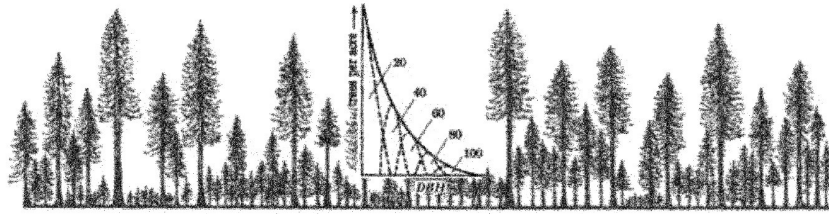# Monitoring the progress of transformation to CCF

Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) has recently received renewed attention in Sweden and elsewhere in Europe for its potential to mitigate climate change, for its suitability as a toolbox for conservation and for its popularity in the general public. Continuous cover forestry is also ideal for community and recreational forests, where visitors are very sensitive to high-impact forest management methods such as clearfelling. CCF is forest management based on ecological and environmental principles with a continuity of woodland microclimate and soil processes. As a consequence of this definition patch harvesting is replaced by continuous thinnings where the selection of suitable trees for maintenance and removal is crucial. Transformation is the gradual process of converting an even-aged plantation to a CCF woodland by changing its horizontal and vertical structure. Transformation requires many silvicultural skills and experience and it is a crucial phase where many things can go wrong. Often forest managers and owners struggle to understand whether their transformation effort has been successful or whether they are on the right track. In such common situations effective monitoring can help to assess the transformation process based on scientific indicators. There are a number of simple but clever statistical characteristics that can inform forest managers and owners about what direction their woodlands are taking and how far they have come in terms of the envisaged CCF target stand structure. The purpose of this MSc thesis is to review potential indicators and characteristics from the scientific literature, to classify them in a meaningful and accessible way and most importantly to test them using data from ongoing transformations to CCF.

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References

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