

IUFRO Spotlight is an initiative of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations. Its aim is to introduce, in a timely fashion, significant findings in forest research from IUFRO officeholders and member organizations to a worldwide network of decision makers, policy makers and researchers. IUFRO will encapsulate, and distribute in plain language, brief, topical and policy-relevant highlights of those findings, along with information on where/how to access the full documents.

IUFRO Spotlight also aims to present activities such as sessions at major IUFRO congresses or the work of IUFRO Task Forces with a focus on emerging key issues that are of great interest to policy makers and groups inside and outside the forest sector, and contribute to international processes and activities. The *IUFRO Spotlight* findings will be distributed in a periodic series of emails as well as blog postings.

IUFRO Spotlight #35 / December 2015

Cool it!

Use Forest Landscape Restoration to Fight Climate Change

Forest landscape restoration (FLR) can be a major weapon in the battle against climate change.

FLR can contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation by increasing the productivity of landscapes and by enhancing the resilience of forest ecosystems and reducing the vulnerability of forest-dependent communities.

When one considers that about 25% of the world's land surface is being degraded in one way or another and about 15% of that land surface is considered appropriate for forest landscape restoration, it underlines both the need for significant remedial action while, at the same time, pointing to a reasonable and beneficial way to achieve that restoration.

Adding in the urgency to address climate concerns while also recognizing that forests represent one of the most cost-effective climate solutions available today, it becomes increasingly clear that reducing emissions from deforestation and increasing forest restoration will be extremely important in limiting global warming to 2°C.



The spotlight tool is essentially a simplified presentation of complex restoration initiatives, and how they may contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and vice-versa, in a specific local context. (Image by Yougen/iStock)

As part of a collaborative project – “Inspire, Support and Mobilize Forest and Landscape Restoration” – a group of forest scientists led by IUFRO Research Group 1.06.00 ([Restoration of degraded sites](#)), undertook an exhaustive review of scientific literature on the subject and an analysis of restoration case studies.

From this they assembled a list of potential FLR activities that can contribute to adaptation and mitigation objectives.

The project was a joint effort between the World Resources Institute and IUFRO, funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.

The primary result of the project was ***Forest Landscape Restoration as a Key Component of Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation***, (IUFRO World Series, Volume 34).

It identifies and gives detailed descriptions of the many different ways in which FLR contributes to both mitigating climate effects and helping ecosystems and society to adapt to adverse effects of a changing climate.

The book is already available online at: <http://www.iufro.org/publications/series/world-series/>

The official book launch will take place on Sunday, 6 December, at 16:30 – 17:00 at the Nature and Climate Change Pavilion of the Global Landscapes Forum, in Paris, Hall Maillot, Palais des Congrès, Paris.

Visit: <http://www.iufro.org/events/other-major-events/glf-2015/>

“We had to provide a science basis for using FLR to achieve climate change mitigation and adaptation outcomes,” said Dr. John Stanturf of the U.S. Forest Service and one of the book’s authors. “We distilled the many options down to a simple checklist that could be rated or communicated through a ‘stoplight’ tool.”

The stoplight tool is essentially a simplified presentation of complex restoration initiatives, and how they may contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and vice-versa, in a specific local context. It uses an intuitive color scheme – like a traffic light – to provide a quick rating of where a given FLR project stands relative to different criteria. It can be used in a number of ways depending on the complexity of an FLR project in terms of different stakeholder objectives, ecological contexts and the developmental stage of a project.

Using it to rate projects, Dr. Stanturf says, will lead to better communication of technical issues among specialists and also among specialists and decision makers and stakeholders.

This, he adds, will make it easier to combine restoration and climate change mitigation/adaptation aspects of various projects and thus contribute to forest and landscape restoration at large scales.



(Photographs from left to right by Tom Waldrop, John Stanturf, and Ernest Foli)

The findings reported in IUFRO Spotlight are submitted by IUFRO officeholders and member organizations. IUFRO is pleased to highlight and circulate these findings to a broad audience but, in doing so, acts only as a conduit. The quality and accuracy of the reports are the responsibility of the member organization and the authors.

Suggestions for reports and findings that could be promoted through IUFRO Spotlight are encouraged. To be considered, reports should be fresh, have policy implications and be applicable to more than one country. If you would like to have a publication highlighted by Spotlight, contact: Gerda Wolfrum, IUFRO Communications Coordinator, wolfrum(at)iufro.org

The International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) is the only worldwide organization devoted to forest research and related sciences. Its members are research institutions, universities, and individual scientists as well as decision-making authorities and other stakeholders with a focus on forests and trees. Visit: <http://www.iufro.org/>

IUFRO Spotlight #35, published in December 2015, by IUFRO Headquarters, Vienna, Austria. Available for download at:
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