

Close-to-nature forest management

Forest management in Slovenia is sustainable, multifunctional and close-to-nature. Forest management is planned in such a way as to preserve forests and all their services and functions, while at the same time ensuring stable income to forest owners.

WHAT IS CLOSE-TO-NATURE FOREST MANAGEMENT?

Sustainable forest management is an approach to forest management, which respects nature and forest and provides all material and non-material goods in a way that preserves forest as a natural ecosystem with all diversity of its life forms and relationships.

Close-to-nature forest management mimics the structure and development of natural forests, prioritizes natural regeneration and continuous tending, promotes species and structural diversity of forests and native tree species. It is based on preservation of the forest ecosystem and biological diversity of indigenous plant and animal species and establishment of a biotic balance.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF CLOSE-TO-NATURE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN SLOVENIA

PRESERVATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECOLOGICAL BALANCE OF FORESTS AND LANDSCAPES

Forests are managed in a way that preserves the environment and its natural processes with all established connections. Forests are part of the natural environment, an essential component of the landscape and important for maintaining the ecological balance in the area.

PERMANENT PRESERVATION OF ALL FOREST FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES

Preservation of forests and all their functions – ecological, productive and social can only be achieved by maintaining healthy forests and their biodiversity, by protecting water resources and preserving natural fertility, by sustainable supply of wood and other forest products, by sustainable income and employment as also with the social functions of the forest, such as for example recreational services. Forests are managed in a way, which preserves their multifunctional role.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE MANAGEMENT OF FOREST ECOSYSTEMS

An integrated approach to management means strengthening species-rich and structurally diverse forests, which are characterized by complex relationships between the living (plant and animal) and non-living world, which is treated as an inseparable whole. Forests are managed in such a way that minimally interfere with them and thus preserve all their components and their dynamic balance. The functions of individual elements and their complex relationships are never fully explained, as they are constantly changing in time and space.

MIMICKING OF NATURAL PROCESSES AND STRUCTURES

Close-to-nature forest management imitates natural processes in preserved forests which are not managed. It is necessary to restore forest stands naturally and promote naturally occurring tree species. Over thousands of years, forests have developed relationships, processes and structures that enable their stability and further development.

ADAPTATION OF FOREST MANAGEMENT TO THE SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The characteristics of forest sites change very quickly in the landscape. If we want to preserve them and make the most of their benefits, it is necessary to adapt the mixture of tree species, the structure of the forest and management measures to these characteristics. Such management of forest stands requires great flexibility in choosing an appropriate silvicultural system and careful planning of measures.

COGNITIVE APPROACH TO DECISION MAKING

The cognitive approach is based on continuous monitoring of the effects of our actions and learning, as the forest is a complex natural system that can often react unexpectedly to our actions. That is why in Slovenia we constantly monitor the development of the forests and its responses to forest management measures.

TENDING – THE MAIN TOOL FOR DIRECTING OF THE FOREST DEVELOPMENT

Tending measures are based on the facilitation of favorable factors in the forest development and the inhibition of unfavorable ones, with as much natural automaticity as possible. By tending forests, we strengthen their stability in its various forms, increase the quality of the wood and the value of the forest, and also strengthen other important roles of the forest. With forest tending we can non-violently and rationally direct the development of the forest towards long-term silvicultural goals on a planned way.

LONG-TERM AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY

One of the main goals of natural forest management is to take into account the economic benefits of a preserved environment and economy when planning measures. It makes sense to take advantage of natural processes and invest only minimal amount of energy in directing the development of the forests towards the forest management goals.

ADAPTIVE PLANNING OF MEASURES ON DIFFERENT LEVELS

Close-to-nature forest management plans provide measures for a wider and detail levels. Adaptive forest management takes into account the characteristics of stands and their functions. The choice of silvicultural system is adapted to the forest stands, forests are managed with optimal measures, adapted to the site conditions.

