



# What is **CLOSER-TO-NATURE FORESTRY** ?

The term “closer-to-nature forestry” was first introduced in the EU Biodiversity Strategy, but only after the EU Forest Strategy, with its first attempt of a definition, related guidelines were developed.

Under the umbrella of sustainable forest management, closer-to-nature forestry promotes the diversity of forest components, structures and processes characteristic of natural forests and cultural woodlands at different scales to increase biodiversity and safeguard ecosystem functioning and resilience

Managers are encouraged to promote natural tree regeneration, ensure respectful harvest

conditions and minimise other management interventions, preserve and restore forest soils and water ecosystems, optimise deadwood retention, set areas aside, protect specific species on-site, manage ungulate species at natural carrying capacity and take a scale-specific approach. Implementing closer-to-nature forestry requires detailed planning and a long-term vision but also continuous monitoring to adapt to a changing environment.

Essentially, closer-to-nature forestry does not propose any fundamentally new concept but encompasses existing silvicultural approaches to increase biodiversity in managed forests.

## Natural Forest



## Far from natural forest



## Closer-to-nature forest



Silver fir and beech

Douglas fir, Norway spruce and Beech

Beech, sycamore maple and ash

Source: Larsen 2012, in Larsen et al. 2022

### Further reading:

Larsen et al. 2022. Closer-to-Nature Forest Management. From Science to Policy 12. European Forest Institute. <https://doi.org/10.36333/fs12>

European Commission, Directorate-General for Environment. 2023. Guidelines on closer-to-nature forest management. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2779/731018>



EUROPEAN FOREST  
INSTITUTE