



## Message from the chair



IPFE, has undertaken several leaps to strengthen its foundation as a well-recognized international network for forestry education and associated activities in the past few month since the last Newsletter. The number of institution members stands at 15 currently, and is expected to increase significantly in the next few months.

Some of the activities include completion of the membership of the Steering Committee (now stands at 11 members) and issuing the Charter of the Partnership as well as regulations for membership.

IPFE was instrumental in the Forth Latin America Forest Conference held in Merida from 2 to 5 April, 2008. One of the major outcomes of that Conference was the formation of the Latin-American Forestry Education Network.. The Network has applied for membership in IPF already. Also concurrently (21 - 25April) the Asia Pacific Universities Forest Education Network was discussed and approved during the Asia-Pacific Forest Week held in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The Chair is involved in deliberations to form a Forest Education Network for North America under the auspices of the FAO North America Forest Commission. It is expected that this Network will play an important role in extending the geographic coverage and activities of IPFE, to be a truly global partnership.

Thanks to the secretariat managed effectively by Sari and Jorma and to the active support and engagement of the Executive Office and the Steering Committee, and above all to the member institutions and Networks, IPFE is on the right track to serve forests and forestry education world-wide.

Please keep lending support to IPFE and keep the secretariat informed about activities in your institute, country and region.

H. El-Lakany,

Chair, IPFE

# IPFE NEWS

IPFE contributed to three major events since the spring of 2008. The annual conference of foresters of Latin-America (CONFLAT IV) was held in Venezuela at the beginning of April. The Executive Office and Steering Committee of IPFE had a meeting during the event. The general guidelines of IPFE concerning partnerships, information dissemination and chances for cooperation were discussed. IPFE's role as a global actor aiming to promote these issues was reiterated. Universities as well as the regional networks are welcome to become members.

The need to gather information about forestry education at international level was also discussed in the meeting. The International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) has already started this work and sent a questionnaire concerning forestry education to different forestry faculties and students during winter 2007 - 2008. We hope that all who have received the questionnaire will answer and return the form to IFSA.

A decision to establish a network for forestry education was made in CONFLAT IV. The universities of Latin-America offering forestry education decided to start a systematic cooperation by establishing a network for Latin-American forestry

education. This network represents the experience of forestry education during 50 years and members recognize the same, and global, problems in teaching and learning. The aim of the new network is to raise the image and quality of forestry education and forestry as a profession as well as to solve the problem of poor information dissemination between educators. The agreement of the network was signed by over 30 representatives of the universities. One of the vice-presidents of IPFE Professor Osvaldo Encinas had a very significant role in the establishment procedure.

Later in April, the Asia Pacific Forestry Week was held in Hanoi, Vietnam. The establishment of the Asia Pacific Universities Forest Education Network was discussed during that event. This is also very important decision that would help to improve forestry education globally. The meeting was attended by more than 50 representatives of institutions from 12 countries and seven international organizations. The need to this discussion lays also in the problems of the present forestry education: the need for universities to become more internationally connected and to develop international collaboration as well as need for curriculum review and update. Also the need to more



effectively maintain and utilize university forests and incorporate general educational goals (e.g. creative thinking, ICT, research skills) into professional forestry programs was recognized. It was decided in the meeting that the formation of such a network should be pursued but it still needs to be discussed whether to establish the network separately from related existing networks (e.g. APAFRI, SEANAFE) or as a part of them.

A Policy Brief: "Future Forestry Education: responding to Expanding Societal Needs": prepared by A.B Temu and A. Kiwia was published in April 2008. by ICRAF, Nairobi, Kenya. A preface was written by Hosny El-Lakany, Chair of IPFE, and Dennis Garrity, Director General, World Agroforestry Centre. The policy brief summarized the problems in forestry education that were brought up in the workshop of forestry education held in Nairobi in September 2007. These are common issues to the problems discussed during the Africa Workshop which served as reasons for establishing new networks including: declining investments to the education, outdated curricula, need to improve relevance and popularize forest sciences, technologies and practices. As an answer to these problems some ideas like the increase of investments in forestry capacity, improved coordination, harmonization of forestry with other related sectors in society as well as regional and global collaboration is presented. The current status of forestry education, global forestry perspectives, factors influencing forestry practices and the way forward for forestry education are presented in the policy brief as well.



Sharing graduate survey experiences with the SILVA president, Siegfried Lewark, at the SILVA Network conference in Copenhagen 2008. Photo: Reiner Mühlisieg

# NEWS from the NETWORKS

## Presentation of the International Forestry Students' Association – IFSA

The International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) is the only global network for forestry students. It unites approximately 3000 students in 61 member associations (called local committees) from 42 countries.

The mission of IFSA is to be a platform for forestry students to enrich their formal education and to promote cultural understanding by encouraging collaboration with international partners' organizations, practical experiences and a wider, more global perspective. Through its network, IFSA promotes student meetings, enables participation in scientific debates and supports the involvement of youth in international forest and environmental policy, as well as in decision making processes.

### **A word about global representation:**

60% of the IFSA Local committees are European but each year IFSA is becoming increasingly active in countries outside Europe and strives to develop more activities outside this continent. The recent involvement of Latin Americans is a great example. IFSA is always trying to improve its communication and invites students from all parts of the world to join the network and thus enrich its activities by multicultural participation.

### **History of IFSA and Forestry Education:**

One of the goals of IFSA is to "Encourage improvements in Higher Education internationally to the benefit of all students". The involvement of the association in this topic dates back to November 1995 when IFSA in collaboration with the International Association of Students in Agricultural and Related Sciences (IAAS) made a questionnaire on Higher Education. Then for the period 1996 - 2001 IFSA acquired the status of Collective Consultation member for the debates on Higher Education organized by UNESCO. Each year from 1998 to 2000 IFSA also participated actively to the IUFRO group 6.15.00 discussions about forestry education.

In 2004-2005 IFSA was involved in the project initiated by IPFE called "International Education for Foresters in Non-Timber Forest Products" by encouraging students to participate in this course.

In 2007, a representative of IFSA was present during the 1st IPFE Workshop in Nairobi and contributed to involve more and more the association in the partnership. IFSA is now member of IPFE; a representative was also present during the sessions about Forestry Education of the CONFLAT (Latin American Forestry Congress) in Venezuela in April 2008.

IFSA is currently making a global survey via a questionnaire on Forestry education. The main objective of this action is to make a worldwide database available online. The document is downloadable on the IFSA website and all answers are still welcome.

Perspectives for the future are quite promising. In collaboration with the Latin American Forestry Students' Association (ALECIF), IFSA would like to organize a session on Forestry Education during the World Forestry Congress 2009 where all people interested on the subject will be invited.

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# SILVA Network and IPFE

## – some observations on state and developments

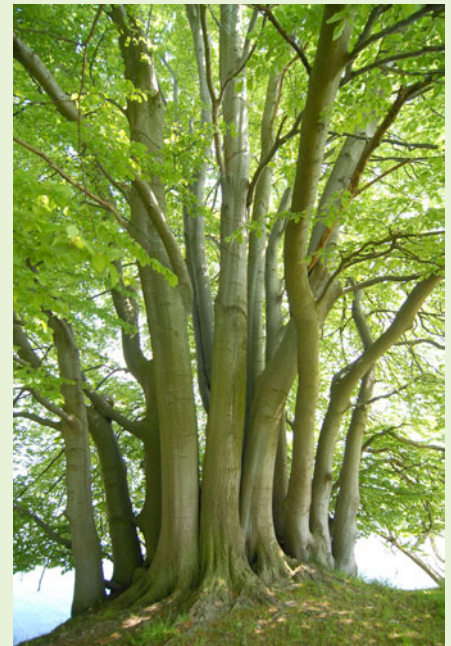
In April 2008 SILVA Network had its annual conference in Denmark centred on the theme of graduate analyses. It was another thought inspiring meeting of representatives of a dozen of the close to fifty members of the Network – faculties of forestry in Europe. There were informative reports on quite a few good examples from graduate enquiries, which demonstrated successful graduates, starting in careers in forestry and in many fields of occupation outside of forestry.

Some of these graduate enquiries have been done regularly over many years; others are single efforts, with different focus and approaches, which therefore do not lead to comparable results in a scientific sense. Exchange about these experiences are a good example of using SILVA Network as a platform for development – if a joint project of member faculties comes out of it, that would be a perfect result. But this needs commitment of single members from the member faculties as moving forces and experts.

This demonstrates an issue which IPFE and SILVA Network have and

will also in future have in common: Much of the strength is through conferences, very often side meetings at bigger congresses. Those are the occasions to discuss experiences and initiate projects. This works through personal participation of leading members of the networks. Then in addition there are always local participants from the region where the respective meetings take place – and once-in-a-while visitors and newcomers from more or less distant regions. These are the potential sustainers of the networks, who therefore need attention.

Of course attractive events will help. The next SILVA Network conference is under preparation with the theme of student and staff mobility at this stage of the Bologna process – if all works well it will take place in late October 2009 in Thessaloniki, Greece. At this time we also await the proceedings from the annual conference 2007 (Freiburg) on international curricula coming out now any moment – and the work on proceedings of 2008 has begun, with Pieter Schmidt pushing it forward as already many times in the past.



I will at this occasion name one representing this group, Paavo Pelkonen, who just a few weeks ago turned 60 and has been honoured in Joensuu by a fine “*liber amoricum*”, in which some of the processes of networking show up nicely. Paavo served as president of SILVA network for ten years, which are marked by many future oriented projects started and still running: So it seems natural, though not self understood, and a real asset, that he is one of the members of the new leading group of IPFE.

I look forward to many inspirations from Paavo and of course from other members of SILVA Network and IPFE in preparing and carrying out conferences and projects in the near future.

Siegfried Lewark,  
President of SILVA Network



Teachers as pupils, discussing activating learning methods in the forest during the SILVA Network conference in Copenhagen 2008. Photo: Reiner Mühlsiegl



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