

Forest health situation 2020 in Austria: damage by bark beetle remains above average

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In 2020, the bark beetle situation in Austria partly eased. Although the total amount of damaged wood decreased significantly, it remained above average. Like in the previous year, regional differences were observed in outbreak development. Storm damage strongly increased, while total abiotic damage decreased compared to the previous year due to significantly lower snow breakage. Damage caused by silver fir adelgids increased, especially in the eastern half of Austria. Top and shoot dieback was observed on Norway spruce and crown dieback on Douglas fir in Lower Austria. Damage indirectly related to drought, increased in various deciduous tree species especially in the east.

Forest health situation 2021 in Austria: New spruce bark beetle outbreak in the south

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In 2021, the total damage by bark beetle in Austrian continued to decrease. However, the significant decreases in areas severely affected in the previous years were contrasted by massive increases in other regions. Especially in the south of Austria, a new bark beetle gradation has been emerging. Damage caused by wind and snow dropped to average levels of the last two decades. Damage caused by debris flow and hail rose sharply as a result of heavy storms. The lack of precipitation had indirect consequences for biotic damage factors and forest fires.

Documentation of Forest Damage Factors 2020 and 2021

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The Documentation of Forest Damage Factors (DWF) provides comprehensive yearly records of the important pests, diseases and abiotic damaging agents in all private and public forests of Austria. Records are based on estimates for each unit provided by foresters of the district forest authorities. The estimates consider the physiological damage to the tree rather than an economic damage. Parameters representing the volume of damaged trees and/or the damaged area are recorded for 73 damaging agents in the reporting period 2020-2021. The invasive American oak lace bug (*Corythucha arcuata*) has been included since 2020. Reporting and analysis of the damage is done on the level of district forest authorities; maps illustrate the volume and/or area damaged by each agent as well as the intensity of the damage and the change compared to the previous year.

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