



# Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management in Finland – individual forest management methods for the wellbeing of nature and people

*18 December 2023*



Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland

TAPIO 

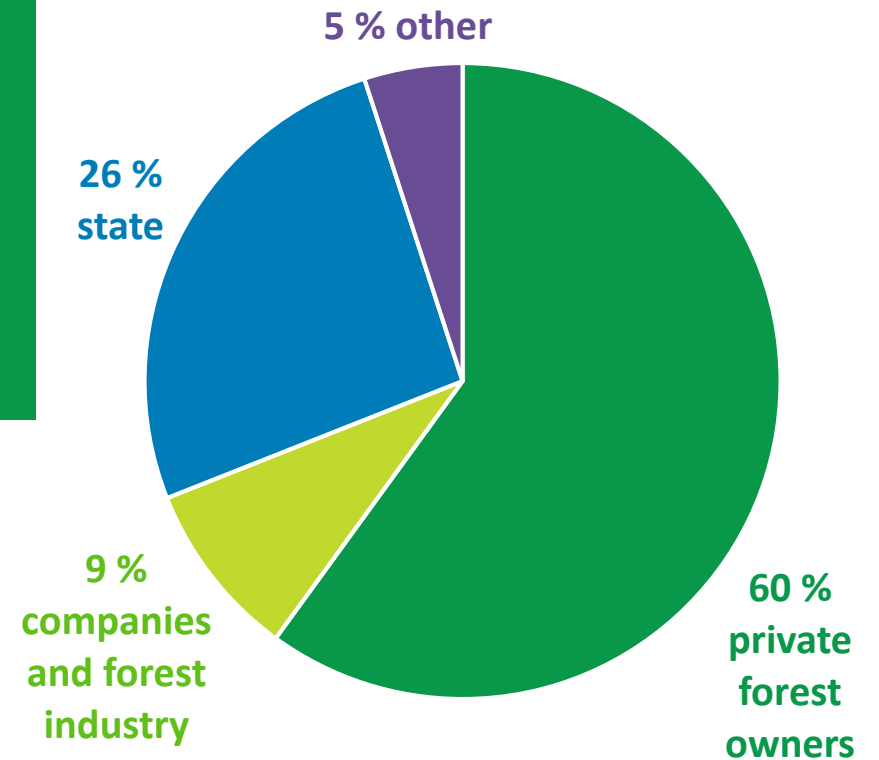


# Finland's forests

**Forest area:**  
20 M ha  
>75 % of land area

In Finnish forest management, the structure of the forest, the characteristics of the soil as well as the goals of the forest owner are taken into consideration.

## Forest ownership



Source: Natural Resources Institute Finland

# The story behind the Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management

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Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management offer alternatives for forest management and information on their effects.

Different elements of sustainability are taken into consideration: **economy, nature, recreational use** of forests and **climate change mitigation and adaptation**.

The Best Practices reflect **long-term research** and societal values among the key stakeholders as well as the main targets set by the Finnish national forest policy.

The Best Practices are **provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry** as a service for Finnish forestry.





# The compilation process

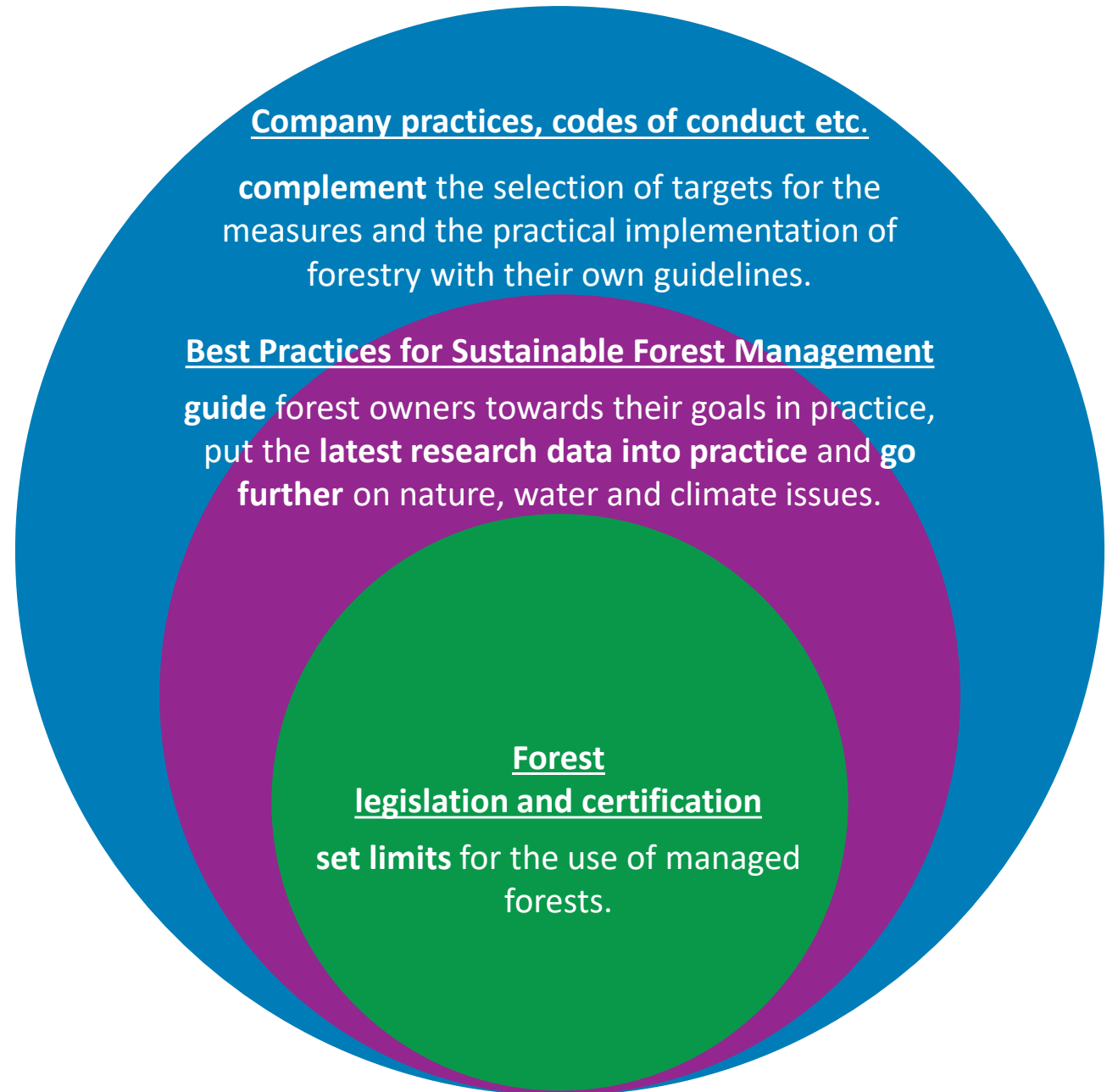
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Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management are developed in a multi-stakeholder process coordinated by Tapio Ltd., where the actors represent forest, environment and climate sectors.

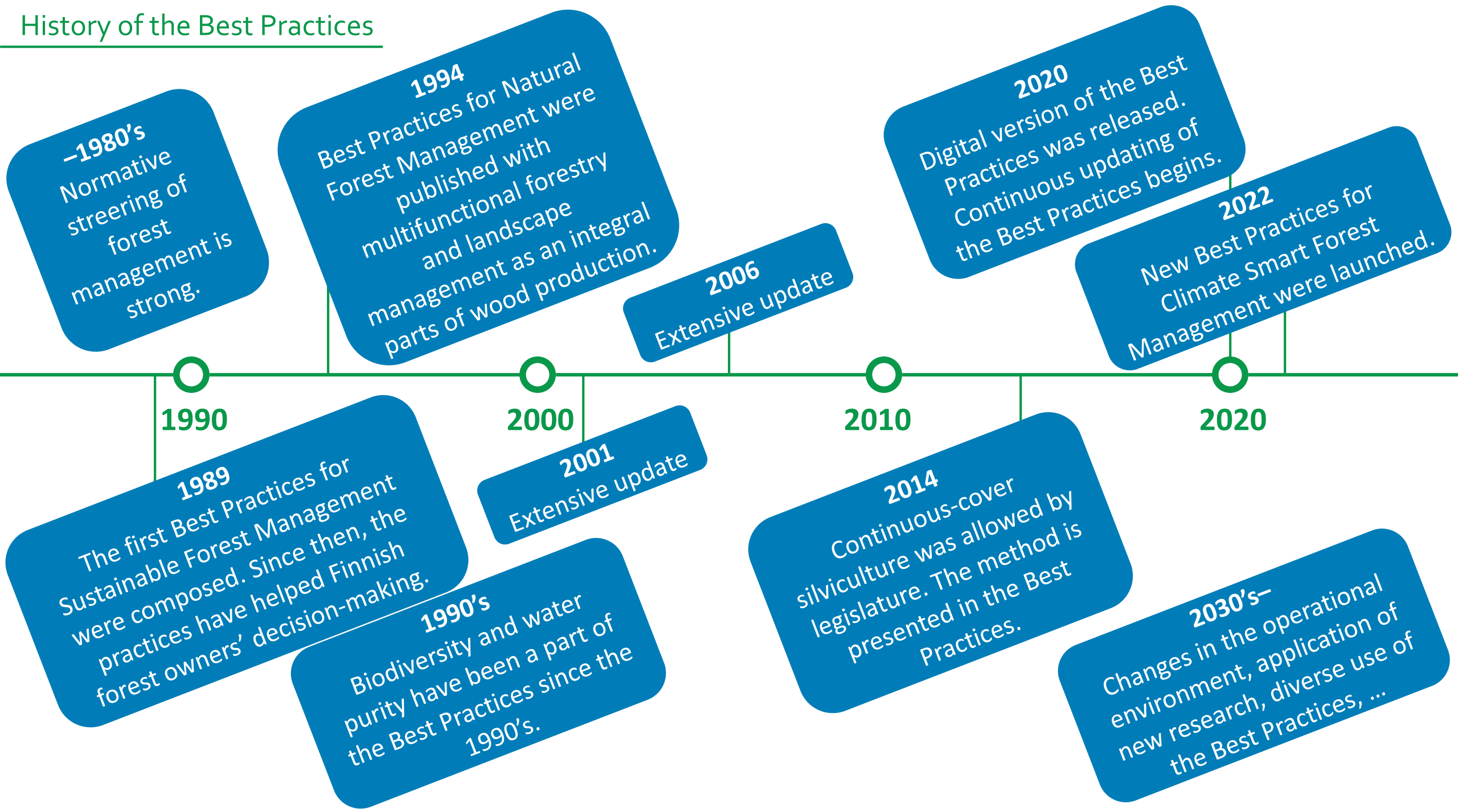
The work is overseen by a high-level management group and steered by a group representing the different interests of forests and forest management. The Best Practices are **constantly open for updates and feedback.**

# Best Practices in relation with laws, certificates and other practices

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## History of the Best Practices







# Application of the Best Practices

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Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management are broadly used by **forestry professionals, forest owners and forestry students.**

The Best Practices are **freely available** in Finnish and in Swedish.

The Best Practices are also **available through an interface (API)** for organizations that wish to include parts of them in their own services or websites.



# Different forests and forest owners need individual solutions

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>600 000 forest owners



Present | Near future | Future generations



Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management take forest owners' diverse values into account.





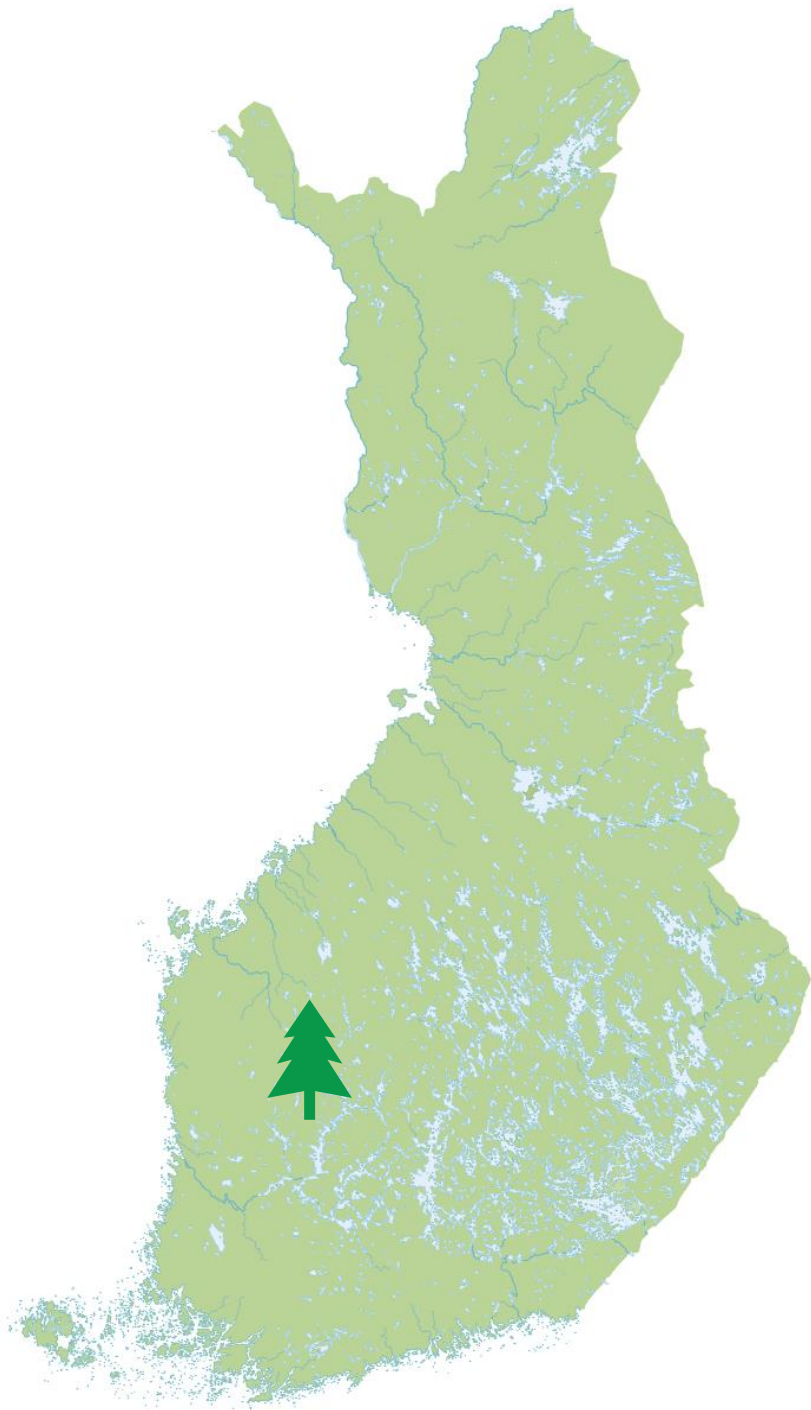


The effects of  
the Best  
Practices for  
Sustainable  
Forest  
Management  
are best seen in  
versatile forests  
that provide  
well-being in  
Finland.

In continuous-cover silviculture, trees are grouped and of varying sizes. Continuous-cover forestry can offer hiding places for galliformes.

© Airi Matila

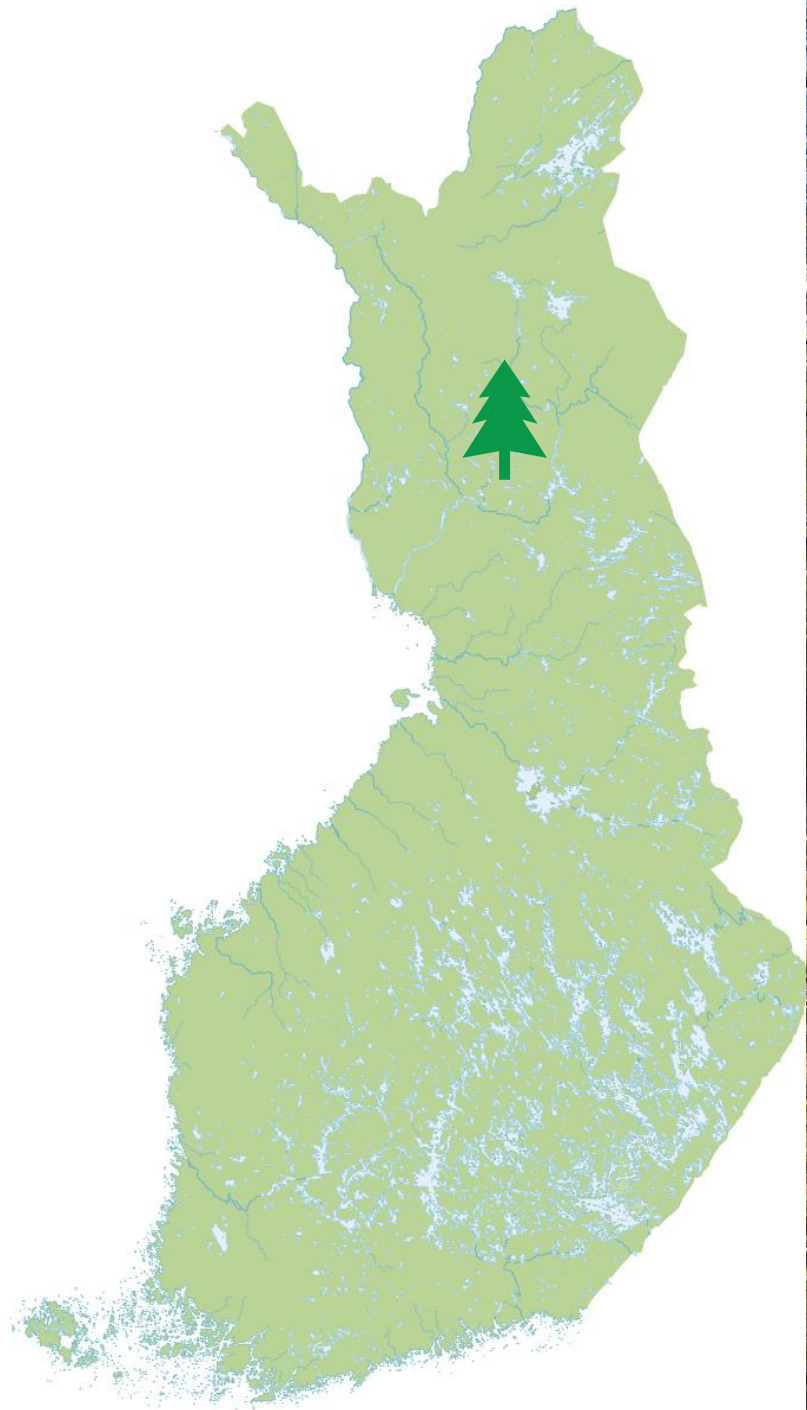




Finland is a land of peatlands. The management of peatlands places particular emphasis on water and nutrient management as well as the control of greenhouse gas emissions.

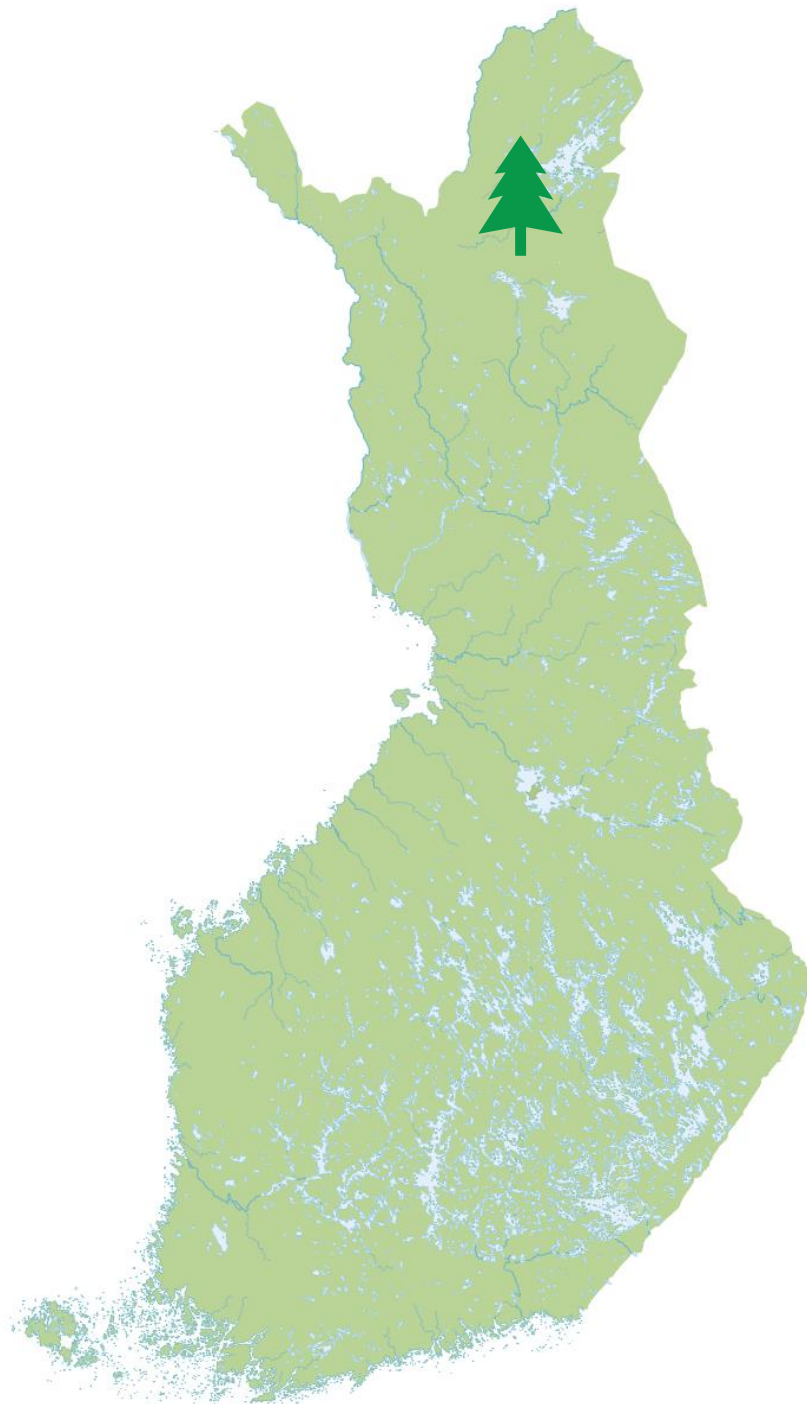
© Markku Saarinen





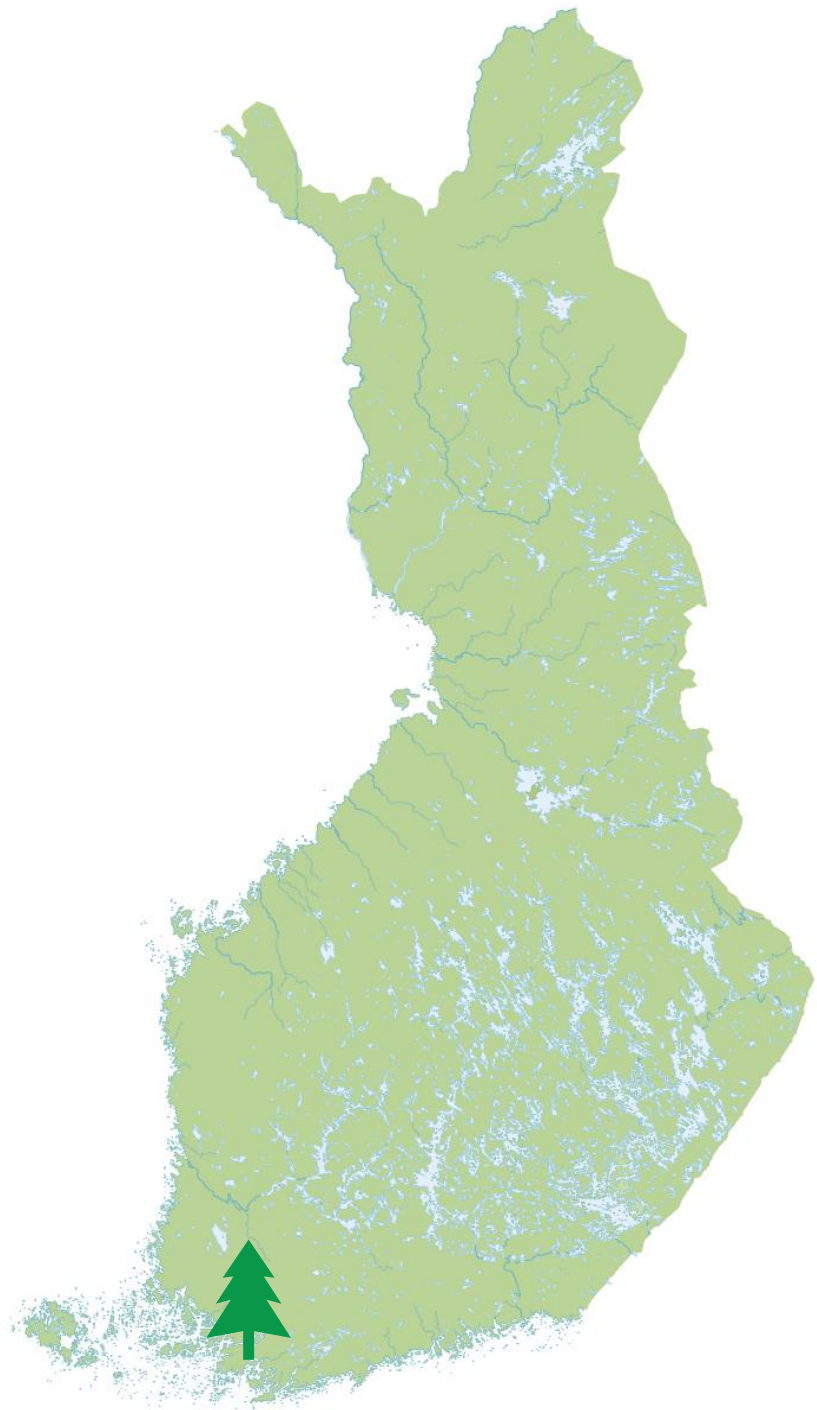
In northern Finland, the forests grow more slowly on average than in southern Finland.





In northernmost Lapland, the goals for forest use differ from the ones in southern parts of Finland. Social and cultural aspects of sustainability are highlighted.

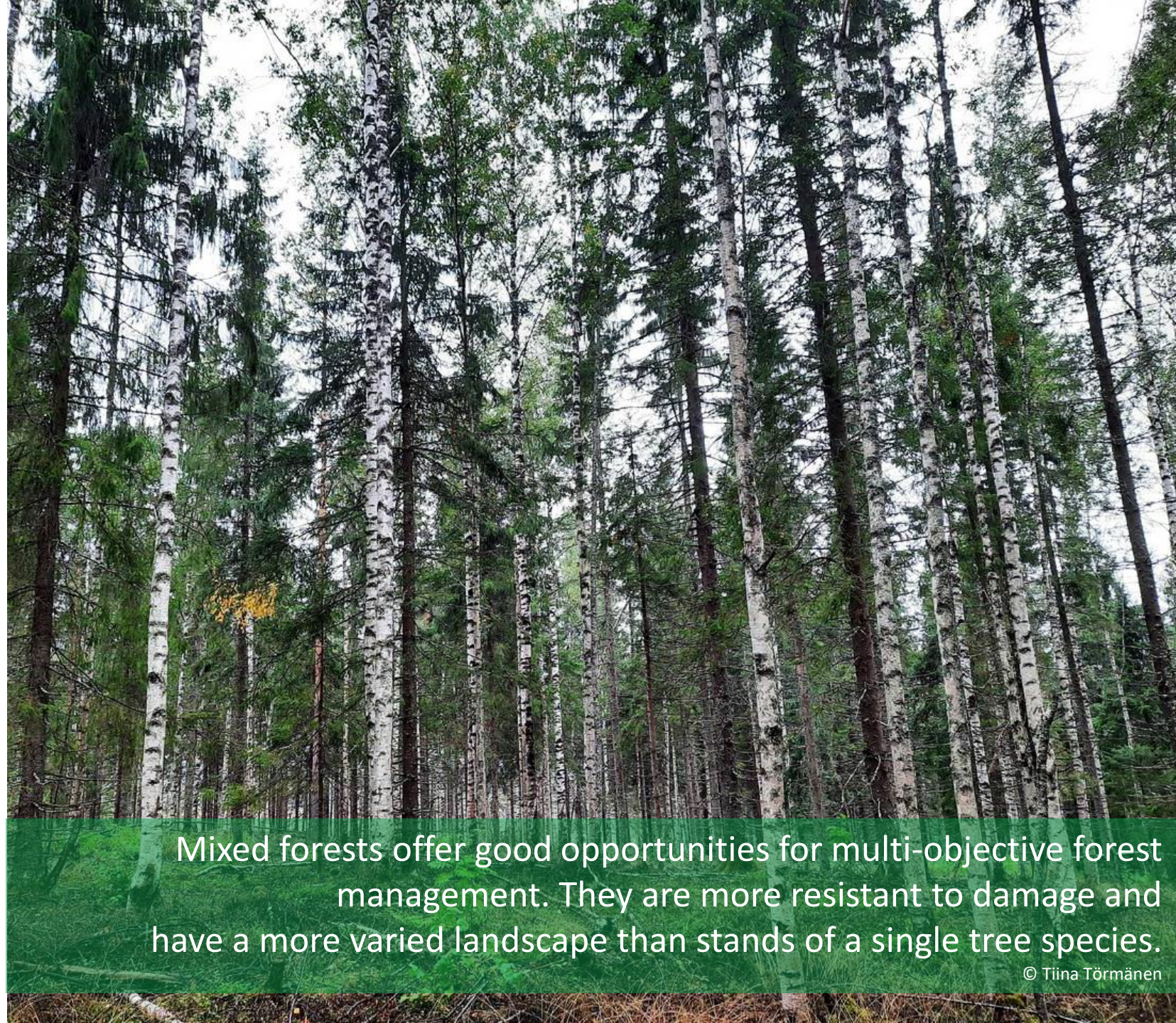




Groves are the most nutritious forests in Finland mostly found along the shoreline and in southern parts of the country. This grove has been logged with an emphasis on nature management.

© Jukka Ruutiainen





Mixed forests offer good opportunities for multi-objective forest management. They are more resistant to damage and have a more varied landscape than stands of a single tree species.





Finnish forest legislation allows a wide range of regimes to be applied to different forest management goals.

**The challenge to a forest owner is the plethora of options available.**

This is where the Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management help decision-making.

# Climate smart forest management

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## **CARBON IN PRODUCTS**

Grow high-quality wood

## **CARBON IN THE FOREST**

Store carbon in soil and trees

## **BALANCE**

Economy, nature, recreation, climate

Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management offer alternative climate smart forestry recommendations for forest owners.



# Best Practices for Climate Smart Forest Management help forest owners make choices that will help their forests survive in the future

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1. ANTICIPATE, MONITOR AND PREPARE



2. FAVOUR MIXED FOREST



3. ENSURE GOOD GROWTH OF SEEDLINGS



4. SPREAD THE RISK





# Nature management

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Nature management is a generic term for activities that are carried out in parallel with timber production in commercial forests. Nature management provides conditions for forest species diversity, clean water and other ecosystem services.

Some nature management measures in the Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management:

Taking valuable habitats into account

Preservation of deadwood

Retention tree groups

Favouring mixed forest

Preservation of trees of biodiversity or landscape value

Protection zones for small waters

Favouring pollinators

Avoiding bird nests



## Case: Deadwood secures diverse nature

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**According to the law**, deadwood protection requirements are connected to separately defined nationally mapped target areas.

**The certification** includes requirements for saving living retention trees and existing deadwood from forestry operations.

**Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management specify** where to leave the retention trees and how to keep deadwood intact during mechanical logging.





# Game management

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If game management is of particular importance to the forest owner, it can be taken into account in forest management planning.

Some measures in the Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management for favouring game:

Saving shrubs, junipers and undergrowth

Retaining shrubs at the edges of open areas

Avoiding clear cutting during bird nesting season

Game-oriented forest plans

Conservation of game culture sites





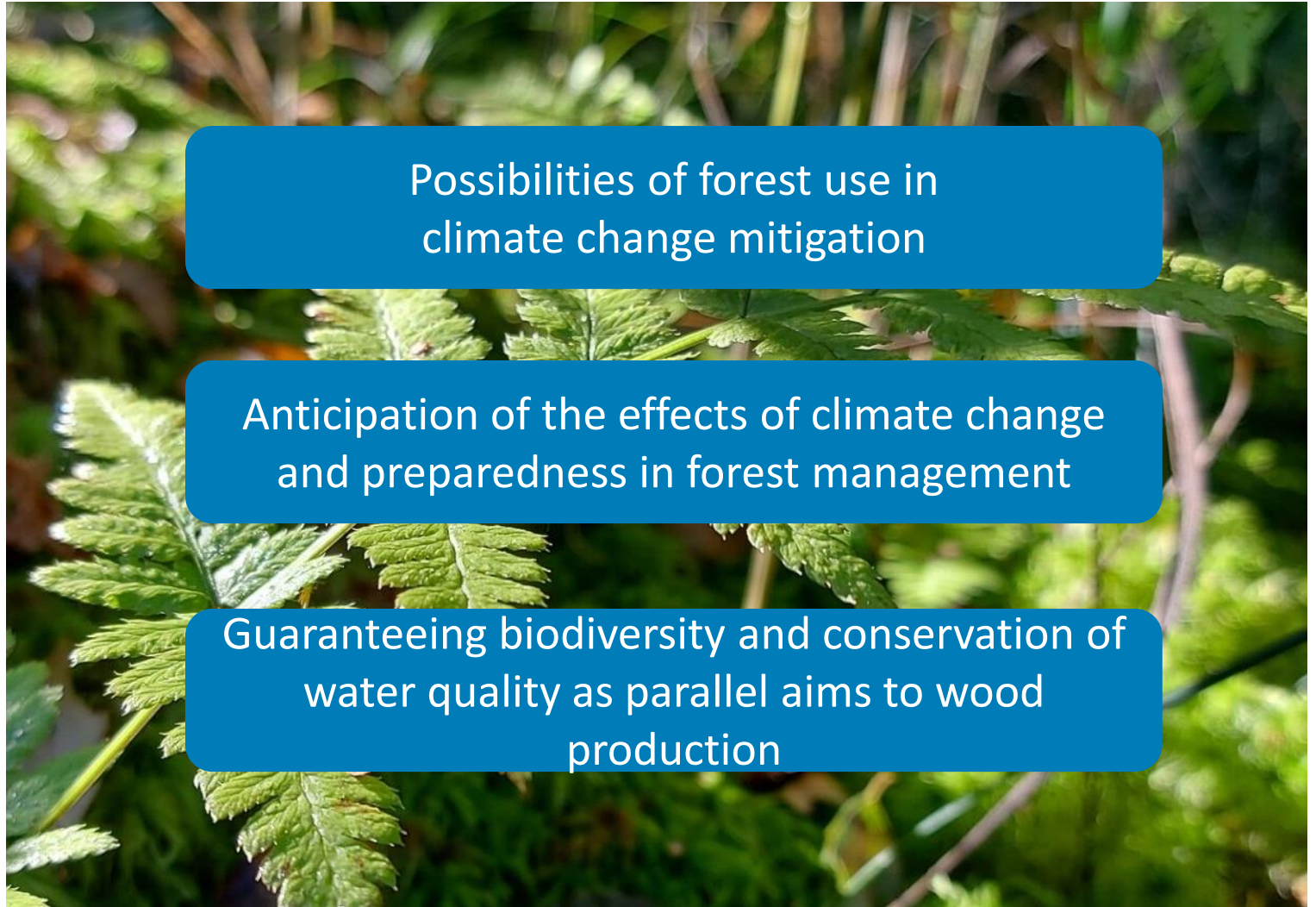
# The Best Practices are kept up-to-date

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The Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management offer justifiable and versatile alternatives for the use of Finnish forests.

At present, the focus is on climate change and biodiversity.

Keeping up-to-date comes with both possibilities and insecurities.



Possibilities of forest use in  
climate change mitigation

Anticipation of the effects of climate change  
and preparedness in forest management

Guaranteeing biodiversity and conservation of  
water quality as parallel aims to wood  
production



Broad  
partnerships

Access to digital  
services and API

Open informing

Community of  
the service  
developers

The drafting of  
the Best Practices for  
Sustainable Forest  
Management is  
an open process

Webinars

Key trainers'  
network

Round Table  
concept





Ministry of Agriculture  
and Forestry of Finland



Ympäristöministeriö  
Miljöministeriet  
Ministry of the Environment



Ministry of Economic Affairs  
and Employment of Finland



NATURAL RESOURCES  
INSTITUTE FINLAND



Suomen ympäristökeskus  
Finlands miljöcentral  
Finnish Environment Institute



ILMATIETEEN LAITOS  
METEOROLOGISKA INSTITUTET  
FINNISH METEOROLOGICAL INSTITUTE



UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI



UNIVERSITY OF  
EASTERN FINLAND



JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO  
UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ



Metsäkeskus  
Forest Centre



SUOMEN  
RIISTAKESKUS  
FINLANDS VILTcentral



Centre for Economic Development,  
Transport and the Environment



HAMK  
Häme University  
of Applied Sciences



METSÄHALLITUS



MTK



METSÄNHOITO-  
YHDISTYSTEN PALVELU



Metsänomistajat  
PÄIJÄT-HÄME



Etämetänomistajien Liitto ry



PKMO  
Pääkaupunkiseudun  
Metsänomistajat ry



WWF



Suomen luonnonsuojeluliitto  
The Finnish Association for Nature Conservation



Metsä



storaenso



UPM



Metsäteho



TORNATOR



Finnish Forest Industries



sahateollisuus



Finnish Energy



BIOENERGIA



KONEYRITTÄJÄT

TAPIO



Partners for the Best Practices for  
Sustainable Forest Management





Natural Resources Institute  
Finland (Luke) produces a wide  
range of research information on  
forest management methods and  
their impacts. Luke also provides  
information on topics where more  
research is needed.





The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK) makes sure that forest owners can find practices that suit them.





# Finnish Forest Industries

Finnish Forest Industries Federation's member companies want to ensure that forest management in Finland is sustainable. FFIF acts as a partner in the Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management so that the practices are easily applicable.





The Finnish Wildlife Agency is involved in developing the Best Practices for game-oriented forest management that benefit animals, hunters and forest owners.





WWF Finland ensures that the Best Practices include good practices for environmentally friendly forest management and conservation.



# The Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management are an important part of forestry professionals' daily work

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2/3

of Finland's forestry professionals apply the Best Practices monthly

93 %

think that it is important or highly important for forestry experts to have access in the Best Practices

76 %

think that the Best Practices are a significant or a very significant part of Finnish forest management



# The Best Practices are taken into use through digital services and training

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Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management are published as Open Data and they have been integrated as part of the digital services and forest management planning systems of the Forest Industry.

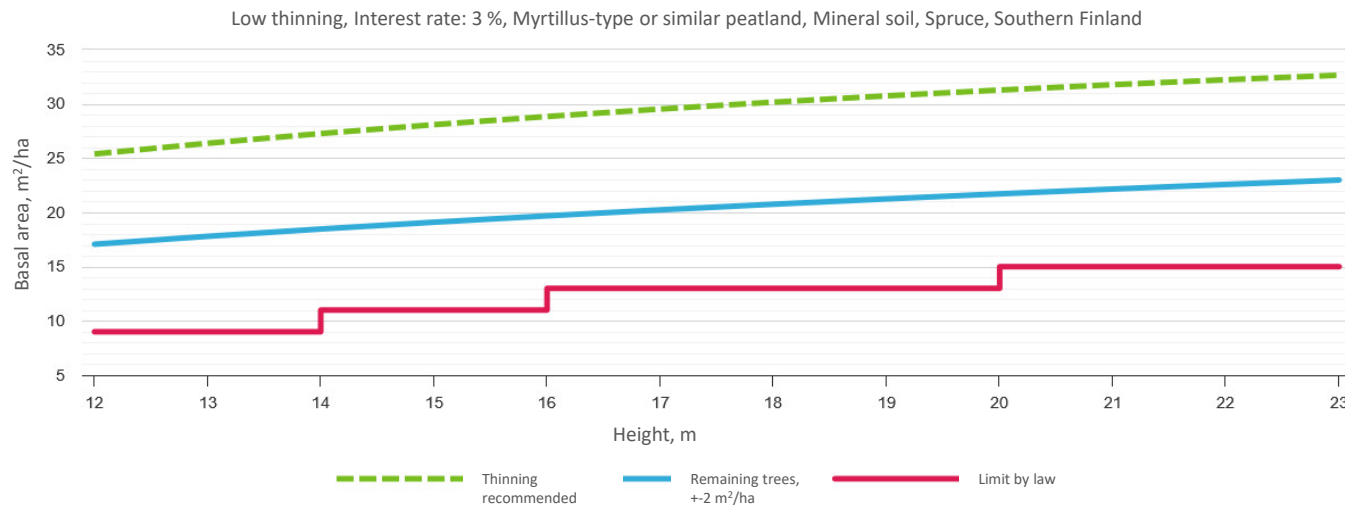
The Best Practices are widely used in forest professionals' basic training and forest owners' training.





# Thinning schedules

The **thinning schedules** in the Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management describe the optimal time to carry out thinning in managed forest and how dense to leave the forest.



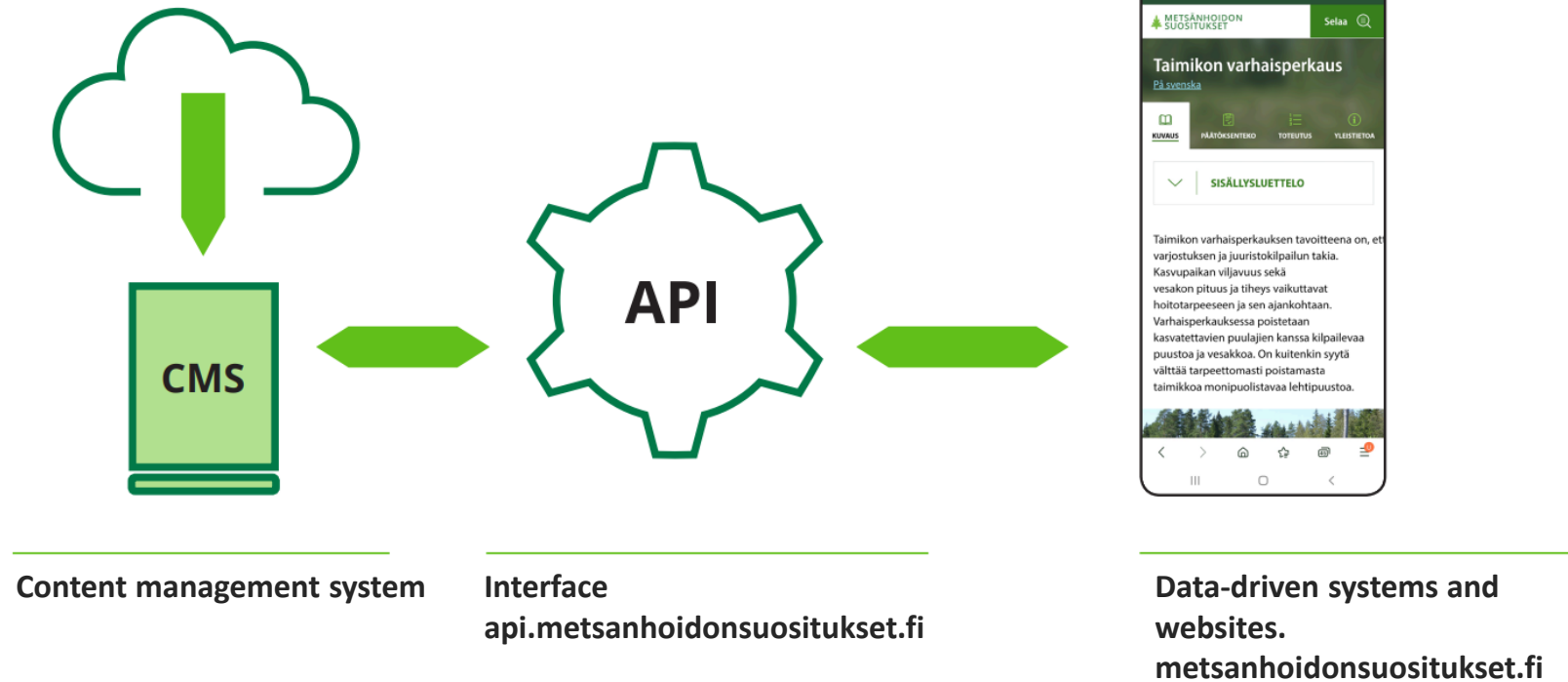
*“With the new thinning schedules, forest owners can be offered a wider range of options, such as adjusting the profit target or emphasising carbon sequestration. This will bring advantages for forest owners who want to have more control over the development of their forests.”*

Kalle Vanhatalo  
Coordinator of the Best Practices for  
Sustainable Forest Management  
Tapio



# Application programming interface (API)

The Application Programming Interface (API) for the digital Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management enables the transfer of the Best Practices directly to other digital systems and services in the forest sector.






# Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management reflect Finland's forest policy

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A common political will for forest management and the coordination of different political goals are an important part of the Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management in Finland.

The Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management are mentioned in [The National Forest Strategy 2035](#).



*“Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management are based on the newest research information and practical experience. They are a key part of the implementation of Finland's National Forest Strategy 2035 aiming at the overall sustainability of forestry.”*

Erno Järvinen  
Head of Forests and Bioenergy unit  
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland



# Key messages

## **Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management aim at overall sustainability**

Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management aim to achieve the overall sustainability and diversity of forest use. The aim is to increase the well-being of and from forests. Forest owners can aim for overall sustainability in their own forests or emphasise different dimensions of sustainability according to their values. The Best Practices offer alternative solutions for forest management and use. They describe the economic, natural, recreational and climate change mitigation impacts of the different options.

## **The Best Practices focus on the forest owner and their objectives**

The forest owner can choose from forest management options based on their objectives and values. The Best Practices support forest owners in setting their objectives. The Best Practices help forest owners to make decisions that are appropriate to the forest site. They are also an important tool for forestry professionals and forestry education.

## **The Best Practices are developed through a transparent, generally accepted and trusted process**

The Best Practices are regularly revised to keep them up to date as new research information is available. Practical experience and objectives that are considered important by society are also taken into account. The Best Practices are conducted in broad consultation with forest, environmental and climate scientists, experts and data users. Tapio acts as an independent, transparent and participatory coordinator. The value of the recommendations comes from their use. It is important that the recommendations are easy to apply in different situations.



# Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management in Finland

Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management **offer alternatives for forest management and information on their effects.**  
The Best Practices take include **all aspects of sustainability.**

The Best Practices are provided by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry** as a service for Finnish forestry. **Tapio** acts as an independent, transparent and participatory coordinator.

Economic  
value

Recreation



Nature  
management

Climate  
actions

Present | Near future | Future generations

Best Practices for Sustainable Forest Management **guide forest owners** towards their goals in practice, **put the latest research data into practice and complement** laws and certificates.







**METSÄNHOIDON  
SUOSITUKSET**

[Link: Best Practices for Sustainable  
Forest Management in Finland](#)



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