

NETWORKING

We gained one new Member Country in 2011, when Switzerland ratified the EFI Convention. The Convention on EFI has now been ratified by a total of 23 European countries.

Our network of member organisations met at the EFI Annual Conference in Sweden in September, where existing networks were strengthened and new ones built. Similar events at the regional scale were organised by the Regional Offices in Barcelona, Vienna, Bordeaux, Freiburg, Nancy and Copenhagen. For example, the Second Mediterranean Forest Week (MFW) was held in Avignon in April, offering a unique platform for the improvement of dialogue between the Mediterranean forest research community, policy makers and relevant stakeholders. It also communicated to the international community and society at large the relevance and challenges related to Mediterranean forests.

Our networking activities in research expanded, especially within foresight studies. Futures workshop sessions facilitated by EFI worked to strengthen networks, both at European and regional levels. The RoK-FOR project (Sustainable Forest Management Providing Renewable Energy, Sustainable Construction and Bio-based Products), which is a Coordination Action funded by the FP7 Regions of Knowledge programme, proved to be a great tool for facilitating network-

ing between the five participating regions and beyond.

In 2011, we also became the host organisation for EVOLTREE (EVolution of TREES as drivers of terrestrial biodiversity), which is the only Network of Excellence in the area of forest research. EVOLTREE aims to integrate existing resources and construct a European research platform to implement pan-European research in the field of ecosystem genomics, and to disseminate high-level knowledge on genomics to the scientific community, end-users and the public.

Mobilising young researchers within our Associate Member network and beyond strengthened. Our Winter-Summer School 2011: "Making Values Work – Exploring Multiple Perspectives in Understanding the Valuation of Forest Ecosystems" was a great example of such activities. Our Winter-Summer School (WSS) is a model of graduate education aimed at creating collaborative research networks on topics of high relevance for forests and the environment at the European scale. The WSS has built capacity for high quality research through innovative teaching methods and leading experts. Our flagship of capacity-building activities, the FOPER II (Consolidation of the Human Capacities in Forest Policy and Economics Education and Research in the South-East Europe Region) project, strengthened its network, and was instrumental in the success of the WSS.



EFI staff during 2011 EFI week in Joensuu.



ANNUAL REPORT 2011

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.



Risto Päivinen

OVERVIEW OF 2011

We took a decisive step towards strengthening our policy support activities by establishing a Policy Support Office in Barcelona. The EFI policy support activities – current ones and those in the future – are led from there. The establishment of the Barcelona office was possible thanks to a generous offer from Spain to host the office and to provide privileges for EFI as an international organisation in Spain. This shows the high interest of our Member Countries to support EFI activities, and it is a pleasure to have the new office located under the same roof as the Mediterranean Regional Office – EFIMED. By the end of 2011, we had 16 people working in

Barcelona both for policy support activities and for EFIMED. The establishment of the new office allows also for more efficient operations within our FLEGT-REDD Unit.

Overall, staff numbers increased by 20% to 129 staff members with 29 different nationalities, and our funding grew by 23% during the year. Our activities in the five Regional Offices increased steadily and we were delighted to have a new Member Country, Switzerland. Our 23 Member Countries benefited from our activities, such as the newly established ThinkForest forum, which fosters inspiring and dynamic science policy dialogue on forest issues. I expect 2012 will witness the revision of our strategies and a stronger integration of the Institute.



The Board of EFI: from the left: Jim Lynch OBE, Michael Köhl, J. Bo Larsen, Harald Mauser, Giuseppe Scarascia-Mugnozza, Jean-Marc Cuehl and José Antonio Bonet Lledós. Absent from the photo Lisa Sennerby Forsse

POLICY SUPPORT

The year witnessed the establishment of the Policy Support Office in Barcelona, Spain, and the appointment of Dr. Marc Palahi as Assistant Director for Policy Support.

Consequently, our activity increased in this field, especially as the high-level forum on forests, ThinkForest, started to take shape. This forum is a unique science-policy action, bringing together high-level policy makers and leading European forest scientists to generate an inspiring and dynamic science-policy dialogue on strategic forest-related issues. The President of the forum is Mr. Göran Persson, the former Swedish prime minister, who chaired the launch event in May 2012. Forthcoming ThinkForest events will also make use of the considerable expertise of our member organisations.

We participated actively in the development of the EU Forest Strategy, and in this context prepared a paper detailing our vision for a European forest research area. We also actively took part in the activities of FOREST EUROPE, working as part of the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for the Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.

Our work on FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) and REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest

Degradation) increased substantially and now the EFI FLEGT and REDD Unit houses two EU Facilities. In 2011, the EU FLEGT Facility successfully responded to the expectations laid out in its work plans, and answered many extra requests. Support for Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA) negotiations proceeded well, and made use of the lessons learned in earlier processes. During 2011, the EU concluded VPA negotiations with three partner countries. In Asia, a wide range of FLEGT-related events was organised, and contributed to, across the region.

The year was the first complete year of operations for the EU REDD Facility, focusing on concrete exploration of the options for future work. The EU REDD Facility initiated its activities in five focal countries with different stages of development of the REDD+ and FLEGT processes: Democratic Republic of Congo, Guyana, Indonesia, Republic of Congo and Vietnam. The aim is to establish long-term dialogues and to provide demand-driven and tailor-made technical assistance to support these countries' REDD+ objectives.

A new operational base for the Unit was established in Barcelona, and the first staff took office there. By the end of the year, the full staff count of the Unit was 32, and Mr. Heiko Liedeker had been appointed as the new Head of Unit.



Jo Van Brusselen and Andreas Schuck



Glòria Domínguez Torres and Margaret Shannon



Scientific Advisory Board of EFI: Kristina Blennow, Bas Arts, Bo Jellesmark Thorsen, Carlos Gracia, Andrey Filipchuk, Leena Paavilainen, Marco Marchetti, Jean-Luc Peyron, Bill Slee and Zoltán Somogyi



Leena Roihuvuo, Niina Valbuena, Jarkko Heikkinen, Senni Piirainen and Katriona Pajari

RESEARCH

Research in 2011 started to show the positive effect of our Regional Offices collaborating with Associate Members and with the Headquarters programmes. Several new projects began, and the new research strategy expressed our complementarity to our member organisations as a facilitator for mobilising forest research capacities in Europe.

Our goal is for research to provide science-based insights into forests and forest-related issues at the European and European-regional scale, and also to address European policy topics in a global context. We conduct research on forest-related topics in a collaborative way, analysing available but often scattered information to provide policy support on a pan-European level. This we do with a multi-disciplinary point of view, acting as an international institute serving our Member Countries' needs.

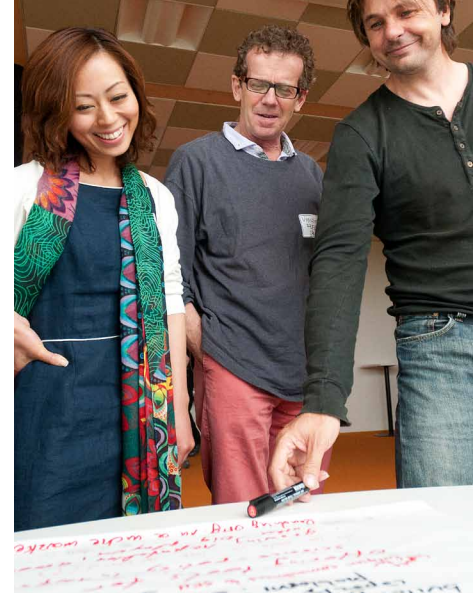
We also worked on the development of the topical research profiles of the Regional Offices, and on three research themes to run across all our work: sustainability and climate change; foresight, economics and information; and forest policy and governance.

Our new projects include ARANGE on multifunctional forest management in European mountain ranges, involving Central-East European Regional Office – EFICEEC and the Sustainability and Climate Change Programme. The INTEGRATE (Integration of Biodiversity Conservation into Forest Management and its Re-

lation to Other Forest Functions/Services) project began at Central European Regional Office and the Observatory for European Forests – EFICENT-OEF, to investigate the integration of nature protection in forests and the maintenance of various forest functions. This is a direct project for the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV), demonstrating the involvement of our Member States. The Ex-post evaluation of the EU Forest Action Plan started at EFICENT-OEF, in collaboration with the Foresight and Information programme. And at Mediterranean Regional Office – EFIMED, the CREEA (Compiling and Refining Environmental and Economic Accounts) project will develop economic and environmental accounting principles.

Other projects include Trees4Future (Designing Trees for the Future), a large-scale infrastructure project offering access to research facilities in the genetics, forests and forestry industries field. We are vice-coordinator of this 9 million euro project.

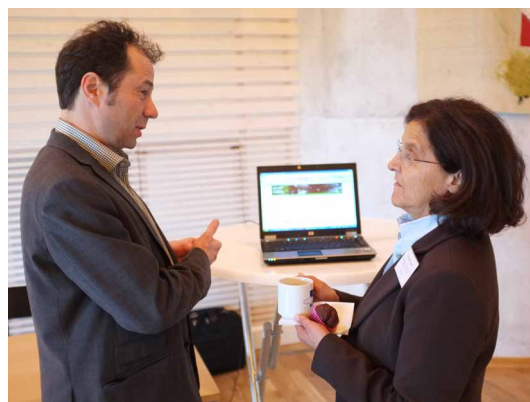
Foresight techniques were applied last year to develop the North European Regional Office – EFINORD workplan, and the ToSIA (Tool for Sustainability Impact Assessment) approach was further developed by our Sustainability and Climate Change programme to include participatory stakeholder processes supporting regional sustainable development targets. Last but not least, we co-developed the new ERA NET proposal 'Woodwisdom-NET+': this is a 19 million euro multinational effort, which was recently approved.



Emi Pesonen, Vincent van den Berk and Christophe Orazio



Yitagesu Tekle, Ed Pepke and Tim Dawson



Mika Mustonen and Margarida Tomé

INFORMATION

Our web-based activities increased significantly in 2011. Information portals such as the Forest Products Price Information Portal, the Information portal on Forest Policies, Institutions and Instruments, and the Nordic-Baltic Forest portal are useful to decision makers, politicians, official bodies, organisations and individuals with an interest in the forest sector. The EUROFOREST portal continues to go from strength to strength.

The publications highlight was the launch of a new series, What Science Can Tell Us. The first issue, Water for Forests and People in the Mediterranean – A Challenging Balance was also published in Spanish and French, and aims to improve the science-policy interface regarding water and forest interactions and trade-offs. We also published a Research Report on Private Forest Owners in the Western Balkans – Ready for the Formation of Interest Associations, and a Discussion Paper called Are MCPFE Indicators Suitable for Planted Forests? as well as 51 Technical Reports for the EFORWOOD project.

Our databases, such as the Long Term Forest Resources Assessment Database (LTFRA), were developed further, and a database on long-term monitoring trials open to any organisation was launched by Atlantic European Regional Office – EFIATLANTIC. This provides online up-to-date information on existing forest trials. As part of EFI's mapping activities, an update of the Forest Map of Europe was completed. A unique and novel tree species map for European forests was also developed and released. Within a few months it was already downloaded over 360 times. Within the CARBONES project, a time series of maps on biomass, carbon and age-classes was developed at the European scale.

We organised or co-organised 44 events to share information and to mobilise our network, both regionally and at the European or even global levels. For example, the EU REDD Facility contributed to the Oslo REDD Exchange and UNFCCC COP17 in Durban.

One of the highlights of the year was the video on European Forests available on our YouTube channel. You can also find EFI on Facebook and Twitter!

ADVOCACY

We continued our work in advocating for new forest topics in the European Union 7th Framework Programme Work Programme 2013, and actively participated in the revision of the FTP Strategic Research Agenda. Furthermore, we contributed to the work of the Advisory Group on Forestry and Cork of the EU.

Our Regional Offices play a crucial role in conducting advocacy work in the different regions of Europe. This is possible thanks to their active network partners, who represent regional stakeholders and have the best possible knowledge of regional forest-related issues. For example, EFICEEC participated in COP3 (Kyoto Protocol Climate Conference) of the Carpathian Convention, and has worked actively for the promotion of forest sciences in the Carpathian region.

EFIMED's advocacy work yielded great results when it was granted a specific ERANET scheme for Mediterranean forest research: FORESTERRA (Enhancing FOREst RESEARCH in the MEDITERRANEAN through improved coordination and integration). FORESTERRA is coordinated by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness, and led by EFIMED, which also provides the secretariat. This ERANET is of crucial importance as it aims to reinforce scientific cooperation on Mediterranean forests by activating a transnational EU-Mediterranean network, and initiating transcontinental cooperation among Mediterranean Climate Areas.

Under the umbrella of the FTP (The Forest-based Sector Technology Platform) forestry value chain, we organised a brainstorming meeting for key experts among our Associate Members on potential topics for the work programmes, which were then advocated to the Commission.



Cristina Garmendia Mendizábal and Risto Päivinen



Jussi Viitanen and Heiko Liedeker



Ilpo Tikkanen, José Maria Solano Lopez and Marc Palahi