

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF TROPICAL FORESTERS, INC.  
1500 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Apt. 841  
Washington, D.C. 20005

NEWS NOTES NO. 21

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The VI World Congress and Tropical Forestry: With a registration of about 2800 participants, representing 93 countries, the VI World Forestry Congress held last June in Madrid goes down in history as the largest of all the World Congresses. Over 50 ISTF members attended.

From the standpoint of tropical forestry, the Congress presented an opportunity that could be a major step forward in tropical forest development. This was a meeting held to consider the functioning of the recently created Committee on Forest Development in the Tropics, established by FAO at the request of Liberia and Venezuela. A detailed account of this meeting is given in the present News Notes.

From the standpoint of forestry as a whole, the Congress also provided an opportunity for two meetings devoted to a discussion of the creation of an International Union of Forestry Societies. This, too, is covered in the News Notes.

One day was given over to Technical Commission VI to consider forest problems specifically affecting tropical regions. This session was attended by over 180 participants representing 27 countries.

The Commission, in closing, made the following recommendations:

1. Committee on Forest Development in the Tropics - Commission VI commends FAO for the creation of a Committee on Forest Development in the Tropics and recommends that each tropical member nation provide adequate support.
2. Tropical World Forestry Congress - The constantly increasing interests pressing for attention at World Congresses makes it impossible to give adequate subject-matter coverage to problems peculiar to forests of the tropics. In coming years, with even larger attendance, and more diversified agenda items, the time allotted to tropical matters will probably be further restricted.

With the increasing importance and complexity of tropical forestry and the greater number of men engaged, the most satisfactory solution would seem to be the establishment of Tropical World Forestry Congresses. The Director General of FAO is therefore requested to include in his program of work for 1968-69 plans for a Tropical World Forestry Congress. The FAO Committee on Forest Development in the Tropics may be asked to organize such a congress.

3. Review of National Forest Policy - Forest policy should form an integral part of the over-all national policy and foresters should be associated from the beginning in formulating land-use programs and legislation. Apart from the indirect influence of forest laws, national forest policy should stress the production and consumption

of forest products. The Timber Trend Studies have proved a useful guide in forecasting production prospects, possible gaps in production, etc. Governments may assign their Forest Services to undertake these studies at suitable intervals, to provide data for establishing production targets for forest management goals.

4. Deterioration of Tropical Forests - Nations should take active measures to combat the increasing deterioration of tropical forests by shifting cultivation, fire, and destructive exploitation.

5. Permanent Forest Areas - Areas designated by Government as permanent forests should, wherever possible, retain that status, in order that long-range forest management be possible.

6. Shifting Cultivation - FAO should institute a new, thorough and basic study of the problem of shifting cultivation and its control; that this study should be started by calling together a small Working Group of creative and imaginative scientists representing the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, economics, forestry, agriculture, soils, ecology, and political science; and that this small Working Group should be charged with reviewing the problem of shifting cultivation and developing a program of study and research which will lead to a fundamental understanding of the problem of shifting cultivation and its control.

The desirability of a more thorough coverage of tropical problems was informally discussed. During the past two Congresses it has not been possible to cover tropical forestry matters in the time allotted, and a number of proposals were made. Some participants suggested devoting several days to tropical problems just before the next World Congress. It was, however, felt that ultimately the solution lay in a separate Tropical Forestry Congress, to be arranged by the FAO Committee on Forest Development in the Tropics.

Quite apart from the limitations of tropical problems, many participants felt that there was danger that future congresses would become unwieldy from the standpoint of number of participants as well as a constantly-increasing number of agenda items and the staggering mass of Congress documents.

Proceedings of the VI World Congress will be printed and made available, probably in 1967.

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International Union of Forestry Societies: Creation of an International Union of Forestry Societies came closer to realization during the VI World Forestry Congress, when delegates from more than 30 countries met under the Chairmanship of V. L. Harper, USA, to consider possible organization plans. Two meetings were held, both of them marked by intense interest in the proposal and a unanimity of approval of the creation of such a Union. It was also marked by a wide diversity of opinion as to the type of membership that should compose it.

It was finally decided that the Union should be composed of organizations whose membership consists primarily of academically-trained foresters. It was also suggested that a more descriptive name might be "International Union of Societies of Foresters".

It was generally agreed that the purpose of the Union will be "to advance the progress, competence, status, and effectiveness of professional foresters throughout the world".

Sir Henry Beresford-Peirse, U.K., voiced what seemed to be the sense of the meeting in saying that he felt this type of international union of professional foresters would be a most valuable contribution to forestry, and suggested that the U.S. be asked to take over the preliminary effort of organizing the Union.

It was then agreed that during the initial period of one or two years, the affairs of the Union would be placed in the hands of the following officers: V. L. Harper (USA), President; a Vice President - probably from northern Europe; Tom Gill (USA), Executive Director.

During this preliminary period, member societies would pay no dues. The officers were given the authority to select a Board of Directors - or Governing Committee - composed of representatives of societies willing to assist in the task of drafting a constitution. A number of countries indicated their willingness to take part in this work.

FAO Committee on Forest Development in the Tropics:

During the VI World Forestry Congress, an informal meeting was called by Leslie Vernell, of FAO, for the purpose of exploratory discussions regarding the recently created Committee on Forest Development in the Tropics.

This Committee is the outcome of a resolution passed at a symposium of tropical foresters held at Duke University, in April 1965, recommending the creation of a continuing body to consult with and advise the Director of Forestry and Forest Products Division of FAO, on tropical forestry problems, programs, and progress on a world basis. The resolution suggested ways and means by which FAO and other agencies could stimulate better development and use of the tropical forestry resources.

Liberia and Venezuela formally requested FAO to create such a committee, which was authorized at the FAO Conference in November 1965.

Mr. Vernell reported that earlier this year letters had been sent to heads of Forestry Departments in most member countries of FAO, inquiring as to their interest in becoming members of such a Committee. Sufficient interest was indicated to warrant the Director General of FAO to send formal letters inviting 17 nations to become Committee members.

Mr. Vernell pointed out that there were certain topics which, although within the province of the Committee, would be better dealt with by Regional Forestry Commissions.

The Tropical Committee would deal with general economic problems on a world-wide basis rather than policy matters, since the Regional Commissions would continue to handle policy.

It was the consensus of the meeting that the Committee should cover both humid and dry areas within the tropics.

Probably the first formal meeting will be held in Rome, at the 1967 Conference, and additional meetings will be planned-for in various countries.

No nominations were made for officers, but it was hoped that direct responsibility for the Committee's activities would be assigned to an FAO Officer in Rome.

FAO's prompt action and constructive attitude toward this Committee places responsibility for its success squarely upon the tropical member countries. Tropical forestry now possesses a Committee with vast potential to advance forest development in the tropics. Its future lies in the hands of the tropical nations.

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Recent Publications: WOOD: WORLD TRENDS AND PROSPECTS, "Unasyuva", Volume 20: Here is a major contribution to forestry literature. A clear, well-organized study of major national and regional appraisals of wood resources and requirements, together with an estimate of future changes in the world wood balance up to 1975. This publication is a distinct credit to FAO and will long remain a source of valuable information on world trends and prospects with regard to wood. \$1.30 (US), Forestry & Forest Products Division, FAO, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, Rome, Italy.

MAHOGANY OF TROPICAL AMERICA, by F. Bruce Lamb. A comprehensive study resulting from years of investigation by a veteran and distinguished tropical forester. The book gathers together a wealth of information hitherto available only from diverse sources, as well as much new and useful information. \$7.50 (US), The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

FORESTS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, by Russell C. Stadelman. A book of approximately 250 pages, describing the countries, forests and timber species of Southeast Asia. It includes an index of 834 common names and 676 scientific names of timber species found in these countries. \$10.00 (US), Russell C. Stadelman, 4893 Princeton Street, Memphis, Tennessee 38117.

BOLETIN FORESTAL NO. 8 (March 1966), issued by the Office of Renewable Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Caracas, Venezuela: A well-edited source of information concerning Latin American forests. Contains "Forest Notes" and "Books and Reviews".

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