

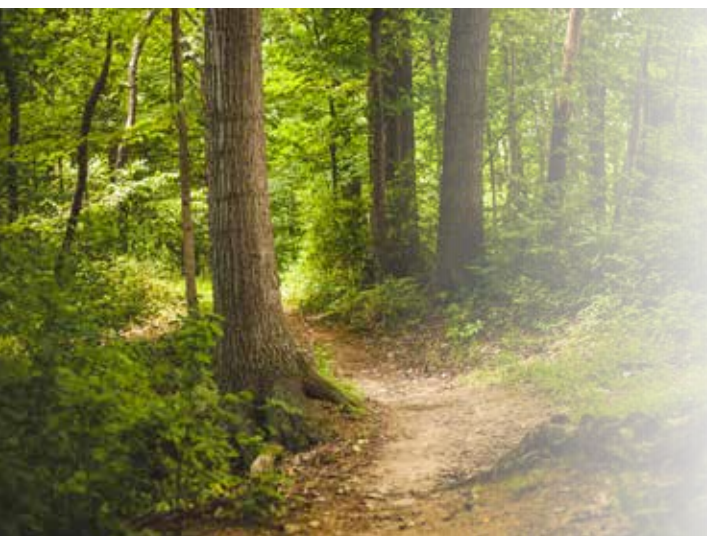
60 years anniversary: Scandinavian forest economics

The SSFE is a vibrant network of forest economist, which celebrated its 60 years anniversary in 2018 – gathering more than 60 researchers in Helsingør, Denmark.



The objectives of the SSFE are: i) To promote co-operation between forest economists in the Nordic countries, ii) to promote planning and accomplishment of common Nordic research in forest economics and closely related areas, iii) to promote co-operation on common Nordic actions for higher education in forest economics and closely related areas.

Key vehicles for pursuing these objectives are joint research projects, workshops and notably the Biennial SSFE meetings, which was first started in 1958 and have run almost with no breaks ever since. Thus, the network is today 60 years old, and as was very evident at the meeting in May 2018, it is as young and vibrant as ever.



Forests are as relevant as ever, as they become ever more crucial not only as a source of materials and products, but also as a harbor for biodiversity, a major climate change mitigation instrument and at the same time have more and more to offer in terms of other ecosystem services of all sorts to the modern society. These are all key items on the public agenda, and certainly in the Nordic countries as much as anywhere else.

The question increasingly asked is, how can we both protect and manage our forest ecosystems to meet these many demands? Forest economics as a specialization within the economic discipline stands at the forefront, when science looks for answers to this question and offer policy advice and guidance.

For this reason, the **SSFE 2018 Biennial meeting** had specific focus on the interface between science and policy around the world. We invited keynote speakers addressing this specific aspect of our work. Associate Professor **Laura Bouriaud**, University Stefan cel Mare Suceava, Romania, joined and gave a talk on the way forest policy research is developing in Eastern Europe and how research findings both support and challenge policy development and forest management practices.

Professor **Sven Wunder**, Centre for International Forest Research/European Forest Institute, gave a talk on the global research and policy agenda on payment for Ecosystem Services, a term he has been at the forefront in defining and mainstreaming.

Professor **Eirik Amundsen**, University of Bergen, Norway, presented his view on the science policy interface with a talk that outlined his experience and some lessons learned from his many years as a “wise man” of the Danish Economic Councils.

Finally, Professor **Carsten Rahbek**, Centre for Macroecology and Climate Change, University of Copenhagen, a prominent macro-ecologist provided his experience of the value and need for interdisciplinary work between biologist and economists to be able to produce scientifically sound advice for policy processes.

Closely related to the last talk, and in full compliance with tradition, the program also included a within-program excursion. The theme was the science and policy processes underlying current efforts to enhance biodiversity protection in forest and nature areas in Denmark. The SSFE is grateful to Professors Niels Strange and Carsten Rahbek and WWF expert Thor Hjarsen, for setting up the program and giving the participants an interesting insight into links from scientific analyses to practical in-the-field implementation.

Concluding points: The many presentations, the key notes and the excursion discussions illustrated that as a scientific field, forest economics has a lot to offer, and often so in collaboration with sister sciences. Therefore: Whether your concerns are around the use of wood for building materials or fuels, the role of forests for recreational values, sound forest management in face of climate change or the role of forests in protecting biodiversity, your local forest economist will be a valuable source of reflection and advice.