

From:

Dr. John A. Parrotta, IUFRO President
IUFRO Headquarters – Secretariat

To:

International Council Representatives 2019-2024

Subject:

Circular letter by the IUFRO President

**Dear representative to the IUFRO International Council,
Dear alternate representative,**

I hope that you, your families and colleagues have been well during these past challenging months.

When I last wrote to you in June, I emphasized that IUFRO is placing the emphasis on maintaining and improving our communications – both within the IUFRO network and with our stakeholders in the "outside world" – to overcome the limitations that the current pandemic has imposed on our traditional in-person networking activities (i.e., physical conferences, workshops, etc.). Despite these limitations, I am pleased to report that we remain very active, with a growing number of our scientific meetings and other activities moving to online platforms, which has also enabled a much broader and diverse group of colleagues to actively participate. Hopefully, you have been following these developments via our IUFRO website, newsletters and social media channels.

I also trust that you have had a chance to consider the Terms of Reference for International Council members which was sent to you in June. Especially in these times, your engagement is crucially important to the future of effective global forest science collaboration via involvement of your country's IUFRO member organizations, so please do stay in touch!

Due to the constraints imposed by the current pandemic, we held our **59th IUFRO Enlarged Board Meeting via video conference from 9 to 11 September 2020**. The meeting, chaired by me and technically hosted by IUFRO HQ, was very successful, due in large part to the excellent preparations led by the IUFRO Secretariat. It was, in fact the largest such meeting ever, involving 72 participants, many of whom otherwise might not have been able to travel for financial or other reasons. The virtual format of the meeting was conducted very efficiently and also received very positive feedback from the participants after the meeting. Prior to the Enlarged Board meeting, Task Force Coordinators and Division Coordinators, as well as the Management Committee had met twice (in May and again just prior to the EB meeting) through virtual pre-Board meetings. Please find at the link below the **Draft Minutes from the 59th IUFRO Enlarged Board Meeting** for full details of the meeting and its outcomes.

I would like to highlight a couple of topics and initiatives discussed during the meeting:

- **The IUFRO Strategy and accompanying Strategy Action Plan 2020-2024:** As mandated by the IC during its meeting in Curitiba in October 2019, IUFRO HQ finalized the IUFRO Strategy document and prepared a draft Strategy Action Plan for the IUFRO Board's consideration and adoption. During our virtual Enlarged

Board Meeting, the *IUFRO Strategy document* (Motion 5) and the accompanying *IUFRO Strategy Action Plan 2020-2024* (Motion 6) were approved. Both of these documents are available at the link below. Please note that The *IUFRO Strategy* document will undergo a professional layout design in due course. The *Strategy Action Plan* is being further refined to prioritize actions and identify more clearly those actions that will be taken by different units, officeholders and IUFRO HQ. Please note that there are also several Actions relevant to the IC, requiring further commitment by all of you. You will receive a follow-up letter concerning the latter very soon.

- **Strategic Communications Plan 2020-2024:** This document, linked to the *IUFRO Strategy Action Plan*, will provide internal guidance to IUFRO in the next four years. In order to be successful, IUFRO HQ strongly relies on the support of IUFRO officeholders, especially Board and International Council members, to help mobilize the network and secure the necessary funds to implement the Plan. The document is available at the link below.
- **Enhancing participation in IUFRO activities in a changing world:** As IUFRO collaborative activities taking place worldwide have been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, I invited the Enlarged Board to provide guidance on how to enhance participation in IUFRO activities in a changing and uncertain world, including but not limited to the current and potential long-term impacts of the pandemic. The Board noted that there was urgency for IUFRO to respond to the current situation and to adopt innovative ways and new formats for enhancing communication and collaboration within the network. IUFRO HQ is preparing a consolidated summary based on the discussions and feedback received. This will be further elaborated by the Management Committee and Enlarged Board. If you are also interested in participating in this discussion, I encourage you to please let me and/or our Executive Director, Alexander Buck know about it.
- **IUFRO World Congress Stockholm 2024:** Preparatory activities for the next [IUFRO World Congress in June 2024](#) are well underway. The Secretariat of the Congress will finalize the Congress logo and design for approval by the MC by April 2021. The Congress Scientific Committee (CSC) is currently selecting its members and will soon start the discussions about the Congress title and themes, and the overall process for organizing of the scientific program,

I would also like to inform you that Senior Officer Renate Prüller, who has served so well as your main focal point for the IUFRO HQ over many years, began her well-deserved retirement on 1 October 2020. Andre Purret (purret@iufro.org), in his new position as the IUFRO Operations Manager succeeds her in strategic positions, such as supporting the Management Committee, International Council and IUFRO Board.

As always, I encourage you to write to me if you have any concerns or suggestions for how IUFRO can further improve to serve our members and continuously improve our global network for forest science collaboration, interconnecting forest, science and people for a better world.

With warm regards and best wishes,

John
IUFRO President

Link

[Zip file of all documents mentioned in this circular](#)