

# JWP

JOURNEYS WITH PURPOSE

Transformative journeys  
in wild nature



Photograph: Dan Dinu



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Each guest is invited to engage with the rewilding project, and join the conversation with the world's leading conservation pioneers.

Photograph: Conservation Atlas

# Our Mission

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Journeys With Purpose is a gateway to the world's most ambitious conservation projects.

Our mission is to empower global change, by bringing the beauty and value of wild nature to the forefront. Our journeys act as a catalyst for changemakers in the world's last wild places and the people and projects that fight to preserve them. Each guest is invited to engage with the rewilding project, and join the conversation with the world's leading conservation pioneers.

We strongly believe that by being immersed in the natural world, and experiencing vibrant ecosystems where all things thrive, that we become motivated to protect it.

# Seven Worlds One Planet

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The Seven Worlds, One Planet approach is a global curriculum designed around the recovery and conservation of our natural world's vibrant landscapes, biodiversity, wildlife and livelihoods in each of the seven continents. This journey is to the Făgăraș Mountains, in the Southern Carpathians, Romania

Photograph: Bogdan Ciungara

# Carpathian Mountains

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Europe's second largest mountain range at roughly 1,500km long, the Carpathians cover Romania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, Austria, Serbia, and northern Hungary. Romania alone has over 6 million hectares of forests across striking mountains, untamed rivers and vast, dramatic valleys, a significant portion of which is still virgin. This is the natural habitat for bears, wolves, lynx and golden eagles, as well as over 3,700 plant species, many of which are endemic to the region.

For decades the region has fallen victim to abusive exploitation practices and unsustainable logging resulting in thousands of hectares of severely damaged forests and eroded mountain slopes. The mission of Carpathia is to secure and restore the living tapestry of beech, oak, maple, spruce and pine that give life to the Făgăraș Mountains and to create Europe's largest forest national park.



Photograph: Conservation Atlas



Photograph: FCC

# Carpathian Communities

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In a country which has one of the highest poverty rates in the European Union, conservation of wild areas is not a priority. However, the mission of Foundation Conservation Carpathia (FCC) is to create a new economic avenue based on conservation.

While big businesses were reaping billions of dollars from deforestation, the highly profitable extraction of timber has not benefitted the rural communities who inhabit the land. The same applies for mushrooms and forest berries which are hand picked by local Roma and sold for less than €2/kilo before appearing in the northern European markets for €30 - €40/kilo. It was time for a significant change, to reengage the local communities with their land and create a socio-economic model which enables a thriving and sustainable livelihood.

# Foundation Conservation Carpathia (FCC)

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In 2009, Barbara and Christoph Promberger approached the Zarnesti court with the vision to create a world-class wilderness reserve. Over the continuing course of ten years, with the support of 12 philanthropists and ongoing support from sponsors and a growing team, the project continues to pursue four key pillars within its rewilding mission.

**ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION**

**WILDLIFE & SPECIES REINTRODUCTION**

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

**CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES**

For more information on FCC, please watch the video link attached created by Conservation Atlas.

<https://youtu.be/AEvvDkUIN0o>



Photograph: FCC

# Your Hosts

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## CHRISTOPH PROMBERGER

In 1993, Christoph Promberger initiated a research project about wolves in the Romanian Carpathians, which is where he met his Austrian wife Barbara, a fellow biologist and conservationist. He spent the next 10 years developing his initial research project into a complex multi-layered conservation project involving wolves, bears and lynx. As a result of the forest restitution in Romania and the following clear-cuts starting in 2005 all over the mountains, Christoph and Barbara founded Foundation Conservation Carpathia (FCC) with the goal to stop illegal cutting and to create a world-class wilderness reserve. Since 2009, they have raised over €100m for FCC which has developed into the largest private land conservation project in Europe.



## DUNCAN GROSSART Founder and MD of Journeys With Purpose

Duncan founded JWP to accelerate our engagement with the natural world. As a zoology graduate and lifelong conservationist, Duncan built an award-winning global photography business before he was drawn back to his roots and love of wild nature. Duncan is a fellow of the Zoological Society of London, Royal Geographical Society, Royal Society for Asian Affairs and Scientific Exploration Society, and a published photographer. He is also a member of the Young Presidents' Organization. In the creation of these journeys he endeavours to engage impact-driven individuals with inspiring people, projects and places as a gateway for change. Duncan will be co-hosting the journey.



## BARBARA PROMBERGER

Barbara Promberger is co-founder and executive director of FCC, one of the largest private land conservation initiatives in Europe, which works to create a world-class wilderness reserve in Romania's Southern Carpathian Mountains. Barbara studied biology at the University of Vienna and moved to Romania in the 1990's to study wolves, bears and lynx and their interactions with their natural prey. In 2005, as a result of the forest restitution in Romania her focus shifted to protecting large natural landscapes and processes. Passionate about horses and exploring wild places, she and her husband have also created an equestrian eco-tourism facility, at the foot of Romania's Făgăraș Mountains, where they live with their two daughters.



## ISABELLA TREE

Isabella Tree is an award-winning journalist and author of five books, married to conservationist Charlie Burrell. Her best-selling book 'Wilding' tells the daring story of rewilding their 3,500 acres of unprofitable farmland at Knepp Estate in West Sussex, UK. In less than 20 years their degraded land has become a functioning ecosystem again, wildlife has rocketed and numerous endangered species have made Knepp their home. What has happened at Knepp challenges conventional ideas about nature, wildlife and how we manage and envisage our land. Isabella and Charlie are currently working on The Book of Wilding – a practical guide to rewilding big and small. Issy and Charlie will be joining the group for their first evening of the trip.

# The Journey

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This journey is an expedition deep into the wilderness of the Făgăraș Mountains, tracking and monitoring the key species which inhabit the region; lynx, wolves, boar, eagles and European brown bear, with daily insights into the inner workings of the rewilding project and a night spent under the stars on the mountainside. You will be hosted by the founders and executive directors of FCC, Christoph and Barbara Promberger, and enjoy a welcome dinner with two special guests.

“The need to relate to the landscape and to other forms of life is in our genes. Sever that connection and we are floating in a world where our deepest sense of ourselves is lost.”

ISABELLA TREE, 2020 'WILDING'



Photograph: Conservation Atlas

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|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>ARRIVE:</b>          | 24th June 2023    |
| <b>DEPART:</b>          | 1st July 2023     |
| <b>DESTINATION:</b>     | Romania           |
| <b>TYPE OF BOOKING:</b> | Private Group     |
| <b>DURATION:</b>        | 8 days / 7 nights |
| <b>START / FINISH:</b>  | Sibiu, Romania    |



Photograph: FCC

## Sibiu | Day 1

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Begin your journey in Sibiu, a city in central Romania situated in the foothills of the Cindrel Mountains, known for its Germanic architecture and medieval walls. You will travel to Cobor Biodiversity Farm, which combines conserved grassland with autochthonous cattle and high quality meat production. Enjoy an evening BBQ and sundowners in the ancient oak pastures and get to know your fellow guests. We are delighted to have as our special guests, Isabella Tree and her husband Sir Charles Burrell, president of FCC.

Cobor is surrounded by pristine meadowland, host to incredible flora, as well as an organic farm, free-grazing horses, autochthonous cattle and a lovingly restored Guesthouse.

Overnight in [Cobor Biodiversity Farm](#)

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## Șinca Nouă | Day 2

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Enjoy a farm tour in the morning and the opportunity to spot rare endemic birds, such as the lesser spotted eagle, the hoopoe and the honey buzzard. After lunch you will journey to Equus Silvania, in Șinca Nouă village, the home of the Promberger's and their horse riding centre, for a guided tour with a botanist through the fields of flowers and wild orchids. This evening, you will gain an insight into the background of the project on a deeper level from Christoph and Barbara, followed by a delicious dinner of traditional Romanian fare.

Overnight in [Equus Silvania](#)



Photograph: Dan Dinu



Photograph: FCC

## Dâmbovița Valley | Day 3

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Begin the day with a hike or horseback ride to the virgin forests of Strâmba Valley. After an al fresco lunch prepared by an exceptional Romanian chef, you will continue your journey to the Dâmbovița Valley where the core project of FCC takes place. Here you will be immersed firsthand in the reintroduction areas, as well as the tree nurseries and the education centre for the communities. You will enjoy a wine tasting of top local organic wine by sommelier, Magdalena Crisan, followed by a delicious dinner cooked by Romanian chef, Liviu Preda.

Overnight in private glamping under the stars.

# Rucăr, Bison-reintroduction area | Day 4

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Rise with the dawn song for an early morning hike through the subalpine spruce forests, populated with red deer, bears and bison, and a popular habitat for the Romania's rarest bird, the capercaillie. Returning to base, you will have the chance to observe the landscape with a bird's eye view in a helicopter ride across the Făgăraş mountains. Alongside the biologists, visit the bison reintroduction programme, which saw the free roaming of bison in the region in 2020, following a 200 years disappearance. The journey continues with a picturesque drive to the village of Nucşoara, in Argeş County.

Overnight in Nucşoara at [Florea de Colt](#)

Today you will hike through the forests, populated with red deer, bears and bison.



Photograph: Galia Scribn



Photograph: Dan Dinu

## Nucșoara | Day 5

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Accompanied by Christoph and Barbara, you will meet with the local mayor and visit the ancient beech pastures in Nucșoara to learn about the collaboration between FCC and the local town hall. Today's trek takes you even more off beat as you venture into the gorge passing dramatic cascades, led by the local mountain rescue team. The stillness and untouched beauty of this area is immense and you will be right in the thick of it.

Overnight in [Florea de Colt](#)

# Valea Doamnei hike | Day 6

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The focus today is to see firsthand the reforestation project to restore the depleted area of Groapele, the largest clear-cut zone in the Făgăraș Mountains. You will hike up a nearby valley with virgin forests and spectacular rock formations, where, if you are lucky, you will spot nesting peregrine falcons. This afternoon you will drive up the Transfăgărășan Road, considered to be one of the most scenic roads in the world, arriving in the evening to the beautiful medieval town of Sibiu.

Overnight in [Art Hotel](#)

If you are lucky, you will spot nesting peregrine falcons.



Photograph: Conservation Atlas



## Sibiu | Day 7

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Led by an exceptional local guide you will have a walking tour of Sibiu's medieval streets and the settlement of the Transylvanian Saxons to gain an insight into Romanian culture through the eyes of the locals. Just 30 minutes outside of Sibiu lies the narrow gauge railways, Mocănița, of Sibiu's original steam train, the tracks of which are lined by many fortified churches dating back over 800 years. Enjoy lunch, surrounded by rolling green hills, at Nucet Bio-Haus which prides itself on using natural, locally sourced, produce.

Overnight in [Art Hotel](#)

# Travel Day | Day 8

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Following a final breakfast, you will be transferred to Sibiu International Airport for your onward journey.

*The journey incorporates remote rural areas of Romania where infrastructure is limited, so some accommodation may be more basic. We do everything in our power to make these places as comfortable as possible.*



Photograph: Dan Dinu

# Join the Journey

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This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to engage with a pioneering rewilding project, and be part of a group of inspiring and empowering changemakers. Join the journey!

**€8,375 / \$8,375 per person**

Based on 2 people sharing in DBL or TW

Small group experience /

Limited to 14 guests

**[hello@journeyswithpurpose.org](mailto:hello@journeyswithpurpose.org)**

For further journeys visit

**[www.journeyswithpurpose.org](http://www.journeyswithpurpose.org)** and

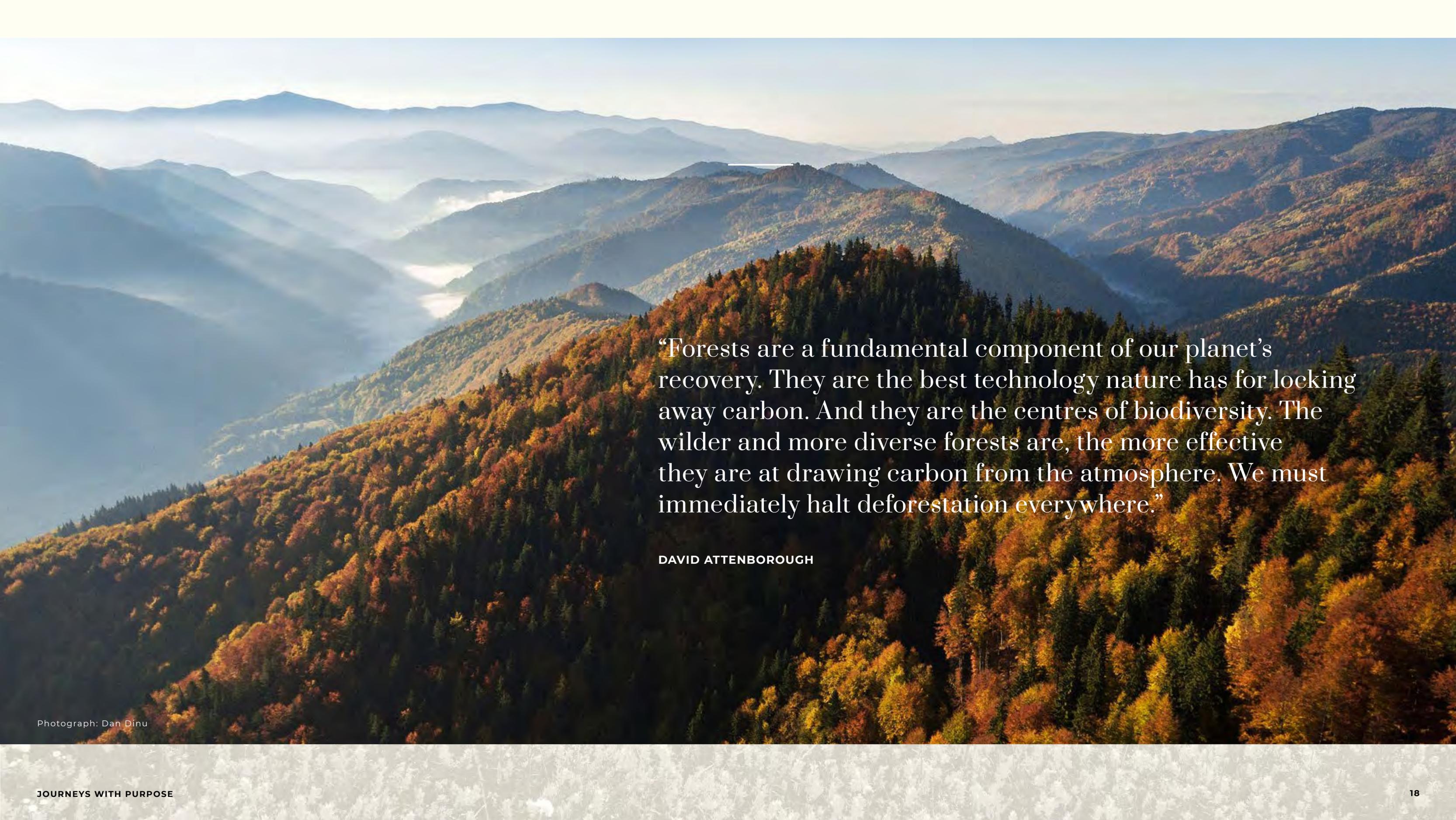
for bespoke experiences get in touch

**[hello@journeyswithpurpose.org](mailto:hello@journeyswithpurpose.org)**

*Please note: We work alongside conservation team members, communities and other people who work with animals and other dynamic factors at hand, so the schedule may be subject to change at short notice*



Photograph: Gabriel Serbin



“Forests are a fundamental component of our planet’s recovery. They are the best technology nature has for locking away carbon. And they are the centres of biodiversity. The wilder and more diverse forests are, the more effective they are at drawing carbon from the atmosphere. We must immediately halt deforestation everywhere.”

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

Photograph: Dan Dinu

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“We believe that strong and healthy ecosystems are vital ingredients for life, well-being and sustainable livelihoods.”

Photograph: FCC