



International Union of Forest Research Organizations

Union Internationale des
Instituts de Recherches
Forestières

Unión Internacional
de Organizaciones de
Investigación Forestal

Internationaler
Verband Forstlicher
Forschungsanstalten

From:

Dr. John Parrotta, IUFRO President
IUFRO Headquarters – Secretariat

To:

IUFRO Members and IUFRO Officeholders

Subject:

Circular letter by the IUFRO President

Dear IUFRO members,
Dear IUFRO officeholders,

As we approach the end of the 2020, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, as members and officeholders of IUFRO, for your commitment and enthusiasm. This has ensured that IUFRO - *the* global network for forest science collaboration - has remained strong, active and resilient in its response to the challenges and new realities that this past year presented.

I can proudly say that, through all our efforts, IUFRO has maintained and in some ways even enhanced collaboration in forest science despite the obstacles we faced during this past memorable year. A dynamic, adaptive and inclusive IUFRO network remains essential if we are to deal effectively with the many environmental and social challenges that have certainly not gone away, although most of the world's attention this year has focused on the human health and economic crises that the pandemic ushered in.

Towards this end, I am pleased to inform you that the IUFRO Board, during its first ever virtual meeting in September, finalized our [post-2020 Strategy](#) and an associated comprehensive Strategy Action Plan. These are designed to enhance research excellence in forest science worldwide, improve communications and embrace diversity within our network, and to increase IUFRO's visibility, outreach and education activities. I am grateful to the many IUFRO officeholders and their scientific units, member organizations and stakeholders who have provided valuable inputs to the development of the Strategy and the Action Plan, and am confident that these documents will effectively guide our collective work in the years to come and make our network stronger and even more beneficial.

We have also taken a close look at our current and evolving modes of networking which, until very recently, have relied heavily on physical meetings, and are working towards a more diversified set of options – particularly digital and hybrid formats. This is reflected in the paper "[Enhancing networking capabilities and participation in IUFRO activities in a changing world](#)", with additional supporting resources for meeting organizers available on the [IUFRO webpage](#).

Embracing this diversity of meeting formats will help us enhance flexibility and expand involvement of a larger and far more diverse group of scientists and stakeholders in our activities, while reducing our collective “carbon footprint” associated with international travel.

Although our lives, our work and many of our societies have been severely disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, we have also been reminded of the values of compassion, solidarity, truth, shared sacrifice, and commitment for the good of our human family and the biosphere that sustains us. Global recovery and human well-being will more than ever also depend on forest science to harness the potential of forests and trees to contribute to sustainable development while avoiding and mitigating the threats affecting forests.

Once again, I thank each and every one of you for your dedication and contributions to forest science and the IUFRO “family” during 2020 and look forward to your continued active participation in our efforts to interconnect forests, science and people. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me or IUFRO Headquarters in Vienna at any time.

With warm regards and best wishes,



John Parrotta
IUFRO President