

# Planning sustainable bioeconomy in private forests

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# Finnish discourses of the proper (sustainable?) forest use

- There has always been a major conflict between the productivist and the environmental discourses
- The productivist discourses have typically been hegemonic
  - Multi-objective forestry rhetoric is used to hide the conflicts and contradictions between different forest uses
  - The hegemony is probably weakening
- The environmental discourses have typically been subordinate
  - Those forest owners who produce this discourse feel isolation, marginality, frustration,...
  - These discourses are probably becoming less subordinate

## Literature

- Takala, T., Hujala, T., Tanskanen, M. & Tikkanen, J. 2017a: Forest owners' discourses of forests: Ideological origins of ownership objectives. *Journal of Rural Studies* 51: 1-14.
- Takala T, Hujala T, Tanskanen M, Tikkanen J 2017b: The order of forest owners' discourses: Hegemonic and marginalised truths about forest and forest ownership. *J Rural Stud* 55:33-44.
- Takala, T., Lehtinen, A., Hujala, T., Tanskanen, M. & Tikkanen, J. 2019a: The rise of multi-objective forestry paradigm in the Finnish print media. *Forest Policy and Economics* 106 101973.
- Takala, T., Lehtinen, A., Tanskanen, M., Hujala, T. & Tikkanen, J. 2019b: Discursal power and multi-objective forestry in the Finnish print media. *Forest Policy and Economics* 111: 102031.

# Many forest owners still recognise that a change is happening, needed or at least discussed.

- The most topical forest issues in Finland just now, as recognised by forest owners (TOP 4) \*:
  - The effects of forest use on climate change (neutral or concerned tone) (n=77)
  - Sustainable cutting levels (neutral tone) (n=36)
  - Multi-objective, sustainable, pluralistic and reasoned forest use, reconciliation of different forest uses (neutral, critical or concerned tone) (n=30)
  - Continuous cover management (neutral tone) (n=27)

(The concept of bioeconomy is not in a general use among forest owners: it was mentioned two times only.)

(\*An unpublished forest owner survey, spring 2020, n=495, an open-ended question)

Conclusions: The prevailing order of discourses hinders any rapid transition to a more sustainable forest use in Finland, **but** there is also potential for and recognition of a change.

We need different measures for different actors.

Policy measure (for an ecologically more sustainable forest use)	Critical anti-economist	Dutiful forest-owner	Forester	Economist/di-stant
A. Change in the order of forest discourses (necessitates a change in the general value base, at best a very slow process)	X	X	X	X
B. Measures before the order of discourses has changed				
1. Creative combination of ecological and socio-cultural objectives in conservation efforts.	X	X		
2. Sharing information on biodiversity loss and maintenance.	X	X	?	
3. New kind of forest planning and advisory services that emphasise ecological objectives well over wood-production goals.	X	X		
4. Training for forest professionals to identify this forest-owner type.		X		
5. Promotion of ecological aesthetics		X		
6. Payment for ecosystem services (PES systems)				X

# The problem of implementation

- There is a long way from our discourse analyses to concrete practices
  - The emphasis have been more in defining problems than giving practical solutions
- In the present project, we aim to develop new practical tools for forest planning
  - Background theories: Agonist pluralism (Mouffe 2002) and the theory of discourses
  - Methods: Positional analysis by Söderbaum (e.g. Brown et al. 2019)
  - The core issue: how to treat contradictions, differences and alternatives in an open and constructive way in a planning process?

## Literature

- Brown, J., Söderbaum, P. & Dereniowska M. 2017: Positional Analysis for Sustainable Development. Routledge. 180 s.
- Mouffe, C. 2002: The Democratic Paradox. Verso, London. 143 p.

# First experiences of taking theories to the field

- The combination of positional analysis and agonist pluralism seems promising
  - Open treatment of contradictions decreases tension and provides essential information for both planners and forest owners
- Taking the role of a forest planner opens new perspectives for a change – good will is not enough
  - Where to find (social and material) support for doing something new?
  - Do we have knowledge and technology to do things in a different way? Where?
  - How to get experience, if there is no chance for practicing or failing?
  - How to make new service products profitable?
  - .....

(One more thing: I really don't know whether making forest use more sustainable helps to make a society more bio-based, in a material sense.)