IUFRO Task Force 2007–2010
Forests and Human Health
ForHealth

Background and objectives

Environmental change and biodiversity degradation have a big impact on the dispersion of infectious human diseases, but at the same time forest environment can be an enormous asset in improving the health conditions of human communities. To facilitate the on-going debate on the interplay of forests and human health IUFRO has launched a Task Force on Forests and Human Health, ForHealth.

The Task Force has two main objectives:

1. To support the dialogue and information exchange between the various players in this field (scientists from different disciplines, policy-makers, implementing agencies and other stakeholders), especially between forest and health professionals
2. To enhance the transfer of knowledge on the health benefits and health risks of forests into the practice

Activities

• Series of round-table discussions, workshops and conferences
  
  Nairobi 1st of May, 2008: Symposium on Emerging infectious diseases and forest ecosystem degradation and a high-level Round-table Discussion
  
  Korea Oct, 2008: Conference on Forests and Human Health

• Book, Human Health and Forests: A Global Overview of Issues, Practice and Policy, by CIFOR, publisher Earthscan

• State of art report, newsletters and other publications

• Portal for networking and delivering information www.forhealth.fi

• Supporting the set-up of research projects and delivery of health through forests

www.forhealth.fi
www.iufro.org/science/task-forces/forests-trees-humans/

1) IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organizations) is a non-profit, non-governmental international network of forest scientists.

Priorities and Objectives

MAXIMIZING HEALTH BENEFITS OF FORESTS

Mental health benefits
Physical health benefits of forest exercise
Forest derived pharmaceuticals and nutraceuticals
Forest food and herbs
Improving living environments

MANAGING HEALTH RISKS CONNECTED WITH FORESTS

Infectious and respiratory diseases
Hazards