

During the IUFRO World Congress in Seoul, Korea in August 2010, the Research Group on Forest History expanded its scope by creating two new Working Parties to continue the work of the IUFRO Task Force on Traditional Forest Knowledge (2005-10). This conference will be the first meeting of our new Research Group.

Forest and agricultural landscape management practices of local communities based on their traditional knowledge offer insights into principles and approaches that may be effective in coping with, and adapting to, climate change in the years ahead. Efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, however, have not yet given adequate attention either to the forest-related knowledge and practices of traditional communities, or to the interests, needs and rights of local communities in the formulation of policies and programmes to combat climate change.

The new draft of the European Common Agricultural Policies 2014-20, promoting the diversification, rural practices characterized by lower greenhouse gas emissions, and the conservation of traditional landscapes, has clear potential for recovery of traditional knowledge and their landscapes in Europe. However, there is the need to develop appropriate planning tools for integrating environment and landscape into rural policies taking into account the cultural identity. At the global level the development of agreement between the Research Group 9.03.00 and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to expand the FAO project on rural heritage systems to include forest and woodlands, as well as the work of UNESCO on biocultural and immaterial heritage, present new research fields and challenges that need to be explored. For forestry and foresters this will require approaches for integrating natural and cultural values in a new paradigm that bridges the gap between nature and society, both in research and in development policies, and improving the uneasy relationship between, traditional knowledge and formal forest science. This new perspective seems particularly needed especially in view of the 20th anniversary of the Rio Declaration on environment and development and the need for a revised post-2012 strategy for meeting global environmental and sustainable development goals that pays greater attention to cultural values.

Topics to be considered for the meeting: traditional knowledge, planning and management, history, rural and forest policy, biodiversity, socioeconomic development, monitoring.

Submission of Abstracts: An abstract of approximately 500 words may be submitted to the session organizing committee c/o Dott. Valentina Marinai, landscape@unifi.it. Please include the full name of authors, their affiliations and e-mail address. The deadline for abstract submission is February 15th.

The papers presented at the conference will be considered for publication in the international journal "Global Environment", while the new book series on environmental history by Springer Verlag may publish the proceedings of the meeting.

For more information on the IUFRO Division 9 Conference, please see http://www.iufro.org/download/file/7245/4677/all-division9-sarajevo12-1st-announcement_doc/.