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A new Forest Governance Approach for Germany to cope with Global Change

T4.19 Institutional and Social Innovations in the Forest-based Sector as a Response to Contemporary Challenges

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Abstract: On the occasion of the current revision of the German Forestry Act, and against the background of an enormous drought-induced forest die-back in Germany, the German Scientific Advisory Board for Forest Policy at BMEL (Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture) developed a new forest governance approach to cope with global change. Its guiding principle is adaptability through a proper mix of policy instruments. We recommend six minimum standards mandatory to all forest owners, securing (i) forest preservation, (ii) avoidance of clear-cuts, (iii) accessibility for the public, (iv) adequate game stocks as well as (v) soil protection and (vi) water protection. Beyond these minimum standards, all societal demand shall be flexibly addressed by any of the following policy instruments: information; structural support; payments and other financial support; and regulations. Moreover, we recommend to create legal frameworks that incentivize private cooperation. In consideration of the public being the main beneficiary of most of the forest ecosystem services, we advocate for highest priority to financial instruments. The approach is rounded out by a specific example for forest adaptation to climate change.