Facts

about regenerative forestry in northern forests

– what does regenerative forestry mean?

Regenerative forestry aims to measurably strengthen the state of forest nature. Its principles guide measures to improve forest biodiversity, such as diversity of trees and improving the living conditions of different species in forests. In addition, it highlights a holistic approach to nature benefits or so-called ecosystem services, for example, wood production, carbon sink, clean water, pollinators, berries, mushrooms and recreational use. Forest certifications provide an assurance that forests have been managed sustainably. Regenerative forestry goes beyond that. Regenerative forestry aims to create a system-wide net-positive transformation.

WHAT DOES REGENERATIVE FORESTRY AIM TO?[1]

Regenerative forestry aims to reverse ecological harm and build resilience for the long haul creating an enduring state where ecosystems can self-renew and thrive. The target is to slow, and ultimately reverse, biodiversity loss in the forests.

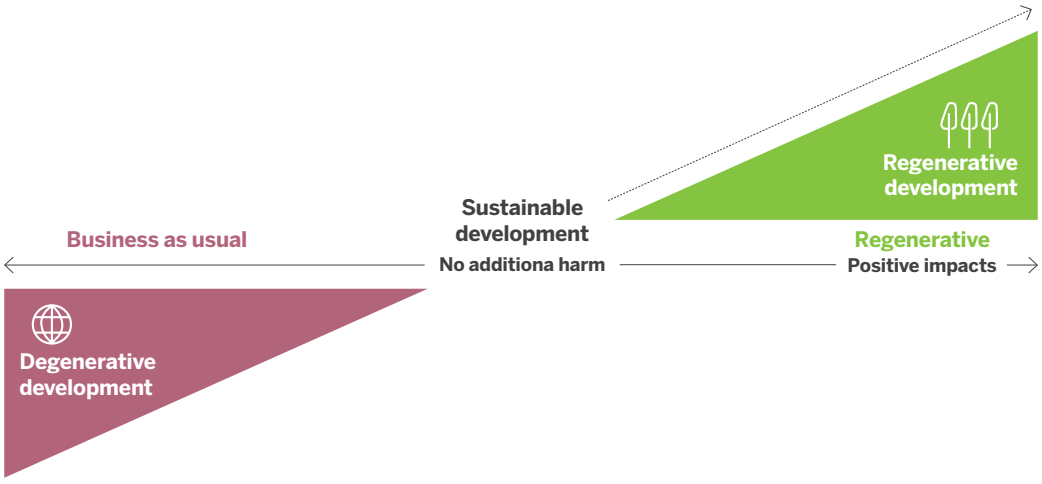
The long-term goal is for wood-based materials and their by-products to generate net-positive outcomes for nature, the economy, and society, thus supporting the sustainable use of forest resources and ecosystem services.

In addition to forestry, the concept of regenerative thinking is also emerging in various fields such as agriculture, textiles, and the built environment. The concepts share some common aspects but they are still in development and differ substantially in the application of the term and criteria of 'regenerative'.

WHAT DOES NET-POSITIVE MEAN?

A net-positive approach aims to leave the environment in a better state than before, contributing to overall ecological resilience and sustainability. Regenerative forestry strives to achieve a net-positive impact on biodiversity and society.

A crucial question is in what ways regenerative thinking differs from the general concept of sustainability. Sustainable development usually refers to trying to reduce the negative impacts on the environment - to do 'less bad'. Regenerative activities, on the other hand, have the goal of improving the state of nature and producing positive effects for society and the economy.



1) Ramboll, Realising the potential of a circular economy for wood-based materials, 2024

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WHAT ARE ECOSYSTEM SERVICES?[1]

Ecosystem services refer to the array of values derived from natural capital. Forests provide various ecosystem services – not only wood. Ecosystem services include, for example:

- clean water and fresh air
- production of wood and other raw materials
- carbon sequestration and storage
- food, such as berries and mushrooms
- pollination
- recreational experience

DOES REGENERATIVE FORESTRY MEAN THE SAME AS 'NATURE POSITIVE' OR 'CLOSER TO NATURE' FORESTRY?

Terms such as 'nature positive', 'closer to nature', and 'regenerative forestry' all underscore the significance of biodiversity, but they represent different concepts.[1]

At the moment there is not any standardised, internationally agreed-upon definition for regenerative forestry.

CASE: METSÄ GROUP AND REGENERATIVE FORESTRY[2]

In spring 2023 Metsä Group committed to the principles of regenerative forestry with the aim to verifiably improve the state of nature in their member-owners forests in Finland by 2030. Commercial forests in Finland are seminatural, meaning that only native tree species are used and wood production is integrated into natural ecosystems without land-use conversion. One tangible example of implementing regenerative forestry principles is Metsä Group Plus, a novel forest management model offered to Metsä Group's owner members.

In practice, regenerative forestry in Metsä Group means the following:

Summary of regenerative principles[1]

- Reverse ecological harm and build long-term resilience to create an enduring state where ecosystems can self-renew and thrive.
- Proactively rejuvenate and replenish natural resources and ecosystems
- Create system-wide net-positive transformation

2) Metsä Group, Regenerative forestry