

Munich, November 17, 2017

## Press Release

### INTERFORST Topic

## Forests in Climate Change – Indispensable, Vulnerable

- New silvicultural strategies are required
- Sustainably managed forests are climate protectors
- Representatives from practice, research and politics will get together at INTERFORST

**Climate and environmental protection is being controversially discussed at a global scale. By contrast, there is general agreement as to the importance of healthy forests showing strong growth; forests are part of many regional and national climate protection programs. However, trees and forests are suffering from climate change themselves. Which strategies can be helpful?**

Warmer, dryer and more extreme events: climate forecasts predict more stress for nature – and it is clearly noticeable even today: "This includes trees toppled by storms, vermin and forest fires as a result of dry summers", says Philipp zu Guttenberg, President of AGDW – Die Waldeigentümer [*Consortium of the German Forest Owner Associations – The Forest Owners*]. That calls for a number of measures, "among other things, the planting of climate-tolerant tree species and the provision of suitable means to get control of pests such as bark beetles or oak processionary moths". According to the President of the AGDW, the use of state-of-the-art technology and of the latest scientific findings is also decisive.

### **Sustainable management is climate protection**

The question is no longer whether it will come to climate change but how rapidly and to what extent this will happen. Trees can indeed adapt themselves to environmental changes by natural selection or even partly profit from an extended vegetation period or higher carbon contents in the atmosphere. A very rapid cli-



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mate change with extreme influences, however, could overstrain the forests' adaptive capacities (Source, inter alia: Brang/Klimawandel als waldbauliche Herausforderung [*Climate change as a silvicultural challenge*]).

A key to long-term forest protection is sustainable management. Actually, abandoned forests are carbon neutral from a very long-term perspective. After trees have died, the carbon stored in the wood is released again; at the same time, young trees recapture carbon. A balance occurs with a more or less constant carbon pool. However, untouched natural forests only withdraw little additional carbon from the atmosphere.

In a managed forest, trees are harvested and the timber is utilized before the degradation process starts. A sustainably managed forest shows high performance as a carbon sink over long periods of time. Therefore, responsible sustainable forest management and an intelligent use of timber as a precious raw material are an important component of and contribution to worldwide climate protection.

### **Diversity ensures resilience**

Another lever for forest protection is the development of structurally rich mixed forests with a high potential for adaptation. "A greater diversity of tree species increases resilience. This goes hand in hand with biodiversity of organisms in the soil, which, in turn, increases long-term carbon sequestration in forest soils", explains Prof. Dr. Karl Stampfer from the Institute of Forest Engineering of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences in Vienna [*Institut für Forsttechnik der Universität für Bodenkultur in Wien*]. "A broader age structure for trees and earlier harvesting are further measures under discussion."

State-of-the-art forest machinery and wood harvesting systems play a big role, too, just like qualification, emphasizes Prof. Dr. Stampfer: "Well-trained experts ensure that the manifold expectations placed on forests are fulfilled without negative effects on the ecosystem."

### **Bayerische Staatsforsten: at least four tree species!**

The Bavarian State Forest Enterprise [*Bayerische Staatsforsten*] also relies on a comprehensive forest restructuring. "We intend to move away from single-


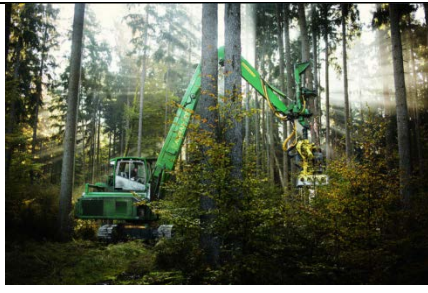
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layered monocultures towards structurally rich mixed stands with at least four tree species", explains Martin Neumeyer, Chairman of the Bavarian State Forest Enterprise. According to Martin Neumeyer, this will be at the expense of the spruce which currently accounts for 43 percent, but is not to exceed 35 percent in fifty years' time. However, coniferous wood remains important, "particularly against the background of the increasing demand for wood for building construction". Therefore, the Bavarian State Forest Enterprise has proclaimed a campaign in favor of pines: "It is our intention to increase the proportion of pines from approximately two percent today to some six percent till 2050, and to clearly more than ten percent in the mountains."

### **Discussion on climate-fit forests also at INTERFORST**

The right path to take for ensuring stable mixed forests is the subject of quite controversial discussions among experts. Forest owners are claiming political support in order to look for and test alternatives. In the interest of minimizing their risk, many of them intend not only to rely on common domestic tree types, but also on climate-tolerant tree species, such as the Douglas fir, red oak or grand fir as additions.

The discussion on the climate-fit forest is an integral part of INTERFORST scheduled to take place at the Munich exhibition grounds from July 18 to 22, 2018. This is where all relevant groups of forest management will get together and representatives from science, politics and practice will exchange views and ideas.

	
<p><i>Picture source: Bavarian State Forest Enterprise [Bayerische Staatsforsten]</i> Sustainable forest management is climate protection</p>	<p><i>Picture source: Bavarian State Forest Enterprise [Bayerische Staatsforsten]</i> Sustainable forest management requires state-of-the-art forest machin-</p>

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## **About INTERFORST**

Every four years, INTERFORST as one of the internationally leading trade shows for forestry and forest technology, presents the entire logistics chain, ranging from afforestation to timber harvesting to the saw mill. Another focal point is the energetic use of wood. A comprehensive supporting program with congress and various forums and special shows brings science, politics and practice together. In 2014, INTERFORST recorded 451 exhibitors from 27 countries and some 50,000 visitors from 72 countries. The next INTERFORST will take place from July 18 to 22, 2018 on the exhibition grounds of Messe München.

## **Messe München**

Messe München is one of the leading exhibition organizers worldwide with more than 50 of its own trade shows for capital goods, consumer goods and new technologies. Every year, a total of over 50,000 exhibitors and around three million visitors take part in more than 200 events at the exhibition center in Munich, at the ICM – Internationales Congress Center München and the MOC Veranstaltungszentrum München as well as abroad. Together with its subsidiary companies, Messe München organizes trade shows in China, India, Brazil, Russia, Turkey, South Africa, Nigeria, Vietnam and Iran. With a network of associated companies in Europe, Asia, Africa and South America as well as around 70 representations abroad for over 100 countries, Messe München has a global presence.