

FINLAND

Innovation & cooperation

Location

Southern Ostrobothnia region

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P1 – Knowledge transfer & Innovation

Measure

M01 - Knowledge transfer & information actions

Funding (EUR)

RDP budget 168 125.48

Project duration

2018 – 2020

Project promoter

Finnish Forest Centre

Contact

Jussi.laurila@metsakeskus.fi

Website

www.metsakeskus.fi/kulota

Reintroducing the traditional practice of controlled forest burning, as means to promote biodiversity and create new business opportunities in the forestry sector.

Summary

Controlled burning as a forest renewal practice has dramatically decreased in the 21st century. The aim of the Kulota project is to reverse this trend and to increase the use of controlled burning in the Southern Ostrobothnia region through activation and information and knowledge sharing with and by land and forest owners.



The project activities were focused both on increasing awareness and on reintroducing the practice. A detailed handbook/manual on controlled burning was elaborated, along with a range of promotional events, such as demonstrations, seminars, field trips, promotion through social media.

Results

The project was able to reach over 300 interested parties (such as land owners and service providers), and it is expected that the volume of controlled burning will increase in the future.

Reintroducing the practice will contribute to the natural renewal of forestry. For example the alkaline conditions in the forests will be improved for the long term. Significant benefits will emerge for fire dependent species of flora, fungi and fauna.

Context

Controlled burning has various positive effects on forestry and the biodiversity of forest nature. It can make forest management more effective, improve the soil temperature and nutrients, as well as its alkaline conditions. It also improves the overall forest health, ensures good growth conditions for the next generation of trees, and increases biodiversity by creating a suitable growth environment for those species that are dependent on post-burning conditions. Controlled burning also gives possibilities to diversify the forest industry by providing business possibilities for service providers in the sector.

Objectives

The aim of the project was in overall to raise awareness about the use of controlled burning in the Southern Ostrobothnia region. The method is old and it has significant benefits for the forest, the forest owners and the industry as a whole. The knowledge exists, but it was not being shared, and the project was created for this purpose.

Activities

The activities of the project fall under two groups, firstly on increasing awareness, and secondly on reintroducing the practice.

A detailed handbook/manual on controlled burning was created. It contains all the information required for a successful controlled burn, including calculation guidelines on the costs. The project gathered a group of 13 experts who can assist forest owners in planning their operations. This work is continued to gather a larger database of experts in the method. This operation is desperately needed to make sure that the knowledge that is still out there will not be lost.

A total of four demonstration burnings will be carried out during the project, two of which took place in the autumn of 2018. These demonstrations are aimed at both forest owners and service providers in the sector. These demonstrations showcase the method and the use of new technologies (for example drones) that can be used.

Secondly, in order to reintroduce the practice, the projects supported the following activities:

A handbook and marketing materials about the method.

A total of five seminars on the method for forest owners and service providers were organised.

A total of three field trips to present the effects of controlled burning were delivered, including visits to both recent and older burn sites.

Ensure an active presence online media including the social media.

Direct mailings to forest owners. GIS data will be used to find suitable locations for controlled burning and contact forest owners directly.

Main results

The project was able to reach over 300 interested parties (for example land owners and service providers), and it is expected that the volume of controlled burning will increase in the future.

Reintroducing the practice will contribute to the natural renewal of forestry. The alkaline conditions in the forests will be improved for the long term. Significant benefits will emerge for fire dependent species of flora, fungi and fauna.

Controlled forest burning will create new business opportunities for service providers in the forestry sector.

Increased revenue is expected for forest owners who adopt this practice.

Additional sources of information

www.metsakeskus.fi/sites/default/files/kulotusopas.pdf

www.maaseuduntulevaisuus.fi/metsa/artikkeli-1.255024