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**Perceptions of Nature and Gender by foresters engaged in environmental education**

**Christine Katz**

**Key Words:** Nature perception, forest pedagogics, forestry stakeholders, gender

**Abstract:** Environmental education, especially with a focus on forestry, is getting a new topic within forestry education and also research and is more and more asked for by the public. Increasing distance to direct nature experiences is said to be one crucial factor responsible for deficiencies in knowledge about nature and assumed lack of interest in nature relations by adolescent persons. Because of this the stakeholders working in the field of forest related environmental education are asked to deal with their educational mandate and its relation to sustainable development. Which are the present objectives of environmental educational activities by foresters? Which topics and nature knowledge are transferred? How is this being done? How are foresters prepared for this challenge? What is the output of those activities, what did members of the target groups learn? How could it be measured? These are some questions arising.

The contribution focuses on the professional activities of foresters concerning forest related environmental education (in Germany called “Waldpädagogik”, literally “Forest Pedagogics”). It highlights their understanding of nature in educational knowledge transfer processes and its interrelation to gender. Nature knowledge, perceptions, experiences and relations are influenced by social contexts, gender and power relations. Valuation of natural resources in the society and appreciation of non monetary valuable nature aspects are considerably connected to this.

Presented are results of the analyses of the educational work of foresters (interviews and participative observation). The data were generated within a research project about knowledge about nature and nature experience during forest related environmental education under a gender perspective. It was founded by the German Federal Ministry of Research and Education.

Address: Leuphana-University Lüneburg  
Faculty of Technology and Environment  
Scharnhorststr. 1, 21335 Lüneburg, Germany  
Email of corresponding author: [waldfrauen@uni.leuphana.de](mailto:waldfrauen@uni.leuphana.de)