



Equipping young forest leaders for a changing work environment

New Joint EFI-IFSA-IUFRO Project on “Global student networking and green jobs” analyses changing employment in the forest sector and prepares current forest students and young scientists for future leadership.

(Bonn/Vienna/Freiburg, 30 November 2018) The forest sector has been facing significant changes in recent years due to various challenges including globalization, international trade, and climate change.

Naturally, this has also changed the nature of forest sector employment. Forestry careers have expanded beyond traditional forest administration and industry jobs. New ‘green jobs’ match a broader societal awareness for forest ecosystem services, climate change mitigation and adaptation, environmental education, recreation, tourism, and nature protection, for example.

These shifts in labour market trends call for a new generation of graduates with a strong foundation of knowledge in the context of current global issues.



Photo credit: EFI/IFSA/IUFRO

“The crucial question we need to answer is: Are we, the world’s forestry students of today, prepared for the new expectations and skills society is placing in our hands as future land managers and forest policy decision makers?” emphasises Dolores Pavlovic, President of the International Forestry Students’ Association (IFSA).

A new project run by European Forest Institute (EFI) in close collaboration with IFSA and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) has now been started to tackle this question. The joint project is generously funded by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and will be hosted by EFI in Bonn, Germany.

“The project seeks to provide insight into the future labour market including changing professional skills. This will be done through systematic analysis of the development of employment in the forest sector globally,” explains the Head of EFI’s Resilience Programme and Bonn Office, Georg Winkel.

“Providing networking opportunities to young scientists across continents and engaging students in international science-policy processes are integral parts of the project,” says Alexander Buck, Executive Director of IUFRO. Thus, a traineeship program and the IUFRO-EFI Young Scientists Initiative, which is especially designed for early career researchers from Africa, Asia and Latin America, have already been established. “We are delighted that the seed planted through the previous joint IUFRO/IFSA position has now grown into a full-fledged capacity development project,” adds Buck.

The project will start in December 2018 and last for three years. It will combine innovative student-based global empirical social research with networking and capacity building activities for forestry students. Involving the combined strengths of the three partner organisations IFSA, IUFRO, and EFI, and networking with other relevant research and expert activities, the project seeks not only to increase our understanding of transforming labour markets in the forest sector, but also to strengthen international collaboration involving the future forest leaders: forestry students from all over the globe.

The **European Forest Institute (EFI)** is an international organisation with 29 member countries and around 115 associate member organizations. EFI undertakes forest research and policy support at pan-European and global level, with headquarters located in Joensuu, Finland, and further offices across Europe and in Asia. Further information about the EFI is available here: <https://www.efi.int/>

The **International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA)** is a globally organized and locally operating students' organization. It brings together forestry students from all over the world to connect students to their peers, forest related organizations and policy platforms with the aim to enrich their formal education: <https://www.ifsa.net/>

The **International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)** is the only world-wide organization dedicated 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: <https://www.iufro.org/>

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