



EUROPEAN FOREST INSTITUTE

Annual Report 2013



2013:

Celebrating 20 years
of forest networking
in Europe



Overview

The year was a celebration of the 20th anniversary of EFI and we were able to reflect our growth from a small seedling into a vibrant and widely spread network organization. Our Annual Conference in September in Nancy, France, brought together 300 representatives from our various stakeholders to celebrate our achievements. In 20 years EFI has grown to be well-equipped to respond to the needs of the rapidly changing world, with a strong European network of Member Countries, member organizations, Regional Offices and a capable staff of more than 170 people.

As we look ahead, we see that current societal challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, energy demands and the economic crisis in Europe require an ambitious European forest research area. EFI offers a platform for multiplying the impact of national research initiatives through its regional presence and pan-European network. Through EFI, our Member Countries can support the development of a more coherent policy framework for European forests and the forest sector, based on sound scientific knowledge and information. Last year we took important steps in this respect by shaping our Research and Policy Support Business Plan, which presents a vision and a plan for EFI activities as well as clear profiles for our different units to enhance their complementarities and the cohesion of the Institute.

The next 20 years look bright for EFI. There is much work for us to do. This will require continuous adaptation to our changing operating environment, as well as sustaining our financial basis in close collaboration with our Member Countries. The first 20 years would not have been possible without the commitment of our Member Countries and member organizations, and their vision for building a new type of network in Europe, nor without the dedication of our highly professional staff. We look forward to their collaboration and support over the next 20 years. ■



Research and

One of our central aims is increasing research activities at European and regional level. In 2013, the research programme, Forest for Society, was created. It will be key to ensuring a more interdisciplinary profile for EFI, as it deals with the socio-economic and governance aspects of forestry and forest products and markets.

In the field of Sustainability and Climate Change, the 'Operational Potential of Ecosystem Research Applications' (OPERAs) project continued, with EFI responsible for developing tools and instruments for quantifying and operationalizing ecosystem services and natural capital. The focus is on stakeholder needs and the development of user-friendly tools. Within the 'Innovative and effective tech-

nology and logistics for forest residual biomass supply in the EU' (INFRES) project, the impacts of biomass harvesting for bioenergy were reviewed with the aim of defining thresholds for the sustainable use of biomass across Europe.

The newly established Foresight and Policy Support Programme published a review of forest sector outlook studies, showing the need to update them with foresight analysis, and an outlook for global pulp and paper markets. The work is novel, both at EFI as well as generally in forest science literature.

'The Resource INFrastructures for monitoring, adapting and protecting European Atlantic FOREsts under changing climate' (REINFFORCE) infrastructure project coordinated by

the Atlantic European Regional Office – EFIATLANTIC ended in 2013. An online database and harmonized protocols have been created for sharing the impressive amount of data collected by the network of 38 arboreta and 41 demonstration sites from the north of Scotland to the south of Portugal.

'The Integration of Nature Protection in Forest Management and its Relation to other Forest Functions and Services' (INTEGRATE) project assessed the latest scientific knowledge on biodiversity in managed and unmanaged forests in Europe, and investigated conceptual frameworks in the context of competing management goals. Its results were published as an EFI report 'Integrative approaches as an opportunity for the



Information

conservation of forest biodiversity' with contributions from more than 60 international authors. The work will be followed up in the 'Establishing a European network of demonstration sites for the integration of biodiversity conservation into forest management' (Integrate+) project.

Enhancing research information products and services is another of our aims. High-resolution wood production maps were developed within the 'Visions of Land Use Transitions in Europe' (VOLANTE) project. These maps have been combined with tree species maps and European Forest Information Scenario (EFISCEN) model outputs to produce high-resolution European-wide maps of various forest ecosystem services. Based on a report 'Mapping the distribution of forest

ownership in Europe', forest ownership maps in 47 European countries were developed using thorough data collection and analysis. Regional information service outputs included, for example, the project 'Facts and Figures of the Nordic forest sector'.

Structuring the European forest research area is one of our overall aims. An ERA-NET scheme 'Tackling the challenges in sustainable and multifunctional forestry through enhanced research coordination for policy decisions', SUMFOREST, was prepared in 2013 and started in early 2014. This project is a milestone in developing a European forest research area. One of the tasks, led by EFI, is ensuring a dialogue with, and long-term integration of Russia into the European forest research area. EFI also substan-

tially contributed to the Forest-based Sector Technology Platform (FTP) Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) by involving the EFI network in developing calls for specific forestry research topics under the SRA.

Building scientific cooperation between the EU and Russia is among EFI's strategic goals and EFI, as an international organization, is well placed to do so. EFI is coordinating a specific task, within SUMFOREST which aims to map forest research capacities in Russia and identify joint EU-Russia research topics. Enhanced cooperation took place with St Petersburg Forest Technical University (FTU), and an EFI Project Centre RUSFOR was developed to focus on forest policy and governance questions. ■



Capacity building

Increasing the involvement of Associate Members is among the goals of our capacity building activities. By engaging young and promising researchers we aim to build a vibrant future network of international forest scientists.

The second EFI Winter Summer School 'Making values work – sustaining multiple values in managed forests' was jointly organized by five EFI units. Twenty three students from 14 countries took part in the school, building a community of dedicated young researchers addressing forest values from different perspectives.

The Forest Policy, Economics, Education and Research network (FOPER) entered its final year. After 10 years, 45 students have passed through its innovative international Master's programme, and FOPER has become the largest and most vibrant regional research network in the Western Balkan countries.

The Careers in Sustainability Excellence (CASTLE) Marie-Curie Initial Training Network on sustainability assessments in the forest and bioenergy sectors successfully launched with the recruitment of 14 Early Stage Researchers.

Joensuu Forestry Networking Week 2013 was held in May, and looked at "How to meet the increasing demand for wood in Europe?"

A forest sector foresight course was organized at the University of Eastern Finland, the first of its kind.

Four summer schools were organized on forest genetics-related issues within the EVOLUTION of TREES as drivers of terrestrial biodiversity (EVOLTREE) network.

A Summer School on Forest Policy and Governance was organised by EFI and FTU in St Petersburg in July, attended by 40 participants and lecturers from EU countries and Russia. The initiative was supported by our Associate Member, the University of Padova, and three EFI units.

Policy Support



An important decision in 2013 was the establishment of the Foresight and Policy Support Programme to promote and implement the Policy Support function. The Programme launched a strategic policy study 'The Future of the European Forest-based Sector' (funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food) in which changes are analyzed related to paper and wood products markets and new bioeconomy products and services, and their implications for the European forest-based sector. It can already be said that the next 20 years are likely to change the sector much more than the past two decades.

A Host Country Agreement was signed by the Kingdom of Belgium and EFI. Consequently, EFI has privileges and immunities in Belgium, paving the way for building a stronger EFI presence. The EFI Brussels Liaison Office is instrumental in increasing our policy support activities in Brussels. EFI represents forest research in various key stakeholder groups such

as the EU Advisory Group on Forestry and Cork, the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability and the FTP. EFI's representation in Brussels is a new service to our member organizations, and is a valuable channel for reaching Brussels-based organizations and decision makers.



The Start-up Project for a European Forest Risk Facility (FRISK-GO) project began at the end of 2013, to explore the possibilities and functions of a potential EFI Forest Risk Facility. Such a facility would pool together scientific and practical knowledge needs related to various risks affecting European forests, to benefit forest management, policy making and society at large.

The Central-East and South-East European Regional Office – EFICEEC-EFI-SEE performed a policy implementa-

tion analysis of the national forest policy and strategy of Croatia, and a stakeholder analysis for the national forest programme.

The 'Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management' project (CI-SFM) reviewed the achievements of the pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (CI-SFM), and gave recommendations for improving the C&I set and their further development and implementation. During 2013 the project

organized a set of regional workshops and a CI-SFM pan-European Forum, both of which contributed to the final report 'Implementing Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management in Europe'.

The Third International Congress on Planted Forests (ICPF) was organized by EFIATLANTIC in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) and

EFI aims to increase the visibility and impact of its member organizations' research in policy support, and 2013 was important in this respect. EFI member organizations were involved in ThinkForest events as speakers, and contributed to the What Science Can Tell Us (WSCTU) series, which aims to structure and synthesize scientific knowledge on policy-relevant issues for policy makers. More than 50 experts from our network participated in the main EFI policy support publications of 2013:

*European Forest Governance:
Issues at Stake and the Way Forward
What Science Can Tell Us 2, 2013*

*Living with Storm Damage to Forests
What Science Can Tell Us 3, 2013*

*Climate Change in European Forests:
How to Adapt
EFI Policy Brief 9, 2013*



the Union of Foresters of Southern Europe (USSE). The Congress discussed the future challenges concerning the sustainability of planted forests and their contribution to green economies at global level.

EFI also successfully supported the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) as part of the INC Secretariat together with FAO and Liaison Unit Madrid in the Legally Binding Agreement (LBA) for European forests process.

EFI hosts the EU FLEGT Facility and EU REDD Facility as part of Policy Support. The facilities support the European Union, EU member states, other country governments and forest sector stakeholders in implementing the FLEGT Action Plan and developing national REDD+ frameworks. The two facilities work in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In 2013, the EU FLEGT Facility provided flexible, responsive support for the FLEGT Action Plan in several areas: supporting negoti-

ation and implementation of Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs); regional action and collaborative work with other consumer markets that source from VPA partner countries; and communication and capacity building. The EU REDD Facility implemented actions to support emerging REDD+ national policies and conveyed national level experience to policy discussions at EU level. Renewed funding for the Facilities under multiyear agreements continued as expected. ■

The ThinkForest initiative continued to go from strength to strength, connecting European level policy makers and scientists. Four ThinkForest events were organized at the European Parliament, attracting about 300 participants, among them 24 MEPs:

- European Forest Governance – Issues at Stake and the Way Forward
- Opportunities and Challenges in Meeting Renewable Energy Targets from Forest Biomass – an EU Perspective
- Climate Change in European Forests: How to Adapt
- Future of European Forest Governance

A fifth ThinkForest event on 'Emerging opportunities for EU-Russia cooperation on forest-based sector governance' took place in Rovaniemi, Finland in December.

The ThinkForest brief 'European Forest Governance: issues at stake and way forward' was the first of its kind and similar ThinkForest publications will follow.





Networking

EFI's 20th anniversary celebration took place in Nancy, France in September, at the EFI 20 Years Science and Policy Forum. During the Forum, over 200 leading European forest scientists and experts gathered to discuss the future of our forests, and how EFI and its partners can contribute to meet the challenges related to the various changes, risks and uncertainties which forests will face.

The Forum stimulated balanced discussion between policy/decision makers, stakeholders and scientists, and gave a taste of current important issues. Among the keynote speakers were Commissioner for Environment Dr. Janez Potočnik, Mr. Kriton Arsenis, MEP, Dr. Gert-Jan Nabuurs, Alterra, Wageningen University, and Mr. Alexander Panfilov, Russian Federal Forestry Agency.

The forum included a seminar on 'Risks to European Forests – What added value can a European Forest Risk Facility provide?' This session presented the initiatives towards a European Forest Risk Facility, linked challenges and opportunities, and its context within other ongoing initiatives. Other meetings included a session on FLEGT and REDD+, including presentations about the forest governance research agenda.

The week also included various side events, in which several hundred scientists debated the future of our forests, with a total of nearly 500 participants for the whole week. The following contributors made this event possible: INRA, AgroParisTech – ENGREF, University of Lorraine, GIP ECOFOR, NFZ.forestnet, Central European Regional Office and its Observatory for European Forests (EFI-

CENT-OEF), Swiss Confederation, Lorraine Region, Greater Nancy, Office National des Forêts, Labex ARBRE and the town of Nancy.

As part of the celebrations, EFI produced a special anniversary book and supporting video. 'Celebrating 20 years of forest networking in Europe' gives a voice to EFI's network – their memories of EFI and their vision for the future. Two special journal issues focusing on EFI's 20th anniversary were also published in the AFZ-Der-Wald and Revue Forestière Française. These highlighted the contributions of EFI's network to European forest issues over the last two decades, and acknowledged the network's strength and commitment.

A special seminar celebrating EFI's 20th anniversary was also organized in June in Joensuu, Finland with a key-



note speech from the Finnish Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Mr. Jari Koskinen. In addition, Regional Offices held their annual events with their regional partners and collaborators.

An extraordinary meeting of the Council in Nancy brought together EFI Member Countries. It was held in the same time as the **Annual Conference** decision making session for member organizations. The Annual Conference decided on the continuation of three Regional Offices (EFI-ATLANTIC, EFICEEC-EFISEE and EFICIENT-OEF) for the next five years and approved two new Project Centres: Forest Policy and Governance in Russia (RUSFOR) and Supporting the Global Implementation of REDD and FLEGT (SURF). The Conference also approved an increase in EFI membership fees for Associate and Affiliate Members in 2014. ■

Finances in 2013

In 2013 the total funding was 13.1 million € from which the subsidies were 2.5 million €, funding for activities 10.5 million € and membership fees from the Associate and Affiliate Members 156 k€.

From the subsidies of 2.5 million € the core funding from Finland was 41 % and the core funding and subsidies for Regional Offices were 59 %.

Several key recruitments took place during the year. The number of personnel was 170 with 35 different nationalities (a total of 115 person years). Of these the Regional Offices had a total number of 51 staff members (35 person years), making up one third of the entire personnel at EFI.

New premises

EFI Headquarter's moved to its new premises in Joensuu, which it shares with the Finnish Forest Research Institute (Metla). Our location is almost in the center of the University of Eastern Finland's campus. EFI Barcelona also celebrated a move to new premises in the renovated Sant Leopold Pavilion.



EUROPEAN FOREST INSTITUTE

Yliopistokatu 6 | 80100 Joensuu | FINLAND
TEL: +358 10 773 4300 | FAX: +358 10 773 4377
efisec@efi.int | www.efi.int

Additional details are available in
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PHOTOS Doni Blagojevic, Roser Cabré-Verdiell Surribas, Varpu Heiskanen, Maria Jalavisto,
Christophe Maitre, F. Radermecker, Robert Ramos/Fundació Privada Hospital de Sant Pau and Saku Ruusila
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