

Forest-food nexus: a topical opportunity for human well-being and silviculture

Abstract - As population will reach over 9 billion by 2050, interest in the forest-food nexus is rising. Forests play an important role in food production and nutrition. Forests can provide nutritionally-balanced diets, woodfuel for cooking and a broad set of ecosystem services. A large body of evidence recommends multi-functional and integrated landscape approaches to reimagine forestry and agriculture systems. Here, after an in-depth commented discussion of the literature produced in the last decade about the role for forests with respect to the food security global emergency, we summarize the state of the art in Italy as a country-case-study. This commentary aims to increase awareness about the potential of silviculture in Italy for combining ecological resilience with economic resilience, and for reasonably increasing non-wood products supply by means of a sustainable intensification of forest management at national level.

Chain-supply fragmentation, landowner inertia, and lack of governance and cooperation may hamper an effective exploitation of non-wood products. The strategies to guarantee an effective supply of non-wood products require appropriate business skills and the presence of a structured business service. A transparent market is also essential; therefore, the introduction of standards (e.g. grading rules and forest certification schemes) is important since they can add value to products and services, and emphasize the importance and complexity of the forest sector. However, the implementation of sustainable forest management for an effective supply of non-wood products is affected by the availability of appropriate planning tools, and the public officers need a new mindset to stimulate and support the business capacity of forest owners...

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- Camille Pissarro