



## THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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### **Dear Members of the International Partnership for Forestry Education (IPFE),**

We have the pleasure of inviting you to participate in the Second International Symposium on Forestry Education in Vancouver, May 17-21, 2010. This symposium follows on from the 2008 event held in Beijing. The two symposia (Olympic Forestry Education Symposia for 2008 & 2010) are supported by the Chinese State Forestry Administration, the Canadian Forest Service, the Chinese Forestry Education Association, the Association of University Forestry Schools of Canada (AUFSC), the UBC Faculty of Forestry, the Beijing Forestry University, and the International Partnership for Forestry Education (IPFE). These symposia brought, and will bring together many of the senior administrators of Chinese, Canadian and other international forestry education institutions. This will include representatives from many of the highest profile universities and international organizations concerned with forestry education who will come together to discuss; opportunities and problems facing post-secondary forestry education, the potential for collaboration among universities and the possibility of sharing our combined expertise through initiatives such as web-based learning technologies, faculty exchanges, joint Masters programs, etc.

The Beijing Symposium was held December 7-11 2008 at the Beijing Forestry University. This symposium was the first of its kind organized in China and greatly advanced the mutual understanding between Chinese and international forestry education institutions. More than thirty Chinese universities, five Canadian universities and several other universities from Australia, Finland, Indonesia, Malaysia, USA and Venezuela participated in a productive, two day symposium. The proceedings of the first symposium are available at [www.ipfe.fi/](http://www.ipfe.fi/).

Approximately 200-250 participants will be invited to the Vancouver symposium (150 participants from the visiting countries and 50-100 North American participants). Deputy Minister Yang Jiping will lead the Chinese participants on behalf of the Chinese State Forestry Administration. Mr. Jim Farrell, the head of the Canadian Forest Service, will open the Vancouver symposium on behalf of Canada.

The Symposia Steering Committee, which was formed before the Beijing Symposium, will assist in the planning of the Vancouver symposia. The following representatives from China have agreed to serve on the Steering Committee:

- Mr. Zhagen Sun, Deputy Minister, State Forestry Administration of Peoples Republic of China
- Professor Bin Wu, Executive Vice President of Chinese Forestry Education Association
- Professor Weilun Yin, President of Beijing Forestry University

- Professor Xuewu Sun, President of Northwest Science and Technology University of Agriculture and Forestry
- Professor Chuanping Yang, President of Northeast Forestry University
- Professor Shiyuan Yu, President of Nanjing Forestry University
- Professor Shougong Zhang, President of Chinese Academy of Forestry

The following North American and International representatives will also serve on the Steering Committee:

- Dr. Jack Saddler, Dean, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia (Canada)
- Dr. Tat Smith, Dean, Faculty of Forestry, Toronto University and Chair of Association of University Forestry Schools (Canada)
- Dr. Ian de la Roche, Former President, FPInnovations (Canada)
- Mr. Jim Farrell, Assistant Deputy Minister, Head of Canadian Forest Service/Natural Resources Canada (Canada)
- Dr. Hal Salwasser, President, National Association of Professional Forestry Schools and Colleges (US)
- Mr. Jan Heino, Assistant Director-General and Head for the Forestry Department of FAO
- Dr. Siegfried Lewark, President, Silva Network, University of Freiburg
- Dr. Hosny El Lakany, Chair, International Partnership for Forestry Education (IPFE)
- Dr. Peter Kanowski The Australian National University (Australia)

The goal of the Vancouver symposium will be to discuss progress on the issues that were identified at the Beijing Symposium and to report on the various ongoing joint educational programs and initiatives and explore further synergies and ways to collaborate. Four topic areas will be discussed in the Vancouver Symposium and we encourage participants to submit abstracts related to these topics:

1. **Promotion of forestry education globally:** Interest in forestry education has been declining in most countries resulting in decreased enrollment and lower student quality. Some faculties have changed their name to attract more students without changing the disciplines or curricula. Professional forestry is not considered modern and exciting and is often perceived to be poorly paid, regionally-based, and having a negative public image, poor career prospects and low gender and ethnic diversity. However, areas such as conservation, wildlife management, climate change, biodiversity, have grown in popularity and have become integral parts of many forestry programs. In this topic area we will revisit forestry enrollment and employment prospects globally, seek ways for joint promotion of forestry education and discuss if there is a future for forestry education in the way it has been traditionally structured and taught.
2. **Regional Forestry Education Networks:** Regional forestry education networks are currently operating in all continents. Networks are important for effective sharing of learning and experiences, curricula development, courses, methods of teaching and joint programming. However there are some conditions for them to be effective including clear agenda and objectives, strong, participatory leadership, sharing of tasks across the membership, clear benefits for membership, good communication, web-presence, regular events etc. The session explores opportunities to enhance effectiveness of regional networks and possibilities for collaboration across networks.

3. **E-learning/distance education in forestry/Course based Masters Graduate programs in forestry:** Today's forestry graduates face increasingly complex working environments. Graduates have to be equipped to deal with emerging paradigms of global dimensions: integrated ecosystem management, landscape restoration, deforestation, forest governance, forest biodiversity, forest and climate change to name a few. Most universities do not have the teaching resources to offer all this. Two ways to tackle this challenge are 1) to offer areas of specialization at the Masters level or 2) through the introduction of online learning (also known as 'e-learning'). Universities, such as the University of Toronto, now offer a Masters program as their primary educational output. Other North American and European Universities are also moving in this direction. Similarly, over the past ten to fifteen years many e-learning courses in the fields of natural resources management, forestry and wood sciences emerged, have been used – and often disappeared again. Considerable effort and money has gone into the development of e-learning courses, but sustainable examples are few. This session will explore both the potential for the growth/development of Masters Programs and the potential of e-learning and opportunities for collaboration.
  
4. **Incorporating global issues in a universal core curriculum:** Many of the current critical issues in the world are closely linked to forests. While global current issues cross borders, forestry education often remains segregated by geography. Students receive insufficient exposure to a range of factors that drive the global forest sector agenda and its wide variety of forest management practices. The availability of educators possessing an adequate knowledge of global perspectives is often a limiting factor and many institutions, especially in developing countries, lack the resources to acquire needed expertise. There is an urgent need to adapt and adopt forestry curricula which encompass global issues from a forestry perspective. Such issues are often addressed in a scattered manner within certain courses in some forestry schools, but they lack cohesive systematic approaches. This session will explore the possibilities of developing a “universal core curriculum” that promotes global dimensions while maintaining special local circumstances.

As we hope you can see from the suggested themes of the meeting, we should have many interesting topics to discuss! We would benefit immeasurably from your participation in this important Symposium and we hope that you will accept this formal invitation to attend and present. Please find enclosed the first announcement of the Symposium.

**Yours Respectfully,**



Jack Saddler  
Dean, Faculty of Forestry, University of  
British Columbia



Dr. M. Hosny El Lakany  
Chair, International Partnership for Forestry  
Education (IPFE)