



# YOUTH FOREST POLICY DAYS 2022

1-3 December 2022 | Online

# Final Report



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# Introduction

The Youth Forest Policy Days (YFPD) event is an outstanding initiative organised by the International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) and FOREST EUROPE (FE). This event enabled the youth community to exchange knowledge, gain insights about international forest policies and learn new skills.

IFSA has always emphasised the need to put Youth voices in the centre of the policy fields, advocating for better forest education and taking learning beyond the classroom. This event brings the policy field to life with inspiring experts, motivated youth and concrete learning opportunities. We wish to highlight the importance of the youth as well as provide young people with sufficient knowledge, raise awareness and inspire them to take action.

YFPD was a three-day digital event covering the forest sector's multidisciplinary and gave the speakers and attendees a platform to share their knowledge and experience. The first day was in a workshop format, where participants gained practical skills in public speaking, digitalisation in the forest sector and how to design an engaging conference. During the workshop day, all the participants could also exchange their personal experiences during the networking and Living Library sessions. The second day of the event was in a conference format where during the panel discussion, participants learnt about international forest policy and the role of youth in the forest policy arena. Furthermore, some of the major forest issues, such as deforestation, sustainable forest management, restoration and forest finance, were discussed in the parallel sessions.

This report presents the main outcomes of the YFPD with the purpose of knowledge sharing, capacity building and organising similar events in the future.

# Figures

**18** sessions

**42** speakers

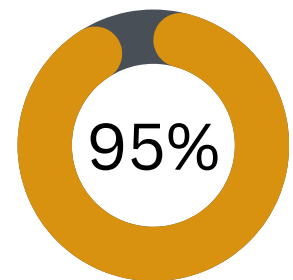
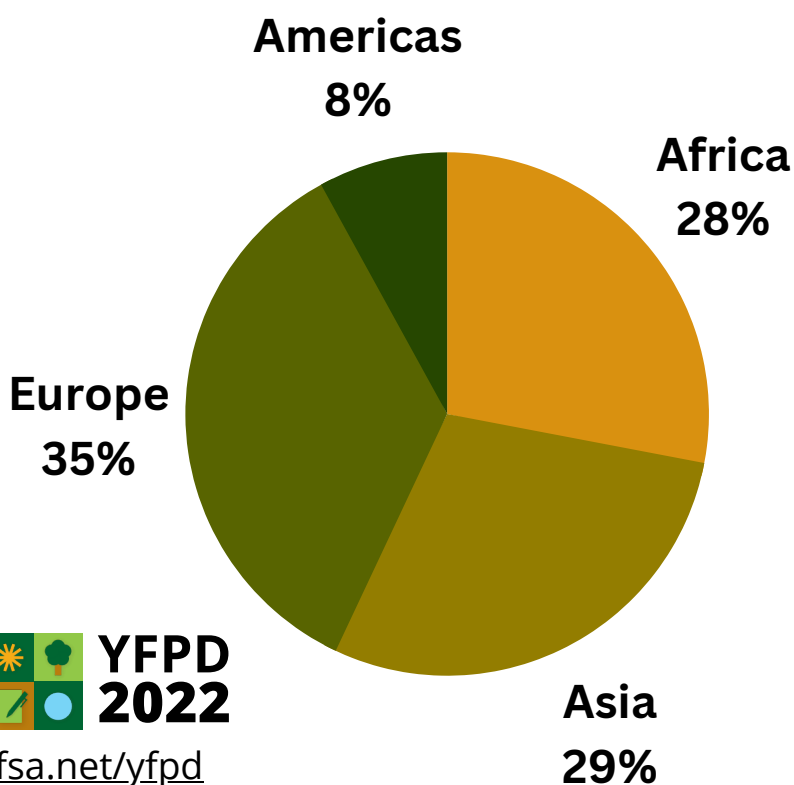
**3** days of event

**300+** participants

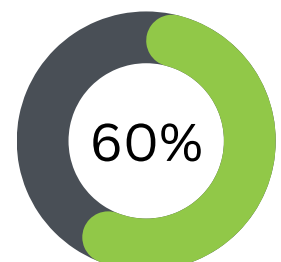
**4** hours average viewing time

**12+** hours of recorded sessions

**65** different countries



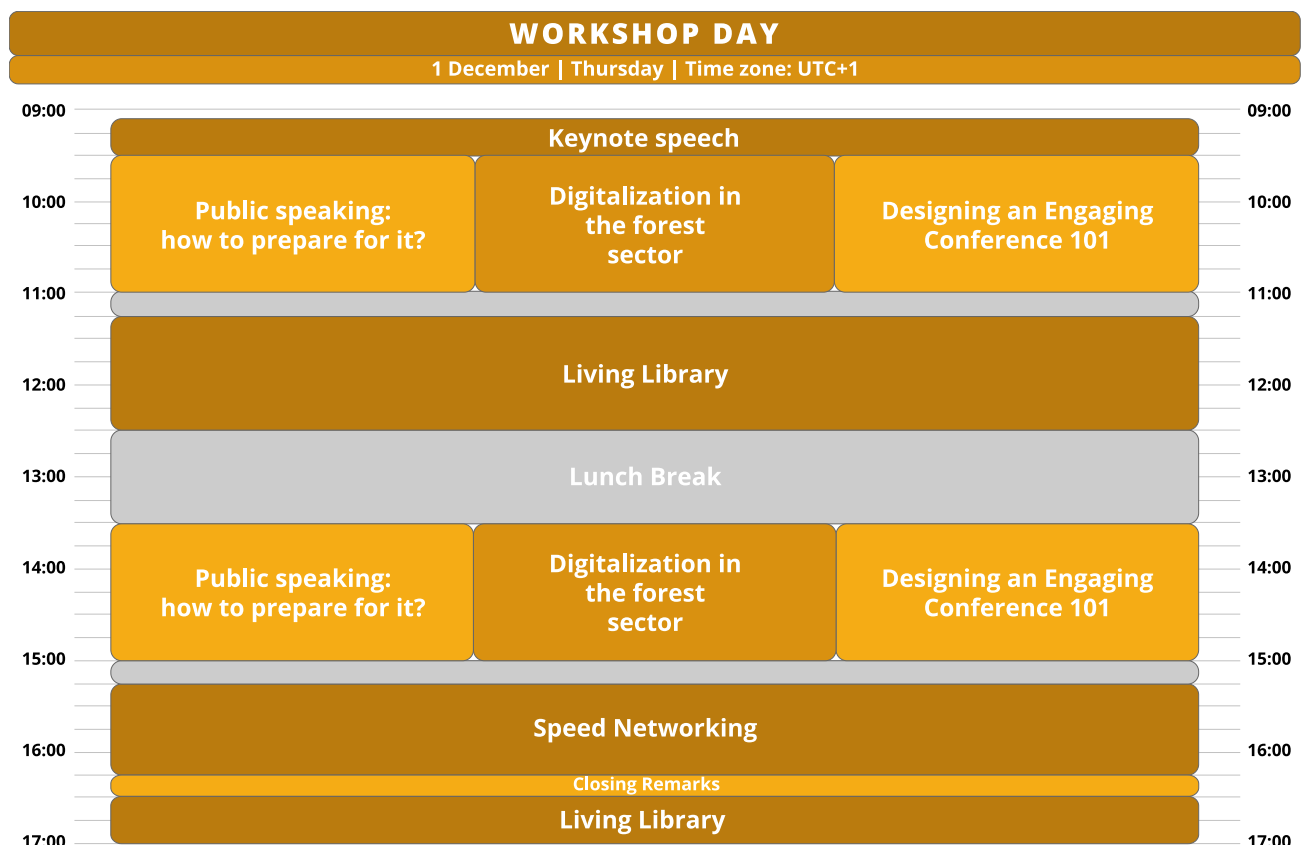
Youth audience



IFSA members <sup>2</sup>

# WORKSHOP DAY

The Workshop Day on 1st December consisted of three different topics: Public speaking and how to prepare for it, Digitalisation in the forest sector, and Designing an engaging conference. Each workshop was led by talented professionals from diverse forest organisations with regional and global scopes. Additionally, activities such as Living Library and Speed Networking were added to the programme to facilitate networking and knowledge sharing among the participants.



## Public speaking: how to prepare for it?

Feeling anxious anticipation before delivering a speech or presentation is a regular occurrence. Fear of public speaking, also known as glossophobia, is present in three out of four people, while 77% of the population has symptoms of anxiety caused by public speaking situations.

Carla Brown from Siegwark, who moderated the session, reiterated the need for the application of artistic proofs (logos, ethos and pathos) as effective in engaging your audience, which is essential and elevates your speeches and presentations because people relate with people.

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## Designing an engaging conference

Designing a conference may seem challenging, but with the fundamental toolkit presented by Venetia Galanaki and Andrea Chávarri Marrese from Global Landscapes Forum, it can turn into an exciting event that brings people together. Venetia gave an insightful presentation on a set of questions one must ask before organising a conference: What is the event's purpose, and what is the key message? Who is the audience? What is the content? What is the format of the event? How to design and coordinate the event, so it meets the objectives? By applying those questions, event planning can become a systematic process that will improve with every event. In addition, Andrea emphasised the importance of social media and how to build an engaging social media campaign on three levels: building up the hype before the event, full engagement with the audience through social media during the event, and post-event communication to summarise the outcomes. Andrea gave real-life examples, proposed different social media platforms and advised how to use them wisely.

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## Digitalization in the forest sector

Digital applications and tools impact current and future tasks, activities, skills and abilities of professionals working in the modern forest sector. Thilo Wagner (Wald und Holz, North Rhine-Westphalia), who moderated the session, highlighted different perspectives and best practices in the new realm of technological advancement in the forestry sector. Experienced professionals such as Frank Heinze (Competence Center Forest and Timber 4.0), Danijela Šarić Bartolović (Competence Centre Ltd), Florian Hartsch (University Göttingen) and Stihl Bertil Stapel (treeva GmbH) shared their knowledge and discussed potential challenges when implementing various digital tools and technologies in the forest sector. They underlined the need for innovative and consistent infrastructure, which, together with best practices, will connect multiple actors to achieve efficiency across various forest sectors. This workshop also focused on the approaches derived from Industry 4.0 and the Internet of Things (IoT) that could be replicated in the forest sector and bring it to a more advanced level. Furthermore, using digital applications and tools can potentially open up market access for young entrepreneurs and optimise the wood supply chain as a whole.

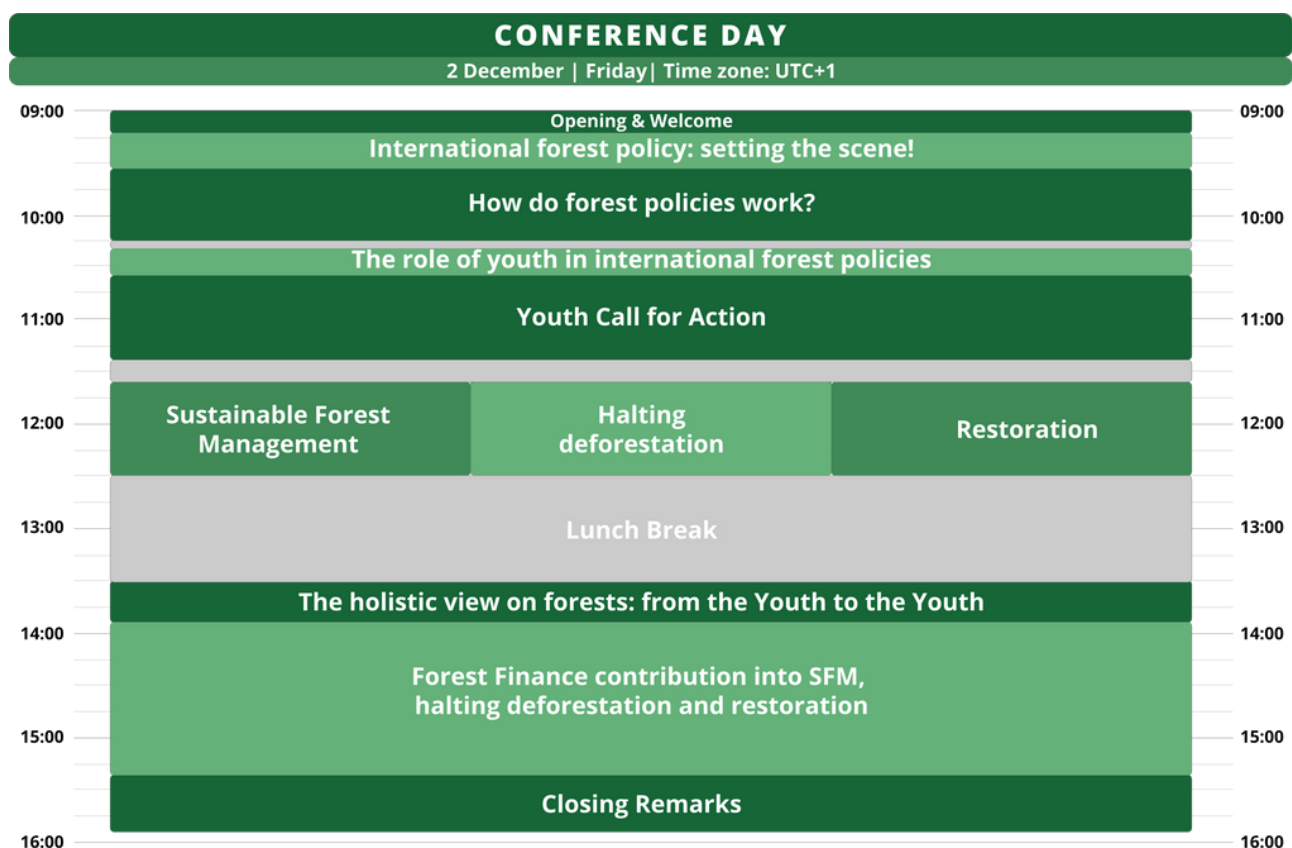
[Watch Recording](#)

## Living Library

The Living Library/Human Library works just like a regular library, but instead of books, it allows you to “borrow” a real person with a real story to tell! At the YFPD, there was an exciting selection of books available to the readers on the topic of Working Life. Readers could choose a “book” of interest, ranging from becoming a forester and navigating the work environment to gender equality and community involvement. Visit the YFP webpage to learn more about the stories: <https://ifsa.net/yfpd/workshop/#living-library>.

# CONFERENCE DAY

The Conference Day on the 2nd of December focused on learning about international forest policy and how youth can get involved. The day was structured as a complete learning path, starting from definitions of forest policy and governance and followed by sessions on policy effects on practical forest management, keynotes and youth perspectives. The day ends with a panel looking at the future of forest policy from the viewpoint of finance.



## Introduction to International forest policy: setting the scene!

On the morning of the 2nd of December 2022, Prof Dr Bas Arts from Wageningen University and Research set the scene by explaining the meaning of “policy”, and reflecting on the objectives, timing, and planning. He has also highlighted the importance of “governance” in the implementation stage. Eventually, this came down to policy being the “what” and governance being the “how”. International forest governance instruments included non-binding agreements (e.g. Global Forest Goals), communicative instruments, governmental pledges/funds (e.g. GEF) and some market-based instruments (e.g. forest certification). Furthermore, forest governance has been and is still shifting to give a more significant role to non-state actors by making the state’s role smaller yet more effective.

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## How do forest policies work?

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) expert, Susanne Winter, expounded on a very successful initiative launched by the WWF aiming to restore forest landscape in degraded lands in Africa and South America. The initiative highlighted the need for locally adapted governance measures, data collection and monitoring over time and starting from a smaller scale before scaling up ([see more details in the report](#)).

Hélène Koch, the representative of The Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF), shared her thoughts about the importance of giving a voice to forest owners in the European context. She has also mentioned that CEPF is bridging the gap between EU policies and practitioners. On the one hand, the needs of practitioners are brought to the discussion on the EU level. At the same time, CEPF translates the “policy language” into an accessible and understanding language for practitioners.

The importance of community forests in several African countries was highlighted by Cecile Ndjebet (African Women’s Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF)). A new scheme enables the inclusion and empowerment of women based on a stable governance system.

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## The role of youth in international forest policies

Jesse Mahoney, Counsellor of Agriculture (Australia), spoke about his experience in the international forest policy arena. He believes opportunities for youth are available from national to international forums. The best way to bring effective change is to create concrete and innovative solutions that can be presented to policy-makers during national and international events. Even if that doesn’t work, try again! The youth’s presence is essential, and they need to show that they are adaptable to be effective.

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## Examples of Youth voices into Policy: Youth Call for action and Gender Open Letter

This session showcased two examples indicating how youth can make their voices heard in policy processes. Amos Amanubo, the Coordinator of youth outreach and liaison at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), presented the Youth Call for Action, a document that was developed after nearly two years of comprehensive consultations across the world with different youth organisations and expert groups led by Major Groups for Children and Youth (MGCY) of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the World Forestry Congress (WFC) Youth Coalition with the support of the WFC Secretariat. The document highlights four core action areas to promote meaningful inclusion, participation, and recognition of youth and young professionals in the forest sector.

Theresa Loch, Head of the Gender Sub-Commission of IFSA, presented the Open Letter on Gender and Forest Education, which IFSA developed. It consists of four demands with sub-demands from students calling on forestry universities and departments, organisations and policymakers for a swift transformation towards more gender-aware and inclusive practices in forest education.

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## **Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) by Forest Europe**

SFM is an evolving concept, the main reference for the FOREST EUROPE process (in the pan-European region). Forest Europe, countries and observer organisations contribute to the successful expansion of forests, the increase of protected areas and a balanced approach between economic, ecological and social aspects. Forests worldwide and their management are under pressure due to changing climatic conditions and societal demands. Indeed, global forestry issues are quite dominant nowadays (e.g. deforestation, wildfires, protection). Therefore, integrating forest use, biodiversity and climate mitigation is key.

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## **Halting deforestation by International Union of Forest Research Organizations**

Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) is an important tool in climate change mitigation as the current and ongoing deforestation alters the carbon cycle. However, the governance of REDD+ has turned out to be much more complex than expected, as it includes social, economic, environmental, governance and technical aspects. The recent IUFRO report (Forests, Climate, Biodiversity and People: Assessing a Decade of REDD+) highlights the impacts, challenges and lessons of REDD+, which among other things, recognises the need for improved stakeholder involvement and the transparency of funding. Innovative and practical solutions are needed to halt deforestation, which is becoming a problematic issue in the sector.

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## Restoration by Global Landscapes Forum

Drivers of forest degradation and deforestation vary from region to region and depend on the social, political or economic context. Yet, there are some common drivers, as identified during the plenary session: illegal logging for timber and charcoal production, agricultural intensification, fast-growing population, the introduction of non-native species, and a lack of knowledge on the importance of forests and their protection. Hence, restoration is crucial for the health of many ecosystems and the prosperity and well-being of people worldwide. However, according to our panellists (Eva Makandi, founder of the Light On A Hill Organisation, Kenya; Eka Cahyaningrum, co-founder of Himba Rya Indonesia, Indonesia), collaboration with youth and inclusivity of young people are two things that need to be actively taken up by policymakers and financial institutions to achieve restoration goals. Young people have the energy to drive change, but to do so, they require funding, mentorship and a platform to speak out.

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## Forest Finance contribution into SFM, halting deforestation and restoration

The renowned speakers presented the final session: Bas Louman (Tropenbos International), Jorge Matallana (Forest Stewardship Council), Emma Berglund (Swedish Forest Industries Federation), Analí Bustos (PhD Student and Forest GLF Restoration Steward, 2021), Monica Gabay (IUFRO) and Charles Nelson (ESG manager for the Landscape Resilience Fund). They discussed forest finance, its concept and contribution to SFM, and both deforestation and restoration efforts. The speakers also explained different sources (e.g. private, public, philanthropic), forms (e.g. grants, loans) and purposes (e.g. production of goods or conservation) of financing. It emerged that accessing private finance for local stakeholders is quite challenging. A consistent financial gap exists to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For instance, there is approximately a \$2.5 Trillion deficit in funding.

The landscape restoration funds launched by WWF in 2021 in Vietnam, Ghana and Brazil are successful financial tools aiming to strengthen local support, direct services and grants and provide flexible loans. The contribution of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) to bridging the gap between ecosystem services and forest finance was also discussed as well as the contribution of sustainable wood products and wood value chains to circular bioeconomy, climate change mitigation, biodiversity restoration and improved welfare of the local communities and society at large. Lessons from Monte Alegre Nature Reserve Project from Argentina were presented in the session.

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# CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS SIMULATION

On the 3rd of December, our youth was involved in climate negotiation. The simulation consisted of two sessions on Climate Negotiations with four brilliant ambassadors from Climate Interactive - Wiktorina and Thorsten Beckmann, Gabriela Lasmar and Kilian Woods.

Each session was a highly interactive role-playing game for participants to explore the different stakeholders and solutions that need to come together to take action on climate change. Participants were divided into multiple groups of stakeholders. Each group took turns in presenting their policies and negotiated different scenarios with each other. In turn, every solution was recorded in the En-ROADS Simulator, allowing participants to explore the long-term effects of the global climate and make connections between various solutions to reach the Paris Agreement.



# Conclusion



The Youth Forest Policy Days event is one of its kind - the first online forest policy and capacity-building event organised by the youth for the youth! It resulted in a very innovative and successful exchange of knowledge and skills among various young professionals with the support of international experts.

Diverse youth from different parts of the world play a vital role in building the future. Hence, young people need to have an opportunity to speak their minds and take action. This can be achieved by creating an inclusive environment where young generations can express themselves and contribute to various decision-making and policy discussions. Furthermore, with sufficient funding and open access to many opportunities, young people can reach new heights and become pioneers in solving the forest sector's numerous challenges.

The youth should have the opportunity to have a place in policy discussions at different levels, supported by the elders in this essential learning path for a brighter future.

**The YFPD Team thanks all the organisations, initiatives and individuals without whom the event would not have been successful!**



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