

Multi-scale assessment of forest biodiversity change: sharing methods and data to analyse the implementation of the Natura200-related policies in different national contexts

Alessia Portaccio from the University of Padova, Italy, visited the University of Freiburg, Germany 11-30.11.2018

My Short Scientific Visit took place in the context of the PhD project research carried on by the candidate at the University of Padova, which aim is to investigate the role of the EU Nature Directives as driving forces of forest biodiversity change, through the implementation of performance indicators. Research in the field of efficacy and impacts of biodiversity conservation policies at the European level fits into the EFI priority research topic 'Policies, strategies and management practices to enhance biodiversity in a rapidly changing environment, considering different regional and socioeconomic settings'.

The SSV was carried out at the Faculty of Environment and Natural Resources of the University of Freiburg, in Germany. In particular, I collaborated with the research team of the ConFoBi project, which aim is to assess conservation of forest biodiversity in multiple-use landscapes of central Europe. The visit lasted from the 11th to the 30th of November 2018.

The overall aim of my SSV was to achieve technical and scientific improvements of the methods needed for the data collection and analysis in the multi-scale assessment of forest biodiversity change, functioning, therefore, as a catalyser of the progress of the PhD research project, through a collaboration between the two institution.

The approach adopted to achieve the objective consisted into a peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and exchange, which is defined by three phases: i) a preliminary phase of introduction to the contents and the context of the partner project, ii) a series of face to face meetings and interviews with the expert of the several project research subsets, and iii) a series of practical training on ground and information analysis sessions.

Through my SSV I could identify potential synergies for collaboration on two of the four ConFoBi research subsets, or rather: A) multi-scale assessment of structures, and B) structures & forest biodiversity.

Thanks to the SSV we identified the methodologies applied by ConFoBi at the survey plots level in the Black Forest, that could be applied at the case study of my PhD (alpine region, Italy). This would set a survey methodology protocol for my PhD study and serve as a test of the approaches envisaged by the University of Freiburg research team.

Furthermore, the idea is also to carry out a compared analysis between the data available for the two regions of interest respectively for the two projects (Baden Wurttemberg and Veneto), while taking into account the differences of regional and socioeconomic settings between the two countries. From such a collaboration, we expect to publish a joint scientific article about the findings.

The SSV act like a catalyser for the progress of the PhD research project as well as it enhanced future bilateral collaboration for the exchange and sharing of approaches and data.