

Department of forest resource
management
Swedish NFI, PS-RT

POLICYDOCUMENT
2022-09-12

Policy for distribution of exact positions for the permanent plots of the Swedish NFI

Exact positions for permanent plots in the Swedish NFI are protected by confidentiality pursuant to Chapter 24. Section 8 of the Publicity and Secrecy Act. Exact coordinates are stored in the NFI databases and are used for internal use in the statistics production conducted by NFI staff. The plots were established in 1983-1987 and reinvented at certain intervals. Public access to the exact positions could lead to that these plots could be treated differently from surrounding forest. This can apply to everything from harvesting measures to compensating fertilizers. If this were to happen, it would in turn lead to the fact that basic characteristics of the permanent plots regarding representativeness are no longer met and that they can therefore no longer be used to produce official statistics.

The exact positions can be extremely valuable in other applications outside NFI-production of statistics, so permission to distribute these coordinates can in some cases be granted.

Policy

In order to minimize the risk that the representativeness of the plots is affected, the NFI database is not distributed in its whole and extractions of data with the exact positions should only be distributed to authorities and research projects in certain special cases, but never to individual persons, private companies or other organizations.

The applications closely linked to the NFI, within the department for forest resource management, as eg. Heureka RegVis, kNN Sweden, Forestry basic data and SLU's climate reporting should be allowed to use exact coordinates on an ongoing basis. Research projects where staff from the NFI directly participates, as well as international harmonization work such as E-Forest and Cost Action projects, should also be granted permission.

In other cases of government cooperation and research projects within universities and colleges, the request for permission must be made to the NFI Program Steering Committee (PS-RT). PS-RT will then deal with the matter promptly.

The purpose of this document is not to limit the legal right to access general public documents that everyone is entitled to. A request must always be handled promptly and the answer may depend on who is asking and at what time the question is asked. In cases where PS-RT judges that the request cannot be met, he/she requesting the data shall be informed of his/her right to an appeal against a rejection decision and the Legal Unit at SLU shall be contacted.



Göran Ståhl

Chairman PS-RT