

Main Trends in Forestry in Europe - 2010 - 2014



Between 2010 and 2012, the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) elaborated an overview of the most important forestry training programs in Europe and North America in 23 countries. This year the country-specific programs got updated (see link below) and furthermore the main trends within forestry and forestry education were discussed (A, B, CH, CZ, D, DK, E, F, FL, GB, I, IRL, L, LT, N, NL & S).

The following table resumes & reflects the major trends in forestry and forestry education during the past 4 years.

Major Trends 2010 - 2011	Trend Specifications 2013 - 2014
<p>Increased societal expectations</p> <p>In general an increased influence of society's demands and expectations on the forest and its management is observed. It is assumed that this trend will continue to increase in the future-as it will have a particularly strong impact in areas with a high level of urbanisation</p>	<p><i>D: "Biodiversity and nature protection grew in importance, so 5% of the forests should be set aside and placed under nature protection".</i></p> <p><i>E: "Nature environment and Health relationship are of a growing importance, more topics about nature and nature conservation and social welfare are thought".</i></p> <p><i>FL: "The fight against neophytes has become significantly more important".</i></p> <p><i>GB: "Forest protection and forest recreation have grown even further in importance". In education a special emphasis is placed on forest protection, as there were several disasters, such as ash dieback".</i></p> <p><i>IRL: "The importance of Forest recreation got even bigger".</i></p> <p><i>L: "The importance and the pressure of the environmental lobby (nature protection) on forestry have increased significantly". Also in training more emphasis is placed on nature protection":</i></p> <p><i>L: "The pressure on the forest land is growing".</i></p> <p><i>NL: "Nature environment and Health relationship become a bigger subject and is taught on the University of applied science as a study program".</i></p> <p><i>S: "Forest environment as a remedy to people with stress symptoms is of growing importance (Forest recreation and health became more important)".</i></p>
<p>Globalisation</p> <p>Globalisation will endure. Labour market mobility will continue to grow. It is expected that employees will also change jobs more frequently in future.</p>	<p><i>A: "The European Qualifications Framework with 6 levels is introduced in A also in the forestry sector, there are new guidelines</i></p> <p><i>E: "In the general European globalisation of the university education also in forestry the former engineers (ingeniero de monte ...) changed to bachelor and master degrees".</i></p> <p><i>IRL: "There is a big gap in the education of forest harvesting in Ireland, this due to the lack of big machines, too expensive, training has to be done in Sweden</i></p>
<p>Economic pressure</p> <p>The economic pressure will remain elevated or increase further.</p>	<p><i>A: "The EU funding „Rural Development" will be redefined for the period of 2014-2020, here could occur major financial losses for the future forestry education".</i></p> <p><i>CH: "Forestry (and forest industries) has an economic problem: a lack of</i></p>

profitability and therefore menaced sustainability”.

CZ: “(Due to the economic pressure) Transformation of wood into modern industrial goods such as new wood constructions and special furniture” is of growing importance.

GB: “The State supports the different trainings with even lower contributions, which will further elevate the student fees”.

GB: “The general low student numbers and the relatively high costs of forestry trainings lead to financial problems, the deletion of forestry education at various universities can be the consequence”.

GB: “The possibility that other professionals, such as geographers, can take, with some additional training, forest jobs was increased (the relevant requirements and specifications were deliberately reduced)”.

IRL: “Exports of Timber and panel products is growing”.

IRL: - The FTEI (FTEI Forestry Training and Education Ireland) was dissolved what means less funding for education in forestry

NL: “Due to growing economic pressure, the entrepreneurship in Holland becomes more important in forestry”.

Technological changes

The technological changes have a direct impact on a very wide range of areas and the possibilities for the mechanisation of forest maintenance and the wood harvest will increase further. Also included here are the new technologies available in the IT and social media sectors.

B: “E learning is getting more and more important, this also in forestry education, especially in the basics”.

GB: “Training, training centers and trainers all need some level of Innovation to revitalize their products, courses and outcomes. These Innovations should lay a path to enable the forestry workforce to become more knowledgeable, safe, mobile and ultimately profitable and therefore sustainable”.
GB: “There must also be Innovation in finding the funding to reach these goals”.

S: Stora Segerstad is running an international project on learning forestry English through an integrated web based tool available at www.toolsforskills.eu from oct 2014 on. It is based on the books "Working in harvesting teams" part 1 and 2 and on the multilingual glossary "Forest workers´ glossary" which also is an app for I-phone and Android.

Biomasse as a fuel

The respondents referred to the importance of biomass as a fuel, a development that is likely to have a direct effect on the management and use of the forest.

A: “The importance of wood as a source of energy has increased further”.

F: “Energy gained further in importance in forestry education”.

GB: “In GB biomass as a fuel was so heavily promoted, that it caused problems with other uses such as paper wood”.

GB: “The importance of the production of CO2 and biomass has increased so much, that it was decided by the "Forestry commission" in 2012 to norm "good practices in reforestation projects" and to form private companies accordingly”.

N: “Bioenergy grew in importance in the forestry education”.

Climate change

It is assumed that the changes to the climate will have a very profound impact on the forest and forestry organisations.

N: “The expected climate changes and its consequences on forestry are of an even bigger importance; especially research is very much focused on it, education a little less!”

New Trends	Specifications 2013 – 2014
The importance of private forest owners is growing	<p><i>E: “The importance given to the private forest owners is growing in Spain, so information about them and their needs is collected with the aim to know them better and to be able to organise their education in a more efficient and better way (eForOwn Project)”.</i></p> <p><i>GB: -“There is an additional training in private afforestation projects (goal is an increased production of biomass and CO2)”.</i></p> <p><i>IRL: “The importance of the private sector in Ireland is growing, nearly half of the forests are now in private hands, this due to huge private reforestation (around 5’000 to 6’000 ha an year)</i></p>
A lack of qualified personal in forestry in the future	<p><i>CH: “In the next few years, a shortage of forestry apprentices is expected”.</i></p> <p><i>CH: “In the next 15 years there will be a wave of retirements (for the foresters for example 53%!), this will lead at medium to long term to a bottleneck of qualified forestry personal”.</i></p> <p><i>CH: “Lack of qualified personnel: Will we tomorrow have enough qualified professionals at all levels? This is a serious problem in Switzerland“.</i></p> <p><i>D: “Job prospects for the classic forester (Förster) and the higher forest service are better than ever in the last 20 years (it was economized too long)”.</i></p>

Conclusions

All main trends in forestry education, mentioned in 2011, are still valid.

Biodiversity and forest protection, adaptation to climate change, the transformation of wood to fuel and modern industrial goods as well as forest recreation and health gained even further in importance.

Furthermore the importance given to the private forest owners grew considerably and became a major trend.

Another new trend, at least in certain countries, is the expected lack of qualified forestry personal.

Further reports and other downloads: <http://www.eduforest.eu/Mindex.php?index=6>

Authors

Urs Schroff and Andreas Bernasconi, Pan Bern AG, Bern (Switzerland).