

A new global partnership for forestry education

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Collaborative partnerships for forestry education have the potential to capitalize on the strengths and complementarities of individual programmes. A number of such partnerships already exist on a regional scale – for example, in Africa, Asia and Europe – or between groups of institutions. Until now, none has been explicitly global in character, to provide links among regions.

The concept of a new International Partnership for Forestry Education (IPFE) to support institutions and networks committed to education about forests and forestry evolved through discussions among universities, regional forestry education networks and global organizations such as FAO and the World Bank between December 2001 and September 2003. The World Bank indicated its willingness to contribute Development Grant Funding of US\$150 000 to help catalyse the establishment of IPFE. This funding will support further development of the concept and some initial pilot-scale activities in the period to October 2004, as a basis for pursuing longer-term support. In its development phase, IPFE is being managed by an informal group comprising individuals associated with the genesis of the proposal.

Universities are at the core of the partnership. Other participants include existing regional networks for higher and continuing education and extension, FAO, international development agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and forestry research institutions.

The network's proposed activities include:

- sharing of information about curriculum structure and content and about educational and professional standards;
- facilitating student and faculty exchange and wider awareness of graduates' qualifications;
- identifying needs for teaching materials, courses and curricula and facilitating their development, translation and adaptation to local conditions;
- supporting, promoting and linking regional networks;
- helping to represent the interests of university-based forestry education to the international community and in international processes and fora.

Further information about IPFE is available on IPFE's Web site (www.forestry.ubc.ca/ipfe) or by contacting:

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