

Decision consultant and forest owner as pragmatic, adaptive planners in their everyday task environment

Theoretical consideration and examples about practical research cases

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Abstract

Forest planning research is mostly prescriptive. The normative ideal which orientates research is utility maximising. The proposed presentation demonstrates an approach supplementing to that dominant one, motivated by the noticed gap between the research-generated FMP-innovations and everyday utilisation of FMP-methodology. Theoretical orientation of our research lies on the phronetic planning notion, recently introduced into the planning theoretical discussion. The approach switches attention, on one hand to descriptive planning research and, on the other hand, to action research strategy. Following those directions, our research project will focus on forest planning as pragmatic, everyday action.

First, we will discuss briefly about theoretical choices behind the study by comparing instrumental and phronetic rationality views. More closely we will focus on the everyday problem-solving, which is characterised, among other things, with a concept **adaptive planner**. This view is basing on the cognitive psychology and on its´ recent expansions towards socio-constructivism. After a theoretical review, implications to normative forest planning research will be discussed and concretised by framing our ongoing research which is now culminating in a **design-based** project.

One of the key concepts to be presented is the **task environment**, which refers to an “*environment coupled with a goal, problem, or task – the one for which the motivation of the subject is assumed*”. Therein, the demands of the outer environment and the psychology of the subject can be distinguished only for explanatory purposes. The goal, the objective or any other internal representation is not motivating the everyday action directly, but the guidance of behaviour originates in the task environment as a whole. The design-based research is defined as “*progressive refinement*,” where a well formulated intervention, the design, is iteratively tested, evaluated and revised for finding answers to questions arisen both from the real-life practice, but also from theoretical issues and knowledge in a more wider context.