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## Forest certification as a tool to support sustainable development in forest management

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The concept of sustainable development is currently known and used in many contexts across a wide range of industries. Nevertheless, specific approaches to achieving the strategy of sustainability can be found in the individual sectors. The beginnings of sustainable management in forestry go back to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Currently, certification systems contribute to sustainable behaviour in forests. In the Czech Republic, this concerns in particular PEFC and FSC certification systems. Both these certification systems include two different processes, forest management certification and chain of custody certification, i.e. including the wood-processing companies, where only certified wood must strictly be used. This article aims to evaluate the importance of certification for sustainable development in forestry. Given the clear superiority of the PEFC system in the Czech Republic, this paper focuses on the potential benefits for PEFC certificate holders. To determine the benefits of PEFC certification for sustainable development, a questionnaire survey was chosen. Assessment of the benefits for sustainable development depends on the subjective assessment of certification holders. The results suggest that the beneficial effect on sustainable development in forest management is clear in the forest property area of over 500 ha.

### Keywords:

PEFC; FSC; social aspects; sustainability; benefits of the certification

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