Adaptation of European forestry policies to a changing climate

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Introduction

- Forest and its further creation is one of the tools that can be used to tackle climate change but at the same time, forests get affected by a changing climate.
- There exist various measures and strategies how to help forests to adapt to climate change. The aim of this research is to summarise these measures and determine how national policies and legislation of three European countries: Czech Republic, England and Sweden comply with them and how effective in terms of changing climate adaptation they are.

Summary of major characteristics covered by the general forestry legislation in each country

Domain	Czech Rep.	England	Sweden
Forested Land	✖	✖	✖
Forest categorisation	✖	✖	✖
Ownership	✖	✖	✖
Species structure	✖	✖	✖
Climate change	▬	▬	▬

✖ = fully covered
✖ = partially covered
▬ = not covered

Adaptation measures suggested by FAO and IPCC included in national policies

Measure	Czech Rep.	England	Sweden
Maintenance of forest health	✖	✖	✖
Reduction of external stress	✖	✖	✖
Forest inventories, monitoring	✖	✖	✖
Fire protection	✖	▬	▬
Multispecies planting	✖	▬	✖
Adaptive forest management	▬	▬	▬
Changes in species structure	▬	▬	▬

Discussion and conclusion

- In Sweden and the Czech Republic, forestry policies are more focused on productive function of their woodland and include measures on mitigating external stress to forests.
- In England they are concerned mostly with afforestation and increase in the area of forest cover, although the system of subsidies does not really take suitability of species for future climate into consideration.
- There are no direct links in national legislation and grant schemes to climate change and its mitigation.
- Recommend inclusion of not only short term but long term measures, mostly to consider possible changes of species structure that would be more suitable for changing climate.
- Sustainable and adaptive forest management will be vital for maintaining healthy and resilient stands.