

BFW-Strategic concept 2026–2030

Rooted in change
Research. Facts. Future.



January 2026

Despite constant change, the forest remains deeply rooted in nature and culture. The same is true of the BFW: rooted in change, the BFW combines continuity and a long tradition with innovative strength – building on tried-and-true methods without resting on its laurels.

ROOTED IN CHANGE

Our employees are already successfully conducting research and working in new fields to address the questions of our time. Key topics for the BFW are global climate change and its impacts, the bioeconomy, biodiversity, and the new opportunities offered by digitalization. Specifically, these include:

- adapting forests and management methods to a rapidly changing environment,
- promoting biodiversity in forests under conditions of global warming,
- the bioeconomy and the circular economy,
- Protecting the population and infrastructure from natural hazards, and
- recreation, health, and social aspects.

In an age when opinions are abundant but solid foundations are often lacking, the work of research and educational institutions is becoming increasingly important.

The BFW embraces this responsibility: We work with data, analyses, and scientifically verified facts. After all, only on the basis of sound knowledge can we develop sustainable solutions to the complex challenges facing our forests. Our goal is to provide guidance and reliability – for practitioners, society, and policymakers.



The two training centers in Traunkirchen and Ossiach are essential pillars of the knowledge value chain and key areas of responsibility for the BFW. The transfer of knowledge to the field, and feedback from the field, are structural advantages that create an exemplary link between research, monitoring, data analysis, and practical implementation.

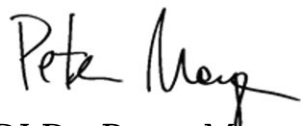
RESEARCH. FACTS. FUTURE.

The BFW thrives on the talents of its employees and an open corporate culture. In view of the expectations we place on ourselves, as well as those of our partners and customers, we plan to maintain our course of steady qualitative growth.

As part of a task review facilitated by BDO, the new strategic concept for the BFW was developed through self-assessments, goal setting, close coordination, and comprehensive feedback loops.

Above all, this enables us to proactively set the right course in a strategic process and to agree on common goals for the next five years.

Our thanks go to all participants who contributed to the strategic planning process and enriched it with their ideas. The BFW can and will actively contribute to addressing new challenges such as global warming, globalization and digitalization.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Mayer', with a stylized, flowing script.

DI Dr. Peter Mayer
Leiter des BFW



THE BFW – SELF-IMAGE AND STRENGTHS

VISION

The BFW is the primary point of contact for professional practice, society, and policymakers for all questions relating to forests. Research, monitoring, and knowledge transfer provide the answers.

MISSION

The work of the BFW enhances knowledge and understanding of all aspects of forest protection and sustainable management, natural hazards, and the interaction between humans and nature.

The BFW achieves this by providing the best possible advice to professional practice, society, and policymakers, based on the research conducted by the BFW, its monitoring activities, education and training, and the public duties entrusted to it.



STRENGTHS

Thanks to its many years of experience and expertise, the BFW possesses several key strengths that play a decisive role in the successful fulfillment of its diverse responsibilities.

Its core competencies include

- **High level of technical expertise:** In-depth expert knowledge in the fields of forestry, natural hazards, and landscape makes the BFW a central hub for research and consulting both nationally and internationally.
- **Broad range of activities:** The combination of research, training and consulting enables a holistic approach and practical application of scientific findings.
- **Unique data pool with high data quality:** Extensive, nationwide, long-term data collection forms the basis for reliable national and international reports and collaborations.
- **Strong institutional anchoring:** Close cooperation with ministries and other public institutions ensure continuity and stability in the political and professional landscape.
- **Multidisciplinary and diverse team:** The BFW has a broad range of expertise. Its experts, with diverse backgrounds and from different generations promote innovation and interdisciplinary solutions.



- **Well-developed infrastructure:** A broad-based infrastructure with locations in Vienna, Innsbruck, an Experimental Nursery in Tulln, and training centers in Ossiach and Traunkirchen enables a strong regional presence.
- **Connection to forestry practice and the value chain:** The close connection to the field ensures practical research and direct applicability of the results. The two training centers in Traunkirchen and Ossiach are key pillars of the knowledge-based value chain.
- **High quality of knowledge transfer, education and training:** The BFW is a leader in education and training, offering target-group-specific, scientifically sound expertise.
- **Modern, objective, and effective regulatory activities:** As a modern and objective agency, the Federal Forest Office (one function of the BFW) ensures efficient and transparent administrative and inspection activities. This organizational structure creates a close integration of knowledge and enforcement, thereby enabling evidence-based enforcement and practical research with direct feedback from the field.

These combined strengths form the foundation that enables the BFW to serve as a leading institution in Austrian forest research, consulting, and continuing education, and to successfully meet the challenges of the future.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1. The BFW is perceived by relevant societal target groups as an attractive and competent knowledge partner and contributes to society through fact-based advice and knowledge transfer society.**
- 2. The BFW is an attractive knowledge partner for policymakers and provides advice in line with its mission.**
- 3. The BFW generates socially relevant and fact-based knowledge through research and uses its unique interdisciplinary interface function to disseminate knowledge to forestry practitioners and to forest-related target groups.**
- 4. The Federal Forest Office continues to fulfill its statutory mandates effectively, promptly, independently, and objectively.**
- 5. The BFW is a modern organization and an attractive employer for its employees.**
- 6. We sustainably secure the long-term operational capacity and financial future of the BFW as a public institution.**



CONCLUSIONS

The BFW continues to build on its role as a scientifically excellent, socially relevant and reliable institution. As an innovative partner for practice, society, and policymakers, the BFW will continue to provide guidance and develop sustainable solutions for the diverse issues facing our forests.

In an era in which personal opinions and scientific facts often clash, the role of a research and educational institution takes on particular significance. The BFW works with data and scientifically findings – not opinions. The BFW fulfills its statutory mandate to collect and make data accessible and assumes the responsibility of evaluating and interpreting this data. Only then will decision-makers and society have a reliable foundation for effectively addressing the complex challenges facing forests and the environment.

Ensuring the objective and effective fulfillment of its statutory duties remains a central pillar. At the same time, the BFW is driving forward its transformation into a modern organization that attracts qualified employees through its appeal as an employer and retains them in the long term.

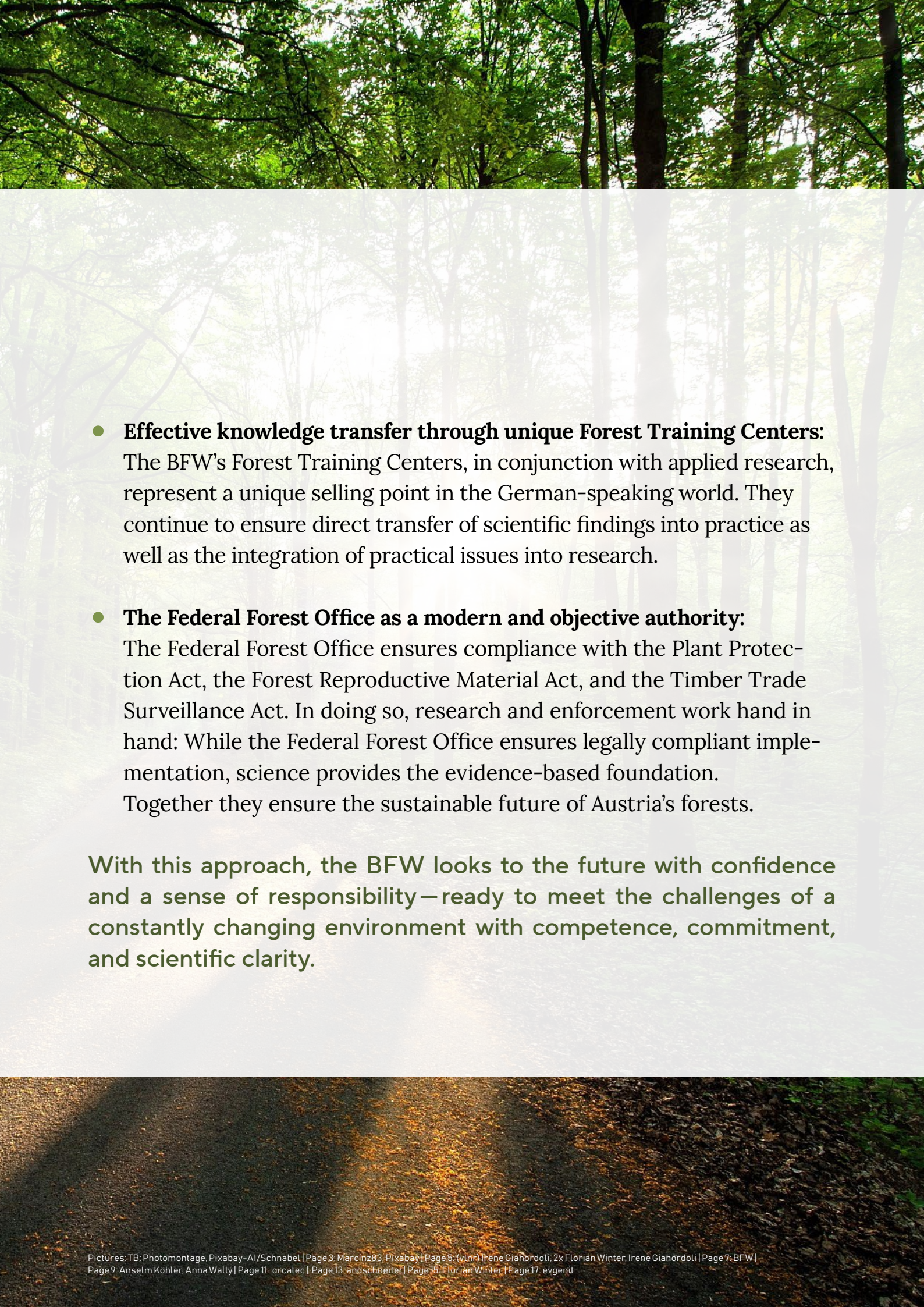
In the spirit of its guiding principle, “Rooted in Change,” the BFW combines stability with openness to innovation. It actively shapes this transformation while remaining deeply committed to its roots, its mission, and its social responsibilities.





THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS ARE OF KEY IMPORTANCE FOR THE COMING YEARS:

- **Digitalization as an integral part of task fulfillment:**
The BFW is embedding digital technologies even more firmly in research, monitoring, forest management, natural hazard prevention, policy advice and regulatory enforcement. Technological innovations, such as artificial intelligence, are proactively used in the fulfillment of its tasks.
 - **Strengthening the role as a central data authority in the forestry sector:**
With a clear data strategy, the BFW ensures the legally compliant, high-quality, and transparent use of its unique datasets and creates a reliable foundation for practitioners, society, and policymakers.
 - **Fact-based advice as a core service in a complex environment:**
In an era of increasing social polarization, the BFW clearly positions itself as a neutral, evidence-based expert institution and provides robust foundations for decision-making rather than opinion-driven assessments.
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- **Effective knowledge transfer through unique Forest Training Centers:**
The BFW's Forest Training Centers, in conjunction with applied research, represent a unique selling point in the German-speaking world. They continue to ensure direct transfer of scientific findings into practice as well as the integration of practical issues into research.
 - **The Federal Forest Office as a modern and objective authority:**
The Federal Forest Office ensures compliance with the Plant Protection Act, the Forest Reproductive Material Act, and the Timber Trade Surveillance Act. In doing so, research and enforcement work hand in hand: While the Federal Forest Office ensures legally compliant implementation, science provides the evidence-based foundation. Together they ensure the sustainable future of Austria's forests.

With this approach, the BFW looks to the future with confidence and a sense of responsibility—ready to meet the challenges of a constantly changing environment with competence, commitment, and scientific clarity.

