State of Forest Ownership in the UNECE Region – main findings

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Seminar on State of Forest Ownership in the UNECE Region trends – opportunities – challenges

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What is new about this study

• Based on information provided by national experts from UNECE member States
• Including more detailed information from 28 European countries
• Includes more detailed categories of ownership
• Covers ownership, use, policy support, organisations, forest management, as well as services and products.
The meaning of forest ownership

The FAO Forest Resources Assessment defines forest ownership as:
“the legal right to freely and exclusively use, control, transfer, or otherwise benefit from a forest. Ownership can be acquired through transfers such as sales, donations, and inheritance” (FAO, 2018).

Compare / contrast with the property rights framework (Schlager and Ostrom, 1992):
1. **Access** rights (rights to enter forest land);
2. **Withdrawal** rights (rights to harvest or remove timber, firewood and NWFPs);
3. **Management** rights (rights to plan internal forest activities and transform the forest);
4. **Exclusion** rights (rights to prevent others from accessing and harvesting wood or NWFPs);
5. **Alienation** rights (rights to sell forestland and forest products as well as to lease or sell management and exclusion rights).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
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<td>• Public ownership by the State at national level</td>
<td>• Private ownership by individuals and families</td>
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<td>• Public ownership by the State at sub-national government scale</td>
<td>• Private ownership by private business entities</td>
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<td>• Public ownership by local government</td>
<td>• Private ownership by private institutions</td>
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<td>• Private ownership by tribal and indigenous communities</td>
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<td>• Other private common ownership</td>
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• Very little customary tenure
• Higher private ownership – except in Canada and Russian Federation
• Fragmentation a particular issue in much of Europe
• But great diversity within the UNECE region
The public-private split (a simplistic measure but nevertheless a useful start)
Public ownership: more detail

Russian Federation
Croatia
Lithuania
fyR Macedonia*
Ireland
Cyprus
Israel
Turkey
Poland
Latvia*
Sweden
Slovenia
Finland
Greece*
Bulgaria
Austria
Slovakia
Norway
Czech Republic
Romania*
United States
Georgia
Netherlands
Serbia
France
Iceland
Portugal
Albania
Luxembourg
Spain*
Germany
Switzerland
Canada
United Kingdom
Belgium

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Private ownership: more detail

Changes in forest ownership affected by:

- Afforestation/deforestation
- Restitution, privatization and nationalization of forest land
- Fragmentation and consolidation (inheritance)
- Lifestyle changes
Impact of forest ownership on SFM

Forest management depends on:

- forest categories
  - public owners - in line with national policy and society’s needs
  - private owners – very diverse
- Owners’ values and motives
- Policy tools: regulation, incentives, advice, organisation
Objectives of private owners

![Chart showing objectives of private forest owners in different countries]

Legend:
- Aesthetic enjoyment
- Farm & domestic use
- Land investment
- Part of residence/farm
- Recreation
- Timber production
- Other
Comparing public and private forests
Utilisation rate in public forests
Utilisation rate in private forests
Management *decisions* compared with management *operations*:

- decisions about management of public forests, whatever the scale, are almost entirely made by the forest owner
- only a few countries reported that State-owned forests are managed by ‘others’, including State-owned companies, private management companies, and NGOs
  - NOTE contrast with global trend
- in most countries, municipal forests are more like private forests – more free to operate autonomously
- operations are undertaken by agency staff or by private contractors.
Public forest management

Proportion of public forest available for wood supply in 2015.
Private forest management

• Small-scale owners generally undertake the work themselves;
• Medium to large-scale owners usually outsource operations to other companies.
• New owner types generally have limited forest skills and usually outsource the forest works to companies or become members of forest owners’ associations;
• In some Central and Eastern European forest works are mainly undertaken by the forest owners while in some Western European forest work is mainly carried out by forest contractors
Private forest management
FOOs - diverse group of organizations that have the common objective of *facilitating* forest ownership and management and *representing* forest owners.

- From individual forest owners to municipalities and commons to large scale forest enterprises.
- Voluntary/mandatory; bottom up/top down formed; different levels; legal forms; size, scope, aims...
Thank you!

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