



Rome, 23rd June 2011
Parallel Session

Present and future role of forest resources in the socio-economic development of rural areas

Parallel Session 1

Forests, conservation of biodiversity, landscape protection and public services.

The recreational function of the Walloon forest: a rural forest in a periurban environment



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Outline

1. Introduction

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5. The economic value of forest recreation in Wallonia

6. Discussion

1. Introduction

1.1. Context and aims of the study

PhD thesis dealing with the valuation of forest recreation at regional level

Colson, V. (2009). La fonction récréative des massifs forestiers wallons : analyses et évaluation dans le cadre d'une politique forestière intégrée. Thèse de doctorat. Faculté universitaire des Sciences agronomiques, Gembloux.

Aims of the study:

- 1) To evaluate forest recreation at regional level (Wallonia)
- 2) To estimate the recreational value of the Walloon forest
- 3) To provide policymakers with information on the way to take forest recreation into account in the regional forest policy

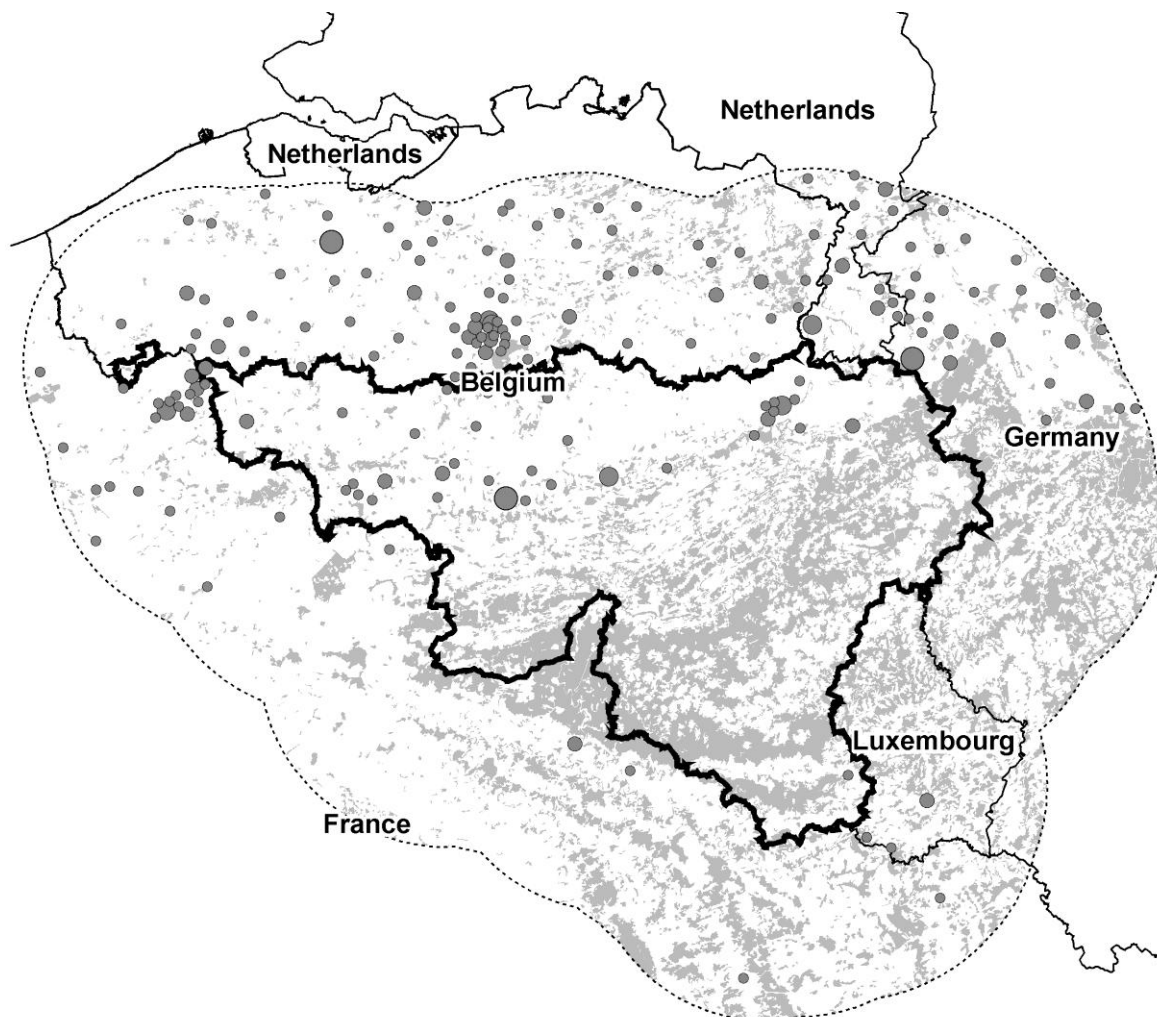
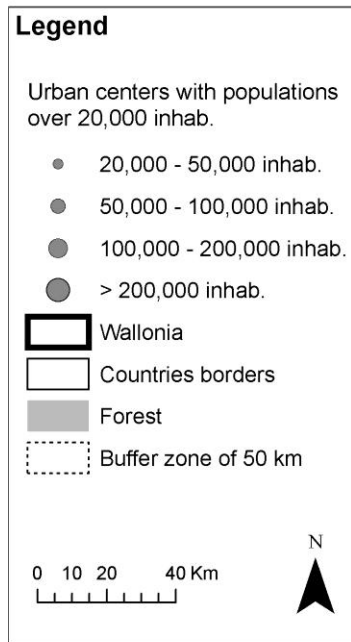
1. Introduction

1.2. The Walloon context



1. Introduction

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1. Introduction

1.2. The Walloon context

- Woodland covers around 30 % of the regional area
- Population density is around 198 inhab/km²
- Northern neighbouring regions are densely populated and less wooded
- Road network is particularly developed

⇒ Wallonia is a region of **transition** between more populous and less wooded regions located to the North (Atlantic Europe) and more wooded and rural regions lying further South (central Europe).

⇒ Visits in Walloon forests involve local population, one-day tourists and holidaymakers

⇒ The Walloon forest = « *a rural forest in a periurban environment* »

⇒ Forest recreation policy focuses on **access regulations**

2. Methodology

2.1. Demand analysis

Three surveys :

- Phone survey (1005 interviews)
- Face-to-face interviews in forests (4046 interviews, 40 woodlands, 6 periods)
- Map survey (interview of forest managers)

2.2. Estimation of the annual number of visits

- Population data, number of visits, road network
- Distribution of visits from centres of population to woodlands
- Visits by tourists: depending on accomodation supply around woodlands

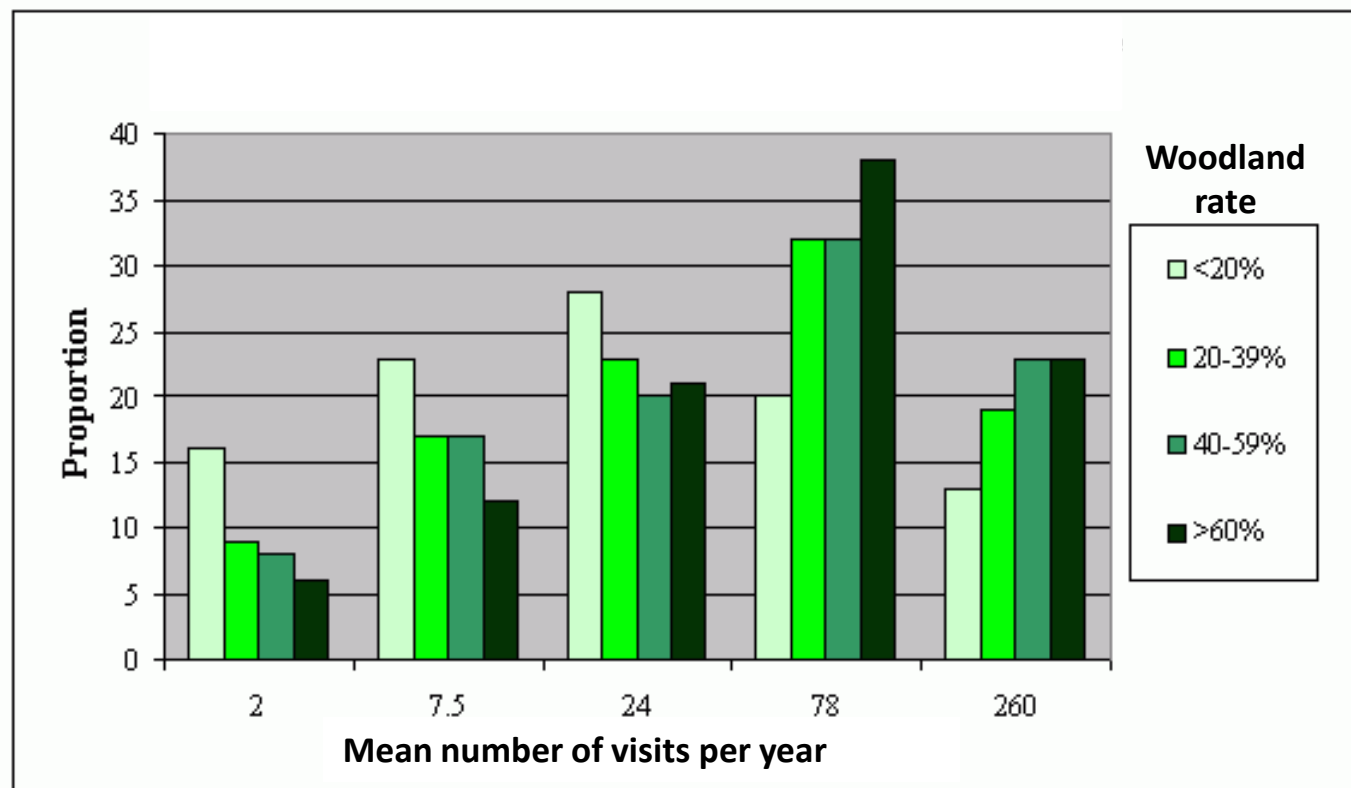
2.3. Estimation of the economic value

- Data collected in the surveys
- Number of visits
- Two approaches based on the *Willingness to Pay* and the *Travel Cost*

3. Demand analysis

3.1. Phone survey:

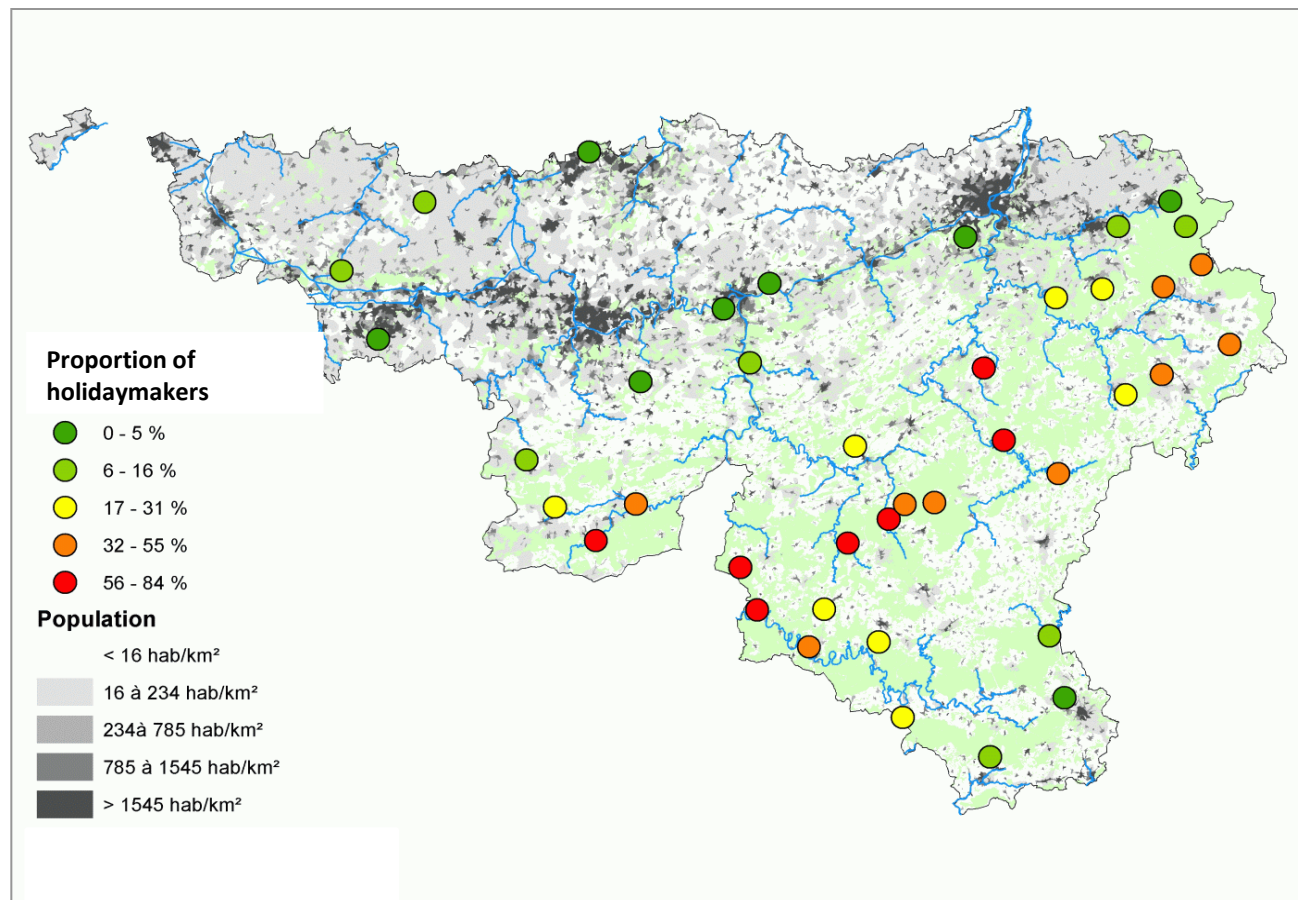
- 45% of the population undertake a forest walk at least once a year
- Some differences according to the degree of forestation around the place of residence.



3. Demand analysis

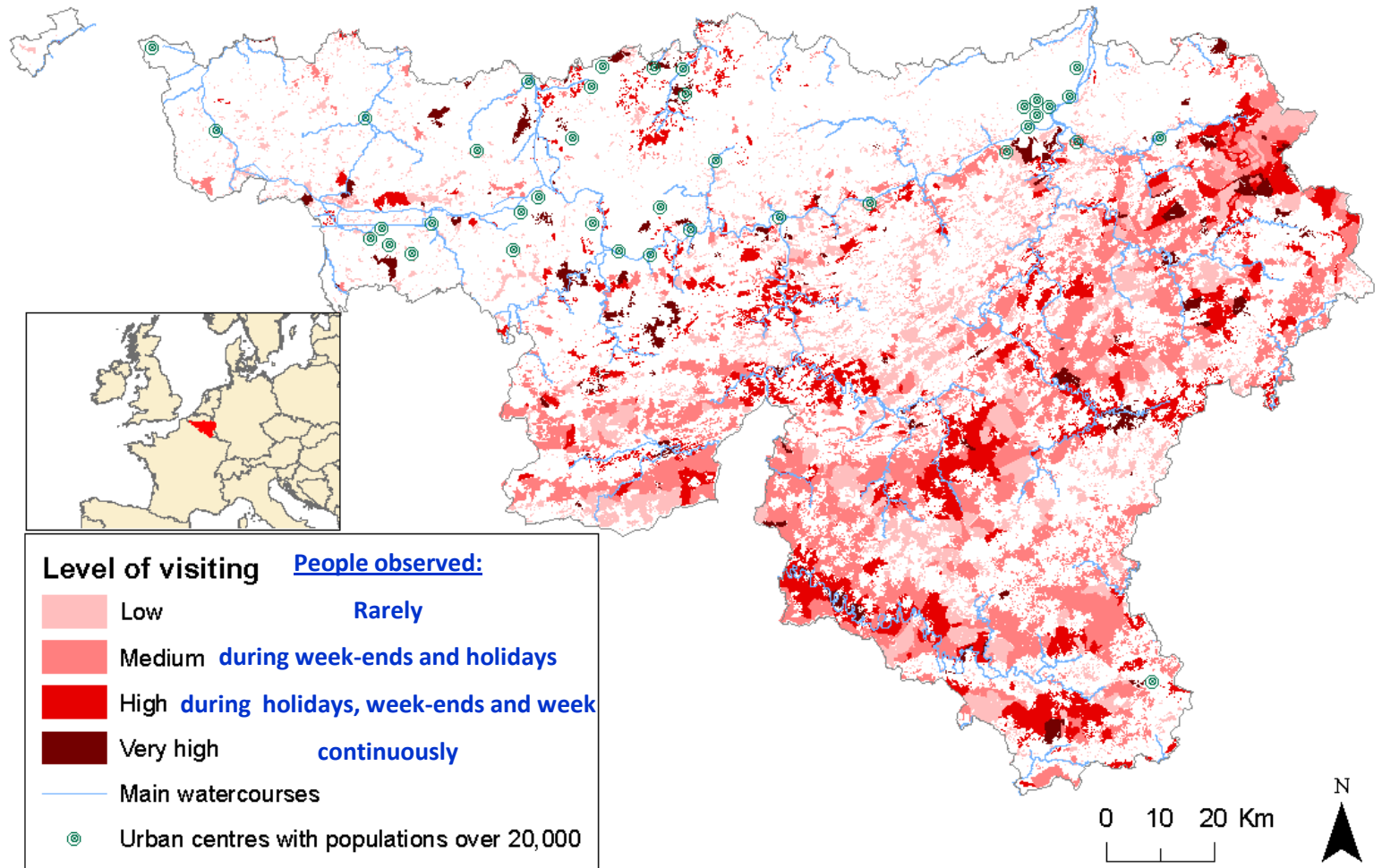
3.2. Face-to-face interviews

- Mean proportion of holiday-makers : 30%
- High differences from one forest to another



3. Demand analysis

3.3. Map of level of visiting



3. Demand analysis

3.3. Map of level of visiting

Main factors acting upon the level of visiting

- Types of ownership: public >> private
- Recreational facilities: presence >> absence
- Relief: neither too much, nor too little
- Types of stands: broadleaves >> coniferous



5. The economic value of forest recreation in Wallonia

5.1. Travel Cost

Depending on what is taken into account in the cost of use of private vehicle:

- fuel and tyres : € 1.727 billion/year
- fuel, tyres, maintenance, and depreciation : € 3.386 billion/year

5.2. Willingness To Pay

- Proportion of individuals who cited a non-zero amount is 54.5%
- The average cost is 4.40 Euros/activity. (*local inhabitants: €3.82 / holiday-makers: €5.82*)
- The regional value comes to € 472 million/year.

5.3. Mean value

⇒Regional value : in the order of € 2 billion/year, highly dependent on the hypothesis



6. Discussion

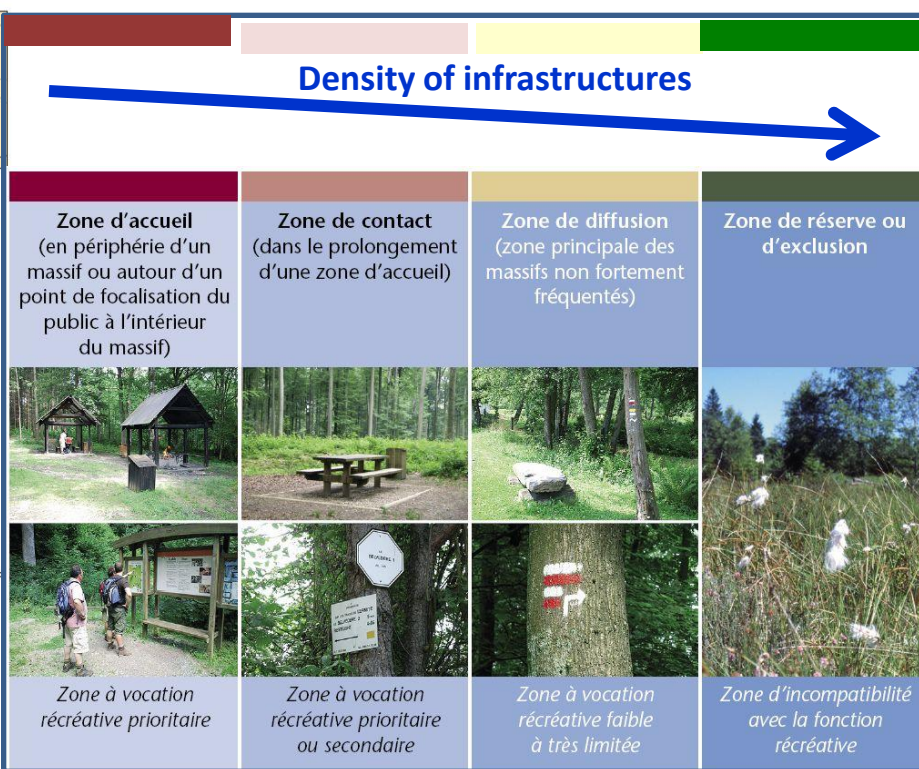
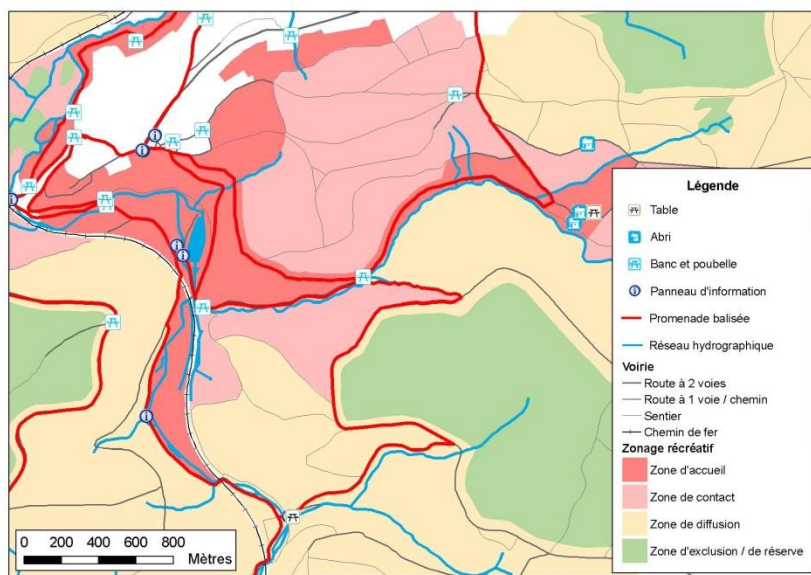
6.1. Importance of forest recreation in Wallonia

- Forest recreation should be considered in all forest policies
- Prediction of increasing of forest recreation due to the periurban context
- Opportunity for a rural area (tourist infrastructures)
- Risk of conflicts \Leftrightarrow importance of the other functions (hunting, conservation, timber production)

6. Discussion

6.2. Sectorization

⇒ To avoid conflicts and to preserve multifunctionality at the regional level: necessity to proceed to a sectorization relating to forest recreation



**Thanks for your attention
and see you in the Walloon forest!**



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