



Nationales Waldprogramm für Deutschland

National Forest Programme for Germany

**A socio-political dialogue to
promote sustainable forest management
within the framework of sustainable development
1999 / 2000**

Summary

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1 Introduction

As a country with a long tradition of sustainable forest management, as an industrialized nation with a high resource consumption and as one of the rich countries in the world, Germany bears a particular responsibility to manage its natural resources - and in particular its forests - in a sustainable and socially compatible way. To further develop the sound management of forests and to meet the various interests in the use of forests also in the future, a National Forest Programme (NWP) was developed for Germany. A National Forest Programme is not defined as an operational, specialized political programme in the narrower sense. On the contrary, it designates an ongoing dialogue, laying the foundations for a social consensus on sustainable forest management. Germany thus also meets its international commitments to promote sustainable forest management within the framework of sustainable development.

In September 1999 the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry (BML) invited the other Federal Ministries concerned, the *Laender* and nationwide groups, organizations, trade unions from the fields of agriculture, forestry and forest industries, hunting, environment and development, research as well as trade and industry to elaborate a National Forest Programme. Cooperation in the National Forest Programme has therefore been open to all groups addressing forest issues. On a basis of partnership, current technical topics were discussed, different views exchanged

and wherever possible a consensus reached on assessments of problems, ways of solving them as well as on the outlines of sustainable forest management within the framework of sustainable development. This Programme represents a compromise, including statements endorsed by all actors as well as those statements on which a consensus could not be reached and which must still be discussed in detail.

The National Forest Programme constitutes the platform for an ongoing social process where the actors concerned indicate a future need for action in the context of intensive discussions. The Programme provides BML with a basis for its future forest policy action, whilst being a recommendation for action for all other actors. The National Forest Programme constitutes a further step forward towards a social consensus on the sustainable development of forests from economic, ecological and social aspects.

Note: *The long version of the National Forest Programme (in German only) can be obtained from the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry (see above address).*

The key contents of this Programme are summarized in the following.

2 *Forests in Germany*

2.1 *Multifunctional importance*

Forests cover one third of the national territory of Germany. They are habitats of high economic, ecological and social importance. The sound and rational use of natural resources, their conservation and healthy development are matters of concern to society. The key market product of forestry is still raw wood. Yet, the forest goods enjoying particular attention and appreciation in society are primarily those shaping the direct living environment of the individual such as the opportunity for recreation in nature, tourism or the services rendered by forests to the conservation of nature, soil, climate, and drinking water. Forests render these services partly by their mere existence, but they also partly require structural measures to do so.

2.2 *The principle of sustainability*

The sustainability principle looks back on a long tradition in German forestry. The contents of what is meant by "sustainable forest management " are changing in the course of time and adapting to social requirements. The concept and practice of sustainable forest management are, therefore, constantly developed further in Germany. Whereas originally sustainable forest management primarily referred to sustainable timber production, it gradually began to encompass other diverse economic, ecological and social functions as well.

The new sustainability concept also forms the basis for the National Forest Programme of Germany.

Sustainable forest management is the stewardship and use of forests and forest land in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfill, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems. (1993 Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, Resolution H 1)

2.3 *"National Forest Programme" as a concept*

From UNCED to the National Forest Programme

In the international sphere a comprehensive model of sustainable development was elaborated and adopted in 1992 by the "Earth Summit " of Rio de Janeiro – The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Issues relating to the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests play a key role here. A number of follow-up meetings took place to implement the forest-related decisions adopted at this Conference and to put them into concrete form. In this context, around 150 proposals for action were developed, including the concept of National Forest Programmes as an important internationally agreed instrument to implement international, forest-related agreements at a national level. The proposals for action stress

the cross-sectoral and dynamic character of National Forest Programmes, expressly calling upon key interest groups to get involved in their elaboration.

Contents of a National Forest Programme

Under the agreements of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (1997) the term "National Forest Programme" is used as a comprehensive forest policy framework to achieve sustainable forest management. Accordingly, a National Forest Programme should take the following **principles** into account:

- national sovereignty and own responsibility in the use of resources,
- consistency with the regulatory framework of the country and with international agreements,
- partnership and involvement of all interested groups,
- integral and intersectoral approaches to the conservation and development of forests,
- long-term planning, implementing and monitoring processes.

National Forest Programmes should contain the following **elements**, inter alia:

- key forest policy statements on important fields of action,
- presenting the importance of forests and forestry for society,
- interfaces with other sectors (coordination),
- strategies to safeguard the economic, ecological and social functions of forests,
- identifying a need for action.

While Germany already disposes of the key elements of a National Forest Programme for

forest conservation and sustainable forest management in the shape of the existing forest-related acts and instruments at Federal Government and *Laender* levels, these elements have so far not been consolidated in a forest policy programme. The National Forest Programme for Germany is designed to compile these elements and to identify any existing gaps.

2.4 International cooperation

As the major bilateral donor in the forest sector, Germany has been promoting forest conservation and sustainable forest management for many years in the partner countries of development cooperation. The consensus on the role of a National Forest Programme concept reached in international negotiations constitutes the first step towards an effective coordination of national as well as international actions, which is also of central importance for the partner countries. National Forest Programmes should form the basis for development policy cooperation in forest issues and also give a signal that sustainable forest management should be viewed as a joint global task to be met on a partnership basis.

2.5 Incorporation into European agreements

Alongside the UNCED decisions, agreements at European level are relevant to German forest policy, in particular the resolutions and declarations of the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe (1990, 1993 and 1998) as well as the forestry strategy of the European

Union. The three Ministerial Conferences developed criteria, indicators and guidelines for a sustainable management of forests.

The EU forestry strategy is to supplement the national forest policies of individual Member States and to optimize the implementation of Community measures.

3 Framework conditions in Germany

Forests as habitats

Around 30 % of Germany is covered with forests. Despite conversions for construction and settlement, for example, the forest area has been expanding since 1960 by around 500,000 ha to 10.7 million ha today. Since virtually the whole of Germany, except for high mountain regions, sea coasts and special sites, used to be covered with forests, forests are always the form of vegetation which is closest to nature. There are no longer completely untouched forest ecosystems in Germany. Particularly on the more favourable sites, deciduous trees were largely cleared for agricultural and other purposes. Today, coniferous trees prevail on around 70% of the remaining forest area, partly mixed with deciduous trees, and frequently in regions where they did not exist before systematic forestry began. The main tree species today are spruce, pine, beech and oak.

In the densely populated cultural landscape of Germany, forests represent important ecological regions with recreational and protective functions. On the one hand, they

form large-scale, coherent, close to nature ecosystems, and on the other hand, especially in areas with few forests, they serve as refuges for many species whose non-forest habitats are more or less impaired. Many forest areas are subject to an even stricter protection, e.g. national parks, biosphere preserves, nature conservation areas and other protected areas. Within the framework of the European Network of Protected Areas „Natura 2000“ forests play a special role in Germany.

Forests and landscapes shaped by forests are not static entities, but subject to natural dynamism. The local and temporal change of forest stands in age composition and tree species, also caused by the type of management, has resulted in a closely linked network of diverse habitats. The ownership patterns in forests and the diversity of objectives pursued by owners also contribute to these manifold shapes. Around 46% of German forests, mainly small forests, are privately owned by 1.3 million forest owners. As self-helping organizations, forestry cooperatives are to improve the economic situation of these enterprises. 31% of the forest area is owned by the *Laender*, 20 % by public-law corporations and 3% by the Federal Government.

With an average of 270 solid cubic metres/ha, Germany takes a leading place in Europe with respect to its growing stock. Whereas current annual fellings in Germany account for only 3.7 cubic metres/ha, the potential and sustainably usable roundwood availability is 5.7 cubic metres/ha. Therefore,

only about 70% of the felling potential is exhausted.

Forests are exposed to various natural hazards and strains of civilization. In the process, air-borne pollutant inputs still play a key role and exceed the long-term stress capacity of forests. In the medium term, this could adversely affect not only the stability of forests, but also their protective functions. Game populations and hunting strongly influence the development of forests. Too large stocks of cloven-hoofed game cause considerable damage on large areas, hampering the establishment of stable mixed forests. By a type of hunting in line with forest requirements, forestry enterprises have a key instrument at their disposal to help conserve and establish forests rich in species and structures on a large scale, whilst reducing their operating costs through fewer game protection measures.

Statutory provisions

The Federal Forest Act is designed to conserve forests due to their economic benefits (productive function) and their importance for the environment and the recreation of the population (protective and recreational functions), to expand them, wherever possible, and to ensure their proper management on a sustainable basis, whilst promoting the forestry sector and reconciling public interests and the concerns of forest owners. Apart from directly applicable provisions, it also contains framework provisions to be specified by the *Laender*. Special fields are governed by special acts, e.g. the Act on Forest Seed and Planting Stock, the Forest Damage Compensation

Act, the Forestry Sales Fund Act or the Act on Classification Scales for Raw Timber. In addition, there are a number of other legal bases such as e.g. the nature conservation and hunting acts of the Federal Government and *Laender*.

Promotion of forestry enterprises

The forestry sector receives public support because of the diverse functions performed by forests. This takes the shape of an improvement of the economic environment, e.g. within the framework of the Joint Task for the Improvement of Agricultural Structures and Coastal Protection (GAK), for which over DM 120 million are made available annually by the Federal Government and the *Laender*. Besides there are other direct and indirect instruments of support in forestry.

4 Fields of action for forest policy in Germany

4.1 Preliminary remark

In a joint discussion involving the actors of the NWP process, fields of action were first selected, with the state of play and need for action being discussed at round tables. The final aim is not to deal with all problematic issues of forest policy in the Federal Republic, but to achieve a broad consensus, if possible, on perceptions of problems and ways of solving them. As a result, fields of actions, which are of priority importance to the persons involved, should be tackled. The results of the round table talks, including the jointly adopted recommendations for actions

to the actors, are summarized in the following.

4.2 *Forests and society*

General information. Alongside the supply of the raw material wood and other products, forests and forestry enterprises provide a number of protective and recreational services to society. Forests render these services partly by their mere existence, but they also partly require structural operations by forest owners to do so. The scope of services performed by forest owners for society to some extent go beyond the social obligation of landowners embodied in the Basic Law.

Need for action:

- *developing economically as well as ecologically viable standards for uses involving forests,*
- *elaborating „dividing lines“ between services to be rendered as part of the social obligation and those services going beyond that for which costs could be incurred,*
- *developing remuneration systems to reward services rendered to society,*
- *expanding the range of protective and recreational services through entrepreneurial initiatives by forest owners,*
- *better presentation of the services rendered to society,*
- *strengthening the economic productivity of forestry enterprises to safeguard the entire range of services provided by forests.*

Forests as recreational areas. Traditionally, the German population has close ties to forests and uses them as recreational areas. The German forest laws basically allow access to forests for recreational purposes. Uses imposing a greater strain on forests are however either prohibited or subject to authorization (e.g. camping, organized events or commercial mushroom picking). The extent of local recreation and tourism varies from place to place. It is especially in conurbations that the needs of various sports and leisure groups increasingly collide on a confined space, frequently placing a serious strain on forests and forestry enterprises, e.g. resulting from increased traffic volume and waste, greater precautions for the safety of roads and recreational facilities and greater risk of forest fires.

Need for action:

- *stepping up public relations work, information campaigns and educational work on forests,*
- *including the local level in the co-responsibility for the sustainable development of recreation and tourism,*
- *gearing recreational services to demand,*
- *steering the number of visitors.*

Protection of soils, groundwater and drinking water, immission control and local climate protection. Soils play a key role in forest ecosystems: they buffer airborne pollution, filter and store water, serve as a habitat for a large number of soil organisms and they are vital for plant roots. Forests protect the topsoil from erosion. In the mountains they protect towns and villages and traffic routes from falling rocks,

landslides and avalanches. Forests filter precipitation, leading to a steady replenishing of groundwater resources. The drinking water derived from forest areas generally has a high degree of purity, enabling water supply enterprises to save costs for water purification. Forests filter noxious gases and dusts from the atmosphere. These atmospheric depositions have been acting on forest soils for decades, impairing the functioning of forest soils to a varying degree according to the respective region.

Need for action:

- *reducing harmful immissions,*
- *continuing forest monitoring,*
- *applying the polluter-pays principle,*
- *conserving and managing forests in line with drinking water protection.*

Flood, sight and noise control as well as other services. Forests alleviate flood peaks and evenly release the stored water after a time-lag. Thus, forests contribute considerably to flood control, especially along big rivers.

Forests conceal aesthetic damage to landscapes such as plants, buildings and transport facilities, contributing to an effective noise abatement by sound absorption.

Forests can improve the image and value of residential property in cities and regions, representing an important economic factor for health resorts, for example. Furthermore, there are a large number of cultural monuments and remainders of former settlements in forests, important for the history of civilization, as well as traditional forms of forest management from former

coppicing and composite forest systems and pasture forests.

Need for action:

- *minimizing the use of forests for settlement purposes as well as for other building and infrastructure projects,*
- *taking forests adequately into account in flood control measures,*
- *conserving existing examples of historic forms of forest utilization.*

4.3 Forests and biological diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity adopted by UNCED declared the conservation of biological diversity as one of the key objectives of environmental protection worldwide.

Forests are crucial for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in Germany. Here the diverse locations and forms of use entailed a mosaic of very different ecosystems with a great diversity of species and genetic resources. Within the framework of multifunctional forestry, measures are being taken to protect and develop biological diversity in forest management.

Recording and researching biological diversity. The recording of biological diversity has only just started worldwide. Many functional relations within the complex forest ecosystems are also not yet sufficiently known.

Yet, a complete recording of biological diversity cannot be implemented at present. This is why it must be recorded indirectly by

means of suitable indicators. Results of forest inventories and observation measures on particularly protected plots can provide key assistance in these endeavours.

Need for action:

- *supplementing the current species surveys and developing nationwide uniform indicators of biological diversity,*
- *strengthening cooperation between forestry and nature conservation,*
- *intensifying research,*
- *improving coordination of research and implementation of results.*

Reducing external hazards. Forests and their biological diversity continue to be seriously jeopardized by air pollution. In addition, the conversion and fragmentation of forest areas, the lowering of the groundwater level and regionally excessive recreation traffic are impairing the efficiency of forest ecosystems.

Need for action:

- *taking further measures to reduce air pollution,*
- *continuing silvicultural measures to stabilize forests,*
- *avoiding losses of forest areas as well as forest fragmentation,*
- *in the case of water table drawdowns compensation/restoration by the responsible party,*
- *steering the number of visitors.*

Close to nature forestry. On the basis of many years of experience gathered by numerous forestry enterprises, concepts for

close to nature forestry have been developed over the past few years in all *Laender*, largely relying on the use of natural processes and self-steering mechanisms.

Need for action:

- *more financial aid for the conversion to close to nature forestry,*
- *speeding up training and further training in the field of "close to nature forestry",*
- *increasing integration of old and dead trees in managed forests,*
- *using environmentally sound forest technology,*
- *developing proper forestry further.*

Forests and Game. The animal species occurring in these habitats, more specifically cloven-hoofed game, are a key element of forest biological diversity worthy of conservation. However, large cloven-hoofed game populations, unadapted to the natural habitat capacities, currently threaten the development of forests rich in structures, resulting in a depletion of species through selective browsing.

Need for action:

- *deriving the bag level from objective ecological indicators,*
- *developing further effective hunting methods and seasons,*
- *developing further pertinent legal provisions.*

Nature conservation measures, protected areas, biotope network. Measures for the conservation of species and biotopes form part of regular forestry activities. Apart from this, protected areas are required where all

measures are subordinate to the purpose of protection or are not undertaken at all. There is a system of protected areas in Germany, also encompassing forest areas to a considerable degree. But also forests without a statutory protection status are important elements of a large-scale system of biotopes in the landscape. In the implementation of nature conservation measures, the aims "conservation of current biological diversity" and "as close to nature as possible" could collide and must be weighed up in individual cases.

Need for action:

- *implementing the NATURA 2000-concept, taking requirements of nature conservation and ownership rights into account,*
- *expanding forests and combining fragmented forest areas to form ecosystem networks.*

Genetic diversity of forest trees and shrubs.

Key measures to safeguard forest genetic resources, also covering large areas, are the natural regeneration of suitable stands as well as the use of source-identified and adapted reproductive material for plantings. In addition, there are specific measures for genetic conservation by the Federal Government and *Laender*.

Need for action:

- *prolonging the regeneration periods,*
- *providing forest owners with more information and training,*
- *taking genetic diversity more into account in the imminent revision of the Act on Forestry Seed and Planting Stock,*

- *using source-identified reproductive material, also in landscaping.*

Incentive measures. Beyond statutory requirements, direct incentives for additional measures conserving and developing biological diversity arise from the financial aid provided for the conversion to close to nature forestry and the option of making greater use of the instrument of contract nature conservation.

Need for action:

- *further developing forestry support in favour of close to nature forest management,*
- *developing additional incentive instruments,*
- *expanding contract nature conservation in forestry.*

4.4 Role of forests in the global carbon cycle

The threat to the global climate by the anthropogenic greenhouse effect is a central issue of national and international environmental policies. The main cause is the rising concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere ensuing especially from the combustion of fossil energy sources and the large-scale destruction of forests worldwide. Countermeasures must therefore tackle these causes first and foremost. Forestry operations, too, could help to solve the problem. Climate changes also pose risks to forests themselves.

Conservation of forest areas and promotion of forest expansion. In comparison with other vegetation forms, forests may have the highest carbon stocks. The conservation and expansion of forest areas is therefore a means of fixing carbon.

Need for action:

- *increasing the promotion of forest expansion,*
- *accelerating and simplifying the authorization procedures in planned afforestation,*
- *taking the objective of forest expansion more into account in regional planning.*

Silvicultural measures to increase carbon storage in forests. The age and structure of forest stands exert an influence on the level of average growing stock and thereby of carbon stocks stored in forests. As half of the carbon stocks in forests of the temperate latitudes are fixed in mineral soils, humus and litter, soil conservation also plays an important role.

Need for action:

- *increasing CO₂-sequestration through suitable silvicultural measures,*
- *taking the aspect of CO₂-storage function into account in multifunctional silviculture, also by using financial incentives,*
- *implementing close to nature forest management on a large scale, if possible,*
- *using soil-conserving methods in forest opening and forest operations.*

Greater use of wood as a raw material and source of energy. The use of long life-cycle

wood products withdraws in the long run carbon stored in wood from the atmosphere (product storage).

Furthermore, wood from sustainable use, which is used for energy purposes, contributes to a CO₂ reduction if it replaces the use of fossil fuels (energy substitution).

Finally, the use of wood or wood products also contributes to reducing carbon dioxide by replacing other materials with a high level of fossil raw materials or energy sources being used in the production (substitution of materials).

Need for action:

- *improving the legal framework conditions for the use of wood, in particular in the fields of environment and energy,*
- *promoting research and development regarding product and process innovations in the wood sector,*
- *stepping up the campaigns advertising the use of wood.*

Research and monitoring. With a view to forestry strategies for adjustments to future climate changes, more scientifically sound knowledge is required on the contribution of forests to the carbon cycle and the possible effects of climate change on forests.

Need for action:

- *regionalizing global climate models,*
- *recording carbon stocks and their changes in forest ecosystems,*

- *enlarging the level of knowledge on the adaptability of forest ecosystems to climate changes.*

4.5 Importance of wood as a renewable resource

Wood is the key marketable product of German forestry. Over 90% of the income earned by forestry enterprises is based on the sale of industrial roundwood, which also chiefly serves to finance the recreational and protective functions of forests. It is vital for the conservation of the stability, productivity and functional diversity of forests that the economic viability of forestry enterprises is ensured.

Raw material resources and wood supply.

There are far less fellings than regrowth in Germany. Especially in smaller private and communal/municipal forests, a considerable stock and increment potential is still unused. Due to the long production periods, flexible adjustments of quality and quantity to the respective market requirements are only possible to a limited degree in the forestry sector. It is therefore necessary to gear organic production towards diversity and a high-quality processing of wood, as far as possible.

There are deliberately no regulatory or compensatory mechanisms for the wood market, which are comparable to the agricultural sector. Therefore, market fluctuations always have a direct impact on wood prices and thus also directly on the income of forestry enterprises. Whereas the average nominal proceeds from wood sales remained virtually constant over the past

decades, the expenses of forestry enterprises (especially labour costs) steadily increased. It is expected for the future that the supply of saw logs and veneer logs will increase in contrast to the supply of pulpwood.

Need for action:

- *mobilizing unused wood potential available on a sustainable basis,*
- *site-adapted forest expansion,*
- *up-to-date forecasting of future wood availabilities,*
- *supply and demand side must increasingly respond to future changes in the supply structure,*
- *optimizing the entire "wood production chain",*
- *increasing the demand for wood products,*
- *high-quality processing of wood, as far as possible.*

Wood-based industry, timber trade. The some 60,000 enterprises of the forest industries, paper industry and timber trade employ around 700,000 people. The larger enterprises are concentrated on individual, capital-intensive fields. In spite of the progressing structural changes and a tendency towards larger business units, the wood-based industry as well as the timber trade in Germany are still marked by a comparatively low degree of concentration.

Need for action:

- *seizing the opportunities offered by technological progress, globalization and new information and communication media,*

- *increasing the demand for wood products,*
- *avoiding competitive distortions in the promotion policy, undesirable from a national economy point of view.*

Framework conditions for the sale of wood and promoting the use of wood. The annual total consumption of wood and wood products (including paper) currently amounts to about 1.1 m³ per capita. Apart from the virgin wood fiber, secondary raw materials (waste paper, recovered wood) are increasingly being used. All in all, the recycling quantity of waste paper and recovered wood meanwhile approximates the level of annual fellings, also on account of environmental policy requirements.

Compared with other materials, wood provides mainly ecological benefits and is extremely versatile due to the diversity of wood species and assortments. These characteristics must be used to improve the competitiveness of wood.

Need for action:

- *improving the competitiveness of wood,*
- *taking the ecological benefits of wood into account in the further development of legal framework conditions,*
- *scientific monitoring of the negotiations within the framework of the World Trade Organization to reduce trade barriers.*

Certification of sustainable forest management/labelling of wood.

Certification is increasingly being used in forestry to document sustainable forest management. It is designed to encourage

forestry to continuously improve its management practices and to improve the image of forest management. In the process, it allows the imperative positioning of wood from sustainably managed forests on the global market. The requirements of certification systems are targeted at voluntariness, credibility, transparency and cost effectiveness as well as open access to and the same prerequisites for all types of forests and ownership.

Need for action:

- *using certification also to improve the competitiveness of sustainably produced wood as against competing raw materials,*
- *informing the public,*
- *supporting the mutual recognition of certification systems.*

Wood as a renewable source of energy. The energy sector is an increasingly important market for wood assortments for which no higher-value use can be found. There are several ecological and economic reasons speaking for a higher energy use of wood. As a result of price increases of fossil energy sources and due to public support, biomass plants are also increasingly gaining in competitiveness.

Need for action:

- *research and development to enhance the use of wood,*
- *taking the ecological benefits of wood into account in the further development of legal framework conditions, in particular in the environmental and energy fields.*

4.6 Contribution of forestry and forest industries to development of rural areas

Rural areas are faced with multiple challenges, such as structural changes, ageing of the population, rural exodus, loss of regional identities. It is, inter alia, necessary to take sustainability objectives more into account for rural areas, to improve the labour market situation in rural areas and to enhance the attractiveness of rural areas for the population. As an integral part of rural areas, forestry and its downstream sectors must contribute to overcoming structural deficits.

EU structural policy. The decision on Agenda 2000 also enlarged the prerequisites for the nationwide support of rural areas. The range of measures of EU structural policy also encompasses the support for the forestry sector as well as accompanying measures. These are to contribute to the conservation and development of economic, ecological and social functions of forests in rural areas.

Need for action:

- *shaping EU support provisions along more practical lines,*
- *implementation of the new option to promote the ecological stability of forests.*

Joint Task for the Improvement of Agricultural Structures and Coastal Protection (GAK). The objectives of the Joint Task co-financed by the Federal Government and the *Laender* are improved production, labour and living conditions,

inter alia, by improving the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, processing and marketing and the promotion of environmentally sound production methods. Support in the forestry sector focuses on silvicultural measures, forest road construction, measures due to the new types of forest damage as well as support of forestry groupings and of investments to improve the provision, processing and marketing of forestry products.

Need for action:

- *gearing the Joint Task more strongly to the objectives of structural improvement and sustainability,*
- *concentrating on the "efficiency of forestry enterprises", "forestry cooperatives" and "conversion to close to nature forestry",*
- *tailoring support to public demand,*
- *equal treatment of afforestation and the set-aside of agricultural areas with respect to support.*

Fiscal policy. The sustainability of forestry presupposes economically sound forestry enterprises. Apart from targeted structural support, fiscal policy is geared to specific conditions for forestry production. Thus, for example, proceeds from the sale of wood cut as a result of calamities are tax-favoured through adapted tariff regulations.

Need for action:

- *explore possibilities for fiscal policy to support the establishment and conservation of stable forests,*
- *taking the natural features of forestry into account in fiscal policy as*

prescribed in Section 41 of the Federal Forest Act.

Forestry cooperatives. Sustainable forest management is hampered to some extent by unfavorable ownership patterns, small sizes of forests and fragmentation of forest ownership. Ways of solving these problems arise from cooperation between forest management units, in particular with the help of forestry cooperatives. The cooperatives in the new *Laender* require particular support in the critical start-up phase.

Need for action:

- *shaping public support primarily as "start-up aid for self-help",*
- *avoiding obstacles to regional adjustment processes through too stringent competition rules,*
- *opening up forestry cooperatives to possible new business segments, e.g. nature conservation services.*

Work in rural areas. Structural changes do not exempt forestry and forest industries. Also due to low profitability organizations are being reformed and jobs cut in public as well as in private forest sectors. Particular employment problems result from the privatization of the *Treuhand* forest in the new *Laender*. It is important to create new competitive job opportunities and to safeguard existing jobs as far as possible.

Need for action:

- *safeguarding existing and creating new competitive jobs,*
- *supporting marketing initiatives,*

- *setting up economically sound forestry enterprises and operational structures in the new Laender as soon as possible.*

Forestry framework planning. Under Section 7 of the Federal Forest Act the authorities competent according to *Laender* law are to draw up forestry framework plans to safeguard the prerequisites in forestry for the development of living and economic conditions. Whereas in most *Laender* forestry framework plans are already available at local and regional levels or are currently being drafted, some *Laender* lack pertinent plans at *Laender* level. The integration into programmes under the Regional Planning Act also varies widely.

Need for action:

- *drafting framework plans for forestry where they are not yet available,*
- *including forestry expertise into non-forestry plannings,*
- *integrating forestry planning into cross-sectional planning,*
- *improving the coordination among the Laender, in particular at Laender borders.*

5 *Laender Forest Programmes in the context of NWP*

The NWP concept will not only be implemented at the national level, but also at *Laender* level. The forest policy dialogue has already started in several *Laender*.

Furthermore the *Laender* participate in the NWP-process at the national level.

- *forest management and nature conservation,*
- *training and further training.*

6 Prospects

With the process for the elaboration of a National Forest Programme for Germany, a new form of forest policy dialogue has been initiated in Germany. This dialogue focuses on the search for ways of solving problems in the forestry sector. The key element for the success of the process is the creation of transparency regarding the respective interests, the highlighting of common ground, the promotion of negotiations between partners with conflicting interests and the seeking of a consensus.

In the past few months, representatives of very different interest groups tried to meet this challenge. It became clear that the elaboration of a National Forest Programme is a learning process. The dialogue between the actors involved on the conservation, management and development of our forests must be continued as a consensus on individual topics cannot be regarded as permanent in a society undergoing constant change. The discussion on the following topics is to be resumed in a second round:

- *international cooperation and international trade,*
- *competitiveness of forestry and forest industries,*
- *shaping the regulatory framework for forest management,*
- *support,*