

Association of Forest Site Ecology and Geobotany (AFSV)

History of our Association

The Association of Forest Site Ecology and Geobotany (AFSV) has a long tradition and was promoted by the leadership of prominent forest scientists with international reputation. Initial members of the association, when established in 1928, were forest ecologists of the first hour, like Prof. Dr. Konrad Rubner. Beyond classification and syntaxonomy of forests their geobotanical approach put emphasis on investigating forest ecology and silviculture. After an interruption during World War II the society was re-founded in 1954.

What is "Forest Site Ecology"?

The forest site describes all environmental factors affecting plants on their woody habitats not considering competition among plants. The manuals for forest site survey and forest site mapping were developed continuously. Today, processing of georeferenced data is becoming an important tool in digital site classification.

What is "Geobotany"?

Geobotany denotes the European tradition of studying the distribution of plant species and vegetation in space and time. Sociological Geobotany describes the co-occurrence of different species in forest communities, comprising of forest type classification as well as the investigation of functional and structural interactions of plant species in communities. In Ecological Geobotany the influence of environmental factors on the occurrence of species and forest types and the adaptations and survival strategies of plants are analysed. The natural forest communities with their specific combination of tree species and the typical set of indicator species in the herb layer integrate the complexity of all factors influencing a site. Combined with physiographical site maps they form the foundation of translating ecological regularities into close-to-nature silviculture. Applied Geobotany addresses questions of landscape and environmental planning, which affect land use and forestry as well as conservation biology. Its study objects include natural and historical vegetation types, habitats and characteristic landscapes.

Diversity of Topics

Each year we organise excursions to different regions of Germany and neighbouring countries warranting a large variety of topics. Local experts present diagnoses of site characters and the criteria for tree species selection for silviculture and other management aims. Environmental analysis includes the evaluation and discussion of individual environmental properties like water and nutrient availability as well as their combined effects. Besides soil chemistry the physiographic interpretation of soils is cross-checked with that inferred from indicator plant analysis and humus morphology. Finally, site diagnosis and geobotanical findings form the basis of conclusions for silviculture and nature conservation.



Advanced Training and Information Exchange

The society's annual meetings offer an outstanding possibility for professional advancement and exchange of knowledge. At present ca. 310 members predominantly from Germany and neighbouring countries are represented in the AFSV. The combination of scientists and practitioners from various fields of activity (foresters, experts for site and vegetation classification, pedologists, geologists, biologists) provides a rich exchange of experience. Firmly based in a long tradition of methods and institutions, AFSV explicitly invites the engagement of young members and encourages the open discussion of new methods and concepts.

Future Strategies

Special working groups have been installed to strengthen central topics of interest (e. g. GIS-modelling of forest sites, vegetation data bases, assessment of biodiversity and naturalness, detectable changes in the floristic composition caused by global warming and nutrient input, forest planning and wilderness protection, monitoring of Natura-2000 habitats, bog restoration). Programmes, timetables and activities will be coordinated with national organisations (e. g. botanical and phytosociological societies). International contacts will be intensified.

Membership Dues, Activities and Publications

Annual membership dues: 15 €
Annual conference and excursion
Printed conference materials
Peer reviewed journal "Waldökologie online" (ISSN 7103-1614)
Articles in professional journals (e. g. AFZ-Der Wald, Forst und Holz)

Contact Us

We will be glad to answer your questions:
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