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IUFRO will encapsulate, and distribute in plain language, brief, topical and policy-relevant highlights of those findings, along with information on where/how to access the full documents. The **IUFRO Spotlight** findings will be distributed in a periodic series of emails as well as blog postings.

Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge: Sustaining Communities, Ecosystems and Biocultural Diversity

By Su See Lee, IUFRO Vice-President
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A new book invites forest scientists to think outside the box – or, perhaps outside the laboratory – and make more of an effort to incorporate elements of traditional knowledge in their research and forest management activities.



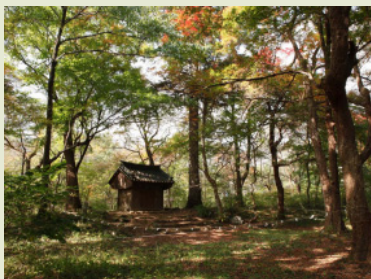
The book, *Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge: Sustaining Communities, Ecosystems and Biocultural Diversity*, published by Springer just this month, takes a long look at the contribution traditional knowledge has made and continues to make to sustainable resource management around the world.

Seventy-six authors from all corners of the globe contributed to the book.

At its heart is the belief that there is still much to be learned about sustainable forest management from local and indigenous peoples who have, for many generations, managed their forest resources in a sustainable manner – especially in areas of high biodiversity and in developing mitigation strategies to cope with changing climate.

For a variety of reasons, much of this knowledge is being lost and that is something that should not be allowed to happen.

The book's authors indicate that this knowledge needs to be recognized and that the people who have it need to be brought into the conversation – currently they are often excluded – and respected for what they know. The writers encourage the scientific community to pay more attention to this information and knowledge and, where appropriate, to lend their support.



Knowledge of climate and its vagaries, weather forecasting, observations on plant growth and animal behavior, among other things, have all been of direct and fundamental importance to the livelihoods and wellbeing of these local and indigenous groups.

So, over countless years they have developed approaches for managing biodiversity and coping with changing environmental conditions that most researchers, forest managers and policy makers don't know about.

The authors believe that some of that knowledge can – and should – inform the future planning of more of our science-based forest management plans and schemes.

The book contains sections dealing with various aspects of traditional knowledge in North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Australia-Pacific regions and covers topics such as: key policy issues; ethics; best practices; regional and international programs; and the importance of traditional knowledge for food security, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and cultural identity.

For more information about *Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge: Sustaining Communities, Ecosystems and Biocultural Diversity* please go to: <http://www.springer.com/life+sciences/ecology/book/978-94-007-2143-2>

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Suggestions for reports and findings that could be promoted through IUFRO Spotlight are encouraged. Please send them to: Gerda Wolfrum, wolfrum(at)iufro.org. To be considered, reports should be fresh, have policy implications and be applicable to more than one country.

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