

# NATURE MANAGEMENT

## – online training for forestry SMEs

*The general aim of the project is to develop new services with companies and help them to offer better services for forest owners. The aim of this pilot is to improve the competence of forest service entrepreneurs and other operators who plan and provide forest services. When the competence of operators increases, forest service companies can better respond to the changing needs and demands of forest owners and thus improve their own competitiveness. Nature management practices for commercially managed forests are becoming more and more attractive to forest owners, but there are still few forest enterprises that include these aspects in their services, or at least the services are not marketed widely.*

The aim of this pilot was to design and implement a three-part online nature management training package. It was targeted to forestry operators and entrepreneurs who plan forest services and their implementation. The learning platform training could improve the competence of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to attract more and more qualified orders for forest services. Finnish Forest Centre (FFC) carried out the pilot in collaboration with a forest service company in the area. The content of the training was planned together, and the company's representatives also tested the training and commented on it. The experts and project persons of FFC were responsible for compiling the content of the online training. Existing material was utilized in the content of the training. The three themes of the training were protection of forests and biodiversity, water protection and continuous cover forestry.

Based on the feedback, the training was considered useful. In many respects, the persons who tested the training were familiar with the content but the summary of things was considered good. They also learned something new and the part of continuous cover forestry in particular was considered interesting and useful. The development proposals were related to the advanced information in some respects. In addition, the idea of utilizing video material and transforming the training into a spoken and possible to listen, audiobook-like, format was raised. The online training will be published on the website of Finnish Forest Centre, where it is open to everyone, so all the people who are interested have equal access to education.

### Conclusion

The online training increases the competence of operators in nature management. They receive ideas what should be included in the services provided to forest owners. Nature management can be integrated into existing services, such as thinning, final felling or clearing of seedling stands. In this case, the services can be marketed as measures considering biodiversity, for example. The information obtained also makes it possible to compile new service concepts, such as continuous cover forestry services. The operators should highlight their nature management expertise in the marketing and communication of services so that the services meet the needs of forest owners who are willing to invest in nature management in their forests. In this way, the competitiveness of companies can also be improved.

## PILOT SUMMARY



EUROPEAN UNION

**Interreg**  
**Botnia-Atlantica**  
European Regional Development Fund



**Prosperous forest**  
Diversification through Inclusion and Specialisation