



Biographies of speakers and moderators

International Conference on Forest Education

22 – 24 June 2021, Virtual conference livestreamed from FAO, Rome, Italy
All times refer to Central European Summer Time (CEST)

Andrew Taber

Andrew Taber is a Senior Forestry Officer in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. As Team Leader for Social Forestry, he oversees work in community forestry and tenure, producer organizations and small enterprise, gender, indigenous peoples, and links between forests and food security and nutrition. Previously, he headed an international NGO dedicated to sustainable mountain development and has held senior positions in international forestry research and wildlife conservation organizations. His expertise spans community-based wildlife management, landscape conservation, climate change adaptation, capacity building and administration. He is a scientific authority on Neotropical wildlife and ecosystems and has participated in international policy processes. He has trained and mentored practitioners and researchers and holds a doctorate from Oxford University as well as learned from holders of traditional knowledge.



Sessions featuring Andrew Taber

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Moderator
- Plenary Session 3, 24 June 2021, 13:00 – 14.30 CEST: Presentation of the Collaborative Partnership on Forest's Joint Initiative on Forest Education
- Plenary Session 3, 24 June 2021, 13:00 – 14.30 CEST: Presentation of the Call to Action on Forest Education



Maria Helena Semedo

Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General, is an economist and politician from Cape Verde. A leading expert in global development issues, she has worked in public service for over thirty years. Over the last decade, FAO has helped shape a new global narrative where agriculture is prominently recognized as a solution in addressing increasingly complex emerging issues – from transforming food systems to dealing with climate change. As part of the FAO Core Leadership Team, Semedo works to develop impactful initiatives such as the FAO Green Cities Action Programme and the corporate strategy for mainstreaming biodiversity across agricultural sectors, fostering multi-stakeholder dialogues that optimize the Organization's 75 years of technical expertise and experience, its global reach and innovative approaches, all contributing to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sessions featuring Maria-Helena Semedo

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Welcome address

Eva Müller

Dr. Müller is Director General for Forests, Sustainability and Renewable Resources of the German Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture (BMEL). She has more than 35 years of professional experience in international forestry, with a focus on forest policy and sustainable forest resource management. From 2004 to 2018 she worked in leading positions with increasing responsibility at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. As Director of Forestry Policy and Resources she was responsible for all results, programs and activities of FAO's technical work in Forestry. Dr. Müller has a BSc in



Biology and Chemistry from the University of Heidelberg in Germany, an MSc in Forestry from Yale University in the US and a PhD in Natural Resources from the University of Hamburg in Germany. She speaks English, French, Spanish, German and Italian.

Sessions featuring Eva Müller

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Opening Remarks



Stefania Giannini

Stefania Giannini is the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education. In this position, she provides strategic vision and leadership in coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Education 2030 Agenda. With an academic background in the Humanities, Ms Giannini has served as Rector of the University for Foreigners of Perugia (2004 – 2012), being one of the first and youngest women to hold this position in Italy. As Senator of the Republic of Italy (2013 – 2018) and Minister of Education, Universities and Research (2014 – 2016), she developed and implemented a structural reform of the Italian education system, centered on social inclusion and cultural awareness.

Sessions featuring Stefania Giannini

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Remarks on the global policy context of education for sustainable development

Daniela Kleinschmit

Daniela Kleinschmit is Professor for Forest and Environmental Policy at the University of Freiburg. Before she has spent six years at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. Her research interest comprises land use policies with focus on forest and bioeconomy. Daniela Kleinschmit has initiated and coordinated various research projects and published several scientific papers, chapters and edited volumes. She is actively supporting diverse science-policy interactions at different political levels and as Vice-president of the International Union of Forest Research well connected in the international scientific community. As Vice-Dean, Dean and since this year Vice-President of University Freiburg she has been actively engaged in research management and governance.



Sessions featuring Daniela Kleinschmit

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Keynote Address



Amos Amanubo

Amos has been an advocate for enhancement of forest education through lobbying academic institutions, regional and international science-policy-practice spaces. Through his previous role as President of International Forestry Students' Association, he championed the development of capacity building initiatives and global forestry students' networking to enrich the formal education of forestry students. Amos holds a B.Sc. Forestry from Makerere University and is currently pursuing a master's degree in Environment, Society and Sustainability at the University of Cape Town. His interests include Science-Policy-Practice cooperation, Forest Education and Capacity building, Forest Landscape Restoration, Environmental Policy, Sustainability and Climate Change.

Sessions featuring Amos Amanubo

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Keynote Address

Mika Rekola

Dr. Mika Rekola is a university lecturer in forest economics at the University of Helsinki, Finland. He is also a deputy head of the department in charge of public engagement and communication. Mika's research interests are ecosystem services and education. He is an acting coordinator of forest education research group in IUFRO, and now working as a consultant in this FAO-IUFRO-ITTO forest education project. Mika is also a CEO and co-founder in an education start-up Forum4edu.



Sessions featuring Mika Rekola

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Presentation of the key findings of the Global Assessment on Forest Education

James Kung'u



James B. Kung'u is a Professor of Forestry and Climate Change in the Department of Environmental Sciences, School of Environmental Studies, Kenyatta University, Kenya. He holds a PhD (Forestry) from the University of the Philippines at Los Baños. He is the Dean of School of Environmental Studies, Kenyatta University and the Chairman of Africa Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education for East and Central Africa. For the last 26 years, he has been involved in capacity building at technical, undergraduate, postgraduate and community level. Before moving to Kenyatta University, James had worked for nine years with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources.

Sessions featuring James Kung'u

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Presentation of the key findings of the Regional Assessments on Forest Education – Africa

Sirichai Saengcharnchai

Sirichai Saengcharnchai is the University Network Partnership Coordinator for Developing Research Capacity of Universities in Southeast Asia on Forest Landscape Governance at RECOFTC. As ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change Project Coordinator, he is responsible to facilitate various national and regional capacity development activities, policy dialogues, mainstreaming social forestry curriculum development into ASEAN universities, and knowledge sharing, communications and networking for ASEAN Member states and civil societies. He is involved in various in-country and regional governments as well as donors/development agencies in planning various interventions on development of social forestry in South East Asia



Sessions featuring Sirichai Saengcharnchai

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Presentation of the key findings of the Regional Assessments on Forest Education – Asia-Pacific



Niclas Sandström

Niclas (PhD in Educational Psychology) is a senior lecturer, research director, linguist, and educationalist. He has experience in linguistic and semiotic research, learning landscape research and design, sustainability, and adaptive leadership for sustainable development. He is a member in global immersive education module design and forest education and circular economy. He has published tens of scientific articles, book chapters, and a book on sustainable education design. He is passionate about co-creation and shape shifting. His current interests are in circular economy learning modules and virtual Realities, educational leadership and existential semiotics of space.

Sessions featuring Niclas Sandström

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Presentation of the key findings of the Regional Assessments on Forest Education – Europe

Sandra Rodríguez-Piñeros

Professor at Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua, Mexico, Dr. Rodríguez is also the coordinator of the Joint IUFRO-IFSA Task Force on Forest Education. In 2001 she obtained the ITTO Freezailah fellowship to pursue a MSc. in Forest Economics in OSU. She obtained her Ph.D. in 2009 in Environmental Science – Forest Management from Oklahoma State University. Her PhD Dissertation was awarded with the IUFRO Outstanding Doctoral Research Award in 2014. Dr. Rodríguez has over 15 years of international experience in forest management and social aspects of forestry, she has worked for government, non-government organization and the academia.



Sessions featuring Sandra Rodríguez-Piñeros

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Presentation of the key findings of the Regional Assessments on Forest Education – Latin America and the Caribbean



Osman Yousif Hamid

More than 40 years of national and international experience in Education and Training. Osman Hamid is one of the four founders of forestry training and education in Namibia. Advancing through a series of promotions, from a technician to a Chief Technical Advisor, Regional Project on Curriculum Revision, He has contributed to a number of regional and international studies. Osman Hamid received his Diploma in Forestry from Sudan, B.Sc. in Forestry, Beshawar University, Pakistan and M.Sc. in Environmental Studies, Khartoum University, Sudan. He is professionally affiliated to several networks, groups and societies. Currently is a Free Lancer.

Sessions featuring Osman Yousif Hamid

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Presentation of the key findings of the Regional Assessments on Forest Education – Near East and North Africa

Michelle Zeng

Michelle Zeng is the Senior Manager, Educational Strategies of the Faculty of Forestry at the University of British Columbia. She has made great efforts to support the faculty's transition to online teaching during the pandemic. She has also successfully brought the online forestry program to thousands of global learners and won two awards at national and international levels over the past five years. Michelle holds her second master's in educational technology. Her research areas cover digital learning, inclusion and diversity in online learning, strategies and policies, pedagogical design, data analytics, and the integration of emerging technology in enhancing forest education.



Sessions featuring Michelle Zeng

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Presentation of the key findings of the Regional Assessments on Forest Education – North America



Terry Sharik

Terry Sharik holds a Ph.D. degree in Forest Recreation and Forest Botany from the University of Michigan. Prior to assuming the SFRES deanship in July 2012, he held faculty positions at Oberlin College, Virginia Tech, Michigan Tech, University of Michigan Biological Station, and Utah State University. He officially retired from Michigan Tech in June 2018 but retains the title of Research Professor. He has been active at the international level through the International Symposia on Forestry Education, the Collaborative Partnership in Forestry, the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN.

Sessions featuring Terry Sharik

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Presentation of the key findings of the Regional Assessments on Forest Education – North America

Rocco Saracina

Rocco is the national lead for a robust network of state Project Learning Tree (PLT) programs, advancing collaboration, development, and continual improvement. PLT is an environmental education program that develops students' awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of the environment. Before focusing on environmental education, Rocco spent nearly a decade building [SFI's conservation programs](#) and partnership network. Rocco serves on the executive leadership team of the [Society of American Forester's \(SAF\)](#) Diversity and Inclusion Working Group. He holds a M.S., Natural Resource Sustainability from Virginia Tech and a B.S., in Environmental Science from Humboldt State University.



Sessions featuring Rocco Saracina

- Plenary Session 1, 22 June 2021, 12:30 – 15:00 CEST: Presentation of the key findings of the Regional Assessments on Forest Education – North America



Sheam Satkuru

Sheam is the International Tropical Timber Organization's Director of Operations where goals include enhancing SFM in the tropics while expanding and diversifying the trade in tropical wood products from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests. Sheam holds a master's degree in Corporate & Commercial Law from Kings College, University of London and is a Barrister-at-Law from Inner Temple, London. She brings over 25 years of experience in international law and trade regulations/negotiations, international collaboration, sustainable development in tropical forestry and the private sector, legal/policy analysis, advocacy, communications and public affairs.

Sessions featuring Sheam Satkuru

- Plenary Session 2, 23 June 2021, 13:00 – 15:00 CEST: Moderator
- Plenary Session 3, 24 June 2021, 13:00 – 14.30 CEST: Presentation of the Collaborative Partnership on Forest's Joint Initiative on Forest Education

John Innes

John Innes is Dean of the Faculty of Forestry at the University of British Columbia. He is President of the Commonwealth Forestry Association (since 2010), Chair of the Standing Committee on Commonwealth Forestry and Chair of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Education Coordination Mechanism. He is actively involved with climate change research and in 2007 was part of the IPCC team that shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Al Gore. For his lifetime contributions, he received the International Forestry Achievement Award by the Canadian Institute of Forestry (2015) and was bestowed International Fellowship by the Royal Swedish Academy for Agriculture and Forestry (2018).



Sessions featuring John Innes

- Plenary Session 2, 23 June 2021, 13:00 – 15:00 CEST: Speaker for Roundtable "Then and now: The evolution of forest education in a global landscape"



Felix Finkbeiner

At the age of 9, Felix Finkbeiner, developed the idea that children could promote climate justice by planting a million trees in every country. With the support of children from all over the world, Felix launched the youth initiative Plant-for-the-Planet in 2007. This gave rise to the Trillion Tree Campaign with the goal of planting 1 trillion trees until 2030. So far, more than 91,000 children and youth in 75 countries have been trained in Plant-for-the-Planet Academies. As Climate Justice Ambassadors, these children and youth give speeches to adults, motivating them to act. Felix is a Ph.D. candidate at ETH Zurich studying the potential of forest restoration in addressing the climate crisis.

Sessions featuring Felix Finkbeiner

- Plenary Session 2, 23 June 2021, 13:00 – 15:00 CEST: Speaker for Roundtable “Then and now: The evolution of forest education in a global landscape”

Marie Noel Ngoddo

Marie is a program officer for training and learning initiatives. She joined RECOFTC in 2019 bringing 10 years’ experience promoting rights and providing training for Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the Asia-Pacific region. She has previously worked with different non-governmental organizations and one specifically focused on establishing schools of indigenous knowledge and traditions. Marie is a member of the Kankanaey Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines. She is a proponent of traditional and indigenous knowledge, which reflects her identity as an indigenous woman, and her educational and work experiences. Marie has master’s degrees in social and development studies and in lifelong learning.



Sessions featuring Marie Noel Ngoddo

- Plenary Session 2, 23 June 2021, 13:00 – 15:00 CEST: Speaker for Roundtable “Then and now: The evolution of forest education in a global landscape”



Alexander Buck

Alexander is the Executive Director of the international Union of Forest Research Organizations, a global network for science collaboration uniting over 15,000 scientists in more than 600 member organizations in 125 countries. He studied forestry and law and is an expert on international forest, environment and resource policy. Alexander has 25 years of experience in working in research management and at the science-policy interface at the global and regional levels and engaging with stakeholders across the public and private sectors. He is a member of the advisory boards of various international and national initiatives related to forests and sustainable development.

Sessions featuring Alexander Buck

- Plenary Session 3, 24 June 2021, 13:00 – 14.30 CEST: Moderator; Presentation of the Collaborative Partnership on Forest’s Joint Initiative on Forest Education.

Mette Wilkie

Mette is the Director of Forestry Division in Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. She holds a master's in environmental management from Wye College, University of London. She started her career in 1986 as an Associate Professional Officer with FAO. She has worked as Forest Management Consultant in Asia and Africa and carried out assignments for UN agencies, EU, bilateral development agencies and the private sector. Mette re-joined FAO in 1998 as a Forestry Officer (Forest Management). In 2014 she joined the United Nations Environment Programme as Director, Ecosystems Division.

**Sessions featuring Mette Wilkie**

- Plenary Session 3, 24 June 2021, 13:00 – 14.30 CEST: Closing Remarks