

URBAN FORESTS IN NORDIC REGIONS

What can the National Forest Inventory tell us?

This new network brings together urban forestry and National Forest Inventory (NFI) affiliates from seven countries. They will explore the potential of the current NFI to report on urban forest resources and provide cost effective suggestions for a full expansion of the NFI to report on urban forest resources



Photo: Riis forest located in Aarhus Denmark.

An increasingly urbanized society

More than three quarters of the population in the Nordic and neighbour countries resides in urban areas which indicates their influence on an increasingly large proportion of forest. The forested land located in and around cities and towns is referred to as urban forest. Urban forest plays a key role in urban ecosystem functioning and for the health and well-being of urban populations, and thus, ultimately, for sustainable urban development. However, data to quantify and characterize this resource are, by and large, lacking or fragmentary. As a consequence, urban forests are under-represented in policy and practice.

Expanding the relevance of the NFI

The NFI has the potential to provide, for the first time, national level data on urban forest resources, their availability, and future sustain-

ability supply. Expansion of the NFI to include and report specifically on urban forests will be a major step forward for their integration and recognition in national and international policy and decision making. This step is also in line with the evolution of forest inventories as multi-purpose resource surveys, broadening their scope to include new variables and components.

From city level to national overview

By combining the NFI with an urban focus, this network aims to expand the political relevance of the NFI to the sustainable urban development agenda at the national and EU level. As a first step, the network will:

- 1) Develop a harmonious definition of urban forest resources;
- 2) Assess what current NFI data can tell us about forests in urban areas;
- 3) Recommend cost-effective expansions of the NFI data collection in urban areas;
- 4) Develop indicators that expand the relevance of the NFI to the sustainable urban development agenda

Such data can contribute to research-based policy supporting diverse stakeholder perspectives for the sustainable future of the Nordic region's forests. This will ultimately strengthen the position of the Nordic region and affiliated neighbour countries in sustainable urban forest management.

Participation from seven countries

The network is active in 2017 and consists of urban forestry and NFI affiliates from Nordic countries (DK, FI, NO, SE) and three neighbour countries in the EFINORD region (UK, D, LT). The network is coordinated by Anders Busse Nielsen and Natalie Gulsrud from the University of Copenhagen.

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