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If a whole or part of a section has been amended, the date of the amending law appears in square brackets at the end of the section. If a whole section, paragraph or clause has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted section, paragraph or clause.

The *Saeima*<sup>1</sup> has adopted and  
the President has proclaimed the following law:

# Law on Forests

## Chapter I General Provisions

### Section 1.

(1) The following terms are used in this Law:

- 1) **landscape felling** - a type of felling to ensure the visibility and accessibility of landscape elements;
- 2) **confirmation** - a document issued by the State Forest Service, attesting to the legality of a specific planned activity and shall be regarded as a permit for such activity;
- 3) **deforestation** - human-induced conversion of a forest into another type of land use;
- 4) **deforestation felling** - a type of felling in a forest to implement activities due to which the type of land use is changed;
- 5) **parts of plants** - stem, leaf and root cuttings, explants or embryos for micropropagation, buds, layers, roots, scions, sets and any parts of a plant intended for the production of planting stock;
- 6) **elements of forest structure of biological significance** - components of a forest which are important for the

protection, distribution of biotopes and species, or provision of ecological functions;

7) **site index** - a classification unit for the description of the productivity of a forest stand, which is determined on the basis of the height of trees at a certain age;

8) **other felling** - a type of felling which is used if felling is necessary for the establishment and maintenance of the forest infrastructure and delimiting boundaries, removal of dangerous trees, preservation of natural values;

9) **natural carriageway** - an unbuilt carriageway with a width of not more than four meters for the purposes of forest management and protection;

10) **final felling** - a type of felling to cut a forest stand at once or by several turns after reaching the final felling age or the final felling diameter;

11) **final felling diameter** - the average diameter of the first level trees of the dominant tree species of a forest stand at the height of 1.3 metres which must be reached in order to cut the forest stand in the final felling before reaching the final felling age;

12) **final felling age** - the lowest age of the dominant tree species of a forest stand which must be reached in order to commence felling of the forest in the final felling;

13) **sustainable forest management** - management and use of a forest in such a manner and intensity which maintain the biological diversity, productivity, regenerative capacity, viability, and potential of the forest at present and in the future, its ability to fulfil the significant ecological, economic, and social functions on a local and global scale, as well as which do not cause damage to other ecosystems;

14) **selective cutting** - a type of performance of the final felling. By such felling the basal area of a forest stand is not reduced within a year from its commencement to the extent that it becomes smaller than the critical basal area;

15) **young stand** - a forest stand of coniferous trees, ashes, and oaks of up to 40 years of age, a forest stand of grey alders of up to 10 years of age, forest stands of other tree species of up to 20 years of age;

16) **clear felling** - a type of performance of the final felling. By such felling the basal area of a forest stand or part thereof is reduced, within a year from its commencement, to the extent that it becomes smaller than the critical basal area;

17) **thinning** - a type of felling to improve the composition of a forest stand and the growing conditions of trees of the remaining forest stand;

18) **critical basal area** - a limit value of a basal area of a forest stand below which satisfactory development of the forest stand is impossible, and the forest stand is to be regenerated;

19) **forest protection** - measures for prevention or reduction of forest damage and consequences thereof;

20) **reforestation** - a set of measures to regenerate a forest stand in a forest area where after felling or impact of other factors the basal area of a forest stand has become smaller than the critical basal area;

21) **forest damage** - partial or complete loss of the growth potential of a forest stand due to the impact of pests, diseases, animals, humans, wind, snow, fire, and other similar factors;

22) **afforestation** - a set of measures to establish a forest on land which has not been registered as a forest in the National Immovable Property Cadastre Information System;

23) **forest infrastructure** - objects built or arranged in a forest for the purposes of forest management and protection, as well as recreation;

24) **forest inventory** - obtaining of information regarding a forest and adjacent marshes, forest infrastructure objects, overflowing clearings, marshes and glades that are part of the forest and in the ownership or possession of the specific forest, and documentation of the obtained information;

25) **basic material** - individual trees, a forest stand, parents of a tree family (trees from which progeny is obtained by controlled or open pollination of one identified parent used as a female, with the pollen of one parent or several identified or unidentified parents), a seed orchard, a clone (trees obtained from a single individual by vegetative propagation), or a clonal mixture (a mixture of individual clones in specific proportions);

26) **forest reproductive material** - a seed unit (cones, fruits, and seeds obtained therefrom and intended for the growing of planting stock), parts of plants, or planting stock (from seed units, parts of plants, or plants from natural regeneration) of the tree species and their hybrids which are important for forestry purposes and intended for reforestation or afforestation;

27) **lawful forest possessor**:

a) a person into whose ownership, under a decision by a specific institution, in the course of the land reform, land has been transferred (granted) for payment or whose ownership rights to the land have been restored and the land has been determined (surveyed) on site in accordance with laws and regulation;

b) a person who has acquired possession of the land according to the right of inheritance or on another lawful basis;

28) **State Forest Register** - a State information system that compiles, stores, and updates information regarding a forest and forestry activity carried out therein, adjacent marshes, forest infrastructure facilities, and overflowing clearings, marshes, and glades that are part of the forest;

29) **forest land** - land covered by a forest, land under forest infrastructure objects, as well as overflowing clearings, marshes, and glades that are part of the forest and adjacent marshes;

30) **forest park** - a forest territory of public or cultural and historical significance which has elements of facilities and is used by the public for recreational purposes;

31) **forest stand** - a forest with uniform forest growth conditions, composition of tree species and age;

32) **basal area of a forest stand** - the total of basal areas of the first level (a cluster of the highest trees of a forest stand the height of which from the average height of trees of the level differs by not more than 20 per cent) tree trunks (in square metres) growing in the area of one hectare, at the height of 1.3 m from the root collar;

33) **age of forest stand** - biological age of trees of the dominant tree species of a forest stand. If trees of the dominant tree species in the forest stand are of different age, the age of the forest stand shall be determined according to the biological age of the cluster of trees that has the greatest wood supplies;

34) **forest** - an ecosystem in all stages of its development where the major producer of organic mass is trees the height of which at the particular location may reach at least five metres and the present or potential projection of the crown of which is at least 20 per cent of the area covered by the forest stand;

35) **minimum basal area** - the smallest basal area of a forest stand which is necessary to allow further productive development of the forest stand;

36) **national forest monitoring** - a system for the observation, analysis, and forecasting of forest resources and environmental situation in which scientific methods are employed;

37) **unproductive forest stand** - a forest stand which is not efficient to grow due to insufficient increment of wood supplies, composition of tree species, or quality of trees;

38) **park** - a nature object of public or cultural and historical significance which has the diversity of natural elements, structures, and small architectural forms and especially established infrastructure;

39) **plantation forests** - forest stands established through afforestation, intended for specific purposes and registered in the State Forest Register;

40) **reconstructive felling** - a type of felling to cut an unproductive forest stand in a linear form or randomly;

41) **sanitary felling** - a type of felling to improve the health condition of a forest by felling trees damaged by forest diseases, pests, animals or otherwise damaged, felled, or broken by wind in a linear form or randomly;

42) **seed orchards** - a plantation of selected clones or tree families which is isolated or managed so as to avoid or reduce pollination from external sources, and managed to produce frequent, abundant, and easily harvested crops of seed;

43) **dominant tree species** - a species of trees which has the greatest wood supplies in the first level of a forest stand;

44) **scientific research forests** - a forest territory registered in the State Forest Register to carry out studies, establish and maintain long-term scientific research sites, environmental and forest monitoring sites, as well as provide support to practical experience and continuing education in the field of forest education.

(2) The term "military site" shall be used in this Law within the meaning of the National Armed Forces Law.

[13 October 2011; 27 July 2017]

## Section 2.

(1) The purpose of this Law is:

1) to promote economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable management and use of the forest by ensuring

equal rights, inviolability of the ownership rights, and independence of economic activity of all owners or lawful possessors of the forest, and determining equal obligations;

2) to govern the conditions for the management and alienation of the State forest land.

(2) Other laws and regulations shall provide for additional conditions for the management of specially protected nature territories, micro-reserves, and protection zones.

(3) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for assessing sustainable forest management in conformity with the pan-European criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

(4) Binding regulations of local governments shall also provide for additional conditions for the forest management in city and village territories.

(5) Forest management may not be in contradiction with the requirements specified in the spatial development planning documents.

[13 October 2011]

### **Section 3.**

(1) The subject matter of this Law is:

1) land which has been registered as a forest in the National Immovable Property Cadastre Information System;

2) land of another category of land use with an area of 0.5 ha or more on which a forest stand has grown where the average height of trees is at least five meters and the basal area of the forest stand is equal to or exceeds the minimum basal area of the forest stand;

3) overflowing clearings and glades that are part of a forest, adjacent forest infrastructure objects and marshes that are part of the forest.

(2) Only Chapters I, XI, and XII of this Law shall apply to a land parcel whose type of use registered in the National Immovable Property Cadastre Information System is forest with an area of not larger than 0.12 hectares (except for the cases when a forest is located on the State forest land) if structures are located thereon and it occupies a territory which is intended (permitted) to be used for construction according to the spatial plan of a local government.

(3) The requirements for tree felling shall not apply to the trees in protection zones along the electrical power networks referred to in Section 12, Paragraph three of this Law.

(4) Trees on the land which has been registered as agricultural land in the National Immovable Property Cadastre Information System shall be felled in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding tree felling outside the forest.

[13 October 2011; 24 January 2013; 12 February 2015]

### **Section 3.<sup>1</sup>**

The following shall not be regarded as forest:

1) the land which covered by current road right of way, railway right of way, overhead line route of electrical power networks and electronic communications networks, gas pipeline or oil pipeline route, water pipeline route, and cemetery, as well as a row of trees of artificial or natural origin the width of which is less than 20 meters, orchard, park, forest nursery;

2) the area separate from the forest which corresponds to the definition of a forest within the meaning of Section 1, Clause 34 of this Law and does not exceed 0.5 hectares.

[13 October 2011 / See Paragraph 33 of Transitional Provisions]

### **Section 4.**

(1) This Law shall apply to:

1) persons for which forest land is in the ownership or lawful possession;

2) persons whose rights are determined and obligations imposed by this Law and other laws and regulations governing forest management and utilisation.

(2) The management and protection of the forest land which is under jurisdiction of the State and owned by the State, and recorded in the Land Register in the name of the State represented by the Ministry of Agriculture, shall be performed by *akciju sabiedrība Latvijas valsts meži* [joint-stock company Latvian State Forests] which has been

founded for the administration and management of the State forest property. The joint-stock company Latvian State Forests and the stock of this company may not be privatised or alienated. The joint-stock company Latvian State Forests shall only alienate the forest land on the basis of a Cabinet order issued each time. All the conditions of this Law which relate to the forest land under jurisdiction of the State or owned by the State shall be applicable to the forest land owned by the joint-stock company Latvian State Forests.

(2<sup>1</sup>) The management and protection of the State forest land to be recorded in the Land Register in the name of the State represented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development and recorded in the Land Register shall fall within the competence of the Nature Conservation Agency.

(2<sup>2</sup>) The Ministry of Defence may transfer the right to fell trees and the ownership rights to the trees felled on military sites to the joint-stock company Latvian State Forests.

(2<sup>3</sup>) The Ministry of Transport may transfer the right to fell trees and the ownership rights to the trees felled during the construction of railway infrastructure objects and the infrastructure related to railway construction to the joint-stock company Latvian State Forests.

(2<sup>4</sup>) The Ministry of the Interior may transfer the right to fell trees and the ownership rights to the trees felled in the State border zone, patrol zone, and border sign surveillance zone to the joint-stock company Latvian State Forests.

(3) Shareholders of the joint-stock company Latvian State Forests shall determine the indicators characterising the achievement of the objectives identified in the Forest Policy and supervise their achievement in the operation of the joint-stock company Latvian State Forests.

(4) The Ministry of Agriculture shall, at least every five years or upon request of the Cabinet for evaluation of a specific situation, draw up a report for the Cabinet on achievement of the objectives formulated in the Forest Policy. The report shall include information regarding the following:

- 1) the assessment of the forest as a capital and its changes;
- 2) the conservation of biological diversity in the forest environment;
- 3) the conformity with the interests of the public and forest owners in the use of social values of the forest.

(5) The economic independence of a person may be restricted in cases set out in this Law and other cases specified in laws and regulations.

*[16 February 2006; 16 December 2010; 13 October 2011; 27 July 2017; 22 April 2021; 19 August 2021]*

## **Chapter II**

### **Right of Access to a Forest**

#### **Section 5.**

(1) Natural persons have the right of access to and free movement in a State and local government forest, if laws and regulations do not provide for otherwise and plantations of special significance or enclosed forest areas for keeping of animals in captivity and protection zones around water supply points are not arranged therein in conformity with the requirements of laws and regulations. It shall be only permitted to use vehicles when moving along roads and natural carriageways, except for the movement to carry out the tasks related forest protection, national protection, or public safety, as well as to perform forest management operations in agreement with the forest owner or lawful possessor. To agree on the movement on adjacent land parcels, the forest owner or lawful possessor may address the State Forest Service or the local government with a request to provide the contact details of the owner or lawful possessor of the land parcel (phone number and e-mail address). The State Forest Service or the local government shall provide the contact details at their disposal which have been provided to the abovementioned authorities by the owner or lawful possessor of the land parcel when receiving another service.

(2) Access and free movement of natural persons in the forest may be restricted by its owner or lawful possessor.

(3) A local government may, upon recommendation of the State Forest Service or an environmental protection institution in the interests of forest fire protection, as well as in the interests of protection of specially protected nature territories, wild plants and animals, restrict the right of access and free movement of natural persons in the forest.

(4) If the rights of access and free movement of a natural person in a forest are restricted, it shall be an obligation of the forest owner or lawful possessor to demarcate the relevant territory with visible warning notices.

(5) During performance of service duties public officials, as well as persons performing national forest monitoring or environmental monitoring have the right to move in the forest without any restrictions by presenting their service or work identification document, if necessary.

(6) Restrictions to access and free movement in a forest shall be in effect only if such restrictions conform with the requirements laid down in Paragraph four of this Section.

[16 February 2006; 13 October 2011; 22 April 2021]

#### Section 6.

It is an obligation of a person, while staying in a forest, to observe forest fire safety regulations, not to damage forest soil and forest infrastructure, not to pollute the forest with waste, observe the specified requirements regarding utilisation of rest areas, not to destroy bird nests and ant hills, and not to otherwise harm wild plants and animals, as well as not to enter the territories specified in Section 5, Paragraphs two and three of this Law.

## Chapter III Tree Felling

#### Section 7.

It shall be permitted to fell trees in the final felling, thinning, reconstructive felling, sanitary felling, deforestation felling, landscape felling, and other felling.

[13 October 2011]

#### Section 8.

(1) The Cabinet shall issue regulations regarding tree felling outside the forest. The following shall be determined in the regulations:

- 1) the procedures for felling trees outside the forest;
- 2) the methodology for the calculation of losses resulting from tree felling in city and village territories;
- 3) the cases when compensation for losses is not determined.

(2) A relevant local government shall determine the compensation for losses in respect of reduction of natural diversity, as well as the procedures for calculating and compensating for such losses in its binding regulations regarding tree felling outside the forest in city and village territories. Compensation for losses shall be paid into the budget of the territorial local government.

[13 October 2011]

#### Section 9.

(1) Final felling shall be permitted if:

- 1) a forest stand has reached the following final felling age:

Dominant tree species	Final felling age (in years) depending on the site index		
	I and higher	II-III	IV and lower
Oak	101	121	121
Pine and larch	101	101	121
Spruce, ash, linden, elm, flatterling elm, and maple	81	81	81
Birch	71	71	51
Common alder	71	71	71
Aspen	41	41	41

- 2) a forest stand has reached the final felling diameter.

(2) The clear felling shall be permitted in the cases when in the current forests on one land parcel:

1) the area of the intended clear felling does not exceed the maximum area of clear felling specified in laws and regulations together with all the forest stands in the adjacent areas that:

a) have not been recognised as regenerated and in respect of which the time period for regeneration specified in laws and regulations has not become due yet;

b) have been recognised as regenerated but have not reached the age specified in laws and regulations;

c) have not been recognised as regenerated within the specified time period but the total area of which does not exceed one hectare;

2) the area of the intended clear felling does not have adjacent forest stands, and the area of the intended clear felling does not exceed the maximum area of clear felling specified in laws and regulations;

3) the forest stands in the adjacent areas of the area of the intended clear felling have been regenerated and have reached at least the age specified in laws and regulations, and the area of the intended clear felling does not exceed the maximum area of clear felling specified in laws and regulations.

(3) If a forest in the ownership or lawful possession is divided in two or more parts as a result of a lawful transaction, then the restrictions specified in Paragraph two of this Section and the conditions referred to in Section 13 shall be applicable to the part of the forest established after each division in the same way as to the forest prior to its division for seven years from the moment of its division.

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 10.**

(1) Thinning shall be permitted in the cases when the basal area of a forest stand exceeds the minimum basal area.

(2) As a result of a felling the basal area of the forest stand shall not become smaller than the minimum basal area.

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 11.**

If the basal area of trees which are able to grow in a forest stand is smaller than the critical basal area, it shall be permitted to fell the forest stand in the sanitary felling after receipt of a sanitary opinion of the State Forest Service. The conditions of this Section shall not be applicable to specially protected nature territories whose individual rules for protection and use prohibit sanitary felling after receipt of a sanitary opinion of the Sanitary Forest Service or random sanitary felling. When performing the tree felling referred to in this Section in other territories where reconstructive felling, final felling, or clear felling is prohibited, all trees which are able to grow shall be preserved.

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 12.**

(1) In order to commence tree felling in a forest, a confirmation shall be necessary. The confirmation shall not be necessary:

1) for the felling of trees the stump diameter of which is less than 12 centimetres;

2) for the tree felling in thinning in young stands of up to 20 years of age;

3) if the basal area of a forest stand exceeds the critical basal area, for the felling of dead standing and windthrown trees, preserving the dead standing and fallen trees specified in the laws and regulations regarding tree felling and nature protection. Each year, prior to the commencement of felling of such trees, but not more than once a year, a forest owner or lawful possessor has an obligation to notify the State Forest Service of the tree felling;

4) for the establishment and maintenance of delimiting boundaries;

5) in the case referred to in Paragraph three of this Section.

(2) The confirmation shall not be issued if:

1) the planned activity does not conform to the requirements of laws and regulations;

2) a forest owner or lawful possessor has failed to submit the information specified in Section 29, Paragraph two of this Law;

3) the acquired ownership rights have not been corroborated in the Land Register under the name of the acquirer, except for the cases when:

a) sanitary felling is intended;

b) acquirer is the State;



4) a forest owner or lawful possessor has failed, within the time period specified in laws and regulations, to pay a fine for violations of the regulations regarding forest management and use and has not compensated the losses caused to the forest. The confirmation shall be issued after payment of the fine and compensation for the losses caused to the forest.

(3) In order to ensure operation of the infrastructure:

1) if the tree felling is required in emergency situations:

a) the tree felling may be commenced after an oral notification to the State Forest Service and the Nature Conservation Agency if the activity is to be carried out in a specially protected nature territory, except for a landscape protection zone and neutral zone of the North Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve;

b) a person eliminating the consequences of an emergency situation shall inform a forest owner or lawful possessor within a week after tree felling;

2) when the tree felling is required in situations when trees have fallen on infrastructure or bent to the extent that they or their branches interfere with operations of the infrastructure:

a) the tree felling may be commenced after an oral notification to the State Forest Service and the Nature Conservation Agency if the activity is to be carried out in a specially protected nature territory, except for a landscape protection zone and neutral zone of the North Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve;

b) a person preventing an accident shall inform the forest owner or lawful possessor within a week after tree felling;

3) when the tree felling is required in operation protection zones in situations where trees may potentially endanger operations of the infrastructure, trees shall be felled in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Protection Zone Law and the methodology for the determination of the protection zone of the relevant site.

(4) Tree felling is prohibited in a forest if forest inventory has not been performed in a land parcel, except for the cases referred to in Paragraph three of this Section, as well as the cases when dead standing, damaged and windthrown trees are felled in accordance with the procedures laid down in the laws and regulations regarding tree felling.

(5) It is prohibited to fell trees that have reached the size of specially protected trees - venerable trees - specified in the laws and regulations regarding specially protected nature territories.

[13 October 2011; 24 January 2013]

### **Section 13.**

The Cabinet shall issue regulations regarding tree felling in a forest, determining the following:

1) the criteria for final felling and thinning - the minimum and critical basal areas of a forest stand and the final felling diameter according to the dominant tree species and side index;

2) the maximum area of clear felling;

3) the procedures for recognising and felling an unproductive forest stand;

4) the procedures for felling dead standing, windthrown trees, trees infected with diseases, infested with pests or damaged otherwise;

5) the procedures for preparing felling areas and conditions for arranging felling areas for clear felling;

6) the nature protection requirements for tree felling;

7) the procedures for felling trees in landscape felling;

8) the procedures for felling trees in deforestation felling;

9) the procedures for felling trees in selective cutting;

10) the procedures for issuing a confirmation of tree felling and validity period thereof.

[13 October 2011]

### **Section 14.**

Tree felling in violation of the procedures laid down in this Law, or the damaging of trees, shall be regarded as arbitrary tree felling or damaging of trees.



## **Chapter IV**

### **Utilisation of Forest Non-Wood Values**

#### **Section 15.**

Forest non-wood values are the following:

- 1) material values - tangible things which are related to the forest and which are separated from the forest in the course of acquisition thereof;
- 2) the recreational, environment-stabilising and ecological qualities inherent in a forest.

#### **Section 16.**

(1) Forest non-wood material values - wild berries, fruit, nuts, mushrooms, and medicinal plants - may be gathered by persons at their discretion, if the forest owner or the lawful possessor has not set restrictions in accordance with the provisions of Section 5, Paragraph four of this Law.

(2) The procedures for utilisation of wild animals shall be determined by the laws and regulations regarding protection of species and biotopes, and hunting.

(3) In a State or local government forest, everyone has the right to gather wild berries, fruits, nuts, and mushrooms, in conformity with the provisions of Sections 5 and 6 of this Law.

(4) The Cabinet shall determine the regulations regarding forest management in an enclosed forest area which has been established for keeping of animals in captivity.

*[13 October 2011]*

## **Chapter V**

### **Forest Reproductive Material**

#### **Section 17.**

Forest reproductive material intended for forest regeneration (seeding or planting) and afforestation, as well as for growing of forest planting material, may be gathered only from basic material registered in the State Forest Service.

#### **Section 18.**

The State Forest Service shall maintain a register of basic material and certify forest reproductive material.

#### **Section 19.**

It shall be permitted to use forest reproductive material of an origin suitable for the particular location for reforestation or afforestation.

*[13 October 2011]*

#### **Section 20.**

(1) It shall be permitted to sell certified forest reproductive material only.

2) The Cabinet shall issue regulations determining the following:

1) the requirements for the attestation and registration of basic material of forest reproductive material, and the procedures for attesting and registering basic materials of reproductive material;

2) the requirements for the certification of forest reproductive material, and the procedures for certifying forest reproductive material;

3) the requirements for trade and use of forest reproductive material (also genetically modified forest reproductive material), and the procedures for trading in and using forest reproductive material (also genetically modified forest reproductive material);

4) the procedures for imposing a prohibition on the sale of forest reproductive material.

*[13 October 2011]*

## **Section 20.<sup>1</sup>**

Forest regeneration and tree felling regulations shall not apply to forest tree seed orchards.

[16 February 2006]

# **Chapter VI Forest Regeneration and Afforestation**

## **Section 21.**

(1) A forest owner or lawful possessor has an obligation to regenerate a forest stand after felling or impact of other factors if the basal area of the forest stand has become smaller than the critical basal area, as well as to ensure tending of the regenerated forest stand or the forest stand established by afforestation.

(2) The obligation referred to in Paragraph one of this Section shall not apply to the owners or lawful possessors of the forests located in the territories of military training areas.

[13 October 2011; 22 June 2023]

## **Section 22.**

A landowner or lawful possessor shall have the right to afforest land, if such rights are not restricted by laws and regulations.

## **Section 23.**

[13 October 2011]

## **Section 24.**

(1) A forest stand shall be considered to be a plantation forest, if it is registered in the State Forest Service as a plantation forest.

(2) The procedures regarding tree felling and forest regeneration determined by this Law shall not apply to plantation forests.

(3) After felling of a plantation forest stand, it shall be permitted to repeatedly establish a plantation forest stand in the same area.

## **Section 25.**

The Cabinet shall issue regulations regarding reforestation, afforestation, and plantation forest, determining the following:

- 1) the time period for reforestation;
- 2) the procedures for recognising a forest stand as regenerated or established by afforestation;
- 3) the time period for tending of a young stand regenerated or established by afforestation;
- 4) the procedures for recognising a young stand regenerated or established by afforestation as tended;
- 5) the procedures for using forest reproductive material for reforestation and afforestation;
- 6) the procedures for establishing, registering, managing a plantation forest, and for felling trees thereof.

[13 October 2011]

# **Chapter VII Forest Protection**

## **Section 26.**

It is the duty of a forest owner or lawful possessor, and of a person who performs forest felling, prepares, stores, or processes timber in a forest or in its immediate vicinity:

- 1) to perform activities that reduce the possibility of forest damage and restrict distribution thereof;

2) to monitor the forest situation and notify the State Forest Service of determined forest damage.

#### **Section 27.**

(1) On the basis of the results of the monitoring referred to in Section 29.<sup>1</sup> of this Law, the State Forest Service shall, in accordance with the procedures specified in Section 28, Clause 2 of this Law, determine by a decision the situation of mass proliferation of forest pests or the spread of diseases and for the containment thereof may determine an obligation for the persons referred to in Section 26 of this Law to:

1) discontinue or postpone tree felling, except for felling to eliminate the consequences of mass proliferation of forest pests or spread of diseases;

2) take measures in order to combat pests and diseases or prevent spread thereof;

3) destroy forest reproductive material infected with diseases or infested with pests.

(2) The decision referred to in Paragraph one of this Section on the situation of mass proliferation of forest pests or the spread of diseases shall be a general administrative act. The decision shall be published in the official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis* and shall be executed as of the moment it enters into effect.

(3) When establishing a quarantine organism, action shall be taken in accordance with the laws and regulations in the field of plant quarantine.

[22 June 2023]

#### **Section 28.**

The Cabinet shall issue forest protection regulations by determining:

1) the forest protection measures, the procedures for and time periods of their implementation;

2) the procedures for determining and revoking the situation of mass proliferation of forest pests or the spread of diseases;

3) the procedures for controlling conformity with the requirements for forest sanitary situation.

[22 June 2023]

## **Chapter VIII Information Regarding Forests, and a Forest Management Plan**

#### **Section 29.**

(1) A forest owner or lawful possessor shall ensure the first forest inventory in its ownership or lawful possession and submit the data thereof to the State Forest Service, as well as re-perform the forest inventory at least every 20 years and in other cases specified in laws and regulations.

(2) A forest owner or lawful possessor have an obligation to, by 1 February each year, inform the State Forest Service of the forestry activity carried out in the previous calendar year.

(3) A forest owner or legal possessor shall be responsible for submitting the information referred to in Paragraphs one and two of this Section to the State Forest Service and for the veracity of the information referred to in Paragraph two to be submitted.

(4) A person performing the forest inventory shall be responsible for the veracity of the forest inventory data.

(5) The forest inventory shall be performed by persons who have been certified by an accredited conformity assessment institution and whose civil liability regarding professional activities has been insured.

[13 October 2011 / Paragraph five shall come into force on 1 January 2015. See Paragraph 25 of Transitional Provisions]

#### **Section 29.<sup>1</sup>**

(1) Latvian State Forest Research Institute Silava shall perform national forest monitoring in the whole territory of the State, obtaining statistical information regarding the situation with forest resources and forest health, as well as the interaction of the forest and environmental factors (biotic, abiotic, anthropogenic factors).

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the content of and procedures for forest monitoring.

(3) The national forest monitoring shall be financed from a grant from the general revenue of the State budget and the funds granted by the European Union.

[13 October 2011]

### **Section 30.**

A forest owner or lawful possessor has the right to receive all information relating to the forest in his or her ownership or lawful possession from the State Forest Register. The forest inventory data shall be publicly available in accordance with the procedures laid down in Section 34, Paragraph one, Clause 4 of this Law.

[22 April 2021]

### **Section 31.**

(1) A forest management plan shall be developed on the basis of the forest inventory data. A forest owner or lawful possessor shall be entitled to include additional information in the forest management plan. When planning forest management, a forest owner or lawful possessor shall comply with:

- 1) the maximum equable and sustainable utilisation of timber resources;
- 2) the requirements laid down in Section 35 of this Law;
- 3) preservation and increase of forest productivity and value;
- 4) the requirements laid down in this Law and other laws and regulations.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the content and validity period of the forest management plan, as well as the procedures for developing and approving thereof.

[13 October 2011]

### **Section 31.<sup>1</sup>**

(1) The State forest shall be managed according to a forest management plan developed by a forest manager and approved by the relevant institution or board of directors of the manager, ensuring the maximum equable and sustainable use of timber resources, creating favourable environment for economic development, preserving the ecological value of the forest, and meeting the social needs of the public.

(2) The State forest management plan shall provide for the scope of forestry works and arrangement thereof in the territory in conformity with the principles for sustainable management of forest and ensuring public participation.

[13 October 2011 / Section shall come into force on 1 January 2015. See Paragraphs 30 and 32 of Transitional Provisions]

### **Section 32.**

A forest owner or lawful possessor have an obligation to develop a forest management plan if the total area of the forest to be managed exceeds 10 000 hectares.

[13 October 2011 / The new wording of the Section shall come into force on 1 January 2015. See Paragraph 32 of Transitional Provisions]

### **Section 33.**

[14 April 2005]

### **Section 34.**

(1) The Cabinet shall issue regulations regarding forest inventory and exchange of information of the State Forest Register, determining the following:

- 1) the content and procedures of forest inventory, as well as the cases when forest inventory shall be re-performed;
- 2) the procedures for maintaining the Forest State Register and updating the forest inventory data;
- 3) the information which a forest owner or lawful possessor provides to the State Forest Service, and the procedures for providing such information;
- 4) the scope and procedures for making forest inventory data available to the public and the procedures stating

how the forest owner or lawful possessor may limit the making of forest inventory data available to the public.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the minimum requirements for professional qualification of the persons who perform forest inventory, as well as the procedures for certifying and supervising the operation of the certified persons.

[13 October 2011; 22 April 2021]

## **Chapter IX**

### **Protection of Nature in a Forest**

#### **Section 35.**

(1) The forest management regime and objectives of economic utilisation, ecological or social priority shall be determined in this Law and other laws and regulations. The management goal shall be included in the development plans of the territory (in the national planning of the Republic of Latvia, in local government development plans at the local and regional level).

(2) In the management of a forest, it is a duty of a forest owner or lawful possessor to comply with the general requirements of nature protection, in order to:

- 1) ensure the preservation of the biological diversity of the forest;
- 2) preserve the ability of the forest to protect the soil from erosion;
- 3) protect surface water and underground water from pollution;
- 4) preserve the essential elements of cultural heritage in the forest;
- 5) promote the resilience of the forest and its adaptation to climate changes.

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 35.<sup>1</sup>**

(1) Forest stands of genetic resources shall be established in order to preserve the genetic diversity of forest tree species.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for establishing and managing forest stands of genetic resources.

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 36.**

In addition to specially protected nature territories, micro-reserves, and protection zones, elements of the forest structure of biological significance shall be identified and preserved for the purpose of preservation of biological diversity.

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 37.**

The Cabinet shall issue regulations regarding nature protection for forest management, determining the following:

- 1) the general requirements of nature protection for forest management;
- 2) the restrictions in protection zones around marshes;
- 3) the conditions for identification and preservation of the elements of a forest structure of biological significance;
- 4) the restrictions on economic activity during animal reproduction season.

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 38.**

[13 October 2011]

## **Chapter IX.<sup>1</sup>**

### **Parks and Forest Parks**

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 38.<sup>1</sup>**

A park shall be established on a forest land in accordance with spatial development planning documents according to a specific plan or design in order to ensure nature objects suitable for public recreation and entertainment. Regular care and renewal of the park shall be necessary for the maintenance of its functions and quality.

#### **Section 38.<sup>2</sup>**

(1) A forest park shall be established to ensure suitable conditions in a forest for public recreation, sports, and entertainment, and it shall be managed to the extent to preserve the forest ecosystem and not to reduce the aesthetic, landscape, and cultural and historical value of the territory.

(2) It is prohibited to perform clear felling in the forest park.

#### **Section 38.<sup>3</sup>**

(1) Parks and forest parks shall be established by a relevant local government upon agreement with a land owner by issuing the binding regulations regarding the establishment, management, and protection of a specific park or forest park. The local government shall coordinate the binding regulations with the land owner if the forest park is established outside the local government land, and with the Nature Conservation Agency if the park or forest park is established in a specially protected nature territory.

(2) The land owner has the right to compensation for restrictions on the forestry activity in the forest park.

#### **Section 38.<sup>4</sup>**

(1) The Cabinet shall issue regulations regarding parks and forest parks, determining the following:

1) the procedures for establishing parks and forest parks in a forest;

2) the basic principles for the management of parks and forest parks;

3) the procedures for granting and calculating a compensation for restrictions on the forestry activity in forest parks.

(2) Regulations regarding tree felling, forest reproductive material, reforestation, and afforestation shall not be applicable to a forest park in the cases stipulated by the Cabinet.

## **Chapter X Issuance of a Confirmation**

[13 October 2011]

## **Chapter XI Deforestation**

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 41.**

(1) An area shall be deforested if it is necessary for construction, extraction of mineral resources, development of land to be used in agriculture, restoration of specially protected biotopes, ensuring of protection and inviolability of the land territory of the State, or prevention of a threat to national security on military sites and their protection zones, and if an administrative act has been issued by the competent authority to a person which gives such person the right to carry out the relevant activities, and the person has compensated the State for the expenses related to the elimination of the negative consequences caused by deforestation.

(2) The compensation referred to in Paragraph one of this Section shall not apply to a person who carries out construction of the forest infrastructure objects and restoration of specially protected biotopes in a forest, and to a person whose area in possession is deforested to ensure protection and inviolability of the land territory of the State or to prevent a threat to national security on military sites and their protection zones.

(3) The Cabinet shall determine the criteria for determination of the compensation, and the procedures for

calculating and reimbursing them.

[13 October 2011; 27 July 2017]

#### **Section 42.**

The compensation shall be credited to the State basic budget (Forest Development Fund) in full amount, and it shall be permitted to use it for the financing of forestry support programmes in order to promote increasing of carbon sequestration, adaptation to climate changes, and preservation of biological diversity in accordance with the procedures laid down in the laws and regulations regarding the Forest Development Fund.

[13 October 2011 / The new wording of the Section shall come into force on 1 January 2013. See Paragraph 14 of Transitional Provisions]

## **Chapter XII**

### **Forest Administration by the State**

#### **Section 43.**

(1) In the forestry sector the functions of State administration shall be performed by:

1) the Ministry of Agriculture which shall develop the forest sector policy and the laws and regulations necessary for its implementation, ensure that all interest groups are informed, as well as promote improvement of knowledge and skills of foresters and forest owners for sustainable forest management;

2) the State Forest Service which shall supervise the conformity with those laws and regulations that govern forest management and utilisation in all the forests of Latvia;

3) the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development which shall develop the nature protection policy and the laws and regulations necessary for its implementation;

4) the Nature Conservation Agency which shall control conformity with the laws and regulations regarding protection of specially protected nature territories and specially protected species and biotopes in all Latvian forests and approve the forest management plans in the Natura 2000 in Latvia - protected nature territories of European importance.

(2) The State with its institutions and with State and European Union financing or co-financing shall support stabilisation of sustainable forest functions and development of forest sector.

(3) The Forest Development Fund shall be established for the financing of support to, development of and scientific research in the forest sector, public information and educational and training programmes and projects for forest owners. The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for managing the Forest Development Fund.

[14 April 2005; 16 February 2006; 19 December 2006; 6 May 2010; 16 December 2010; 13 October 2011]

#### **Section 43.<sup>1</sup>**

(1) The State fee shall be paid for forestry activities - issuance of a confirmation, a sanitary opinion of the State Forest Service, an opinion on the recognition of a forest stand as unproductive, a certificate of origin of forest reproductive material, a permit for the importation of forest reproductive material.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the amount of the State fee for the issuance of a confirmation, a sanitary opinion of the State Forest Service, an opinion on the recognition of a forest stand as unproductive, a certificate of origin of forest reproductive material, a permit for the importation of forest reproductive material, and the procedures for paying thereof.

[13 October 2011]

#### **Section 44.**

(1) The State forest land shall be the land of the Forest Department of the Ministry of Agriculture as on 21 July 1940 which has not been transferred, in the course of the land reform, to other natural or legal persons for permanent use, as well as the forest land which belongs to, or is within the jurisdiction of the State, including the forest land which has been recognised as property without heirs in accordance with Section 416 of The Civil Law.

(2) The State forest land shall be entered in the Land Register in the name of the State in accordance with the procedures laid down in law.

(3) The State forest land shall not be granted for permanent use and shall not be alienated or privatised, except for



the cases specified in Paragraphs four and 4.<sup>1</sup> of this Section.

(4) Alienation or privatisation of the State forest land shall be permitted by an order of the Cabinet, issued each time, in the following cases:

1) [14 November 2008];

2) if the State forest land is necessary for the performance of the following local government autonomous functions specified in the Local Government Law:

a) road construction or if such State forest land is alienated where a road is located;

b) establishment or extension of cemeteries,

c) establishment and maintenance of parks;

3) establishment and maintenance of forest parks in city and village territories;

3) upon privatisation, and also upon alienation of the land of structure owners:

a) in rural areas - land used by structures and the yard, and also the land required for the maintenance of such structures with the area of up to 0.5 ha or more if a functionally larger area is required or if separating the State forest land up to 0.5 ha is not permissible in accordance with the spatial development planning documents, or if separation creates such an inter-area, within the meaning of the Law on the Alienation of the Property of a Public Entity, which cannot be useful for the functions of the State or the local government;

b) in urban areas - the area of land used by structures which is in lawful use of the owners of the structures (for construction) of up to 0.12 ha or more if a functionally larger area is required or if separating the State forest land is not permissible in accordance with the spatial development planning documents, or if separation creates such an inter-area, within the meaning of the Law on the Alienation of the Property of a Public Entity, which cannot be useful for the functions of the State or the local government;

4) if the State forest land (functional area) is required for a capital company registered in the Republic of Latvia to expand industrial production structures or complex structures for industrial production (except for the mining industry or quarrying structures) in its possession, and the relevant land property of the capital company is bordering with the State forest land, and also if the industrial production structures or complex structures for industrial production (except for the mining industry or quarrying structures) in its possession are located on the State forest land;

5) upon privatising or alienating a State-owned structure or its undivided share together with a functionally necessary land parcel or its undivided share which includes State forest land, or a vacant State-owned land parcel or its undivided share which includes State forest land if separating the State forest land is not permissible in accordance with the spatial development planning documents, or if separation creates such an inter area, within the meaning of the Law on the Alienation of the Property of a Public Entity, which cannot be useful for the functions of the State or the local government;

6) upon alienating a land parcel from the owner of adjacent land remaining after the construction of a transport infrastructure object which includes the State forest land if the former owner has not exercised their right provided under the Law on the Alienation of Immovable Property Necessary for Public Needs to recover the alienated immovable property and if such forest land is not required for the functions of the State or the local government;

7) upon alienating State forest land which is recognised as property without heirs or owners, confiscated or abandoned and forms undivided shares or is not bordering with State property, or is located in the territory of a city/town or village, or has no access thereto, or if separating the State forest land is not permissible in accordance with the spatial development planning documents, or if separation creates such an inter-area, within the meaning of the Law on the Alienation of the Property of a Public Entity, which cannot be useful for the functions of the State or the local government;

8) if the State forest land is used as a type of consideration compensation in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding alienation of immovable property necessary for public needs.

(4<sup>1</sup>) The State forest land may be alienated to a local government on the basis of an individual law to achieve the objectives of economic growth of the territory and raising of the quality of life in the society identified in the sustainable development strategy and development programme of the relevant local government if, according to an assessment, alternative territories are not available in the relevant local government or region and the State forest land is necessary for the establishment of an industrial park, special economic area, or other similar facilities.

(5) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures by which State forestland shall be alienated for the performance of the local government autonomous functions referred to in Paragraph four, Clause 2 of this Section. Such land shall not be further alienated to another person or transferred for privatisation, as well as shall not be burdened with property rights. The land referred to in Paragraph four, Clauses 3 and 5 of this Section shall be privatised in accordance with

the procedures laid down in the Termination of State and Local Government Property Privatisation and of the Utilisation of Privatisation Certificates Law or alienated in accordance with the provisions of the Law on the Alienation of the Property of a Public Entity. The land referred to in Paragraph four, Clauses 4, 6, and 7 of this Section shall be alienated in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Law on the Alienation of the Property of a Public Entity. If the land is alienated from the persons specified in Paragraph four, Clauses 4 and 6 of this Section, the procedures provided for in the Law on the Alienation of the Property of a Public Entity shall be applied for the sale of immovable property for a free price according to which immovable property shall be sold to the persons specified in Section 4, Paragraph four of the Law on the Alienation of the Property of a Public Entity.

(6) The forest land which has been recognised as property without heirs and in respect of which creditor claims have been submitted shall be alienated by a sworn bailiff in accordance with the procedures provided for in the Cabinet regulations. In such case the prohibitions and restrictions specified in Paragraphs two, three, and four of this Section shall not be applicable.

(7) If forest land has been recognised as property without heirs, a sworn notary shall also send an extract from the notarial deed book regarding termination of an inheritance matter in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations to the Ministry of Agriculture which shall, within 20 days, assess whether it is efficient to acquire the relevant forest land for implementation of the State functions, and inform the State joint-stock company Latvian State Forests thereof.

(8) The joint-stock company Latvian State Forests has the priority rights to the forest land under jurisdiction of the State which has been recognised as property without heirs and in respect of which creditor claims have been submitted. It may acquire such land into ownership at the price agreed at an auction or if an auction has not taken place - at the initial price at the auction. The Cabinet determine down the procedures for exercising priority rights.

*[16 February 2006; 14 November 2008; 13 October 2011; 6 June 2013; 15 June 2017; 22 April 2021; 22 June 2023; 22 June 2023]*

#### **Section 44.<sup>1</sup>**

(1) Forest land belonging to or in the jurisdiction of local governments shall be recorded in the Land Register under the name of the local government in accordance with the procedures laid down in law.

(2) A local government has the right to take a decision to refuse to transfer for privatisation or alienation forest land belonging to or in the jurisdiction thereof in the cases specified in the Termination of State and Local Government Property Privatisation and of the Utilisation of Privatisation Certificates Law, as well as in cases where the forest land is necessary for recreational needs.

*[16 February 2006]*

#### **Section 45.**

(1) The maximum amount for tree felling in hectares and cubic metres, distributed according to the dominant tree species permitted to be felled in a final felling in the course of five years, with respect to State forests, shall be calculated by the State Forest Service and approved by the Cabinet.

(2) If, according to the sanitary report of the State Forest Service, the area felled in the reconstructive felling and sanitary felling of forest stands which have reached the final felling age exceeds five per cent of the area specified in Paragraph one of this Section, the Cabinet shall review the maximum acceptable amount for felling in the final felling.

*[13 October 2011 / Amendments to the Section shall come into force on 1 January 2016. See Paragraph 31 of Transitional Provisions]*

#### **Section 45.<sup>1</sup>**

The Forest Advisory Council shall be established in accordance with the procedures stipulated by the Cabinet in order to promote balanced design and implementation of the forest sector policy in Latvia. The Cabinet shall determine the composition, functions, duties, and tasks of the Council.

*[13 October 2011]*

## **Chapter XIII Scientific Research Forests**

#### **Section 46.**

(1) Scientific research forests shall be managed to carry out studies, establish and maintain long-term scientific research, environmental and forest monitoring sites, as well as provide support to practical experience and continuing

education in the field of forest education.

(2) Revenue from scientific research forests shall be used for the management of such forests, establishment and maintenance of the infrastructure of long-term scientific research sites, and support to forestry practical experience, demonstration sites, and continuing education process.

(3) Revenue from State scientific research forests shall constitute revenue of the manager of the State scientific research forests from paid services and other own revenue, and shall be used in accordance with the conditions of Paragraph two of this Section.

*[13 October 2011; 6 November 2013]*

#### **Section 47.**

(1) Scientific research forests shall be administered or managed by an institution registered in the Register of Scientific Institutions which owns or possesses areas of scientific research forests.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine an administrator and manager of the State scientific research forests.

*[6 November 2013]*

#### **Section 48.**

The following regulations shall not be applicable to scientific research forests if it is necessary for carrying out of studies:

- 1) regulations regarding tree felling;
- 2) regulations regarding forest reproductive material;
- 3) regulations regarding reforestation and afforestation;
- 4) regulations regarding forest protection;
- 5) regulations regarding nature protection for forest management.

*[13 October 2011]*

#### **Section 49.**

(1) Scientific research forests shall be established on the basis of a Cabinet order.

(2) Scientific research forests shall be recorded in the State Forest Register.

(3) The Cabinet shall issue regulations determining the procedures for managing and supervising scientific research forests.

*[13 October 2011]*

## **Chapter XIV Compensation for Damages Caused as a Result of Violations of the Laws on Forest Management and Use**

*[30 January 2020 / The new wording of the title of this Chapter shall come into force on 1 July 2020. See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]*

#### **Section 50.**

(1) *[30 January 2020 / See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]*

(2) Persons held administratively or criminally liable shall not be released from the duty to compensate for damages caused as a result of violations of the laws and regulations.

(3) If a person has violated this Law or other laws and regulations regulating forest management and use and has caused damage to the forest, the State Forest Service shall recover compensation for damages for the benefit of the State.

(4) The procedures for the calculation of damages caused to the forest shall be governed by the Cabinet.

*[30 January 2020 / The amendment regarding the deletion of Paragraph one and the new wording of Paragraphs*

*three and four shall come into force on 1 July 2020. See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]*

## **Chapter XV**

### **Administrative Offences in the Field of Forest Management and Use and Competence in Administrative Offence Proceedings**

*[30 January 2020 / Chapter shall come into force on 1 July 2020. See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]*

#### **Article 51**

- (1) For the destruction, damage or relocation of forest sign posts, a warning or a fine of up to fourteen units of fine shall be imposed.
- (2) For staying in the forest without following the procedures and obligations specified in the laws and regulations regulating forest management and use, a warning or a fine of up to twenty-eight units of fine shall be imposed.
- (3) For violation of the laws and regulations regulating forest management and use by limiting the right of natural persons to stay and move freely in the forest, a warning or a fine of up to twenty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine of up to thirty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (4) For the violation of the requirements for the care of the renewed forest stand, a warning or a fine of up to twenty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine of up to thirty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (5) For the destruction, damage or relocation of forest infrastructure objects (except forest amelioration objects), a warning or a fine of up to fifty-six units of fine shall be imposed.
- (6) For the violation of forest protection requirements specified in the laws and regulations regulating forest management and use, a warning or a fine of up to forty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine of up to eighty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (7) For the violation of fire safety requirements in a forest, a warning or a fine of up to seventy units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine from fourteen to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (8) For the violation of the requirements for the acquisition, use or trade of forest reproductive material, a warning or a fine of up to seventy units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine from twenty-eight to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (9) For the felling of trees in a forest without the receipt of the confirmation specified in the laws and regulations regulating forest management and use, a warning or a fine of up to seventy units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine of up to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (10) For the violation of the requirements regarding reforestation, a warning or a fine of up to one hundred units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine of up to two hundred units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (11) For the arbitrary felling or damaging of trees, a warning or a fine of up to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine of up to two hundred and eighty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (12) For the violation of the nature protection requirements specified in the laws and regulations regulating forest management and use, a warning or a fine of up to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine of up to two hundred and eighty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (13) For the violation of forest protection requirements specified in the laws and regulations regulating forest management and use if a situation of mass proliferation of forest pests or the spread of diseases has been determined, a fine from twelve to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine from twenty-eight to two hundred and eighty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (14) For the violation of fire protection requirements on forest land if an emergency situation has been declared in connection with a forest fire, a fine from twelve to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine from twenty-eight to two hundred and eighty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.
- (15) For the destruction or damage of a forest, a fine from six to one hundred and forty units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine from twenty-eight to two hundred and eighty units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.

(16) For the violation of deforestation requirements specified in the laws and regulations regulating forest management and use, a fine from ten to three hundred units of fine shall be imposed on a natural person but a fine from fifty to six hundred units of fine shall be imposed on a legal person.

[30 January 2020; 22 June 2023]

## Article 52

(1) The administrative offence proceedings regarding the violations referred to in Section 51, Paragraphs two and three of this Law shall be conducted by the State Police, the local government police or the State Forest Service until the examination of the administrative offence case. The administrative offence proceedings regarding the violations referred to in Section 51, Paragraphs two and three of this Law shall be examined by the administrative commission or sub-commission of the local government.

(2) The administrative offence proceedings regarding the violations referred to in Section 51, Paragraphs one, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven (if the violations have been committed on the forest land), twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen and sixteen of this Law shall be conducted by the State Forest Service.

(3) Administrative offence proceedings for the violation referred to in Section 51, Paragraph eleven of this Law which have been committed:

1) in the protection zone of the environment and natural resources outside the forest, until the examination of the administrative offence case shall be carried out by the State Police, the local government police, the State Environmental Service or the State Forest Service. An administrative offence case regarding the violation referred to in Section 51, Paragraph eleven of this Law which has been committed in the protection zone of the environment and natural resources outside the forest shall be examined by the State Environmental Service;

2) in the remainder of the territory outside the forest until the examination of the administrative offence case shall be carried out by the State Police, the local government police or the State Forest Service. The administrative offence case regarding the violations referred to in Section 51, Paragraph eleven of this Law shall be examined by the administrative commission or sub-commission of the local government.

(4) The administrative offence proceedings regarding the violations referred to in Section 51 of this Law which have been committed in specially protected nature territories and micro-reserves, until the examination of the administrative offence case, shall also be carried out by the Nature Conservation Agency. The administrative offence case regarding the violations referred to in Section 51 of this Law which have been committed in specially protected nature territories and micro-reserves shall be examined by the institutions referred to in Paragraphs one, two and three of this Section, respectively.

[30 January 2020 / This Section shall come into force on 1 July 2020. See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

## Transitional Provisions

1. With the coming into force of this Law, the following laws and regulations are repealed:

1) law On Forest Management and Utilisation (*Latvijas Republikas Saeimas un Ministru Kabineta Ziņotājs*, 1994, No. 9; 1995, Nos. 11, 22; 1996, Nos. 13, 19; 1997, Nos. 7, 14);

2) law On Utilisation of State Forests (*Latvijas Republikas Saeimas un Ministru Kabineta Ziņotājs*, 1995, No. 10; 1998, No. 5).

2. The Cabinet shall:

1) issue the regulations referred to in this Law by 1 January 2001;

2) ensure the establishment of the State Forest Register by 1 January 2002.

3. Prior to adoption of the relevant Cabinet Regulations, the following Cabinet Regulations shall be in force, insofar as they are not in contradiction with this Law:

1) Regulation No. 132 of 14 June 1994, On Classification of Forests into Categories and Specification of Specially Protected Forest Areas;

2) Regulation No. 25 of 24 January 1995, Regulations Regarding Forest Regeneration;

3) Regulation No. 58 of 21 March 1995, Sanitary Regulations Regarding Forest Management and Utilisation;

4) Regulation No. 98 of 18 April 1995, Regulations Regarding Establishment of a Specially Protected Forest Area

"Sites of the Christmas Battles";

5) Regulation No. 241 of 25 July 1995, Regulations Regarding Material Liability for Violations of Regulations on Forest Management and Utilisation;

6) Regulation No. 325 of 13 August 1996, Regulations Regarding Compensation for Damages to Forestry Due to Transformation or Deterioration of Quality of Forest Land;

7) Regulation No. 332 of 20 August 1996, Procedures Regarding Organisation of State Forest Inventory;

8) Regulation No. 334 of 20 August 1996, Procedures Regarding Organisation of Forest Monitoring;

9) Regulation No. 449 of 9 December 1996, Regulations Regarding Final felling;

10) Regulation No. 450 of 9 December 1996, Regulations Regarding Intermediate Felling;

11) Regulation No. 440 of 24 November 1998, Regulations Regarding Tree and Bush Felling not Included in the Forest Fund.

4. Until establishment of the State Forest Register, the functions of the relevant information system shall be performed by the database "Forest Fund".

5. Section 9, Paragraph one, Clause 2 of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2002.

6. Section 9, Paragraph two, Clause 1 of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2001.

7. Section 12, Paragraph three, and Section 29, Paragraph two of this Law, with respect to State forests shall come into force on 1 January 2008. Until that time, inventory information included in the updated database "Forest Fund" shall be used.

8. Forest management projects that were prepared prior to the coming into force of this Law shall be regarded as forest management plans within the meaning of this Law. Forest inventory information that was included in the above-mentioned forest management plans shall be regarded as forest inventory information within the meaning of this Law and shall be valid until termination of validity period of the relevant forest management projects.

9. The Cabinet shall, not later than by 30 June 2006, issue regulations which govern the State forest land alienation procedures referred to in Section 44, Paragraph five of this Law.

[16 February 2006]

10. Section 44, Paragraph four, Clause 1 of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2007.

[16 February 2006]

11. The Cabinet shall issue the regulations referred to in Section 3, Paragraph five of this Law by 30 June 2006.

[16 February 2006]

12. If a forest in ownership or lawful possession is located in the territory of the Gauja, Slītere or Ķemeri National Parks, or in Teiči, Krustkalni, Grīņi or Moricsala Nature Reserves, the confirmations referred to in Section 39, Paragraph one of this Law shall be obtained from the administration of the relevant territory by 31 December 2007.

[14 June 2007]

13. In 2007, the administration of the Gauja, Slītere and Ķemeri National Parks and Teiči Nature Reserve shall, by fifth day of each month, submit electronically to the State Forest Service the information regarding applications received and confirmations issued over the previous month. The relevant administration shall receive forms of the confirmations referred to in Section 39, Paragraph one of this Law from the State Forest Service by 31 December 2007.

[14 June 2007]

14. Amendments to Sections 41 and 42 of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2013.

[13 October 2011]

15. In specially protected nature territories and micro-reserves where transformation of forest land is prohibited in accordance with the requirements of laws and regulations, starting from 1 January 2013 until making of amendments to the relevant laws and regulations, it is prohibited to carry out such activities on the forest land the implementation of which would change the category of land use.

[13 October 2011]



16. Until 1 January 2013 the forest land shall be transformed in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 806 of 28 September 2004, Regulations Regarding Transformation of Forest Land.

[13 October 2011]

17. Starting from 1 January 2012 in all individual regulations for the protection and use of specially protected nature territories until making of amendments thereto the term "final felling according to a sanitary report of the State Forest Service" shall conform to the "sanitary felling according to a sanitary report of the State Forest Service" referred to in Section 11 of this Law and the definition of the sanitary felling.

[13 October 2011]

18. Until the day of coming into force of the Cabinet regulations referred to in Section 34 of this Law, the term "dominant stand" shall correspond to the following definition: trees of a forest stand with the greatest growing stock increment the height of which does not differ from the average height by more than 10 per cent.

[13 October 2011]

19. In specially protected nature territories where individual regulations for the protection and use have come into force prior to 1 January 2012 (except for the territories where general regulations for the protection and use are in force), Section 12, Paragraph one, Clause 3 of this Law shall not be applicable until making of the relevant amendments to the individual regulations for the protection and use of specially protected nature territories.

[13 October 2011]

20. The Cabinet shall, by 30 April 2013, issue the regulations referred to in Section 2, Paragraph three, Section 13, Section 20, Paragraph two, Section 28, Section 34, Section 35.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph two, Section 37, Section 38.<sup>4</sup>, Paragraph one, Section 41, Paragraph three, Section 43.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph two, and Section 49, Paragraph three of this Law.

[13 October 2011; 24 January 2013]

20.<sup>1</sup> The Cabinet shall, by 31 October 2013, issue the regulations referred to in Section 31, Paragraph two of this Law.

[24 January 2013]

21. Until the day of coming into force of the Cabinet regulations referred to in Sections 13, 20, 28, 34, Section 35.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph two, Section 37, Section 38.<sup>4</sup>, Paragraph one, Section 41, Paragraph three, Section 43.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph two, and Section 49, Paragraph three of this Law the following Cabinet regulations shall apply, insofar as they are not in contradiction with this Law:

- 1) Cabinet Regulation No. 189 of 8 May 2001, Regulations Regarding Nature Protection for Forest Management;
- 2) Cabinet Regulation No. 648 of 19 November 2003, Regulations Regarding Forest Reproductive Material;
- 3) Cabinet Regulation No. 630 of 27 July 2004, Procedures for Managing Scientific Research Forests;
- 4) Cabinet Regulation No. 806 of 28 September 2004, Regulations Regarding Transformation of Forest Land;
- 5) Cabinet Regulation No. 819 of 3 October 2006, Procedures for Establishing Parks and Basic Principles for Management Thereof;
- 6) Cabinet Regulation No. 892 of 31 October 2006, Regulations Regarding Tree Felling on Forest Land;
- 7) Cabinet Regulation No. 46 of 9 January 2007, Regulations Regarding the State Fee for Forestry Activities, Examinations of Hunters and Heads of a Hunt and Calculation of the Losses Caused by Game Animals;
- 8) Cabinet Regulation No. 590 of 28 August 2007, Regulations Regarding Forest Inventory and Circulation of Information of the State Forest Register;
- 9) Cabinet Regulation No. 421 of 10 June 2008, Regulations Regarding Forest Protection Measures and Declaration of Emergency Situation in the Forest.

[13 October 2011; 24 January 2013]

22. Amendments to Section 3, Paragraph one, Clause 2 of this Law which provide for a new wording of this Clause shall come into force on 1 January 2015. Until the day of coming into force of these amendments trees on the land which has not been registered as a forest in the National Immovable Property Cadastre Information System shall be felled in accordance with the procedures laid down in Section 8 of this Law.



[13 October 2011]

23. The Cabinet shall issue the regulations referred to in Section 34, Paragraph two of this Law by not later than 31 March 2013.

[13 October 2011; 24 January 2013]

24. The first forest inventory referred to in Section 29, Paragraph one of this Law shall be deemed the forest inventory which has been registered in the State Forest Register after coming into force of the Forest Law, as well as the forest inventory information which has been registered in the State Forest Service prior to coming into force of this Law and is still valid.

[13 October 2011]

25. Section 29, Paragraph five of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2015.

[13 October 2011; 24 January 2013]

26. In specially protected nature territories where, in accordance with the requirements of laws and regulations, transformation of forest land is prohibited without a written authorisation from the Nature Conservation Agency or the regional environment board, activities due to implementation of which the category of land use is changed may be carried out on the forest land if, in accordance with the law On Environmental Impact Assessment, technical regulations of the regional environmental board have been issued or an initial environmental impact assessment of the intended activity has been conducted.

[13 October 2011]

27. The Cabinet shall, by 31 March 2012, issue the regulations referred to in Section 8, Paragraph one, Section 16, Paragraph four, Section 25, Section 29.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph two, Section 43, Paragraph three, and Section 45.<sup>1</sup> of this Law.

[13 October 2011]

28. Until the day of coming into force of the Cabinet regulations referred to in Section 8, Paragraph one, Section 25, Section 29.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph two, and Section 43, Paragraph three of this Law, but not later than until 31 March 2012, the following Cabinet regulations shall apply, insofar as they are not in contradiction with this Law:

- 1) Cabinet Regulation No. 108 of 6 March 2001, Regulations Regarding Afforestation and Plantation Forests;
- 2) Cabinet Regulation No. 717 of 29 August 2006, Procedures for Felling Trees Outside Forest Land;
- 3) Cabinet Regulation No. 313 of 8 May 2007, Procedures for Establishing, Managing and Using the Forest Development Fund;
- 4) Cabinet Regulation No. 313 of 7 April 2009, Procedures for Performing Forest Monitoring;
- 5) Cabinet Regulation No. 1453 of 15 December 2009, Reforestation Regulations.

[13 October 2011]

29. Until the day of coming into force of the regulations referred to in Section 13 of this Law, the forest stands referred to in Section 9, Paragraph two, Clause 1, Sub-clause "b" and Section 9, Paragraph two, Clause 3 of this Law which have reached at least the age specified in laws and regulations shall be deemed forest stands in respect of which at least three years have passed since the year of regeneration thereof (including the year of regeneration) or in which the average height of trees of the species corresponding to the type of forest has reached one meter for coniferous trees and two meters for deciduous trees.

[13 October 2011]

30. The plans referred to in Section 31.<sup>1</sup> of this Law shall be deemed the State forest management plans developed by 1 January 2012 which shall apply until the end of validity period thereof but not longer than until 31 December 2016, insofar as they are not in contradiction with this Law.

[13 October 2011]

31. Amendments to Section 45 of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2016.

[13 October 2011]

32. Sections 31.<sup>1</sup> and 32 of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2015.

[13 October 2011]

33. Section 3.<sup>1</sup>, Clause 2 of this Law shall not be applicable to the land which has been registered as a forest in the National Immovable Property Cadastre Information System by 1 January 2012.

[13 October 2011]

34. The Cabinet shall determine the administrator and the manager of State scientific research forests by 1 February 2014.

[6 November 2013]

35. The new title of Chapter XIV of this Law, amendments to Section 50 regarding the exclusion of Paragraph one thereof and the new wording of Paragraphs three and four as well as Chapter XV shall come into force concurrently with the Law on Administrative Liability.

[30 January 2020]

36. Amendment to this Law regarding the supplementation of Section 4 with Paragraph 2.<sup>3</sup> shall come into force concurrently with the corresponding amendments to Section 2, Paragraph three of the Law on the Alienation of the Property of a Public Entity.

[22 April 2021]

37. The Cabinet shall, by 15 July 2023, issue the regulations referred to in Section 28 of this Law. Until the day of coming into force of the relevant Cabinet regulations, the Cabinet Regulation No. 947 of 18 December 2012, Regulations Regarding Forest Protection Measures and Declaration of Emergency Situation in the Forest, shall be applicable, insofar as they are not in contradiction with this Law.

[22 June 2023]

## **Informative Reference to the European Union Directive**

[13 October 2011]

The Law contains legal provisions arising from the Council Directive 1999/105/EC of 22 December 1999 on the marketing of forest reproductive material.

The Law shall come into force on the day following its proclamation.

The Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 24 February 2000.

President V. Vīķe-Freiberga

Rīga, 16 March 2000

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<sup>1</sup>The Parliament of the Republic of Latvia

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