



## **IFSA Statements (By Sylvain Dupire – IFSA President)**

### **Board Item 19**

*29 April 2008*

#### **Introduction:**

The International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) is the only global network for forestry students. It unites approximately 3000 students in 61 member associations (called local committees) from 42 countries.

The mission of IFSA is to 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 also supports the participation of youth in international forest and environmental policy as well as in decision making processes.

#### **A word about global representation:**

60% of the IFSA Local committees are European but each year IFSA is becoming increasingly active in countries outside Europe and strives to develop more activities outside this continent. The recent involvement of Latin Americans is a great example. IFSA is always trying to improve its communication and invites students from all parts of the world to join the network and thus enrich its activities by multicultural participation.

#### **The benefit of partnerships with professional organizations:**

Partnerships with professional organizations like IUFRO, EFI, CFA and IPFE are like a symbiosis and benefit to both parties. For forestry students, the possibility to attend international scientific conferences and meet scientists from all parts of the world is something very enriching and important for the next generation of forestry scientists and managers. Thus students took part in 2007 in the IUFRO Enlarged Board meeting, EFI Annual Conference, IUFRO European Congress and IUFRO all div V Conference. It is also very important to have the opportunity to be involved in the organization of world congresses such as the IUFRO World Congress 2010 and Forestry World Congress 2009, to contribute a students' point of view.

The different opportunities for internships are also very beneficial in helping students to broaden their understanding of how professional organisations work, whilst feedback and close relations with professional partners contribute significantly to the well-working of the association and the quality of the activities proposed by IFSA. The events and others activities organized can thus be really enriched by input from professional partners. For examples, the IFSA board is currently writing a midterm strategy for the association to improve continuity between the different generations as well as internal and external communication; the IUFRO strategy was a very good example of how to write such a document. Another good example are all the inputs provide by different organizations (IUFRO and IPFE especially) for the elaboration of a questionnaire on forestry education and trends in forestry employment opportunities in the world. Finally, partnerships with professional organizations are also very important for students to access further source of information for their studies.

In return to the partner organization IFSA is an excellent network to promote their activities, to make surveys and involve students in international processes. The global network of IFSA thus allows partner organisations to reach forestry students from the five continents easily and quickly. In accordance with the Memoranda of Understanding, students may also participate in meetings and events of the professional organization for free or by a lowered participation fee. In return the students will provide assistance to the organization in the running of the said meeting or event. Since all students are being educated in forestry or a related subject, and at a higher education level, they learn fast and are able to take the job seriously. Involving students in their events are also a good means for the professional organizations to improve continuity and sustainability in their activities. Students are a source of fresh ideas and different opinions which can enrich every project.

## **IFSA activities in 2007-2008**

### *IFSA Strategy for 2008-2010*

To improve the continuity of IFSA and the transparency and the communication of the association, the IFSA board wrote a 3 years strategy which gives the main objectives and the actions for implementation of the strategy to 2010. This strategy will be presented and proposed for approval of the next General Assembly of IFSA in Bulgaria, August 2008.

### *Questionnaire on Forestry education and trends in forestry employment opportunities*

Currently IFSA is making a global survey in the field of forestry education. The main objectives are to make a worldwide database available online and try to identify education needs in different part of the world. The document is downloadable on the [IFSA website](#) and all answers are still welcome.

### *New partnership with student associations*

IFSA is currently strengthening the link with ALECIF (Latin American Forestry Students' Association) to improve the quality and the quantity of activities in Latin America.

In another domain IFSA is sharing a lot of information and good practices with the International Students' Association in Agriculture and related Sciences (IAAS), this collaboration is also a means to join the two related fields of Agriculture and Forestry.

### *Participation in international processes*

IFSA always tries to send a delegation to the international processes linked to forestry and environment issues. This, IFSA took part in the 5<sup>th</sup> MCPFE in Warsaw in November 2007 and to the COP 13 of UNFCCC in Bali in December 2007. In 2008, IFSA will continue in this way; a delegation is already registered to the COP 9 of the CBD and to the MCPFE expert meeting in Norway in May 2008. Take part in such meeting is a great opportunity for students interested in international policy to understand better and involve themselves in decision making processes.

### *Preparation for World Forestry Congress 2009*

IFSA is discussing the participation of a global delegation of forestry students during the World Forestry Congress 2009 in Argentina. A side event with main theme "Forestry Education" will be organized before the congress for students in collaboration with IPFE and ALECIF.

### *Involvement in the organization of IUFRO World Congress 2010*

The Liaison Officer IUFRO/IFSA (Michael Rivoire) is member of the Congress Scientific Committee (CSC) chaired by John Parotta. In conjunction with the CSC, he will get the opportunity to follow the process of organizing a world congress, coordinate student involvement as assistants during the conference, and assist wherever needed.

### *Traditional IFSA events*

The International Forestry Students' Symposium (IFSS) will be hosted this year in Bulgaria from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> August. It will gather forestry students from all parts of the world to evaluate the work done during the year, elect the new board and plan the work for the next year.

Different regional meetings were organized in March-April 2008 in Latin America and in Northern and Southern Europe. These meetings strengthen the link between students, improve the work of IFSA in these particular geographical areas and promote discussions on forestry themes during one week.

### *Publish IFSA News*

In 2008, at least 3 issues of the IFSA magazine will be published. They will deal with IFSA activities, job opportunities for graduates and wildlife and game management.