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CUPFOA - Croatian Union of Private Forest Owners Associations

The Croatian Union of Private Forest Owners Associations is an independent, nonpartisan, non-profit interest organization which consists of voluntarily associated private forest owners associations, established to meet the common interests of the members. CUPFOA was established from 22 members organisations in 2008 as an national organization for the local private forest owners and land users' associations. Today CUPFOA has 35 members organisations which makes him an umbrella organization of private forest owners associations in Croatia.

The fundamental goal of the CUPFOA is to improve the quality and economic value of forest products as well as to improve the management of private forests in Croatia through the use of planned mergers and different activities of private forest owners associations, and also through the participation in the implementation of projects in the field of forestry. The union pursues the mutual interests of and increases the cooperation among its member organizations and among forest owners.

Forests in Croatia cover approximately 46% of the land area (2,6 mil. ha). Around 23% (593 027 ha) of the total forest area is privately owned, while 77% (1 987 799 ha) is in public ownership. The distribution of private forest ownership in Croatia is very heterogeneous, diverging from 1% of privately owned forests in some regions to 57% in other. The average holding size is less than 1 hectare, and characterized by a low level of forest management. Public forests are either managed by a state-owned forest company or other state agencies, e.g. national parks. In private forests, the annual increment is 4,2 cbm/ha and the annual fellings is 1,08 million cbm, while in public forests the increment is 6,4 cbm/ha and the fellings- 7,3 million cbm. All public forests and 40% of privately owned forests have forest management plans. Restitution process is still ongoing so this percentage could become even bigger in the future. State owned forests are managed by state company Croatian forest ltd.

About 97% of forests in Croatia are semi-natural forests (self-regenerated or planted or sown) and 3% are plantation forests. With around 75%, broadleaved forests are predominant forest type. Only 6% are coniferous and around 19% are mixed forests. The main species are Common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and Pedunculate and Sessile oaks (*Quercus robur* and *Quercus petraea*).

The biggest problems in private forests management in Croatia are small scale properties (0,76 ha/owner usually in two cadastar plots), heterogeneity of silvikultural forms and poor cadastre and land – registry and that was the result of neglecting of private ownership in former socialistic system. Unfortunately, part of this system are still present regarding private forests because most of decisions concerning private forest management and subsidies from the Green-tax fund are taken without participation of private forest owners.

From 2013 CUPFOA are ordinary member of The Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF).

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