

Forests Can Promote Human Health

By Eeva Karjalainen, Finnish Forest Research Institute

There is evidence that forests have positive effects on human health. Walks in the forest enhance the human immune system and can thus, for example, help to fight diseases like cancer. A great diversity of scientific studies and international initiatives are currently focusing on these important findings. In a seminar on Forests and Human Health held on 30 April 2008 in Marrakesh, Morocco, the IUFRO Task Force on Forests and Human Health, ForHealth, together with its partners and other actors in this field, explored possibilities of cooperation between scientists and policy makers working with forest and human health issues.

Forests for fighting cancer and reducing stress

In the scientific seminar presentations, the interdependency of forests and human health was strongly emphasized. The research groups of Dr. Qing Li (Nippon Medical School, Japan) and Prof. Yoshifumi Miyazaki (Chiba University, Japan), for example, produced data on how forest visits can strengthen the human immune system. According to these studies, spending time in the forest increases the activity of natural killer (NK) cells in human beings. Since NK cells can kill tumor cells by releasing anti-cancer proteins, forest visits may have a preventive effect on cancer generation and development. In addition, visiting the forest also has relaxing effects. It significantly reduces the concentration of salivary cortisol, a stress hormone, and lowers the blood pressure and pulse rate.

Conserving forests and biodiversity

Dr. Gladys Norley Ashitey, Deputy Minister of Health, Ghana, particularly stressed the influence of the biodiversity of tropical forests on human health and wellbeing. Consequently, she emphasized the importance of the cooperation between scientific, governmental and private sectors in forest conservation. Stakeholders from the environment, health and nutrition, agriculture, forestry, economic development, culture and education sectors should jointly formulate and implement strategies that enhance forest conservation. This will be a necessary step in the promotion of both human health and sustainability of ecosystems and biodiversity.



Photo: G Wolfrum, IUFRO Headquarters

Promoting partnerships and joint initiatives

At the seminar, Dr. Matti Rousi from the Finnish Forest Research Institute and Deputy Coordinator of the Task Force on Forests and Human Health ForHealth, pointed out that there is a great number of international initiatives on environment and health but very few of them focus particularly on forests. Dr. Rousi suggested to join forces with already established stakeholders, such as COHAB (Co-Operation on Health And Biodiversity), and strengthen the forestry perspective in them. The COHAB Initiative is an international program established to respond to the gaps in awareness and existing policies on issues linking biodiversity with human health and well-being. In his presentation, the Director of COHAB, Mr. Conor Kretsch, met the challenge and outlined the opportunities for partnership between ForHealth and COHAB.

The seminar on Forests and Human Health took place on 30 April 2008 in Marrakesh, Morocco. The seminar was organized by the [IUFRO Task Force on Forests and Human Health](#) in co-operation with the University Cadi Ayyad, SYLVIA-WORLD for Development and the Protection of Forests and the Environment, and the IUFRO Secretariat.

The presentations and posters can be downloaded from the ForHealth webpages:
<http://www.forhealth.fi/pmwiki/pmwiki.php?n=Main.SeminarOnForestsAndHumanHealth>

Report on Forest Adaptation to Climate Change is Taking Shape

By Alexander Buck, IUFRO Deputy Executive Director

IUFRO leads and coordinates a global scientific assessment regarding the adaptation of forests and forest-dependent people to climate change. The assessment aims at informing policy deliberations on this subject matter globally and regionally. It is being carried out by an interdisciplinary panel of experts with outstanding scientific expertise on issues related to forests and adaptation.

The report under preparation by the Expert Panel will present the state-of-knowledge regarding the impacts of climate change on forests and their main goods and services, key vulnerabilities of forest dependent people, as well as options for adaptation in terms of policy and management. A special summary for policy makers will form part of the assessment report.

The Expert Panel held its 2nd meeting on 13-15 May 2008 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy (*see photo*). The Panel agreed, among others, on the thematic outlines of all sections of the assessment report and prepared first draft texts of these sections. It also agreed on the detailed timetable for drafting, review and finalization of the assessment report. In this way, the meeting in Rome laid the foundations for a successful and timely delivery of the assessment report which is due to be completed by December 2008.



Photo: A. Buck, IUFRO Headquarters

The assessment is being undertaken in the framework of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests' (CPF) Joint Initiative on Forest Science and Technology. This Joint CPF Initiative was launched in April 2007 as a new mechanism for effectively linking the information requirements of governments and intergovernmental processes related to forests and trees with existing scientific expertise. It builds on the political recognition provided by the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and is led and coordinated by IUFRO.

Further information:

<http://www.iufro.org/science/science-initiative/>

Congratulations to IUFRO Member Organization! Southwest Anatolia Forest Research Institute, Turkey, celebrated its 50th Anniversary!

The Southwest Anatolia Forest Research Institute (SAFRI), located in Antalya city, in the Mediterranean region of Turkey was founded in 1958 as one of the first forest research institutes in Turkey. During the last 50 years the Institute has provided solutions to regional forestry problems and hence contributed to the forest sector in Turkey. The majority of the research over the past 50 years has been focused on silviculture, and conservation.

Photo: Anatolia Anniversary - Arazi



The anniversary was organized by the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Forestry in Antalya city by holding a conference on April 1-2, 2008. The impact of research during the last five de-

cadades on forestry at regional and national level was discussed. The participants talked about the new vision of forest research in the 21st century and the role of forest research in the era of global warming. More than 200 researchers, foresters, academics and non-governmental organizations participated at the conference.

Contact: Nesat Erkan, Director
nesaterkan@yahoo.com

Job Openings and Visiting Program

Endowed FRBC Chair in Forest Hydrology

(closes Oct. 15, 2008)

The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, is seeking to fill an endowed FRBC Chair in Forest Hydrology at the Assistant or Associate Professor level. The appointment will be effective July 1, 2009, but an alternative date may be arranged. For more information, contact:

Heather Akai, e-mail: [heather.akai\(at\)ubc.ca](mailto:heather.akai(at)ubc.ca)

[Announcement](#)

Canada Research Chair - Tier 1:

Natural Resource/Environmental Economics

(closes Sept. 15, 2008)

The Department of Forest Resources Management, Faculty of Forestry at UBC, Vancouver, invites applications from outstanding individuals for one full-time, tenured position at the Professor level. The appointment will be effective July 1, 2009, but an alternative date may be arranged.

For more information, contact:

Heather Akai, e-mail: [heather.akai\(at\)ubc.ca](mailto:heather.akai(at)ubc.ca)

[Announcement](#)

Visiting Scientist Program

(for areas of natural sciences other than mathematics and physics) http://users.ictp.it/~twas/hg/vis_sci.html

The program which is co-sponsored by ICSU, TWAS, UNESCO and UNU/IAS supports visits of internationally renowned scientists to institutions located in developing countries, especially those located in the least developed countries.

Contact: [exchanges\(at\)twas.org](mailto:exchanges(at)twas.org)

Obituary

It is with great sadness that we inform you that **Gustaf Sirén** died at the age of 88. Professor Sirén made outstanding achievements in forestry research and development during a long and active career in Finnish and Swedish forestry. He was a pioneering researcher in energy forestry. In 1995 Gustav Sirén received the IUFRO Distinguished Service Award for his active commitment to IUFRO and his work as IUFRO officeholder in P1.09-00 Integrated Research in Biomass for Energy that he started in 1981.

Websites

FAO Launches New Website on Urban Forestry

Under the title "Forests and Trees for Healthy Cities", the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) recently launched an informative website about urban forestry: <http://km.fao.org/urbanforestry/>

Publications

Sustainable Forest Management and Poverty Alleviation: Roles of Traditional Forest-related Knowledge

IUFRO World Series 21, ISBN 978-3-901347-67-2

Edited by John A. Parrotta, Liu Jinlong and Sim Heok-Choh. Extended abstracts from the conference held in Kunming, China, from 17-20 December 2007.

For copies, contact: office@iufro.org

The Forest and the City:

The Cultural Landscape of Urban Woodland

By Cecil Konijnendijk

The book discusses the relationship between cities and their forests over time, focusing on socio-cultural links. [Website](#)

Emerging Needs of Society from Forest Ecosystems: Towards the Opportunities and Dilemmas in Forest Managerial Economics and Accounting

Zadnik Stirn, L. (Ed., 2008) Proceedings (Non-reviewed Papers, Abstracts, Author Index) of the IUFRO Symposium in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 22 - 24 May 2008; 196 pp. ISBN 978-961-6020-51-0. **Contact:** Biotechnical Faculty, Dept. of Forestry and Renewable Natural Resources, Ljubljana Univ., Večna pot 83, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia <http://www.iufro405-08.si/>

Managerial Economics and Accounting in an Evolving Paradigm of Forest Management

Kant, S., et al. (Eds., 2008). Proceedings of the IUFRO Symposium in Rottenburg, Germany, 17 - 20 May 2006; Schriftenreihe der Hochschule für Forstwirtschaft Rottenburg, Vol. 22, 376 pp. ISSN 0940-3698. **Contact:** Univ. of Applied Forest Sciences Rottenburg, Schadenweilhof, 72108 Rottenburg am Neckar, Germany

EEA Report No 3/2008

The report 'European forests – ecosystem conditions and sustainable use' is available on the [EEA website](#). ISBN: 978-92-9167-354-4

FAO Forestry Paper on Forests and Energy

A new FAO Forestry Paper on Forests and Energy is now available in multiple languages in the document repository. Visit: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/publications/en/>

IUFRO Meetings

NOTE: The following list of meetings is just a selection!

For a full list of IUFRO events, please visit our online [calendar](#), or the [homepages](#) of IUFRO Units involved. Non-IUFRO meetings are also announced on the IUFRO [Noticeboard](#) on our web site.

1-5 July 2008

Recent Advances in Forest Insect Science

Pretoria, South Africa

[IUFRO 7.03.00](#) Entomology

Contact: Mike Wingfield, mike.wingfield@fabi.up.ac.za

<http://www.fabinet.up.ac.za/iufro703/index>



25-28 August 2008

Adaptation of Forests and Forest Management to Changing Climate with Emphasis on Forest Health:

A Review of Science, Policies, and Practices

Umeå, Sweden

IUFRO, SLU, FAO

Contact: Björn Hanell, bjorn.hanell@ssko.slu.se

<http://www.forestadaptation2008.net>

8-10 September 2008

Conference on Orchards and Groves:

Their History, Ecology, Culture and Archaeology

Sheffield, United Kingdom

[IUFRO 6.07.02](#) Social and economic history

Contact: Ian Rotherham, i.d.rotherham@shu.ac.uk

<http://www.ukeconet.co.uk/>

[index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=37&Itemid=26](http://www.ukeconet.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=37&Itemid=26)

16-18 September 2008

Landscape Ecology and Forest Management - Challenges and Solutions

Chengdu, China

[IUFRO 6.14.00](#) Urban Forestry, [8.01.02](#) Landscape Ecology, Task Force on Forests and Water Interactions

Contact: Shirong Liu, Email: liusr@caf.ac.cn

<http://research.eeescience.utoledo.edu/lees/IUFRO/2008MTG/>

21-26 September 2008

9th Extension Working Party Symposium

Mattawa and Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

[IUFRO 6.06.02](#) Extension and [6.06.02](#) Technology Transfer

Contact: Guy Smith, guy.smith@nrcan.gc.ca ;

Jurij Beguš, jurij.begus@zgs.gov.si

<http://iufroextension.org>

22-26 September 2008

The Breeding and Genetic Resources of Five-Needle Pines

Yangyang, Korea

[IUFRO 2.02.15](#) Breeding and Genetic Resources of Five-Needle Pines

Contact: E.W. Noh, ewnoh@forest.go.kr

<http://iufro.kfrigene.net/>

5-9 October 2008

The 1st International Conference on Forest Related Traditional Knowledge and Culture

Seoul, Korea

IUFRO Task Force on Traditional Forest Knowledge

Contact: Ms. Byong-Yi Choi, cby9192(at)snu.ac.kr

<http://www.iufro.org/science/task-forces/traditional-forest-knowledge/activities/>

3-7 November 2008

Symposium on Sustainable Forest Management in Africa, African Solutions to African Problems in Natural Forest

Stellenbosch, South Africa

[1.02.00](#) Tropical and subtropical silviculture

Contact: Robert Nasi, r.nasi(at)cgiar.org

<http://academic.sun.ac.za/forestry/Symposium%202008/Symp2008Main.html>

6-8 November 2008

The European Forest-Based Sector: Bio-Responses to Address New Climate and Energy Challenges?

Nancy, France

[IUFRO 4.05.00](#) Managerial economics and accounting,

Task Force on Forests and Carbon Sequestration

Contact: Jean Luc Peyron, jean.luc.peyron(at)gmail.com

Website: <http://www.gip-ecofor.org/publi/>

[page.php?id=1&rang=0&domain=34&lang=en_GB](http://www.gip-ecofor.org/publi/page.php?id=1&rang=0&domain=34&lang=en_GB)

30 November – 2 December 2008

Americas Regional Meeting of the IRG on Wood Protection

Guanacaste, Costa Rica

[IUFRO 5.03.00](#) Wood protection

Contact: Andrew Wong, awong.unimas(at)gmail.com

<http://www.irgamericas.org/>

Other Meetings

29 July - 1 August 2008

FAO International Meeting on Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry: Trees Connecting People - In Action Together

Bogotá, Colombia,

<http://km.fao.org/uploads/media/BogotaEN.pdf>

28-30 August 2008

Final Conference of COST Action E39:

Forests, Trees and Human Health and Wellbeing

Hamar, Norway

http://www.e39.ee/?News:Conference_in_Norway

2-4 September 2008

Forests and Forestry – Risks, Challenges, Solutions

Zvolen, Slovakia

International Scientific Conference held on the occasion of the 110th anniversary of the foundation of the Forest Research Institute and on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of lifelong learning in the Slovak Forest Sector.



Contact:

Michal Vanco

Michal.Vanco(at)nicsk.org

<http://www.nicsk.org/en/index.htm>

2-4 September 2008

4th International Timber Forum "Forest and Man"

Moscow, Russia

Supported by the Russian Government, Ministries of the Russian Federation, Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The forum will be held together with the 12th

International Branch Exhibition "Lesdrevmash-2008"

in Moscow International Exhibition Centre "Expocentr".

Contact: center(at)expo.ru; expo(at)expo.ru

3 – 5 September 2008

Forests in the Changing Environment

Koli, Joensuu, Finland

Pan-European workshop as a basis for a regional

contribution to the United Nations Forum on Forest (UNFF)

Contact: Heikki Granholm, heikki.granholm(at)mmm.fi

<http://www.mmm.fi/forests/koli2008>

14-19 October 2008

4th International Conference on Monitoring and Management of Visitor Flows in Recreational and Protected Areas (MMV4)

Montecatini Terme, Italy

<http://www.mmv4.org>

16-19 October 2008

3rd National Congress of Silviculture

Taormina, Sicily, Italy

National Forest Corps, Italian Academy of Forest Sciences and Region Sicily

<http://www.congressoselvicultura2008.org>

20-24 October 2008

European Forest Week

Brussels, Belgium and Rome, Italy

FAO, EC, MCPFE, UN-ECE

Contact: Maria Casa, maria.casa(at)fao.org

<http://www.europeanforestweek.org>

26-30 October 2008

23rd Session of the International Poplar Commission Conference "Poplars, willows and people's wellbeing"

Beijing, China

Contact: Zhang Zhiqiang, ipc2008(at)bjfu.edu.cn

A limited number of developing country scientists will also be supported – for details, see:

www.fao.org/forestry/ipc2008

27-30 May 2009

12th European Forum on Urban Forestry: Changing City, Changing Forest

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

More information will soon be available at

<http://www.efuf.org>

18-25 October 2009

XIII FAO World Forestry Congress: "Forests in Development - a Vital Balance"

Buenos Aires, Argentina

http://www.wfc2009.org/version2/presentacion_ingles.asp