

New Strategic Partnership between IUFRO and BMZ to Better Link Forest Science with International Development Policies

(Vienna, 5 December 2019) Forests and trees play an important role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 goals, the SDGs, which were agreed upon by the 193 Member States of the United Nations in 2015. In order to better understand and recognize the contributions of forests and trees to the overall Agenda goals of poverty eradication and sustainable development, government representatives need unbiased policy-relevant scientific information that

supports well-informed decisions concerning forests, trees and land use worldwide.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) have therefore entered into a strategic partnership that aims to enhance the interaction between the science community and policy makers.

“The new partnership will strengthen international research cooperation and innovation in support of Germany’s development policy objectives and priorities,” said Heiko Warnken, Head of the Division for Rural Development, Land Rights, Forests and Animal Husbandry at BMZ. “A structured collaboration and advisory services will increase the impact and range of German development cooperation regarding forests, their protection, sustainable management and restoration,” he explained.

The core activity of this new partnership will be carried out in the framework of IUFRO’s Science-Policy Programme and its main instrument, the IUFRO-led Global Forest Expert Panels (GFEP) initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF).

“GFEP produces objective and independent scientific assessments on key issues related to forests and forest policy,” explained GFEP Coordinator Christoph Wildburger. “Since 2007, GFEP has produced six global assessments on topics such as forests and climate change, forests and water, forests and food security or forests and biodiversity. Currently, a new assessment on the relationship between forests and poverty is underway,” he added.

Furthermore, in cooperation with IUFRO’s Special Programme for Development of Capacities (SPDC), activities will be initiated to support regional dissemination of reliable scientific information as well as capacity building of scientists and institutions in economically disadvantaged countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.



From right to left: Heiko Warnken, BMZ, and IUFRO Executive Director Alexander Buck signing the multi-year cooperation agreement on 14 November 2019. (Photo IUFRO)

The partnership also aims to strengthen communication at the science-policy interface. Through this partnership, IUFRO's Science-Policy Programme will be further developed into a full-fledged advisory mechanism for policy and implementation agencies in the development arena.

“The new strategic partnership will enable both partners to considerably enhance the contribution of forest and tree related science to international development policy and therewith support the mutual objective of providing solutions that benefit forests and people worldwide” concluded Alexander Buck, the Executive Director of IUFRO.

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The International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) is the only worldwide organization devoted to forest research and related sciences. Its members are research institutions, universities, and individual scientists as well as decision-making authorities and other stakeholders with a focus on forests and trees: <https://www.iufro.org/>