



Report of the UNECE/FAO Forest Communicators' Network – Annual Meeting

20-22 May 2019, Oslo, Norway

The annual meeting of the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Communication – the Forest Communicators' Network (FCN) took place on 20-22 May 2019 in Oslo, Norway. It was kindly hosted by the Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research.

The meeting was attended by 28 participants from 9 countries and 14 organisations. All presentations held at the meeting are available at the website: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=51052>

The objectives of the meeting were to exchange experiences on communicating effectively within and outside the forest sector and to gain new perspectives on communication through social media.

Opening of the meeting

Mr. Knut Øistad, Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO), opened the meeting and welcomed participants while introducing NIBIO and its main activities. He elaborated on the challenge to go from a fossil-based economy towards a bioeconomy. Currently 80% of the Norwegian economy relates to oil and gas, the bioeconomy is supposed to substitute this market share, with a high potential of value added in the Norwegian forest sector and a focus on the human resources of the country.

Mr. Kai Lintunen, FCN leader, welcomed participants and summarized past achievements of the team of specialists (ToS). The agenda was introduced and adopted as proposed.

Communicating effectively within and outside the forest sector

The FCN noted that communicating to other sectors is a continuous challenge and an area that should be further explored. Communication events at international conferences should continue to reach out to a broad audience.

Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl, Austria, updated the FCN on FAO's global communicators' coordination group. The six regional communicators networks (North America, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Mediterranean and the Near East, Asia-Pacific) are represented in the global group to opportunities for shared messages and outreach to raise awareness on forest issues across the regions and exchange experience. The UN Strategic Plan on Forests and its recently

adopted Communication Strategy offers a huge opportunity to further streamline and focus on forest communication. Upcoming opportunities for joint communication efforts are the Asia-Pacific Forestry Week (17-21 June 2019), the 8th World Conference on Ecological Restoration (22-27 September 2019) and the XXV IUFRO World Congress (29 Sept – 5 Oct 2019).

Forest Education

Ms. Anna Lena Albertsen, Skogkurs, introduced the Norwegian education programme “Learning with the Forest” which targets pupils and elementary school teachers and reaches about 150,000 pupils annually. This is a hands-on example on how to come from traditional environmental education to education for sustainable development.

Mr. Thomas Baschny, Forest Pedagogics subgroup, presented the activities, achievements and plans of the FCN sub-group on forest pedagogics. Since 2006, an annual Forestpedagogy Congress has been held, the next session will take place 1-4 July 2019 in Riga, Latvia, under the theme “Designing bridges between Forests and Schools”. The main objectives are to improve social and political awareness, establish forestpedagogy as a recognized Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) part and to elaborate common quality standards of forest pedagogy programs.

Mr. Christoph Rullmann, Association for the Protection of the German Forest (Schutzgemeinschaft Deutscher Wald), showed a video about creating forest experiences at the European Summer School, where young adults participate and interactively engage in learning about the economic, ecological and social functions of forests. The importance of bringing children to the forest, giving them an emotional connection and nature facts was noted.

Mr. Bob Burt, representing IUFRO, presented the World Wood Day, which was celebrated in Austria, 20-24 March 2019, in conjunction with the International Day of Forests (21 March). A scientific symposium was organized together with the IUFRO Research Group on Forest Products Culture.

International Day of Forests

Ms. Maria De Cristofaro, FAO, presented FAO headquarter activities on the occasion of the International Day of Forests, which was celebrated on 21 March 2019 under the theme “Forests and Education” and with the slogan “Learn to Love Forests!”. The celebrations featured the annual IDF video, a t-shirt design contest for kids, a students’ video contest, a teachers’ video contest and a workshop. It was announced that the theme for the International Day of Forests 2020 will be “Forests and Biodiversity”.

Ms. Theresa Loeffler, UNECE/FAO, reported the activities on IDF 2019 in Geneva, which included a forest food breakfast, handicraft workshops organized jointly with Poland, a forest quiz organized jointly with PEFC during a side event at the UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and the “paper cave” exhibition by the Confederation of European Paper Industries showcasing innovative wood-derived products of the future.

Outcomes of the brainstorming session on IDF 2020 under the theme “Forests and Biodiversity”:

Ideas/Messages	Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from bio-structures/designs (bee hives, spiders, fungi) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seeing from the point of view of a spider what is going on in the forest • SFM can build biodiversity • Biodiversity is more than birds/animals • Power of variety • All living creatures matter • More than you see (zoom in – zoom out) • Diversity in forests/people/uses • Open your eyes/minds • Biodiversity hot spots – high value forests • Where would you rather be – forests vs. moon • Lifecycle of a butterfly • Biodiversity – find it where you are • Use influencers: Jane Goodall, David Attenborough, Ed Norton 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is biodiversity for you? – Contest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make a diverse picture/collage of the submissions (like a word cloud) • Immersive room experience in cities – hear it, touch it • Memory game to be printed at home to get familiar with biodiversity • More sounds than visuals – sound of biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Choir or song composition, animals as the orchestra ○ Biodiversity DJs • Colouring contest

Wood is good! Strategic campaigns in communications

Ms. Jennifer Hayes, US Forest Service, presented the “It’s all yours” campaign for public engagement that began during a large ski event, but has since become a national campaign in the U.S. The campaign included among promotional videos, forest ambassadors in ski lifts, the engagement of influencers and a partnership with the movie Pete’s Dragon.

Ms. Claire-Lise Suter Thalmann, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, presented the Swiss Timber campaign WOODVETIA which featured the wood carving of 20 famous Swiss personalities in different species which were displayed all over the country in various settings. The campaign raised awareness on Swiss timber products.

Ms. Catherine Rivoal, French Ministry of Agriculture and Food, presented the campaign “Pour moi, c’est le bois” which aimed at increasing the visibility of the forest sector, wood consumption and the market share for domestic timber products. The three-year campaign partnered with major TV, radio, cinema programmes as well as being present in the press and on social media. It was noted that it is not an easy task to communicate the complexity of forest issues.

Ms. Theresa Loeffler, UNECE/FAO, showed the video “three little pigs and climate change”, a joint production of the Forest, Land and Housing Division of UNECE and the State Forests Poland. The video was launched at the 24th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24), held in Katowice, Poland, 2 - 14 December 2018, to promote wood construction. Countries are welcome to produce their own language version of the video. Further, the Vancouver Invitation, a bold and forward-looking statement of intent to harness the environmental, economic and social benefits of sustainable forest management, was presented. It was developed with Canada and supported with input from UNECE countries.

Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl, Austrian Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism, elaborated on communication in the context of the EU Forest Strategy. Communication is essential in this regard due to the fragmentation within the EU. The EU Forest Strategy is a political commitment but not legally binding.

Ms. Mita Sen and Yan Lang, UNFF, presented the UNFF clearinghouse mechanism for forest financing as a communication tool for the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN). Key components of the clearinghouse online platform are to identify forest financing opportunities, exchange information on best practices and track progress towards 2030. Participants provided feedback on potential databases and other sources to help develop the online platform.

Ms. Maria De Cristofaro, FAO, and Mr. Kai Lintunen, FCN leader, presented the idea of the “Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW)” initiative which is a joint initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) focusing on the contributions of sustainable wood value chains to sustainable development and climate change mitigation. The SW4SW is a ground-breaking new cooperation initiative, where the CPF joins forces. It provides an opportunity for communicating about the merits of forest and wood use internationally through a common initiative.

Outcomes of the brainstorming session on the campaign “SW4SW”:

- What’s in it for me?
- Who is the target group?
- Tag line – like “It’s all yours” – e.g. “Money does grow on trees!”
- SDGs in annual reports – good way for reaching stakeholders
- An exhibition about biodiversity
- Contest “Imagine the world ...”
 - If we didn’t make wood
 - If Columbus didn’t discover America
- Wood as plastic substitute – be where the consumer makes the decision (supermarket)
 - Campaigning to change consumer behaviour (be aware of the price as well – main reason for buying decisions)
 - Take the story out of the forest use wood-derived products so you will not have a plastic ocean
- Do you want a plastic future, clean oceans? – climate change – ecosystem approach
- What is sustainable wood?



- You use wood from birth to death
- Step by step campaign
- Use emotional words (trees vs. biomass)
 - Take the example of a Christmas tree to explain that using wood is good
- Fauna is more emotional than flora
- Kids & stories – who are the people that youth listens to?
- Youth should talk for the future – easy solutions – kids have to believe what they say
- Back to the future video contest – past – today – future
 - It was always a smart decision to use wood
 - We have been using wood for millennia and we can continue to do so if we manage it sustainably
- Climate in cities can be improved with trees

Social media training

Mr. Hadrian Hiorth and Mr Eirik Sjo Engen, Hearts & Science, delivered a half-day training on social media. The training included facebook and Instagram insight tools, content and outreach planning, self-service solutions and stories on facebook, Instagram and snapchat, video creation and tips on which content works best on which platform. The full training material is available on the meeting's website.

Best practices in forest communication

Mr. Florian Kraxner, IBFRA/IIASA, presented the “Cool forests at risk” conference which was held 17-20 September 2018 in Laxenburg, Austria. The central goal of the conference was to inform science to develop transdisciplinary strategies for improved collaboration and communication while promoting the values of boreal forests for the climate, bioeconomy and people.

Mr. Pierre Hermans, Sylva Nova, presented how private companies are using forests as a marketing tool. A corporate social responsibility approach is integrated into strategies and companies have decided to work on their image and carbon footprint by financing different afforestation or forest restoration projects.

Mr. Pétur Halldorsson, Icelandic Forest Service, presented a campaign for Iceland's afforestation which led to the inclusion of the idea to quadruple afforestation efforts in the government's climate strategy. The key to success was the direct communication with politicians giving a clear proposal and action plan which was ready for use.

Ms. France Rollin, Natural Resources Canada, showcased Canada's communication experience on their national Forest Week which is already held since 1920 and a collaborative effort of all forest centres and the forest service reaching out to politicians as well as the public.

Mr. Kai Lintunen, FCN leader, presented the Forest Bioeconomy Future Catalogue showing the newest products and services of forest bioeconomy, it is available at: <https://forest.fi/forest-bioeconomy-future-catalogue/>

Mr. Borut Debevc, Slovenian Forest Service, presented Slovenia's generic communication on the International Day of Forests, the annual forest week and the 25th anniversary of the Slovenian Forest Service.

Ms. Manca Baznik, Slovenian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, presented the results of a public opinion research about forest and forest policy which led to increased campaigning on rising awareness on how to behave in the forest addressed to visitors, the education system and forest owners.

Events offering communication opportunities

28 May 2019, Vienna, Austria: R20 Austrian World Summit

17-31 June 2019, Incheon, Republic of Korea: Asia-Pacific Forestry Week 2019

1-7 July 2019, Riga and Tervete, Latvia: 14th European Forest Pedagogics Congress 2019

29 Sep -5 Oct 2019, Curitiba, Brazil: XXV IUFRO World Congress

4-9 November 2019, Geneva, Switzerland: The 5th European Forest Week, in conjunction with Forêt2019, the Joint Session of the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI), and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC)

2024, Stockholm, Sweden: XXVI IUFRO World Congress– the Nordic-Baltic consortium

FCN internal business

- Election of officers

The FCN confirmed the leadership group with Mr. Kai Lintunen (Finland) being the team leader, Ms. Lourdes Lázaro Marín (IUCN), Mr. Tomass Kotovičs (Latvia) and Ms. Gerda Wolfrum (IUFRO) being deputy leaders. Mr. Colin Morton stepped down as deputy team leader following his retirement. The Secretariat as well as the FCN group thanked Mr. Morton for the many years contributing to the team's activities and the energy and dedication he brought to the task. Ms. Jennifer Hayes (US Forest Services) was elected as deputy leader, taking over from Mr. Morton.

- Training elements were seen as a positive hook for people to attend the meetings
- For the next FCN annual meeting some options are being discussed (Italy, Slovenia)
- Cross-promotion through the google-mailing list was encouraged

Field Trip, Tuesday 21 May 2019

The FCN was invited for half a day to the Oslo city forest, Nordmarka, where representatives from the Norwegian Forestry Association and Oslo Municipality provided context about the Norwegian forests and the forest sector.

Annex I – Agenda of the meeting

Time	Day 1 – Monday 20 May 2019
09:00	Welcome by Knut Øistad, host country representative and Kai Lintunen, FCN leader Introductions
09:10	Boreal Forests The Norwegian forest context – Knut Øistad Q&A
10:15-10:45	COFFEE BREAK (provided)
10:45-12:30	Communicating effectively within and outside the forest sector FCN setting the scene – Kai Lintunen Forest communication, the global context – Ingwald Gschwandtl Q&A Forest Education Forest Pedagogics – Thomas Baschny Schutzgemeinschaft Deutscher Wald – Christoph Rullmann The Norwegian program Learning with Forest – Anna Lena Albertsen World Wood Day 2019 in Austria – Bob Burt FAO IDF activities – Maria De Cristofaro UNECE/FAO IDF activities – Theresa Loeffler Q&A
12:30-13:30	LUNCH (self paid)
13:30-15:00	Wood is good! Strategic campaigns in communications It's all yours campaign - Jennifer Hayes Marketing Schweizer Holz, Woodvetia – Claire-Lise Suter Thalmann Merci la forêt, French Campaign – Catherine Rivoal Vancouver Invitation on Sustainable Forest Products for a Better Future – Theresa Loeffler Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW) Initiative - Maria De Cristofaro and Kai Lintunen EU Forest Strategy – Ingwald Gschwandtl Q&A
15:00-15:30	COFFEE BREAK (provided)
15:30-16:00	UNFFs clearinghouse mechanism forest financing – a communication tool - Mita Sen and Yan Lang Interactive feedback session on the UNFFs clearinghouse mechanism forest financing
16:00-17:30	IDF brainstorming on activities for the IDF 2020 and SW4SW – group exercise



Time		Day 2 – Tuesday 21 May 2019
		Cool Forest Project – Florian Kraxner, IBFRA/IIASA
		Social media training
		Theme 1: Active your insights to boost your reach!
09:00-10:30		– You’ll learn how to use Facebook and Instagram Insight Tools to optimize your content and content plan, while learning more about your followers.
		Theme 2: Maximise your investment with reach and frequency
		– Learn how to reach your target audience with an optimal frequency, using Self-service solutions on Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat.
10:30-10:45		COFFEE BREAK (provided)
		Social media training
		Theme 3: Two Seconds
10:45-12:30		– 60% of brand impact happens in the first two seconds on social media. Learn how to create videos that work.
		Theme 4: Tell your story with Stories
		– Stories is the fastest growing format on Facebook and Instagram, and it’s what Snapchat is based upon. Learn more about how you can activate this format in your marketing communication strategy!
12:30-13:30		Lunch (self paid)
<p><i>Field Trip</i></p> <p>to the Oslo city forest, Nordmarka.</p> <p>Representatives from the Norwegian Forestry Association and Oslo Municipality will organize the field trip. Transport to and from the forest will be provided. Please bring appropriate clothes and shoes/raincoat/sun cream/mosquito repellent.</p>		

Time		Day 3 – Wednesday 22 May 2019	
		Best practices in forest communication – lightning talks (5 min talk + 5 min Q&A each)	
09:00-10:30		Private sector support to forest restoration actions: how companies communicate on their involvement - Pierre Hermans	
		Campaigning for Iceland’s afforestation – Pétur Halldorsson	
		Canada’s Forest Week and communication experience – France Rollin	
		Forest bioeconomy future catalogue – Kai Lintunen	
		Generic promotion for forests, forestry and the forest-based sector in Slovenia	
		Communication activities in the year 2019 - Borut Debevc and Manca Baznik	
10:30-11:00		COFFEE BREAK (provided)	
		Events offering communication opportunities	
11:00-12:30		14th European Forest Pedagogics Congress 2019, Riga and Tervete, Latvia, 1-4 July 2019 – Thomas Baschny	
		The XXV IUFRO World Congress in Curitiba, Brazil (general / FCN session) - Jennifer Hayes	
		The XXVI IUFRO World Congress in Stockholm – the Nordic-Baltic consortium - Jennifer Hayes	
		R20 Austrian World Summit – Ingwald Gschwandtl	
		Asia Pacific Forestry Week – Maria De Cristofaro	
		European Forest Week – Theresa Loeffler	
		Feedback from the group on activities for the European Forest Week	
12:30-13:30		LUNCH (self paid)	
		FCN internal business	
13:30-14:30		Updates on the FCN - Kai Lintunen	
		Progress on the Global Coordination Group of the FCN - Ingwald Gschwandtl	
		Progress report on the FCN Google Group - Maria De Cristofaro	

Annex II – List of participants



Forest Communicators' Network - Annual Meeting

Start Date: Monday, May 20, 2019

End Date: Wednesday, May 22, 2019

Participants: 28

Last Name	First Name	Title	Organization	Countries Represented
Albertsen	Anna Lena	Ms.	Skogkurs	
Arnold	Alexandra Maria	Ms.	Deutscher Forstverein e.V.	
Baschny	Thomas	Mr.	Union of European Foresters	Austria
Baznik	Manca	Mrs.	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Division for forestry	Slovenia
Brown	Carla	Mrs.	FSC International	
Burt	Robert (Bob)	Mr.	International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)	
Chojnacka	Maria	Ms.	State Forests Information Centre	
De Cristofaro	Maria	Ms.	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	
Debevc	Borut	Mr.	Slovenia Forest Service	Slovenia
Gross	Liina	Ms.	Estonian Forest Association	Estonia
Gschwandtl	Ingwald	Mr.	Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism	Austria
Halldórsson	Pétur	Mr.	Iceland Forest Service	
Hayes	Jennifer	Mrs.	US Forest Service	United States of America
Hermans	Pierre	Mr.	SYLVA NOVA	



Kekk	Kertu	Ms.	Estonian Private Forest Centre (Erametsakeskus)	Estonia
Kraxner	Florian	Dr.	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)	
Lang	Yan	Ms.	UN Forum on Forests Secretariat	
Lintunen	Kai	Mr.	Finnish Forest Association	Finland
Loeffler	Theresa	Ms.	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)	
Oistad	Knut	Mr.	NIBIO	Norway
Parro	Kristi	Ms.	Estonian State Forest Management Centre	
Riedl	Marcel	Mr.	Czech University of Life Sciences Prague	
Rivoal	Catherine	Ms.	Ministry of Agriculture, Agrifood and Forestry	France
Rollin	France	Ms.	Natural Resources Canada Canadian Forest Service	Canada
Rullmann	Christoph	Mr.	Schutzgemeinschaft Deutscher Wald - German Association for the Protection of Forests (SDW)	
Sen	Mita	Ms.	United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat	
Suter Thalman	Claire-Lise	Mrs.	Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications Federal Office for the Environment FOEN Forest Division	Switzerland
Viszlai	Igor	Mr.	FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit Bratislava	