

New grants for woodland owners in bid to save Grand Duchys forests

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Schank requested details on the situation, which were provided by Minister for Environment Carole Dieschbourg in the Chamber on Wednesday.

The budget to offer adequate support to private land owners was significantly increased to €290,000 in the last year. Dieschbourg said around 80% were private forests, which meant the government needed to offer more incentives to improve the environmental impact.

The financial grants for eco-systemic actions, such as planting new trees, have been doubled.

Much of the damage done to the Grand Duchy's forests can be attributed to the recent bark beetle infestation, which meant many trees had to be cut down. The Ministry of Environment has paid out damages of around €5,000 per hectare, but Schank said he had his doubts as to whether this sum was sufficient.

Schank explained that land owners had argued the €5,000 sum only covered around 20% of the damage, which meant it was not enough to compensate.

Dieschbourg said this was just the beginning, as the government would introduce a new grant for forest owners ready to cooperate in the name of environmental protection. She referred to this as a sort of "climate bonus" for protecting the natural ecosystems.

The relevant proprietors will also receive access to all necessary scientific support. Dieschbourg announced a new cartography for Luxembourg's forests which is due to be published later in 2020, which would help owners plan where to plant new trees.

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