

**Forest Management Decision Support
Systems (FORSYS)**
Special issue

Preface

Forests serve a multitude of functions and addressing so many different goals to satisfy the needs of forest owners, the forest industry, and society poses a considerable challenge for forest managers. Multi-functional forest ecosystem management planning involves complex decision-making processes that cannot be addressed by empirical methods only, but requires advanced decision-support tools. The Forest Management Decision Support Systems (FORSYS) Cost Action (<http://fp0804.emu.ee/>) brought together experience and expertise from 31 countries in Europe, North and South America, Africa, Asia and Oceania to help provide guidelines and a consistent quality reference for development of decision support systems for forest management.

This Forest Systems special issue —Innovative Approaches to Forest Management Planning— starts with a Short Communication that provides a brief overview of 62 forest management decision support systems (FMDSS) listed in the FORSYS wiki (http://fp0804.emu.ee/wiki/index.php/Main_Page). All 62 systems are described in terms of functionalities, typologies and elements of architecture. Afterwards, a set of 7 papers address topics that include FMDSS architecture and implementation, methods for decision-making, knowledge management techniques and

participatory planning. The structure of this issue thus emulates the FORSYS scientific programme to attempt to provide readers with important contributions to each component of FMDSS.

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