FOREST4EU

ITHub 3 - Sustainable Forest Management and Ecosystem Services

FOREST4EU partner: CNPF

OG: Douglas

OG's country: France

Type of Innovation: Technological

Index of Biodiversity Potential (IBP): a practical tool for forest managers

Introduction

The IBP was created in 2008 (Larrieu & Gonin, 2008) in order to help forest managers to take into account ordinary taxonomic biodiversity into routine management. It is an indirect and composite indicator which pools ten factors, identified as influencing the capacity of forest stands to support animal, plant and fungal species.

Presentation of the Index of Biodiversity Potential tool

IBP scoring is simple, fast and requires no particular taxonomic knowledge. In practice, it suffices to go through the stand by counting the elements relating to each of the ten factors and to give a score between 0 and 5 for each one. The sum of these scores gives the IBP and helps to place the stand in a range from low to high capacity.

The IBP is usable in a range of contexts, as much in productive forests as in areas given over to conservation. It can also be used as a teaching aid in that it permits making certain principles that govern taking biodiversity into account easier to understand.

The sampling method is chosen according to the objectives and the characteristics of the forest, the best way is to score IBP at the same time as another operation in the forest. For example, IBP can be scored during the visit of a stand before a thinning.

The IBP will help the manager to identify the elements favourable to biodiversity to be preserved, in particular the trees of biodiversity interest, and the factors that could be improved. A radar diagram created with IBP scores is a good way to identify these differences between the factors.

A few ways to improve each factor are proposed in the IBP educational document (Emberger et al., 2016). More generally, the diversity of ordinary species can be improved by multiplying the living habitats corresponding to the ten factors, and by ensuring their continuity, in time and space.

In the end, the IBP gives the manager a new look at the forest, and this is the reason why the IBP is often used to explain biodiversity, not only to professionals but also to owners and more generally to all people concerned with forest biodiversity.

Lessons learned

The IBP was created in France, for all types of forests in the different biogeographical regions. Soon after, the stakeholders from different European and Mediterranean countries made clear their interest in acquiring an IBP definition adapted to their own contexts. For this purpose, a methodology was proposed and an international organisation was created: the International Committee of Experts. This Committee ensure the consistency of IBP extension projects, (i) by providing scientific and technical advice on new IBP versions, (ii) by discussing ongoing projects, (iii) by pooling resources.

The first IBP extension was carried out through two Life projects: BIORGEST in Catalonia and GoProFor in Italy. Currently, this extension continues for the whole Spain and Greece through Life GoProFor Med project, while other countries are also testing IBP.

Thus, these programmes help to create synergy at the international level on a common issue: the consideration of biodiversity in forest management.

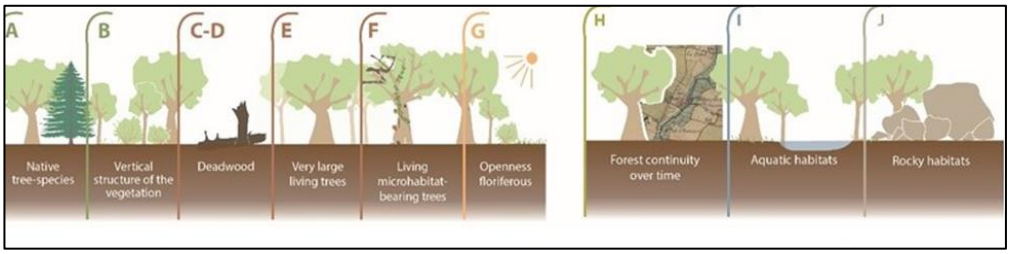

Figure 1. The 10 factors of the IBP (following Emberger et al., 2016). 7 factors related to stands and forestry management (from A to G) and 3 factors related to context (from H to J). ©CNPF

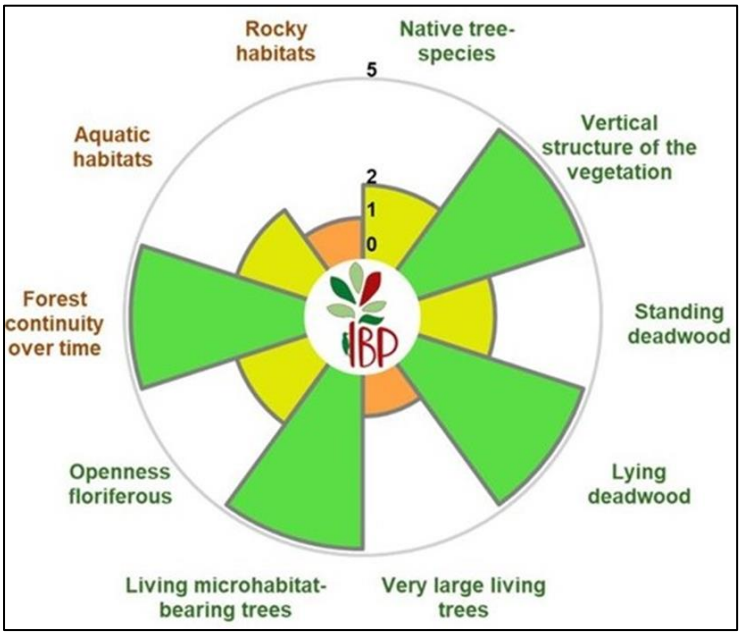

Figure 2. An example of the radar diagram for the Index of Biodiversity Potential (IBP) ©CNPF

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Further information

https://www.cnpf.fr/nos-actions-nos-outils/outils-et-techniques/ibp-indice-de-biodiversite-potentielle

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