

Resilience Blog



Experiences of uneven-aged forest management in the Czech Republic



by Alexander Held — November 8, 2018

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by *Pavel Bednář, Andreas Schuck and Alexander Held*

Risks to our forests are increasing due to climate change and its consequences. Recently, we have seen a raising number of wind storms, wildfire and bark beetle outbreaks. Thus there is a need to find feasible options to adapt forest management to such developments. Especially homogeneous coniferous forest stands both in tree species composition and age have shown to become vulnerable.

On the 25th and 26th of October 2018 [Pro Silva Bohemica](#) invited forest and nature conservation managers, researchers, forest owners and policy representatives from the Czech Republic and other European countries including Austria, Germany, Ireland, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland to share their experiences on transforming pure even-aged Norway spruce stands into uneven-aged mixed forests. Around 110 participants attended the conference in Fryšava pod Žákovou horou about 2 hours' south-east of Prague. The importance of both the topic and the workshop was underlined by the official patronage of Miroslav Toman, the [Czech Minister of Agriculture](#).



The event was organised with the support of the [Forestry and Game Management Research Institute](#) and [The Silva Taroucy Research Institute](#). The bilingual excursion guide and the workshop proceedings (in Czech and English language) were generously sponsored by Stora Enso Wood Products Žďřec. Welcoming words from representatives of the Environment and Agriculture Ministry were followed by presentations from 5 European countries (Germany, Sweden, Ireland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic). They addressed numerous aspects of forest conversion giving emphasis to various aspects of silviculture, tree physiology and forest management concepts. The second day was dedicated to a field trip to the forests of the Kocanda Forest District (part of Kinský Forest Estate). In that district the transformation of pure Norway spruce forest stands towards uneven-aged forestry based on Pro Silva principles has been ongoing for 25 years.



Seven different excursion stops were visited showing the challenges of forest conversion. Extensive research activities were conducted in the Kocanda Forest District during the last decade which allowed to present scientific findings at the various stops. Lively discussions then took place among the participants on the developments of the last 25 years addressing topics of economic impacts, regeneration methods, forest stability and resilience, forest production, natural development processes, game density and forest biodiversity.

Further, the efforts of Pro Silva Bohemica to establish a network of so called “Exemplary Forest Units of Uneven-aged Forestry” was introduced and one of them – the Kocanda Exemplary Forest Unit – was inaugurated in a signature ceremony. The overall plan is to set up around 50 such Exemplary Units throughout the Czech Republic. They should represent different site conditions, forest stand types and be in varying stages transformation towards uneven-aged stands. So far more than 10 such sites have already been established. Many different activities are implemented in these sites in order to collect valuable data. Most importantly they are used as demonstration areas for foresters, stakeholders and the general public. They also offer a service and feedback option (through the existing datasets and findings) to local foresters. Finally, the event was also organised to honor what can be achieved in a forest through the dedication of one particular forester who has been applying consistently forest stand conversion and transformation. This forester is Jiří Bína. He has managed this area within Kocanda Forest District for the last 25 years. He was thanked by the workshop participants for sharing his in-depth knowledge and experiences both during the seminar and the field excursion.

Pro Silva Bohemica has been very supportive of the idea to establish a [European Forest Risk Facility](#) especially looking at forest management to mitigate climate change impacts. They have hosted the Kick-off Event of the Sure Project in Písek, Czech Republic in early 2018.

For those interested in the workshop proceedings and the excursion guide please visit the [website of Pro Silva Bohemica](#). For more information feel free to contact the organiser of the event Pavel Bednář, working for the Forestry and Game Management Research Institute (Research Station Opočno) and Pro Silva Bohemica (bednar@vulhmop.cz), Andreas Schuck or Alexander Held (both EFI).