GTL Project

GreenTecLab

Forest Management I - Importance and Threats to Forests

Actually, the forest does not need man, but man needs the forest.

Learn about the forest, its importance for our planet as well as for us humans and its endangerment.

The Importance of Forests

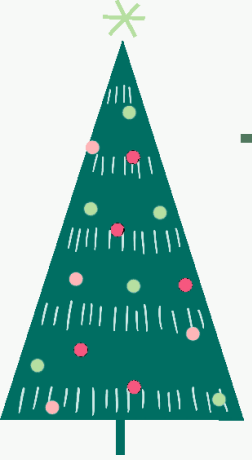
Many people are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of forests for planet Earth and for each and every one of us.

A brief overview of the forest's many functions for us and for the planet shows its importance.

1 Use of Forest

The forest is a

- supplier of raw materials for construction & furniture wood, paper, pulp & textile industry
- source of energy (firewood, pellets)
- supplier of products (game meat, honey, mushrooms, fruits, medicinal plants)



There are various special uses of the forest, e.g. climbing forest, burial forest, cultivation area for Christmas trees.

The forest is a major "employer" in Germany
1.3 million people are employed in the "forest and wood" (annual turnover of approx. 180 billion €).

2 Protective Function of Forests

The forest

- acts as a water reservoir & filters drinking water

- filters air and cleans it of pollutants
- provides protection from avalanches
- holds the soil with its roots and offers protection against mudslides and floods
- is an important habitat for flora and fauna and offers a high level of biodiversity (habitat for 80 percent of all land-dwelling species.

3 Climate Function of Forests

In the context of climate change, forests are of great importance, globally as well as regionally and locally.

- The forest is the "green lung" of our planet; it produces vital oxygen and binds CO2, which is harmful to the climate.

- The forest provides protection from heat, winds, heavy rain and flooding, both on a large scale and locally.

4 Recreational Function of Forests

In Germany, everyone is generally allowed to enter the forests; the forest has a high recreational function for the population. It offers opportunities

- to go for a walk
- to do sports
- to enjoy nature

The Threat to Forests

In almost all countries of the world, including Europe, forests are in disarray and acutely threatened by climate change and human intervention.

The devastating forest fires in 2020 and 2021 in Europe and worldwide bear witness to this.

Forests are acutely threatened by:

- climate change with heat, drought, heavy rain & storms
- acid rain & soil acidification due to pollution
- catastrophic forest fires
- pests & tree diseases
- Invasive species that damage the trees
- Monocultures and unadapted tree species
- Imbalance of the game population
- Unsustainable forest management
- Illegal forest destruction (e.g. slash-and-burn)

You want to learn about sustainable forest management?

Visit the website and check out our Knowlegde Pill
"Forest Management II -
Mobile Forest Farmers' School"

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- https://www.info-privatwald.de/funktionen-des-waldes.php
- https://www.waldwissen.net
- https://efi.int/