

Please provide the following details on the origin of this report

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Submission	
Signature of officer responsible for submitting national report:	
Date of submission:	July 12, 2001

Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report

Ad stakeholders: The Austrian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management invited the members of the Austrian National Biodiversity Commission to participate in the preparation and discussion of this questionnaire. [The National Biodiversity Commission was entrusted by the Federal Ministry of Environment in 1996 to coordinate and harmonize the numerous activities and programs as well as to promote the flow and exchange of information. This commission is composed of representatives from administrative departments (Federal Ministries and Provincial authorities), unions and management, science and non-government organizations (NGOs)].

First drafts of this report were provided by the Federal Forest Research Centre Vienna and provincial authorities. The final version of this questionnaire was approved by the Austrian National Biodiversity Commission before it was sent to SCBD.

Ad material:

Results of the Austrian National Forest Inventory 1986/90, 1992/96, 2000/02; see <http://fbva.forvie.ac.at>;

Hemeroby Study (1998), a cooperative, interdisciplinary study between the University of Vienna and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Thesis on National Implementation of the Work Program on forest biological diversity of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE); (Bernhard Wolfslehner)

Information of MCPFE countries and organisations on projects implementing actions of the biodiversity work-programme / Austria / available at www.minconf-forests.net - work programmes - biodiversity work programme - implementation documents

Assessment of forest experts on the basis of relevant publications.

Decision IV/7 on Forest biological Diversity

1. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this decision by your country?					
a) High	X	b) Medium		c) Low	
2. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?					
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting	
				d) Severely limiting	

3. Has your country assessed the status and trends of its forest biological diversity and identified options for its conservation and sustainable use? (Decision IV/7, paragraph 12)	
a) no	
b) assessment underway (please give details below)	X
c) assessment completed (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	

<i>If a developing country Party or a Party with economy in transition -</i>	
4. Has your country requested assistance through the financial mechanism for projects that promote the implementation of the focused work programme on forest biological diversity? (Decision IV/7, paragraph 7)	
a) no	
b) yes (please give details below)	

Programme element 1: Holistic and inter-sectoral ecosystem approaches that integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking account of social and cultural and economic considerations

5. Has your country identified methodologies for enhancing the integration of forest biological diversity conservation and sustainable use into an holistic approach to sustainable forest management at the national level? (Work Programme, paragraph 13)	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	
6. Has your country developed methodologies to advance the integration of traditional forest-related knowledge into sustainable forest management, in accordance with Article 8(j)? (Work Programme, paragraph 14)	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	
7. Has your country promoted cooperation on the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological resources at all levels in accordance with Articles 5 and 16 of the Convention? (Work Programme, paragraph 15)	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	X
d) not applicable	

8. Has your country promoted the sharing of relevant technical and scientific information on networks at all levels of protected forest areas and networking modalities in all types of forest ecosystems? (Work Programme, paragraph 17)	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	X
d) not applicable	

Programme element 2: Comprehensive analysis of the ways in which human activities, in particular forest-management practices, influence biological diversity and assessment of ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences

9. Has your country promoted activities for an enhanced understanding of positive and negative human influences on forest ecosystems by land-use managers, policy makers, scientists and other relevant stakeholders) (Work Programme, paragraph 29)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	X
d) not relevant	
10. Has your country promoted activities to assemble management experiences and scientific, indigenous and local information at the national and local levels to provide for the sharing of approaches and tools that lead to improved forest practices with regard to forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 30)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	X
d) not relevant	
11. Has your country promoted activities with the aim of providing options to minimize or mitigate negative and to promote positive human influences on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 31)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	X
d) not relevant	
12. Has your country promoted activities to minimize the impact of harmful alien species on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 32)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
13. Has your country identified means and mechanisms to improve the identification and prioritisation of research activities related to influences of human activities, in particular forest management practices, on forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 33)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes – significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	

14. Does your country hold research results and syntheses of reports of relevant scientific and traditional knowledge on key forest biological diversity issues and, if so, have these been disseminated as widely as possible? (Work Programme, paragraph 34)	
a) not relevant	
b) some relevant material, but not widely disseminated	X
c) significant material that could be more widely disseminated (please give details below)	
d) yes - already widely disseminated (please give details below)	
15. Has your country prepared case-studies on assessing impacts of fires and alien species on forest biological diversity and their influences on the management of forest ecosystems and savannahs? (Work Programme, paragraph 35)	
a) no – please indicate below whether this is due to a lack of available case-studies or for other reasons	
b) yes – please give below any views you may have on the usefulness of the preparation of case-studies for developing a better biological understanding of the problem and/or better management responses.	X

Programme element 3: Methodologies necessary to advance the elaboration and implementation of criteria and indicators for forest biological diversity

16. Has your country assessed experiences gained in national and regional processes, identifying common elements and gaps in existing initiatives and improving indicators for forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 43)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited assessment made (please give details below)	X
c) yes – significant assessment made (please give details below)	
d) not relevant	
17. Has your country carried out taxonomic studies and inventories at the national level which provide for a basic assessment of forest biological diversity? (Work Programme, paragraph 43)	
a) minimal activity	
b) yes – limited assessment made (please give details below)	
c) yes – significant assessment made (please give details below)	X
d) not relevant	

If you have ticked any of the boxes in questions 1 to 17 above which invite you to provide further details, please do so here.

(Information can include descriptions of methodologies and of activities undertaken, reasons for success or failure, outcomes and lessons learned)

Q 2: Provided within existing funds, that means there are no new and additional resources available for the time being;

Q 3: The Austrian Forest Inventory (Österreichische Waldinventur - ÖWI) is still going on, since recently biodiversity indicators are assessed too; regional biotope mapping activities also take place; see <http://fbva.forvie.ac.at>;

Q 5: Case study on applying the ecosystem approach in Austrian forests (Federal Environment Agency, 2001)

Q 6: selective cutting systems (Plenterwald);

Coppice and coppice with standards systems (Niederwald und Mittelwald)

KRISSL W. & MÜLLER F. 1989: Waldbauliche Bewirtschaftungsrichtlinien für das Eichen-Mittelwaldgebiet Österreichs. FBVA-Berichte 40, 134 S

as an example: the Federal State of Salzburg took several measures on the conservation of certain forest types (Lärchwiesenwälder); Based on traditional forest-related knowledge, near-natural forest management is increasingly being practiced in the forestry sector. The development of uneven-aged, species-rich and site-related stands with largely natural regeneration leads to ecologically stable forests. Protection forests, which require special silvicultural management, are subject to only limited use, safeguard ecologically sensitive sites (tree line, karstic sites, shallow soils). Closed forests play a key role in indirectly protecting non-forested land from avalanches, landslides, floods, etc.

Q 7:

- Bear-Project: Ecological Bulletins 50/2001: Biodiversity Evaluation Tools for European Forests coordinated by Tor-Björn Larsson; ISBN 87-16-16434-2
- Support of activities of Liaison Unit Vienna/Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), see www.minconf-forests.net
- European Tropical Forest Research Network (ETFRN)-Workshop "Learning from Resource Users - a Paradigm Shift in Tropical Forestry" (April 2000, Vienna): Lawrence, A. (ed.): Forestry, Forest Users and Research: New Ways of learning, ETFRN 2000 (ISBN 3-9501392-0-6)
- Network of alpine protected areas (Netzwerk alpiner Schutzgebiete): 3rd international conference (hosted by NP Kalkalpen, 2001)

Q 8:

- Among other activities, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (BMLFUW) and the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) in technical cooperation with the Forestry Department of Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) are organising the first International Training Programme in Europe: Conservation and management of forest genetic resources in Eastern Europe (2001/2002). The first-year course on conservation, evaluation, management and sustainable use of forest genetic resources took place in Gmunden in May 2001.

- In the framework of the Austrian Forest Inventory investigations on species diversity and ecosystem diversity take place. Species diversity is measured through the indicator group of shrub and tree species. On all plots all woody plants are assessed on different layers. Ecosystem diversity is measured through line-intersect sampling method.
- Case study on the evaluation of protected areas (Federal Environment Agency, 2001)
- Program on Austrian strictly protected natural forest reserves (Naturwaldreservateprogramm)
- COST (European cooperation in the field of scientific and technical research) Action E4: Forest reserves research network;
- COST Action E 27: Protected forest areas in Europe - analysis and harmonisation;

Q 9 - 15:

Austrian forest development plan;

Austrian special forest plan on forest functions: utilization, recreation, protection and social functions;

Implementation of EU-Regulations (see first Austrian national report on CBD), esp. Natura 2000;

Implementation of several Federal and provincial laws (see first Austrian national report on CBD);

Literature:

Führer E. und Neuhuber F., 1998: Zustandsdiagnose und Sanierungskonzepte für das Waldgebiet Glein. Forstliche Schriftenreihe, Universität für Bodenkultur, Wien, Bd. 13. 429 S.

Führer E., A. Andersson, E.P. Farrell, 2000: Pathways to the wise management of forests in Europe. Elsevier; Amsterdam, Lausanne, New York, Oxford, Shannon, Tokyo. 119 pp.

Führer E. und U. Nopp, 2001: Ursachen, Vorbeugung und Sanierung von Waldschäden Facultas, 520 S.

Hemeroby Study (1998), a cooperative, interdisciplinary study between the University of Vienna and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Der Wald im Klimawandel am Beispiel des sommerwarmen Ostens Österreichs (Hauptverband der Land- u. Forstwirtschaftskammer, Oktober 2000)

LEXER, M. J. et al.: The Sensitivity of the Austrian Forests to Scenarios of Climatic Change. Monographien Bd. 132, (Federal Environment Agency, 2001).

Case study on criteria and indicators for sustainable hunting (Federal Environment Agency, 2001)

Q 12: A recent study listed alien species in Austria (Federal Environment Agency, 2001); Some measures against alien species are taken, above all in National Parks.

Q 13: some research activities are envisaged on the federal level; certain research activities take place on provincial level, e.g. on bark fungi, existence of small mammals, existence of yew-trees. Another example: Since 1985 the Federal State of Salzburg is carrying out a scientific research programme in diverse nature forest reserves, including studies on wild birds, bats, lichens and fungi as well as case studies on diverse insect species, flora and silviculture-aspects (in collaboration with the University of Salzburg, the Salzburg Museum on Nature (Haus der Natur) and the University for Agriculture and Forestry (Universität für Bodenkultur) Vienna).

Q 15: a few investigations about the influence of fires on biodiversity and about succeeding plants exist. There is no case study about the impact of alien species on forest biological diversity.

Q 16:

In the framework of Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), see www.minconf-forests.net;

A series of national workshops took place in 1998 on indicators including forest biodiversity indicators (Federal Environment Agency, conference papers 1998);

Q 17:

- In the framework of the Austrian Forest Inventory (Österreichische Waldinventur - ÖWI) the genetic diversity of certain forest tree species is assessed by molecular markers in order to get some clues on post-glacial re-immigration pattern; allochthony and autochthony. In general, threats to genetic diversity in forest tree species are identified and well known, i.e. fragmentation, local deforestation, transfer of forest reproductive material. However, on a regional scale the degree of genetic naturalness of Austrian forests has not been assessed.

- There is a comprehensive knowledge about taxonomy on plants in Austria.

Literature and working groups:

ADLER et al. 1994: Exkursionsflora von Österreich

DOBES, CH., VITEK, E., 2000: Documented chromosome number checklist of Austrian vascular plants. Wien: Naturhistorisches Museum. ISBN 3-900 275-77-7

Working group at the Institute of Botany of the University Vienna: "Flora von Österreich"

Commission of the Austrian Scientific Academy: "Catalogus Florae Austriae"