

European Institute of Planted Forests

20
years of
networking



☉ The past presidents of IEFC answer the question:

“IEFC has accomplished much in 20 years, which achievements stand out for you?”

Michel Arbez 1998 - 2002

THEN: Head of the Pierroton Forest Research Centre.

NOW: Retired, but still an active defender of sustainability pillars.



KEY RESEARCH | EFFICIENT TRANSFER OF RESULTS AND EXPERTISE

The network's first achievements included the setting up of monitoring systems for the sustainable development of cultivated forests in a changing environments using growth and process based models, indicators and certification systems. It produced inventory based management of pests and diseases, and analysed the role of functional biodiversity on forest health and initiating comparative socio-economic analysis of the forest-wood chains in the south Atlantic regions through the development of common relevant indicators and methods. With support from USSE and funding from the European Commission and the participating regional councils, IEFC has also ensured the efficient transfer of results and expertise to professional organisations.



Margarida Tomé 2002 - 2006

THEN: Researcher for the Agricultural Institute (ISA) in Portugal.

NOW: Professor at the Department of Natural Resources and Environment at the Agricultural Institute. Plays a major role in the governance of the university.

RELEVANT PROJECTS | KEY TOOLS | FRIENDSHIPS

IEFC has succeeded in establishing a strong network of researchers within the Atlantic Arc who all have an interest in planted forests. They have always collaborated on very relevant projects that have led to important advances in their understanding of plantations and to contributing to the sustainability of forests around the world. Key tools that emerged from IEFC's projects include the FORMODELS database and the REINFFORCE network of arboreta. I would also like to mention the friendships that this collaboration allowed us to make: we always work while having fun!

Inazio Martinez de Arano 2006 - 2010

THEN: Soil scientist at the NEIKER Research Institute.

NOW: Head of the European Forest Institute Mediterranean Facility (EFIMED) applying skills in bioeconomy development.



DEFRAGMENT THE FOREST RESEARCH LANDSCAPE

IEFC was initiated to connect people and ideas in the field of planted forests and forestry across the Atlantic rim and isles.

It has helped defragment the forest research landscape and has connected, through long-lasting personal and institutional bonds, what was a scattered forest-related community. By gathering researchers, policy makers and practitioners it has helped to bridge the still significant science-policy and science practice divides. But perhaps its main success is the establishment of a much needed platform to connect researchers and stakeholders in planted forests at the global level. This legacy will prove demanding over the next 20 years in a post-oil, crowded world where we will need more and more wisely managed plantations for people and nature.

Ted Farrell 2010 - 2014

THEN: Head of the Soils Department at the University College of Dublin (UCD).

NOW: Retired, but still has an active role within EFI governing bodies and supports the Planted Forests Facility in the organisation of capacity building events.



A SUCCESSFUL EFI PROJECT CENTRE

The most significant achievement of IEFC was its establishment as a successful project centre in EFI. With the further development of EFI, IEFC became the foundation of EFIATLANTIC which quickly established itself as a highly successful Regional Office. The great achievement was that this was accomplished without damage to the identity or the integrity of IEFC which continues to flourish and provide a valuable service to its members.



Jean-Michel Carnus 2014 - 2018

THEN: Deputy head of the forest department at the French Research Institute for Agriculture (INRA) and in charge of international affairs.

NOW: Retired and remains active in the IUFRO taskforce on sustainable planted forests for a greener future by maintaining ties with New Zealand.

FOSTERING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

IEFC has successfully gathered multiple actors from research, education and forestry, to generate and share knowledge and innovations for the sustainable development of planted forests and related value chains. By facilitating transnational R&D projects in Europe and by networking with non EU partners, IEFC has fostered international cooperation. One of its major achievement is the co-organisation of the 3rd International Congress on Planted Forests, with subsequent launching of IUFRO Task Force on Sustainable Planted Forests for a Greener Future in 2015.

☉ The beginning of the story

The project “Compostela-Forêts”



Back in 1987, the pioneering spirit of foresters from Aquitaine, Galicia and the Spanish Basque Country led them to explore the forests of their neighbours building friendships on the way.

Their common interests, combined with a willingness from the southern regions to be visible within the

Association of European Regions, led to the creation of the European Economic Interest Grouping, the Union of Foresters of Southern Europe (USSE), chaired by JL Martres (SYSSO) and Miguel Turrado (USSE).

While the French State was sceptical about this initiative, the forestry regions of Spain and Portugal responded positively to it; and USSE was to grow in the years that followed via means of support from the Aquitaine Regional Council and the acceptance of a project proposal by Recite (Regions and Cities of Europe, September 1991) worth 3M euros.

A significant part of the project, known as Compostela-Forêts, was dedicated to risk (in particular wildfire) prevention with a research component which was officially validated at a seminar held in Santiago de Compostela on 21 February 1992, and which was jointly coordinated by Michel Arbez (Inra Pierroton), Pedro Zorilla (CIF Lourizan- Galice), Fernando Molina (CIF Lourizan) and Fernando Pascoa (Esa- Coimbra).

The project dealt with a number of subjects that all took into account the sustainability of forestry intensification, an entirely new topic at the time: more than ten research laboratories along the European Atlantic Arc were to produce some quite remarkable results.

Yves Lesgourgues wrote in the final report in 1995 (translated from the original quote in French) “all this scientific knowledge should be pooled by creating a **European institute of planted forests** which would bring together the partner laboratories to work on projects of common interest”

The subsequent creation of IEFC was to take a little longer than planned, but it happened; twenty years later, Michel Arbez, alongside all the participants of this great founding project, can be proud of this significant accomplishment.

☉ The first joint adventure

The FORSEE project “Sustainable FORest management: a nEtnetwork of pilot zonEs for operational implementation”

Between 2000 and 2005, the emergence of certification schemes for sustainable management of forests resulted in indicators – until now mainly defined by academia and policy makers - becoming a central subject for forestry stakeholders and certification bodies.

To be able to improve the knowledge of regional experts and contribute positively to the discussion regarding this development, FORSEE was set up to assess the relevance, feasibility and cost of a large set of criteria and indicators.

This INTERREG project gathered 23 partners and 9 pilot zones along the Atlantic rim. It involved the screening of more than 3000 worldwide indicators, testing 60 of them, and significantly improving definitions from the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (now Forest Europe: www.forest-europe.org) and national processes for data collection.

Long-term impacts of the project include: more precise Carbon assessment in southern EU forest stands including understoreys; new definitions of forest employment in national statistics; new monitoring of deadwood in National Forest Inventories (NFI); and new forest standing value assessments.

This project demonstrated the benefit of transboundary cooperation; the advantage of having regional bodies in between



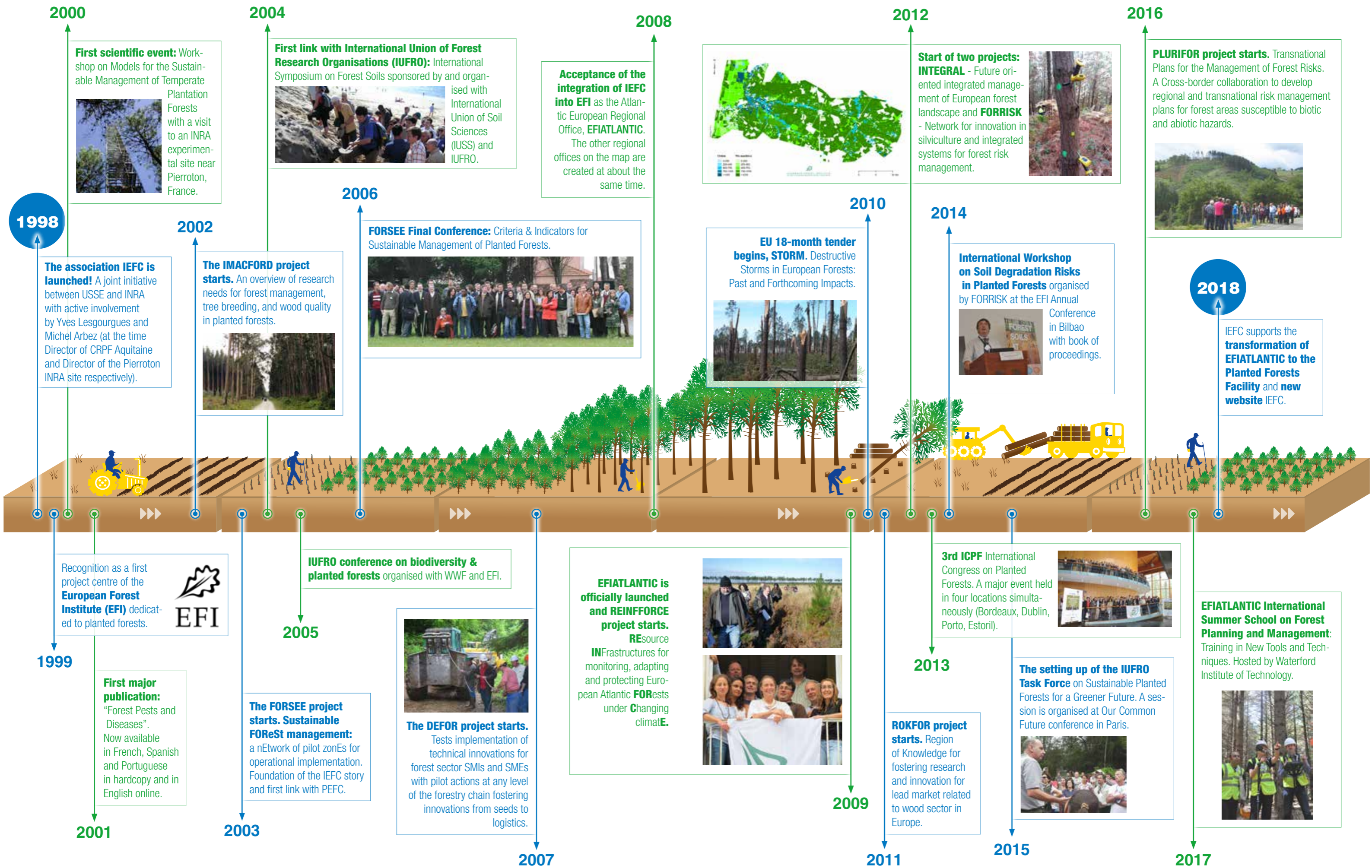
researchers, practitioners and policy makers when developing and coordinating projects which take into account stakeholder expectations.

The success of this first IEFC project acted as a foundation and springboard for long-term trans-disciplinary cooperation within the IEFC network.

Publications include a Special Issue on selected results of the FORSEE project and the EFI Discussion Paper (16, 2011), *Are MCPFE indicators suitable for planted forests?*



TWENTY YEARS OF SUSTAINED GROWTH AND SERVICE TO THE SECTOR



◎ Upscaling network visibility

The REINFFORCE project (REsource INFrastructures for monitoring, adapting and protecting European Atlantic FORests under Changing climate) 2009-2013

In 2008, global warming scenarios predicted a potential increase of 4°C in the 50 years to come, yet there was little available information about the regional consequences of such climate change on forests. IEFC members therefore identified a need to monitor developments in climate change and to test the efficiency of long-term adaptation measures in Atlantic forests.

The project REINFFORCE was thus created in cooperation with many IEFC members of the INTERREG Atlantic area, establishing an infrastructure unique in the world and supporting Research and Development work on the adaptation of planted forests to climate change from 37° to 56° N latitude.

The outcomes of this project include: a network of sites to illustrate the performance of alternative types of management and species provenance under a changing climate; the FORESTRIALS database giving access to meta-data of long-term forest trials established in Europe; common protocols; joint publications describing the main drivers and responses of the tested genetic material under a climate gradient of +6°C on mean temperature; and online collaborative tools.



The REINFFORCE infrastructure is open to any scientific collaboration related to one specific species or a specific parameter of interest for other projects such as health, physiology or phenology that could benefit from a latitudinal gradient.

The project officially ended in 2013, but many of the project partners are ensuring the prolongation of project-related research for another 15 years by maintaining sites, collecting data and sharing information online. This illustrates the huge benefit of such networking bodies which are able to maintain networking activities in the long term.

The new REINFFORCE website was launched in the spring of 2018 - <http://reinfforce.iefc.net>

◎ New Directions

The launching of EFIATLANTIC (2009)



By 2008, the ten year-old IEFC had established a functional network of organisations which were closely collaborating in order to improve and exchange knowledge about the sustainability of planted forests. In view of its maturity and the experience it had gained, the time was ripe for IEFC to move on to support a more visible and prestigious network.

Therefore, in response to a call for regional offices in 2008 by the European Forest Institute (in preparation for a transition

to international status), the IEFC network proposed the establishment of a regional office in France focusing on the topic of planted forests in the Atlantic area (France, Spain, Portugal, Ireland and the UK).

This proposal was accepted and, on 23rd February 2009, EFIATLANTIC, the regional Atlantic office of EFI, was officially launched in the prestigious hall of the Aquitaine Council in Bordeaux by Risto Paivinen, director of EFI till 2014, and the representatives from all the funding organisations.

A major storm (Klaus storm) having devastated the forests of the Aquitaine region earlier that very year, the audience at the launching ceremony was reminded of the vulnerability of planted forests and of the need to develop science-based knowledge for sustainable management in order to improve risk mitigation and the resilience of planted forests under global change.

This baptism set the long term direction of work for EFIATLANTIC unit, which has remained closely connected to the IEFC network by organising a joint event once a year to foster and nurture synergies between the European science and policy oriented network, EFI, and the more regional and practitioner oriented network, IEFC.

◎ IEFC: shaping the future of forestry and forest science in Europe

Marc Palahí (Director of EFI)



“ We need more scientists speaking like journalists and more journalists thinking like scientists. ”

In addition to its role as facilitator of stakeholder exchange, an option for IEFC in the coming years is to help raise societal awareness of planted forests by supporting the creation of a new space in which journalism and science communities can be connected.

Scientific research has an increasingly important role in encouraging new thinking and creating knowledge to influence and formulate effective policies that can drive sustainable development. Therefore, in order to achieve the required impact, science needs to partner with media to ensure a science-informed discussion when we try to tackle the great societal challenges we are facing.

It is here that IEFC has a role to play: being a strong far-reaching network which believes in science as a motor of change, it is now in a position to foster collaboration between scientific communities and journalists by building a space for science-media dialogues on Global Planted Forests alongside the EFI Planted Forests Facility.

This could be done by participating in the EFI initiative, The Lookout Station, and supporting the organisation of annual in-field bootcamps for journalists in different planted forests in Europe to show the societal benefits they can provide and share the knowledge available within the Planted Forests Facility network.

The Lookout Station



EFI created the Lookout Station initiative to provide a platform for science and media communities in order to maximise the societal impact of forest science.

The Lookout Station offers programmes to both science and media communities. It supports storytellers in producing engaging science-based stories about forest-related topics such as climate change, with innovative new tools. It also helps scientists simplify their communication so that the storytellers can accurately report on the topic with scientific facts, data and evidence.

www.thelookoutstation.com

Béatrice Gendreau (Forest Delegate, Nouvelle-Aquitaine Regional Council)

The Nouvelle-Aquitaine region is the largest forested area in France; it thus follows that the forest-wood processing sector is one of the main pillars of the regional economy sustaining 60,000 jobs and 17,000 businesses. The region's forests not only ensure wood production, but they also serve as a carbon sink and contribute to maintaining biodiversity.

The regional council therefore strategically supports and develops the forest-wood sector; this involves promoting economic competitiveness, sustainable development and innovation, together with mobilising the economic and institutional stakeholders.

Within this context, a unique role is played by the regional office of the European Forest Institute (EFI) based near Cestas in Gironde. The Planted Forests Facility (previously known as EFIATLANTIC and an important development within IEFC) sets out to facilitate scientific cooperation and to ensure the transfer of knowledge to the economic stakeholders and policymakers in the sector.

The Planted Forests Facility also brings regional research priorities and capacities to the European level and participates in discussions about planted forests all over Europe and worldwide.

With its collaborative projects and networking activities, such as that of IEFC or the IUFRO Task Force, the Planted Forests Facility fully addresses the issues the forest-wood sector faces today: for example, the globalisation of trade, the development of the bioeconomy, adaptation to climate change and integrated risk management.

The regional council recognises that the Planted Forests Facility's link with production, business and research institutes will continue to play an essential role in stimulating forest management and increasing future business competitiveness.

The aim is to create even more added-value and employment, ensuring that the regional forests can respond to increasing demands, from the wood processing industry for raw materials for existing and new uses, while ensuring the forests fulfil their ecosystem service functions, such as carbon fixation, biodiversity and water regulation and quality.



◎ The IEFC network



Members

- ▶ Centro Tecnológico Forestal y de la Madera (CETEMAS)
- ▶ Alliance – Coopérative Forestière
- ▶ GIP ECOFOR
- ▶ The GB Forestry Commission Research Agency
- ▶ Waterford Institute of Technology
- ▶ Association de l'Industrie Papetière du Portugal (CELPA)
- ▶ Fundación General de la Universidad de Valladolid
- ▶ Sociedade Silvícola do Caima, SA (SILVICAIMA)
- ▶ Centre Régional de la Propriété Forestière d'Aquitaine (CRPF)
- ▶ Union des Sylviculteurs du Sud de l'Europe (USSE)
- ▶ Instituto Superior de Agronomia, Centro de Estudos Florestais, Lisboa (ISA)
- ▶ Centro de Investigaciones Forestales y Ambientales de Lourizan (CIF)
- ▶ Empresa de Transformación Agraria (TRAGSA)
- ▶ Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Galicia (USC)
- ▶ Instituto Vasco de Investigación y Desarrollo Agrario (NEIKER)
- ▶ Grupo Empresarial ENCE SA (ENCE)
- ▶ HAZI, Vitoria
- ▶ Universidade Católica Portuguesa de Porto (UCP)
- ▶ Bordeaux Sciences Agro (BSA)
- ▶ Bordeaux (INRA)
- ▶ Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique
- ▶ Gestión Ambiental de Navarra, S.A
- ▶ Forestal, Pamplona
- ▶ Negociada de Experimentación y Sanidad
- ▶ Escola Superior Agraria de Coimbra (ESAC)
- ▶ Institut Technique FCBA



Associate members

- ▶ University of Kwazulu-Natal
- ▶ UNBC Growth and Yield
- ▶ Institute (KAE)
- ▶ Poplar and Fast Growing Forest Trees Research
- ▶ CRPF Poitou-Charentes
- ▶ BIOFOREST
- ▶ Institute of Lowland Forestry and Environment
- ▶ Western Forestry Co-operative Society Ltd University of Kwazulu-Natal
- ▶ XYLOFUTUR
- ▶ Institut Forestier du Chili



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