Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management in Finland

22.3.2022

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland

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The aim: Sustainable and responsible use of Finnish forests

Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management in Finland

- Provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry as a service for Finnish forestry
- Multi-stakeholder process is coordinated by Tapio Ltd.
- Best Practices offer forest owners well-founded alternatives for benefiting from forests
- Different elements of sustainability are taken into consideration: economy, diversity of nature, recreational use of forests and climate change mitigation with the help of forests
- The Best Practices are continuously updated in order to reflect the most recent scientific knowledge and societal values among the key stakeholders as well as the main targets set by the Finnish national forest policy

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Even though the Finnish forest legislation allows a wide range of regimes to be applied to different forest management goals, the challenge to a forest owner is the plethora of options available. This is where the Best Practices help decision-making.

Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö
Jord- och skogsbruksministeriet

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The effects of the Best Practices are best seen in versatile forests that provide well-being in Finland

- The Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management have helped Finnish forest owners' decision-making for well over 30 years
- Biodiversity and water purity have been part of the Best Practices since the 1990's. With advanced research these themes have been highlighted
- In 1994 Best Practices for Natural Forest Management were published with multifunctional forestry and landscape management as integral parts of wood production
- Continuous-cover silviculture was allowed by legislature in 2014 and the method is presented in the Best Practices

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The Best Practices are taken into use through digital services and training

- The Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management are published as Open Data and they have been integrated as part of the digital services and forest management planning systems of the Forest Industry
- The Best Practices are widely used in forest professionals' basic training and forest owners' training

The Best Practices are kept up-to-date; at present the focus is on climate change and biodiversity

- Anticipation of the effects of climate change and preparedness in forest management
- Possibilities of forest use in climate change mitigation
- Guaranteeing biodiversity and conservation of water quality as parallel aims to wood production

Laws and
forest certification
set limits
for the use of
commercial
forests.

Best Practices
for Sustainable Forest Management
guide
forest owners towards their goals in practice.

Case 1: Water protection

- **Finland is a country of thousands of lakes**
- **The law** forbids spoiling of drainage systems and obligates to protect ground water
- **The certification** requires us to manage the drainage systems by leaving protective strips of land along small waters and drainage systems
- **Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management** offer tools for protecting the waters such as the choice of the forest growing method, the timing of operations, and technical ways to direct the waters

Case 2: Thinning

- **The Law** determines a minimum number of trees. If forest thinning is more severe, the owner must ensure growth of new stock
- **Certification** brings more demands such as favouring mixed forests and taking gamekeeping into account
- **Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management** offer forest owners' tools, like when and how to thin and what options there are for environmental management

Case 3: Dead wood secures diverse nature

- **According to the law** dead wood protection requirements are connected to separately defined nationally mapped target areas
- **The certification** includes requirements for saving living retention trees and existing dead wood from forestry operations
- **Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management specify** where to leave the retention trees and how to keep the dead wood intact in mechanical logging

METSÄNHOIDON SUOSITUKSET

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https://metsanhoidonsuositukset.fi/en

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