

Recording and documenting regional silvicultural practices in Sweden

Whilst working abroad in different countries and on business trips to various parts of the world, I could not help but notice that there are many interesting silvicultural methods that have been successfully developed by forest practice. One such regional method is, for example, a nurse-crop or artificial shelterwood method developed in Schleswig-Holstein for planting mixed-species CCF woodlands on former agricultural land. Despite great environmental odds the method has evolved to be so successful that plant losses are less than 10%. In Britain, the Bradford-Hutt plan, for example, is a unique, regional approach to CCF in Devonshire. Such methods were typically developed on an empirical basis and evolved over many decades. Often these local “management recipes” are not properly documented let alone included in the scientific literature. Yet they constitute expert knowledge and often can be considered best practice. They are typically passed on by generations of forest owners and managers. In our fast-moving time with rapidly changing working conditions and ever-changing educational programmes and global climate change there is an increasing danger that such important methods of regional significance are lost for posterity. Some of these methods may turn out to be real treasures that may even help us mitigate adverse effects of climate change.

The aim of the project is to create a thorough inventory and documentation of important regional silvicultural methods in Sweden. The documentation will include an accurate description of sites, silvicultural prescriptions, maps, photos and interviews of forest managers and owners. It is also the intention to use scientific methods of modelling expert knowledge. Naturally the project involves much travelling and the knowledge of the Swedish language would be of great help. Cooperation with forest ownership associations, forest authorities etc. is part of the project.

The results of the project will be published in a book and communicated in practical workshops.

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