IFSA STRATEGY 2018-2022

International FORESTRY STUDENTS´ ASSOCIATION

IFSA

VISION

A world that appreciates forests

(the) World

A. All of the people and societies on the earth.

B. All that relates to a particular sphere of activity.

Appreciate

1. Recognize the full worth of.

i. Be grateful for (something)

2. Understand fully; grasp the full implications of.

IFSA's vision of "a world that appreciates forests" describes the dream of having all the people and societies on the earth recognize the full worth of forests and fully understand forests, grasping their implications and being grateful for their multi-fold contributions to humanity.

Forests may be understood in different ways and appreciated for different reasons. At IFSA we value the importance that forests represent for all of our members -- the social, environmental, and economic values that are the pillars of sustainability. Appreciating forests for their provisions of natural beauty, timber, shade, water purification, non-wood forest products, habitat, biodiversity, recreation, carbon sequestration, energy and much more, IFSA members are realizing this vision.

This vision leaves flexibility for different groups to be considered "a world", e.g. Local Committees (LC), IFSA, groups formed based on a common thematic interest related to forests, the whole world including all people and societies. "A world" can be interpreted at different scales and sizes of groups of people.

Mission

To enrich our members' education through international events, networking and intercultural exchange.

Who are we?

IFSA is a globally organized and locally operating students' organization connecting forest and related science students to their peers and forest-related organizations and policy platforms.

We seek to create global cooperation among students of forest and related sciences, to broaden knowledge and understanding and a space for youth international forest processes to achieve a sustainable future for our forests. Through our network, we facilitate student meetings, enable participation in scientific debate, and support the involvement of youth in decision making processes regionally and globally.

GOAL 1 - STRENGTHEN THE IFSA COMMUNITY.

We believe in the power of community – changing hearts, minds, and action through building new and needed connections across the world of forests. Consequently, our first objective is to build community – connecting students with each other on local, national, regional and global levels.

The IFSA community begins with students of forest and related sciences but stretches to include youth associations (spanning agriculture, water, geography) and numerous professional organizations, named IFSA Partners. Effective communication, knowledge sharing, and member-led activities contribute to a growing community of practice.

1.1. Expand the IFSA Network

As a global network, we strive for nothing less than global representation. We seek to engage every interested student into an IFSA local committee.

Activities for Implementation:

1.1.1. Increase membership globally

1.1.2. Increase and retain member ship in underrepresented regions

1.1.3. Increase regional profession al partners and collaboration

1.1.4. Utilize IFSA Partners to iden tify contacts to expand IFSA

1.1.5. Raise exposure of LC-led activities and projects

1.1.6. Produce promotional IFSA materials

1.1.7. Promote collaborative activities

1.2 Promote collaborative activities

Strengthening the IFSA community includes strengthening its action and impact.

Activities for Implementation:

1.2.1 Coordinate global IFSA activities

1.2.2 Promote and coordinate local and regional projects and activities

1.2.3 Promote and encourage events with 2 or more LCs

1.2.4 Further develop joint projects and events with IFSA Partners

1.2.5 Further joint projects and activities with youth partners

1.3. Enhance digital communications

We want to share our message of forests with everyday people and facilitate knowledge sharing across the forest community. Creating a united network requires diligent maintenance of existing platforms and a culture of innovation within IFSA. We seek to push boundaries among the forest community and to coordinate with partners to magnify our collective reach.

Activities for Implementation:

1.3.1. Re-vamp and maintain a digi tally forward website and so cial media platforms

1.3.2. Produce a monthly IFSA news letter through MailChimp

1.3.3. Increase subscribers to IFSA mailing list and decrease official use of Yahoo mailing list

1.3.4. Establish regional pages on IFSA website

1.3.5. Establish page on IFSA Website to showcase LC-led activities and projects

1.3.6. Coordinate global and regional digital campaigns with in IFSA and alongside IFSA Partners

1.3.7.Increase collaboration among Liaison Officers, international policy commission, and the Communications Comission to magnify existing digital campaigns related to forests.

GOAL 2 – TAKE LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM.

We believe that transformative change happens outside of the classroom. In order to prepare today's students for tomorrows challenges, IFSA's seeks to create unique learning experiences in all activities. IFSA also seeks to bridge the gap between formal forestry education and the rapidly changing labor market and global challenges. IFSA provides students an unprecedented opportunity to take their learning outside the classroom and into the world – broadening their horizons and enhancing their understanding of forests globally.

2.1 Deliver trainings and workshops

Activities for Implementation:

2.1.1. Collaborate with youth partners to implement an IFSA Training program and trainers by 2020.

2.1.2. Design and facilitate trainings to enhance understanding on emerging issues, build needed skills, and facilitate youth-led action.

2.1.3. Develop a standardized cultural competency workshop in 2019.

2.1.4. Implement cultural competency workshops in all IFSA meetings (regional and global).

2.1.5. Produce workshop, learning, and promotional material for use by LC's

2.1.6. Conduct a survey on desired topics to develop learning material in 2019

2.1.7. Establish online learning content in under 'Learning' page in website, inclusive of webinars, interactive modules, and videos.

2.2 Enhance forestry education

While much of our work builds skills of todays students, IFSA collaborates to enhance forestry education globally through research on evolving trends and projects to supplement curricula with learning workshops.

Activities for Implementation:

2.2.1. Further research on forest education and employment in collaboration with partners (IUFRO-EFI-IFSA Project, IUFRO-IFSA Joint Task Force).

2.2.2. Collaborate with partners to deliver projects on forest-related educations for students at all levels as well as young professionals.

2.3 Facilitate IFSA-led programs in events

IFSA-led programs and sessions at local, regional, and global events offer students an opportunity to build skills from facilitation, coordination, to speaking and designing events. We seek to see the number of IFSA-led sessions and programs in international events grow.

Activities for Implementation:

2.3.1. Implement mentorship programs at global events.

2.3.2. Facilitate traineeships, internships, and research projects with IFSA Partners.

2.3.3. Facilitate youth-led events, sub-plenaries, and side events at global events.

2.3.4. Provide training for IFSA officials on innovative learning methods and participant engagement by 2019.

2.3.5. Increase youth centered trainings and workshops alongside IFSA Partner events.

GOAL 3 – ENABLE STUDENTS TO ENGAGE GLOBALLY.

We know we must be bold and present in global dialogues, if we want to achieve our vision of a world that appreciates forests. We believe that now is the time for young voices to be included in policy dialogue, technical discussions and decision making, at all levels. We know youth are valuable partners and agents of change, particularly in facilitating collective action, building capacity, and sharing the message with every day people. To capitalize on this need IFSA creates space for students to participate in global policy and scientific dialogues and advocates for sustainable forest management and improved forest education.

3.1 Create space for members in global events

IFSA provides access into several scientific and policy events through established relationships with IFSA professional partners and accreditation in many processes (UN ECOSOC, UN CBD, UNFCCC, UNCCD, etc.).

IFSA also represents the interests of children and youth in Forest Europe and the United Nations Forum on Forest.

Activities for Implementation:

3.1.1. Facilitate member participation in UN processes related to forests and further collaboration with youth constituencies

3.1.2. Lead the UN Forum on Forest Major Group Children and Youth and the implementation of the UNFF MGCY Work Plan 2018 – 2022

3.1.3. Increase online reporting and engagement of IFSA members during events

3.1.4. Create regional dialogues and reports on relevant topics to formally bring member perspectives forth on an international stage

3.1.5. Maintain IFSA representation at major IFSA Partner events and policy processes

3.2 Improve the IFSA Delegation experience

Numerous IFSA Delegations represent member interests in a variety of global events annually. Being a part of an IFSA Delegation provides members opportunities to serve the broader network through representation and sharing new information on emerging global matters.

Activities for Implementation:

3.2.1. Increase access for IFSA members to take part in an IFSA delegation through increasing regional representation and funding available to delegates.

3.2.2. Develop an IFSA Delegation Guideline to better inform and prepare IFSA delegates.

3.2.3. Develop formal internal delegation protocol to be universally implemented, inclusive of selection protocol, post-event surveys, open calls, and creation of delegation reports.

3.2.4. Explore creative ways to enhance an online IFSA Delegation Experience, for those unable to be present.

3.3 Creatively communicate global opportunities

IFSA's global partnerships and engagement are created to provide more opportunities for IFSA members. For these global engagements to benefit IFSA members, we must get creative in delivering information. Students have limited free time and varying levels of knowledge, global opportunities and information should be shared consistently, creatively, and simply to all corners of the network.

Activities for Implementation:

3.3.1. Create a prominent webpage for opportunities and open calls on the IFSA Website (update regularly).

3.3.2. Transition IFSA Blog to be hosted on the IFSA website by 2020.

3.3.3. Maintain upkeep of IFSA blog and implement measures for quality control.

3.3.4. Utilize IFSA YouTube to post introductory informational videos for each IFSA Partner and policy process.

3.3.5. Expand and continue promotion of member content through platforms such as the IFSA Tree News.

3.3.6. Develop a prominent and accurate calendar and list of partner events in the upcoming year to be placed on the website.

ENSURE INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

To successfully accomplish the thematic goals presented in the Strategy, a cross-cutting goal of ensuring stability, sustainability and the continuation of the association has been identified. The below objectives ensure that IFSA will continue to thrive

A. Review and update IFSA Structure

IFSA's organizational structure must be updated to reflect the challenges and outcomes identified in Interim Reports from 2014 – 2018 and the outcomes of the Structure Review working group. A new and improved IFSA structure will capitalize on new synergies to enhance communication and collaboration across the organs and official positions within IFSA.

Activities for Implementation:

A.1. Propose a revised IFSA Structure in the 47th General Assembly.

A.2. Implement and revise the new IFSA Structure, as needed.

A.3. Establish awards for IFSA Officials to reward exceptional work.

B. Promote continuity between generations

To improve sustainability and the operation of IFSA, it is crucial to find continuity across generations of IFSA leadership and over the years.

Activities for Implementation:

B.1 Decentralize and revamp IFSA internal document management (Officials Master Folder) in 2018.

B.2 Develop an online platform for LC use by 2019.

B.3 Conduct officials training at each IFSS and off-line trainings throughout the year.

B.4 Consolidate changeover documents and create one position guideline to be updated and reviewed annually. These documents will keep accurate and detailed records of past partnerships, events, successes and challenges.

B.5 Develop a mentorship program between IFSA consulting members and IFSA officials in 2019-2020.

B.6 Increase collaboration with IFSA - Supporting and Alumni Network.

C. Sustainable financial management

Innovative financial management is key to ensure growth in all areas of IFSA's work. Diversifying funding sources and increasing project funding are priorities in the coming year.

Activities for Implementation:

C.1 Consistent and accurate reporting for the ERASMUS+ project funding to 2020.

C.2 Submit project proposals for grants (ongoing) and ERASMUS+ KA2 in 2020.

C.3 Seek additional operational and project funding from ERASMUS, applications to be submitted annually.

C.4 Increase collaborative activities with IFSA Partners and donors.

C.5 Seek funding for the implementation of the UNFF MGCY 2018 – 2022.

C.6 Collaborate with IFSA SAN to facilitate fundraising for IFSA delegations, LC activities, and global meetings.

C.7 Facilitate collaboration regionally and globally to seek further project funding.

D. Strengthening democracy and ease of decision making

IFSA's power lies in its local committees and the General Assembly. To best serve the network, it is imperative that all voices are represented in the highest level of decision making. As IFSA steadily expands and the number of LCs grow, democracy must be strengthened.

Activities for Implementation:

D.1 Increase LC representation at the General Assembly, either by in person attendance, transferred votes, or future alternatives.

D.2 Explore the possibility of online voting schemes (a complement or substitute to transferred votes) to be implemented by 2020.

D.3 Increase information availability during IFSS and GA through the creation of a webpage or login protected platform beginning in 2019.

D.4 Implement workshops for Statutes, Rules of Procedure, and IFSA Official positions, at each regional meeting in 2019.

D.5 Develop a protocol where all LCs have an opportunity to vote for the selection of regional representatives.

D.6 Launch inaugural 'IFSA LC Annual Survey' in 2018.

D.7 Publish results from IFSA LC Survey annually and utilize results as a feedback mechanism to shape priorities of work.

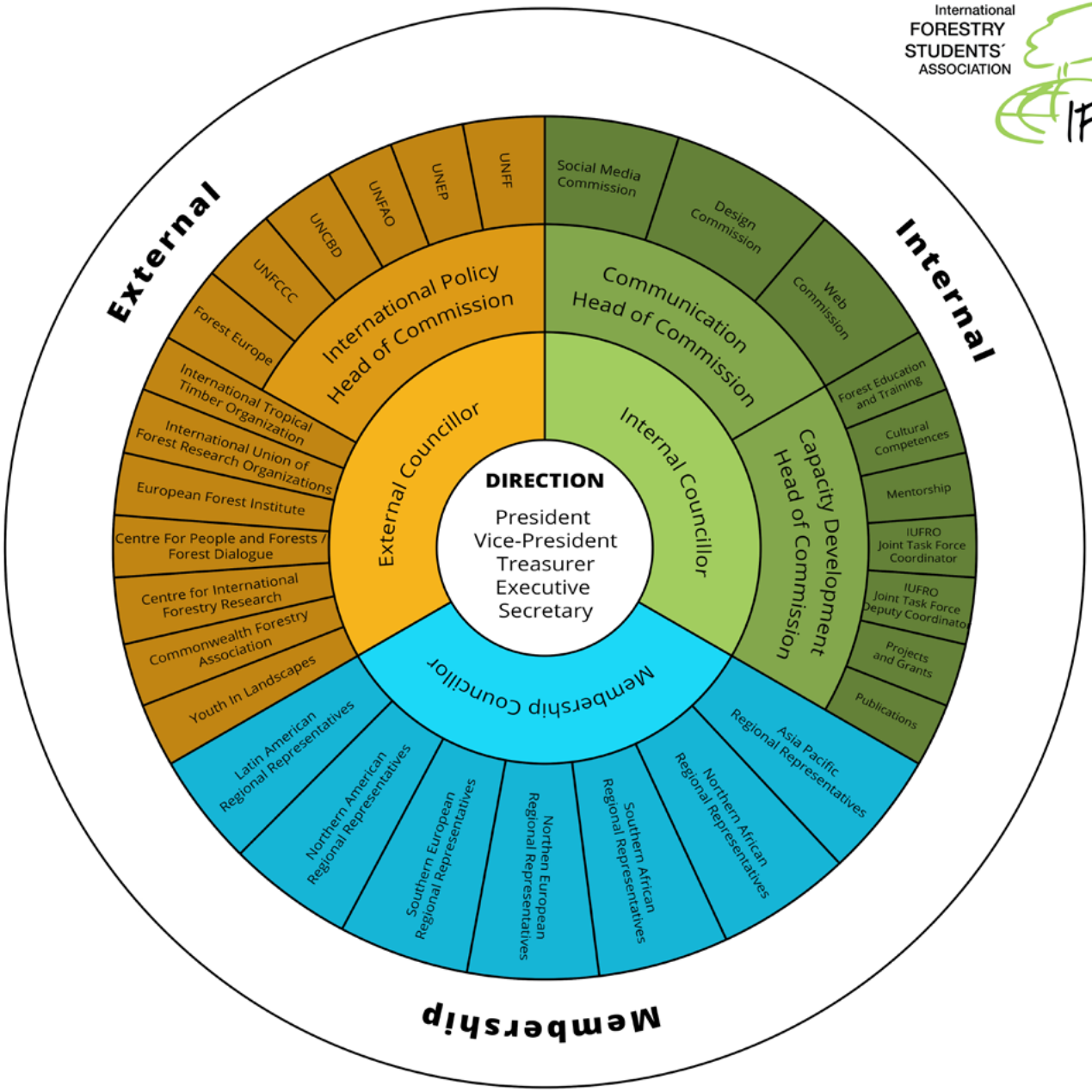
KEY IFSA INDICATORS

Metrics and indicators on key priority areas of work can be one way to measure success and picture whether we are achieving our objectives as an association. The following 14 metrics will be measured annually and provide a snapshot of our performance and progress to implementation of the IFSA Strategy.

The entirety of the IFSA Community must come together to achieve these targets – IFSA Officials, Local Committees, Partners, and individual members.

1. Number of LCs
2. Number of LC projects
3. Events with 2 or more LCs
4. Number of external events attended
5. Participants at IFSA events
6. Compilation Digital Media Metric (tbd)
7. Sessions led by IFSA
8. Participants to IFSA Learning Workshops or trainings
9. Gender balance across IFSA delegates and participants
10. Regional representation in IFSA delegations
11. Number of cultural competency workshops
12. Number of IFSA delegates at external events
13. Number of sponsored delegates and IFSA projects
14. Number of learning material/IFSA content produced

APPENDIX A. IFSA STRUCTURE



APPENDIX B.
SWOT ANALYSIS 2014 - 2018

Top Strengths of IFSA:

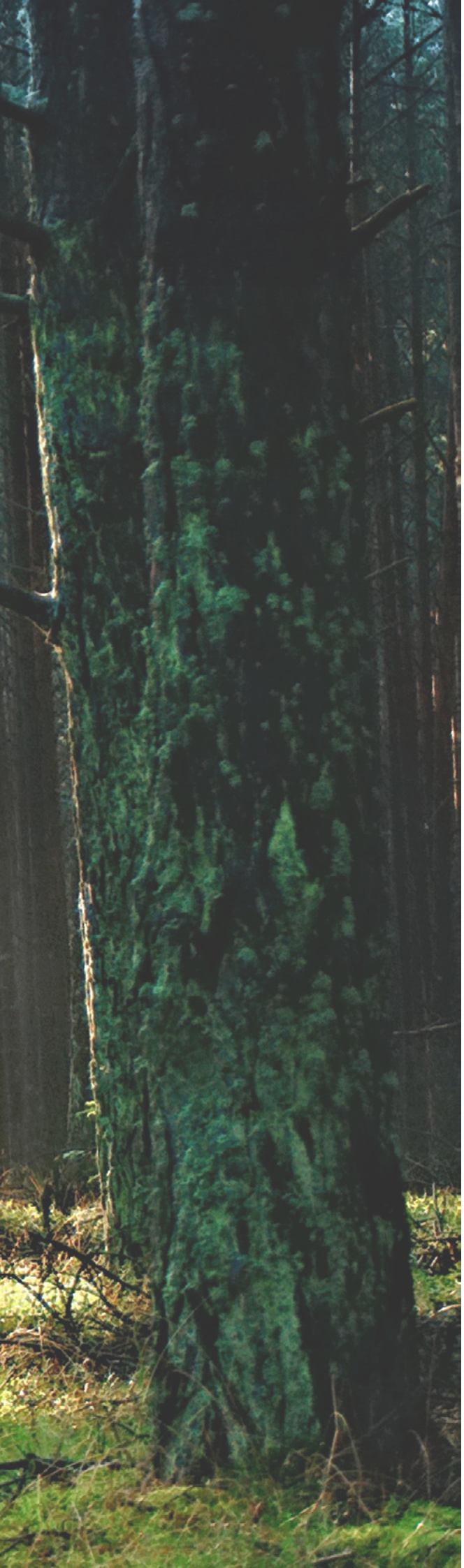
- Identify as THE forestry students' network
- Diversity of IFSA members and officials
- Strong social network of forestry students
- Space for personal development
- Annual events

Top Weaknesses of IFSA:

- Complicated structure, unclear communication channels
- Lack of continuity between officials during changeover (e.g. LOs)
- Unequal regional distribution (geographically still euro-centric)
- Poor marketing of IFSA's value, benefits and impacts
- Financial dependence on donors and grants
- Membership application and payments are complicated
- Poor democratic process (election system and vetting)

Top Opportunities for IFSA:

- Alumni (e.g. funding, internships, jobs, advisory role etc.)
- Increase awareness about IFSA in universities and faculties
- Increasing invitations to speak on behalf of youth in International Processes
- Increased interest in cooperation and growing importance as a professional NGO
- More cooperation with peer partner organisations (e.g. EGEA, IAAS), which could increase training possibilities and contacts.

Threats to IFSA:

- General change in the interest of forests (merging with other disciplines)
- No formal support from universities for LCs
- Instability of partner organisations, changes in partners financial stability leading to changes in donations
- Being 'used' by partners as face of youth without being genuine
- Disparity between students desire to contribute to IFSA and desire to benefit from IFSA
- Political instability (e.g. China + Taiwan issue, Northern Africa)
- Changes in regional financial grant structures (e.g. EU grant changes)