



Setting priorities in conservation and restoration in the Mediterranean Biodiversity Hotspot



Setting priorities in conservation and restoration

- nearly 65 % of the habitat types and 52 % of the species listed in the Annexes to the Habitats Directive have an unfavourable conservation status

EU's 2020 biodiversity indicators:

- Number of threatened species
- Number of protected species in favourable conservation status
- State of ecosystems

The EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020



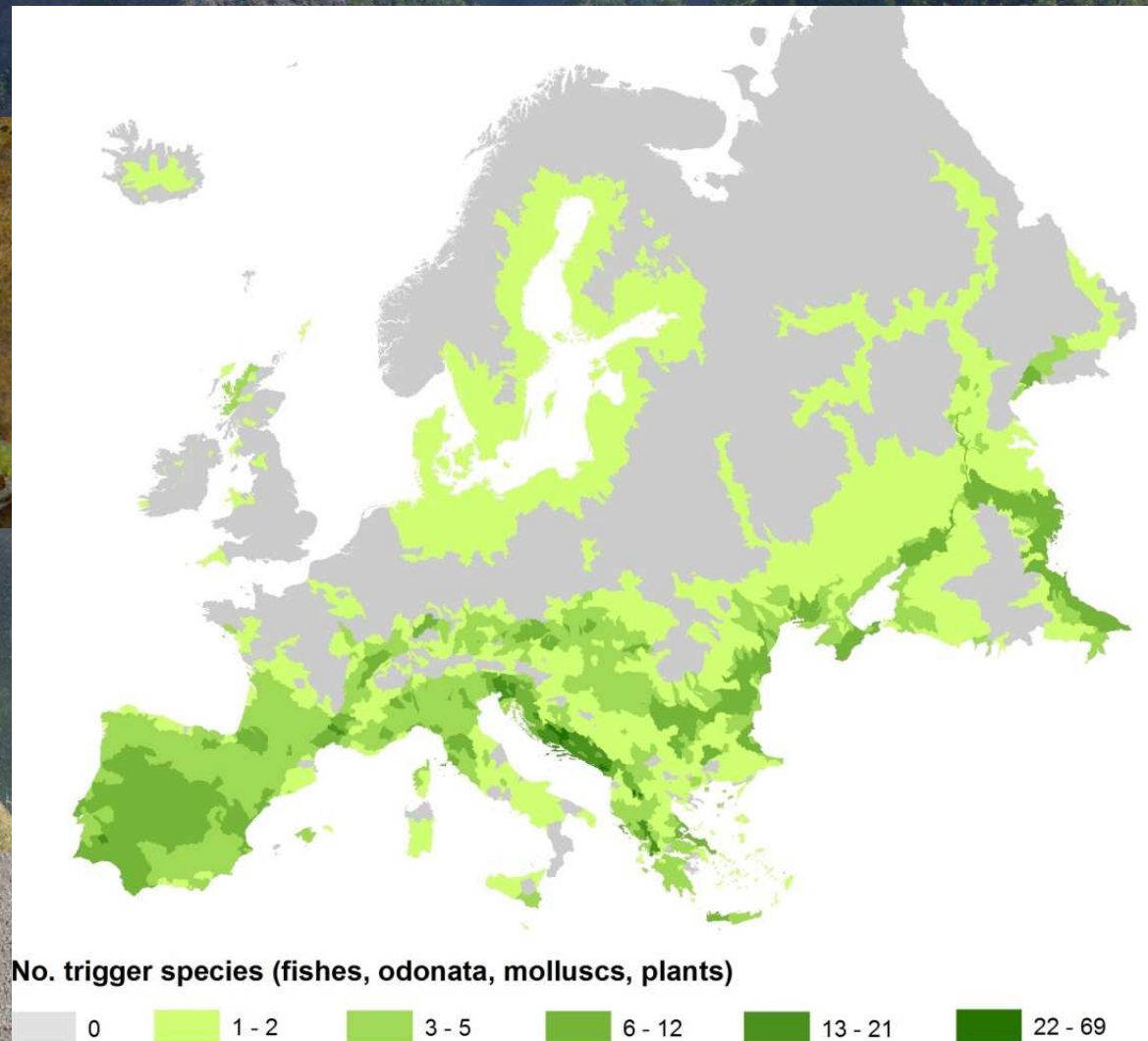
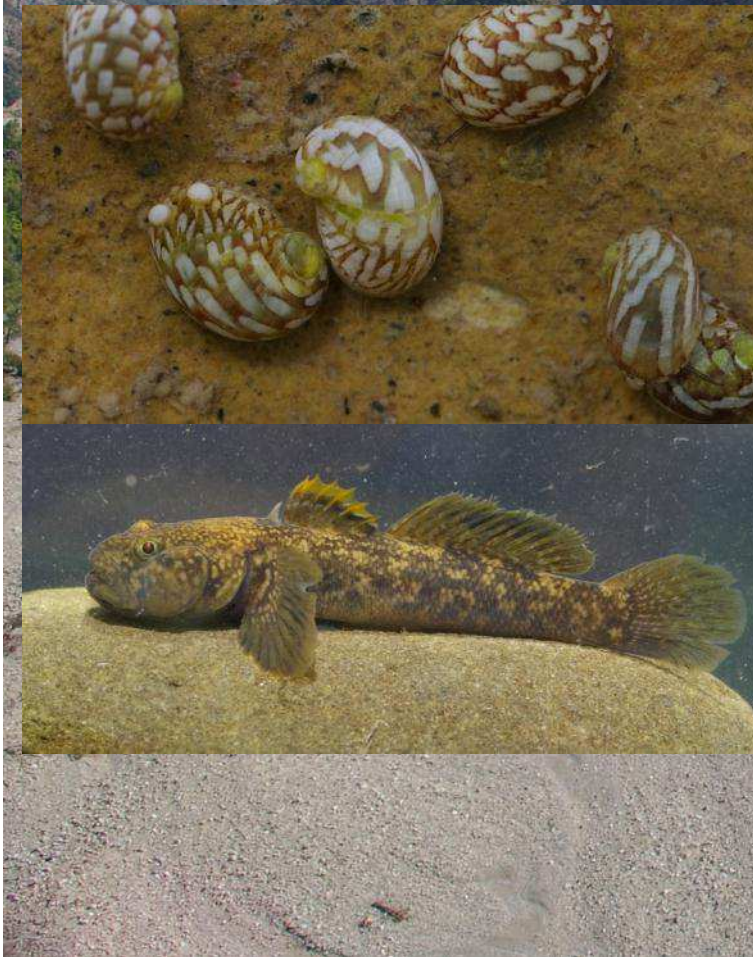
In May 2011, the European Union adopted a new strategy to halt biodiversity loss in the EU, restore ecosystems where possible, and step up efforts to avert global biodiversity loss. The strategy is in line with the commitments made by EU leaders in March 2010 and the international commitments adopted by 193 countries, including the EU and all its Member States, in the conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010.



EU strategy focus on:

- Full implementation of the EU nature legislation
- Better protection and restoration of ecosystems and the services provided, and greater use of green infrastructure
- More sustainable agriculture and forestry
- Better management of EU fish stocks and more sustainable fisheries
- Tighter control on Invasive Alien Species
- A greater EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss

Most of EU's threatened freshwater biodiversity occurs in southern Europe



No. trigger species (fishes, odonata, molluscs, plants)

0 1 - 2 3 - 5 6 - 12 13 - 21 22 - 69

The Mediterranean Biodiversity Hotspot

The Biodiversity Hotspot concept serves to prioritize geographical regions of high conservation value.

The Mediterranean is one of the 25 globally most important Biodiversity Hotspot .



Myers et al. (2000) Biodiversity hotspots for conservation priorities. *Nature* 403:853–8.

Cernièko polje, BiH



Give threatened species a status as Natura species in a flexible, renewable way

European Red List of Non-marine Molluscs

Annabelle Cuttelod, Mary Seddon and Eike Neubert

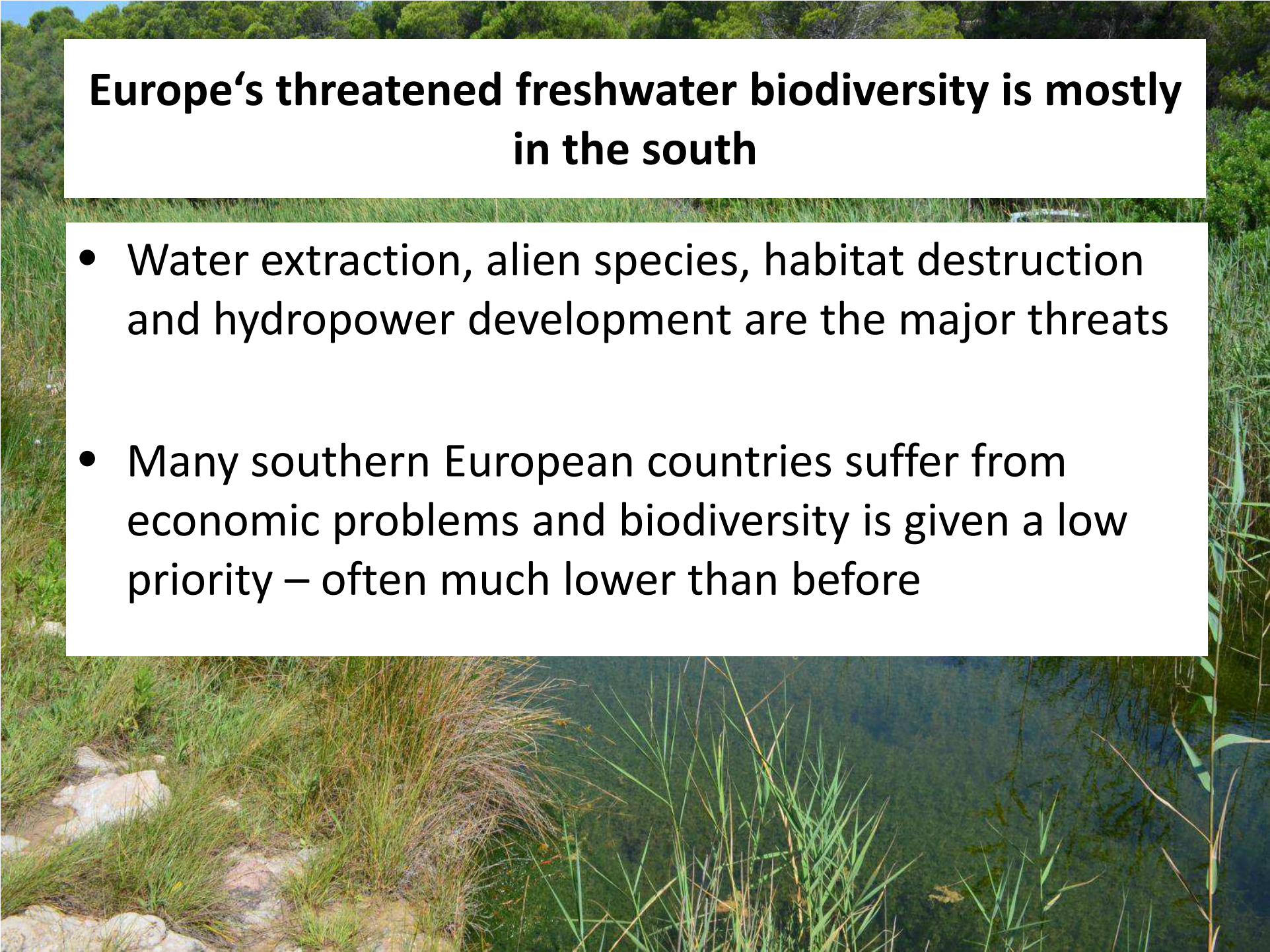


European Red List of Freshwater Fishes

Jörg Freyhof and Emma Brooks



http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/redlist/index_en.htm

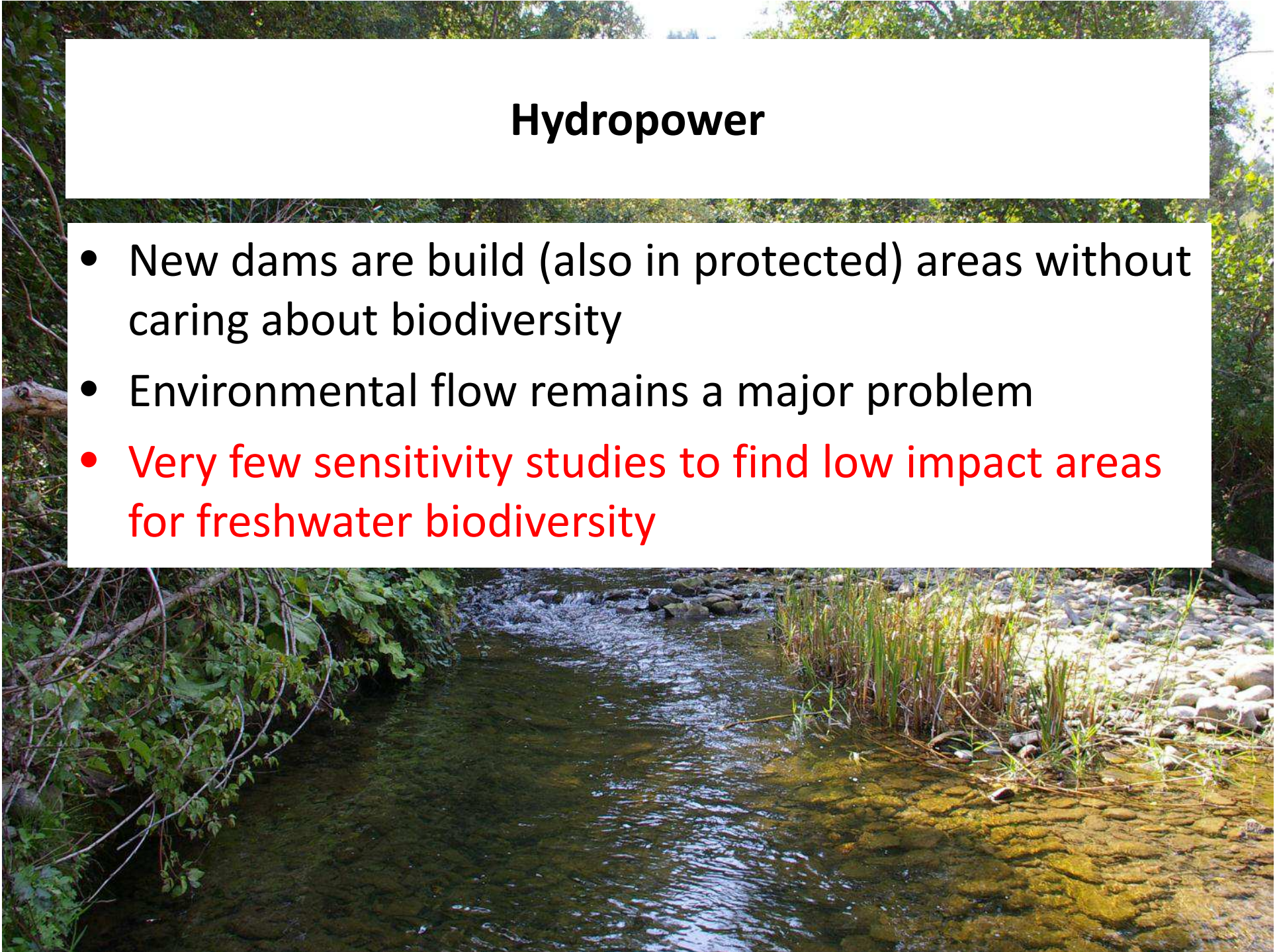
The background of the slide is a photograph of a natural landscape. In the foreground, there is a river with greenish water, bordered by tall, dry grass and some rocks on the left bank. In the background, there is a dense line of green trees under a clear sky.

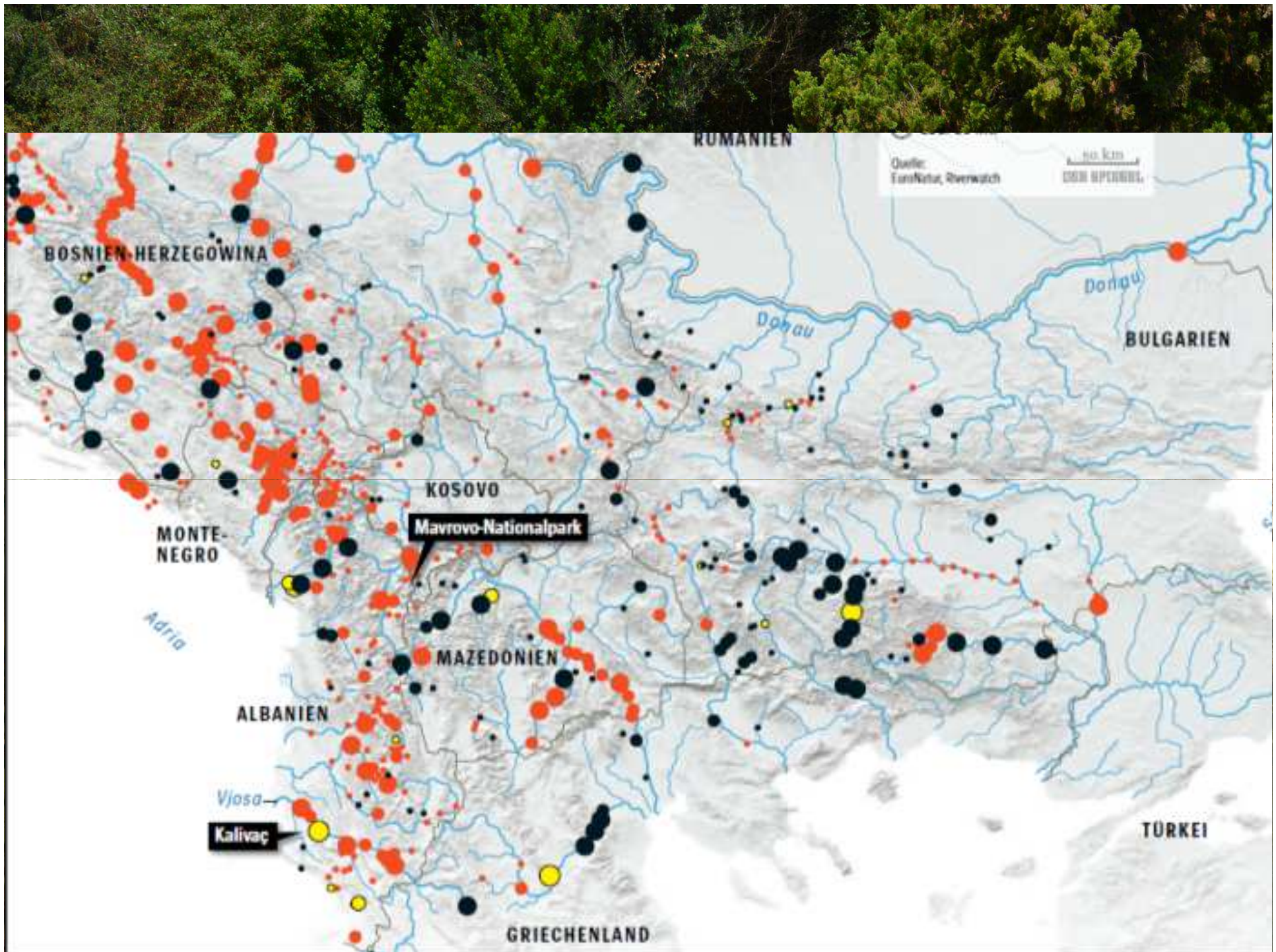
Europe's threatened freshwater biodiversity is mostly in the south

- Water extraction, alien species, habitat destruction and hydropower development are the major threats
- Many southern European countries suffer from economic problems and biodiversity is given a low priority – often much lower than before

Hydropower

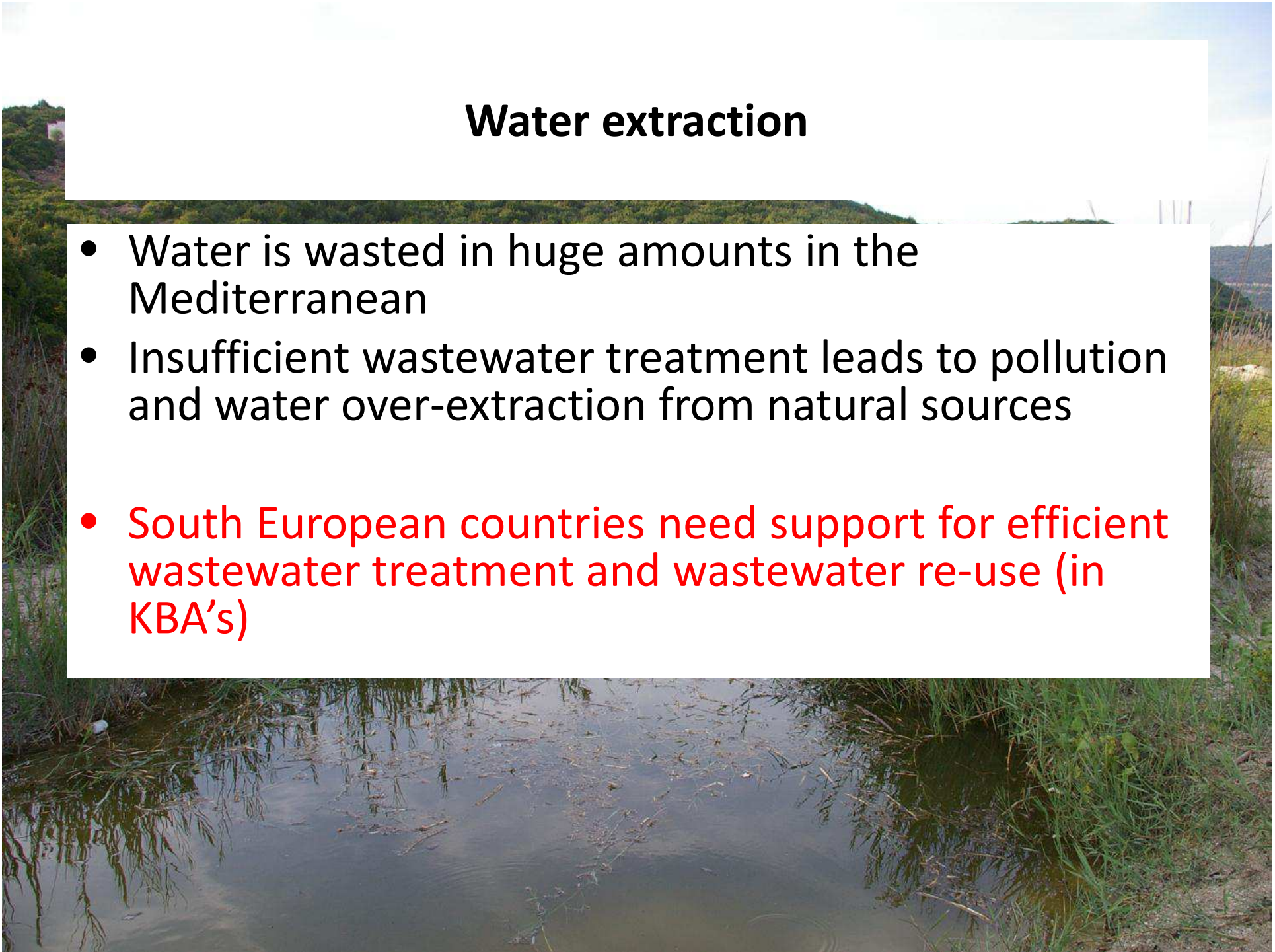
- New dams are build (also in protected) areas without caring about biodiversity
- Environmental flow remains a major problem
- Very few sensitivity studies to find low impact areas for freshwater biodiversity





Water extraction

- Water is wasted in huge amounts in the Mediterranean
- Insufficient wastewater treatment leads to pollution and water over-extraction from natural sources
- South European countries need support for efficient wastewater treatment and wastewater re-use (in KBA's)



Habitat destruction

- Habitats are continuously destroyed and regulations in protected areas are poor or often ignored
- Rivers are especially vulnerable as activities outside protected areas make the difference
- Natura and WF directives need to be fully and consequently implemented
- No more EU/national funding for destructive activities



Alien species

- Mediterranean waters are especially vulnerable
- Alien species already replace native biodiversity in several areas
- Most aliens are Europeans – border controls are not enough
- There is a lack of enforcement
- **We need a strict alien species task force.**



Do southern member states need more help from EU?

The EU Parliament notes that our natural heritage is a major ecological asset which is fundamental to human well-being; takes the view that **all Member States should cooperate and coordinate** their efforts in order to ensure more effective use of natural resources and avoid net losses in terms of biodiversity and ecosystem services in both rural and urbanised areas

European Parliament resolution of 20 April 2012 on our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (2011/2307(INI))



Southern Europe has to cope with a huge proportion of EU' threatened biodiversity

Is it possible

- to set up special funding schemes for southern Europe's freshwater biodiversity?
- to give freshwater biodiversity conservation projects in southern Europe a special EU support?
- to give 100% funding for southern European freshwater projects for *Life+*, *MED* and others if they tackle important topics in conservation and restoration?
- to give logistic help EU project applications (*Life+*, ENPI, MED program....), pre-financing for application and knowledge transfer?



Southern Europe has to cope with a huge load of threatened biodiversity

Southern Europe holds the major heritage of Europe's freshwater biodiversity

The BioFresh project tell us where sensitive areas are.

Set priorities for action and new policies now!



Thank you for your attention!

