



Forest Research Institute
Center of Excellence PROFOREST
for Protection of Forest Resources
in Central Europe



GIS and databases in the forest protection in Central Europe

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Introduction

This book, summarizing the Central European approach to the use of databases and digital maps in the forest protection, appears as the result of the Workshop “GIS and databases in forest protection”, organized on November 25-27, 2004 in Kraków by the Centre of Excellence PROFOREST at the Forest Research Institute in Warsaw.



PROFOREST Centre of Excellence



On 17th July 2002 the European Commission officially approved a three year-long project focused on development of a ERA in the area of protection of forest resources in Central Europe (**QLK1-CT-2002-30315/ PROFOREST**) within the Framework V Programme: Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources.

The PROFOREST Centre of Excellence (CoE) at the FRIW brings together a team of scientific personnel from selected Departments of the Institute to develop a network of international cooperation, integrative activity and education, to foster the development of forest science related to protection of forest resources in Europe, dividing the project into 9 Workpackages, with 38 project actions.

The main aim of the PROFOREST CoE is to pursue and stimulate the process of integration of forest scientists working on the protection of forest resources in Central Europe. The location of PROFOREST at the FRIW is testimony to the Institute's 75-year history and experience, and the knowledge of its researchers in the protection of forests and forest resources against insects, pathogens, fires, air pollution, game animals; protection of water catchments and soil, conservation of biodiversity and genetic resources, and nature conservation in general. The PROFOREST CoE serves to strengthen personal contacts and encourage closer Europe-wide cooperation and integration of researchers in formulating joint grant proposals. It also fosters the development of forest sciences in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, towards the better management of forests for future generations.

The PROFOREST CoE is located in the middle of European forests and deals with many pure science and applied research problems in forest science; therefore it facilitates contacts between researchers throughout Europe, east to west and north to south. The network formed will enable the pooling of knowledge and the exchange of detailed methodologies and research techniques and to host meetings, workshops and seminars devoted to protection of forests and forest resources. The resulting contacts between distinguished scientists and young researchers and students will facilitate rapid development of the subject area.

Numerous conferences, workshops, seminars, scientific fellowships and training sessions are organised with the participation of the Institute and PROFOREST CoE, in cooperation with the State Forests Holding and the National Park Offices.

Researchers, practitioners, and students from local and European areas have gathered in Poland to discuss and gain understanding of the problems of protection and silviculture in multifunctional forests, to collect materials for research and comparative assessments and to foster the development of new research networks.

The main goal of the workshop was the exchange of knowledge on the current and envisaged use of GIS-based methods in the research and practice of forest protection in Central European countries. During two days of sessions, attended by 20 participants from 6 countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine), 11 contributions were presented by the representatives of institutions dealing with the forest protection problems, both in research and in practice. The plenary discussions and working sessions were an excellent opportunity for the exchange of knowledge, as well as for planning of closer co-operation focused to the joining of the existing information on the threats to Central European forests on above-national, transboundary level.

We hope that this book will be helpful for all the people working on forest protection problems. Although searching for common bases in research on protection against forest pests is one of the objectives of the PROFOREST CE activity, we hope also that the presented results of our common work will facilitate the development and strengthening of the European co-operation in the field of forestry research.

Editors