

Project *brief*

Thünen Institute of Forestry

2024/23a

Better support for German small-scale private forest owners

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- There is additional activation potential for forest management in small-scale private forests.
- Small-scale private forest owners (SPFO) in Germany show an increasing demand for advisory and support services.
- To address small-scale private forest owners, new target group-specific instruments must be developed.

Background

Of Germany's 11.4 million hectares of forest, 48% are privately owned. The largest share of this is made up of small-scale private forests with areas of less than 20 ha. The cultivation of these areas is often omitted, as it is hardly worthwhile from the perspective of the SPFO. In the joint project "*Institutional economic analysis and approaches to improve organization and management in small-scale private forest (InA-PW)*", the Thünen Institute analyzed the factors influencing the willingness of SPFO to become active in their forest as well as the establishment of contact with professional foresters.

Method

Using regression analysis approaches, the data of a representative forest owner survey from 2017 were re-evaluated for the 1,009 SPFO in the dataset.

Key findings

SPFO are ready to get involved in their forest. The willingness to carry out non-resource-related measures can be explained above all by the [SinusMilieu](#)[®] affiliation. The classic forestry policy instruments, membership in a forestry association or state subsidies, seem, in their current form, not to be appropriate to reach out to more SPFO.

The demand for advisory and support services will increase (Fig.). In addition to needs-based advisory and support services "on-site", establishing and expanding digital information and communication structures is also important. SPFO often use the Internet as a source of information about forests.

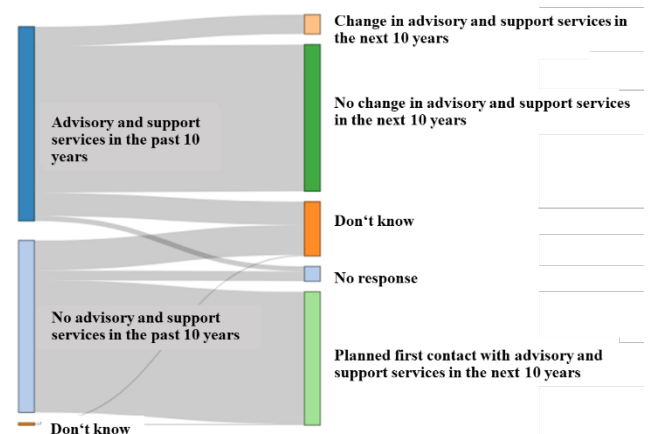


Figure: SPFO advisory and support services needs in the past and future

Conclusion

The willingness to carry out forestry measures is dependent on the SPFO's values and norms. The grouping of the SPFO into different social milieus, such as e.g. SinusMilieus[®], can be used to develop target group-specific approach strategies.

First contact with the SPFO and overcoming of knowledge deficits regarding sustainable forest management are of great importance for advisory and support services. Digitalization can be a central element in supporting the SPFO.

Further Information

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Duration

12.2020-6.2024

Project-ID

2226

DOI:10.3220/PB1721304739000

Publication

Stockmann J, Franz K (im Druck) Kommunikationsstrategien für forstfremde Kleinprivatwaldeigentümer. AFZ Der Wald

Stockmann J, Franz K, Seintsch B (im Druck) Bedarfsgerechte Beratungs- und Betreuungsleistungen im Kleinprivatwald. AFZ Der Wald

Stockmann J, Franz K, Seintsch B, et al. (2024) Factors explaining the willingness of small-scale private forest owners to engage in forestry - A German case study. *Forests* 15(2):319, DOI:10.3390/f15020319

Stockmann J, Franz K, Seintsch B, et al. (2023) Wie erreicht man zukünftig den Kleinprivatwald? *AFZ Der Wald* 78(1):38-41

Support

