



Photo: Ponsse

“Resurgence of forestry”

The need for forest products has never been as high as at present. Norway, Sweden and Finland are launching major campaigns to increase the awareness among forest owners of the value of actively managing their forests.

Finland: Campaign to boost timber sales

The Finnish national forestry programme has set a target to increase timber harvests by 10-15 million cubic metres per year by 2015. In order to reach this target, several measures are being taken.

The forestry centres in Finland are campaigning to increase timber sales and silvicultural activities. A letter has been sent to 40,000 forest owners with advice and information on harvesting and silvicultural options for their properties. The letter includes contact details for timber buyers and entrepreneurs. Experience from previous campaigns indicates that about half of the forest owners will respond positively to at least some of the suggestions.

Read more: www.skogscentralen.fi

Norway: “Time for forestry”

The Norwegian forest owners’ cooperative has initiated a campaign called “Time for forestry” to increase forestry investments and timber felling in Norwegian forests.

The campaign has the following targets for its activities in 2010:

- To increase planting by 50% to 30 million saplings
- To increase precommercial thinning by 80% to 45,000 hectares
- To increase timber felling by 20% to 9 million cubic metres per year.

The targets will be achieved by information to the forest owners and by increased capacity, e.g. of forest machine entrepreneurs.

Source: www.nordicforestry.org

Sweden: “Kraftsamling skog”

Kraftsamling Skog (Demonstration of strength in forestry) is a part of an initiative by LRF’s (Federation of Swedish Farmers), intended to raise the profitability, growth and attractiveness of green businesses.

The campaign is based on research showing that it is possible to increase growth by 20% in the private forestry by more intensive silviculture.

The campaign will involve several activities, such as training courses for 50,000 forest owners, establishment of model farms illustrating the effects of the measures, and web-services that can help forest owners make financial calculations.

Source: www.nordicforestry.org

New offices strengthens EFI's regional presence

The European Forest Institute is physically cementing its position as a pan-European organisation. In addition to its head office in Joensuu, Finland, and a regional office in Spain, EFI wants to establish five further regional offices throughout Europe. The institute is currently inviting and considering proposals for the new regional offices. One is intended to cover the Nordic countries.

Risto Päivinen, the director of EFI, attended the SNS board meeting in May 2008 to discuss a new regional office called EFINORD. The establishment is to be located in Copenhagen, Denmark, subject to approval by the EFI annual conference in September. If accepted, EFINORD will be a regional branch of EFI and could be opened in 2010.

Mediterranean office inspires

EFI wants to strengthen its regional presence and its ability to respond to regional research and policy needs. The results of establishing the regional office EFIMED in Barcelona, Spain, have been encouraging, according to Risto Päivinen.

– The experience gained from EFIMED has already shown that regional offices can provide a successful new platform for innovative research, co-operation and networking, he says. Spain has become a stronger participant in Mediterranean forest research, and enhanced its position in the European forest community.

Proposed new regional offices

EFI called for expressions of interest in the autumn of 2007 for new regional offices, and has since requested full proposals from five parties to establish such offices:

- EFICENT – a joint initiative by Eastern France, Southern Germany and Switzerland, focussing on central Europe
- EFI-INNOFORCE – covering a region from the Baltic states down to south-eastern Europe

- EFINORD – initiated by the Nordic countries
- EFI-PLANT – covering the region of the Atlantic Rim
- EFISEE – embracing south-eastern Europe.

Proposals should be submitted by August 2008, and decisions regarding them will be taken in September. The new offices can then be inaugurated as soon as negotiations and arrangements are completed.

SNS is currently preparing the proposal for EFINORD. The relationships between the regional office and both SNS and the Nordic Council must first be clarified.

Added value

A regional office is legally part of the EFI, run by staff employed by or seconded by the EFI. They will have relatively permanent structures, not to be confused with the EFI project centres, which are coordinated by local host organisations and formally independent of EFI.

Read more: www.efi.int



– *There have been some qualms that the regional offices may compete with local organisations for resources, says Risto Päivinen, director of EFI. But contrary to these misgivings, we have seen that the regional office EFIMED has brought benefits to local institutes and added value to the region. The local researchers have found that they now have a stronger voice in the EU.*



EFI'S motives for regional offices:

- Regional offices can provide platforms for implementing the goals and principles of the European Research Area in forest research.
- They allow the regions to benefit from EFI's pan-European network and research expertise.
- They help regional experts, institutions and governments to address issues of importance for their regions in a European context.
- They can pool financial and other resources for tackling important issues.
- They reduce the fragmentation of research structures.
- They increase the effectiveness of the participating institutes through co-ordinated collaboration.
- They raise the visibility of EFI in Europe's regions.

EFI – from a local Finnish to a leading international organisation

– The European Forest Institute has risen rapidly since its inception in 1993 to its current position as a leading international research organisation that is highly regarded by its members, says Risto Päivinen, director of the institute.

Finnish initiative

EFI was initiated by the Finnish Forest Industries Association, who wanted to establish a more formal body to exploit research advances from outside Finland. Risto Seppälä, who was Professor at METLA, promoted the idea, and helped to establish the institute until it was formally launched in 1993. Birger Solberg was appointed as the first director and he was followed by Ian Hunter until Risto Päivinen took over in the year 2000.

The institute started as a Finnish organisation, with a Finnish board but with associated members from various countries throughout Europe. In 2005, it attained legal status as an international organisation.

A voice in the EU

– The international status was requested by the member countries, says Risto Päivinen, in order to give

the institute more power and provide a stronger voice for the forest sector in the EU.

Risto Päivinen stresses the importance of EFI's role in setting the research agenda in the EU. EFI was one of the driving partners in the establishment of the Forest Technology Platform (FTP), which has had a strong influence on the EU research programme, and raised the profile of forestry issues in strong competition with other research fields.

The number of members has steadily increased, and there are currently 131 member organisations based in 37 countries. Five organisations are even based outside Europe (in the USA, Canada and Japan).



The EFI headquarter in Joensuu, Finland

Each member pays 1,250 Euro per year to the institute, their fees account for 150,000 Euro per year, and its total annual budget amounts to 4 million Euro. National funds contribute additional voluntary financing. There is no regular funding from the EU.

Head office in Joensuu

The head office is located in Joensuu, eastern Finland, where most of the staff are located. One Regional Office was established in Spain in 2007, and there are plans to establish five new regional offices in the near future (see adjacent article). EFI also has seven Project Centres across Europe. These are networks of member organisations and other partners focused on specific issues, such as conversion

of secondary spruce forests, forest research and education in Russia, and fire ecology. The Project Centres are hosted by local organisations, with staff that are formally independent of EFI.

*More information: www.efi.int
risto.paivinen@efi.int*



“Nordic cooperation, a necessity”

SNS stands for Nordic cooperation. But why is Nordic cooperation important? We asked some members of the SNS board. Here are the responses of Aðalsteinn Sigurgeirsson

“Iceland is a small country where forestry is marginal and forest research is a minor activity. We have learned the necessity of co-operating internationally, and SNS is an important bridge to research networks in Europe and the Nordic countries. The Nordic meetings are often more profitable to attend than many European meetings. Being the

leader of an institute with just 6-7 researchers, it is difficult to make one's voice heard at an EU-meeting, where other leaders may represent 500–1,000 researchers.

Noltfox – information from 15,000 experiments at a single site!

Those who visit the NOLTFOX website will now be able to access information regarding more than 15,000 experiments performed at sites throughout northern Europe.

NOLTFOX is the SNS-supported joint Nordic database for registering forestry experiments. Since the first version was launched in 2001, further countries have joined. Today, information on experiments from the United Kingdom and the Baltic states

can be found along with those from Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland and Denmark.

The experiments cover subjects such as genetic diversity and breeding, regeneration and establishment, stand treatment, growth and yield, ecosystem research, Christmas trees and decorative greenery, wood for energy and peatland forestry.

The current version of NOLTFOX includes literature related to the experiments. A user can search the database for a specific topic, select experiments of interest and print out a list of references that describe results from the experiments.

Read more: <http://noltfox.metla.fi>

Shortcuts

Nordic meeting on cone collection

The genetic effects of selecting the best stands for cone collection are limited, according to Professor Dag Lindgren. It is more efficient to select the best trees within a stand.

Dag Lindgren was one of several speakers at the joint Nordic meeting on cone collection held in Stockholm in March 2008, which attracted 39 participants from five nations discussing ways to optimise cone collection in stands.

Forestry companies in the Nordic countries usually prefer seed from seed orchards, but their production does not always meet the market's demands for seed.

www.nordgen.org/nsfp

2008 Nova Prize to Plant Pathology network

NOVA (The Nordic Forestry, Veterinary and Agricultural University Network) has awarded their annual prize for 2008 to the network NorPath.

The network has developed a Nordic Master's program in Plant Pathology with substantial funding from the Nordic Council of Ministers. The first students will enrol at the Faculty of Life Sciences at Copenhagen University, and the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. Other partners are SLU in Sweden and Helsinki University. The network's project leader has been Lisa Munk, from the Faculty of Life Sciences in Denmark.

Source:
www.nova-university.org

The Marcus Wallenberg Prize awarded to Finnish researchers

The 2008 Marcus Wallenberg Prize was awarded to Bjarne Holmbom and Christer Eckerman for their pioneering research, which has created a platform for the large-scale separation, isolation, purification and applications of chemical components in wood.

For example, they have developed an understanding of the fundamental chemistry of spruce tree knots – parts of branches that are embedded in the stem. Furthermore, they have developed methods to extract tree knots from pulping process streams and to isolate and purify chemicals from them, with many potential applications and uses. For example, the lignan hydroxymatairesinol

(HMR) can be used as a human dietary supplement.

The selective removal of knots from pulping process streams provides opportunities for additional benefits by reducing process disturbances, reducing the use of bleaching chemicals and energy, and improving the consistency of the paper products.

Åbo Akademi University and Professor Bjarne Holmbom are participants in the WoodWisdom-Net Research Programme Project

A sustainable Process for Production of Green Chemicals from Softwood Bark - PROBARK.

Read more:
www.woodwisdom.net

Contact News & Views

Write to the scientific editor:
Mats Hannerz,
Silvinformation AB
mats.hannerz@silvinformation.se

More info about SNS:

www.nordicforestresearch.org

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- short
- relevant to the Journal
- interesting for the readers.

Examples: comments on papers published in the Journal, views on ongoing research, trends in research policy, opinions about forestry practice etc.

News & Views is edited by Mats Hannerz, Silvinformation AB
mats.hannerz@silvinformation.se
and produced by Carl Henrik Palmér. chp@areca.se