



## **IFSA: an overview**

The International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) is the global network for forestry students. It unites approximately 3 000 forestry students in about 60 member associations (called Local Committees) in over 40 countries. IFSA is a non-governmental, non for profit and non religious organization entirely run by students for students.

### **IFSA's Vision is the**

Global cooperation amongst forestry students to broaden knowledge and understanding for the realisation of a sustainable future for our forests, and to provide a voice for youth in international forest processes.

### **Impelled by this vision, IFSA works towards achieving the following Mission:**

Be a platform for forestry students to enrich their formal education and promote cultural understanding by encouraging a wider and more global perspective, collaboration with professional partners and practical experiences. Through its network, IFSA supports the participation of youth in international forest and environmental policy as well as in decision making processes.

### **How do forestry students communicate in IFSA?**

IFSA members communicate via three main channels.

1. Website: [www.ifsa.net](http://www.ifsa.net) where they can find the important information and discover new opportunities for students.
2. IFSA magazine called "IFSA News" which is published 3-4 times a year and in which students can write articles on different subjects related to forestry field.
3. Different [IFSA mailing lists](#) and an online [Forum](#).

## What are the main activities of IFSA?

### 1) Youth representative during international decision making processes regarding environmental and forest policy

More than 40% of the world's population is younger than 20 years old! So why shouldn't this important part of the society have the right to speak up when crucial decisions for the future are being made? Within IFSA, forestry students have the platform to represent the interests of youth and to create their own projects to implement sustainable forest management.

As Youth Non-Governmental Organization (YNGO), IFSA has the statute of youth representative for the following events:

- [United Nations Forum on Forests \(UNFF\)](#)
- [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#)
- [Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\)](#)
- [United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization \(UNESCO\)](#)
- [Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forest in Europe \(MCPFE\)](#)

This privileged statutes offer many opportunities to forestry students to understand and take actively part in international processes which are very important for our future.

### 2) Several working groups called "commissions"

IFSA has 7 commissions which permit students to develop new skills as well as dedicate to sustainable flow of the association:

#### **International Processes Commission:**

This commission is in charge to coordinate and prepare the participation of IFSA in the processes outlined above. It is also a forum to discuss about forest policy and exchange the different point of view about it.

#### **Exchange Program Commission:**

This commission is in charge of facilitating students work placements and exchanges between forestry faculties. The main activity is to look for and propose internships in international and national forestry organizations.

#### **Promotion and Publication Commission:**

This commission is in charge of the publication of the IFSA News, it proposes always new general topic for the next issues, collects the articles written by IFSA members and organizes them before sending the final version to the printing company. This commission is also in charge of the elaboration of informative material about IFSA (poster, brochures...)

### **Web Commission:**

This commission is in charge of the maintenance and development of IFSA website. Currently, this commission is also creating an online Forum for IFSA.

### **Language Commission:**

IFSA often receives official documents in languages other than English. A commission was created to translate these documents and also to help students to translate some texts for their studies.

### **Village Concept Program (VCP):**

IFSA collaborates with other international students' organizations in different fields (e.g. agriculture, medicine, pharmacy) and this commission is an example of collaboration. The aim is to gather students from different fields and help a village (or several ones) from developing countries to improve the situation.

### **"Fund task force" Commission:**

As international organization IFSA needs a lot of money for its activities. This commission was created to try to assure the financial stability of IFSA.

## **3) International Forestry Students' Meetings**

The internet is a very good working-tool for international bodies but is always better to meet face to face. For that IFSA has several traditional meetings which are a very good tool to promote the cultural understanding.

The biggest one is the **International Forestry Students' Symposium (IFSS)** which gathers forestry students from all over the world during two weeks in different country each year. This event hosts the IFSA General Assembly, during which we evaluate the work done the previous year, elect new board and plan the work for the following year. In addition students are introduced to a foreign forestry system.

IFSA also holds very important **regional meetings**, such as the South European Regional Meeting (SERM), North European Regional Meeting (NERM), and Latin American Regional Meeting (LARM). These meetings are the opportunity to discuss the problems in a geographical area. IFSA also tries to help to develop regional meetings in Africa, Asia and North America.

#### 4) Partnership with professional organization

IFSA has very strong partnerships with the **International Union of Forest Research organizations** ([IUFRO](#)) and the **European Forest Institute** ([EFI](#)) which permit student to join international scientific congresses, to have the opportunity to present their work during them and to meet some specialist in the different fields of forestry.

IFSA has also recent partnership with the **Commonwealth Forestry Association** ([CFA](#)) which always offers new opportunities.

Finally, IFSA is member of the **International Partnership for Forestry Education** ([IPFE](#)) and helps actively to improve the forestry education around the world.

Such partnerships are very important in the preparation of students for their professional life.

#### How can you become an IFSA Member?

**Step one:** Form a group of students to become an organization at your university. Here for you need to establish a direction (president, etc.) and statutes. If you already have it, join with your already existing society!

**Step two:** Contact your potential regional representative (find him/her from IFSA web-page, [www.ifsa.net](http://www.ifsa.net)) for any information you need concerning membership application.

**Step three:** Type it in details before print.

**Step four:** Send all documents via e-mail to your regional representatives and to the council responsible for your region. Paper copy with stamps and original signatures can wait until the councils do not have questions anymore and your LC has been approved. The address for snail mail post is IFSA e.V., International Secretariat, Tennenbacher Str. 4, D-79106 Freiburg, or by fax on +49 761 203 3819.

We also invite you to read the procedure on our website:  
<http://www.ifsa.net/faq.php#faq1>

IFSA is waiting for you!