

Supporting Private Forest Owners After Natural Disasters: Training, Communication and Financial Instruments in Slovenia

Assigned Session: Natural disturbances in Alpine forests: implications for natural hazard protection, other ecosystem services, and their management

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ABSTRACT



Over the past decade, forest ecosystems have been increasingly exposed to pressures resulting from climate change and socio-economic factors, leading to more frequent and severe natural disasters such as windthrows, ice storms, snow damage, and forest fires. In Slovenia, the majority of affected forests are privately owned, often consisting of small holdings, which poses a significant challenge for effective and timely response to such events. Rapid implementation of remedial measures is crucial to ensure the safety of people and property, prevent secondary damage—particularly bark beetle outbreaks—preserve the

economic value of timber, and support the successful restoration of damaged forest stands. This paper examines the role of training, education, and information provision to forest owners as key supportive mechanisms for forest management under conditions of natural disasters. Various approaches to mobilizing owners are presented, including the organization of workshops and specialized courses, individual counseling through district foresters, the use of mass and specialized media, preparation of targeted educational materials, and the establishment of financial incentives and support mechanisms. Based on practical experience, the effectiveness of each approach in activating forest owners is evaluated, along with identified limitations and challenges. The findings indicate that an integrated approach, combining careful planning of remedial measures, professional advice, timely communication, and appropriate financial instruments, significantly enhances owner responsiveness and contributes to the successful remediation and restoration of forests following natural disasters.

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