

FOREST RECREATION IN POLICY AND LEGISLATION – A EUROPEAN COMPARISON

Carsten Mann¹, Andreas Bernasconi, Sandra Gentin, Anne-Marie Granet, Frank Søndergaard Jensen, Geert van Kerckhove, Erodotos Kokouris, Eija Pouta & Urs Schroff

¹ UMR Métafort – Cemagref, 24 avenue des Landais, 63172 Aubière, France,
Tel.: +33 (0)4 73 44 0622, mail: carsten.mann@cemagref.fr

Abstract

The need for outdoor recreation inventories and monitoring is described in various forest policy documents and legislation on the European and national level, and differences in priorities, implementation status and methodology can be observed among countries. The objective of this presentation is to highlight the findings of an analysis of how recreational aspects are reflected in core forest policy and legislation documents as well as related domains. The COST E33 network was used to extract information about recreational demand, supply and monitoring practises for international comparison. The results give insights into national policy setting and legislation in the field of outdoor recreation, and reveal commonalities, gaps and future needs.

One of the main findings is a contradiction between the expressed political importance of outdoor recreation on both the European and national level, and the many associated nonbinding commitments. The majority of the countries surveyed recognise and express outdoor recreation in some form of political and/or legislative way. However, information on recreation monitoring or measurements are rarely mentioned in relevant policies or acts on the national, regional or local level, perhaps due to a lack political will or resources.

The analysis indicates that a consistent forest recreation monitoring and controlling framework, linked to sustainable forest management, as described, for example, in the Helsinki process, should be better transferred into national policy and legislation. Comparable data across Europe could then provide a sound base for making decisions on improving outdoor recreation policy, planning and management, and furthermore provide a basis for the detection of societal changes and demands over time.

Key Words

Recreation inventories, recreation monitoring, forest policy and legislation

Key References

- Bauer, J., Kniivilä, M. & Schmithüsen, F. (2004): Forest legislation in Europe: How 23 countries approach the obligation to reforest, public access and use of non-wood forest products. Geneva timber and forest discussion paper 37. UNECE, FAO.
- Cirelli, M., & Schmithüsen, F., Texier, J., Young, T. (2001): Trends in forestry laws in Europe and Africa. Legislative study No. 72, 45, FAO.
- Yudego, B.M. (2002): A comparison between National Forest programmes of some EU member states. Skogsstyrelsen (National Board of Forestry) Rapport 10. Sweden.