



Addressing the increased need on communicating about forests

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The UNECE-FAO Forest Communicators Network



Our forests, our future –conference Brussels

April 26th 2019, Kai Lintunen

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Public perception on forests and forestry



Shaping forest communication in the European Union: public perceptions of forests and forestry

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Final Report



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ECORYS
International Company

network



Strategic Framework for Forest Communication in Europe

12-09-2011

This Strategic Framework aims to help achieving better informed decision making on matters relevant to forests and forestry by closing the gap between perception and facts on forests and forestry in the wider European region.

For the purposes of this framework, 'forests' are ecosystems as well as the raw material inputs for forestry and related industry activities incorporating the economic, the environmental and the socio-cultural dimensions of sustainable forest management.

The framework was developed by the UNECE-FAO Forest Communicators Network (FCN)¹, at the request of the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission, and is based on best practices and latest research.

The framework provides communication objectives, common key messages and approaches, which are designed to be used by governments, public and private sector institutions and organisations and stakeholders at all levels, when formulating individual forest communication programs and strategies.

Geographically the framework addresses the European part of the UNECE region. Out of the 56 Member States of the UNECE, experts from 36 countries² and from 21 organisations³ participate in the Forest Communicators Network and were involved in some form in the elaboration of this framework.⁴

¹ <http://live.uneca.org/forests/information/foa.html>

Forest Communicators Network



² Austria, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, FYR Macedonia, Greece, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

9 March 2011

EU Forest Communication Strategy

At no point in the history of humankind have our forests been so necessary for our survival and yet so much in need of our attention. They support all terrestrial life, help stabilise our climate, provide us with smart natural and sustainable materials and energy. Yet they are under threat from fire, pests, flood and disease – dangers exacerbated by climate change brought about, in part, by forest loss and degradation in an ironic vicious circle. Humans pose as big a threat as long as we fail to protect our forests and continue to clear them for our own purposes regardless of the global problems we create.

The value of forests to life on Earth, and the potential benefits and solutions they promise to bring to our increasingly damaged world, are enormous.

However, in the EU studies of public perception ([Annex 1](#)) reveal that the issues are not well understood outside our small forestry community and suggest that there is a significant gap between public understanding and reality. For example, deforestation is a key concern for the majority of European people. Most perceive the total forest area in the EU, as well as the level of biodiversity, to be decreasing. In reality, total forested area in Europe has increased over the past two decades and the loss of biodiversity has at least slowed down due to recent policy measures. While most EU citizens support more active management, harvesting and management are seen as being some of the biggest threats to our forests. Worryingly, there is no reason to believe that the perception of forests and forestry among key decision makers outside of, but relevant to, our sector is any better.

It is clear that we must do more to explain the facts and why forests are so relevant to modern life, and we need to do this globally, regionally, nationally and locally.

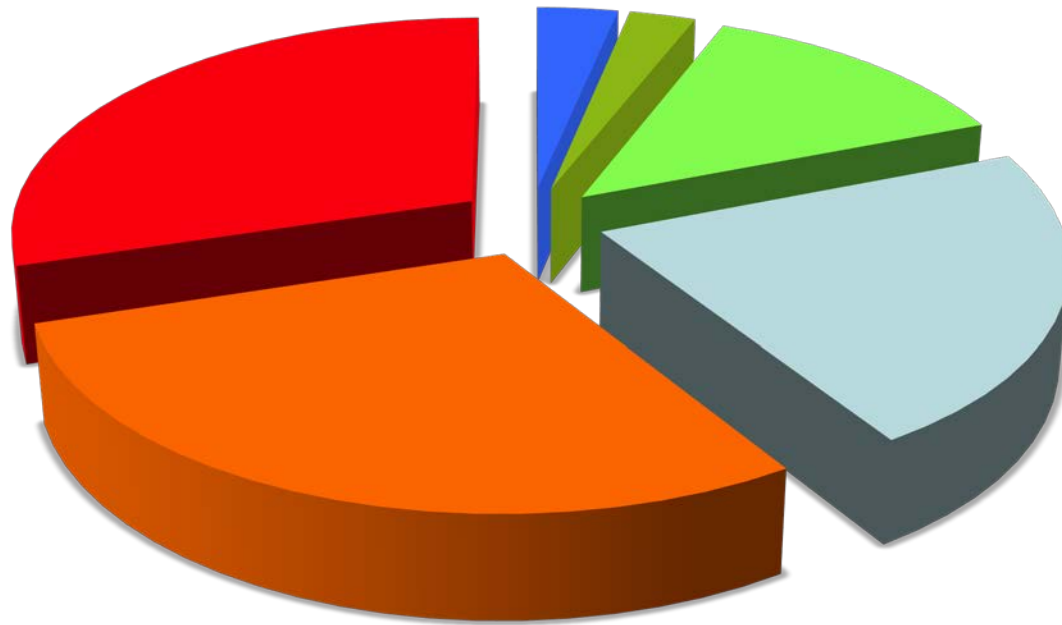
The UNECE/FAO Forest Communicators Network and the education focussed Forest Pedagogics provide support for cross-sector communications and platforms for improved coordination of activity. Successful initiatives, such as European Forest Week 2008, underline that planned, coordinated and sustained communications is possible across our sector and can be very effective.

The EU Forest Action Plan (2007 – 2011) aims to establish better co-





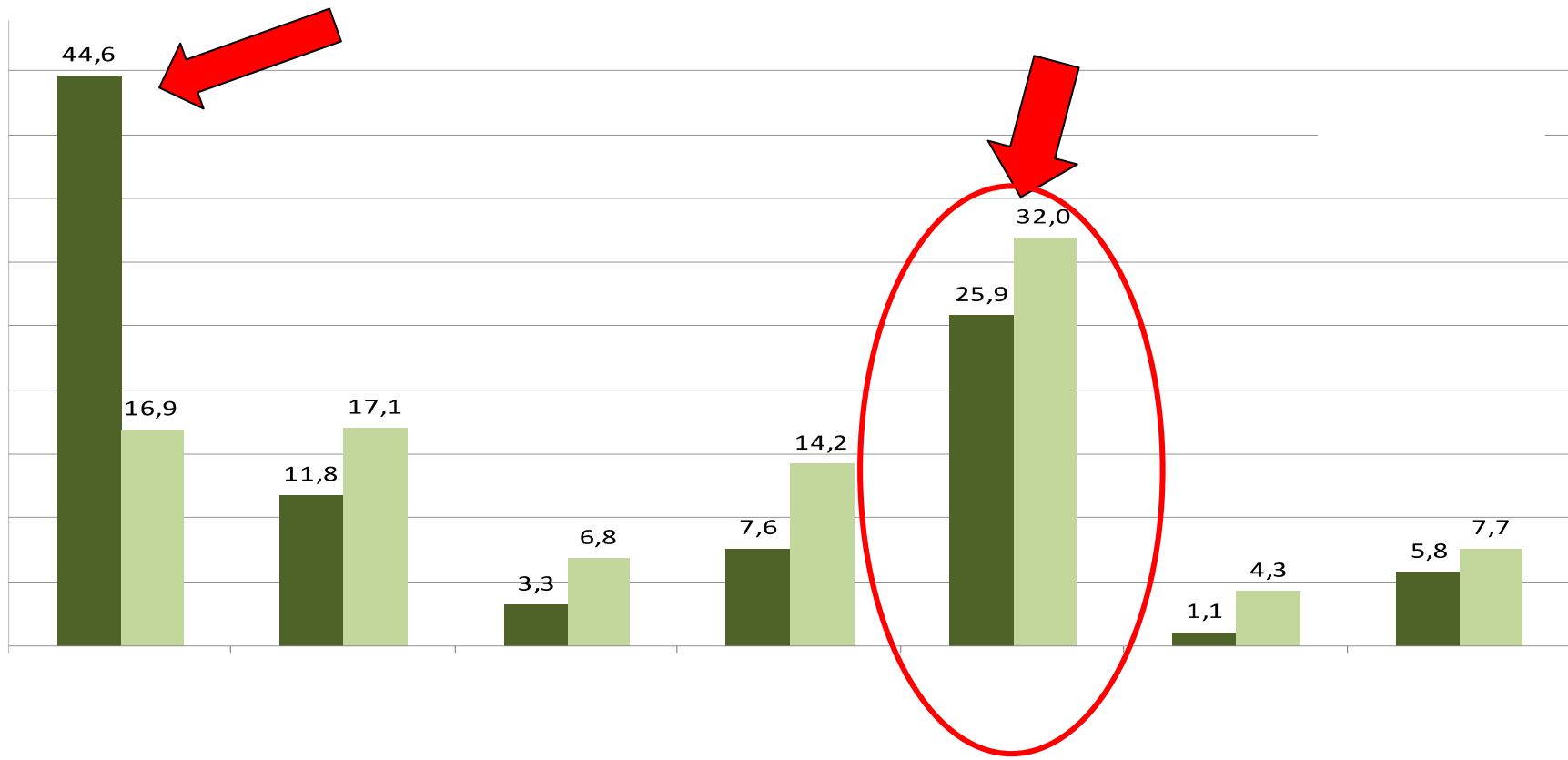
Public perception on total forest area development in Europe



- Dont know 3,3 %
- Increasing a lot 2,7 %
- Increasing a little 13,2 %
- Stable 22,2 %
- Decreasing a little 29,4 %
- Decreasing a lot 30,1 %



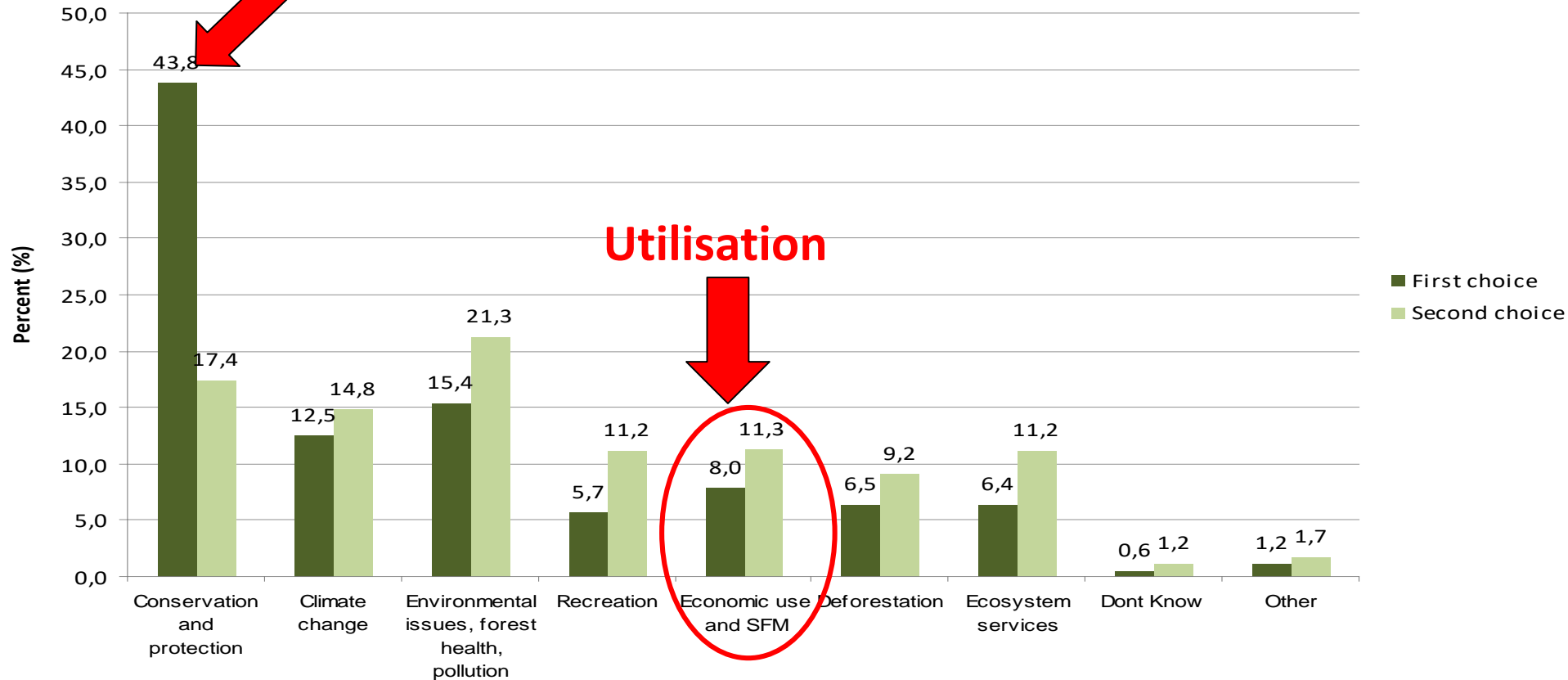
Public perception on damages and threats to forests





Key concerns regarding forests

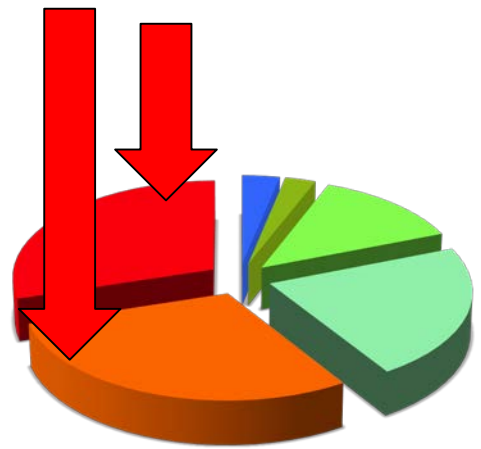
Conservation and Protection



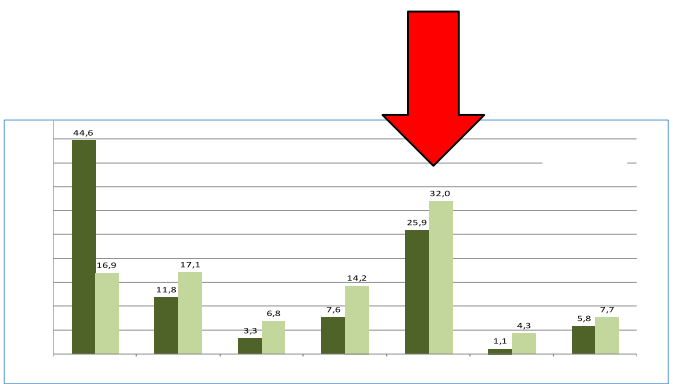


Public perception of Europeans on their forests

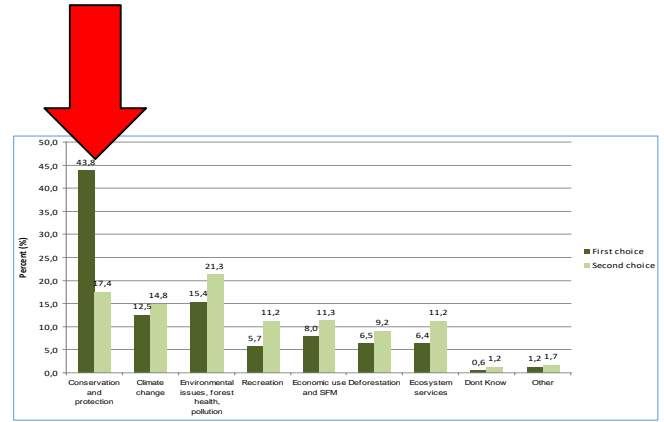
Forests going down



Utilisation a threat



Conservation is priority







Forest Communicators Network scope



Mandate by

UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
Committee on Forests and Forest Industries

UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
European Forestry Commission

Overall Objective

Help the sector improve its communication in order
to raise awareness of the importance of forest



ca. 250 members
(govmnt, non govmnt)



40 countries



40 Intl institutions, organisations,
NGOs& campaign groups

A close-up photograph of several hands of different skin tones stacked on top of each other in a circle, symbolizing unity and teamwork. The background is blurred, showing parts of people's clothing and a floor.

Cooperation and concerted actions

Communications advice and messaging on a number of international events and institutions



International Year of Forests 2011 for the UNFF, New York



The four European Forest weeks



International Day of Forests



EXPO Milano 2015



UNFF13, New York, 2018

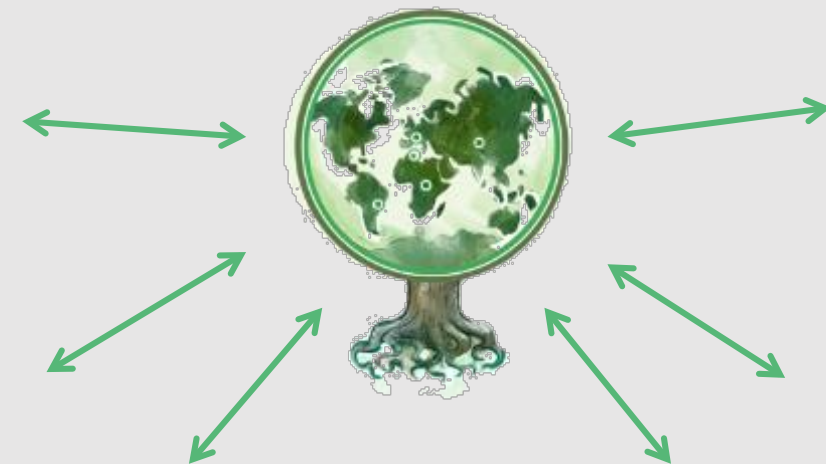
A model for Forest Communicators Networks in other Regions



North America



Europe and Central
Asia



Asia-Pacific



Mediterranean and
the Near East



Latin America and
the Caribbean



Africa

Global Coordination Group



Act as a **think tank**

Provide **expertise** on **global** and **regional** communication issues

Assist **coordination** among **regional** networks

Identify **shared opportunities** to raise **awareness** on forest issues across the regions

Global group on forest communication - mandate

Identify international events to promote the importance of communication to policy makers, stakeholders and decision makers





COFO 23 Communication session

HOW DO WE LEAD FORESTRY
OUT OF THE WOODS ?



23rd Committee on Forestry (COFO)

Rome, Italy

16-20 July 2016



International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)

125th Anniversary Congress
Freiburg, Germany
18-22 September 2017



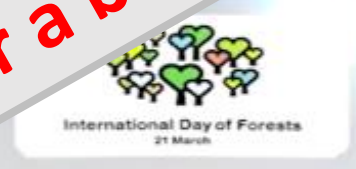
Regional forest communicators' networks increasingly present at major forest events of global and regional importance

Represents a shift in how forest communications are seen

Networks are being invited as part of main proceedings



2015 Forests and Climate Change



The spot reached over a billion people



LAUREN ANDERSON
Content Editor,
Biodiversity, Forests, Land
and Water (US)

15 May 2018

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UNFF13 Links Strategic Plan on Forests to SDG Achievement, Adopts Communication Strategy



UN Photo/Kibae Park

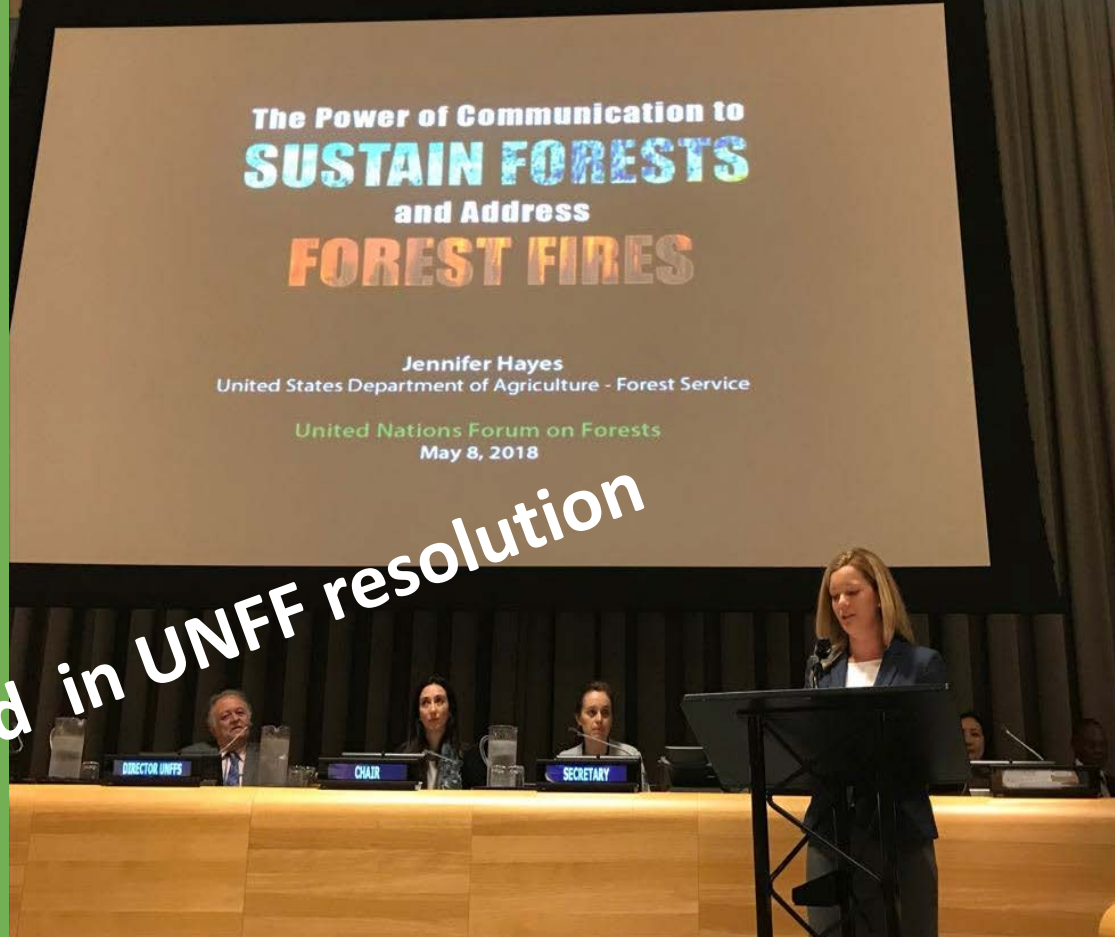
STORY HIGHLIGHTS >

UNFF13 focused on forest-related solutions for sustainable development, with delegates addressing implementation of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests 2017-2030 (UNSPF), announcing voluntary national contributions, and adopting a communication and outreach strategy.

United Nations Forum on Forests, May 2018

- Communication session on main program of UNFF

Forest use included in UNFF resolution



Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia agree to boost forest communications

Forest communications experts from nine countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia have agreed to strengthen communications and boost the visibility of forestry issues in the region.



Representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation committed to setting up a regional sub group on forest issues of specific relevance to the region within the UNECE/FAO Forest Communicators Network (FCN).

The commitment was the result of the first regional workshop on forest communication for countries from Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, which was held in St Petersburg, Russian Federation, 1-3 June.

At the workshop, experts from government agencies, international organizations and NGOs shared information and experiences regarding forest communication, identified communication challenges and opportunities, and analyzed successful case studies and effective communication tools.

The meeting was organized by FAO and the Federal Forestry Agency of the Russian Federation, with support from Austria, Finland and the United Nations UNECE/FAO FCN.

Alexander Panfilov, Deputy Head of the Russian Federal Forestry Agency, and Eugenia Serova, Director of FAO's Liaison Office with the Russian Federation, opened the meeting.

The UNECE/FAO FCN already counts almost 200 members and aims to improve the ability of the forest sector to communicate effectively within and outside the sector by providing a forum for international cooperation and developing the professionalism of forest communicators. FAO has facilitated the creation of a further five networks in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Mediterranean and the Near East, and Latin America and the Caribbean.



REGIONAL FOREST COMMUNICATORS WORKSHOPS

Promoting best practices
in forest communication

- ◆ Costa Rica
- ◆ Kyrgyzstan
- ◆ Morocco
- ◆ Namibia
- ◆ Niger
- ◆ Peru
- ◆ Philippines
- ◆ Russia
- ◆ South Africa
- ◆ Tanzania
- ◆ Thailand
- ◆ Vietnam



**RESTORING LAND, WATER &
COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

SER) 2019 | CAPE TOWN
SOUTH AFRICA

**8TH WORLD CONFERENCE ON
ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION**

September 24-28, 2019

21 March International Day of Forests



اول فروردین (۲۱ مارس) روز جهانی جنگل ها

درختان، جنگل - تغییرات آب و هوایی

سازمان جنگل ها،
مراغه و آبپزرداری کلسور

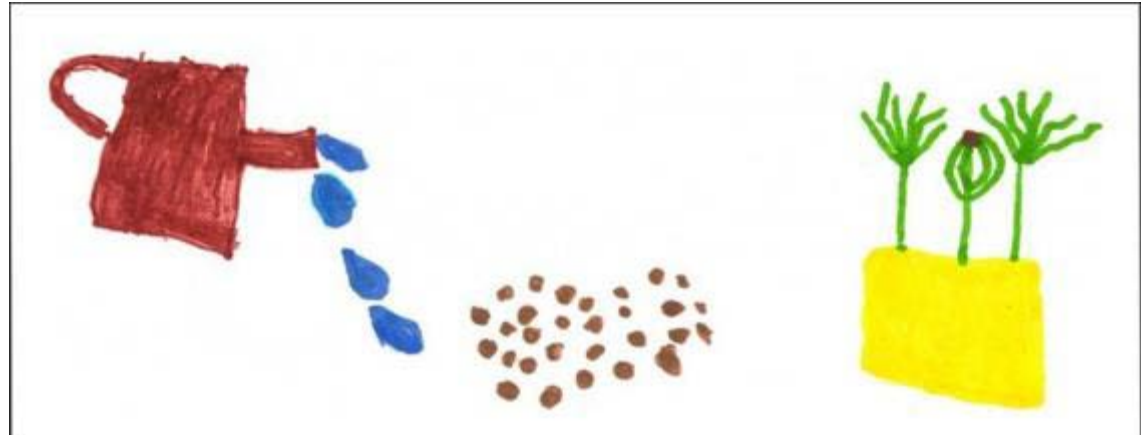


Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



2015
International
Year of Soils

150 million
new trees
planted
every year
in Finland



Every March 21st on the International Day of Forests, tens of thousands of children sow pine seeds, who aspire to be trees..
... growing in the same Finnish forests as the 150 million new trees that the forest sector plants every year

A large group of approximately 20 people, including men and women of various ages, are posing for a group photo in a forest. They are standing and kneeling on a dirt path surrounded by tall trees. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text.

More EXPERTISE – wider OUTREACH - more IMPACT

Thank you!

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@birdieviews