



EUROPEAN FOREST INSTITUTE

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

OVERVIEW



Risto Päivinen

One word can easily characterize the year 2009 for EFI: **growth**. Two new regional offices were established, **EFIATLANTIC** in Bordeaux, France, and **EFICENT**, in three locations of Freiburg, Nancy and Zurich. We also grew globally, with the **EFI's EU FLEGT Facility** establishing a **FLEGT Asia office** in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

EFI's staff also grew, by a quarter. Our new recruits included key personnel such as Assistant Director Gert-Jan Nabuurs and Head of Forest Resources and Information Tuula Nuutinen. Our new regional offices are now led by Christophe Orazio and Andreas Schuck.

Our budget also grew by 25% mainly in the area of policy services reflecting both the willingness of regional and national donors in Spain, France and Germany to support EFI's activities, and the successful work done by the EFI's EU FLEGT Facility Team.

Such rapid growth requires a shared vision within the EFI organization and its network. Through strong networking and collaboration we can maintain the EFI family spirit and the dynamic flexibility of the institute. We exist for our members, and we need to frequently review the added value we are able to create for our member countries and member organisations. We therefore look forward to the external evaluation of EFI which will take place during 2010, giving us valuable insight and input to help us enhance our work in the future.

IN 2009

- Two new Regional Offices started their activities
- Both EFI's budget and personnel grew by 25%
- 21 European countries had ratified the EFI Convention
- Collaboration between research and policy support intensified

IN 2010

- Three new Regional Offices will start their activities
- EFI Annual Conference to be held in Dresden, Germany, focuses on future directions of European forest policy, and on biomass from forests
- EFI Member Countries will meet at an extraordinary Council meeting
- EFI strengthens its policy service activities

“The idea of Regional Offices is well established now, and at the same time EFI is embarking to a new field of policy service.”

Konstantin von Teuffel, Chairman of EFI Board



The Scientific Advisory Board 2009:
Emil Cienciala, Michael Köhl, Marco Marchetti, Antoine Kremer,
Victor Teplyakov, Jean-Luc Peyron, Leena Paavilainen,
Hubert Hasenauer, Leena Roihuvuo (EFI Secretariat), Bas Arts



The EFI Board until September 2009:
José Antonio Bonet Lledós, Jim Lynch OBE, Harald Mauser,
Miroslav Benko, Andrey Selikhovkin, Konstantin von Teuffel,
Liisa Saarenmaa, Birger Solberg

ADVOCACY

EFI's efforts to advocate for forest-related research continued in 2009. EFI particularly contributes to the crucial Forest Europe process by providing policy advice and representing the European forest research community.

Often the best knowledge on acute issues is available in our own regional offices. This was the case concerning the aftermath of Cyclone Klaus in southern France. This major storm damaged more than 20% of forests in some regions. It is essential to build up our knowledge in the context of integrating climatic risks into forestry. EFIAT-LANTIC is officially associated with the French inter-ministerial mission on post-storm reforestation and expertise on the future of Aquitaine forests. The situation is similar for expertise on forest fire issues, as reflected in the publication of the discussion paper 'Living with Wildfires: What Science Can Tell Us', whose authors are eminent European scientists covering a broad range of expertise and scientific disciplines. Due to the urgent need for up-to-date information on this topic this discussion paper has already been translated into five languages.

Providing scientific input as a basis for decision-making is one of EFI's primary tasks. In 2009 we reached decision-makers through various bilateral and multilateral meetings where EFIMED presented its work on forest fires (Discussion Paper 15). EFI also presented the mid-term evaluation results of and recommendations on the Forest Action Plan to the Standing Forestry Committee, and took part in the Koli Forum on Natural Resources together with high-level decision makers from around Europe.

EFI has a direct influence on decision-making processes in key forums including the European Commission Advisory Group on Forestry and Cork. We strive to ensure that everyone in our network is aware of the issues to be covered in these meetings, and regularly consult them for their views and proposals. Through our active involvement in the Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform (FTP), EFI can actively influence the future priorities defined for the EU's research funding mechanisms and instruments.

We have also brought our work on forests and climate change adaptation to the attention of policy-makers at events such as the Forest Day sessions held in Copenhagen as part of the major UN climate conference in December.



At the European Tropical Forest Advisory Group meeting: Peter Dewees, Frank Jacobs, Ralph Ridder, Risto Päivinen, Frances Seymor and Jerker Thunberg.



Ilpo Tikkanen



Jan Schulte, Vincent van den Berk, Nisha Santhar, Felise Nguen, Aimi Lee, Anne Anantom



Elena Gorriz



Bernhard Wolfslehner,
Gerhard Weiss



Fergal Mulloy, Peter Mayer



Sonia Roig Gómez, Pia Böhnke, Miquel Fabra-Cr



Andreas Schuck, Aljoscha Requardt, Karoline Öhler



Francisco Ureña Lara, Claudia Antoniotti, Christophe Orazio

NETWORKING

Responses to a survey conducted among EFI member organisations in 2009 indicate that EFI fulfills its aim of 'connecting scientists' by providing good opportunities for collaboration and networking. The majority of respondents wanted to be more actively involved in EFI activities. The survey responses have provided valuable information for the future development of EFI, in which member organisations will continue to play a key role.

January 2009 saw the launch of EFI's Regional office in Central Europe (EFICIENT) in Freiburg, Germany. This was followed by the opening of an integral part of EFICIENT, Observatory for European Forests (EFICIENT-OEF) in Nancy, France. EFICIENT addresses Central European research needs, aiming to work with OEF to strengthen EFI's work disseminating information at the pan-European level.

EFI's third regional office EFIATLANTIC was launched in Bordeaux, France, in February. EFI-ATLANTIC will concentrate on forest issues in Portugal, Atlantic Spain, Atlantic France, Ireland and the UK, with a strategic focus on the sustainable management and competitive utilisation of planted forest resources.

EFI's regional offices each bring their own unique networks of experts into our work. One of the highlights of EFIMED's work in 2009 was the

publication of the Mediterranean Forest Research Agenda for 2010–2020, which reflects the strength of regional networking by giving a comprehensive overview of the challenges Mediterranean forests are facing, and how science can best address them.

In 2009 we bade farewell to our five former project centres, who had successfully pioneered our networking for ten years. These project centres were temporary networking nodes built around specific themes or research topics. EUFORIC, CONFOREST, IEFIC, INNOFORCE and PROCES all successfully illustrated the benefits of networking by building up research networks that have lasted for a decade. They also paved the way for EFI's new regional offices, and most of them are now involved in the regional offices. The project centre concept still lives on, and the Lisbon-based Project Centre PHOENIX will work for another five years examining issues related to post-fire ecology.

The year culminated in EFI's Annual Conference, which brought our 120 member organisations together to make high-level decisions on our activities. The conference was followed by a scientific seminar and an excursion with the theme 'Forest Ecosystem Management in the 21st Century', hosted and organised by EFI's Irish member organisations. These memorable events were attended by a record number of 180 participants, reflecting the great demand for European networking on forest issues.



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Sergey Zudin, Simo Varis, Tuula Nuutinen, Katja Gunia, Terhi Vilen, Jo Van Brusselen, Elena Zudina



Marcus Lindner, Josef Herkendell



Gert-Jan Nabuurs, Harald Mauser

INFORMATION

To satisfy the various needs for value-added, science-based information, EFI compiles and disseminates information on European forests and forestry for a wide range of target groups. These target groups benefit from easy access to information, knowledge and expertise.

Improved tools for decision-making can help the forest sector to assess its sustainability impacts. Tools such as ToSIA, developed within the EFORWOOD project, can convert huge amounts of information into easily understandable science-based decision support tools for politicians, the regional authorities, industry and other stakeholders. In order to improve the accessibility and visibility of results, we have developed web-based services, such as WebToSIA and the Fire Paradox project's FireIntuition platform. Within Fire Paradox EFI has also coordinated decision support for policy-making. The outcomes of this project, which is due to end in early 2010, have already been publicised in the EFI research report 'Towards Integrated Fire Management' and other publications.

Several new projects with strong communications and information dissemination components started up during 2009. EFI is leading the dissemination activities of the Motive Project (MOdels for AdapTIVE forest Management), which will also exploit social media during 2010.

EFI was also actively involved in various events organised to improve the visibility of forestry and widen target groups, including the conference 'Future forest monitoring in the European Union – providing information for multifunctional forest management', which was organised as part of Sweden's EU Presidency by

our member organisation the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU). Another event jointly organised by EFI in 2009 was the new Joensuu Forestry Networking Week (JFNW) conference, held in Finland to connect young and experienced forestry scientists, professionals and stakeholders from different parts of Europe. The first JFNW was hosted by the Finnish Forest Research Institute (Metla), EFI and the University of Eastern Finland. The second Joensuu Forestry Networking Week has already been planned for 2010, with a focus on water and forests.

We were also actively involved in a networking workshop held as part of the BECOTEPS project, through which Bio-Economy Technology Platforms have joined forces to address synergies and gaps in their strategic research agendas.

EFI's publishing activities during 2009 included the production of Portuguese, Spanish, and French translations of the discussion paper 'Living with Wildfires'; new translations of the policy brief 'What are VPAs/FLEGT' in four languages; and new versions of the policy brief 'Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade – the European Union approach' in Spanish and Bahasa Indonesian. Other significant publications included Research Report 22 'Valuable Broadleaved Forests in Europe' and proceedings on 'Modelling, Valuing and Managing Mediterranean Forest Ecosystems for Non-Timber Goods and Services'.

News flows have increased on EFI's website, in EFI News, and in the Euro-forest portal. The EFI and Euro-forest websites enable stakeholders to follow EFI's latest activities and keep up with the latest news on issues including plans for the future monitoring of Europe's forests, and the impacts of biofuel policies on biodiversity around Europe.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Our research during the year 2009 started to reflect EFI's widened pool of expertise. Research increased in volume and scope in line with the expansion of EFI and the strengthening of our headquarters. Collaboration between research activities and policy support has particularly intensified steadily.

Sustainability remains an issue for European forests and forest management due to high demands for woody biomass for bioenergy, nature conservation needs, and pressures related to climate change. The EFORWOOD project, led by Skogforsk, Sweden, has addressed this through various models and the comprehensive ToSIA tool devised at EFI. EFORWOOD covers the whole value chain from the forest to the final product and its re-use. Though the project itself ended in 2009, the development of the resultant network and tools will continue through various projects including Northern ToSIA.

Natural disturbances continue to gain attention in European forest management. On the one hand such events have to be taken into account and risks should be minimized; but on the other hand these processes form part of natural dynamics, and create significant niches for biodiversity. The impacts of fires and storms have particularly been studied in our R&D work. The now completed Fire Paradox project, which involved 31 partners led by the Centre of Applied Ecology "Prof. Baeta Neves", Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal, has produced plenty of scientific advice for practical policy decisions.

Many projects continued to seek deeper insights into the future development of forest resources, carbon balances, wood for bioenergy and biodiversity issues. Related mapping exercises and ground validation of remote-sensed material also continued. Forest resource projections and details of the availability of biomass for bioenergy were produced under various projects to support decision making by the European Commission, including the EU LULUCF (Land use, land-use change and forestry) negotiators to the UNFCCC COP on climate change in Copenhagen by provid-

ing information on the future carbon balance of Europe's forests.

EFI's EU FLEGT Facility continued to provide support for voluntary partnership agreement (VPA) negotiations with various countries in Africa and Asia. The facility also started to provide support for VPA implementation, and will further expand this work over the coming years. The growth of these activities was reflected in the establishment of EFI FLEGT Asia, a regional FLEGT support programme based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In May 2009, the European Union and the Government of the Republic of Congo announced a new agreement that for the first time establishes a system to ensure wood products exported from the Republic of Congo to the EU contain no illegally harvested timber, and are derived from managed forests.

Policy research concentrated on reviews of the EU Forest Action Plan and the 'Forests Europe' process, formerly known as the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE). The mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the EU Forest Action Plan contains an inventory of the implementation of the plan's 18 key actions, an evaluation of its relevance and effectiveness, and recommendations for the action plan's further implementation until 2011. This study, financed by the European Commission, was undertaken by EFI in cooperation with the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences in Vienna, the Centre Tecnologic Forestal De Catalunya in Solsona, and Hamburg University's Institute for World Forestry.

Several EFI projects have been concentrating on capacity building in different European regions. The FOPER project came to a successful end in 2009, after establishing master's programmes on Forest Policy and Economics at the universities of Sarajevo and Belgrade, in collaboration with partner institutes in Banja Luka, Skopje and Tirana. The FOPER II project is now running in the Southeast European region and will expand research networking further into Europe by developing joint research projects on issues with policy implications.

EFI is the leading institution conducting and advocating forest research and facilitating forest research networking at the pan-European level.

EFI is an acknowledged provider of and a major contact point for unbiased, policy-relevant information on European forests and forestry.



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