

IUFRO STRATEGY
FINAL DRAFT

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INTRODUCTION

The Strategy post 2019 is an essential tool for IUFRO to guide and implement its activities in the years to come in order to further improve its position as the global network of forest science cooperation, knowledge sharing and policy support. It provides a framework for IUFRO's governing bodies, officeholders and the Headquarter for effectively responding to changing paradigms regarding forests and society, and for improving its preparedness for handling unfolding new futures.

The Strategy has been developed in a participatory, inclusive process over a period of more than two years. It takes into account inputs received from a diverse set of groups within the IUFRO network and from external stakeholders, including an independent Review Panel and through various consultations and strategic dialogues organized on the occasion of major IUFRO events.

The Vision, Core Values and Institutional Goals have been modified from the previous IUFRO Strategy in accordance with the outcomes of these deliberations. The Mission remains unchanged.

A Strategy Action Plan has been developed as a tool for implementing the Strategy and monitoring progress. It includes more than 55 actions that will enable IUFRO's governing bodies, units, officeholders and HQ to effectively address the Goals and Objectives of the Strategy within the next five-year period from 2020 to 2024.

THE EVOLVING CONTEXT FOR OUR WORK

Global Context: An increasing global population, coupled with resource-intensive lifestyles, is putting more pressure on forests and trees. Climate change, ongoing environmental degradation, urbanization, globalization, digitalization and changing consumption patterns are likely to further exacerbate these pressures. More than ever, the world needs to take action to move away from the fossil-based economy towards renewable resources and nature-based solutions.

Forest context: Global prosperity and well-being depend on the productivity and robustness of the world's ecosystems and the services they provide. Forests cover more than 30% of the world's land base and provide numerous ecosystem services that are vital for human well-being and livelihoods. Forests, being interconnected with other systems, can no longer be seen in isolation. At the same time they are undermined by deforestation and degradation, and the impact of global challenges and threats on the social, cultural, ecological and economic functions of forests can result in consequences for people's livelihoods, health and the quality of life. There is a growing need to harness the potential of forests and trees to contribute to sustainable development while avoiding and mitigating the threats affecting these forests.

Policy context: Adopted in 2015, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a global framework for addressing global development challenges, including those related to forests and trees. The 17 SDGs and its numerous targets attempt to be inclusive and achieve progress across the interrelated economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. In parallel, a number of international commitments related to forests, such as the Paris Climate Agreement, the soon-to-be-adopted post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Global Forest Goals of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 have been put in place with the objective of informing related actions in the coming years.

Forest science context: The successful implementation of these ambitious agreements, frameworks, goals and targets require high-quality, up-to-date scientific evidence and innovation drawing on the best expertise. In this regard, it is a particular challenge for the scientific community to contribute to a better understanding of the complex, interrelated problems associated with forests, and to support more effective and durable solutions to these problems. Forest scientists can and do already contribute practical solutions that can respond to the major challenges of society, but these scientific voices need to be heard even more by both the policy-makers and practitioners, and communicated even more effectively to all the corners of the world. Moreover, to be able to fully grasp the drivers of the changing relationships between forests and society - between ecosystems and services for people - scaled up scientific efforts across and between different disciplines as well as regions are needed, together with increased capacities at the local level.

At the same time, numerous threats to science, including to forest science, co-exist. The growing spread of misinformation through internet and social media creates unprecedented challenges to all kinds of science and its effective uptake by the society. This can lead to the undesired outcome of (forest) science being undervalued and misused. The transparency, independence, accessibility, inclusivity, equitability, integrity and quality of (forest) science has never been as important as it is now.

The role of IUFRO and its thematic direction:

IUFRO, the only global network for forest science, continues to improve the scientific knowledge base that supports our efforts to tackle threats to sustainable development and human well-being.

Being responsive and addressing these critical challenges means continued promotion of global cooperation in forest-related research and the provision of objective and independent scientific evidence to the science community, policy-makers, relevant stakeholders, and the general public. The fundamental basis for all of this is research excellence - pursuing for the highest possible quality and relevance – and this is what IUFRO stands for!

Being the global voice for forest science, IUFRO builds on its unique membership and committed pool of scientists to generate, exchange and disseminate scientific knowledge. To effectively respond to the changing paradigms regarding forests and society, IUFRO works towards addressing emerging issues in a proactive manner, increasing collaboration with other scientific disciplines, improving capacities for science cooperation and promoting forest- and tree-related education.

To react to the most pressing challenges and hazards that affect both forests and society, the work and collaboration in IUFRO is focused on five thematic areas: *Forests for People*; *Forests and Climate Change*; *Forests and Forest-Based Products for a Greener Future*; *Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Biological Invasions*; and *Forests, Soil and Water Interactions*. All of them are strongly linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, a global framework guiding the forest-related policy processes in the coming decade, and thus the direction of the future of IUFRO's strategic development.

- **“Forests for People”** addresses key dimensions and challenges regarding the relationship between forests and society as individuals or communities, as well as the institutional arrangements supporting people's livelihoods and quality of life. (Linked to **SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 15 and 16**).
- **“Forests and Climate Change”** focuses on the impacts of climate change on forests and how to increase their resilience and adaptive capacity. Climate change is a global challenge neglecting national borders and affecting every forest on every continent. Global temperatures are increasing, regionally, and more extreme and intense weather events are occurring, coupled with increased stress and disturbances. These effects on forests affect human well-being and health, thus requiring efficient mitigation and adaptation strategies. (Linked to **SDGs 13, 15, 6, 7**)
- **“Forests and Forest-Based Products for a Greener Future”** addresses the provision of wood and forest-based products and how the environmental performance of existing bio-based forest products can be improved. It includes the use of forests as a source of renewable energy and the potential for new and innovative forest-based products in the future. (Linked to **SDGs 8, 9, 11, 12, and 15**).
- **“Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Biological Invasions”** focuses on how the loss of biodiversity may be prevented or mitigated across ecosystems and landscapes and how management regimes could be adapted to enhance biodiversity and control biological invasions. (Linked to **SDGs 2, 3, 14 and 15**)
- **“Forests, Soil and Water Interactions”** addresses the contribution of forests, especially natural forests, to the resilience of water supply for humans and the delivery of related ecosystem goods and services. (Linked to **SDGs 6 and 15**)

VISION

The Global Voice of Forest Science Promoting a Sustainable Future of Forests and Society

MISSION

IUFRO advances research excellence and knowledge sharing, and fosters development of science-based solutions to forest-related challenges for the benefit of forests and people worldwide

WHO WE ARE

IUFRO is *the* global network for forest science cooperation, open to all individuals and organizations involved in forest research and forest related sciences. It is a non-profit, non-governmental and non-discriminatory organization with a long tradition dating back to 1892. IUFRO attains its objectives by networking activities including the generation, exchange and dissemination of scientific knowledge and practices; by the provision of access to relevant information, and the assistance to scientists and institutions to strengthen their research capacities.

CORE VALUES

The core values *Excellence, Networking, Diversity* and *Integrity* guide the work of IUFRO. These core values and associated behaviours are presented below:

Excellence

IUFRO promotes and delivers work of the highest quality and professional standards. It is precise in articulating scientific understanding including its uncertainties, and rigorous in ensuring that the communication reflects the best contemporary scientific findings.

Networking

IUFRO cultivates productive relationships in forest science and promotes the sharing of information and services among our members and scientists. It promotes access to science and its benefits for policy makers and the global society.

Diversity

IUFRO respects and embraces diversity in terms of gender, culture, ethic or social origin and any other aspect of personal status, and rejects discrimination in all its forms. It includes perspectives and approaches from all parts of the world.

Integrity

IUFRO adheres to the highest ethical standards of unbiased science, and thus promotes transparency and the empowerment and independence of thought and open participation. The actions of all those acting on its behalf must demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity.

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

IUFRO's institutional goals have been developed taking into account and reflecting our core values. Within this framework, IUFRO's institutional goals and themes are logically linked: Tackling forest-related challenges of today and needs of the future requires the best possible scientific knowledge. Such **research excellence** (Goal 1) can only be achieved if sufficient capacities are in place, relevant scientific disciplines are on board, and emerging issues are effectively identified. By means of **networking** (Goal 2) such research excellence will be further enhanced, reinforced and scaled up at a regional and global level. In combination, research excellence and networking enable the **impact** (Goal 3) and outward picture that make IUFRO attractive for its partners and sponsors. Each institutional goal features a number of objectives and associated activities. They will provide guidance to IUFRO's governing bodies, officeholders and the Headquarter. They will be reflected in any internal operational guidelines and documents.

GOAL 1 – RESEARCH EXCELLENCE: STRIVE FOR QUALITY, RELEVANCE AND SYNERGIES

IUFRO is recognized and acknowledged for its leading global role in forest science. The thematic structure of IUFRO provides a comprehensive framework for advancing the state of knowledge and promoting research excellence in tackling the multiple biophysical, social and economic problems facing the world today. In order to maintain and further enhance its role as a global leader, IUFRO will strive to improve capacities for science cooperation, address emerging issues in a proactive manner, and increase collaboration with other scientific disciplines.

Objectives

(1) Improve capacities for quality science

Improvement in the rigor, timeliness and utility of scientific research requires adequate capacities of scientists and research institutions around the globe, including in economically disadvantaged regions. This can be enhanced through participation in scientific exchange and research networking.

(2) Identify emerging areas of research

Sharpening IUFRO's strategic orientation includes an open attitude towards emerging issues and focus on areas which we see a need to be more active in.

(3) Increase interdisciplinary collaboration

The world's most pressing forest-related environmental, social and economic challenges transcend political sectors and scientific disciplines. Interdisciplinary cooperation is essential not only for tackling current research questions, but also for keeping the door open to diverse future paths in forest-related sciences.

GOAL 2 – NETWORK COOPERATION: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION AND EMBRACE DIVERSITY

IUFRO facilitates networking for the sharing, exchange and use of scientific knowledge within and across disciplinary boundaries for the benefit of forests, science and people. The value of the network is inextricably linked to the active participation of a diverse set of IUFRO's member organizations, officeholders and scientists across the globe and cooperation among these participants. Accordingly, IUFRO will seek to further improve communication within the network and further enhance its diversity and member base.

Objectives

(1) Improve communication within the network

Efficient communication within the network is essential for sharing information in accessible ways, encouraging learned syntheses, and delivering excellent science-based solutions for sustainable development.

(2) Further diversify participation in the IUFRO structure

The (balanced) participation of scientists on equal terms (gender, culture, age and geography) constitutes a prerequisite for the relevance and quality of the science collaboration in IUFRO. It allows for viewing research topics and the application of forest science from different perspectives.

(3) Widen and strengthen member base

The strength of IUFRO is its members. They enable the active participation of scientists in IUFRO's networking activities, provide indispensable resources financially and in kind, and contribute significantly to IUFRO's visibility. There is considerable potential for further enhancing member engagement in IUFRO and widening its member base.

GOAL 3 – IMPACT: ENHANCE VISIBILITY, OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

IUFRO has established itself as one of the leading knowledge institutions regularly providing scientific input and policy support to global processes regarding forests and society. IUFRO's research network and activities, including work on the science-society (policy) interface ensure that our partners and stakeholders will have access to best science-based solutions for complex challenges and issues facing the world's forests. This outward looking approach will further increase the attractiveness of IUFRO to policy makers and stakeholders. IUFRO also strives to empower the next generation to solve the complex challenges by enhancing global forestry education.

Objectives

(1) Further enhance IUFRO's impact on policy processes

Science-based knowledge produced by IUFRO enables its partners and stakeholders to utilize the results and to respond to new policy needs.

(2) Strengthen science-society interaction

The uptake and use of scientific information by policy makers and practitioners forms part of a social process and depends largely on building trust among stakeholders. This requires our pursuit of quality, science-based solutions, effective communication and global cooperation.

(3) Enhance global forestry education

Raise awareness and engage in the development of comprehensive forestry education programmes, to deal with the complex challenges and opportunities that the forest sector will continue to face.