



IUFRO Spotlight is an initiative of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations. Its aim is to introduce, in a timely fashion, significant findings in forest research from IUFRO officeholders and member organizations to a worldwide network of decision makers, policy makers and researchers.

IUFRO Spotlight issues up to October 2014 will primarily focus on the *IUFRO World Congress* that will take place on **5-11 October 2014 in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA**. The topics of individual Congress sessions will be highlighted in order to draw attention to the wide variety of themes that will be addressed at the Congress and their importance on a regional and global scale. [Link to: IUFRO 2014 World Congress Scientific Program](#)

IUFRO Spotlight #18 / March 2014 / IUFRO World Congress

Consumers and Industry: Keen on Green

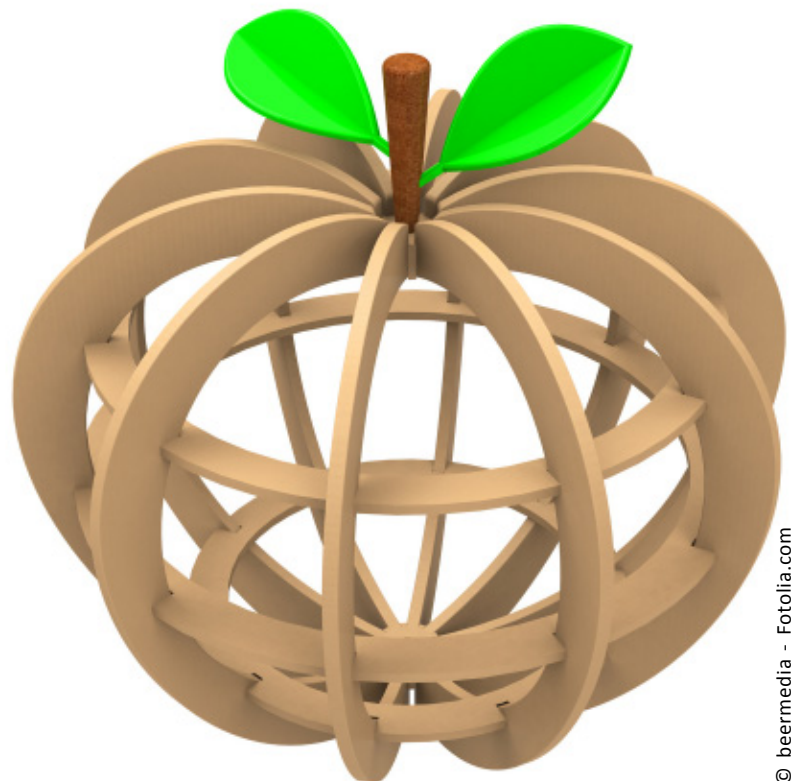
Looking toward the future is enough to make you, ahem, “turn green” with envy.

It’s all about a greener future.

That future and, more specifically, how it relates to the world’s forests will be one of many subjects discussed at the XXIV IUFRO World Congress in Salt Lake City, Utah, this fall.

A session there, entitled *Forests and Forest Products for a Greener Future* will look at how business and marketing will contribute to that goal.

Organized by Eric Hansen of Oregon State University, Tom Hammett of Virginia Tech and Birger Solberg of the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, it will cover a wide range of business and marketing theory topics that address how products and markets (timber and non-timber) can be expected to contribute to the greening effect.



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The goal of their session is to convey a sense of the cutting edge work that is taking place in this field as consumers and industry embrace a greener future.

They point at some of today’s forest-related green initiatives that are, for the most part, in their infancy but offer the potential for massive leaps forward. Among them, a range of biochemicals, biomaterials and bioethanol, all from renewable materials; medical products such as wood-based casts for fractures; a growing interest in designing and building wooden skyscrapers; the positives around biophilic design (connecting nature and people in the places where they work, live and learn); and nanocellulose, where possible products include everything from body armor to automobile components to highly absorbent wound dressings, tampons and diapers. For these innovations to be successful, marketing will play a key role.

The range of research opportunities is immense, they say.

Business and marketing practices, through the value chains that process and transport forest-based products from forest to consumer, have a significant influence on the interactions between society and forests, the researchers note.

They also say that much current business and marketing research is about consumer/customer reactions to products and services, and that going forward in this area, research should play an increasingly important role in identifying green products that can be successfully adopted in the market place.

And they mention environmental marketing, eco-labeling, supply chain optimization and design for environment as some current practices that help the push toward a greener milieu.

Their session will also look at the idea of improving effectiveness in the supply chain. They note that in addition to the financial benefits, an efficient supply chain can also result in lower environmental impacts.

Other questions being explored focus on corporate social responsibility; a growing issue in both the business and research worlds. As examples of discussion points they ask: what motivates companies to be responsible? What policies can be put in place to encourage and-or reward that responsibility? Why do some companies embrace the concept and others not?

The organizers note there are relatively few forest researchers and academics specializing in marketing and business management issues (as opposed to traditional forest economics), so there is much room to study and improve understanding of the various important issues in the area.

This session aims to stir a wider discussion and engender increased interest in exploring more of those issues.

[IUFRO Research Group 5.10.00 on Facebook](#): Forest Products Marketing and Business Management

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21 March International Day of Forests