



## Ostwind e. V. requirements

### of accommodation along the European Primeval Forest Route

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Hiking on sections of the European Primeval Forest Route is committed to local and global nature conservation. The intercultural exchange in Europe as well as the engagement of people who are involved in ecological projects along the route are also to be promoted.

The European Primeval Forest Route is to be provided with a bonus program, that means with the acquisition of eco-miles. Hikers acquire eco miles through:

- personally documented and centrally recorded hiking performance,
- by traveling to and from the hiking trails by public transport and train,
- overnightstays in sustainable accommodation,
- participation in guided tours in nature preservation areas,
- visiting exhibitions, participating in environmental education events and seminars,
- participation in environmental activities along the route (e.g. forest reforestation),
- participation in the mentioned activities in a foreign language (eco-miles),
- assistance in building up information about the route and natural special attraction of nature and landscape.

The hikers receive a certificate for the amount of proven eco-miles that has yet to be defined, as well as a photo book of the corresponding route for passing a number of control points that have yet to be determined.

#### Sustainable accommodation for hikers

In several countries through which the Primeval Forest Route runs, accommodation providers use ecolabels and other ecological certificates to document their sustainability and to market them as a quality feature on appropriate internet platforms.

In both Germany and Austria, the Association of Biohotels offers joint marketing for the member companies. An external auditor checks compliance with the requirements imposed by the association. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per overnight stay must not exceed 40 kg per guest per night. Biohotels usually have a high standard of comfort.

In Germany, accommodation providers can use the VIABONO and DEHOGA Umweltcheck Gold ecolabels. The financial outlay is relatively low for the participating companies because there is no

external audit, only submitted documents are checked. This increases the spread of the label. The CO2 footprint per overnight stay must be 30 percent lower than in an average comparison group of accommodation providers.

Austria has taken a different path. The Ministry of the Environment is distributing the European Ecolabel for hotels and is setting even higher ecological requirements with an Austrian Ecolabel based on it. An external audit is associated with the Ecolabel. Since only a few accommodation establishments have used this certification so far, despite state funding, it will be necessary for hikers on the Primeval Forest Route in Austria to name additional accommodations that meet sustainability requirements and climate protection goals.

In Slovakia, Romania and Ukraine, Ostwind doesn't know any sustainable certified accommodation near by the Primeval Forest Route. The company Cleantech Slovakia has started the initiative for a program for sustainable tourism in Slovakia. More detailed information is missing here.

#### Further requirements for accommodation for hikers along the European Primeval Forest Route

In addition to the CO-2 footprint and the environmental friendliness of accommodation providers, accessibility by public transport and communication in German or English are of central importance for hikers. It is also necessary that the accommodation is ready to take hikers for a single night, and it is desirable that the overnight stay can be canceled or changed.

Advantages are:

- transport to and from the hiking route,
- luggage transport to the next accommodation,
- website and email contact for pre-planning the hiking trips,
- an orderable dinner, also for the later evening,
- sale of local hiking maps,
- arranging guided tours to attractions of nature and landscape,
- assistance in obtaining permits for hiking in protected areas.

The website [www.wild-forest-trail.eu](http://www.wild-forest-trail.eu) is intended to provide information about the accommodation and the environmental qualities and services.

Beyond the Primeval Forest Route, the aim should be that hiking portals such as [Outdooractive.com](http://Outdooractive.com) identify sustainable accommodation with a special symbol. Then Ostwind could link to this from the website [www.wild-forest-trail.eu](http://www.wild-forest-trail.eu).

A future goal is the development of a European booking platform for sustainable accommodation.