

Forest harvesting intensity varies in Europe

February 5 2014

Forests provide us with essential raw materials and the demand for these materials is increasing. To meet this increasing demand, forestry faces the challenge of how to intensify management of the existing production forests in sustainable ways.

An international and multidisciplinary team of scientists led by Christian Levers from the Humboldt-Universität in Berlin show that forest harvesting intensity is distributed unevenly across Europe and harvested timber volumes were mostly well below the increment. The spatial patterns of forest harvesting intensity were well explained by forest-resource related variables (i.e., the share of plantation species, growing stock, [forest cover](#)), site conditions (i.e., topography, accessibility), and country-specific characteristics, whereas [socioeconomic variables](#) were less important.

The study provides concrete starting points for developing measures targeted at increasing regional wood supply from forests or lowering harvest pressure in regions where forests are heavily used.

More information: "Drivers of forest harvesting intensity patterns in Europe" by Christian Levers, Pieter J. Verkerk, Daniel Müller, Peter H. Verburg, Van Butsic, Pedro J. Leitão, Marcus Lindner and Tobias Kuemmerle. *Forest Ecology and Management* 315 (2014) 160–172. dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.foreco.2013.12.030

Provided by European Forest Institute

Citation: Forest harvesting intensity varies in Europe (2014, February 5) retrieved 26 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-02-forest-harvesting-intensity-varies-europe.html>

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