

# Science meets practice in the Finnish Forest Biodiversity Programme METSO

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## METSO – a new era of forest conservation

In Finland, valuable forest habitats and species have been traditionally protected by legal instruments. Nature conservation programs have been mainly conducted by authorities and specialists. Although programs are accepted by the Parliament, this top-down approach has caused resistance among forest owners and their interest groups.

The Forest Biodiversity Programme METSO is a novel way to conserve forest biodiversity because it is implemented totally through voluntary means. Private forest owners are encouraged to protect valuable forest habitats by offering a set of different conservation schemes with a full compensation system.

As a part of the METSO programme, several research and development projects are funded. Altogether, the funding amounts to nearly 2 million Euros per year, including four separate funding instruments.



- Research on commercial forests** studies the effects of the conservation schemes and forest management applied in METSO programme in terms of ecological, economical and social sustainability.
- Research programme of deficiently known and threatened forest species (PUTTE)** produces essential information on the currently data deficient species living in forested habitats, their taxonomy, ecology, and responses to different forest management options.
- Nation-wide nature management projects** develop forest management and restoration practices that enhance the status of biodiversity in commercial forests. Nature management and restoration are executed for instance in herb-rich forests and wooded peatlands.
- In regional partnerships** forest owners and forestry and environmental authorities maintain forest landscapes, develop recreational and financial activities related to biodiversity and manage valuable habitats.

Basic research is carried out by the research institutes and universities in Finland, with partners abroad. Nature management projects and partnerships typically involve several partners from research institutes, NGOs, local foresters and forest owners.

### RESEARCH ON COMMERCIAL FORESTS: INFORMATION ON BIODIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS AND METSO MEASURES



SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH



### RESEARCH PROGRAMME FOR DEFICIENTLY KNOWN SPECIES (PUTTE): BASIC KNOWLEDGE ON TAXONOMY AND ECOLOGY



### NATURE MANAGEMENT PROJECTS: NEW METHODS FOR MANAGEMENT & RESTORATION IN COMMERCIAL FORESTS



PRACTICAL NATURE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION



### PARTNERSHIPS: FOREST OWNERS AND LOCAL FORESTERS ACTIVELY SECURE NATURE VALUES IN AN INNOVATIVE MANNER

## METSO – A POWERFUL POLICY INSTRUMENT FOR SECURING FOREST BIODIVERSITY

### WHAT?

- METSO programme aims to halt the ongoing decline in forest species and habitats, and establish favourable trends in Finnish forest biodiversity by 2020
- The programme was launched by the Finnish Government in 2008, and it is financed through the state budget (40 million Euros per year)

### WHO?

- The programme is a joint effort by the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- All major stakeholders – land owners, forestry and environmental authorities, NGOs, forest companies, research institutes and universities – are involved

### HOW?

- Funding is mostly used for improving the network of protected forests through voluntary conservation agreements with private forest owners, and for developing biodiversity-friendly forest management practices including restoration
- Forest owners can get compensation for permanently or temporarily conserving valuable sites or for selling the land to the state
- The aim is to protect permanently 96 000 hectares of privately owned forests through voluntary agreements.
- Nature management and temporary conservation agreements are aimed at 82 000 hectares of privately owned commercial forests.

In METSO it is the new bottom-up and voluntary approach to conservation in return for financial compensation that has raised the interest of private forest owners.

**MORE ON METSO PROGRAMME:**  
[WWW.METSONPOLKU.FI/EN](http://WWW.METSONPOLKU.FI/EN)

Wood pastures (WPs) are among the valuable habitats considered in METSO. Several projects focus on WPs. They all work together to produce a handbook on best practices for WP management in Finland.

### PROJECT 1 PRODUCES REGIONAL MAPS OF VALUABLE WPs



SITE SELECTION



### PROJECT 2 STUDIES DATA DEFICIENT FUNGI SPECIES INHABITING WPs

### PROJECT 3 BRINGS TOGETHER LAND OWNERS AND CATTLE OWNERS, CREATES MARKETS FOR WP-FRIENDLY MEAT

SPECIES INFO

PRACTICAL INFO



### PROJECT 4 COMPILES NATIONAL GUIDELINES ON THE MANAGEMENT OF WPs

HANDBOOK ON BEST PRACTICES

### NATURE MANAGEMENT OF WPs IN METSO