WOULD YOU PUT A TREE IN YOUR GAS TANK?

(Vienna, 15 June 2010) – The world’s forests may provide some unexpected answers as to how mankind can create more value with less environmental impact – good news as we move toward a greener future.

Putting a tree – figuratively speaking – into your car’s gas tank may be the way of the future. Dr. In-Gyu Choi, associate professor in the department of forest science at Seoul National University, will coordinate a session at the 2010 IUFRO World Congress that will look at the future of forest biomass as raw materials for the development of green biofuels and chemicals.

Forest biomass is renewable, abundant and carbon-neutral. Its importance as a future source of green energy and green chemicals should not be ignored, he says.

The session will involve itself with “look-ahead” science – things such as innovative technologies to convert forest biomass into bioalcohol, synthetic gasoline and diesel as well as the future market possibilities for forest-based green chemicals to be used as the raw materials for biodegradable bioplastics. (Plastics from biomass are made the same way as petroleum-based plastics, but are actually cheaper to manufacture and meet or exceed most performance standards with the exception of water resistance and longevity.)

Eco-efficiency – and this session falls under that broad category – aims at the delivery of competitively priced goods and services that satisfy human needs and improve quality of life, while progressively reducing ecological impacts and resource use intensity to a level compatible with the earth’s estimated carrying capacity.

IUFRO, the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, is a non-profit, non-governmental international network of forest scientists that promotes global cooperation in forest-related research and enhances the understanding of the ecological, economical and social aspects of forests and trees.

An important part of IUFRO’s mission is to disseminate scientific knowledge to stakeholders and decision-makers and to contribute to forest policy and on-the-ground forest management.

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