



# Forest Monitoring: Chapter 13. Diversity and Composition of Plant and Lichen Species (Developments in Environmental Science)

*Roberto Canullo, Franz Starlinger, Paolo Giordani*

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## **Forest Monitoring: Chapter 13. Diversity and Composition of Plant and Lichen Species (Developments in Environmental Science)** Roberto Canullo, Franz Starlinger, Paolo Giordani

Among the elements of forest biodiversity, vegetation, including epiphytes, is the foundation of ecosystem functioning and primary production. Basic features for harmonized large-scale and intensive monitoring of vascular plants, cryptogams, and epiphytic lichens are presented. For the assessment of ground vegetation on the European scale, a minimum, single-scale approach (with a common sampling area of 400-m<sup>2</sup>) is suggested to produce sets of presence–absence and relative cover data. This common frame can accommodate national designs. For epiphytic lichens, sampling follows a standard procedure for tree selection after stratification by bark type. On each tree, four vertical grids of five 10×10cm contiguous quadrates are used to record the species occurrence. Monitoring parameters and timing of surveys, transformation of different abundance scales, and the need for continuously updated nomenclature are also discussed. Examples of transnational results (e.g., functional groups for both lichen and vascular plants and nitrogen deposition) are presented which demonstrate the importance and value of harmonized monitoring data.

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