

Results of the workshop - SCIENCE

Workshop: **Prosilva - 20th anniversary conference: Connecting science, practice and education to the further development of close-to-nature forest management**

Location: **Logarska dolina**

Date: **25/09/2010**

GROUP A: The role of science in the further development of the close-to-nature forest management

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1. The objectives of the workshop:

1. Critical evaluation of the current state of forestry practice, research and education links for the further development of close-to-nature forest management
2. Comprehensive definition of current strengths and weaknesses in the cooperation of science for the development of close-to-nature forest management
3. Formulation of proposals for more successful integration of science in the further development of close-to-nature forest management

2. Workshop programme:

14.30	Introduction and orientation	Introduction to the workshop Purpose and objectives of the workshop - a summary of the morning work Introduction to the working process
14.50	Group work	Explanations about the group work: - programme of teamwork - the way of collecting ideas - expected results
15.05	Analysis of current good practices	Setting up of the 1st sub-question: What do you think are the main positive things in the collaboration of the scientific community?
15.25	Analysis of current obstacles	Setting up the 2nd question: What do you consider to be the main obstacles in the collaboration of the scientific community in CTN?
15.45	Suggestions for the future	3rd question: What are your suggestions for involvement of science in the further development of close-to-nature management?
16.05	Summary of work in groups	
16.20	Conclusions	

3. Workshop results:

A. Setting the fundamental question: How can science contribute to the further development of close-to-nature forest management?

1. First sub-question: What do you think are the main positive things (good practices) in collaboration with the scientific sphere in developing and supporting close-to-nature forest management (CTN) in Europe?

Replies from participants:

- Review articles on various aspects of close-to-nature forest management
- Establishment of a network of forest reserves
- Determination of the density index of forest stands
- Development of tools for analysing complex processes
- Past research of the variety of forest stands
- Ecological studies of forest stands in Belgium
- Scientific confirmation of practical experience in close-to-nature forest management (beginning of this process) - namely:
 - on the importance of protecting and protecting forest soils
 - on the importance of protecting water resources
 - on the benefits of close-to-nature forest management
 - about links between sites and mixtures of tree species
- Visits by experts in Ireland and their contribution to the development of close-to-nature management
- Mapping of possibilities of natural rejuvenation in connection with vegetation types in Norway
- Open possibilities for learning about foreign experiences (learning excursions)

2. Second sub-question: What do you consider to be the main obstacles, the main problems in the cooperation of the scientific sphere in the development and support to close-to-nature forest management in Europe?

Replies from participants:

- unilateral orientations in science (including financing)
- the persistence aspect of the "old school"
- lack of research facilities, where the measures of close-to-nature management are consistently implemented
- insufficient translation of research results into the language of practice (terminology!)
- the tendency to address individual aspects of the problem, the lack of holistic approach to present problems
- science is often self-sufficient
- the lack of final practical solutions that would be useful for field foresters and forest owners
- lack of critical judgment among forestry practitioners
- lack of long-term research in the field of close-to-nature forest management
- insufficient number of demonstration stands
- insufficient incentives (even financial) for scientists to deal more with practical problems
- wrong opinion that silviculture is not a scientific field

- too much energy is spent on research on less important areas in forestry
- insufficient research in the field of optimization of forest management in terms of different criteria: recreational role of forests, biodiversity, CO2 effects, economics in different forest types.

3. The third sub-question: What are your proposals for a more effective integration of science in the further development of close-to-nature forest management?

- setting up demonstration plots and demonstration forests
- better communication and cooperation of science with forestry practitioners (designing a space for permanent dialogue) - more answers!
- carrying out research and studies in the following areas:
 - change of the classic "even-aged" approach in forestry to a close-to-nature one
 - linking of the close-to-nature forest management and the problem of climate change
 - climate change adaptation dynamics of forests
 - approach to the management of the forest stands with invasive species (eg Robinia)
 - creation of a set of research problems that need to be solved
- use of permanent forest inventories data to find answers to open questions
- more activities and new approaches in the field of knowledge transfer (more field trips, "roadshow")
- establishment of the concept of lifelong education of forest practitioners
- involvement of researchers into forestry practice and gaining experience with dealing with practical problems.

Report written by Andrej Breznikar