

FORMEC – Progress Made and the Way Ahead

Dear colleagues,

As a member of the editorial board of the Croatian Journal of Forest Engineering (CROJFE) and the president of the scientific network FORMEC (International Symposium on Forestry Mechanization), it is a great honor and pleasure for me to present the current CROJFE edition. In anticipation of the 44th Symposium »Pushing the boundaries with research and innovation in forest engineering«, we have succeeded for the first time in reviewing selected FORMEC paper contributions and publishing them in a CROJFE issue. This will ensure a significant improvement in the quality of the meeting, as well as benefitting the whole scientific community in forest engineering.

FORMEC was founded in 1966 in the former Czechoslovakia. The basic idea of the meeting was to serve as a bridge between East and West and bring together scientists to discuss current challenges related to the mechanization of forestry. The founding concept of FORMEC as a forest engineering communication platform remains, but some specific changes have been made over the years. The official language of the symposium has changed from German to English in order to increase international participation and to encourage the attendance of young researchers and practitioners. This has had a significant impact on the number of participants as well as the quality of their contributions. In the beginning, participation fluctuated between 30 and 40 researchers. This year in Graz, Austria more than 200 participants from 38 different countries have been registered. There is already keen interest in the future meetings scheduled for Dubrovnik, Croatia in 2012 and Dresden, Germany in 2013. FORMEC has be-

come one of the most important scientific meetings in forest engineering. This is recognition of, and at the same time a mandate for, continuous improvement in the future – much in keeping with the adage: »Who stops going forward, stops being excellent«.



Forest engineering research deals with the analysis and design of production systems (from forest to mill) for the material and energy utilization of wood resources. It includes the evaluation of impacts on the environment and humanity. The research concentrates on the direct applicability of results for the forest industry and provides practical solutions to current problems (applied research). The challenge is to direct development of forest engineering methods towards system and network oriented approaches. FORMEC, as a scientific platform, will contribute to this development. In this context the encouragement and promotion of young scientists will play an important role. At the moment we have a lack of young and highly qualified researchers in forest engineering, and professions can only be developed with enough young talent.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who have helped ensure that the meeting in Austria will succeed and who made it possible to finish the current CROJFE issue in time. We look forward to the valuable contributions that all participants can make at this meeting.

Karl Stampfer