



## Concerted management at the territorial level on the initiative of private owners' unions



### Approach

Over the past decade, in the private forest, territorial actions have been carried out to encourage the forest owners to manage their forests in a sustainable manner. These actions involve the private forest owners' unions with the support of the Regional Centres of the Forest Property (CRPF) to first inform the elected officials of the territory concerned of the envisaged action (to motivate the owners to be interested in the management of their forests) and then all forest owners in priority in areas where the forest has potential. These actions are done in partnership with the elected representatives of these territories who play a role of informing and motivating citizens.

### Methodology

A description of the forest is first carried out to take into account the property. It is characterized by reference to the three functions it fulfils. Which are from the point of view

- economic: enhancement, accessibility, operability;
- environmental: biodiversity, wildlife;
- social: hiking, riding, rope park (tree climbing)...

The owners are then encouraged and accompanied to draw up a management document for their forests individually and then in a concerted manner (using an application called "la Forêt bouge"). The Ministry in charge of forests has created a GIEEF label (economic and environmental interest forest grouping) which supports and promotes these approaches of consultation between forest owners in the same territory. This label implies the implementation of established concerted management plan between the owners, accompanied by a voluntary process of sustainable certification of management as a member of the PEFC system. ~~Today, many rural areas are involved in this process in total coherence with the short-circuit policy initiated.~~

## Success

We find that many forest areas abandoned by their owners for various reasons (size of the property, remoteness of owners, low economic interest, lack of knowledge of the possibilities of actions) no longer play their part in climate change mitigation and may become areas of significant risk either to forest fires or loss of carbon after severe weather events. ~~the owners who have abandoned their forests have various reasons behind: size of the property, remoteness of the property, low economic interest of the forest, lack of knowledge of the possibilities of actions.~~ It is therefore essential that the owners organize themselves, consult each other and put in place concerted sustainable management actions.

Management of the forest induces activities and therefore work creating local jobs of different types, such as thinning, pruning, creation of trails and afforestation.

Forest areas become more hospitable and thus play the role that society is entitled to expect, namely their economic, environmental and social functions.

This approach can lead to the establishment of a legal structure such as the free union membership of forest management in which each remains the owner of its heritage and implements its management, which is defined and specified in a document approved by the CRPF: The Concerted Management Plan (PSG concerté). We note that all owners are concerned by this initiative, especially those with very small holdings that are often economically unmanageable, but also owners of larger areas such as several hundred hectares.

## Snowball effect

These approaches allow to set a consultation and a regrouping of the actions initiated by the first forest owners of the last century. Sustainability over time will be based on the agreed management document for a period of twenty years, a link between all foresters who agree with this approach. We also see every year that around the initial core, many new owners are interested in the process. It should also be noted that these approaches allow private owners to play a role of recognized and well listened actors in these territories.



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