

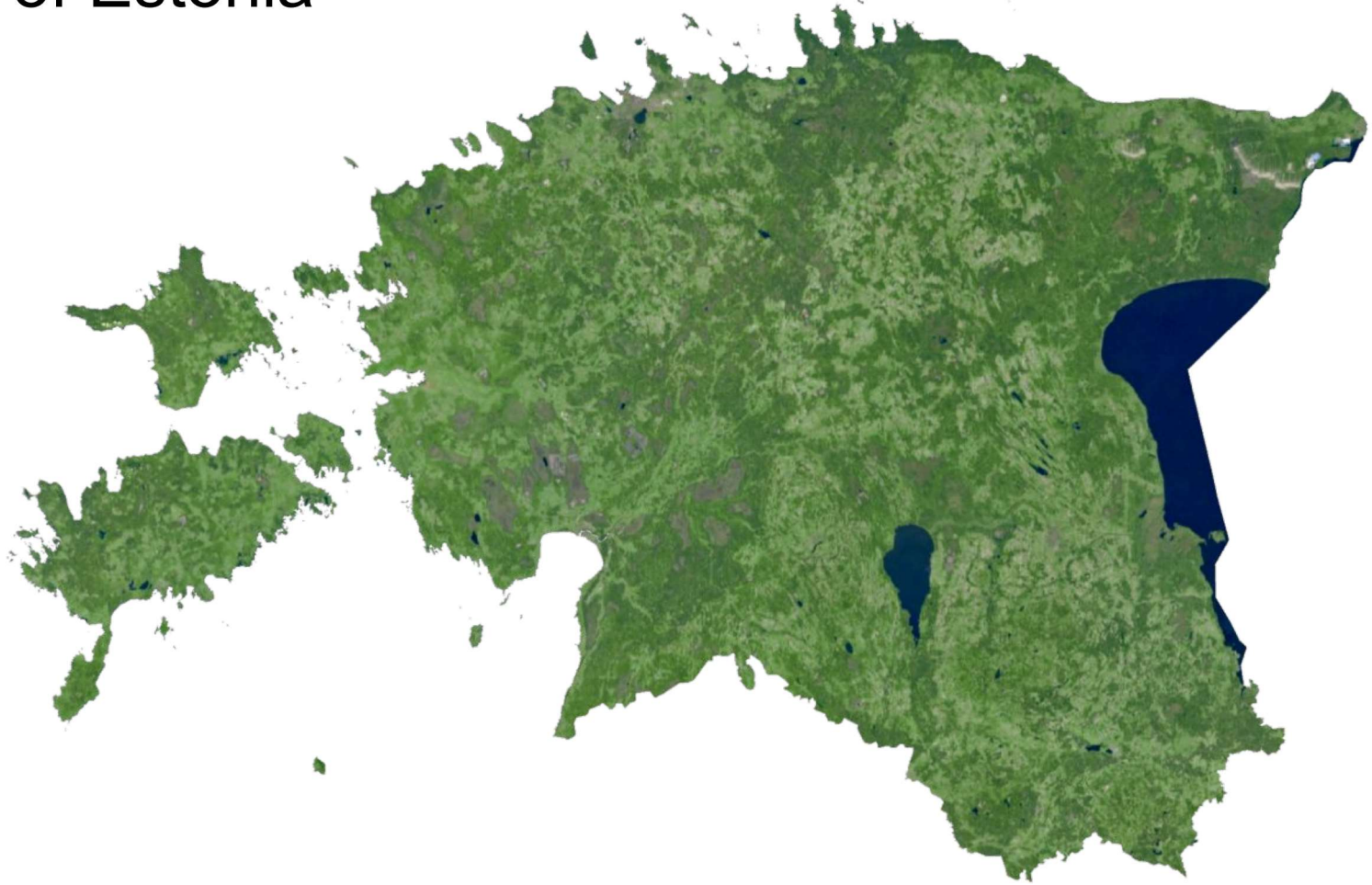
# Lessons from the Estonian forests

Siim Kuresoo

# Lessons from the Estonian forests

- **Overview of Estonian forests**
- **Drivers in change**
- **Lessons for Estonian NGOs**

# Forests of Estonia



# Forests of Estonia

## Maismaaökosüsteemide seisund

- hea
- keskmine
- vilets
- määramata



Allikas: ELME ökosüsteemide seisundi ja hüvede baastasemete kaardistamise projekt ([www.keskkonnaagentuur.ee/elme](http://www.keskkonnaagentuur.ee/elme))



# Forests of Estonia





# Forests of Estonia



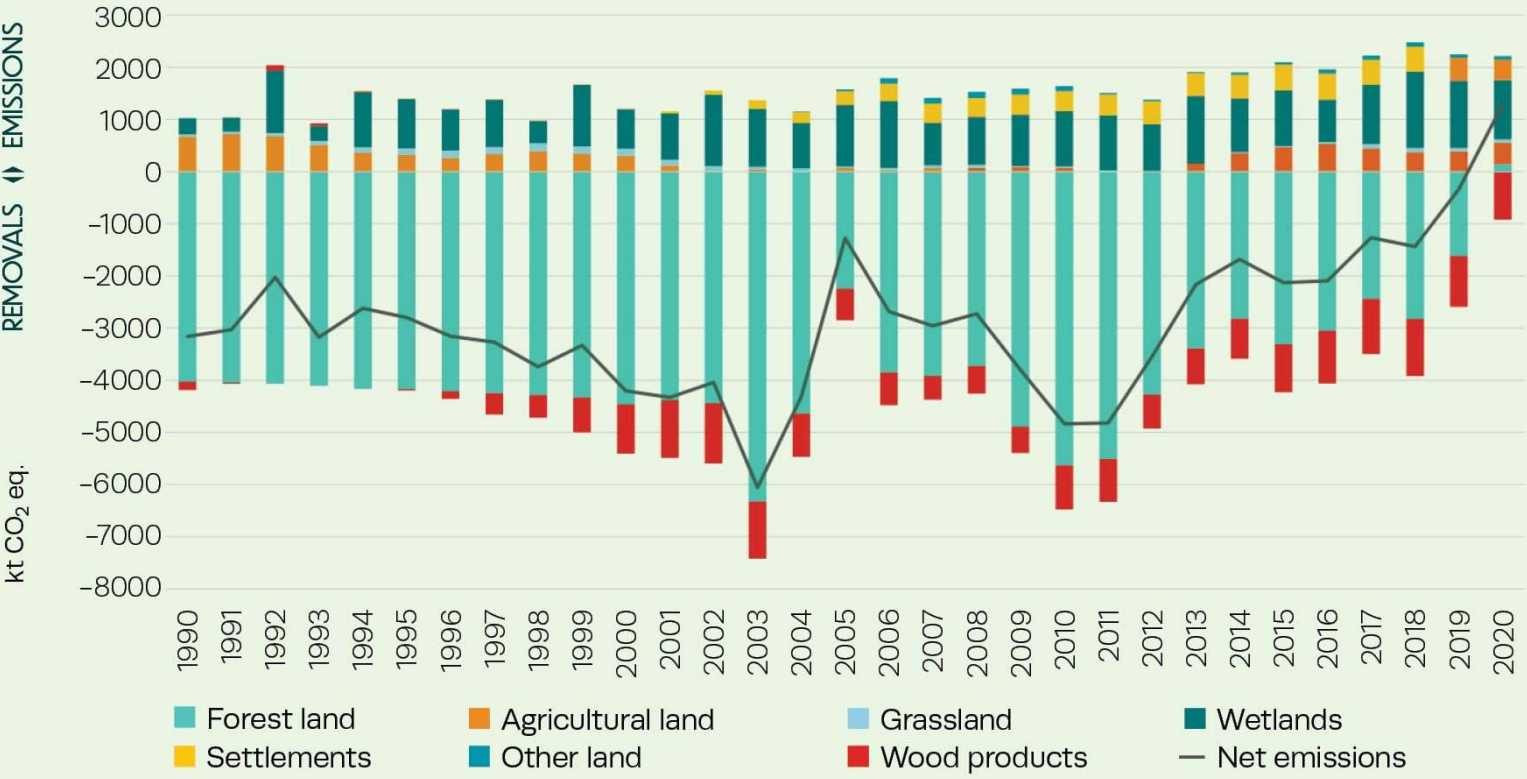


# Forests of Estonia



# Forests of Estonia

## GHG emissions in the LULUCF sector in 1990–2020



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, MARCH 2022



# Forests of Estonia

LULUCF predicted performance under BAU:

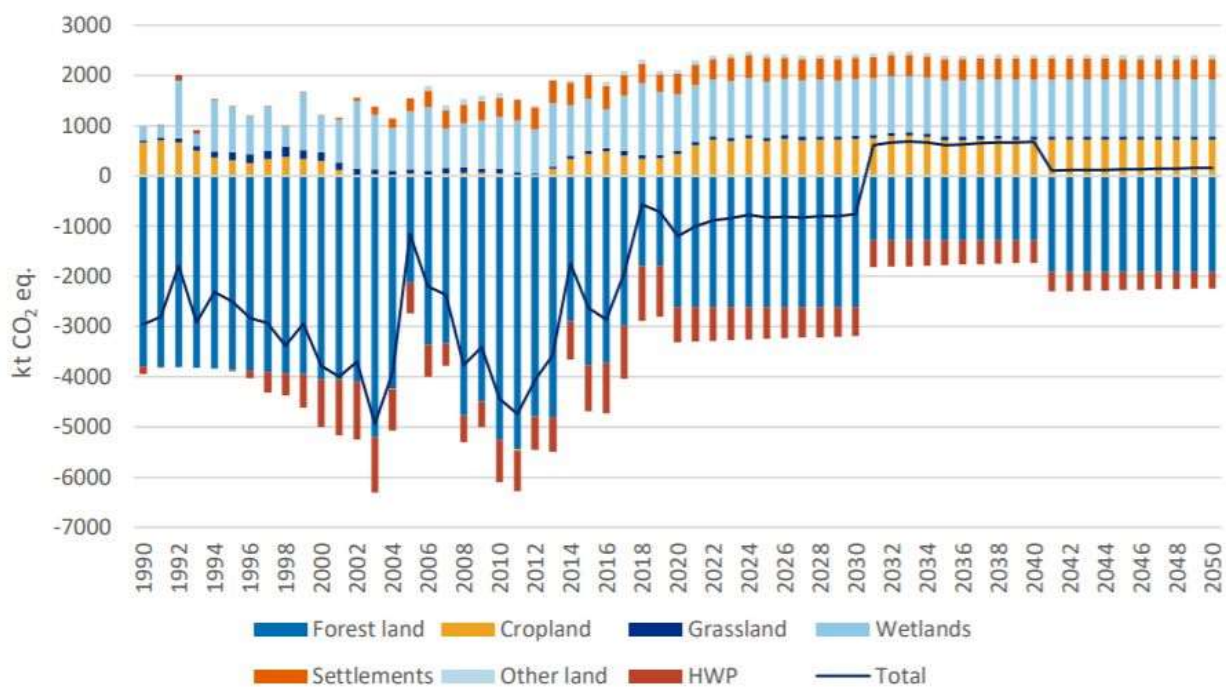
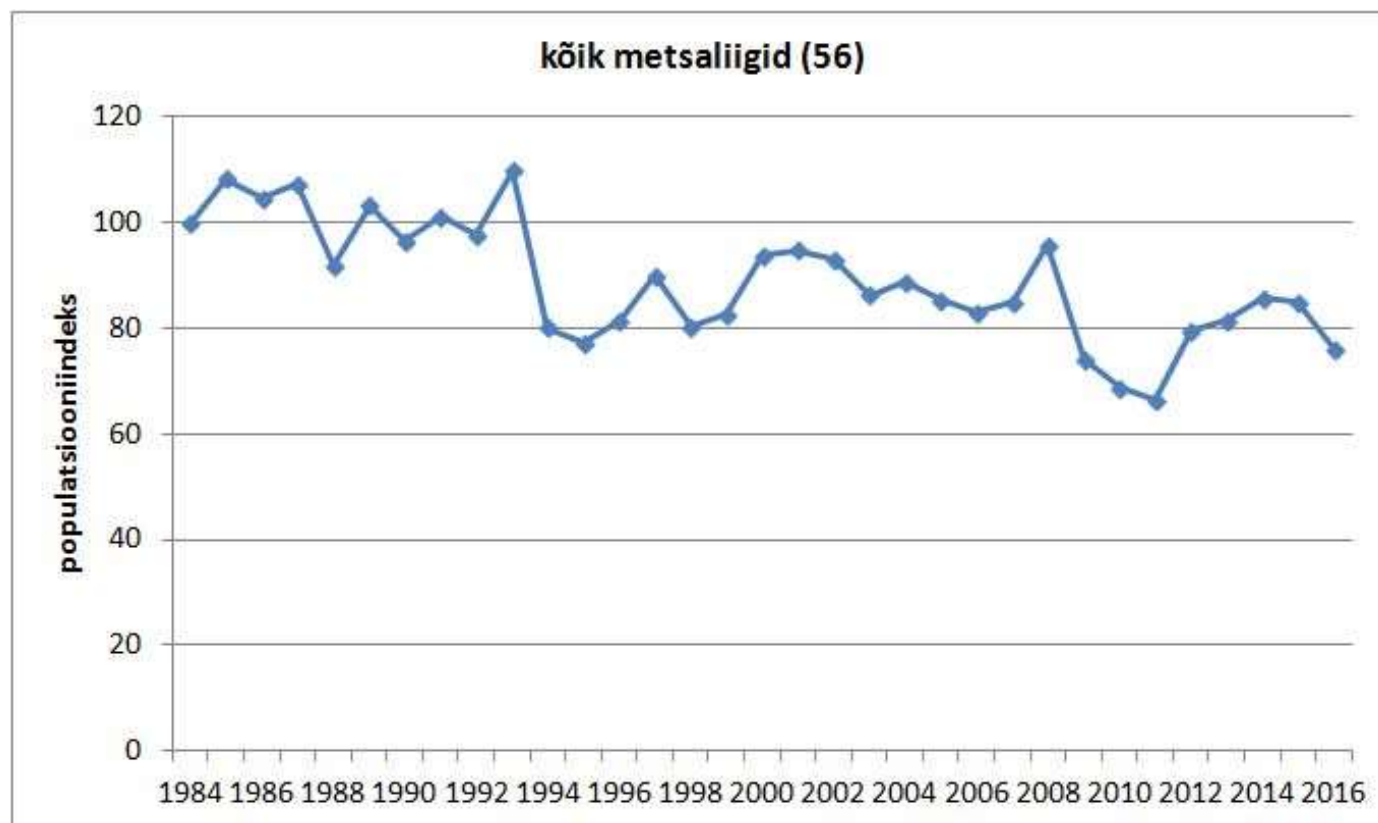
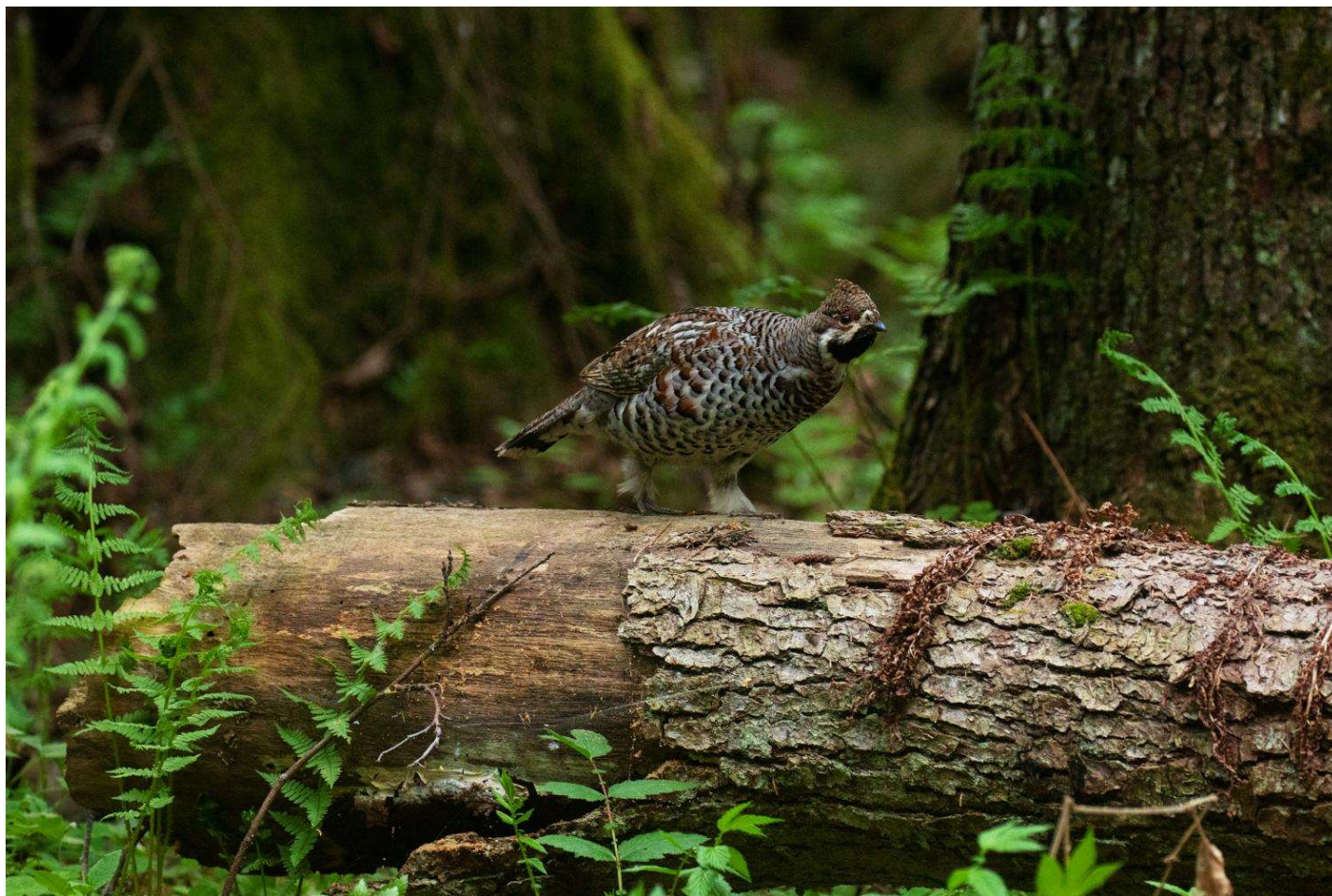


Figure 3.7. Total GHG emissions from LULUCF sector by land use class, kt CO<sub>2</sub> eq.

# Forests of Estonia



# Forests of Estonia





# Drivers of the change

- biomass for energy
- unrealistic political promises
- concentration of land ownership
- Scandinavian influence

# Biomass use for electricity



## ELECTRICITY OUTPUT AND PRODUCTION METHODS

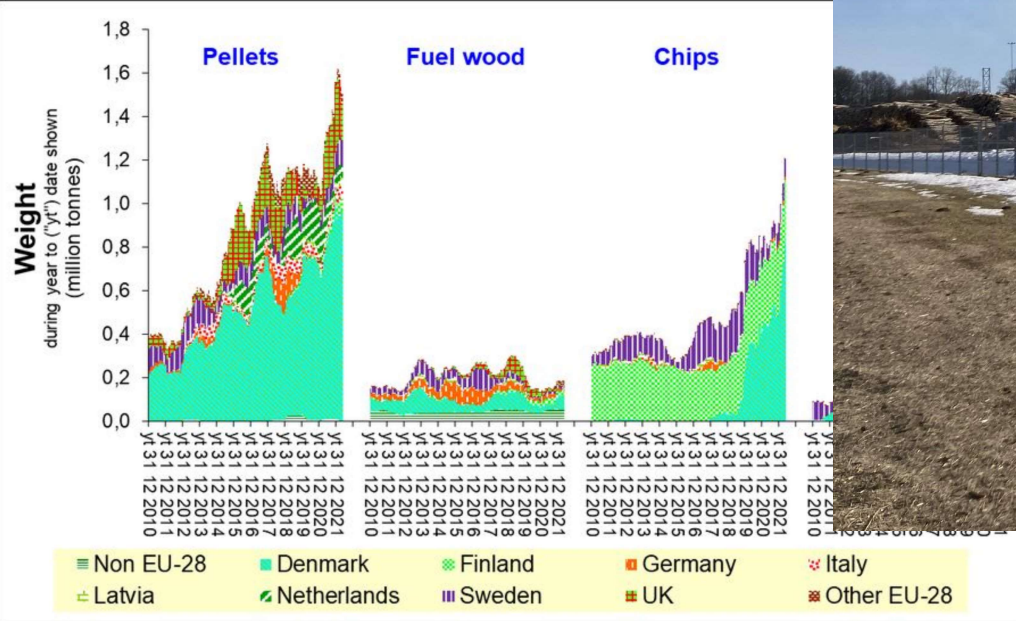
GWh

	2019	2020	2021
Electricity output	5,549	3,808	5,217
Oil shale	3,677	1,825	3,048
Oil shale gas	456	374	409
Biofuel	298	351	639
incl biogas	14	0	0
Wind	1,023	1,139	983
Waste	64	77	84
Solar energy	9	26	25
Other energy sources	22	17	30

## RESOURCES USED

Oil shale	million t	16.6	15.6	9.2	6.4	7.9
Natural gas	million m <sup>3</sup>	37.2	39.9	27.1	43.6	16.3
Biofuels	million t	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.7
Municipal waste	thousand t	235.7	232.9	215.7	242.3	237.5
Cooling water	million m <sup>3</sup>	1486.7	1348.8	711.8	937.7	707.7
Pumped mining water	million m <sup>3</sup>	155.6	91.9	127.4	122.7	130.5
incl. water from open cast mines	million m <sup>3</sup>	76.3	43.9	61.9	64.5	63.2
incl. water from underground mines	million m <sup>3</sup>	79.2	48.0	65.5	58.2	67.3

# Biomass use for pellets





## Biomass use for woodchip exports

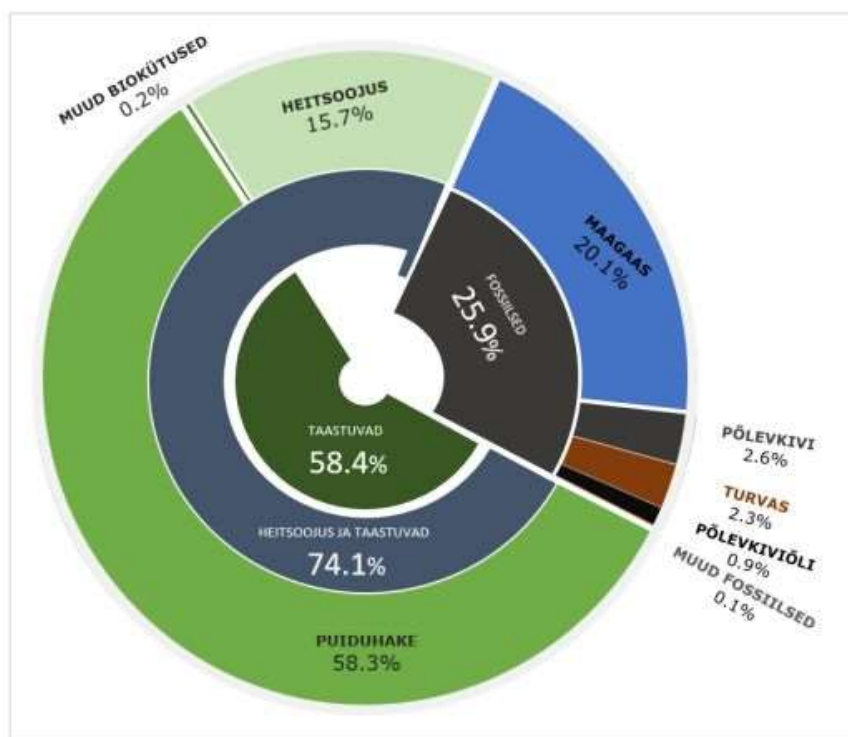


# Biomass use for industrial processes



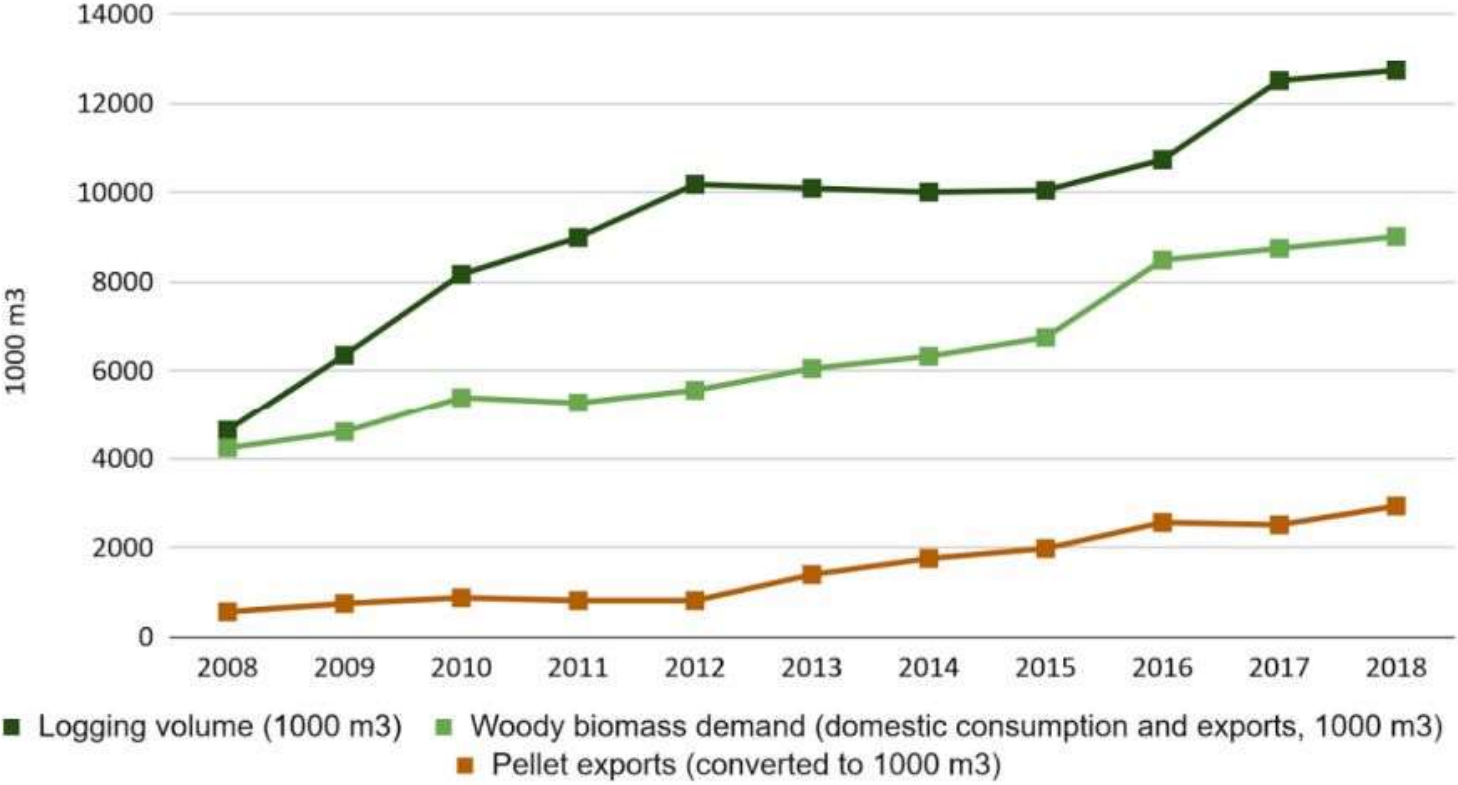


# Biomass use for heating





# Biomass impacts



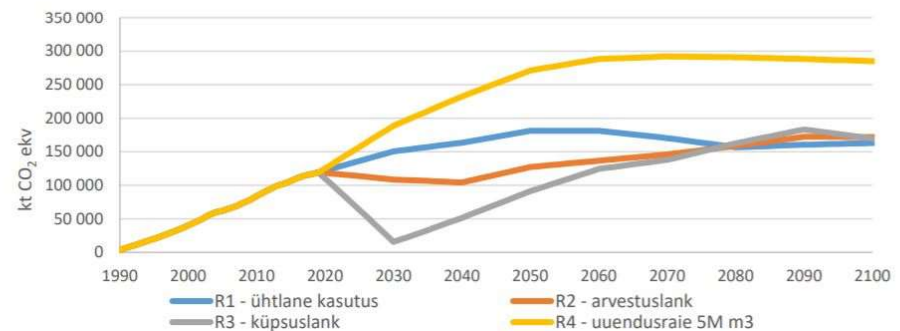
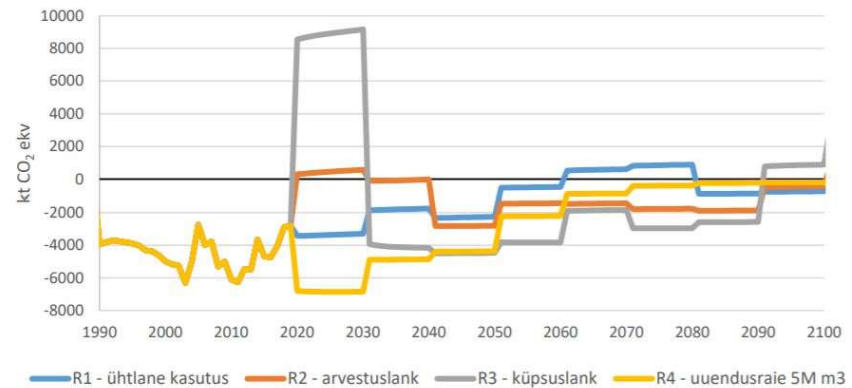
# Unrealistic political promises

National Forest Strategy 2020 described 15 Mm<sup>3</sup> as a sustainable logging volume. Industry invested in capacity considering that this kind of volumes could be sustained for many decades.



# Unrealistic political promises

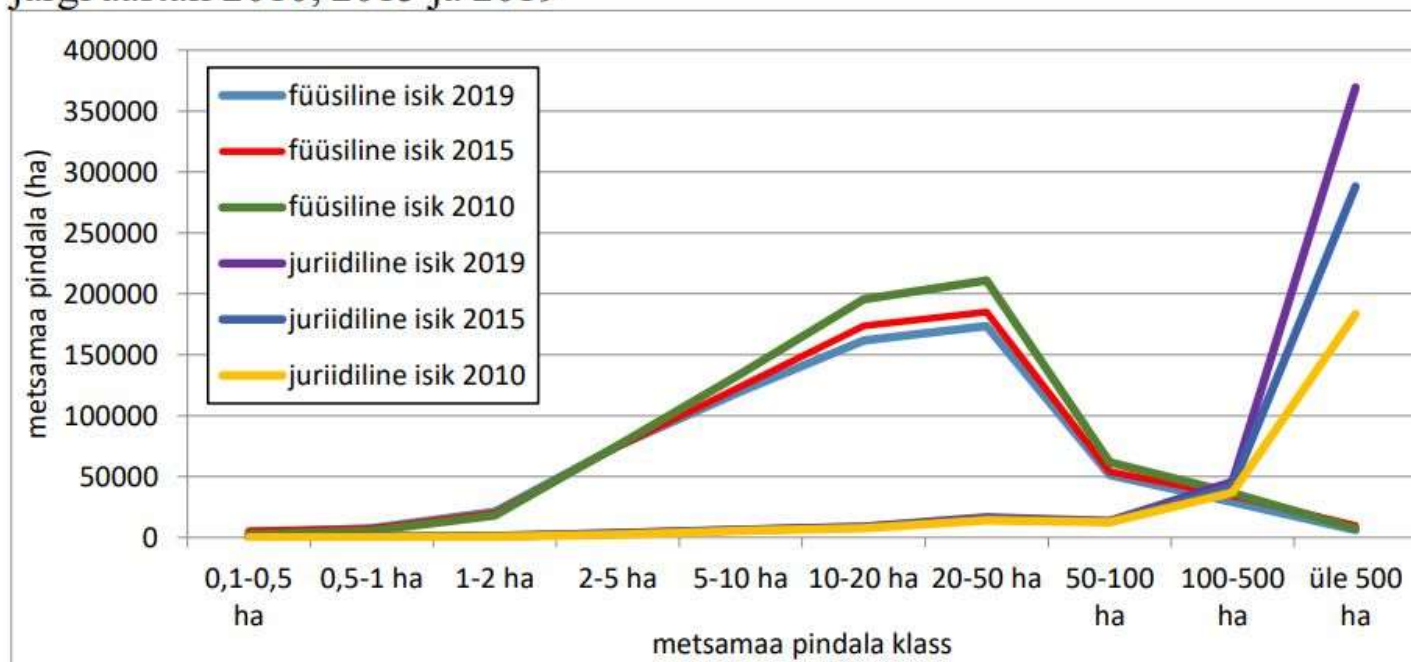
Different scenarios:  
<https://envir.ee/elusloodus-loodu-skaitse/metsandus/lulucf>





# Concentration of land ownership

Joonis 2. Erametsamaa pindala jagunemine omaniku tüübi ja metsamaa suuruse järgi aastail 2010, 2015 ja 2019



# Scandinavian influence



# Scandinavian influence





## Lessons for Estonian NGOs

- limitations of certificates
- good evidence is needed
- big decisions are made on the narrative level
- EU regulations are helpful

## Limitations of certificates

Blind eye on transformative options and locking in past degradation. Is this what we aim for?

Relies heavily on detailed and technical NGO scrutiny and often result in endless debates. Are we fully equipped for that?

## Limitations of certificates

Justification of wasteful and unnecessary consumption. Does less bad equal good?





## Limitations of certificates

# Viis liiget astusid FSC-st välja, kuna sertifikaat ei taga metsaväärtuste kaitset

04. detsember 2023

**Eestimaa Looduse Fond, Eesti Ornitoloogiaühing, Maavalla Koda, Eesti Metsa Abiks ja FSC Eesti asutajaliige Lembit Maamets** astusid täna, 4. detsembril toimunud üldkogul Hea Metsanduse Kojast (FSC Eesti) välja, kuna sertifikaadiga ei ole suudetud tagada metsade vastutustundlikku majandamist. Pikaajalised ja süsteemsed puudujäägid metsade majandamisel ja auditeerimisel on viinud selleni, et puit ja sellest tehtud tooted võivad kanda FSC märgist ka siis, kui tegevusega järjepidevalt loodus- ja kultuuriväärtusi kahjustatakse.

## Good evidence is needed

Loss of woodland key habitats (WKH):

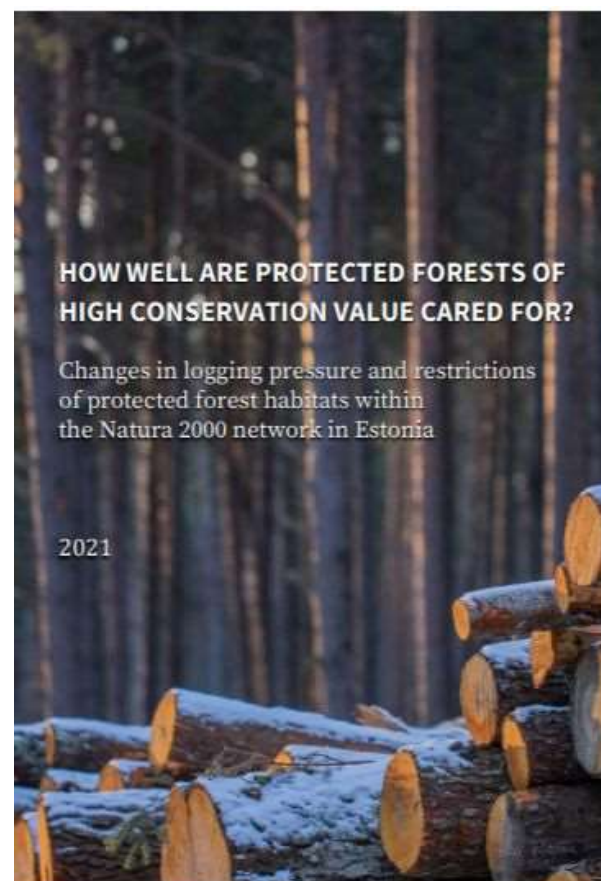
- 75 000 truckloads of wood has been logged from unmapped WKHs between 2010-2019 and the loss of WKH has indecified in 2019:  
<https://elfond.ee/mets/vep-raport>
- wood from these forests have made easily into SBP certified pellets:  
<https://www.somo.nl/wood-pellet-damage/>



## Good evidence is needed

EU protected forest habitats are not safe even in protected areas in Natura 2000 network:

- logging of forest habitats in protected areas has increased since 2015 and protection rules have been loosened: <https://elfond.ee/natura-report>
- European Commission has started an infringement procedure against Estonia (July 2021)
- SBP RRA Estonia update in 2021 has raised this issue as possible risk:  
<https://sbp-cert.org/sbp-publishes-updated-regional-risk-assessment-for-estonia/>



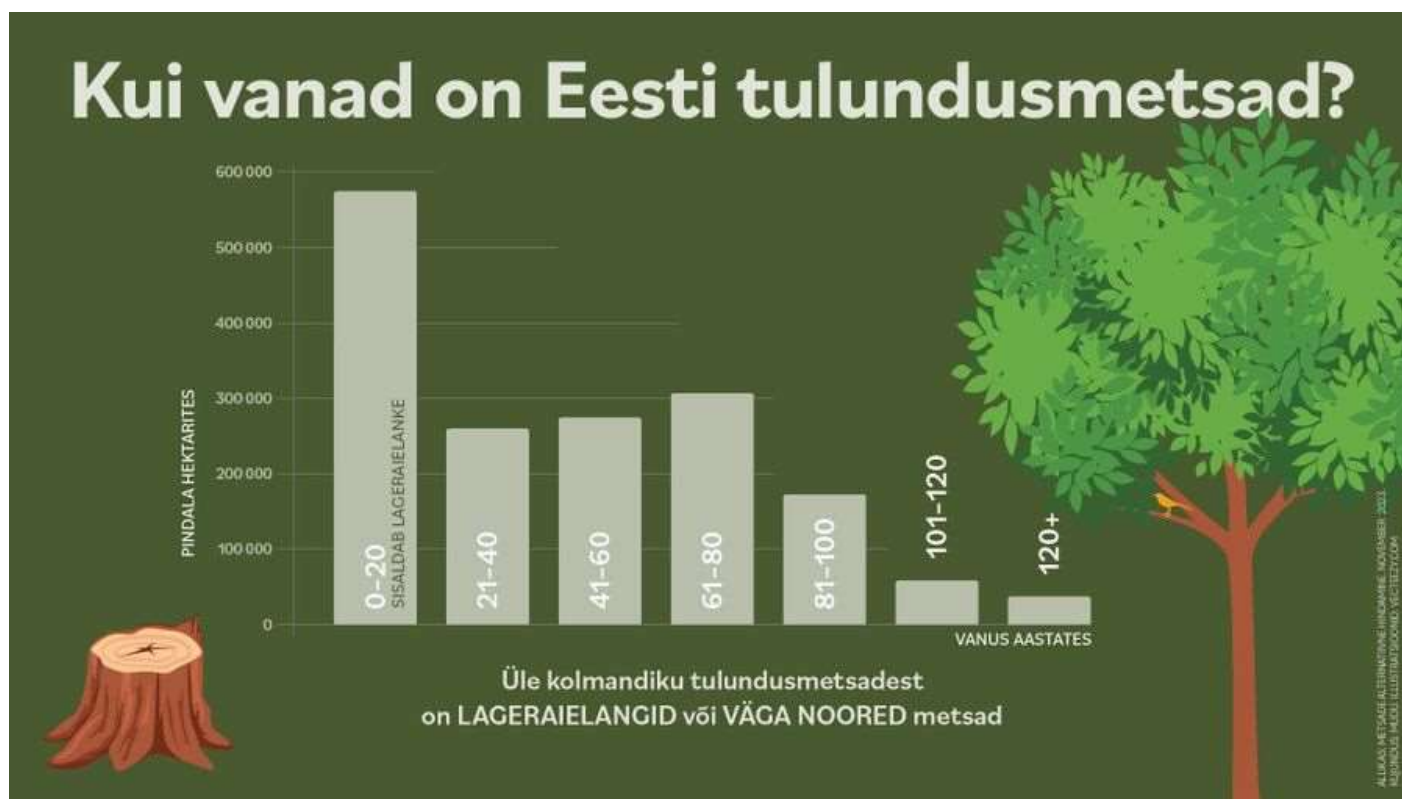


# Big decisions are made on the narrative level

In bioenergy debate: “Trees that do not have other use.”



Big decisions are made on the narrative level





# Big decisions are made on the narrative level

## Kogu Eesti riigile kuuluvat tulundusmetsa\* tuleb majandada **PÜSIMETSANA**

\* riigimets, mis ei ole kaitse all



41%

Jah!

36%

Pigem jah

7%  
Pigem ei

5%  
Ei

12%  
Ei tea

77%  
poolt

Graafikul toodud arvud on ümardatud, mistõttu moodustub summa 101%  
ALLIKAS: TURU-UURINGUTE AS UURING. NOVEMBER 2022. KUJUNDUS: MUDU.



## EU regulations are helpful

- Habitats Directive infringement
- LULUCF is a serious consideration
- new regulations yet to be seen

Estonian court  
suspends logging at  
Natura 2000 sites



Logging in an RMK forest. Source: RMK

NEWS

**BNS**

12.06.2021 11:31

Updated: 12.06.2021 22:43

Thank you!