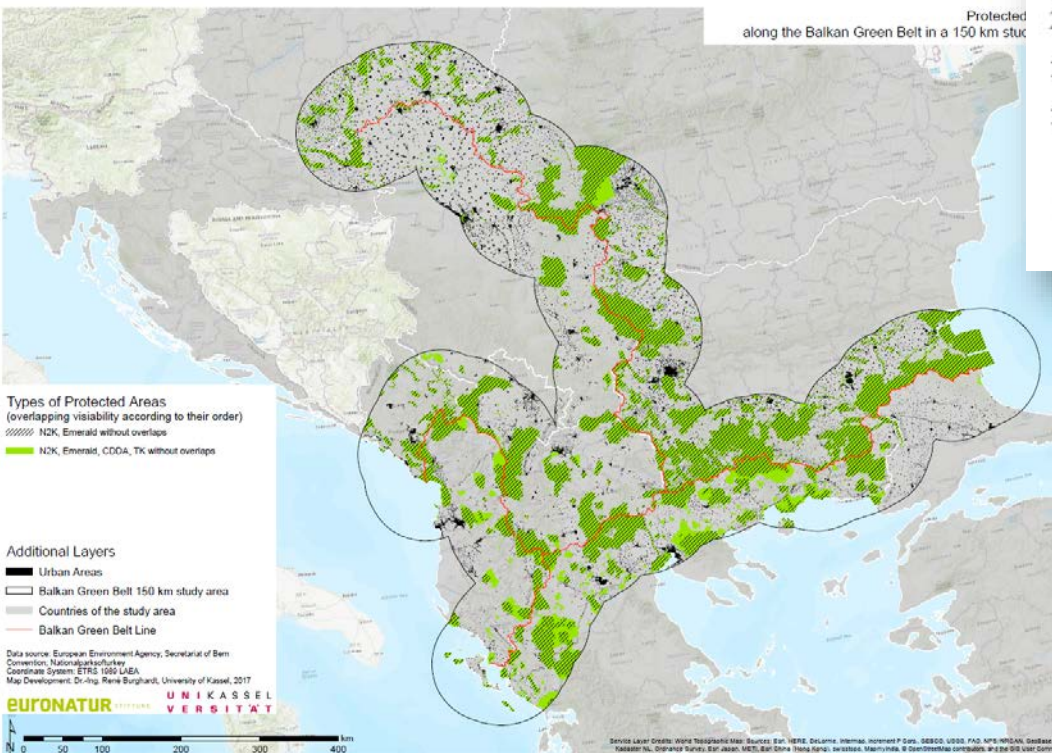
## ii) Contribution to EU Nature Legislation





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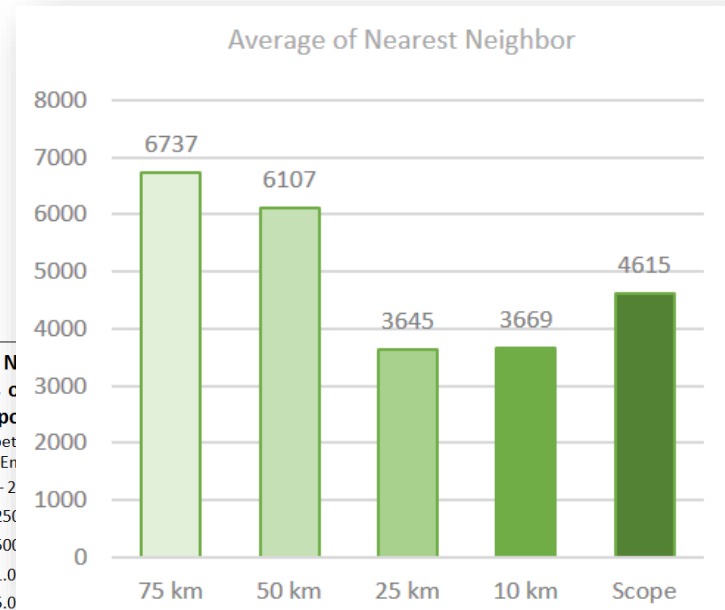
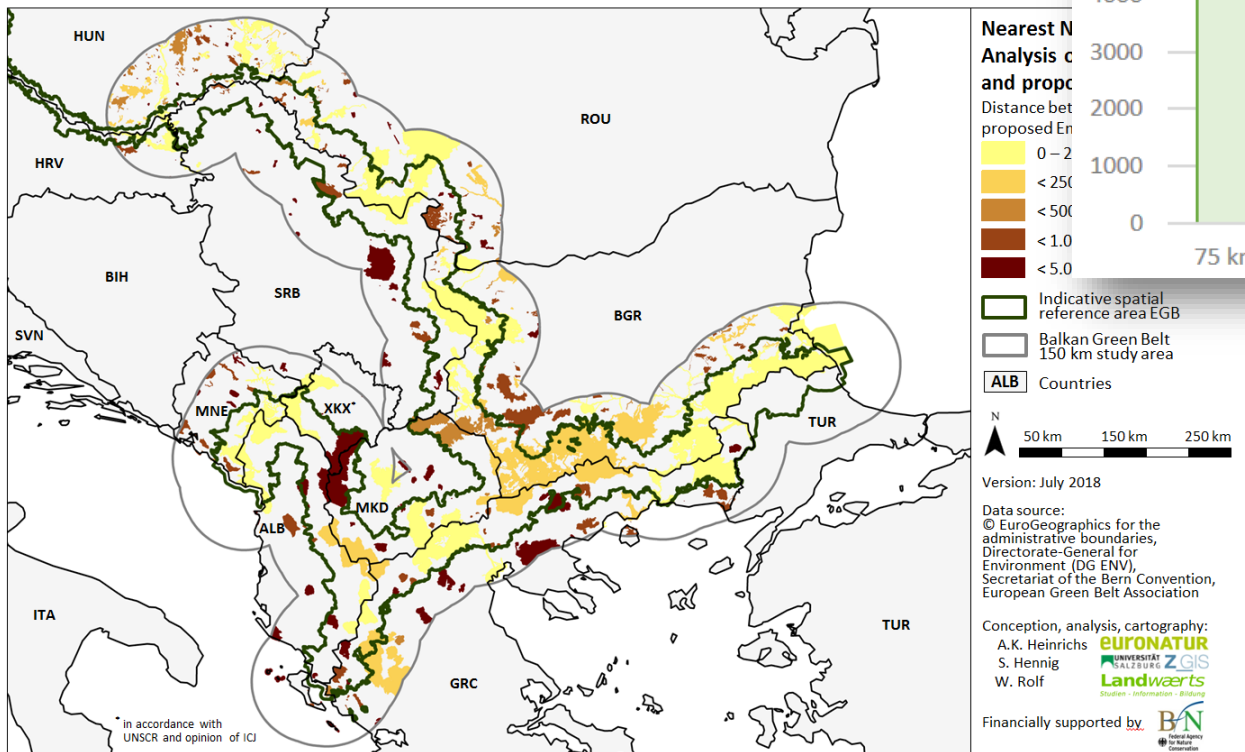
Core habitat – protected areas  
along Balkan Green Belt





## ii) Contribution to EU Nature Legislation

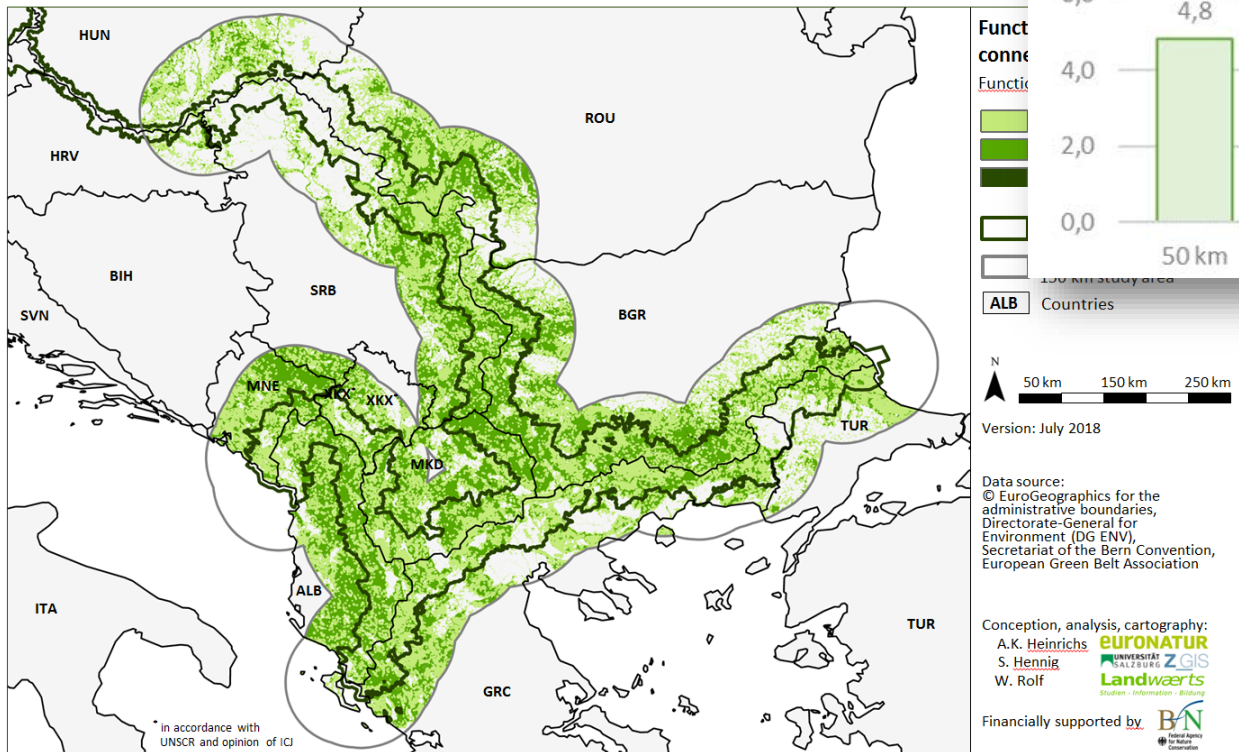
### Spatial coherence of protected area network along Balkan Green Belt





## ii) Contribution to EU Nature Legislation

### Functional habitat connectivity potentials within Balkan Green Belt



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Legend:  
 4,0+  
 2,0  
 0,0

150 km study area

ALB Countries

N  
 50 km 150 km 250 km

Version: July 2018

Data source:  
 © EuroGeographics for the administrative boundaries,  
 Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV),  
 Secretariat of the Bern Convention,  
 European Green Belt Association

Conception, analysis, cartography:  
 A.K. Heinrichs **EUFONATUR**  
 S. Hennig **UNIVERSITÄT ZÜRICH**  
 W. Rolf **Landwärts**  
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 National Agency for Nature Conservation

### Qualitative analysis:

**Scale** (which is significant and transcends administrative boundaries)

- Significant scale which transcends administrative boundaries on different levels;

**Cooperation** (involvement of a minimum of two Member States)

- Various types of cooperation on pan-European level;
- well-established and long-lasting transboundary cooperation amongst EU and non-EU countries as well as between governmental and non-governmental organizations from all 24 countries of the European Green Belt;
- Structure in place to support strategic and co-ordinated approach on a pan-European level

**Relevance** for Member states (national GI strategy or prioritization framework)

- Several countries recognize EGB as a relevant element contributing to national GI concepts



## In summary:

- Multifunctionality analysis results, suggest that **EGB contributes to EU level GI criteria I multiple ecosystem services**. In particular multiple regulating and cultural functions and benefits with high and very high potentials have been found significantly higher than in all adjacent countries.
- Connectivity analysis results suggest that **EGB contributes to EU level GI criteria II goals of EU Nature legislation**. According used indicators EGB contributes to a higher proportion and better connectivity of core habitats (Natura 2000/ Emerald) and a better functional connectivity between different habitat types within the landscape matrix outside of protected areas.
- Qualitative analysis results suggest that **EGB contributes to EU level GI criteria III strategic approach with an EU-level impact**, in particular due to promoting cooperation on pan-European level and contribution to implementation of a national GI strategy.