

MORIOKA 2013: Global Forest Products Marketing and Forest Certification in a Green Economy

By Toshiaki Owari, Deputy Coordinator of IUFRO Research Group 5.10.00 Forest products marketing and business management (<http://www.iufro.org/science/divisions/division-5/50000/51000/>)

This international symposium held on March 28 at Iwate University, Japan, was organized by the Japan Society of Forest Planning, Risk Analysis Research Center, Institute of Statistical Mathematics, and co-organized by IUFRO 5.10.00 and the Wood Utilization Systems Forum.

At the United Nations Rio+20 Conference in June 2012, green economy was considered as one of the important tools for achieving sustainable development. Because forests form a basis for a green economy, the forest sector can play a key role in this context. Forest certification is recognized as a promising development for greening the forest sector. This symposium, co-organized by IUFRO, aimed at providing a synthesis of scientific research on forest products marketing and forest certification worldwide to discuss strategies and challenges of the forest sector in a green economy.

The symposium featured five invited speeches:

- 1) Richard Vlosky gave an excellent overview of certification market research, including theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and study examples.
- 2) Florian Kraxner outlined the spatiotemporal development of forest/chain-of-custody certification from a global perspective.
- 3) Toshiaki Owari provided a comprehensive review of certification market studies that have vigorously been conducted by forest products marketing researchers.
- 4) Takuya Takahashi analyzed the diffusion patterns of forest certification from local and global perspectives in order to identify „winners” and „losers” in the movement.
- 5) Ikuo Ota presented business development and achievements by a successful company of certification adoption in Japan, Yusuvara Forest Owners' Cooperative.

At this symposium, speakers provided their expert knowledge and key research findings of forest certification and certified wood product markets. Forest certification has been challenged especially in the tropics, and few forests have been certified in REDD+ countries. Although forest certification has typically few market benefits to suppliers, several authors reported



a price premium for certified wood coming from tropical forests. Toward a green economy, certification research should facilitate innovative marketing of certified tropical wood in developed countries.

Reports from this symposium will also be published in the academic *Journal of Forest Planning* and the trade journal *Mokuzai Joho* (Wood Information).

Meeting website:

<http://www.formath.jp/symposium/2013morioka/>

Photos:

Top - Invited speakers at Morioka 2013 symposium (from left): T Owari, I Ota, R Vlosky, F Kraxner and T Takahashi; photo by the Japan Society of Forest Planning.

Bottom - Photo by Toshiaki Owari: Certified tropical wood.