

Waldwissen is used by 100,000 visitors per month and contains almost 3000 edited and popularized research articles.

Waldwissen.net – translates research into practice

All universities and research institutes struggle with the challenge of making research results available to a broader audience. A peer-reviewed article is never the final step. Its content needs to be packaged and presented in a context that will also be useful to practitioners and decision-makers. One successful project to deliver this is Waldwissen.net.

The information and communication platform Waldwissen.net – in English it translates as “forestknowledge.net” – has currently almost 3,000 articles which describe important and actual topics, covering the fields of techniques and planning, forestry, forest ecology, and learning and teaching.

Waldwissen.net is a website run by forestry experts for forestry experts. This guarantees that the content is reliable, up-to-date and appropriate

for forest practitioners. The website also targets other users, such as decision-makers, environmental experts and educational users.

Swiss initiative

The website started off as an initiative from the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research (WSL). The first prototype went on line in 2003. The experience was positive and, in February 2005,



Waldwissen is used by forest professionals in central Europe. The map shows the location of the editorial offices

a new version was launched. From other countries, three more forest institutes in the German-speaking part of central Europe became involved: the Forest Research Institute of Baden-Württemberg (FVA), the Bavarian Forest Institute (LWF) and the Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests, Natural Hazards and Landscape (BFW). The former two are in Germany, the third is in Austria. Currently, three more institutes from Germany and one from France (INRA) are partners in the project.

Well visited

There are about 100,000 visitors per month to the web site, mainly from Germany (53%), Switzerland (23%) and Austria (20%). Readers rate articles highly, and in late 2012, a total of 55,000 ratings had been given by users.



Multilingual

The majority of the articles are written in German, but at least 10% of them are also translated into English, French and Italian. The content of the website is produced by editorial staff at each of the institutes.

Christian Lackner at BFW in Austria is one of the editors of Waldwissen. He attended a recent meeting for Forest portals in Copenhagen, and described the next steps for waldwissen.net.

– We will improve interactivity, and Waldwissen will also go mobile in the near future.

Waldwissen.net, its content

The current 2 900 research articles are sorted into four main categories, with subcategories to allow a good overview. The main categories are:

- **Technique and planning** (with inventory, forest technology and natural hazards)
- **Forestry** (with silviculture, forest protection and management)
- **Forest ecology** (forest plants, animals, nature conservation and protective function)
- **Learning and teaching** (public relations, forest history, education and training)

Dossier

The German version of the platform also presents “Dossiers”, which bring together contributions from various fields to give a broader perspective on a topic. Examples of dossier titles are Douglas fir, forest ash, and urban forestry.

Prize winner

Waldwissen.net was in 2007 awarded the distinguished Schweighofer Innovation Award for Forestry. “Thanks to its internationality, multilingualism and the professionalism of its contributions waldwissen.net made an especially strong impression.”

From WALDWISSEN.NET

Well prepared in a crisis

Crisis communication doesn't happen automatically or incidentally. Most authorities carry out public relations and so have access to qualified staff. However, their work during a crisis can in no way be compared to their day-to-day press and public relations activities. If in normal situations a PR department has to make a concerted effort to bring information to the public's attention, this picture changes abruptly in a crisis. The telephone doesn't stop ringing and media representatives are on site; it's hectic. Preparations that can be made for such situations are presented in the article.

Read more: www.waldwissen.net/lernen/oeffentlichkeit/fva_krisenkommunikation_kk3/index_EN

Finnish forestry – a role model for Switzerland?

Finland is regarded as a leader in the European forestry and timber industry. One of the factors leading to this success is the close cooperation between research, forestry, forest owners and the timber industry. Swiss forestry and forest research could greatly profit from the expertise of the Finns. A closer cooperation between research and actual practice and also between forestry and the timber industry is especially necessary in order to improve the economics of forestry. The timber production chain must be optimised, the outlets for wood must be improved and the development of innovative products must be encouraged.

Read more: www.waldwissen.net/lernen/weltforstwirtschaft/wsl_finnland/index_EN

European beech – portrait of a tree species

European beech trees may well reach an age of 300 years and, in rare cases, even 500 years. They can attain a height of over 40 m. Figures from the Austrian Forest Inventory show that the percentage of European beech in industrial timber production is 9.6%. Thus, beech is by far the most important deciduous species in the production forest.

According to the German Federal Forest Inventory 2, the average growing stock per hectare for European beech is 352 m³, ranking third behind spruce (404 m³/ha) and fir (480 m³/ha). The growth performance of European beech reaches up to 70% that of spruce.

Read more: www.waldwissen.net/wald/baeume_waldpflanzen/laub/bfw_buche/index_EN

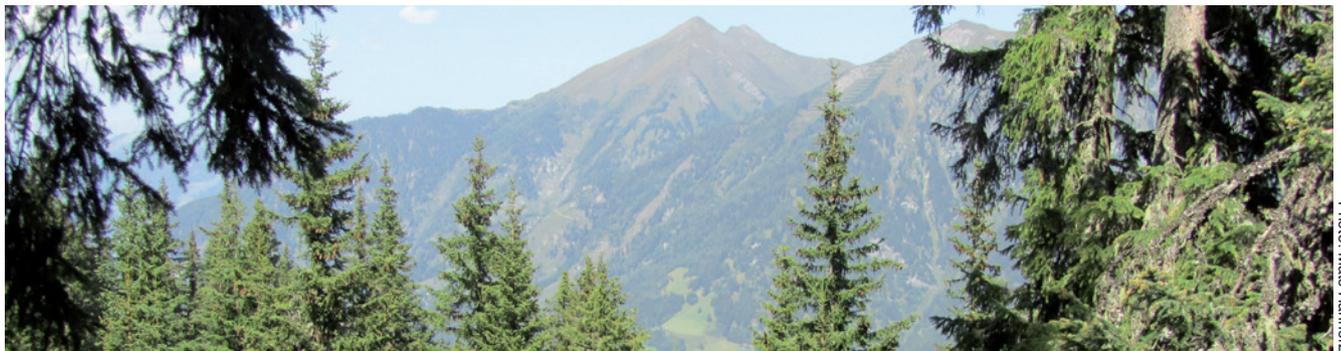


Photo: Matis Hamnerz