

Reduction of forestry derived nutrient inputs to the Baltic Sea by rewilding, ecological forestry and new value chains



Ekoskog

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Executive summary of the project

Ekoskog is a Swedish non-profit association which promotes and develops ecologically sustainable forestry through the dissemination of information, education and the development of a market for ecologically sustainably produced wood. By developing an environmental standard with criteria based on modern research and practical experience, Ekoskog has defined sustainable forestry methods. A report from the EU Commission (spring 2025) compares the predominating forestry certifications schemes, FSC and PEFC, in eight EU-countries and the Ekoskog standard with the EU Guidelines on closer-to-nature forest management. The report concludes that the Ekoskog standard is closest to the EU Guidelines.

New, more sustainable forestry methods are necessary in order to reach national and international targets for climate and biodiversity as well as lowering the nutrient leakage to streams, rivers and the Baltic Sea. The EU Forest Policy for 2023 clearly states the need for forestry without clearcuts and the development of more varied, natural and hence resilient forests.

Instruction films and interviews

Instruction films with interviews of the internationally renowned expert Knut Sturm, founder of the "Lübeck forestry model" for sustainable and economically viable forestry are presented on the Ekoskog website. On the Ekoskog website there are also a number of filmed interviews with forest owners as inspiration to others.

Handbook on ecological forestry

The "Handbook of closer-to-nature ecological forestry" was produced and translated into English in order to spread sustainable forestry methods also to other countries around the Baltic Sea. The manual is richly illustrated with photos and beautiful colour drawings. Ekoskog has previously been cooperating with NGOs in Finland and Estonia and has sent this English version to the former partners. The Handbook is free to download from the Ekoskog website (www.ekoskog.org).

Forest restoration/rewilding measures

Rewilding Sweden has been restoring forests including forest streams and the plugging of forest ditches in cooperation with municipalities and other landowners mainly in Norrbotten, Västerbotten but also in the Gothenburg area to communicate about restoration to the public and forest owners.

Forest restoration guide

An illustrated manual to active forest restoration has been produced and is free to download on the Ekoskog website.

Guided tours

Guided tours to forests under different management systems including forests being converted to closer-to-nature management have been carried out in different parts of the country. Examples of active steps to increase biodiversity and create wetlands and wet areas in order to reduce the leakage of nutrient from forest land to streams and ditches has been presented.

School information on forest ecosystem services

Ekoskog has been partner in a project to increase the knowledge about forests and forestry among students. The "Forests of the Future" project, with Rewilding Sweden as lead partner, includes training of young forest informants who will give lessons in schools about forest ecosystem services, ecological forestry methods and the need for forest restoration.

Networking in the value chain

Ekoskog has had contacts with market actors including building companies, architect firms, sellers of wood products, sawmills and municipalities wanting to use closer-to-nature forest management methods or buy this "eco-timber". There is a strong interest for wood products from forests managed the way Ekoskog promotes. Ekoskog representatives has also been to several meetings arranged by the EU Commission, European NGOs and an EU parliament group in order to promote and discuss closer-to nature, ecological forest management. Ekoskog has also attended the annual meetings of Pro Silva Europe, an organisation promoting clearcut free forestry with national member organisation in many European countries