

THE ONLINE INFORMATION BULLETIN OF THE GLOBAL FOREST SCIENCE NETWORK*A merger of IUFRO News and IUFRO E-Notes distributed by e-mail 10 times a year.*

Harmonizing Forest Terminology: A Way to Reconcile Consensus and Diversity

Renate Prüller, *C SilvaVoc Project*
on Multilingual Forest Terminology

Definitions of forest and related concepts are used on a variety of occasions: to report on forest status and trends, for example, or to help assess the effectiveness of forest related policies. They can also provide a common basis for the international dialogue on forests. The fact that key forestry concepts and definitions not only differ between conventions, international processes and organizations, but also that they are not used consistently at national and international levels causes confusion and calls for harmonization.

In order to foster common understanding of the definitions and the context in which they are developed, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) organized a series of Expert Meetings on Harmonizing Forest-Related Definitions for Use by Various Stakeholders.

The previous two Expert Meetings held in 2002 concentrated on core definitions of forest and change processes between forest and other land classes. It was recognized that each international convention or process was context-specific and applied its own definitions of forest-related terms. However, the use of these terms and the way they were defined should be as consistent as possible.

In this context, **harmonization** – unlike standardization – is meant to facilitate comparisons between existing definitions of related terms. It collects existing definitions, establishes linkages, identifies common elements,



Edith Stipl, *Forest Quilt III* 2004
Oil on panel, 32 x 32 x 1 Inches
<http://www.kostuikgallery.com>

differences, incompatibilities and inconsistencies, as well as qualitative and, if possible, quantitative relationships. Harmonization may result in recommendations for modifications to one or several definitions which make them more compatible, consistent or even congruent.

The Third Expert Meeting in January 2005 dealt with definitions related to the naturalness of forests, planted forests, trees outside forest, and forest management. It additionally focused on multilingual aspects and approved the continuation of the multi-stakeholder process under the CPF umbrella.

While this process mostly affects definitions coined in English as the *lingua franca* of international communication, it also reflects unavoidable discrepancies among national or local sensibilities. *In a multilingual environment* it is important that national and local uses of terms and definitions and, thus, diversity of thinking and expression have their own right and place.

With its *four official languages and long-lasting commitment to terminology*, IUFRO is currently addressing how to reconcile consensus and diversity best. With its 15,000 member scientists in over 100 countries, and activities, products and services of [SilvaVoc](#) and Working Party [6.03.02](#), it provides an excellent resource for addressing international multilingual forest terminology issues while contributing to and benefiting from this unique pool of forest expertise.

You are welcome to send comments on this article to prueller@iufro.org. In addition, we invite you to our session 039 *Added value of terminology work for forestry stakeholders* at the forthcoming IUFRO World Congress.

Report from the 3rd Expert Meeting on Harmonizing Forest-related Definitions for Use by Various Stakeholders, Rome, 17-19 January 2005. All three Expert Meetings brought together more than 50 experts each representing conventions, international processes, organizations and countries around the world. Proceedings of the Expert Meeting will be available from FAO and IUFRO Websites most likely at the end of March 2005.

A Word is Sometimes Worth a Thousand Pictures

Michèle Kaennel Dobbertin,
C 6.03.02 Trends in Forest Terminology

Take a look at this painting and tell me what you see. You will certainly all agree that these are trees in a forest. Yet to each of you, trees and forest mean something different, depending on where you live, and what your cultural background and your professional connection to forests are. We tend to forget these discrepancies and to assume that same words describe same concepts all over the world. Sometimes the picture is intentionally blurred to provide room for interpretation and consensus, but sometimes it needs focusing by experts.

In IUFRO, Working Party [6.03.02](#) and [SilvaVoc](#) have been collaborating for ten years to address this issue. One major concern has been to ensure that users of scientific and technical vocabulary (e.g., scientists, wood and forestry professionals, students, politicians, journalists, translators) benefit from expert assistance on how particular terms and definitions are used locally. The IUFRO network obviously offered the required range of disciplines, cultures and backgrounds, but the experts remained to be identified and made visible for the users.



Edith Stipl, *Quilt II*, 2002.
36 x 36 inches. Oil on panel. For more information: <http://www.kostuikgallery.com>

Thus, a *Directory of Experts* was compiled and went online in 1996 as a product of IUFRO WP 6.03.02 (Trends in Forest Terminology). Its use is free and open to anyone in and outside the forestry and forest research circles. Users select the relevant experts by searching a database by

languages and fields of expertise. They ask their questions by email, fax or phone directly to the experts. Feedback from either user or expert to the database manager is welcome, as it may be used in IUFRO's terminology database SilvaTerm. This Directory is now undergoing major quantitative and qualitative upgrading.

If you are willing to provide expert assistance, in any language, please fill out the online form at <http://www.wsl.ch/forest/risks/iufro/yourname.pdf> and return it to <iufroterm@wsl.ch>.

You Are Invited!

Come and see the new IUFRO website: www.iufro.org

Have you already visited the newly designed IUFRO website? One of the many novelties is the exclusive zone for IUFRO Members with a lot of in-depth information.

Log-in for Members

IUFRO officeholders and scientists working at IUFRO Member Organizations as well as individual members of IUFRO can easily access the Member Zone:

- 1) register for a user account at www.iufro.org/registration/ or click "Register Now" in the top right-hand corner;
- 2) wait for our email with the information about the status of the registration;
- 3) do the actual login using the login boxes in the top right-hand corner (box for Email address and box below for password);
- 4) enjoy surfing in all areas of the IUFRO website!

Do not hesitate to contact us at <office@iufro.org> if you have any problems!

XXII IUFRO World Congress 2005

Forests in the Balance: Linking Tradition and Technology

Brisbane, Australia,
8-13 August 2005

Congress Website:
www.iufro2005.com

Important Dates for Registration

1 April 2005 - Deadline for Earlybird Registration

8 July 2005 - Deadline for Fulltime Registration

1 August 2005 - Online Registration closes 1700 hours (Australian Eastern Standard Time)



Publications

NEW!

[IUFRO World Series 15](#)

Meeting the Challenge: Silvicultural Research in a Changing World

Extended abstracts from the IUFRO All-Division 1 Conference:

Montpellier, France, June 14-18, 2004.

Jointly organized by IUFRO, USDA-FS, CIRAD-Forêt and INRA.

Editors: John A. Parrotta, Henri-Félix Maître, Daniel Auclair, Marie-Hélène Lafond

185 p., Vienna 2005, ISBN 3-901347-51-8.

Price: 20.- EUR plus mailing costs.

Please, send your orders to office@iufro.org



[Other IUFRO World Series Publications](#)

Conference Proceedings

Nursery production and stand establishment of broad-leaves to promote sustainable forest management

ISBN 88-448-0103-5

First published: June 2004; Printed in Italy

Edited by:

Lorenzo Ciccarese, APAT

Stefano Lucci, APAT

Anders Mattsson, Dalarna University, Sweden

Conference jointly organised by:

APAT, Dalarna University and IUFRO Research Group 3.02.00 (Operational methods in the establishment and treatment of stands) and Working Parties 3.02.03 (Nursery operations); 3.02.01 (Stand establishment operations); Rome, Italy, May 7 - 10, 2001.

The PROFOREST Centre of Excellence

is led by the Forest Research Institute in Warsaw (FRIW), Poland. The PROFOREST Centre of Excellence has as its aim to launch, pursue and stimulate the process of integration of forest scientists in Central European countries and EC Member States, in protection of forest resources in Central Europe.

<http://www.proforest.ibles.waw.pl/>

Meetings

For an exhaustive list of IUFRO meetings, please visit our [online calendar!](#)

IUFRO Meetings

Forestry education: between science and practice

6-9 April 2005, Wageningen, The Netherlands

IUFRO Units 6.15.00, 6.18.02, 6.06.04

Contact: Pieter Schmid

Email: [<ineke_schmidt@hetnet.nl>](mailto:ineke_schmidt@hetnet.nl)

Biodiversity and Conservation Biology in Plantation Forests

26-29 April 2005, Bordeaux, France

The Conference will be organized by IEFC (Institut Européen de la Forêt Cultivée), Bordeaux, France and INRA (Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique), Bordeaux and Paris, France, under auspices of IUFRO Division 8; WWF (World Wildlife Fund), Forests for Life Programme; EFI (European Forest Institute)

Contact: Hervé Jactel-Fax: +33-5-56680546,

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<http://www.pierroton.inra.fr/IEFC/manifestations/IUFROD82005.html>

Forest Insect Epidemics:

Population Dynamics, Dispersal, and Ecosystem Impacts

11-14 July, 2005, University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, BC, Canada

IUFRO Units 7.03.05 and 7.03.07

Organizers: Staffan Lindgren, Peter Jackson, Robert Hodgkinson, Terry Shore, Allan Carroll

<http://web.unbc.ca/~iufro/>

Other Meetings

Managing the Forest on Both Sides of the Atlantic - Homage to Gifford Pinchot

7-8 March 2005, Nancy, France

<http://www.engref.fr/pinchot/accueil.htm>

Extension Seminar: "Promoting Rural Development through participative methodologies"

22-23 March, 2005, Santiago, Chile

Organized by INFOR and CONAF

Contact: Susana Benedetti (DC of IUFRO Division 6)
[<sbenedet@infor.gob.cl>](mailto:sbenedet@infor.gob.cl)

Committee on Forestry (17th Session)

Rome, 15 - 19 March 2005

http://www.fao.org/unfao/bodies/cofo/cofo17/cofo17_en.htm