



### **French forestry student first to fill new IUFRO/IFSA joint position**

*International networks of forest researchers and students become more intertwined as new joint position is created at IUFRO Headquarters in Vienna with the support of the Austrian Ministry of Life.*

(Vienna, Austria) On 1 October 2013, twenty-four year old Hugo Pierre of the International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) will just have finished his Master's degree in general forestry at the National School for Water and Forestry Engineering (AgroParistech), Nancy, France, when he takes up his employment as new joint IUFRO/IFSA junior professional officer at the Headquarters of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) in Vienna, Austria, for one year. He has been appointed after a comprehensive international selection process and will work for both organizations in equal shares.

While IFSA is the global network for forestry students represented in over 50 countries worldwide, IUFRO is the global network of forest science with members in more than 100 countries. Both share a common interest in promoting forest-related research and have, thus, been intensifying their collaboration gradually since the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding back in 2002. Among other things, IFSA has an observer status at the IUFRO Board, and, for some years now, IFSA students from all over the world have regularly spent some months as interns at IUFRO Headquarters.

Now this longstanding collaboration has been taken to the next level. A letter of agreement, which provides the legal foundation for a new position hosted by IUFRO Headquarters in Vienna, Austria, was signed by the IUFRO and IFSA Presidents in June 2013. Austria, which has been playing a prominent role both in IFSA and as host country for IUFRO, attaches great importance to education in forest science and has generously agreed to sponsor this new position within the framework of the contract between the Republic of Austria and IUFRO. "Austria, which has been playing a prominent role both in IFSA and as host country for IUFRO, attaches great importance to education in forest science and has agreed to sponsor this new position within the framework of the contract between the Republic of Austria and IUFRO", says Gerhard Mannsberger, Director General of the Forestry Department, Austrian Ministry of Life.

In IUFRO, many member organizations are universities and it is only natural that IUFRO should place even more emphasis on education in forest science in the coming years and seek closer collaboration with forestry students. IFSA, in turn, has identified a need for more professional support and has found IUFRO to be the ideal partner to provide this backing. Through IUFRO, researchers and professors, with their understanding, experience and contacts, will contribute to the development of IFSA. The students, through IFSA, will contribute their perspectives and generate young input to IUFRO.

"By sharing our networking experiences and integrating the students' views, we can learn a lot from each other, for example, in the fields of knowledge management, communication and fundraising, towards further advancing higher education related to forests" says Alexander Buck, IUFRO Executive Director. IFSA's Hugo Pierre, who is looking forward to his new task, adds, "Not only do I take this job opportunity as a great chance to develop my personal qualifications, but I see it as a relevant manner to make our network more professional and stronger. Thus, I am honored to start my professional career by being the first IFSA member to obtain a position at the crossroads of the student and scientific research worlds."

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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: [www.iufro.org](http://www.iufro.org)

The **International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA)** is the global network for forestry students and students of related sciences. It is a non-political, non-religious and non for profit organization, that has developed in the last 35 years. Its members are organized in 78 institutions in over 50 countries. IFSA provides a platform for students to enrich their formal education, promote cultural understanding, gain practical experiences with a wider and more global perspective and provide a voice for youth in international forest policy processes: [www.ifsa.net](http://www.ifsa.net)

The **Austrian Ministry of Life** (Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management): [www.lebensministerium.at](http://www.lebensministerium.at)