

**Brief report on attendance at the
IUFRO Working Party 7.03.12 meeting on
“Alien Invasive Species and International Trade”
3-7 July 2006, Poland**

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Dr. C.Z. Chilima represented FISNA at the IUFRO Working Party 7.03.12 meeting on “Alien invasive species and international trade” which took place in Poland from 3-7 July 2006. Dr. Chilima’s participation was facilitated by the USDA Forest Service and the Malawi Government.

More than sixty scientists from various forest research institutions, government departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donor organizations from all the continents participated. Africa was represented by three participants, two from the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI) in South Africa. The workshop involved presentation of 43 papers and 18 posters and two field excursions over a four-day period. The presentations were categorized into four thematic areas:

- the status of alien invasive species (AIS) in Europe;
- world ecological impact of AIS;
- AIS detection and policy;
- prevention measures and treatments.

Dr Chilima presented a short paper titled *Sanitary and Phytosanitary Systems in Africa - The SADC Experience*. The paper described the recent high rates of introduction of AIS in Africa and reviewed the application of phytosanitary systems in Africa in order to prevent further introduction and transboundary movement of these species. Examples came from the countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. The paper described the permit systems for import and export of forest products and materials in the SADC region and questioned the extent to which these apply to the international agreements on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) under the World Trade Organization (WTO). Participants were informed that in Africa, there is generally poor implementation of permit systems for import and export of forest products and genetic materials and that this is associated with inadequate human and material capacity and lack of risk assessments, especially in most countries in the SADC region. Of special concern was the realization that most African countries are facing problems with the adoption and implementation of International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs), particularly the recent ISPM No. 15 on wood packaging materials.

In the concluding remarks, Dr. Chilima’s paper introduced the current process in Africa where through networking, harmonized approaches to AIS are being developed. At this point, the rationale and objectives of FISNA, including its activities and the Web site were introduced. There was a lot of interest from the participants on FISNA and many of them expressed interest to collaborate with the network mainly through information exchange. During plenary and side meetings, Dr. Chilima established many contacts and discussed a number of possible areas of collaboration through FISNA. The key areas are as follows:

- monitoring bark beetles (possible collaboration between FRIM and scientists in the Czech Republic);
- baobab research (possible collaboration between FRIM and scientists in Germany);
- capacity building and public awareness especially on ISPM 15 and inspection and quarantine systems (possible collaboration with NEPAD, FISNA, USDA F-S, FAO);
- FISNA meetings (possible collaboration with IUFRO, USDA –FS, FAO- proposed back to back meetings in South Africa).

The workshop participants appreciated the global problems facing world trade as a result of AIS. Although most of the examples were on wood-boring insects and tree fungal pathogens in Europe and America, it was apparent that AIS are a global problem and have serious potential impacts on international trade even for developing countries in Africa. It was clear that the potential impact of AIS on international trade involving wood products and wood packaging materials is enormous, and most African countries which are not yet implementing ISPM 15 could be severely disadvantaged due to trade barriers.