

A Multilingual Internet-based Approach to Transfer Forest Knowledge in the Alpine Space

Reinhard Lässig (corresponding author)¹, Martin Moritz², Marcus Schaub³ and Roderich von Detten⁴

¹ Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research, Birmensdorf, Switzerland, reinhard.laessig@wsl.ch

² Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research, Birmensdorf, Switzerland

³ Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research, Birmensdorf, Switzerland, marcus.schaub@wsl.ch

⁴ Forest Research Institute of Baden-Wuerttemberg, Freiburg i.Br., Germany, r.v.detten@ife.uni-freiburg.de

The precious natural heritage of forests and forestry in the alpine region is becoming increasingly imperiled. A trans-national cooperation of exchanging professional knowledge and know-how is necessary to keep the natural heritage attractive, to maintain its management as economically profitable, and to guarantee its protection. A broad participation of all stakeholders is required in order to supply strictly user-oriented information. In this context, the development of a multilingual, internet-based information platform enables central cohesion and a supply of existing knowledge and know-how. www.forestknowledge.net went online as the first trans-national website in Europe which aims to supply practical knowledge on forests in a user-oriented way. Based on the initiative of four research institutes in southern Germany, Switzerland and Austria, this offer of information is being developed in a close relationship of research and practice. www.forestknowledge.net works as a central hub for practitioners who are looking for specialized knowledge or advice, or who want to get in contact with experts. The website is easy to access and use and is issue-oriented. The user is directly guided to topics such as forest management, forest protection, silviculture, nature and landscape protection, and natural risk management. The website also serves as a communication platform which enables an exchange of experience between practitioners and researchers. Research results, handbooks, guidelines, and other documents that previously had only been available regionally or nationally, are now placed at the disposal of practitioners. Rating, evaluating and commenting of documents is not only possible but often be used. www.forestknowledge.net was launched in its German version in February 2005. The Italian, French, Slovene and English versions started in the same year and have been enlarged. WWW.FORESTKNOWLEDGE.NET (www.inforesta.net, www.infoforet.net) was originally developed in its German version, so called WWW.WALDWISSEN.NET. In this article the English name is used in order to understand the development and structure of the Internet portal more easily.