
CLOSE TO NATURE FOREST MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND RELEVANT FOREST POLICY ISSUES

- ALBANIA COUNTRY REPORT -

3rd REAWG Meeting on SFM

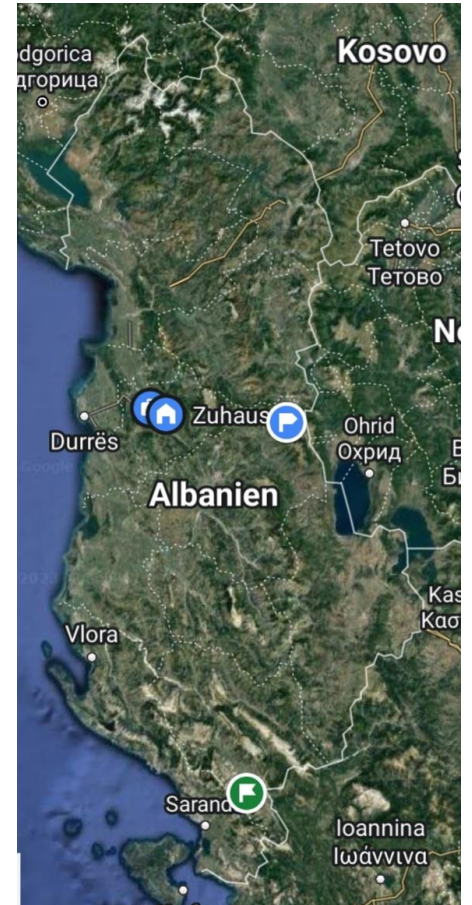
10-12 December 2023
Skopje, NM



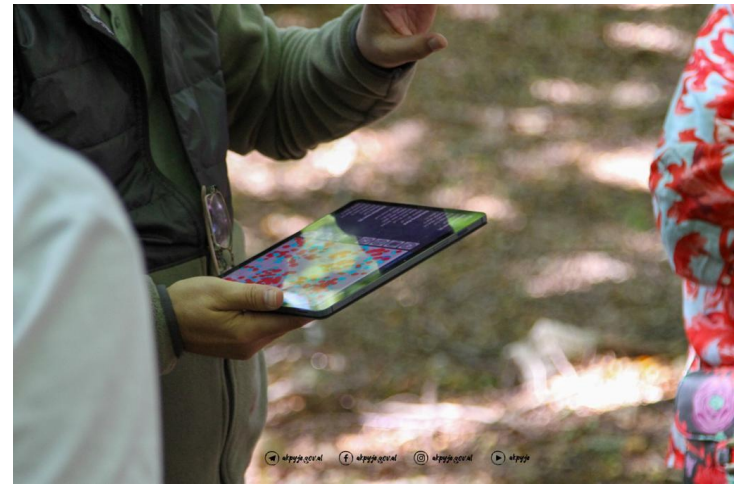
Demostration plot

- Established in Fushe-Studen, Central Albania (41°18'42.3"N 20°24'42.0"E)
- In the area of the Shebenik NP
- Area: 1250 m² (50x25m)
- Middle-Age Beech Stand (*Fagetum moesiacaе montanum*)
- Age: 60 years old
- Elevation: 1198 m (AMSL)
- Mean Annual Precipitation: 1340 mm
- Mean Annual Temperature: 11.5 °C
- Nr. of trees 95 trees (760 trees/ha)









Institutions involved:

- Faculty of Forestry Sciences**
- MTE (Forest policy sector)**
- National Forest Agency**
- Municipality of Tirana**
- CNVP**
- NAFPU**
- Forest management experts**



Discussion findings

- A very positive discussion
- FMPG need to be revised and adapted to the CNFM approach
- Fully applicable in high forest forest on good productivity sites
- The concept of target diameter, despite being known by forest personnel, has not been implemented so far in the practice of forest management
- Lack of local studies my be an obstacle for the implementation



- High need for the development of human capacities in the forestry sector to make possible the implementation of CNFM in the practice of forestry
- Intensive and continuous practical training for all forestry personnel dealing with FM in the near future



RELEVANT FOREST POLICY ISSUES



The analysis of the forestry sector is focused on areas:

- where the highest negative impact to the sector deterioration is currently noted
- where the country is seriously deficient
- where in midterm expected actions have great potential to improve the sector conditions and ...
- contribute to a sustainable economy with the greatest positive impact on the population and nature protection



Table 1. SWOT analysis of forest sector

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Relatively large forest cover (45% of country area) New National Forest Inventory (ANFI 2021) Rich biodiversity (over 20% of forest area under a protected status) Important source of income for rural population (Fuelwood production, NWFP, Forage production,) Use of wood biomass as a renewable energy source Employment of local population in forest management activities Forest recreation/ecotourism development	Forest land tenure conflicts Low standing volume and productivity Organization of the sector still incomplete Insufficient investments in forest sector Forest management planning and implementing system underfunded. Low level of use of new technologies in forest management Outdated and uncontrolled forest mapping system Limited information/knowledge on forest resources Lack of functional information and monitoring systems in forest sector Insufficient human resources capacities Insufficient law enforcement Limited forests accessibility infrastructure Lack of forest certification schemes
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Increased environmental awareness on sustainable forest management issues. New forest information system (ALFIS) Increasing support for biodiversity conservation/protection Increasing support to rural population employment and income generation Innovative financing schemes (PES) Decreasing pressure on forests because of demographic changes in rural areas (grazing, use of fuelwood) Forest stands in young age classes with high CO₂ sequestration potential Starting of EU integration process, access to EU funds Available funding for capacity building programs in the sector from national and international sources Available new technologies for sustainable forest management	Climate change impacts on forests (wildfires, diseases, insects, erosion) Governance in the forest sector is focused on traditional systems/approaches Illegal activities and rural poverty level Forestry not in the leading policy agenda Still a high and unsustainable demand for firewood Economic activities in the forest fund (mining, hydropower development, intensive tourism) Reinvestment of forestry generated income Lack of capacities for EU standard implementation (EUTR) Lack of cross-sectoral communication and strategy harmonization Demographic changes, decrease of population and emigration. Resistance to change from within and outside the forest sector



Priority thematic areas in the forest sector

A. Institutional and legislative context of the sector

Priority topics/fields of action

- Complete the vertical structural organization in the territory of the National Forest Agency
- Standardise the structural organisation of the municipality administration responsible for forests
- Establish in all municipalities control/inspection structures responsible for forestry separated from the management structures



B. Integrated governance system in forest sector

Priority topics/fields of action

- Ensure financial support for the design of forest management plans for all forest economies
- Revise and improve the Forest Management Plans Guidelines based in CNFP
- Build separate capacities for forest management planning at all levels (NFA and municipalities)
- Increase their capacities continuously through a network of training sites



- Ensure financial support for municipalities from the government or international partners to establish permanent processes and capacities for the design and implementation of forest operational plans
- Establish a permanent and functional forest protection system for monitoring and combating diseases and forest pests based on the examples of animal and plant protection.



C. Digitalization of the forest sector

Priority topics/fields of action

- Make ALFIS full functional from the infrastructure point of view and increase NFA capacities to operate and maintain it
- Finish the consolidation of forest property registration process in all the municipality to open the way to establish a digital forest cadaster
- Establish a digital forest cadaster within ALFIS and increase the capacities of NFA and municipality forest staff to develop the necessary procedures



- Make fully functional the module of “Forest Europe Criteria e Indicators monitoring” within ALFIS and increase the capacities NFA and municipality forest staff to develop the necessary Forest Monitoring Program within the National Environmental Monitoring Program
- Start the 2nd cycle of National Forest Inventory and support NFA to increase the infrastructure and human capacities of a dedicated structure for implementing ANFI in a rotation cycle of 8 years
- Establish within NFA in cooperation with the FoFS a forest mapping facility with the necessary infrastructure and provide the necessary training for the personnel



D. Education, research, and training in the forest sector

Priority topics/fields of action

- The establishment of a National Professional Training Center in forest sector as a collaboration of the FoFS and the NFA
- Establishing a career system in the forestry sector based on continuous training and revise the respective legislation as a collaboration of the FoFS and the NFA
- The establishment of a network of experimental areas for the purpose of research and training in the forestry sector



Recomandations for project intervention

Regardless of the importance of all topics, we recommend an intervention in the form of a project with a focus on:

- (i) revision of the Forest management plans guidelines oriented by the concept of closer to nature forest management
- (ii) The establishment of a network of demo plots in the example of Integrate+ for the purpose of training the forestry staff that will deal with the forest management and supporting the training activities of this staff



Recomandations for project intervention

(iii) Making the Forest Information System (ALFIS) functional in terms of software and hardware, including all its modules (FM plans, digital forest cadastre, forest monitoring and reporting system)

(iv) Raising the capacities of NFA and municipalities for the operation and maintenance of ALFIS and on remote sensing techniques in support of the implementing of the National Forest Inventory, design of the forest management plans, and Forest monitoring programme

