



THE EUROPEAN FOREST INSTITUTE

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## News from EFI

### ***17 Ratifications on the EFI Convention***

The UK has ratified the Convention on the European Forest Institute soon after the ratification by the Netherlands. The Convention on EFI has now been ratified by a total of 17 European countries. The Convention enters into force in the UK on 7 January 2008.

The ratifying countries are now:

Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the UK.

EFI thanks its Associate Members in the ratifying countries for their support and efforts in the ratification processes. 'The Associate Members input in furthering the ratifications has been very valuable,' says Risto Päivinen, Director of the EFI.

The ratifying countries meet every three years in EFI Council. The next Council meeting is scheduled for 2008 and it will be held in Spain. Also the chairmanship of the Council will shift from Finland to Spain.

*Further information:*

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### ***EFI Statement on Research Related to GM Trees***

In order to provide the relevant public authorities with sound and unbiased scientific

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data and information, Genetically Manipulated (GM) tree related research is needed. This research should:

- contribute to the maintenance and development of autonomous multidisciplinary competences and expertise in this field;
- inform the policy process; however policy, regulation and operational functions regarding GM trees should be the responsibility of the relevant public authorities;
- explore alternative paths and options, and assess the various technical, economic, social and ecological impacts, benefits, costs and risks associated with GM trees.

GM-tree related research should strictly comply with public safety regulations. Forest research organisations involved in such research should ensure that precautionary procedures have been developed and published. There is also a need for monitoring developments of relevance to European forestry from all over the world.

This statement was issued by the Annual Conference of the European Forest Institute on 5 September 2007. The Annual Conference represents the 132 EFI Associate and Affiliate organizations. The statement was prepared by the Board of EFI in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Board of EFI.

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### ***Policy Makers in Forestry Rely on Personal Contacts***

There is no common EU forest policy. In order to safeguard its interests, the forest sector in Europe need to communicate effectively with EU level policy makers and representatives of other sectors and stakeholder groups.

A doctoral dissertation 'Communication in forest policy decision-making in Europe: a study on communication processes between policy, science and the public' by Gerben Janse indicates that personal communication with peers is the most important source of information for forest policy-makers. It was also found out that the excess of information and complicated websites and inaccessible databases do not serve or attract the policy-makers.

As regards to improving communication between science and policy, both policy-makers and scientists agree that scientific information should be presented in shorter and easier to comprehend formats. Scientists should be involved more in policy advisory meetings and more personal contacts between scientists and policy-makers are called for.

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