

FORCOM 2004

scientific “bread and butter” for managing forested landscapes

18-22 October 2004 in Utsonomiya, Japan

By Klaus von Gadow, Coordinator of IUFRO Division 4

Technical developments, greater complexity of decision-making, and an increasing awareness of climatic and societal changes have brought about a remarkable surge of activities in the research discipline known as *Forest Management*, which provides an important scientific basis for policy and management decisions. These decisions relate to natural forests which represent a highly valued remnant wilderness, as well as to man-made forests which are a renewable source of raw materials essential to human life.

Scientists involved in *Forest Management* research are responding to political, social and stakeholder demands that forest-use should be based on validated research results, conform to acceptable environmental standards, and be transparent to the public.

This conference has demonstrated ways of how these objectives can be achieved, using examples from different parts of the world. Scientists from Asia, the Americas and Europe participated in the proceedings which featured three days of oral and poster presentations, including contributions in forest assessment using large scale laser scanning and satellite data (Danilin, Matsue, Sawada, Kajisa, Murakami); growth modeling, biometrics and silviculture (Kitahara, Dobbertin; García, Takashima, Gaffrey, Ang Lai, Trifkovic, Yamamoto); social and community forest management (Makanji, Nur Mohammed, Kamimura, Sri Nugroho Marsoem); carbon stock assessment and accounting (Valsta, Kim Phat, Nakajima, Abe, Nobori); philosophical questions related to forest use including educational aspects (Tanaka, Osawa, Ito, Kohsaka, Inoue, Katoh) and forest design using decision support tools techniques (Yoshimoto; Paredes, Boston; Feng; Gadow; Mizoue; Mitsuda). The contribution of the various components of the conference towards multiple benefits and improved decision making has shown how the scientific discipline known as *Forest Management* provides the technical support for policy decisions, the scientific “bread and butter” in the areas of assessment, forecasting and design of a forested landscape.

In theory, involving the different disciplines directly in the management of wooded ecosystems appears to be logical, but the practical implementation of this idea is not a trivial task. This important question was also addressed at the conference, but more research and thinking is needed for workable solutions. For further details see the website below.

*The conference “The role of forests for coming generations – philosophy and technology for forest resource management” was attended by 74 scientists from 17 countries and featured 3 days of oral and poster presentations. The event was organized by the Japanese Society of Forest Planning and sponsored by IUFRO Division 4. For further details see the website:
<http://fecsun.kankyo.tohoku.ac.jp/FORCOM/index.htm>*