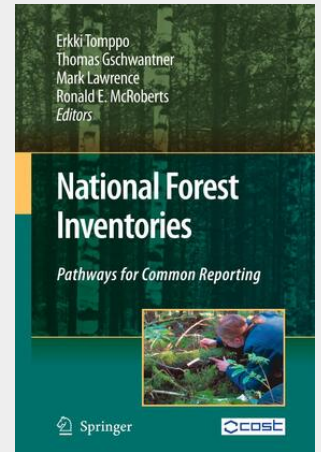


National Forest Inventories

Pathways for Common Reporting

Forest inventories throughout the world have evolved gradually over time. The content as well as the concepts and definitions employed are constantly adapted to the users' needs. Advanced inventory systems have been established in many countries within Europe, as well as outside Europe, as a result of development work spanning several decades, in some cases more than 100 years. With continuously increasing international agreements and commitments, the need for information has also grown drastically, and reporting requests have become more frequent and the content of the reports wider. Some of the agreements made at the international level have direct impacts on national economies and international decisions, e. g., the Kyoto Protocol. Thus it is of utmost importance that the forest information supplied is collected and analysed using sound scientific principles and that the information from different countries is comparable. European National Forest Inventory (NFI) teams gathered in Vienna in 2003 to discuss the new challenges and the measures needed to get data users to take full advantage of existing NFIs. As a result, the European National Forest Inventory Network (ENFIN), a network of NFIs, was established. The ENFIN members decided to apply for funding for meetings and collaborative activities. COST – European Cooperation in Science and Technology - provided the necessary financial means for the realization of the program.

Traditionally the purpose of National Forest Inventories (NFIs) has been to provide continuously updated information regarding the state of a given nation's forest resources, including their timber volumes, species composition and sustainable development. But with increased international reporting requirements – to the FAO, the ITTO, the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Ministerial Conference Protecting Forest in Europe and other international bodies – the potential role of how NFIs can accurately respond to these requirements has received some considerable attention. Addressing the issue of how well countries are able to respond to current international reporting requirements, this book discusses the importance of comparable reporting, and the possible approaches for achieving comparability across Europe and globally. It includes country status reports from 37 countries, worldwide, and it discusses methodologies and techniques for a common reporting system. With its collection of inventories and detailed discussions on the current status and future needs of NFIs, this book provides an invaluable resource for anyone involved in developing, managing, monitoring or contributing to forest inventories, as well as to those who are researching or practising forest resource management.



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