



# European Forestry Commission Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds

## Working Group: Forest and Water



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The Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds (WP-MMW) operates under the umbrella of the European Forestry Commission. Its activities are managed by two main working groups: Working Group 1, which addresses issues related to forests and water, and Working Group 2, which addresses hazards and disaster risk management in mountains. Working Group 1 was established in 2013 at the thirty-seventh session of WP-MMW to work on interlinkages of forests and water catchments while addressing current and future forest challenges. The nexus of hydrology, mountain landscapes and forests is an important field of study for science and of high relevance for resource management and governance.

Forests are vital to our water supply, providing approximately 75 percent of the world's accessible freshwater for agricultural, domestic, industrial and environmental uses. Forests provide numerous ecosystem services, that are essential to maintaining resilient systems, communities and ecosystems. Forests can be used as a nature-based solution to sustaining high quality water provision and risk reduction.

Although understanding of forest and water interactions has increased since the “Shiga Declaration on Forests and Water” in 2002, the dialogue on forests and water needs furthering at scientific, policy and management level.

### Objectives

To bring together national experts on forests, hydrology, applied ecology and socioeconomics to share and disseminate knowledge and experience about forests and water.

### Central themes

- The impact of forest management operations on water quality and water quantity.
- Management of forests with a landscape approach for soil and water conservation.
- Forest ecosystem services and forests as nature-based solutions.
- Forests and the water cycle in forest management.
- Forests in combination with other land uses in different climatic and hydrological conditions.

## Who is involved?

Working Group 1 is currently led by Finland and Turkey. All member countries of the European Forestry Commission are welcome to participate in or host the activities of the Working Group

## What does it do?

National forest and water experts from academia and government meet annually to share their knowledge and experience in practical workshops organized around the central themes. The workshops are hosted by alternating member countries of the Steering Committee. By bringing together a wide array of expertise, the workshops widen the participants' knowledge while offering them valuable new international contacts. Outputs have included baseline publications on the relationship of forests and water and enhanced policy advice at the national level.

The 2020 meeting will take place in Prague, Czechia on 24 and 25 February.

## Further projects

In an effort to advance the activities of the Working Group, two proposals dealing with headwater ecosystem restoration were submitted to the European Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, known as Horizon2020, and the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST Action).

Furthermore, the Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds is planning to initiate field training for practitioners on integrated forest and water management to diffuse the knowledge and lessons assembled by the Working Group.

For more information: [www.fao.org/forestry/37705](http://www.fao.org/forestry/37705)



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