

SILVA News



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SILVA Network General Assembly 2000

The SILVA Network General Assembly 2000 was held in Padova, Italy on 29 June 2000. The meeting attracted 22 participants who represented 14 European Universities.

Membership

During the Academic Year 1999-2000, four applications for membership were sent to the SILVA Network. All four of these institutions had been visited by a SILVA Network representative. During the meeting, Petrozavodsk State University (PetrSU) was introduced by Prof. Alexander Pitukhin, the Dean of the Faculty of Forestry at PetrSU. The other applicants were introduced by Prof. Paavo Pelkonen, President of the SILVA Network. All four institutions were accepted unanimously as new SILVA Network members, they include:

- Bielorussian State Technological University, Minsk, Bielorrussia
- Czech University of Agriculture Prag, Prague, Czech Republic
- Petrozavodsk State University, Forest Engineering Faculty, Petrozavodsk, Russia
- Forest Institute of the Saint-Petersburg State Forest Technical Academy, Syktyvkar, Russia

Future activities

Prof. Paavo Pelkonen emphasised that new project consortia are needed in order to secure the active role of the SILVA Network in the development of European Forestry Education. The development of distance learning and virtual education will be main activities of the SILVA Network in the future.

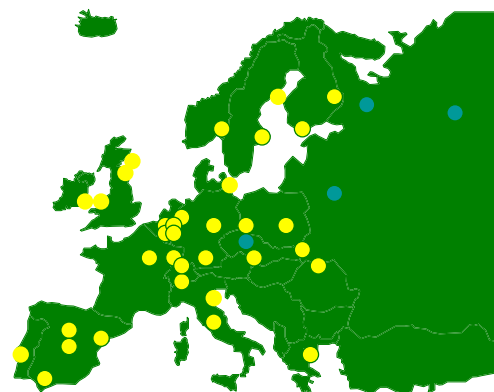
Mr. Simon Heath, co-ordinator of the Socrates Thematic Network for Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and the

Environment (AFANet), University of Aberdeen, introduced the activities of the AFANet. The first three-year programme (1996-1999) came to an end on 31 August 1999. During the Academic Year 1999/2000 the Programme focused on the dissemination of the results of those programme activities.

In January 1999, the SILVA Network made a new project proposal for AFANet. Its aim is to support the development of distance learning techniques and a virtual forestry faculty in Europe. For more information, please see the AFANet info in this newsletter.

The next general assembly

Prof. Pelkonen introduced an idea to organise the SILVA Network General Assembly in conjunction with the Interuniversity Conference for Agricultural and Related Sciences in Europe (ICA) Annual Conference. It was agreed to hold the next SILVA Network General Assembly together with the ICA Conference in Muenchen, Germany; but not in conjunction with the ICA Conference every year, possibly every second year.



Members of the SILVA Network. New members are indicated by blue dots.

Teaching module “Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe”

The teaching module “Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe” aims to raise students’ awareness of certain aspects of Forestry throughout Europe, and to improve their ability to analyse key changes and challenges. It was developed by the members of the SILVA Network as a project of the AFANet.

The study books “Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe, Parts I and II” were published in 1999. In January 2000, the “Teachers’ Manual” was published to accompany the teaching module. The series was accented in Autumn 2000 when a booklet “Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe: Quality Assessment of the Study Module” was issued.

During the Academic Year 1999/2000 the course was successfully organised by the University of Lleida, the University of Freiburg, and the University of Joensuu. In Spring 2000, the implementation of one of these courses and the aims of the module were assessed in relation to cognivist-constructivist teaching and learning theory by Dr. Laila Mäkinen, University of Joensuu.

Experiences from the implementation and the quality assessment of the module were discussed in the Workshop on Quality of Forestry Education in Europe which was held in Padova, Italy, on 30 June, 2000.

Contents of the books:

Part I provides a global overview of the European forests, gives information on the European Union (EU) and its influence on forests, addresses the main issues in forestry on the continental scale and finally examines the complex interrelationship between social changes and forestry.

Part II through a series of 25 country reports offers numerous examples of changes impacting forestry in individual European countries. The 25 country reports describe natural conditions and social structures, forest resources and forestry, forest and forest related policies, forestry education and research; as well as the current main conflicts and challenges facing forestry in each country.

Part II was also recently made available on a compact disc (**CD-ROM**) in Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF). Colour images, more than 150 useful Internet hyperlinks, and a map of Europe were added to the CD-ROM version in order to facilitate the enjoyable usage and adoption of the study material.

The *Teachers’ manual* describes emerging teaching models for higher education and gives examples on how to teach the course “Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe” under different circumstances.

Quality Assessment of the Study Module contains an evaluation report for the module and articles on the teaching and learning process in forestry education, including experiences from teaching the module.

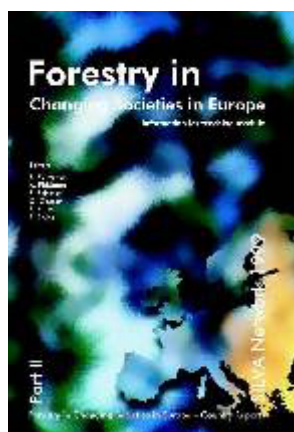
Events

Spring 2001

10 March:
Florence, Italy
Meeting of the ASEFOREP co-ordination committee.

5 April:
Weihenstephan, Technical University Munich, Germany
SILVA Network General Assembly.

6-7 April
Weihenstephan, Technical University Munich, Germany
ICA General Assembly and Annual Conference:
"Perspectives for Higher Education in Sciences applied to Agriculture"



Study material Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe

The books are available at a special price of

- * Parts I+II: 30 Eur + VAT 8% + postage
- * Parts I+II (book+CD-ROM): 25 Eur + VAT 8% + postage
- * Teachers’ Manual: 15 Eur + VAT 8% + postage
- * Quality Assessment of the Study Module: 10 Eur + VAT 8% + postage

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MSc European Forestry Programme

Background

The MSc European Forestry Programme was initiated six years ago by the University for Agricultural Sciences (BOKU), Vienna. The first university consortium was not able to start the Programme due to problems combining universities that require tuition fees with those that are not allowed to collect tuition. In September 2000, a new consortium held a meeting in Uppsala, Sweden. The partners decided to begin the Programme in January 2002.

During the first year, the following universities will participate in the Programme:

- University for Agricultural Sciences, Vienna, Austria
- University of Joensuu, Finland
- University of Wageningen, The Netherlands
- University of Lleida, Spain
- Swedish Agricultural University, Sweden

Mission

The MSc European Forestry Programme provides an additional dimension to the existing educational markets for forestry and environmental management in Europe. The focus of the Programme will be on trade and policy issues, supported by a sound understanding of the variety of European ecological conditions and their dynamics. The curriculum of the Programme is designed to take into account the needs of potential employers.



Problem solving in groups is an important teaching method in the MSc EF -Programme.

The idea of the Programme is to respond to the increasing number of issues in forest and environmental management that are formulated, implemented, and co-ordinated above the level of the classical nation-state. These issues provide a whole range of new challenges and demands for policy and management at the European level.

Structure

The first part of the Programme, the *Introductory Course (IC)*, has a duration of 4 weeks and consists of an introduction to European topics. The first IC will be organised in Uppsala, Sweden, in January 2002. The course consists of 7 sub-divisions, each of which will be the responsibility of one of the participating universities.

The *Applied Period (AP)* of 10 weeks consists of a work assignment at the European Commission or at another appropriate active supranational organisation in Europe (e.g. European Association of Forest Owners, European Forest Institute). A lecturer from one of the participating universities will supervise the AP.

The third part, the *Problem Oriented Course, (POC)* aims during two weeks to a) bring together the experiences that students gained during their AP's, and also to b) prepare students for the thesis part of the Programme: presenting a research proposal constitutes a part of the student's POC activities. It will be organised at the Solsona Research Station in Spain. The theme of the first POC will be forest fires, which is a big problem in the Solsona Region.

The fourth and final part lasts 30 weeks and consists of the preparation of a *thesis* with an explicit European dimension at a host university (20 weeks). A course programme supplements the thesis work.

Practical Matters

During the pilot year, the University of Joensuu will award the official Master of Science degree certificate. The master subject of the degree will be European Forestry. In addition, the Programme Committee will award an additional programme certificate describing the contents of the Programme.

No tuition fees will be collected from the students that receive a degree via the Programme. However, if someone wants to participate only in some parts of the Programme, the Programme Committee reserves the right to charge external students a fee. Students will have to cover housing and travelling expenses, but the participating universities will try to provide scholarships to their students.

EU-Canada co-operation

The EU-Canada project for co-operation in higher education and training, Human Dimensions in 21st Century Forestry, was launched in December 1998. The project aims at building functioning network between European and Canadian educational institutions providing forestry education and to establish a balanced exchange of students and staff members. The European consortium consists of 10 Universities. In Canada, the Project has 4 member universities and a partner non-government organisation, Haliburton Forest.

The goal is to improve the professional education of forest resource managers and increase the international mobility of forestry graduates. Making students aware of challenges facing forestry in Europe and Canada is one of the common objectives.

The University of Joensuu is responsible for the overall administration of the Project in Europe. Every institution recruits students and establishes their own contacts with other institutions.

Transatlantic Student Mobility

So far, 61 student exchanges from Europe to Canada have taken place under the Project. Most of students have studied 1-2 semesters at a Canadian university. In addition, the University of Freiburg organised an intensive field course in Canada in September 1999 at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and in Toronto.

The University of Joensuu, has been organising a distance learning course on European Forestry. Dr. Bruce Michie, European Forest Institute, has been responsible for the co-ordination of the course. The course started in January 2001, it has virtually joined students that represent the University of Joensuu and the UBC to discuss the challenges facing forestry in both regions.

Project meetings

Mr. Pekka Äänismaa, University of Joensuu, and Ms. Laura Drigo, University of Padova, represented the Project at the annual meeting of Project Leaders of the EU-Canada Programme. This meeting was organised in conjunction with the EC/USA Joint Consortia Program for Co-operation in Higher Education and Vocational Education that was held in Costa Mesa, California, USA, in November 2000.

Future of the co-operation

The last of the three project years will end on October 2001. However, several partners have expressed their interest to continue with what has been successful co-operation between the Canadian and European educational institutions. Since continuation of the ongoing Project under the EU-Canada Programme will not be possible, the partners will search for funding from other sources. More detailed plans will be drafted at the final project meeting, which will be organised at University of British Columbia, Canada at the end of the project.

For more information, please contact the SILVA Network Office or see the project homepage at http://gis.joensuu.fi/eu_canada.

Administrative changes

New SILVA representatives:

Bielorussian State Technological University, Bielorrussia:

Dr. Alexandre Fiedorenchik
E-mail: root@bstu.unibel.by

Czech University of Agriculture Prag, Czech Republic:

Dr. Josef Gross
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Petrozavodsk State University, Forest Engineering Faculty, Russia:

Dr. Alexander Pitukhin
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Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden:

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Syktyvkar Forest Institute of the Saint-Petersburg State Forest Technical Academy, Russia:

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Technischen Universität München, Germany:

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&
Dr. Peter Biber
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A New Project Co-ordinator:

Ms. Liisa Tahvanainen, University of Joensuu, will co-ordinate the AFAnet project "the Design and Development of a Virtual European Forestry Faculty".

E-mail: Liisa.Tahvanainen@joensuu.fi.

The SILVA group warmly welcomes all new partners !!!

AFANet INFO



The EU Socrates Thematic Network for Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and the Environment (AFANet), aims to develop a European dimension to education and co-operation at universities and colleges in Europe which offer degree programmes in agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and environmental fields.

At the end of August 1999 the first three-year phase of the AFANet Programme was successfully concluded. Last year the Co-ordinating Committee submitted an Expression of Interest to The European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture for continued funding under the forthcoming SOCRATES II Programme. At the same time, Mr. Simon Heath, University of Aberdeen, took responsibility for the co-ordination of the Network. A full application was submitted in March 2000 and approved in December 2000. The planned duration of the Project is three years, but the funding was approved only for the first year, which will end on 30 August 2001.

See the AFANet Web site at <http://www.clues.abdn.ac.uk:8080/afanet/index.html> for further information.

Design and development of a virtual European Forestry Faculty

- A project for the AFANET by the SILVA Network

The extent of the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the forestry education of Europe is very limited today. Nevertheless, many SILVA Network partners have already experimented with distance education and have recognised the importance of the use of these new technologies not only in education but also for international networking. The experimentation to date has been totally uncoordinated. Support is needed from other educational institutions and experts in virtual education and ICT. In particular, there is an acute need to develop virtual education through the sharing and dissemination of experiences gained from the use of ICT for forestry education.

Aims

The aim of the Project is to support the development of distance learning and virtual forestry education in Europe. During the first project year the aim is to convert an existing regular forestry course into a virtual format and implement it jointly between 2-3 European forestry faculties by utilising modern ICT.

Objectives

- analyse the current state of ICT utilisation for advanced education within Europe
- discover an effective and reasonable way to use Web-based teaching and learning, by determining the kind of material suitable for Web use, how to apply ICT, and what kinds of teaching methods can be used
- train forestry lecturers to effectively use ICT applications and to create Web-based study material
- facilitate the utilisation of the expertise of individual forestry specialists and different European forestry institutions in ICT based distance learning.

Schedule and key persons

The Co-ordinator of the Project is Ms. Liisa Tahvanainen, University of Joensuu. Project work will be supported by the European Virtual Agricultural and Veterinary Faculty (EVA-Online). The Co-ordinator of the EVA-Online, Mr. Hans Bronkhorst, will be a member of the Co-ordinating Committee. Experiences from the Project will be discussed at the General Assembly of the SILVA Network in Weihenstephan, Germany, in April 2001.

The start of the Project was delayed, since its proposal was only approved by the European Commission in December 2000. The first project year will terminate on 30 August 2001. A proposal for the Project's second year will be submitted to the European Commission by the end of February 2001. The participating organisations wish to continue the Project until August 2003, at which time the SILVA Network plans an international conference on distance education for forestry.

The Asia-Europe Forestry Exchange Programme

The Asia-Europe Forestry Exchange Programme (ASEFOREP) is a collaborative exchange programme between Asian and European educational institutions that are committed to international people-to-people exchange. The Programme is funded by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF).

The Programme started in September 2000 with 8 intercontinental student exchanges. Two European students travelled to Malaysia to study at the Universiti Putra Malaysia and one student went to study at the Hokkaido University Forests, Japan. During the Academic Year 2000/2001, the University of Agricultural Sciences, Vienna, has hosted two Chinese ASEFOREP students from the Northeast Forestry University and the University of Joensuu has hosted three. In March 2001, the first European students will travel to study at the University of the Philippines at Los Baños.

The next meeting of the ASEFOREP Co-ordinating Committee will be on 10 March 2001 in Florence, Italy. Several institutions that are candidates for membership to the ASEFOREP have been invited to send representatives to the meeting. Visit the ASEFOREP Web site at <http://www.asef.org/aseforep/> for further information.

During the pilot year, the Programme has had the following members:

Europe:

- University of Agricultural Sciences (BOKU), Vienna, Austria
- University of Florence, Institute for Forest Management and Technology (DISTAF), Florence, Italy
- University of Joensuu (JoY), Joensuu, Finland

Asia:

- Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia
- Hokkaido University Forests (HUF), Sapporo, Japan
- Northeast Forestry University (NEFU), Harbin, China
- University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB), Los Baños, the Philippines



ASEFOREP

SILVA News

SILVA News is the newsletter of the SILVA Network and it is published 1-2 times per year and distributed to approximately 200 individuals and organisations.

Call for contributions

Readers of the SILVA News are warmly welcomed to send short articles on international activities in the field of forestry education. SILVA Network reserves the right to edit the articles as necessary. Members of the SILVA Network are welcome to send also short announcements of events and publications to be published in SILVA News free of charge.

Subscription

SILVA News is free of charge. In order to receive a copy, please send your full address to the SILVA Network Office.

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Henri Malinen

Welcoming celebration for new exchange students in Joensuu. From the right are Jiangping Sun and Junhua Zhang, Chinese ASEFOREP students.