



## IUFRO Board Meeting 2008 Marrakech - Morocco

### **Part I - Sylvain Dupire - IFSA President 2007-2008**

From April 27<sup>th</sup> until May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2008 two IFSA students were kindly invited as observers for the Board meeting of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO). Michael Rivoire (IUFRO/IFSA Liaison officer) and I went to Marrakech (Morocco) in order to attend this meeting.

### **Monday 28th April 2008 – Board Meeting first day**

The board meeting of IUFRO gathers the IUFRO President, Vice Presidents, Finance Officer, Executive Director, the coordinators of division, task forces and special programmes and the FAO Representative; it looks a bit like the Interim meeting of IFSA and has an equivalent function.



Just before the opening of the meeting we were warmly welcomed by IUFRO people and meet some members of the board. Don Koo LEE, president of IUFRO, opened then the meeting beginning by a round table where all people had to present themselves. Then began a session looking like the IFSA General Assembly where people had to approve the minutes of the last Enlarged Board Meeting in Beijing (China) as well as financial statements and reports of president, vice-presidents and executive director. The collaboration with IFSA were mentioned in the 4 reports, it's really nice and impressive to see how IFSA is recognized in IUFRO and how students are important for this organization.

Peter Mayer (Executive secretary) underlined for example the common benefits provided by students' internships in IUFRO headquarter.

### **Some nice ideas can be considered in IFSA:**

- 1) When someone take a position in IFSS, ask this person to sign a sort of agreement with the IFSA President which says he/she understand well his/her mission and engage him/herself to do it during one year. It can make people more responsible...
- 2) Even if IUFRO has a really better fundraising than IFSA which is normal according to the human resource they have, we can still re-think a bit some things in our way to work.

a) A very good way is to clarify well our system of "Gold-Silver-Bronze" Sponsorship and to make appear who is "a gold, etc." on our website and publications.

b) In IUFRO each region as its financer:

Africa: European Union

Asia: Korea, China, Japan

Latin America: USA, Canada

3) Make a survey in IFSA to know what the benefits to be member of the association are.

At the end of the day we went to dinner at the "Place Jamaa El Fna" and visited the nice "souk" of Marrakech. It was a nice cultural evening. Coming back to the Hotel, I had a brief discussion with Jose Antonio Prado (Representative FAO during the meeting).



### **Tuesday 29th April 2008 – Board meeting second day**

The second day began with a discussion about communication problems in IUFRO and how to avoid them. A very interesting presentation was made by Daniela Kleinschmitt showing that forestry people and particularly scientists do not take the time to communicate with in one side the public and on the other one the policy decision makers about the results and recommendations provide by the research. A lot of effort must be done on this point. I think personally as forestry students we must begin to communicate about our studies and why it's necessary to have Master in Forestry.

An amazing point is that IUFRO just begin to use mailing list for its internal communication at the moment IFSA is willing to change them for an online forum! Peter Mayer underlined the possibility to use also blog, facebook, podcast, etc. as tool of communication and in the evening he asked us what IFSA is using and if we think some new technologies could be good for IUFRO. We explained the risk of using facebook (not professional for IUFRO) and the need to have a moderator there.

Another point of the agenda was some discussions about the IUFRO Strategy. I took the parole to say that for IFSA point of view the IUFRO Strategy is a very good tool of communication; internal by saying who is in charge of what and external as we can directly go to the goal which interest us. I also mentioned that we adapted the scheme of IUFRO Strategy for IFSA in order to have this powerful tool in our association. I finally added that for us the strategy is also a mean to improve the continuity between IFSA generations by acting like a guideline. People were happy to see how their strategy is used also outside the organization. Later on the day, some people told me they are interested to read our first draft and make some comments.

IFSA will also provide its comments on the IUFRO Strategy 2011-2014, at the moment Wilrieke is the person supposed to do that, but Michaël could also do it.

In the afternoon I had the great opportunities to present IFSA to all Board members, I insisted on our will to develop IFSA in area it's not really the case in the moment and that for that all help is welcome. I presented then our activities and the importance of

our collaboration with IUFRO. At the end of the presentation Alexander Bock (Deputy Executive Director) express his satisfaction of all students' jobs made by IFSA students during the last year.



Some questions/suggestions were made by IUFRO people after the presentation:

- 1) IUFRO changed recently its name by replacing "forestry" by "Forest sciences" which is more general. They asked us if we will do the same and if students in IFSA are really "Forestry" Students or students in forest sciences. I answer IFSA gathers more than pure forestry students and that at the moment we won't change our name.
- 2) Someone in the board suggested having a "Youth representative" in IUFRO.
- 3) IUFRO President asked if it could be possible to involve IUFRO people in IFSA events. I asked positively and gave him the example of the meeting in Nancy where two IUFRO people were presents and provide invaluable inputs in the discussions.
- 4) The last suggestion of IUFRO was an invitation to continue our collaboration and to attend events like IUFRO Board meeting and IUFRO World Congresses.

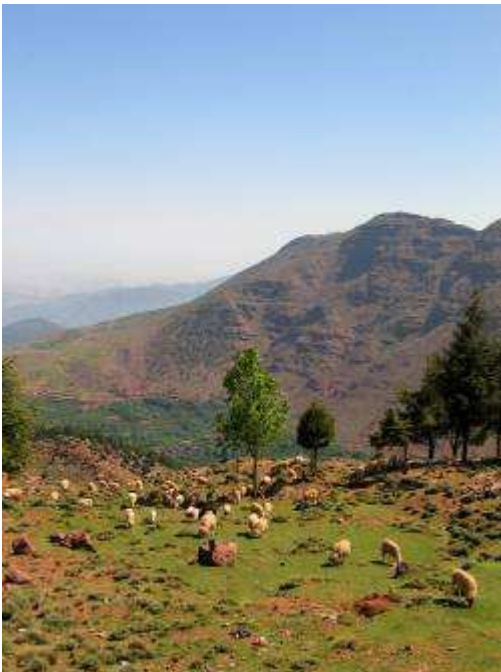
In the evening, the IUFRO President told me IUFRO will send a representative for the beginning of IFSS. I had also a nice discussion with Mohammed Ellatifi the main organizer of the meeting in Marrakech and former student of my school. He should also help us to inform Moroccan forestry students about IFSA.

### **Wednesday 30th May – Seminar on Forests and Human Health**

This day was interesting en enriching in term of knowledge about the benefit of forest for human health. I learn a bit on this subject not really taught in my school. I liked particularly the intervention of Dr Raul Montenegro (Argentina) about the interplay of forests and indigenous health.

I also continued the discussion with several people as the Representative of IUCN during the Congress, Victor K. Teplyakov, who gave me some good advice for the cooperation with this organization. An amazing thing is that his daughter, Jelena Teplyakova is organizing the NEIS 2008!

The evening we went to a nice castle where we discovered some traditional folk Moroccan and a kind of spectacle. It was also great.



### **Thursday 1st May – Field Excursion in High Atlas Mountain**

The last day was also really nice as we had the opportunity to visit a bit the landscape near Marrakech and the South of Atlas Mountain. We had several stop points during on the way and see among other interesting points a plantation of *Cedrus Atlantica* to protect against erosion, the most famous ski station of Morocco called Oukaimeden and a small and beautiful village in High Atlas called Imlil.

We discussed also with a guy from Cameroon who could help us to inform forestry students there about IFSA.

## **Part II - Michaël Rivoire, IFSA-IUFRO Liaison Officer representative**

### **1) General discussions**

IFSA developed its own strategy recently, and people were glad to see that the strategy document of IUFRO was taken as a model. Some of them were interested to read and comment the document of IFSA, what is a very good point. I think that it represent an original but strong link between IFSA and IUFRO.

Currently IUFRO is preparing a new strategy for 2011-2014. We can imagine again that their analysis of trends and issues in forest science will help IFSA in writing its next strategy.

A very interesting point deals with "emerging issues". IUFRO board wants to create trends, not only to follow them. People are currently trying to identify emerging issues in every division. The aim is to have a clear view of trends in forest science, to spot current problems and to forecast future themes of major interest.

I think that this could be really interesting for students. For them, emerging issues represent future works, job opportunities, general trends in science, etc... It is sometimes hard but so important for a student to imagine what will be the themes of forest sciences 2, 5 or 10 years ahead. For example, when they prepare a PhD, it is really important for students to take part in a science trend that can offer job opportunities 3 or 4 years later.

In this way, I think that IUFRO could show the emerging issues they are identifying, for example on their website. Then , IFSA-IUFRO liaison officer could have a new role of spreading this information toward IFSA students. For example, we could create new topics on IFSA's forum for each emerging issue, where students could discuss.



### **2) CSC discussions**

The Congress Scientific Committee involves people from each division and IFSA-IUFRO liaison officer. Discussions dealt with keynote speakers, and general themes. It has been decided that Education will not represent an entire theme, but it could be interesting to imagine a specific discussion on it, a side event, or a student symposium inside World Congress. For that, I will contact Korean students who appeared to be motivated.

I also spoke a little with the Congress Organising Committee responsible, who agrees to involve students in the organisation, in exchange of a free registration fee.

Of course we need to clarify the details (number of students, financial help, logistical help...) but it is still quite too early for that.

IFSA-IUFRO liaison officer is still a "new" position in IFSA, created two years ago. This is the first time we change the liaison officer, and it is a challenge to create a strong role that will change every one or two years. Here it was important to inform IUFRO about that. But in an other hand, we need some stability and continuity in some activities, for example for CSC discussions. We agreed that we cannot change the responsible student for CSC until 2010. I realised that we still need to be clear on that. This will be an important point to detail when the next liaison officer will take the role.

### **3) Other**

IUFRO would like to have youth representative in some meetings. We still have to detail what does it mean, and opportunities for IFSA to take part in this.

Finally, I was happy to see that IUFRO is interested in the communication tools of IFSA (forum, mailing lists, website, IFSAnews). For example, it is quite interesting to see that IUFRO is creating mailing lists, whereas IFSA is abandoning them for a new forum. Some people mentioned podcasts that IFSA could use.

