



Bark beetle image, Kottenforst Bonn. ©I-MAESTRO



Forest fire. ©Pixabay

I-MAESTRO project is updating the Database of Forest Disturbances in Europe

A complete picture of forest disturbance events in Europe was for long missing, as a large amount of the information is available on a regional and/or national scale, but it is usually scattered over many sources. The [European Forest Institute](#) (EFI) in collaboration with [Wageningen Environmental Research](#) (then Alterra) identified this gap already 20 years ago – and aimed at closing it both for providing a basis for comparison of disturbance regimes in different countries and time periods and for modelling possible impacts of climate change. This was the hour of birth of [the Database of Forest Disturbances in Europe](#) (DFDE).

The database covers all the reported forest disturbance events that were found in an extensive literature search. The earliest records date back more than 5 centuries but the majority of the data covers the period from 1850 to 2000. However, due to lack of funding, the foreseen continuous updating of the database was halted.

In I-MAESTRO, EFI is aiming together with partners to fill the data gap between 2001-2020. Another motivation to approach this again is the hope to get more data from the countries that are currently underrepresented, also for earlier periods. These include the Balkans and the Baltic states, but also countries like France. Therefore, some footwork to acquire the national information is needed.

The project is currently asking partners to provide data on forest disturbance from the last 20 years. This data will be used to make an update of the paper [“Natural disturbances in the European forests in the 19th and 20th centuries”](#) published in 2003 in the journal *Global Change Biology*, and to make scenarios on future disturbances for the modelling in I-MAESTRO. However, it is not only I-MAESTRO that will benefit from the data collection as the data will be freely available and anyone can use it for their own purpose. An up-to-date database will benefit everyone dealing with forest disturbances as it gives more precise pictures of past events and trends, and better predictions for the future.

Have any questions or suggestions on relevant datasets? Feel free to contact us at dbadmin@dfde.efi.int.

Innovative forest management strategies for a resilient bioeconomy under climate change and disturbances (I-MAESTRO)

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I-MAESTRO improves the scientific basis for developing management strategies that increase resilience for future natural disturbances and climate change, while maintaining a high level of wood production, carbon storage, and habitat quality for biodiversity.

Website: <https://i-maestro.inrae.fr/>

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