IUFRO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE – Forests in Transition: Integrating Policy, Innovation, and Inclusion for Resilient and Adaptive Landscapes

9 February 2027 - 11 February 2027

Padua

Scientific Programme

Forests are increasingly shaped by profound environmental, economic, social, and geopolitical transitions. Climate change, biodiversity loss, changing global markets, increasing demand for sustainable bio-based resources, and growing recognition of the links between forests and human well-being are transforming the role of forests in society and the economy. At the same time, regulatory change, shifting trade relations, geopolitical tensions, and evolving funding landscapes are reshaping forest governance, value chains, and international cooperation.
The conference “Forests in Transition: Integrating Policy, Innovation, and Inclusion for Resilient Landscapes” will explore how integrated forest policy, social innovation, inclusive governance, and stronger links between science, policy, and practice can contribute to resilient and equitable forest landscapes.
We invite researchers, policymakers, practitioners, representatives of civil society, forest owners and managers, private-sector actors, networks, and other stakeholders to submit abstracts addressing the conference themes. Contributions that connect different sectors, disciplines, governance levels, and forms of knowledge are particularly encouraged.

Integrated Forest Policy Across Sectors (09.03.05)

Chair: Metodi Sotirov | Co-chair: Špela Pezdevšek Malovrh

Forests are expected to provide a wide range of ecosystem services, including biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, renewable raw materials, energy, recreation, water regulation, and rural development. As societal demands on forests continue to grow, policymaking increasingly extends beyond the traditional forest sector and involves multiple policy domains and actors. The growing interdependence of these policy areas creates both opportunities and challenges for achieving coherent and effective forest governance. Policy objectives developed in different sectors may reinforce each other, but they can also result in conflicting priorities, trade-offs, and implementation challenges. Integrated approaches are therefore needed to enhance policy coherence, stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable forest management outcomes. This session invites contributions that explore **the interactions between forest policy and other policy sectors at local, national, regional, and international levels**. We welcome theoretical, empirical, methodological, and practice-oriented contributions addressing **cross-sectoral governance, policy integration, institutional arrangements, and stakeholder engagement**.

Social Innovation for Forest Resilience (04.05.05)

Chair: Melnykovych Mariana | Co-chair: Anže Japelj

This session welcomes insights on how community-based social enterprises, living labs and innovation hubs support the adaptiveness and resilience of forest value chains. Drawing from key European research initiatives like RESONATE, CONNATURALP, RURACTIVE, FORLIVS, GRANULAR, WILDCARD, and ForGEDI, the session examines the enabling drivers that are needed for the emergence of grassroots solutions that are co-created within multi-actor coalitions and can be upscaled to address ongoing climate-driven, habitat-related, economic and political pressures. The central focus is on bridging gaps between empirical (scientific) approaches, traditional knowledge and local know-how. By looking into how co-created knowledge and solutions can be integrated into forest management, this session pinpoints **practical pathways for social innovation that can support supply chains, locate market opportunities for businesses and foster regional bio-economies**. This session will also explore how social innovations emerge, develop and contribute to **ecological, social, economic and institutional resilience in forest landscapes**. Particular attention is given to the enabling conditions and barriers that shape their development, implementation and long-term sustainability (incl. governance arrangements, institutional frameworks, beliefs, stakeholder capacities and access to knowledge and resources).

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Forest Transitions

Chair: Todora Rogelja | Co-chair: Ida Wallin

This topic invites contributions on how Gender, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (GEDI) can be more effectively mainstreamed in forest policy, research, and practice. We welcome work on **inclusive forest governance, equitable nature-based interventions, meaningful participation, and the representation of diverse actors, perspectives, and knowledge systems in decision-making.** Contributions may also examine **the equity implications of changing forest geopolitics, regulatory frameworks, markets, and global dynamics**, with particular attention to how these transformations affect different regions, communities, and stakeholder groups. Contributions from the ForGEDI MOOC, RESONATE, CONNATURALP, and FORLIVIS are particularly encouraged, alongside perspectives from Indigenous and local communities, women's and youth networks, practitioners, and other relevant initiatives. The ForGEDI IUFRO Task Force also aims to use the conference to bring together coordinators and members working on related activities and meet in person to foster exchange, collaboration, and synergies across ongoing initiatives.

Bridging Science, Policy, and Practice for Transformative Change

Chair: Laura Secco | Co-chairs: Mauro Masiero, Angela Moriggi, Angelica Moè, Paola Gatto

This session invites contributions on how scientific knowledge can be more effectively translated into policy and practice to support transformative change in forest landscapes that supports human and environmental health and well-being. We welcome research and experience on **science–policy–practice interfaces, forest and healthcare sector interactions, knowledge brokerage, decision-support tools, and collaborative approaches that improve the uptake and application of evidence in forest-related decision-making**. Contributions may also examine how stakeholder engagement and knowledge co-production can strengthen adaptive governance - helping decision-makers respond to complex and rapidly evolving challenges (such as environmental pressures, regulatory shifts, and post-conflict forest restoration needs) while imagining alternative futures for regenerative pathways. Particular attention is given to **mechanisms that bridge the gap between research findings and implementation, including how knowledge is synthesised, communicated, tested, and incorporated into policy and management action**. Contributions from OptFORESTS, RESONATE, WILDCARD, EU TRANSFORMIT, GRANULAR, CONNATURALP, RURACTIVE, FORLIVIS and ForGEDI, as well as other relevant projects and initiatives, are encouraged.

Poster Session (FORLIVIS IUFRO TF)

Chair: Claire Depardieu | Co-chairs: Maria Nijnik

The poster session provides a platform for researchers, practitioners, students, and other participants to share their work, exchange ideas, and foster dialogue on forest transitions and resilient landscapes. Contributions may address **integrated forest policy across sectors, social innovation for forest resilience, equity, diversity and inclusion in forest transitions, and ways to bridge science, policy, and practice for transformative change**. Particular attention is welcome to **the role of social innovation, Living Labs, and multi-actor approaches in co-creating and implementing solutions to forest-related challenges**. Upon notification of Abstract acceptance, participants will submit a scientific poster along with a five-minute recorded presentation. Posters and presentations will be hosted on the Virtual Poster Session platform, allowing participants to view contributions and engage with presenters online.