



Global Student Networking & Green Jobs in the Forest Sector

A Joint EFI-IFSA-IUFRO Capacity Development Project (2018–2022)

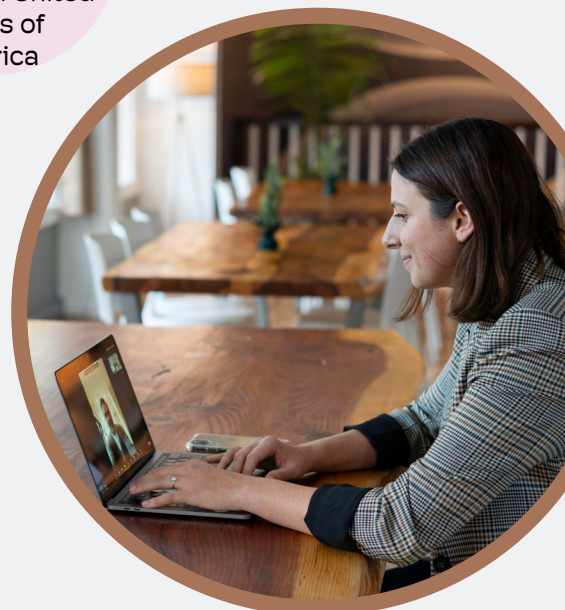
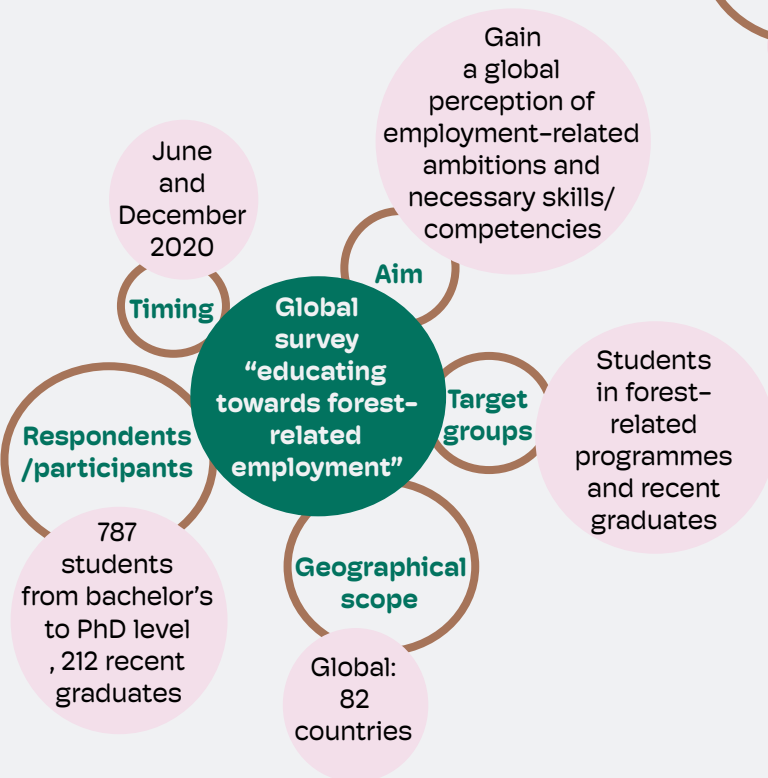
Website: <https://ifsa.net/efi-ifsa-iufro-project/>

*What do **policy makers** need to know about forest-related employment and education?*

Background

Involving policy makers in the discussions on forest-related employment and education is important because they are involved in formulating policies that shape the sector. Therefore, it is the collective responsibility of all the stakeholders (students, researchers, employers, communities and organisations) to share their perspectives with the policy makers.

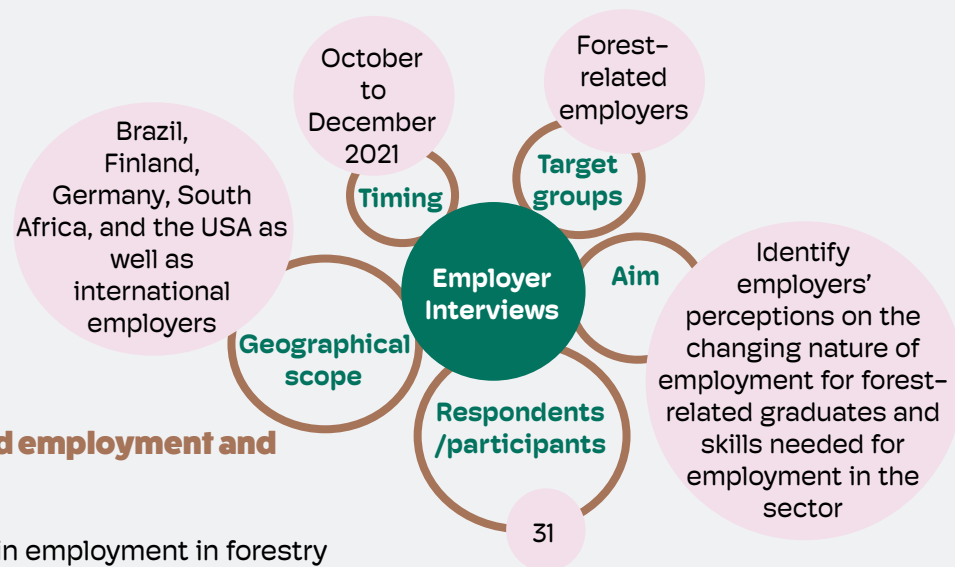
Data sources



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Trends in forest-related employment and education

- We observe a decline in employment in forestry and logging which seems to largely result from productivity gains, primarily from mechanization and information technology.
- Evidence shows that "Green Jobs" transform occupational profiles and workforce composition and can also contribute to the creation of new forest-related employment opportunities.
- Although the majority of students have heard of the concept of "Green Jobs" in the forest-related sector, they have little knowledge about initiatives in their countries and at global level. This also means they do not feel sufficiently prepared by universities to take up these jobs.
- There is a general trend towards upskilling and a growing number, as well as rising proportion, of workers with tertiary education in the overall forestry workforce. This trend needs to be further investigated.
- The demand for university graduates with forest-related degrees (Bachelor to PhD) by companies/organizations has been on the rise in the last decade.
 - Graduates with bachelor's degrees are hired for part time positions and by employers who were willing to train them on the job.
 - Graduates with master's and PhD degrees are preferred for positions that require in-depth knowledge and expertise as well as for permanent positions.
 - Some employers prefer to hire graduates from universities outside their countries because they have experience that the local graduates do not have.
- Students first decision to pursue a forest-related programme is driven by intrinsic factors especially desire to do beneficial work (make a positive difference for environment /communities) and job satisfaction (e.g. enjoyable work, high quality of life), while extrinsic factors like employment opportunities (e.g. positive career outlook, high job security) and earning potential (e.g. good salary, government benefits) play the least role
- Student enrolment numbers are fluctuating with increases in some countries like Brazil, China, Indonesia and decline in others like Finland and a shift from classical forestry programmes to environment and conservation related ones in countries like USA.
- Only one-third of employers contribute to higher institutions' curriculum development but also collaborate in joint research projects, traineeships/internships, excursions, and opportunities for master's and PhD thesis

General observations for forest-related employment and education

Demand for sustainable wood-based products is increasing as scientific and technological advancement continue

- Our societies increasingly value environmental services and related employment is on the rise, especially ecotourism.
- The use of the term "Green Jobs" varies among the countries studied, and so does the connotation given to it.



Do you want to secure skilled workforce in forest-related employment including Green Jobs in the future?

General recommendations

- Raise awareness among students about forest-related careers and study options to help them make informed choices.
- Consider the intrinsic factors that motivate students and integrate them in forest-related programmes. Raise awareness among students about “Green Job” initiatives in different countries and at global level and improve the public perception on these jobs to attract more people to work in the sector.
- Increase opportunities for forest-related traineeships/internships, volunteering, and part-time job opportunities for students because they are considered as valuable source of work experience by students, while most employers see this as an asset during the hiring process

Skills of the future

- Forest economics, forest management and planning, and environmental protection are the top three subject-specific skills considered essential by employers.
- The top-three generic skills required by employers are communication, problem-solving, and creativity.
- Skills of the future include leadership skills (conflict resolution) and general academic competencies (willingness to learn, open-mindedness, holistic view of the sector).

Restructuring the curricula

- Since biodiversity and nature management as well as forest management are the thematic areas that students would like to work in, ensure that curricula sufficiently address students’ core interests.
- Cultivate students’ interests in urban forestry; forest-based recreation; forest-related human health and entrepreneurship through inclusion in curricula.
- Support opportunities for students to develop generic skills (such as leadership, open-mindedness, communication, problem-solving and creativity).

