FOREST IS ONE OF THE DOMINATING ELEMENTS OF FINNISH NATURE

Forests cover more than 75 percent of Finland’s land area, which measured by the proportional share of forest land makes Finland the most forested country in Europe. In total, 20.3 million hectares of land is available for wood production in Finland.

FOREST GROWTH EXCEEDS HARVESTINGS

In 2021, about 74% of the annual increment of the growing stock was harvested.

Finland’s annual increment of growing stock is 103 million cubic metres each year.

In 2021, roundwood removals totalled around 76.3 million cubic metres.

Annual increment of growing stock, roundwood removals and total drain of roundwood 1935-2020, million m³.

Source: Natural Resource Institute Finland
The volume of growing stock and the state of forests have been monitored in Finland since the 1920s. The growing stock volume in Finland’s forests totals 2.5 billion cubic metres. This is 1.7 times the volume recorded in the 1920s.

GROWING STOCK IN FINLAND’S FORESTS HAS INCREASED OVER THE LAST 50 YEARS

Sustainable forest management ensures that the increasing trend will continue also in the future.
HARSH NORTHERN CLIMATE SHAPES FINLAND’S BOREAL FORESTS

Finland’s climate zone is an intermediate between maritime and continental climates. While the growing conditions tend to be harsh, the Gulf stream’s warming impact makes the climate in Finland relatively mild considering the country’s Northern location.

A large majority of Finland is in the boreal vegetation zone but with the country stretching over 1,100km (685.5mi) North to South, the climatic conditions vary greatly across the country. In Finnish forests, the thermal growing season is restricted to few summer months due to the variation in temperatures and the amount of sunlight between the four distinct seasons.

Only four tree species naturally dominate the Finnish forests, being common throughout the country. Those are Norway spruce, Scots pine, Downy birch and Silver birch.

Only four species dominate the Finnish forests: Norway spruce, Scots pine, Downy birch and Silver birch.
About 60 percent of productive forest land in Finland is owned by private people.

There are about 620,000 forest owners in Finland and 350,000 family forest holdings which average size is 30 hectares.

MOST OF THE FINNISH FORESTS ARE OWNED BY PRIVATE FOREST OWNERS

Private forest owners own 60 percent, the state owns 26 percent, companies (including forest industry) own nine percent and other entities own five percent of productive forest land. State forests are managed by the state forest company Metsähallitus.

Wood production is an important objective for many private owners. Forest industry purchases 80 percent of its domestic wood from private forest owners.

Source: Natural Resource Institute Finland
WOOD IS USED IN MANY EVERYDAY ITEMS

- Building and living
- Packaging
- Material combinations
- Medicine and wellbeing
- Energy, bio fuels and chemicals
- Bio-polymers and bio-plastics
- Pulp and paper

Source: Finnish Forest Industries

Read more about newest wood-based products and services: Forest Bioeconomy Future catalogue
FOREST LEGISLATION AND STRATEGIES IN FINLAND
FOREST LEGISLATION IN FINLAND

Forest legislation is the strongest policy means of safeguarding the sustainability of forestry.

Forest legislation in Finland includes several acts and regulations, such as the Forest Act, the Act on the Financing of Sustainable Forestry, and the Act on the Finnish Forestry Centre, the Act on Metsähallitus and the Forest Management Association Act.

The Forest Act is the main law regulating the use of managed forests. Its implementation is monitored by the Finnish Forest Centre.
The first Forest Act was passed in 1886, prohibiting the destruction of forests and striving to ensure that new stands would be generated after loggings.

The current Forest Act came into force in 1997.

The latest reform of Forest Act came into force in 2015, increasing the freedom of choice and responsibility for forest owners in managing their own forest property.

**FOREST ACT**

Finland has a forest regeneration obligation which is defined in the Forest Act and applies to all forest owners.

The purpose of the Forest Act is to promote economically, ecologically and socially sustainable forest management in order that the forests produce a good output in a sustainable way while their biological diversity is being preserved.

The Forest Act sets standards for wood harvesting, forest regeneration and safeguarding the biodiversity of forests. On this basis, forest owners make detailed forest management decisions in accordance with their objectives.

In addition to the Forest Act, the forest management in Finland is also regulated, for example, by the Government Decree on Sustainable Management of Forests and by the Forest Damages Prevention Act. Also environmental legislation, such as the Nature Conservation Act, has implications on forestry.
In Finland, forest inventories have been conducted every five to ten years since the 1920s.

The national forest inventories form a unique time series of the development of Finnish forests.

FOREST INVENTORIES PROVIDE A GREAT AMOUNT OF INFORMATION ABOUT FOREST RESOURCES IN FINLAND

Forest inventory gathers information on the volume, growth and quality of forests. The inventory also provides information on the land use, state of health and diversity of forests. In addition, it is used to investigate changes in carbon sequestration and carbon stocks in forests.

Two forest inventories systems are used in Finland:

• The National Forest Inventory (NFI) is a monitoring system providing information about forest resources in Finland. This type of inventory is conducted by Natural Resource Institute Finland.
• The Finnish Forest Centre (Metsäkeskus) collects forest data and updates it with growth calculations and information on management activities.

In addition, the Finnish Forest Centre provides an eService for forest owners. They can directly find information about their properties on the metsään.fi portal. This portal helps forest owners to conduct their business.
FOREST INVENTORIES PROVIDE DATA FOR DECISION MAKING

Forest inventory results are widely used:

- as a basis for national and international forest policy making
- as a basic knowledge of regional and national forest planning
- to support investment decisions in the forest industry
- for forestry sustainability assessment and forest certification
- in evaluating carbon sinks and greenhouse gas emissions
- as a research data

Source: Natural Resource Institute Finland
IMPORTANT STRATEGIES

The National Forest Strategy 2025
The strategy aims for the growth of welfare and overall sustainability. It takes into account e.g. climate sustainability and the safeguarding of forest biodiversity.
- National Forest Strategy - Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö (mmm.fi)

The Finnish Bioeconomy Strategy
The Finnish Bioeconomy Strategy aims to generate new economic growth and new jobs from an increase in the bioeconomy business and from high added value products and services while securing the operating conditions for the nature’s ecosystems.
- Finnish Bioeconomy Strategy

Forest biodiversity programme for southern Finland, METSO
The METSO Programme 2008-2025 aims to halt the ongoing decline in the biodiversity of forest habitats and species, and to establish at least stable or preferably favorable trends in Southern Finland’s forest ecosystems.
- Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland (METSO) - Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö (mmm.fi)

Climate plan for the land use sector
The climate plan for the land use sector defines the means to reduce climate emissions from the land use sector and to strengthen carbon sinks and carbon stocks.
- Climate plan for the land use sector - Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö (mmm.fi)

Energy and climate strategy
The Energy and Climate Strategy contributes to Finland’s objective of increasing the share of renewable energy to more than 50% of the final consumption by 2030, increasing energy self-sufficiency to more than 55%, halving the domestic use of oil imported into Finland and increasing the share of renewable fuels.
- Energy and climate strategy - Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (tem.fi)

Strategic programme to promote a circular economy
The aim is to transform the economy into one that is based on the principles of circular economy by 2035.
- Strategic programme to promote a circular economy - Ministry of the Environment (ym.fi)