

The Forest Kingdom – with values for the world

Action plan



Production Ministry for Rural Affairs

Article no. L 11.010

Photo Cover photo: Per Bergkvist, Stefan Örtenblad/
Johnér, Håkan Hjort/Johnér, Sara Danielsson/
Johnér, Johan Willner/Johnér

Cover, inside cover: Mikael Svensson/Johnér,
Elliot Elliot/Johnér

Insert, page 3: Johan Ödmann

page 5: Eddie Granlund/Johnér

page 7: Lena Koller/Johnér

page 9: Mårten Dalfors/Johnér, Hans Berggren/
Johnér

page 11: Anna Kern/Johnér

Print XGS grafisk service, October 2011

For more information about the Forest Kingdom, visit:
www.sweden.gov.se/forestkingdom

Welcome to the Forest Kingdom!



The wind can be heard whistling gently high up in the pine tops. All else is silent. Many years ago, someone chopped down the pine tree that left the stump I'm now sitting on. In my rucksack, as always, there's an old dented thermos full of coffee, and the best food in the world – a liver paste and cucumber sandwich.

The forest is where I come to recharge my batteries. This is where I can catch my breath. More than two thirds of Sweden's surface is covered with trees and nearly every Swede has a special relationship with the forest. What does it mean to you?

Forestry and forestry-related industries are extremely important to Sweden's economy and create more than 100 000 jobs, most of them in Sweden's rural areas. And more are going to be created! Forest raw materials can be used to make fuel for cars, furniture, chemicals, paper, clothes and much more.

The forest is also home to thousands of species. The value of the ecosystem services that forests deliver can hardly be quantified in money; for example, growing forests capture carbon dioxide, and thus play a key role in our battle against climate change.

Swedish forests have values to offer the world. And I have a vision that we will become even better at making the most of them. Perhaps Sweden can even

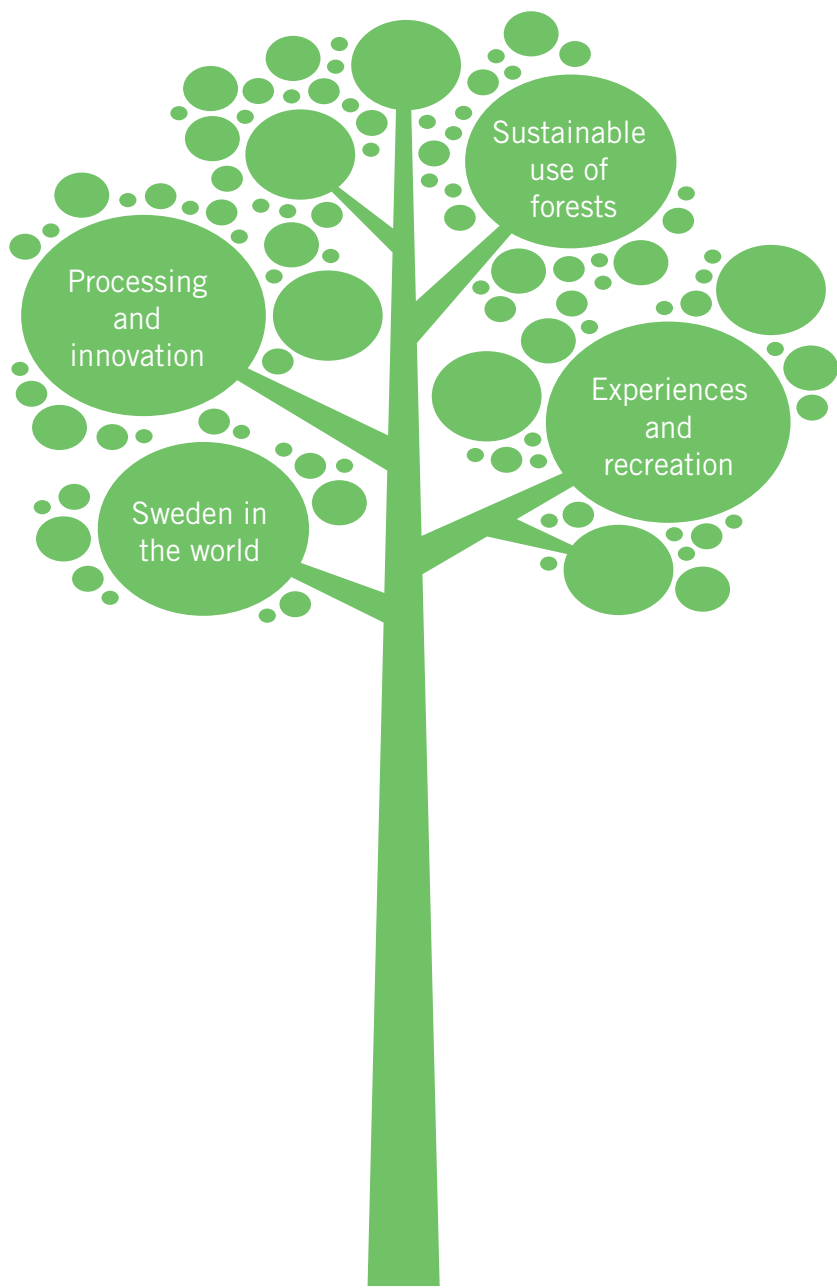
become best in the world at making the most of all the values that forests have to offer, from nature experiences to forestry output, innovation and new products. I have called this vision 'The Forest Kingdom – with values for the world'.

The Forest Kingdom is based on the sustainable use of forests and the coequal forestry policy objectives. This means that the objectives of a good environment and a high level of production are equally important for us to achieve. This is how we can create a balanced forest policy.

What you now have in your hand is an action plan presenting a selection of the activities that will turn the vision into a reality.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Eskil Erlandsson'.

Eskil Erlandsson
Minister for Rural Affairs



The branches of the Forest Kingdom

There are four branches to the Forest Kingdom, building on the values that our forests offer.

Sustainable use of forests

These are our goals:

- More forest raw materials.
- Biodiversity will be preserved and used in a sustainable manner.
- Social values will be protected.
- Sweden's forest sector will be gender-equal.

Forestry and the forest industry

The Forest Kingdom is based on the sustainable use of forests and the two coequal forest policy objectives for production and the environment. This means that the objectives achievement level must be equally high for both objectives. Sustainable and long-term use is also essential for an increased yield of biomass. The Swedish forestry model gives forest owners a great deal of freedom and responsibility. Under the Forestry Act, they can use forests to meet their own goals, such as production, but they also have a major responsibility for managing their forests so that both objectives are achieved.

Forestry is one of Sweden's most important industries and plays a major role in Sweden's economy. It is important that the profitability of forestry increases so that the potential for increased production and more jobs is unlocked.

Many have interests in our forests, and at times they conflict. It is a challenge to reconcile these interests. It is therefore important that those who, in different ways, use forest areas – whether for business or pleasure – have an understanding of each other's needs and rights.

It is a matter of enabling environmental and production interests to coexist and, not least, of forest and rural areas being able to provide good opportunities for living and working. Forests are a long-term investment and what one generation sows, the next will reap.

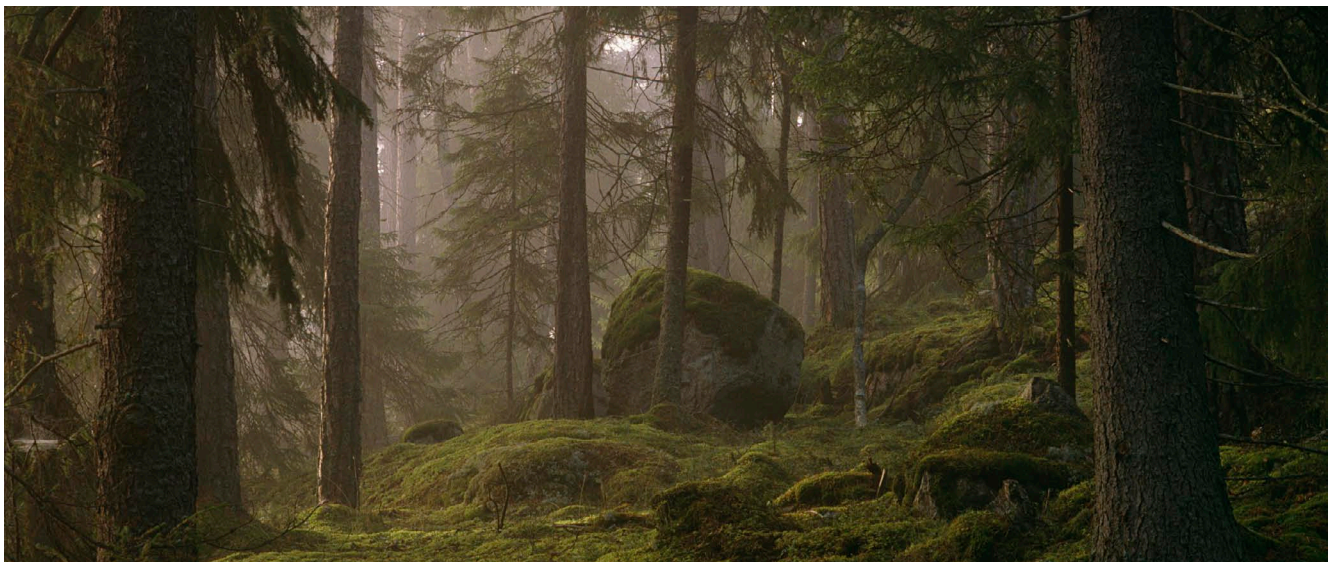
The production capacity of forest land, biodiversity and the genetic diversity in forests must be maintained. Forests also provide habitat and food for wild animals, and forestry and game management must be able to be combined. Forest land should also be used

in such a way as to prevent any damage to ancient remains and other valuable cultural relics. Many forest owners take great responsibility by voluntarily, and without any compensation from the state, exempting areas from forestry or by signing nature conservation agreements with the state. At the same time, forest areas and their nature conservation values can actually be the result of their use.

Ecosystem services, biodiversity and regrowth

Biodiversity in forests and forest areas, with their water and wetlands, is the basis of many ecosystem services that we so easily take for granted. They help to provide a liveable environment that includes clean air and fresh water.

The Swedish Forest Agency is working with the sector and other stakeholders to achieve the environmental quality objective of 'Living Forests' and other relevant environmental quality objectives. Considerable responsibility is thus being taken to preserve biodiversity and protect sociocultural values, but this responsibility can be further developed.



We have reason to be proud of the Swedish model of freedom with responsibility. This has taken us far, but not far enough. Biodiversity in forest areas is still being damaged by forest management activities. According to the Swedish Forest Agency, 37 per cent of regeneration felling has not reached an acceptable level of environmental consideration. Effective measures are needed in this area. Regeneration and young forest management are not as effective as they should be. In this context, we need to take joint responsibility to ensure that, also in the future, we will be able to use our forests without using them up. Preserving old growth forests is important for several reasons. One of them is reindeer husbandry, as hanging lichen is an important source of fodder for reindeer.

Gender equality, integration and skills provision

Sweden must provide equal opportunities for women, men and people of foreign backgrounds to work in the forest sector, and an integration project is under way in the green industries. We need a gender-equal forest sector that also attracts young people. Research on leadership and organisation in the forest sector is therefore important to be able to understand and address the causes of the lack of gender equality in the longer term. A positive sign is that the business sector and the research community have taken a joint initiative for a new research programme called 'Gender and gender equality in forestry'.

What's being done

- The Swedish Forest Agency will take steps to increase knowledge about the value of creating

- clearings and will use a new method involving satellite images to identify areas that need to be cleared.
- The Swedish Forest Agency, in its regular advisory activities, will include both alternative management practices and methods that aim to preserve and strengthen outdoor values in forests close to urban areas.
- Through the 'Dialogue on sustainable use of forests' being conducted by the Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment, efforts to preserve biodiversity in forest areas continue.
- 'Competitiveness demands gender equality – gender equality strategy for the forestry sector', produced by the Ministry for Rural Affairs in consultation with the forestry sector, will be implemented.
- The Swedish Forest Agency is monitoring how consultations between the forestry and reindeer industries are proceeding in the reindeer husbandry area.
- The Swedish Forest Agency and the Sami Parliament will actively promote an enhanced dialogue and collaboration between the industries.
- The Government is working with the industry on an initiative to strengthen forest tree breeding in 2011-2014.
- Skogforsk (the Forestry Research Institute of Sweden) has implemented targeted measures including web-based decision-making support to increase the extraction of tops and branches in the private forestry sector and specific training initiatives for entrepreneurs and supervisors working in this area.
- The Swedish Forest Agency has taken the initiative to further deepen the dialogue on 'Polytaxen' – the inventories assessing environmental consideration and regeneration – with the industry, nature conservation organisations, the research community and government agencies.

- In the Government's view, Skogforsk's activities continue to be important.
- The Swedish Forest Agency collaborates with the relevant agencies, including the Swedish National Heritage Board, to enhance the protection of the cultural and environmental heritage values of forests.
- The National Agency for Education has been tasked with setting up national programme councils for upper secondary school vocational programmes. The councils are to help ensure that the programmes meet labour market skills needs, for example in forestry or game and water management.

Processing and innovation

These are our goals:

- It will be fun, easy and profitable to be a forest entrepreneur.
- Actors in the Swedish forest sector will encourage greater sustainable use of forest and wood raw materials through processing and innovation in new and existing areas of use.
- The production value based on forest raw materials in Sweden will increase as a result of the industry increasing the added value in production through, for example, innovation and product development.

In our country there is a long tradition of forestry work and important knowledge that we will use to advantage. The forest sector consists of both large companies in the paper, pulp and sawn timber industries and small companies producing, for example, furniture and handicraft products, and providing



services such as experiences. We also have a high-tech niche investing in developing new materials from forest raw materials. It is particularly important that we seek solutions that allow biomass to be used in a resource-efficient and responsible manner throughout the entire life cycle.

Forest work should be profitable and offer good development opportunities. New initiatives are proposed in the Rural Development Programme over the next two years, including increased investment in skills development focusing on environment and forestry.

Sweden is at the forefront in a number of areas, such as renewable energy, textiles, packaging and various composite materials. Green energy and new technology are among the areas that offer further development potential.

The Government assesses that the forest industries have considerable potential to contribute to solutions related to new sustainable products and services. Wood construction is currently an expanding sector, where wood is being increasingly used in multi-storey housing, public buildings and bridges for road traffic.

Using wood in construction is climate-smart and contributes to a sustainable society.

For the experience industries based on wildlife, sport fishing, outdoor activities and Sami culture, there is major development potential. It is important to bear in mind that traditional knowledge can serve as a basis for resuming production of traditional products and for starting new businesses.

In Sweden there are more than 100 000 one-person companies in the forest sector. It can be a considerable challenge for them to employ staff, and easily accessible information is needed on entrepreneurship, accounting, etc.

Sweden needs a business climate for green industries – agriculture, forestry, horticulture with ancillary industries and the food supply chain – that stimulates development and innovation and encourages more start-ups and existing businesses to grow.

As a step to strengthen entrepreneurship in the forest sector, the Ministry for Rural Affairs will appoint industry ambassadors. They will be given the important task of spreading knowledge and contributing to business development in their areas.

What's being done

- The Government has invested SEK 265 million in an industry research programme for the forest and wood industries to strengthen their competitiveness both nationally and in the global market.
- The Government supports the 'Trästad 2012' project that aims to highlight the environmental benefits of constructing in wood and to promote this as a natural alternative in all types of construction.

- The Government is continuing its efforts to simplify regulations and in the Ministry for Rural Affairs' area of responsibility the regulatory simplification target is at least 50 per cent by 2014.
- Information and advice to self-employed people, for example on how to employ staff, is available at the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth website (www.tillvaxtverket.se), which is continuously updated.
- The Government is using general policy instruments to promote the production of bioenergy from forests.
- The Swedish Association for Hunting and Wildlife Management is developing a local market for wildlife products.
- The industry ambassadors will work to ensure that the characteristics and qualities of different types of wood are better used so as to increase the added value of products.

Experiences and recreation

These are our goals:

- Companies in the experience tourism industry building on the unique values of Swedish forests, including game management, hunting, outdoor activities and sport fishing, will be given better opportunities to develop and grow.
- Knowledge about forest heritage and the forest as a carrier of culture will be enhanced both among the general public and forest professionals.
- Those who use forests for recreation and recreation-related business activities should have sound knowledge concerning the right of common access.



Sweden's deep forests and clear, clean water are part of its special natural beauty. Its forests offer major beauty values in addition to game, berries, mushrooms and fishing waters. They also offer fantastic opportunities for experiences and activities. The right of common access allows us to enjoy the natural environment almost completely freely, but this also entails obligations. The forests we spend time in have an owner and we must behave responsibly when we are there.

There is a great interest in hunting, fishing and wild game viewing, but this type of tourism is not fully developed. The potential for developing sustainable nature and ecotourism is great in our country both far from large communities and in forests close to urban areas. When developing tourism, consideration must be given to the interests of the landowners.

The forest also offers rich opportunities for us to enjoy culture and cultural sites. We can go to concerts, spend the night in a tree house, or find traces of our historical cultural heritage such as rock piles and the vestiges of ancient cultivated plants.

Today, several outdoor recreation organisations are seeing their membership decline. Apart from being enjoyable, outdoor life and spending time in the forest is also important for our health and well-being. This is why the state supports organisations and individuals involved in outdoor activities. A range of initiatives is in place to raise young people's interest in forests and to boost their knowledge. 'Forest in school' is one of them. The Swedish Forest Agency has produced an online map service, 'Gems of the forest', to inspire families to venture out into the forest.

What's being done

- The Government is continuing its regulatory simplification efforts and the Swedish Forest Agency its administrative cost reductions. In the Ministry for Rural Affairs' area of responsibility, the regulatory simplification target is at least 50 per cent by 2014.
- As of 2011, the Swedish Association for Outdoor Organisations, a non-profit organisation, will be tasked with allocating government grants to outdoor activity organisations.

- The Swedish National Heritage Board is working to develop and increase knowledge about forest heritage.
- The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the county administrative boards and, in many cases, the municipalities are working to support people's opportunities to spend time in nature and engage in outdoor activities, where the right of common access is one pillar of outdoor recreation, and access to nature reserves is another. The knowledge gained from these efforts contributes to the Forest Kingdom objectives.
- Actors involved in the national joint programme 'Forest in school' are working to adapt their activities more closely to target groups.
- The Rural Development Programme provides opportunities to apply for support to increase the cultural and environmental heritage values of forests.
- The Swedish Forest Agency inventories of valuable forest environments are constantly updated and presented under 'Gems of the forest' on the Swedish Forest Agency website www.skogsstyrelsen.se

Sweden in the world

These are our goals:

- Sweden will spread knowledge about the Swedish model and sustainable forestry and thus contribute to increased poverty reduction and the fight against global warming.
- The forest sector should be able to increase exports of forest products and technical know-how by 20 per cent by 2020.

Today Sweden exports enormous volumes of paper, pulp and sawn timber goods, and forestry is our largest export industry, with an export value of SEK 128 billion.

There is further export potential if companies increase the added value of products from forest raw materials.

Strong Swedish representation in international forest policy contexts is important. Sweden has sound forestry expertise and Sweden's views are listened to in international forestry contexts. We convey the Swedish forestry model – freedom with responsibility – to the rest of the world and Swedish forestry in turn is affected by developments in the international arena. We will take advantage of Sweden's strengths, both its knowledge and access to forest raw materials, and develop them further so that we can meet the growing global demand for products and services.

As a forest nation, Sweden will also play an active role in international cooperation on forest issues. The UN has declared 2011 the International Year of Forests – 'Celebrating forests for people' – to call more attention to the important resource that forests represent for many people all over the world. International forest policy is also about the role of forests in fighting poverty and global warming, and protecting biodiversity, 70 per cent of which is found in the world's forests. The importance of forests for the environment and climate change was one of the reasons Sweden joined the UN's REDD+ Partnership to support sustainable forestry in developing countries.

What's being done

- In recruitment to the agencies, international forestry expertise is an important selection criterion.
- The Government takes a positive view of the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences becoming more involved in international forest issues.
- Swedish embassies are being given the opportunity to use the Forest Kingdom in promoting the image of Sweden.
- The Forest Initiative, a partnership between the Swedish Forest Agency and the Swedish Forest Association, aims to create coordinated Swedish involvement in forest-related development issues.

The path leads further into the Forest Kingdom

The Forest Kingdom will be as strong as we, together, make it. The Forest Kingdom has developed in dialogue with forest and environment stakeholders and will continue to grow through dialogue. It is important to gather proposals and ideas from businesspeople, enthusiasts and entrepreneurs working for all the values that forests offer.

Industry ambassadors will have the important task of spreading knowledge and fostering commitment in their industry, and creating conditions for networking and synergy effects between industries, all with the aim of improving profitability.

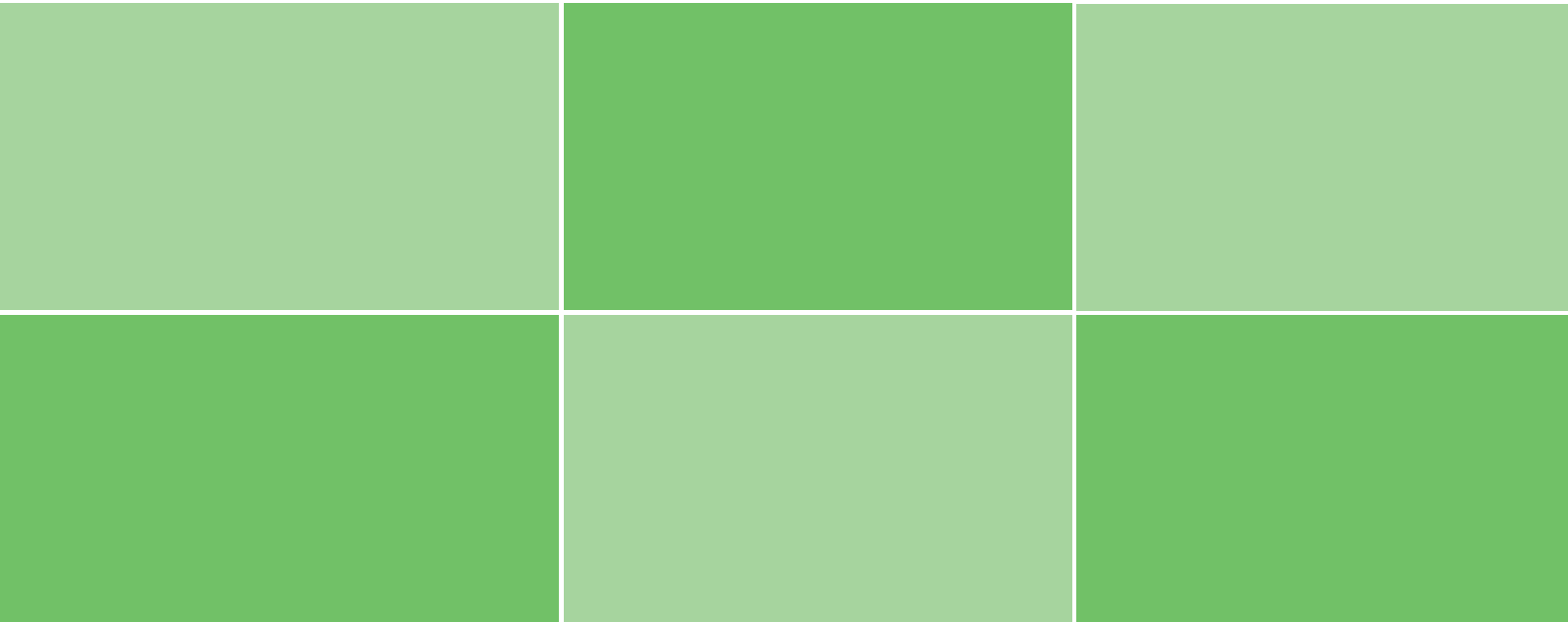
The Forest Kingdom is dependent on all forest sector actors for its continued development. The Ministry



for Rural Affairs, in cooperation with other ministries, offers the Forest Kingdom as a platform that everyone can continue to build on.

Together, the Ministry for Rural Affairs, the Swedish Forest Agency and the industry will continue to develop the ideas and initiatives of the Forest Kingdom to create values for the world. At the end of 2013, we will evaluate the Forest Kingdom to see how far we have come and what needs to be reinforced.

Come with us!



REGERINGSKANSLIET

Ministry for Rural Affairs

103 33 Stockholm