

Phytophthora in Forests and Natural Ecosystems

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<http://www.iufro.org/science/divisions/division-7/70000/70200/70209/>

The 7th meeting of the IUFRO Working Party 7.02.09 *Phytophthora in Forests and Natural Ecosystems* took place in Esquel, Patagonia, Argentina, from 10-14 November 2014. It was attended by 86 participants from 24 countries who discussed the following key issues:

Species concepts and latest taxonomy

The number of described species continues to increase as new ecosystems are explored for *Phytophthora*, and as global plant trade continues to introduce previously unknown and innocuous pathogens to new habitats where they are destructive.

Emerging invasive species

Alarming new reports were presented of threats to rare Andean conifers, heritage juniper woodlands in Britain, iconic kauri trees in New Zealand, and plantations of exotic conifers on several continents.

Disease management

Two opposite trends were noted: "Phytophthora fatigue" is setting in among the government agencies responsible for disease management activities in Europe, Australia, and North America; local "citizen science" initiatives in California and Western Australia are channeling public energy to protect local forest values.

Disease physiology

The "omics" revolution is offering new power to research into the mechanisms of pathogenesis, including providing a ground work for resistance selection and breeding programs.

The threat of *Phytophthora austrocedri* to indigenous and increasingly affected conifers in South America.

Participants were alarmed to see the unchecked advance of this introduced pathogen through Andean *Austrocedrus* forests.

Conclusions

Disease management actions of individuals and local organizations are essential and can be locally effective, but for meaningful results on a scale appropriate to the global challenges to forest health from invasive *Phytophthora* species, national and international commitment and action is necessary. This has been absent, and our forests pay the price. IUFRO must lead the way through its member institutions. More meetings alone and resolutions of good intentions have not made a difference.

Meeting website: <http://www.iufrophytophthora2014.org/>
(Book of abstracts available for download!)



Phytophthora austrocedrae lesion on *Austrocedrus chilensis* in Patagonia (Photo by Everett Hansen)



CIEFAP (Centro de Investigación y Extensión Forestal Andino Patagónico) was the host institution of the meeting
(Photo by Everett Hansen)