One of the greatest challenges in forest education is to go beyond solely teaching technical skills to students and transform them in agents of change in world in transformation, which urgently needs more and better-managed forests. Training the new generation of foresters require novel approaches that place students as active agents of change. One of the initiatives is the Climate Smart Forestry Education programme, which emphasizes the importance of taking care of our forests and providing a meaningful educational experience on-line.

The programme has gained high publicity and media attention as an innovative educational practice. It has been described in detail in several international conferences and publications, and has been adopted by several schools and universities around the world.

The programme is designed to be interactive and engaging, and it incorporates new technologies and innovative methods. It aims to engage young people in forest-related issues and to encourage them to become active agents of change in their communities.

In conclusion, the Climate Smart Forestry Education programme is an innovative and effective way to teach young people about the importance of forests and the need to manage them sustainably. By providing a meaningful educational experience and encouraging active participation, the programme helps to create a new generation of forest stewards who will be ready to face the challenges of the future.
Global Competition on Best Practices in Forest Education

INNOVATIVE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION BY THE ASIA PACIFIC FORESTRY EDUCATION COORDINATION MECHANISM (AP-FECM) – CANADA – TERTIARY

This program offers innovative methods to transform forestry education at regional and international levels.

Innovative Program Development
A multi-university and regional-wide collaborative platform
The only forestry online program of its kind in the world and an award winner in Canada
An effective team-based model to ensure quality of course development and operation
Emerging educational technologies for course revision and new development
The program offers 5 online open educational resources on Sustainable forest management.

The courses use a flexible pedagogical model to support flipped, blended, and fully online teaching, which builds foundation for potential Certificates and Master programs. The program won A Canadian national award “Excellence and Innovation in the Integration of Technology in Educational Practices/Collaboration” – 10 new courses being developed to provide foundational knowledge and skills in sustainably managing different forest types.

The courses also feature a Global Online Learning Community for learners to co-create learning materials, foster collaborative learning and share professional experience.

The program also produced the first higher forestry education report in the Asia Pacific region published by the AP-FECM 2018 - As suggested by the report, a collaborative online education program may be an effective approach to address global issues, narrow gaps, encourage educational resource sharing and increases access in forestry education.

EMPRENDEOR FORESTAL - YOUNG FOREST ENTREPRENEUR REFORESTAMOS – MEXICO – TERTIARY

We seek to motivate the youth to develop entrepreneurial ideas to address their region’s socio-environmental and economic problems from a forestry perspective by helping the youth to understand the potential of the forests in order to contribute to their sustainable development. We do this using in-person and virtual workshops for students and teachers, as well as with our yearly contest. Each year, the best entrepreneurial ideas are rewarded in an event that connects the youth with strategic actors from the private sector, the government, and civil society. The program started in 2013 in four Mexican universities. Currently, around 100 universities (all of which offer forestry degrees) from eleven Latin American countries take part in this event and more than 6,000 students (mainly from rural areas) and 200 teachers participate.

The skills that we foster with this program are focused on the strengthening of self-esteem, leadership, teamwork, communication, and resiliency; we share up-to-date and relevant information about current topics from the forestry sector on a global and national level to promote a broader systematic vision. We provide opportunities for participants to connect with advisors who will help them to improve their proposals and to increase the impact of their entrepreneurial efforts in the forests. With the goal of having more generations of young people incorporate more subjects of forest entrepreneurship into their life’s vision, we work with educational institutions to train the whole of their teacher’s staff, as well as to incorporate entrepreneurial subjects into their resumes and educational offerings in order to generate new subjects, and making these practices accepted for student’s certification.

THE SLOVENIAN NETWORK OF FOREST KINDERGARTENS AND SCHOOLS – SLOVENIA – KINDERGARTEN

In the Slovenian landscape, the forest carries out a number of functions: it preserves biodiversity, mitigates climate change, and is important for the retention of water, a place for relaxation and recreation. In addition to all of these services, in recent years the forest area has become interesting to schools and kindergartens. The forest offers them plenty of room for academic knowledge, development of social skills, nature experience, and cooperation, personal commitment to work, curiosity, imagination and spontaneous individual initiatives. The forest is a space where we work in harmony with the nature of the forest and the nature of children. Increasingly we are coming to realize that learning in forest holds something more; it enables our children to not only experience nature, but to experience themselves and their friends positively. In the forest, the children deepen their knowledge of nature’s connections, mathematics, language development, as well each child develops his or her own individual abilities in the best possible way; the entire class develops as a group and the social network is strengthened. At The Slovenian network of forest kindergartens and schools, we encourage creativity, innovation, curiosity, cooperation, and excellence. We incorporated the forest into our lives, our thoughts and activities – we became a part of it, and in return, the forest aroused our interests and curiosity, allowing us to learn many things and giving us opportunity to develop and succeed! That is learning for sustainable development and learning for life. Undoubtedly, we are turning the forest of Slovenia into the most beautiful and best life classroom.

It is time for forest educators to get the spotlight!