

THE 24TH IUFRO WORLD CONGRESS FOCUSED ON THE ROLE OF RESEARCH

From October 5-11, 2014, the USDA Forest Service hosted 2,500 scientists from more than 100 countries, including 700 students, who converged in Salt Lake City, Utah (USA), for the 24th World Congress of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO). An additional 1,200 professional foresters joined them for the annual Society of American Foresters (SAF) and Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF) conventions.

This congress running under the title “Sustaining Forests, Sustaining People: The Role of Research” offered an extraordinary opportunity for scientists and practitioners to present and discuss their latest findings and current activities in forest research (<http://iufro2014.com/>).

It provided an unique forum for presentation and discussion of current and future global research needs in forest science. The IUFRO Congress explored the role of science in crafting practical measures to enhance the resilience of forests and their capacity to provide the environmental, economic, social, cultural, spiritual and health benefits that sustain rural and urban societies worldwide.

The 24th IUFRO World Congress scientific program was organized around seven major themes: Forests for People; Forest Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; Forests and Climate Change; Forest and Water Interactions; Forest Biomass and Bioenergy; Forests and Forest Products for a Greener Future and Forest Health in a Changing World.

The more than 1,200 oral presentations and nearly as many poster presentations in five plenary, 19 sub-plenary, and over 170 technical and poster sessions during the event week have certainly contributed substantially to providing a solid base of scientific knowledge that is crucial to achieving these goals.

A tree planting ceremony was held to commemorate this world congress. In keeping with IUFRO tradition, four trees were planted as a gift to the host city during the ceremony: cedar of Lebanon (to commemorate IUFRO’s long history and the location of the planting in the Lebanese section of the gardens), European beech (to commemorate IUFRO’s roots in Europe), piñon pine (to commemorate the importance of trees, and this species particularly, to the Native Americans who originally inhabited the region) and American chestnut (to commemorate the role of research in combating a deadly fungus, Chestnut Blight, that virtually eliminated American Chestnut from America’s forests in the early 1900s).

A Pre-Congress Training Session was held at the Snowbird Resort in Utah a total of 69 participants traveled from 30 countries to attend the five-day session sponsored by IUFRO’s Special Program for Development of Capacities.

During this World Congress, the International Council (IC) met twice and discussed and decided on a number of matters of major significance for IUFRO. The IC elected the new President (Mike Wingfield from South Africa), Vice-Presidents (Björn Hånell from Sweden and John Parrotta from USA) and other voting members of the IUFRO Board for period 2014-2019. For the Division 5 Forest Products the new coordinator is Pekka Saranpää (Finland).

Following a very competitive bidding process and detailed evaluation by the Board, the IC also voted on the host of the next IUFRO 25th World Congress in 2019, which will be held in Curitiba, Brazil. The next Division 5 World Conference will be hosted 2017 in Vancouver, Canada.

Founded in 1892, IUFRO is a global nonprofit and nongovernmental scientific organization dedicated to promoting international cooperation in forest-related research. IUFRO includes over 600 member organizations in more than 100 countries representing 15,000 scientists.



*Paper written by:
Eugenia TUDOR
Prof.dr.ing.dr. Marius Cătălin BARBU*