

European Forest Institute

Activities' Report - Year 2021

Dr. Giorgio Matteucci

1. Introduction

Details on EFI and its structure have been provided in the report of 2019. Here a brief summary.

The European Forest Institute was established in 1993, Finland with the aim of enhancing international forest research and providing decision makers with unbiased forest-related information at a pan-European level. EFI has its Headquarters in Joensuu, Finland, and has offices in Barcelona, Bonn and Brussels and project offices in Malaysia and China.

The governance of EFI has the following bodies: Council, Board, Scientific Advisory Board. The Council provides input into the strategic policy framework of EFI activities, ensuring that EFI services its original purpose. The Board consists of eight members, four of whom are elected by the EFI Council and four by EFI Associate Members (CNR is an associate member). The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) contributes to the research and policy support activities of EFI.

In 2021, the following Facilities were active: Mediterranean Facility (in Barcelona), International Partnership Facilities, Policy Support Facility and the BioRegions Facility.

The activities of EFI are organized in Programmes (Governance, Bioeconomy, Resilience) and research network. In 2021, another Research Network started: The Climate Smart Forestry Network, coordinated by the Wageningen University and Research (WUR).

2. Main activities carried on by EFI during 2021 relevant for Italy and for CNR

Between 2020 and 2021, the new Strategy Implementation Plan 2022-2025 has been designed, while accords for a new office in Rome for the Biocities Facility are under way.

An example of the good collaboration and strength of the EFI network was the quick EFI-led response to the controversial Nature article *Abrupt increase in harvested forest area over Europe after 2015*. The response was published in Nature in April 2021 under the title *Concerns about reported harvests in European forests*.

Policy Support Facility activities were very much digitalised last year with all the ThinkForest seminars held virtually. Four ThinkForest webinars were organised, e.g., on EU Green Deal and its implications to forests and forest sector. Three science-policy reports were also published: *European Forest Governance post-2020*, *China-Europe Forest Bioeconomy: Assessment and Outlook* and *Public perceptions of forestry and the forest-based bioeconomy in the EU*. Policy Support Facility Trust Fund will continue to a new five-year period (2021-2025).

The Circular Bioeconomy Alliance (CBA) initiative was established by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales last year. CBA is a diversified partnership of more than 30 different organisations, both public and private, and it allows EFI to engage with a totally new type of actors from banks, NGOs, companies from different sectors as well as other international scientific organizations. CBA aims to have a science-informed debate with investors as well as with public-private actors on how to catalyse the change that is needed to move to circular bioeconomy. One of the key flagship projects of CBA is the Living Laboratories for Nature and People that are being established on four different continents.

3. Activities carried on by Dr. Giorgio Matteucci within EFI during 2021 and impact on the Italian scientific community

Connection and information exchange with EFI offices, sharing of information with Cnr and other Italian colleagues.

Participation to Annual Assembly held in hybrid mode on October 6th, 2021.

Support to EFI for the connection within the Italian community for the establishment of the Biocities Facility in Rome; support to Autonomous Province of Trento for decision on participation to the Bioregions Facility.

4. Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost

The fee is very cheap and has a very high “money for value” return in terms of scientific and lobbying activities for projects and technical/policy activities in the field of forest, wood and sustainability.

New opportunities are emerging from the coming establishment of the Biocities Facility in Rome and from the possible participation of the Autonomous Province of Trento to the Bioregions Facility.

5. Evaluation of Italians’ attendance and how to improve interest and involvement

In EFI the Italian attendance is very active and considered, also with relevant roles in the governing bodies of the Institute.

At the Annual Assembly, held in hybrid format, there were 7 Italian participants with voting rights (Cnr, University of Molise, University of Padova, Sisef, University of Tuscia, CREA, University of Turin) and one with relevant role (MIPAAF – Directorate of Forest).

6. Italian experts with important roles within the Union or within related Commissions and Programs (if known)

Since end of 2020, Italy is serving the relevant role of Chair of the EFI council. The Chair is Dr. Enrico Pompei of the General Directorate for Forest of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forest Policies (mandate: 2020-2023).

Dr. Elena Paoletti, Research Director at CNR-IRET, is member of the Scientific Advisory Board.

Prof. Marco Marchetti of University of Molise is the ChairPerson of EFI Board

7. If Union with CNR Commission, short summary about the 2021 CNR Commission activities

Not relevant

8. Notes (if any)

The covid-19 pandemic situation has reduced the in presence workshop and conference activities, although part of the Annual Assembly was held in presence in Joensuu (Finland)

9. Conclusions

The participation of Cnr in EFI activities is surely relevant and as value return for the Institution and its researchers

Signature

Rome, August 8th, 2022