

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSING THE DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF FORESTS FOR RECREATION IN EUROPE

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Abstract

In COST Action E33, the aim of Working Group 2 (WG2) was to evaluate the state of the art of the present information basis for recreation in European countries. The focus of WG2 was on recreation monitoring, i.e. the information basis developed continuously and systematically to offer a national, regional or site-specific coverage of information, and information on changes over time. Recreation monitoring provides the information base for planning and management to achieve equal opportunities for close-to home outdoor recreation across Europe and among different social groups within individual countries. Nature tourism is becoming a major source of income in many rural communities in Europe. Information on recreational opportunities and capacity is essential for successful and sustainable nature tourism. Thus, the European Union needs comparable and consistent information on the recreational opportunities and on the demand for outdoor recreation and nature tourism within European countries. COST E33 WG2 recommends actions for developing better recreation information basis. These actions include recommendations for individual countries to produce recreation information which is comparable between regions and between countries, and which is consistent over time. To achieve this goal, standardization of information contents and harmonization of methods are required. Secondly, recreation information is needed to feed into indicators and standards for proactive planning for sustainable forestry, for allocation of resources and funding, and for successful management of forest resources in general. Thirdly, in order to achieve the goal of producing comparable recreation information across Europe, actions are needed to develop an advanced methodology for a standardized approach. It is recommended that the methodology is developed as a European Union research project. Forming a European working group with the objective to consider the development of a standardised outdoor recreation monitoring programme at a European level is highly recommended.

Key Words

forest recreation, outdoor recreation, nature tourism, recreation monitoring, recreation demand, recreation supply

Key References

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