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SILVA News

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SILVA Network General Assembly 1999

The SILVA Network General Assembly 1999 was held as a part of an international conference on "Forestry education and research in the context of environmental and development problems: strategies for XXI century", in Lvov, Ukraine.

The Conference took place in September 12 - 19, 1999 and the SILVA Network General Assembly was held on Tuesday 14 September, 1999.

The most important issues for the General Assembly to consider were the approval of procedural rules and the acceptance of new members. The SILVA Network annual report was reviewed and approved. Current progress of various projects and the financial situation of the SILVA Network were reviewed.

Procedural rules

A proposal for procedural rules was prepared for the 1998 SILVA Network General Assembly held at the University of Joensuu. The proposal was discussed on several occasions during the academic year 1998-99.

At the 1999 General Assembly the rules were once more discussed and finally approved. The SILVA Network procedural rules are attached to this newsletter. They can also be viewed at <http://gis.joensuu.fi/rules>.

Membership

During the academic year 1998-99 three applications for membership had been submitted to the SILVA Network. After their applications had been submitted,

all three applicant institutions was visited by a SILVA Network representative. The chairman introduced the applicants and they were accepted unanimously.

The new SILVA Network partner institutions are:

Warsaw Agricultural University, Faculty of Forestry, Warsaw, Poland
University "Stefan cel Mare" of Suceava, Faculty of Forestry, Suceava, Romania
Ukrainian State University of Forestry and Wood Technology, Lvov, Ukraine.

Future activities

New ideas and possible activities of the AFANET (previous DEMETER) were discussed. It was agreed to apply funds for development of distance learning activities in forestry education, resulting eventually in the establishment of a joint European Virtual Forestry University. For more information, please see the AFANET info in this newsletter.

The next general assembly

The next SILVA Network General Assembly will be held on 29 June, 2000, at the University of Padova, Padova, Italy.



Teaching module "Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe"

The first part of the teaching module "Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe" was completed in autumn 1999, when the SILVA Network published a textbook under the title Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe – Information for teaching module.

Publications

The first part of the book deals with European forestry in general. It describes the European forest resources and their uses, reveals the main issues in forestry on a continental scale, discusses the role of the EU in European forestry and finally examines the complex interrelationship between forestry and society.

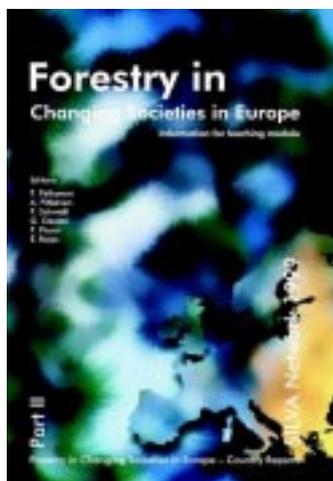
The second part of the book consists of numerous reports describing the forestry situation in 25 European countries. The book provides an excellent view into forestry under different circumstances. Together the two volumes offer a comprehensive basis for the course, "Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe".

In January 2000, the textbook was complemented with the teachers' manual which gives examples on how to teach European forestry in different circumstances, at different universities.

Course

The second part of the project is the implementation of the course "Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe" at numerous European universities. During the academic year 1999-2000 at least three universities offered the course to their students. The courses will be evaluated and the evaluation report will be discussed at the SILVA Network workshop "Quality of Forestry Education in Europe", to be held in Padova, Italy, in June 2000. This evaluation process is the continuation of the DEMETER Thematic Network –activity "Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe".

The first courses will offer valuable experience and information for future courses. We hope that more universities will incorporate this material in their courses since it would be very important for all European forestry students to receive appropriate information on the forestry situation in various European countries.



Study book Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe

The books are available at a price of

Parts I+II: 50 euros + VAT 8% + Postage and Package
 Teachers' Manual: 15 euros + VAT 8% + Postage and Package

from the SILVA Network office at the University of Joensuu, Faculty of Forestry, P.O. Box 111, FIN 80101 Joensuu, Finland, Phone: +358 13 251 4425, Fax: +358 13 251 3590, Email: silva.network@joensuu.fi

Pelkonen, P., Pitkänen, A., Schmidt, P., Oesten, G., Piussi, P. and Rojas, E. (Eds.). 1999. Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe. Information for teaching module. Parts I and II. SILVA Network. 1999. University Press Joensuu. 84+480 p.

Events

Spring 2000

1 March, 2000
Deadline for the AFANET continuation proposal

10 - 14 May
Aberdeen, UK
ICA Annual Conference and General Assembly

For more information please contact the ICA office (ica@agr.kuleuven.ac.be)

Conference website:
<http://www.clues.abdn.ac.uk:8080/ica2000>

Summer 2000

29 June
Padova, Italy
SILVA Network General Assembly

30 June
Padova, Italy
SILVA Network Workshop on Quality of Forestry Education

For further information please contact the SILVA Network office at silva.network@joensuu.fi

Master of European Forestry - Programme

The last meeting of the preparatory committee for the Master of European Forestry –Programme was held in Edinburgh, UK, in November, 1999.

It was planned to start the programme in autumn 2000. However, due to delay in practical arrangement, the start date is still under consideration.

For further information, please contact the SILVA Network office.



SILVA Network General Assembly and Workshop on Quality of Forestry Education in Europe

The next SILVA Network General Assembly will be held together with the third SILVA Network/AFANET workshop on "Quality of Forestry Education in Europe". The events will take place 29 June – 2 July, 2000 at the University of Padova, Italy.

The workshop will concentrate on quality aspects of forestry education in Europe. Experience from both implementation and evaluation of the teaching module "Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe" will be given special emphasis. In addition to this, evaluation and quality assessment methods will be discussed. Different practises will be reviewed; they will serve as basis for discussion.

Preliminary schedule of events:

28/29 June 2000:	arrival and registration
29 June 2000:	Silva Network General Assembly
30 June 2000:	Workshop on Quality of Forestry Education in Europe
1 July 2000:	Excursion to the Cansiglio Forest

Some financial assistance to the SILVA Network members will be available via the AFANET thematic Network.

We hope to see you all in Padova!



The Asia-Europe Forestry Exchange Programme (ASEFOREP)

The Asia-Europe Forestry Exchange Programme (ASEFOREP) is a collaborative exchange programme of Asian and European higher forestry education institutions that are committed to international people-to-people exchange. ASEFOREP has been established in order to co-ordinate and facilitate reciprocal mobility between Asia and Europe.

The participants of the *Asia-Europe Workshop on Sustainable Forest Management and People-to-People Exchange*, held in July 1999 in Joensuu initiated an exchange programme between Asia and Europe. The ASEFOREP programme was launched jointly by the Asia-Europe Foundation and four Asian (Universiti Putra Malaysia, University of the Philippines Los Baños, Hokkaido University Forests, Japan, and the Northeast Forestry University, China) and three European (BOKU, Austria, DISTAF, Italy, and University of Joensuu, Finland) forestry higher education institutions in November 1999 in Singapore.

Aims and objectives

ASEFOREP has been developed in response to recent changes in global conditions for forest management, trade in forest products and the demand for internationally qualified forest professionals. The goal is to improve the professional education of forest resource managers and increase the international mobility of forestry graduates. The programme aims to enhance the understanding of topics, of importance to both continents; such as socio-economic and ecological sustainability, technological development, and institutional development (e.g. moral values, certification, organisation structures). In addition, ASEFOREP seeks to broaden the educational experience of participating individuals, to foster the development of mutual understanding, peace, goodwill and respect among peoples and nations.

The programme homepage is under construction. It will be opened at <http://www.asef.org/aseforep> soon. For the time being, please contact the SILVA Network office at silva.network@joensuu.fi for further details.



EU-Canada co-operation

The EU-Canada project was launched in December 1998, when the University of Joensuu signed the programme agreement with the European Commission.

The main aim of the project is to build a functioning network between European and Canadian institutions and to establish a balanced exchange of students and staff members. The goal is to improve the professional education of forest resource managers and increase the international mobility of forestry graduates. Making students aware of challenges facing forestry in Europe and Canada is one of the common objectives. The partners will also develop a series of intensive, specialised courses dealing with international forestry issues that are open to students from the participating institutions.

The University of Joensuu is responsible for the overall administration of the project in Europe. Every institution recruits students and establishes their own contacts with partner institutions.

The first programme year ended in September 1999. The report on the activities of the first project year has been delivered to the Commission in November 1999 and sent to all participating institutions.

The meeting for launching the project was held in Freiburg (DE), 22-24 April, 1999. It was a successful event where participants of all partner institutions were present. The meeting was an important opportunity for project partners to meet, to learn about the Canadian and European educational systems and to get acquainted with each others. During the meeting, an ECTS counselling session was offered by an ECTS counsellor Prof. Dr. Bertil Holmberg, University of Lund, Sweden. It was agreed that at least the learning agreement of the ECTS documents should be used in order to ensure full academic recognition of studies at host institutions.

Both European and Canadian co-ordinators participated in the Joint Consortia Meeting organised by the European Commission and the HRDC Canada in Rotterdam, in November 1999. The meeting was an excellent opportunity to get acquainted with the European Union officials who are responsible for the administration of the whole programme and to learn from earlier projects.

Student mobility

During the first project year, 9 European project partners started student mobility activities. Altogether 31 European students have participated in student mobility activities in the first project year. 17 of them have participated in the project in order to complete 124 months of studies at Canadian institutions. In addition, 14 students from Albert-Ludwig University Freiburg and Wageningen University participated in a field camp held in Toronto and at UBC in September, 1999. The course was organised by the Albert-Ludwig University Freiburg, Germany. In the first project year 13 Canadian students have participated in student mobility activities.

For more information, please contact the SILVA Network office or see the renewed project homepage at http://gis.joensuu.fi/eu_canada.



Administrative changes

The SILVA Network office has moved from the Carelian Science Park to the University of Joensuu. The former Secretary General, Ms. Anne Pitkänen, handed over her responsibilities in December, 1999, to the new Secretary General, Mr. Pekka Äänismaa. Please see the new contact information at the first page of this newsletter.

If you have any questions, comments, ideas etc. concerning the SILVA Network and its activities, please feel free to contact us by email, telephone, or fax.



Farewell

Dear Colleagues

I am writing this short thank you note at home. At the moment I am living happily in Tampere. I am enjoying life and keeping company to Viivi, who is our 12 weeks old miniature schnautzer. We have had her for a month now and she really knows how to keep us busy.

Once again I would like to express my sincere thank you for your co-operation and kindness during the times we worked together. I enjoyed every minute working with you and I hope the feeling is mutual.

I wish you and the SILVA Network all the best and a prosperous future.

Love, Anne



AFANET INFO



DEMETER Thematic Network was due to come to an end in September, 1999. However, in April 1999, the European Commission called for the continuation of thematic network projects, which were coming to the end of their initial programme. An application for a one year continuation was submitted by the project co-ordinators in May, 1999 which was successful. Also, in May 1999 the ICA General Assembly renamed the DEMETER Thematic Network as AFANET, the Socrates Thematic Network for Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and the Environment, which clearly identifies the scope of our thematic network project.

The focus of the continuation year is on the dissemination and consolidation of the work undertaken during the earlier years of the project. This is why the SILVA Network proposed funding for the evaluation of the course "Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe". The proposal was accepted in September, 1999 and the evaluation work will be carried out at the institutions offering the course. The evaluation process will be thoroughly discussed at the SILVA Network/AFANET workshop "Quality of forestry education in Europe", to be held in Padova, Italy, in June, 2000.

In November, 1999, we expressed interest in a SOCRATES II Programme. A full proposal was submitted to the Commission in March 2000. The SILVA Network proposed to develop distance learning practises in forestry education in Europe with the final aim of founding a virtual European Forestry Faculty, as discussed at the 1999 General Assembly in Lvov, Ukraine.

The design and development of a virtual European Forestry Faculty

- A project proposal for the AFANET thematic Network for Agriculture, Forestry and Aquaculture by the SILVA Network

Universities in an integrating Europe have to collaborate and create active networks. However, the extent of the use of ICT in forestry education and co-operation in Europe remains very limited today. Nevertheless, many SILVA Network partners have already experimented distance education and they have recognised the importance of the use of these new technologies not only in education but also in international networking. However, these experiments have been totally unco-ordinated thus far. Support is needed from other forestry education institutions and experts of virtual education and ICT. In particular, there is an acute need to develop virtual education by sharing and disseminating experiences in the use of ICT in forestry education.

Aims

The aim of the proposed three –year project is to support the development of distance learning and establishing a virtual forestry faculty in Europe. The project aims also to generate through discussion a project definition document for the specification, design, delivery and evaluation of forestry courses by distance learning using ICT, and execute the project. The aims will be achieved by gaining experience in managing curricula developments and delivery using ICT in forestry education.

Objectives

- analyse the current situation in the utilisation of ICT in higher forestry education in Europe
- explore opportunities that are opening up through the introduction and existence of new information and communication technologies
- discover an effective and reasonable way to use web-based teaching and learning and to discover what kind of material is suitable for web use, how to apply ICT, and what kinds of teaching methods can be used
- train lectures and other teaching staff of European forestry higher education institutions to effectively use ICT applications and to create web-based study material
- develop preconditions for the modification of the software environment to facilitate the modification of existing study material to virtual format
- facilitate the utilisation of know-how of individual forestry specialists and the expertise of the different European forestry institutions in ICT based distance learning.

