

PRO SILVA BOHEMICA Mission Statements

1

PRO SILVA BOHEMICA Mission Statement announced at its constituent assembly as of 21 April 1995

The Pro Silva association brings together forest managers who believe in the need to practice close to nature forest management. The organization draws on rich experience with forest transformation into understory and small-scale even-aged stands of mixed species, with an emphasis on the standing tree volume. It equally relies on the latest scientific knowledge and understanding of forest ecology. The data shows that the only responsible way of sustainable use of the forest as a natural resource meeting the broadest social needs is one which respects its ecosystem.

PRO SILVA BOHEMICA, a branch office of the Czech Forestry Society, is based on its statutes. The mission of the association/branch is to promote knowledge and exchange experience concerning the sustainable management of forest as a natural resource, and to define ecosystem-centred approaches.

Implementation measures include:

- regional, national, and international forestry and social events;
- tours of close to nature demonstration forests;
- counselling and consultations;
- encouraging forestry science, research, and teaching to develop the theory and scientifically enhance the principles of sustainable forest management;
- awareness raising and publishing for the professional and lay public.

Conclusions and recommendations for sustainable forestry

as of 3 April 1998

The seminar was held on 2 and 3 April 1998 in Křtiny, Czech Republic. The programme was prepared by the Czech Forestry Society subdivision PRO SILVA BOHEMICA and the National Forestry Committee. It was generously hosted by the "Masaryk Forest" Forestry Training Institute in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of its foundation.

The **purpose of the seminar** was to help the participants assess the content and applicability of the Pro Silva forestry strategy as the method of sustainable forest management complying with the state forest policy through lectures delivered by leading experts, forest demonstrations, and presentations by other participants. The purpose was fulfilled.

The **seminar participants concluded** that the Pro Silva

- strategy was based on ecological foundations and aimed for the widest possible use of natural processes to achieve forestry goals.
- It agrees with Czech forestry as it advocates forest management and timber industry, placing a strong emphasis on multi-purpose management respecting the protective functions of the forest, its significance as an essential element of landscape design, and culture.
- It adheres to the Czech state forestry policy.

PRO SILVA BOHEMICA endorses the core agenda of PRO SILVA EUROPA and the 1997

Declaration of Apeldoorn for the following reasons:

- the Pro Silva strategy is in line with the final declarations of the 1992 Rio de Janeiro and the 1993 Helsinki international conferences.
- the mission of forestry is to ensure sustainable satisfactory yield of timber and other benefits by employing close to nature methods designed to resemble the structure and dynamics of the natural forest to the greatest extent possible.
- natural forests, including the best-preserved primary forests need to be protected for cultural reasons as well as for the sake of forestry practice due to the lessons gained from the natural dynamics of the forest. The status of national nature reserves and nature reserves protecting sites and processes in the Czech Republic is not in a fundamental conflict with the Pro Silva strategy.

The initial situation, frameworks, and tools of forest management

- Forests managed in the Czech Republic are semi-natural forests of a variety of age classes with ongoing processes which can only be transformed over a long time period.
- Ecological silviculture requires a typological system resulting in the target economic groups and in the division of the national territory into natural forest areas.

Goals attainable over a time period deemed short-term from the forestry perspective:

- optimal use of the habitat production potential by vegetation of an adequate species and spatial composition, namely mixed vegetation,
- preservation of developmental and production continuity and substantial reduction of large-scale clear-felling; rotation may only be abandoned following successful implementation of the selection management,
- individual assessment, cultivation, and harvesting of trees aimed at supporting the standing tree volume,

- transformation of the relationship of forest management and hunting,
- harmony between biological production and forestry machinery,
- verification and application of the Pro Silva holistic approach in the development of territorial systems of ecological stability (TSES).

Concerns were raised about

- promotion of ideas which considerably restrict the management of forest as a renewable source of raw material and social benefits. Limited timber production would be replaced by an increased need for non-renewable raw materials as society will never renounce its needs,
- persistent conflicts between forest management and environmental protection. Environmental protection believes the best solution is to eliminate management and leave the forest ecosystems to nature's own devices. Forestry, on the other hand, has not been able to understand the degree to which the clear-felling system collides with sustainable forest management,
- the underestimation of risks which forest faces due to anthropic influences and the efforts to apply certain solutions to all cases, without taking into account the economic developments and condition of the forest.

The following risk-mitigation measures are recommended:

- maintenance of the spatial and temporal patterns in line with the close to nature forestry throughout the transformation of current methods of management,
- objectiveness of sustainable forestry criteria and identification of effective forest management methods,
- preservation and complementation of the network of close to nature forestry demonstrations and forests in which it is expedient to launch this type of management as soon as possible.
- The meeting confirmed that a number of practical questions related to sustainable forest management remain to be answered conclusively. PRO SILVA BOHEMICA is able to effectively distribute relevant knowledge in line with its mission statement.