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Ecological Forestry In Europe

How sound forest management can help to preserve and restore nature

Healthy forests protect and restore nature and the global climate. But most European forests are in bad shape, making them easy prey for pests, diseases and fires.

Ecological forestry approaches, alongside areas without human intervention, help us protect and restore forest health. Today such approaches are practised on an estimated 22 to 30 percent of the EU's forested area, although this varies considerably between countries and regions.

The transition to close-to-nature forestry faces numerous obstacles, both culturally and in terms of training and financial support. It also requires a shift in our perception of forest products.

Once the transition has been achieved, multi-functional and structurally diverse forests can secure a more regular revenue stream for forest owners and bring greater benefits to rural economies.

This report advances principles for such an ecosystem-based forest management. It outlines how these principles can be put into practice, including examples of forests that have transformed to this model. Finally, the report discusses how EU policies can support the transition.

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