



ASSESSMENT OF FOREST CERTIFICATION AS A TOOL SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY IN FOREST MANAGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

- SFM – holistic approach to ensure forest activities deliver social, environmental and economic benefits, balance competing needs and maintain and enhance forest functions
- SFM – adopted 6 Pan- European criteria and indicators
- With the development of the SFM concept was developing new forest certification systems (PEFC, FSC)
- Several studies identified a range of benefits following from certification



MATERIAL AND METHODS

- The goal of the study – assess how the forest certification tool supports the selected areas of SFM
- Systematic sampling – the national PEFC and international FSC database
- Google Forms (autumn 2020), totally 194 responses
- **The first section** – demographic profile of respondents and **the second section** – the level of perception of respondents
- Generally accepted international principles, a five-point Likert scale – 1 corresponded to “strongly disagree” and 5 to “strongly agree”
- SPSS software was used for statistical analyses of collected data



RESULTS

			Ownership			Region				
	Mean	SD	State	No State	U Test	West	North	Centre	East	χ^2 Test
<i>Certification helps to...</i>										
Compliance with legal requirements	3.92	1.09	3.99	3.83	4172.5	3.53	4.00	4.18	3.90	9.073
<i>Certification helps to the maintenance of...</i>										
Forest biological diversity	3.90	1.09	3.96	3.81	4440.5	3.49	4.06	4.11	3.88	9.946
Protective functions (soil & water)	3.90	1.13	3.89	3.92	4494.5	3.47	4.08	4.10	3.92	9.551
Productive functions of forests (timber / non-timber products)	3.78	1.14	3.95	3.55	3827.5*	3.33	3.92	4.10	3.71	13.058*
Forest ecosystem health and vitality	3.77	1.16	3.86	3.66	4267.5	3.42	4.08	3.92	3.69	11.308
Socio-economic functions	3.76	1.17	3.82	3.67	4183.5	3.40	3.81	3.95	3.81	1.640
Forest resources & global carbon cycles	3.74	1.13	3.86	3.58	4099.0	3.33	3.92	3.98	3.69	10.150

Scale of agreement: (1- strongly disagree; 3 - neither disagree nor agree; 5 - strongly agree); * $p < 0.05$



CONCLUSIONS

- Forest certification is based on international principles of SFM (include national legislative requirements, institutional structure and local sustainability criteria)
- Forest Act no. 326/2005 Coll. adopted a definition of close-to-nature forest management as a concept of the application of more environmentally friendly forest management methods
- Regardless of forest ownership and region of operation the results of this survey indicate that certified forest owners and managers in Slovakia link forest certification mostly with fulfilling legal requirements
- Make decisions in the areas of biodiversity, ecosystem protection, restoration, and sustainable development due to the growing intensity of human activities and their associated impacts
- Forest certification is able to meet the individual areas of SFM in Slovakia through compliance with certification criteria



THANK YOU



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