

***Joint Management of European Nature:***  
*The Natura 2000 Network and Nature  
Restoration as an Opportunity*

# The fragile biodiversity of transitional European regions

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## The fragile biodiversity of transitional European regions

Outline, aims:

- Some parts of Europe require more conservation attention than others.
- Nature sometimes cannot be restored.
- Some areas of Europe are needed to restore the biodiversity of other parts.
- Case studies demonstrating the need for better understanding and appreciation of transitional regions.

## The fragile biodiversity of transitional European regions

Some pertinent observations

**Europe's biodiversity is unequally distributed.**

### GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY HOT SPOTS



## The fragile biodiversity of transitional European regions

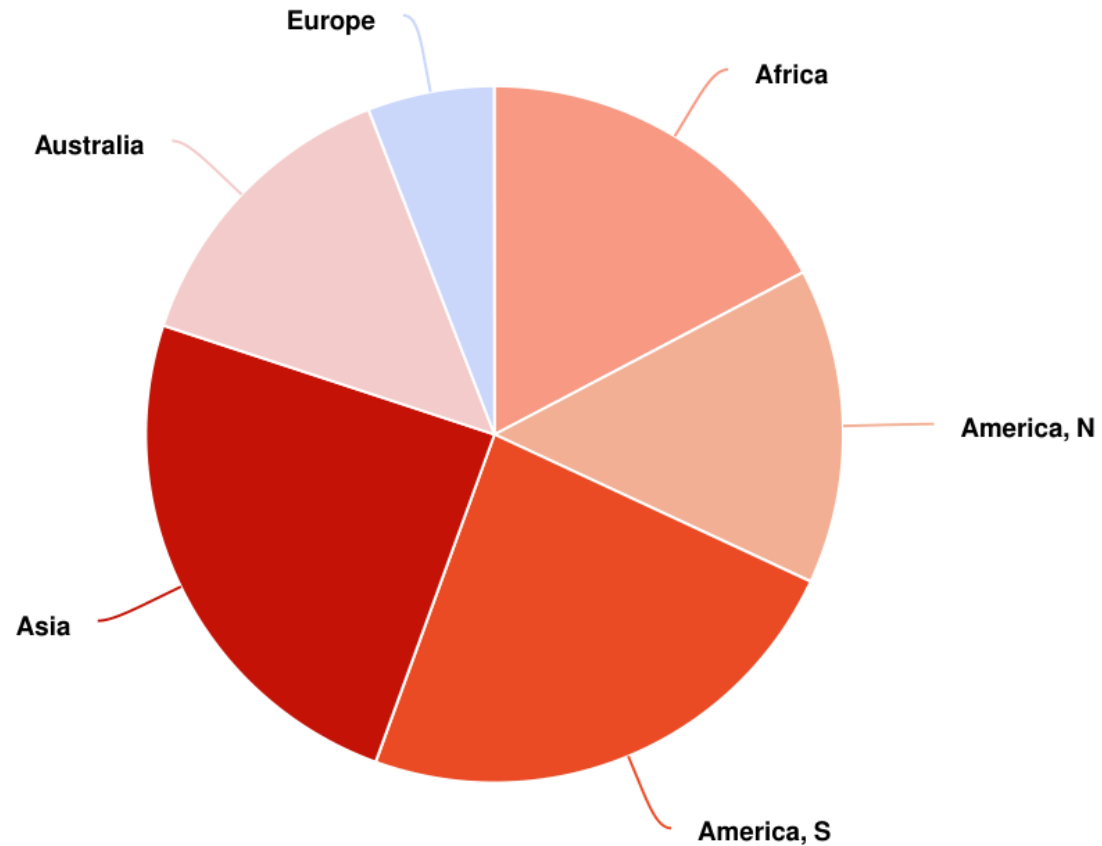
Some pertinent observations

**Europe has the lowest biodiversity of all ice-free continents.**

### BIRD SPECIES PER CONTINENT



Francis C. Franklin / CC-BY-SA-3.0

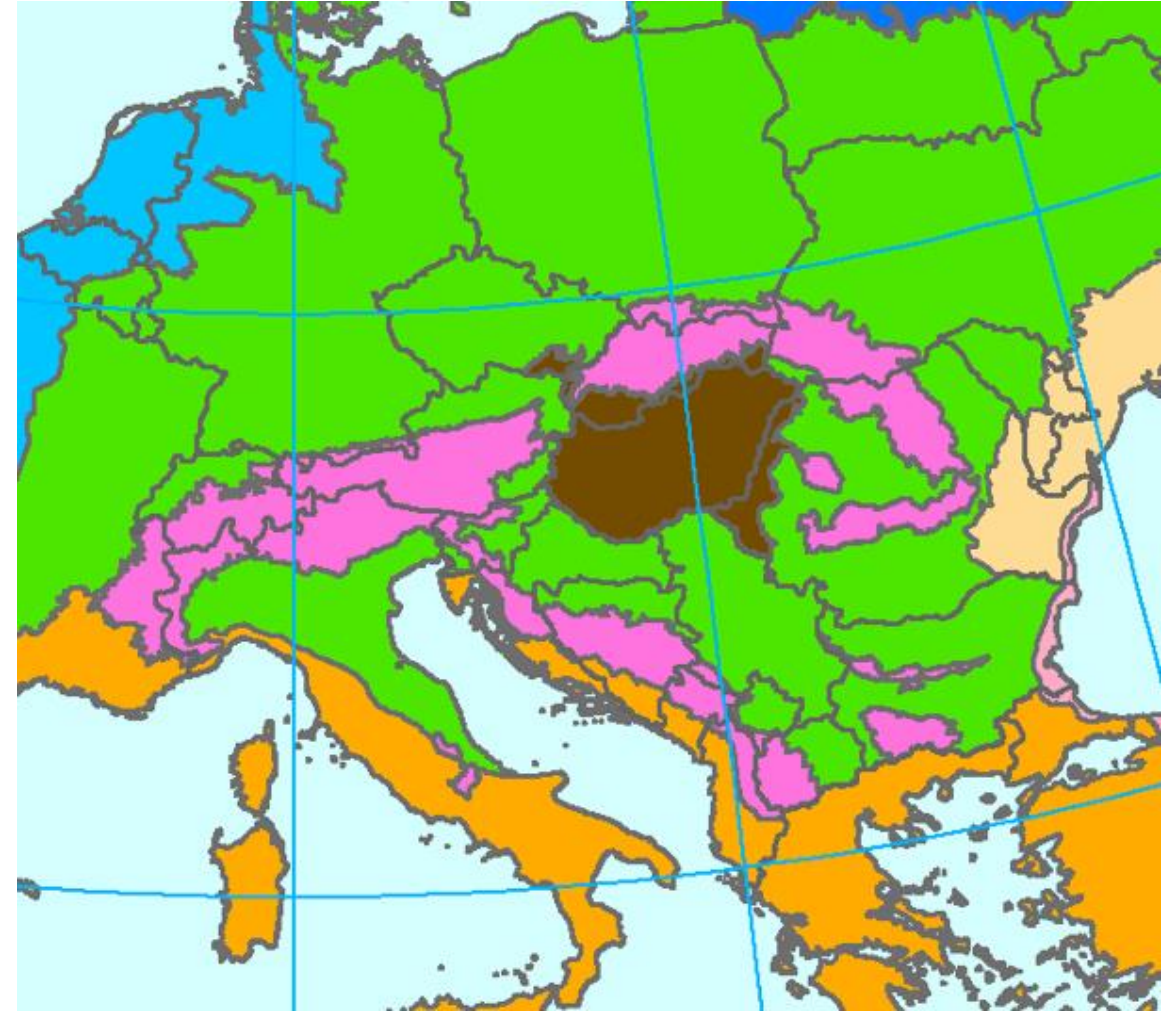


## The fragile biodiversity of transitional European regions

Some European regions are more important than others for supporting overall biodiversity and sustaining Europe's nature.

These are Europe's **transitional regions**.

The open question is how to manage them to get the needed reservoir of genes and species for nature restoration.



From EEA (2012): Biogeographical regions in Europe



## The fragile biodiversity of transitional European regions

The disproportionally high biodiversity of transitional regions is a consequence of

- mixing of biogeographical zones;
- historical factors.

This biodiversity is more threatened than elsewhere because of

- lower population densities;
- edge effect, disturbance;
- relict and isolated populations;
- less conservation effort because insignificant shares of total population.

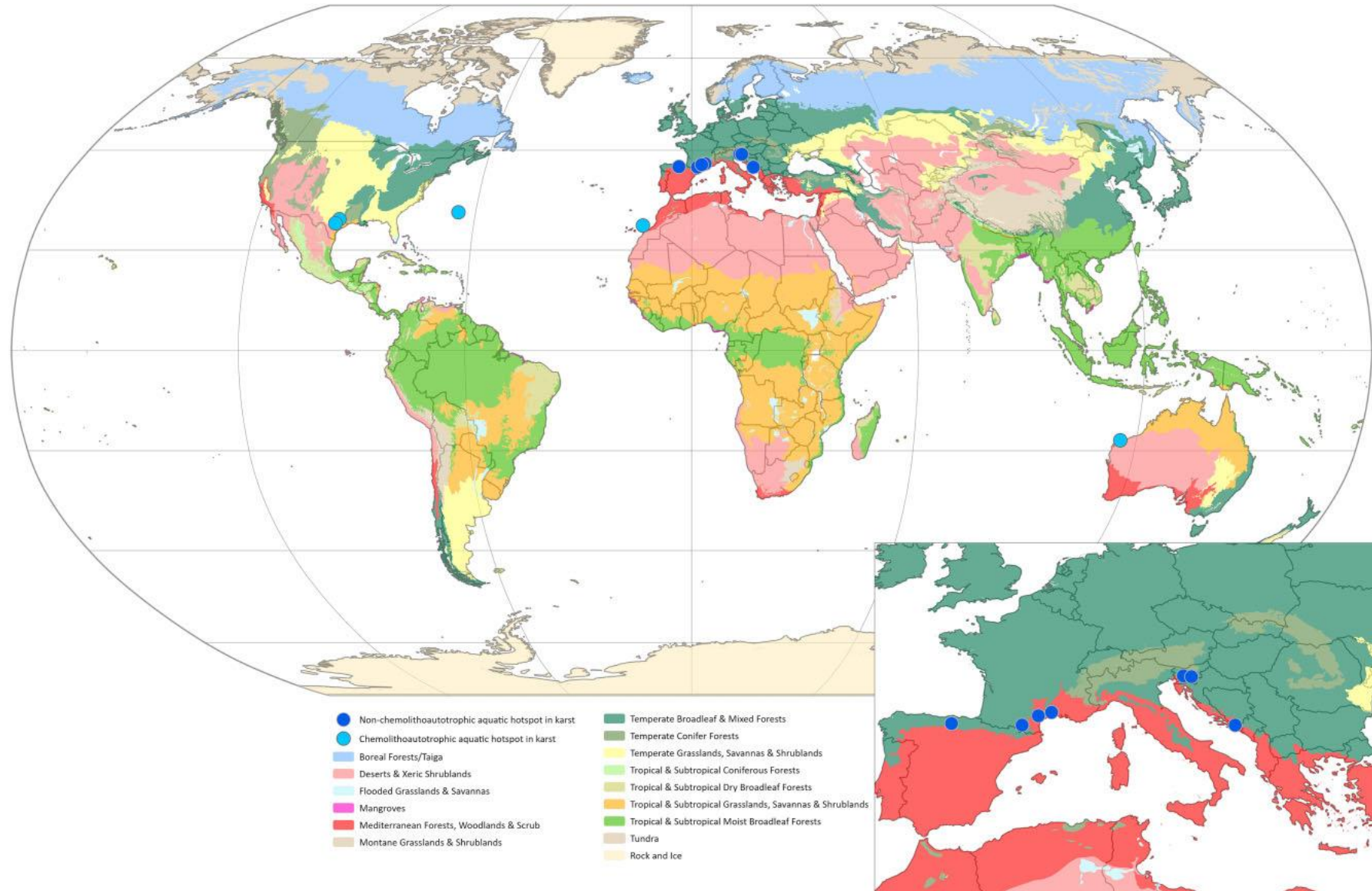
**The conditions causing the high biodiversity are mostly irreversible and cannot be restored!**



Andreas Trepte, [www.avi-fauna.info](http://www.avi-fauna.info)

## The fragile biodiversity of transitional European regions

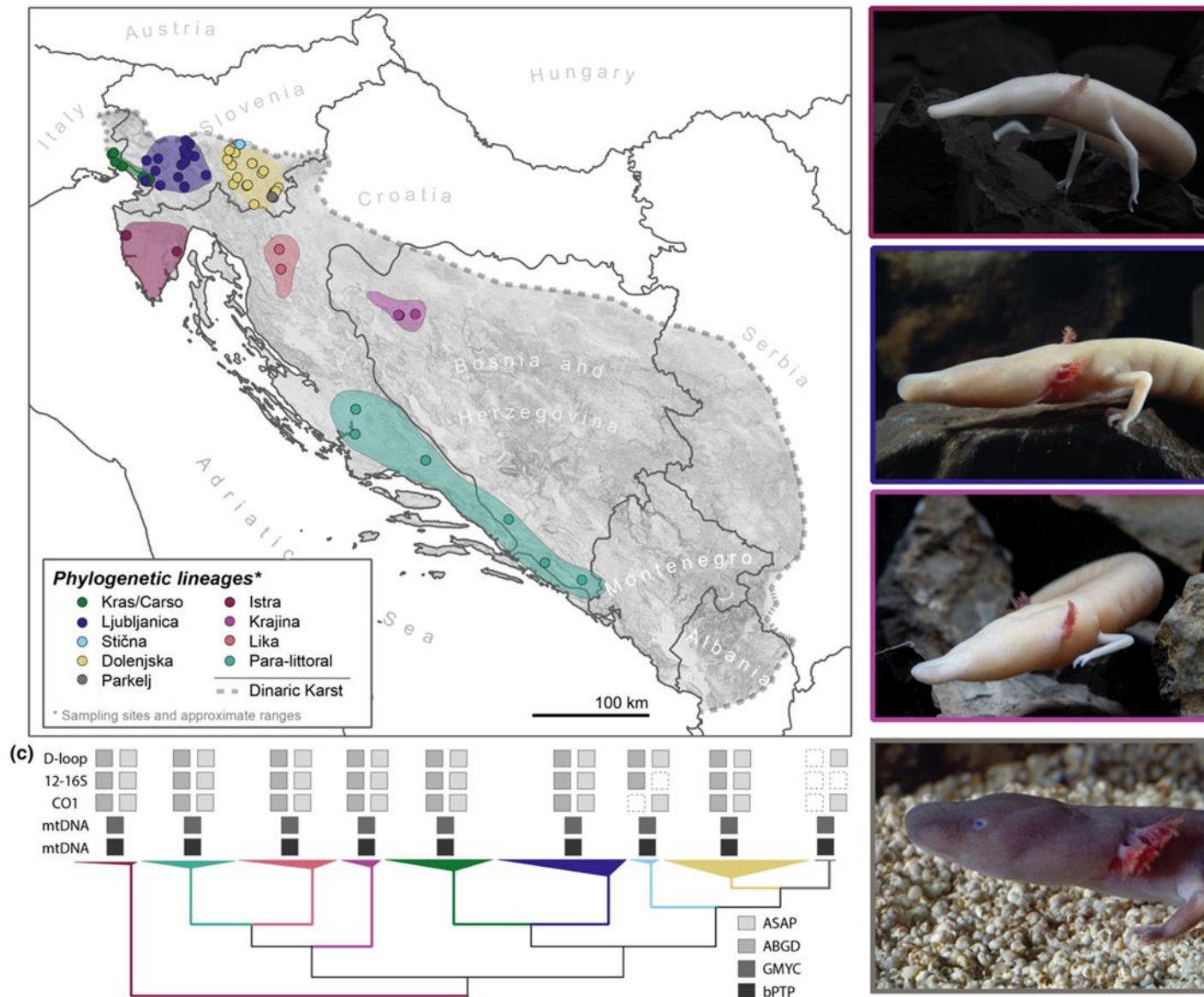
### Case No. 1: **Europe is the global leader in subterranean biodiversity**





## The fragile biodiversity of transitional European regions

### Case No. 1, contd: Nine, not one species of blind European cave salamanders





## Case No. 2: **Transitional corridors restore lost biodiversity**

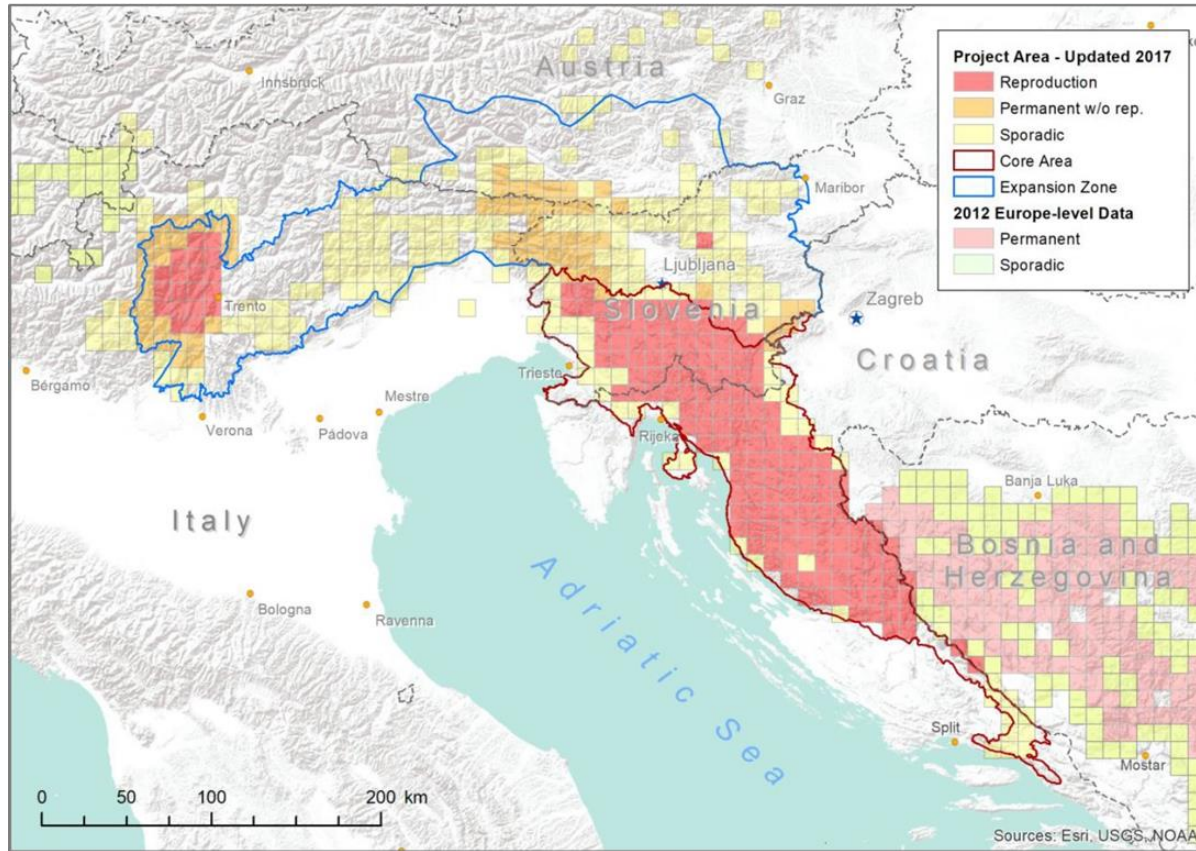


GPS-tracked vultures migrating from Northern Adriatic breeding grounds to the Eastern Alps. Obstacle-free mountain ridges form the essential corridor.



## The fragile biodiversity of transitional European regions

### Case No. 2, contd: Transitional corridors are a service



LIFE DINALP BEAR 2017. <https://dinalpbear.eu/>

Maintaining a bear population of the current size in an area as small as Slovenia is neither sustainable nor affordable. Without broader conservation goal, it is not beneficial to the species.

### Concluding message:

- Transitional regions contribute a disproportionately large share to regional biodiversity.
- Their ecology and wider significance is not sufficiently understood.
- Transitional regions are insufficiently protected.
- In a European context, shared benefits should also mean shared responsibility.