

Abstract

Finland, as a country, is one of the world leaders in the forest sector. Relative to its size, Finland is more dependent on the forest industry than any other country in the world. For this reason, forests have significantly influenced the development and culture of Finland. Because of this symbiosis, the people of Finland feel a sense of stewardship over this resource, which has always been deeply tied with Finland's culture. The purpose of this paper is to observe the use of forests as a resource throughout the history of Finland. Historically, the forests were used for slash-and-burn cultivation; a form of agriculture that allowed the Finnish people to settle the un-farmable land. This practice of cultivation fell out of popularity in the 19th century; however, during its time this method was the critical element in allowing the colonization of interior Finland. Today the forests of Finland are utilized in a multi-use forest system. Outside of industry and government uses, the forests are also used extensively by the Finnish people for recreation, relaxation, and communing with nature. This multi-use forest system is a model that many forested nations should aim to follow.

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