

Recreation monitoring in European countries: results of COST Action E33

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COST E33 Forrec (Forest for nature based tourism and recreation) is a European Concerted Research Action dedicated at recreation in forest. It's composed by 3 working groups of whom number 2 (WG2) aims at recreation monitoring. It has started September 2004 and plan to end in early 2008. 26 countries have signed the Memorandum of Understanding giving insofar a very large scope of recreation trends all across Europe. This paper proposes a description of the various tasks engaged in WG2 after almost 3 years of research.

Based on experts' answers and bibliographies, country reports have been made on several topics such as national household demand surveys, on-site demand studies, supply inventories and monitoring legislations. On this ground, some pan European analysis have been realised using various approaches. Even though recreation monitoring is not always a national priority, our results show that useful materials exists all over Europe. In the same time, strong national particularities (covering definitions and objectives or methodologies) also hinder comparisons. Thus, we try to point out the existing useful information, as well as the missing one, towards what could become a European monitoring system of forest recreation. In addition, such a system may very helpful in designing indicators of sustainable forest management.