

Global Outlook on Forest Education (GOFE)

WP Coordination

Mika Rekola, University of Helsinki, mika.rekola@helsinki.fi, skype: mika_rekola

ABSTRACT

Forestry and forests are changing under several drivers such as globalization, climate change, political instability, aging society, new technologies, and bio economy/green economy. Holistic and integrative approaches are needed, such as ecosystem services and corporate social response. All these changes have a considerable impact on the education sector among other service sectors. There is increasing demand for content of social aspects and generic skills, as well as e-learning and Life Long Learning (LLL) approaches within forest education. As a structural change more and more traditional forestry programmes have been merged with other disciplines or even terminated at some institutions.

The objective of this research is to produce a scientific based policy report on global forest education mainly concentrating university level education. The specific objectives are:

1. To analyse the effects of forest curricula and teachers' knowledge on learning outcomes. A special research question is whether learning outcomes from forest science (FS) centred curricula are different than the ones from more multiple ecosystem (ME) curricula.
2. To make a comprehensive competencies gap analysis in international scale using up-to-date scientific methods.
3. To analyse the possibilities of new learning methods and approaches, for example those related to e-learning and LLL.

The study is based on mixed methodology. Tentatively the bundle of methods needed consists of literary research, qualitative and quantitative surveys of teachers, students, graduates, and stakeholder.

The research is going to be executed in each continent or region by local teams consisting of a principal investigator(s) working as supervisor(s) and group of students. Students are assumed to do the research as a part of their MSc/PhD theses. The project is now also seeking financing for data gathering and student grants.

Milestones of the project

- Recruitment of local teams, February 2016;
- Recruitment of students, April 2016
- Data gathering and literature review October 2016;
- Interviews and surveys, December 2016;
- Communication of the final results, June 2017 in IUFRO 125th Anniversary Congress 2017