

**IUFRO WEBSITE - REDESIGN 2020/21**

<https://www.iufro.org/>

**MC 6/2020 Doc 5.2**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the IUFRO website is to be the main public entrance point to IUFRO where anyone can be introduced to the work of IUFRO, to serve as a space for officeholders and relevant partners to share information, and to provide a repository of all IUFRO-related information. Six years after the previous relaunch in September 2014, it is necessary to redevelop the website in terms of content, technical features and design. Hence, the redesign of the website forms an integral part of the IUFRO Strategic Communications Plan 2020-2024.

In the following, the current features of the website, a roadmap for the relaunch and the main aspects of the redevelopment are described. A short history of the current website is provided at the end of the document. It should be noted that these are initial ideas, which need further discussions with web-companies providing additional ideas and above all technical guidance (see roadmap).

## 2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In line with the IUFRO Strategic Communications Plan 2020-2024, the goals of the redesign of the IUFRO webpage can be described as follows:

- ***Communicate our brand values<sup>1</sup> better to our partners and the broader interested public***
- ***Create a better user experience***
- ***Increase participation of individual scientists and member organizations***

## 3. ROADMAP FOR THE REDESIGN

- **Spring 2020:** HQ to prepare initial roadmap including summary of current features, statistics, evaluation of current site and suggestions for redesign;
- **Mid May:** HQ to provide initial roadmap and background information for the virtual MC meeting and virtual meetings of Division Coordinators, Task Force Coordinators, and the Coordinators of IUFRO's Special Programmes, Projects and Initiatives with the President's Nominees;
- **June 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Virtual MC meeting and virtual meeting of Division Coordinators to exchange ideas on website redesign with aim to identify priorities and brainstorm possible activities and funding sources for website redesign;

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<sup>1</sup> Brand values – are beliefs and core values that IUFRO stands for, guiding our actions and decision making, and represented by the IUFRO brand (logo, slogan, font and colours)

- **End of June:** HQ to collect, through a brief online survey, written feedback and input by MC and Enlarged Board on current webpage and ambitions for the redesigned website;
- **July/August:** HQ to incorporate feedback from MC and Enlarged Board in revised roadmap to be presented at IUFRO Enlarged Board meeting;
- **September:** HQ to present revised roadmap for website redesign at IUFRO Enlarged Board meeting, and seek approval by the Voting Board on funding ;
- **September/October:** HQ to invite bids from website companies;
- **November/December:** HQ to select company for website redesign;
- **Beginning of 2021:** HQ to facilitate revision and begin implementing redesign;
- **Mid-late 2021:** key features of redesign are operational, and the redesigned webpage is broadly communicated to internal and external audiences.

#### **4. FEATURES OF THE CURRENT WEBSITE**

This section provides a brief overview of the features and tools of the current webpage.

##### **4.1 Technical facts**

- Hosted by IUFRO member organization University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU)
- Based on **content management system (CMS) Typo3**: open-source and license-free, developed by a developer community
- Responsive design (for better visualisation on mobile devices)

##### **4.2 Structure and functionalities**

The website comprises:

- **general pages** informing the public about IUFRO (the organization as such, events, publications, membership etc.); information provided by IUFRO members and the Communication Experts at IUFRO HQ;
- **unit pages** for the scientific bodies of IUFRO (Divisions and their Research Groups and Working Parties, Task Forces, Programmes and Projects); information provided mainly by Officeholders, Programme Teams and fed into the Website by IUFRO Web manager; and
- **Member zone with log-in**: comprises member lists with full contact details, IUFRO News (a membership benefit) and restricted pages such as Board meeting information.

The website features a number of functionalities, including a site search, online submission forms (IUFRO Noticeboard items, officeholder information and consent form), a web-based

newsletter distribution system, the SilvaTerm terminology database, online credit card payment for membership fees, and the possibility to make Spanish/French/German versions of a page.

### **4.3 IUFRO homepage ([www.iufro.org](http://www.iufro.org))**

The relaunch of the IUFRO website in 2014 brought a new design, in particular with respect to the IUFRO homepage, which was significantly expanded so that visitors not familiar with IUFRO would be able to find information at first glance. This includes:

- Latest news
- Entry point to the scientific units (Divisions, Task Forces, Special Programmes, Projects, Initiatives): highlight on different group with each visit to/reload of homepage
- Information about the IUFRO themes (tagging of content in view of IUFRO themes, can be seen in the IUFRO Themes box on the IUFRO homepage, if you click on the name of the theme)
- Six information boxes (news from members, from GFIS, events, noticeboard, science-policy, capacity building)
- Major events box
- IUFRO video box
- Sponsors' box
- Access to IUFRO blog

### **4.4 Unit page features**

- All (Divisional) Units currently have unique pages comprising: homepage, activities and events page, publications page, expertise page
- In addition, all have a Unit Noticeboard (user accounts of Coordinators, if existing, connected with units so that Coordinators can post there themselves)
- Unit Toolbox: a page where information and documents relevant for the work of the Coordinators is posted, facilitating the work of the coordinating team
- Unit Virtual Address Book intended to facilitate hand-overs from the outgoing to the incoming Coordinators; had to be abandoned due to the European General Data Protection Rule (GDPR)

### **4.5 External tools**

A number of external tools are used by the IUFRO website:

- **Oracle database** hosted by IUFRO member organization Austrian Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests, Natural Hazards and Landscape (BFW); this database contains information about membership payments, information for the membership invoices etc. The information about officeholders, members and unit information is fed into the IUFRO website.

- **Online literature database:** Also IUFRO's online literature database is hosted by BFW (<http://193.170.148.82/AISIUFRO/search/simple>); IUFRO is participating in the BFW installation of this software; extra costs
- **IUFRO Blog:** WordPress (integrated into the IUFRO website and thus with the website design); no extra costs
- **Mailman mailing lists** for Divisions, Research Groups, Working Parties, Task Forces; no extra costs
- **Surveys:** SurveyMonkey; extra costs
- **Online credit card payments** (membership payments); extra costs

## **5. REDESIGN 2020/21**

The Internet, both in terms of technical features and graphic design, develops very rapidly. The upcoming redesign of the IUFRO website aims achieve the above mentioned goals of (i) communicating our brand values better, (ii) creating a better user experience, and (iii) increasing participation of individual scientists and member organization by means incorporating several of the technical, strategic and content revisions described in the following subsections and/or additional suggestions from the IUFRO MC and Enlarged Board:

### **5.1 New sitemap**

- It is envisaged to develop a more horizontal design of a new website.

### **5.2 Tutorial videos**

- Tutorial videos could be added in order to provide a clear explanation of how to get involved in IUFRO. Videos could also show how to use the website features and ways to access membership benefits.

### **5.3 Technical integration of new technologies**

- Semantic search based on a forest-related ontology. This technology would make it easier to find related information and could build on the ontology currently being developed for the Open Platform on Forest Education. Valuable advice could be provided by Research Group 9.01.01 "Library, information networks and terminology";
- A more interactive/up-to-date design of the website to make it more attractive for users;
- Interactivity by means of personalization of information, e.g. selection of preferences, customizing displayed information; a functionality to select research themes you want to be informed about.

#### 5.4 Redesign of homepage as a showcase for IUFRO

The IUFRO homepage gives visitors a "first impression" of IUFRO and is therefore particularly important. Thus, the homepage needs a modern and user-friendly design:

- make it a "showcase" for IUFRO and its five strategic themes
- make it a means to attract new members, partners, donors
- display content (such as knowledge products etc.) rather like news items that can be tagged and then appear under a certain theme
- provide easy access to information about IUFRO's Special Programmes, Projects and Initiatives, and about collaboration with IUFRO's international partners and stakeholders<sup>2</sup>
- provide some historical "storyline" to market IUFRO
- provide a more dynamic approach to IUFRO unit pages

#### 5.5 Reorganization of IUFRO Division unit pages

##### Current shortcomings and challenges:

- Many pages of scientific units are either not filled at all or filled with information that is not up-to-date;
- There is a lot of material on the unit pages that might not be relevant anymore and that could be taken off (this exercise was done already once for the 2005 relaunch).

##### Ideas

- Create a **news space for each of the nine Divisions** where publications, events, other announcements of ALL units within a particular Division are displayed, the latest on top – the older further down. Units that are very active and communicate their activities and accomplishments will get the reward of better publicity;
- **Move events and activities content from individual unit pages to the news space for each division** (as proposed above), while maintaining unit description and contacts for coordinators and deputies;
- **Content upload via simple forms** (such as the Noticeboard submission form, <https://www.iufro.org/discover/noticeboard/submit-noticeboard-entry/>) by the unit coordinators. The content will be checked and approved by the IUFRO webmaster and automatically result in a news item displayed in the Division news space. The role of the IUFRO webmaster would change from active content upload to content approval.
- **Tagging** of each news item (such as meetings, knowledge products) from Divisions, Task Forces and SPPs, and other text records with a strategy theme (which would then in turn also be displayed on the IUFRO homepage under this theme), as already possible now.

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<sup>2</sup> Information about the SPPs and IUFRO's partners will be reviewed and reorganized by IUFRO HQ as part of the redesign of the IUFRO webpage.

- **Possibility for visitors to be informed**, when news under a certain strategy theme has been posted.
- Officeholder contacts: **no display of email addresses**, but a contact form behind each "email address" - prevent "harvesting" of email addresses and fraudulent emails by IUFRO officeholders and HQ members

**Resulting questions:**

- *How to display the more general information about scientific units (currently under "About Unit")?*
- *Is it ok to move older, but still relevant unit content from the unit pages to an unit archive?*

## 5.6 Technical integration of database and other tools

As part of the redesign, the information contained in the Oracle database (officeholder and member contact information, membership payment information, unit details) will be integrated with the IUFRO website in order to improve efficiency and remove existing duplications.

## 5.7 Possible other ideas

There have been some requests from organizers of smaller IUFRO meetings whether IUFRO had a space on its website where they could create their own conference website. Others wanted to create their own unit newsletter with an IUFRO template. Providing templates for conference websites and newsletters could help to improve "brand recognition". Therefore, it is suggested to:

- provide a template of a (simple) meeting website, in particular for smaller meetings
- provide a template of an online newsletter for IUFRO Units, Programmes and Projects
- both with adaptable layout/graphic elements, but with a standard IUFRO layout.

## 6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Based on experiences gained with the previous relaunch, the total costs to redesign the website are estimated at approximately EUR 100,000. The majority (about two thirds) of these expenditures would result from the update of the Content Management System and the update of related software tools ("extensions") for all the functionalities on the IUFRO website (such as newsletters, forms, Calendar of Events, picture galleries, etc.). The remaining expenditures would cover concept and design as well as general project work which include testing, meetings with designers, going live, etc.

The majority of these expenditures are not included in the regular budget. IUFRO HQ will therefore seek approval by the Board to cover the necessary budget from the IUFRO

strategic fund. The recurring expenditures for web-maintenance amount to approximately EUR 25,000 per year and are covered for the most part by the regular budget.

## **7. SELECTION OF WEB DEVELOPER**

IUFRO Headquarters will develop specifications for the new website. These will be sent to at least two web development companies with the request for a technical proposal and a bid to choose from.



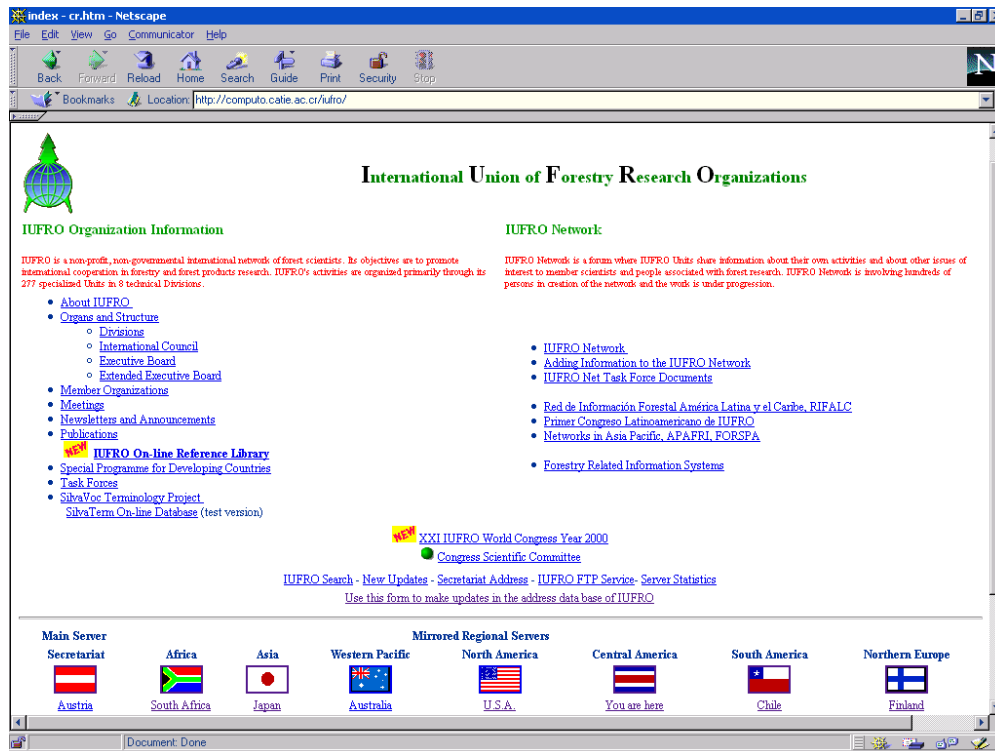
## 8. IUFRO WEBSITE STATISTICS - 1/2018 - 4/2020

1 January - 30 April 2020							
Pages	All visits	Unique visitors	Avg. Time on Page	Content	All visits	Unique visitors	Avg. Time on Page
IUFRO website	101.228	79.045	00:01:26	IUFRO website	101.228	79.045	00:01:26
IUFRO homepage	13.405	11.128	00:01:51	/science/	40.977	30.048	00:01:16
/events/calendar/current/	3.565	2.972	00:02:19	IUFRO homepage	13.407	11.128	00:01:51
/science/divisions/	2.129	1.460	00:00:22	/events/	10.778	9.125	00:01:43
/events/congresses/2019/	1.828	1.542	00:02:34	/publications/	8.386	6.131	00:01:12
/nc/search/	1.511	936	00:00:39	/who-is-who/	5.844	5.043	00:01:59
/discover/noticeboard/position-announcements/	1.269	1.139	00:02:55	/discover/	5.562	4.718	00:01:39
/events/calendar/current/month/12/year/2020/	1.105	976	00:03:10	/nc/	3.535	3.535	00:00:46
/discover/organization/	1.101	883	00:01:26	/de/	1.832	1.832	00:01:31
/science/officeholder-information-and-consent-form/	1.030	771	00:04:24	/membership/	1.779	1.779	00:01:48
/events/congresses/	820	657	00:00:56	/fr/	1.537	1.537	00:01:24
1 January - 31 December 2019							
Pages	All visits	Unique visitors	Avg. Time on Page	Content	All visits	Unique visitors	Avg. Time on Page
IUFRO website	371.720	291.255	00:01:35	IUFRO website	371.720	291.255	00:01:35
IUFRO homepage	44.581	33.224	00:01:54	/science/	123.757	92.598	00:01:20
/events/congresses/2019/	40.727	35.624	00:03:10	/events/	74.363	64.130	00:02:07
/events/calendar/current/	15.517	12.926	00:02:22	IUFRO homepage	44.581	33.224	00:01:54
/science/special/spdc/sap/sap-cong19/	5.639	4.240	00:03:56	/publications/	25.581	20.027	00:01:18
/science/divisions/	5.391	3.757	00:00:31	/discover/	22.303	18.374	00:02:04
/discover/organization/	5.274	3.876	00:02:37	/who-is-who/	15.578	13.595	00:01:52
/discover/noticeboard/position-announcements/	4.398	4.016	00:03:02	/nc/	12.701	8.218	00:01:06
/events/congresses/	4.362	3.687	00:00:51	/membership/	7.242	5.462	00:01:32
/science/special/silvavoc/silvaterm/query-silvaterm-database/	3.382	612	00:00:56	/de/	5.758	4.712	00:01:32
/publications/news/electronic-news/	2.793	2.265	00:00:55	/es/	4.872	3.875	00:01:38

<b>1 January - 31 December 2018</b>							
<b>Pages</b>	<b>All visits</b>	<b>Unique visitors</b>	<b>Avg. Time on Page</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>All visits</b>	<b>Unique visitors</b>	<b>Avg. Time on Page</b>
IUFRO website	316.504	258.205	00:01:36	IUFRO website	316.504	258.205	00:01:36
IUFRO homepage	32.880	27.286	00:01:31	/science/	117.008	90.887	00:01:19
/events/calendar/current/	21.420	17.750	00:02:40	/events/	58.185	49.831	00:02:11
/events/congresses/2019/	20.201	17.619	00:03:46	IUFRO homepage	32.880	27.286	00:01:31
/discover/noticeboard/position-announcements/	5.935	5.466	00:03:18	/publications/	24.449	20.013	00:01:33
/science/divisions/	5.241	3.724	00:00:32	/discover/	23.421	20.271	00:02:21
/discover/organization/	5.014	3.804	00:02:49	/who-is-who/	16.594	14.778	00:02:08
/science/special/silvavoc/silvaterm/query-silvaterm-database/	3.624	691	00:00:48	/nc/	9.037	6.367	00:01:15
/events/congresses/	3.622	3.042	00:00:49	/membership/	5.859	4.715	00:01:33
/publications/news/electronic-news/	3.123	2.664	00:00:53	/search/	4.638	3.838	00:00:55
/science/special/spdc/ysi/	3.075	2.557	00:03:10	/es/	2.980	2.492	00:02:07

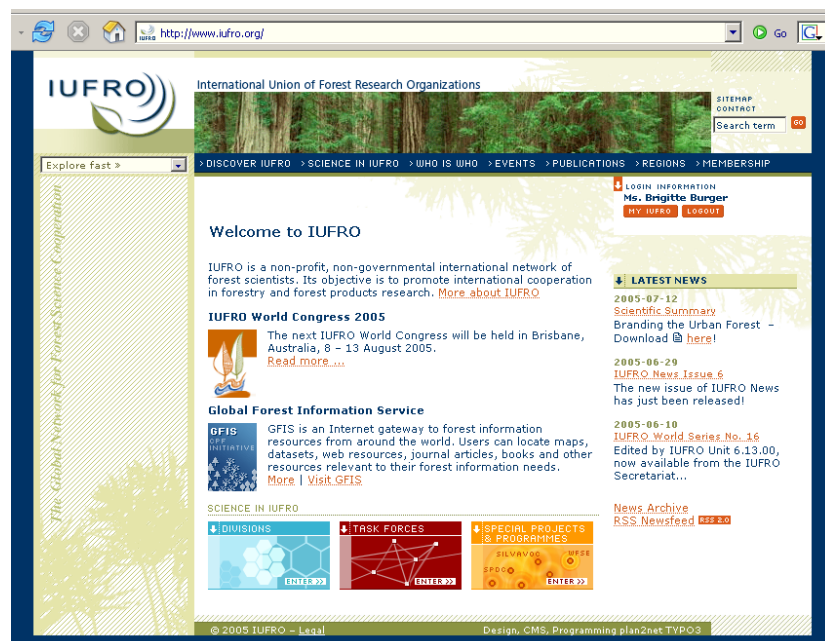
## 9. A SHORT HISTORY IN PICTURES

### IUFRO website - 1995



IUFRO was among the first international organizations with its own website.

### Relaunch 2005/06



The website kept the same pages and structure, but received a new design as well as a content management system.

