



XV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS

Building a Green, Healthy and Resilient Future with Forests

2–6 May 2022 | Coex, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Congress Outcome

Sub-theme 4:

Forests and human health and well-being: revisiting the connections & related events*

Background and the Congress outcomes

The World Forestry Congress (WFC) is one of the largest and influential international fora for the exchange of knowledge, experience and perspectives on the world's forests and forestry sector. The Congress has been held every six years since 1926 and it is organized under the responsibility of the government of the host countries. Since 1954, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has helped host countries to organize past Congresses¹.

The 15th World Forestry Congress (XV WFC) which took place in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 2 to 6 May 2022 was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea under the auspices FAO and convened under the theme "Building a Green, Healthy and Resilient Future". The Congress provided an opportunity for the global forestry community and stakeholders to consider the state and future of world forestry, particularly in the context of the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, while striving to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It also focused on defining the role of forests in the global developmental agenda (2030 Agenda) and other major agreements (Global Forest Goals, Paris Agreement, post-2020 global biodiversity framework) and identify key measures that must be put in place as the forest sector adjusts to the new reality and aims to help 'build back better'. The congress made forests the central part of discussions and decisions on sustainable development, acknowledging their importance for the health, wellbeing and stability of the planet and people in it.

The XV WFC included an opening segment, interactives sessions on thematic areas guided by six sub-themes² and associated events, and a closing segment. The closing segment encompasses the presentation of the Congress outcomes, where the inputs from the week-long discussions among the Congress participants were shared and confirmed. It marks the endorsement of the **Seoul Forest Declaration**, and the hearing of the **Youth Call for Action** and the **Ministerial Call on Sustainable Wood** as the Congress outcomes³. In addition, the Congress conveyed key actions that are needed to achieve a green, healthy and resilient future with forests. More information on the proceedings of the congress is also available in news spotlights⁴.

¹<https://www.fao.org/event/world-forestry-congress/overview/past-congresses/en>

²<https://programme.wfc2021korea.org/en/content/sub-themes-list>

³<https://programme.wfc2021korea.org/en>

⁴<https://www.fao.org/event/world-forestry-congress/news/en>

Acknowledging their importance for the health, well-being and stability of the planet and peoples in it, forests were made an integral part of discussions and decisions on sustainable development by participants of the XV World Forestry Congress who have:

1. endorsed the Seoul Forest Declaration,
2. heard the Youth Call for Action, and
3. the Ministerial Call on Sustainable Wood, and
4. conveyed key actions that are needed to achieve a green, healthy and resilient future with forests.

The Congress Sub-theme 4, titled “Forests and human health and well-being: revisiting the connections” was a contribution to the above-mentioned outcomes of the Congress. The subtheme and its related events also experienced a significant turn over that are summarized below.

Subtheme 4: Forests and human health and well-being: revisiting the connections

Sub-theme leaders: Gerardo Segura Warnholtz (CBF, FAO) and Sophie Grouwels (FFF, FAO)

Host country counterpart: Si Yeon Ha

The sub-theme provided an opportunity for diverse stakeholders to share their views and experiences through five technical sessions. Other related sessions/events include: the Congress plenary session 2 titled “*Forests for a healthy, prosperous and peaceful world*” and the special event titled “*Rural finance, forest and farm producers and Indigenous Peoples at the centre of the 'green recovery'*”.

The sub-theme sessions and related events received participation from actors and stakeholders from diverse backgrounds including forest and non-forest sectors, public and private sector, NGOs, CSOs, scientific bodies, and forestry societies whose knowledge and experience contributed to the identification of challenges and review of innovative solutions to forest related issues in urban and rural settings. Key concluding and action points from the subtheme and its related events that contributed to the formulation of the Congress outcomes are presented below. The proceedings (recordings and photos) and participants/speakers of the of the various sessions are presented in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively. The organizers and partners, as well as the full bibliographies of speakers (in Table 2) for specific sessions are available on the Congress website’s programme page⁵ (please use the filter/search feature to navigate to specific sessions).

Concluding and action points from the Sub-theme 4 sessions overall:

- Forests offer multiple benefits, including physical, psychological and spiritual health. Forests also contribute to medicines, food security, boosting resiliency of food systems, inclusive rural development. However, these benefits are under-appreciated.
- Forests can support people’s health in multiple ways but there are also multiple risks related to infectious diseases, safety and security. People working and /or living in forests particularly face risks and vulnerabilities.
- Evidence from across the world shows that forest/nature-based health practices such as forest medicine, forest bathing (shinrin-Yuko), forest therapy and healing yield enormous health benefits to societies at local, national and global levels.

⁵<https://programme.wfc2021korea.org/en/sessions>

- There is a need to promote forest-based health practices at multidimensional facets including national health and forest policy integration; data, knowledge and information sharing; collaboration among governments and sectoral actors, and capacity building.
- Expand tree cover in densely populated areas to increase healing benefits of trees and forests to citizens.
- Enact and implement laws and policies to guarantee tenure and use rights of Indigenous People and local communities on forest lands and support community-based forestry, equitable benefit sharing and inclusive decision-making to protect forests and improve the livelihoods and well-being of rural populations.
- Governments, forest and farm producer Organizations and community-based associations should play their roles to facilitate and extend social protection for marginalized groups of rural societies such as women, youth and indigenous people in forest-based enterprises/forest value chains. Participation of women, youth and other economically and socially marginalized groups of people in decision process on forests and land management issues should be promoted.
- Explore feasibility of initiatives such as planting trees and establishing forest peace parks in internal or cross-border conflict areas that can help ensure peace and reconciliation process.
- In the aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic, promote holistic and integrated policies and programmes on human and animal health, with “One Health” approach and sharing knowledge between countries on forest products and services that enhances or have potential to enhance public health.
- Moving forward, collaboration among governments, forest and farm producer organizations, Indigenous Peoples, rural communities, urban organizations from relevant sectors, research and academic institutions, private entities, and resource partners is required to promote the generation and use of science and evidence-based knowledge (including traditional and indigenous knowledge), ensure policy coordination and coherence, remove barriers to best practices, and build capacities for sustainable management of forests as natural assets for human health and wellbeing, harmony and peace worldwide.

Concluding and action points from Plenary 2: Forests for a healthy, prosperous and peaceful world:

- The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of forest and trees for human health and wellbeing, especially in urban areas. Urban forests and other green areas should become an integral part of all urban planning as they buffer noise, provide for cleaner air, reduce the urban heat island effect and provide green space for exercise and recreation.
- Forests can help to recover from the stress and depression caused by the pandemic and to “build back better” during the COVID-19 recovery. We need to make a conscious effort to establish a synergetic relationship between people, forest ecosystems and human health and adopt a “one health approach”.
- Apart from the many goods and services forests provide, they also serve as vital safety nets during disasters and conflicts. They are important for livelihoods and income generation in post conflict areas and during peace building. We must maintain healthy and productive forests and must ensure secure access and tenure rights for Indigenous People and others who depend on forests directly for their livelihoods.

- Youth are at the forefront for recognizing the human right to a healthy environment. They are ready to care for forests and are creating solutions to achieve a sustainable world through resource mobilization, advocacy and networking. To scale up youth support to forests and catalyze more action, youth need capacity development and more resources, open access to information and platforms for engaging and networking.
- Local communities, Indigenous Peoples and other forest dependent people have strong ties with the forests that are a key component of their livelihoods, health, wellbeing and culture. Their traditional knowledge and best practices should be taken into consideration in forest restoration efforts and forest management policies.

Concluding and action points from the Special event on “Rural finance, forest and farm producers and Indigenous Peoples at the centre of the 'green recovery” –

This event gave a special voice to Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) partners and other stakeholders, including smallholder families, indigenous peoples and local communities who highlighted their significant role and positive contributions as agents of change for resilient food systems and forest landscapes. More information is available on the webpage of FAO Forest and Farm Facticity⁶. Key messages and action points that emerged from the discussions overall were that:







- More than eighty percent of the world’s food in value terms is produced by small holders and family farms and therefore they are crucial to contribute to ecosystems restoration, climate mitigation and assuring food security.
- To upscale the huge role that small holders and family farms can play in achieving green recovery, Forest and Farm Producers Organizations (FFPOs) in which they are often organized need to be strengthened in their capacity to link sustainable management of forests and farms to secure markets and enterprises with emphasis on maintaining diverse and complex mosaics of land use, essential for biodiversity and combating climate change.
- The ability of banks/impact investors needs to be strengthened on how to deal with FFPOs, how to deal with risk in the forestry, agro-forestry and agricultural sectors, while improving FFPOs financial literacy needs to interact with financial organisations. A mechanism to support FFPOs with their ‘first loan’ in order to create their own track records in a financial institution would lower enormously the risks of that first stepping stone for both sides.
- Design concrete schemes to secure rural women’s rights to lands and forests within collective right systems (e.g., CF); employ innovative mechanisms for rural women to have direct access to climate finance and other dedicated financial schemes of the forest and agricultural sectors.
- Without payments for the public local and global goods which FFPOs produce by maintaining the forest landscape in a sustainable way, it will be very difficult to develop sustainable business cases.
- The creation of (sub) national hub/platforms composed by banks, FFPOs, value chain actors and knowledge agencies will enhance cross-actor learning and identification of lessons, with views to improve mutual understanding and cooperation, serving all actors involved.
- International learning and exchanges on the topic of rural and climate finance are very important, so that national and regional FFPOs, the financial sector, governments and development cooperation can interact with each other and identify concrete solutions (e.g., as in the case of this special event).








⁶<https://www.fao.org/index.php?id=115503>






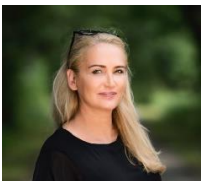
Table 1. Session recordings and photos: Plenary 2, Sub-theme 4, Special event-rural finance, Side event-forest education

Session/event		Date	Time (KST)	Room	Lang	URL	
						Session recording	Photo album
Plenary session 2	Forests for a healthy, prosperous and peaceful world	03-May-22	14:00-16:00 (120')	Hall D	ENG	https://youtu.be/nXvUfq3Ibqg	https://flic.kr/s/aHBqizN8SN
					KOR	https://youtu.be/O2y1V3WeJK8	
					FRA	https://youtu.be/TkAs1DVNzVg	
					SPN	https://youtu.be/G1fA8sOKKtQ	
Sub-theme 4: Forests and human health and well-being: revisiting the connections	Session 1: Overview of the connection of forests ecosystems to human health, wellbeing and social stability	02-May-22	16:00-17:30 (90')	CR 201/202	ENG	https://youtu.be/6ID3cFblyzM	https://flic.kr/s/aHBqizN1ji
					KOR	https://youtu.be/oWkwVlgNWmk	
					FRA	https://youtu.be/dFFCPBnHGI8	
					SPN	https://youtu.be/Z4omNvyKP7c	
	Session 2: Forests for human health	03-May-22	11:00-12:30 (90')	CR 201/202	ENG	https://youtu.be/ewVVgwah-EU	https://flic.kr/s/aHBqizN95C
					KOR	https://youtu.be/_xGkkl2CLQg	
					FRA	https://youtu.be/OPc7j2fq_b4	
					SPN	https://youtu.be/71h6KTyMRpQ	
	Session 3: Forests securing Livelihoods	03-May-22	16:00-17:30 (90')	CR 201/202	ENG	https://youtu.be/mCFvpA_Zh4	https://flic.kr/s/aHBqizNaiu
					KOR	https://youtu.be/kWxrLLma-hQ	
					FRA	https://youtu.be/q1vrTRRF1XM	
					SPN	https://youtu.be/BxohN8wZrpY	
	Session 4: Forests for social cohesion	04-May-22	11:00-12:30 (90')	CR 201/202	ENG	https://youtu.be/UTeTzLBk4po	https://flic.kr/s/aHBqizNhDr
					KOR	https://youtu.be/0ZGdAemSITU	
					FRA	https://youtu.be/U6BlcdXC5iA	
					SPN	https://youtu.be/_11xMOJmprk	
Session 5: Forests for humanity and peace	05-May-22	14:30-16:00 (90')	CR 201/202	ENG	https://youtu.be/pB7zp8Z7Pww		
				KOR	https://youtu.be/uMk3PBwtAbg		
				FRA	https://youtu.be/FpmOnVBOUm8		
				SPN	https://youtu.be/pQM_H6kjsx8		
Special Event	Rural finance, forest and farm producers and Indigenous Peoples at the centre of the 'green recovery	05-May-22	11:30-13:30 (120')	GBR 104/105	ENG	https://youtu.be/yHUyKPDBZ4k	
					KOR	https://youtu.be/zFCawf458AU	
					FRA	https://youtu.be/b623bKyviaM	
					SPN	https://youtu.be/EksvHFzs480	
Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further details are available on XV WFC programme website (use the filter feature to navigate to specific sessions): https://programme.wfc2021korea.org/en/sessions• General photo albums from the Congress: https://www.flickr.com/photos/195581031@N08/albums/• Other Photos: https://flickr.com/photos/195581031@N08/albums/72177720298645440• The Special event gave a special voice to FFF partners: https://www.fao.org/index.php?id=115503						







Table 2. List of participants/speakers: Plenary session 2, Sub-theme 4, and Special event-rural finance
Remarks: Some participants have multiple participation (indicated where necessary).







Session/ Event	Participant	Affiliation/position	Role
Plenary session 2	Henry Bonsu 	A British Ghanaian journalist and broadcaster, a presenter on Times Radio and an analyst for BBC World, ITV, Al Jazeera, and MSNBC	Moderator (Multiple participation – Special event on rural finance)
	Byeong-Am Choi 	Minister of the Korea Forest Service (KFS); Ex- Deputy Minister KFS (2020 to 2021); and Director General of the Planning and Coordination Bureau of the KFS (2018 to 2020)	Keynote speaker
	Maria Helena Semedo 	Deputy Director-General of FAO	Keynote speaker
	Adriana Lucia Santa Méndez 	Director of Forests, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Colombia	Panellist
	Gertrude Kabusimbi Kenyangi 	Forestry activist and winner of the Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award (2015). Executive Director of the Support for Women in Agriculture and Environment (SWAGEN)	Panellist (Multiple participation – Session 4)
	Betty Osei Bonsu 	Environmentalist and project coordinator of Green Africa Youth Organization (GAYO)	Panellist






Subtheme 4 – Session 1: Overview of the connection of forests ecosystems to human health, wellbeing and social stability	<p>Agus Justianto</p> 	<p>Director General of Sustainable Forest Management, Ministry of Environment and Forestry</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
	<p>Liisa Tyrväinen</p> 	<p>Research Professor, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke)</p>	<p>Moderator</p>
	<p>Hasu Lim</p> 	<p>Director General of Forest Welfare Bureau, Korea Forest Service</p>	<p>Keynote speaker</p>
	<p>Matilda van den Bosch</p> 	<p>Senior Research Associate Barcelona Institute for Global Health, Spain</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
	<p>Ulrika K. Stigsdotter</p> 	<p>Professor of Landscape Architecture, University of Copenhagen</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
	<p>Thomas Astell-Burt</p> 	<p>Professor and Founding Co-Director of the Population Wellbeing and Environment Research Lab (PowerLab), University of Wollongong</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
	<p>Bishop Ngobeli</p> 	<p>Manager at Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo (City of Johannesburg) and Board Member of World Urban Parks</p>	<p>Panellist</p>







	<p>Bharati Pathak</p> 	<p>Chairperson of FECOFUN (Federation of Community Forest User Groups Nepal) and focal point for FECOFUN's Gender Policy and Advocacy Program</p>	<p>Panellist (Multiple participation – Special event on rural finance)</p>
	<p>Domyung Paek</p> 	<p>Professor Emeritus of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Graduate School of Public Health, Seoul National University</p>	<p>Moderator</p>
	<p>Maxine Whittaker</p> 	<p>MBBS, MPH, PhD, FAFPHM, Professor and Co-Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for VBD and NTDs at James Cook University</p>	<p>Keynote speaker</p>
	<p>Qing Li</p> 	<p>Professor at Nippon Medical School, President of the Japanese Society of Forest Medicine, Director of the Forest Therapy Society, Vice-President and Secretary General of INFOM</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
	<p>Won Sop Shin</p> 	<p>Professor at Chungbuk National University in Korea and holding Chair of Korea Forest Therapy Forum. Ex-Minister of Korea Forest Service (KFS), and Chair of Committee on Forestry, FAO</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
	<p>Melanie H. Adamek</p> 	<p>Lawyer, author, managing director of a publishing house specialized in nature and health, forest and health expert, head of IM-WALD-SEIN® Institute for Forest Medicine and Forest Therapy based in Munich</p>	<p>Panellist</p>

	<p>Francesco Riccardo</p>  <p>Becheri</p>	<p>Psychologist with personal passion by creating an innovative forest therapy project in Italian northern Apennines. His work at Pian dei Termini Forest Therapy Station</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
	<p>Amy Ickowitz</p> 	<p>Senior Scientist leader of the Sustainable Landscapes and Livelihoods team at CIFOR, Bogor, Indonesia</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
	<p>Ronnakorn Triraganon</p> 	<p>Senior Strategic Advisor of RECOFT</p>	<p>Moderator</p>
	<p>Elizabeth Nsimadala</p> 	<p>President of the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) and currently the Director in charge of women affairs and immediate past President at the Pan Africa Farmers Organization (PAFO)</p>	<p>Keynote speaker (Multiple participation – Special event on rural finance)</p>
	<p>Ma. Estrella Penunia</p> 	<p>Secretary General of the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)</p>	<p>Panellist (Multiple participation – Special event on rural finance)</p>
	<p>Ambrish Mehta</p> 	<p>Trustee of Action Research in Community Health and Development (ARCH), an NGO of Gujarat, India</p>	<p>Panellist</p>

Subtheme 4 – Session 4: Forests for social cohesion	<p>Lisa Huyen</p> 	Co-founder, Viet Nam Star Aniseed Cassia Manufacturing and Exporting Joint Stock Company (VINASAMEX., JSC)	Panellist
	<p>Apollinaire William</p> 	Deputy Executive, Director Albertine Rift Conservation Society Network	Panellist
	<p>Krystyna Swiderska</p> 	Principal Researcher in the Natural Resources Group at IIED (International Institute for Environment and Development)	Panellist
	<p>Daniel Desire Ouedraogo</p> 	Head of Program Design and Advocacy, TreeAid; forest governance, agroforestry, participatory approach and sustainable management of natural resources	Panellist
	<p>Femy Pinto</p> 	Executive Director, Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme, Asia	Moderator (Multiple participation – Special event on rural finance)
	<p>Fabiola Martha Muñoz Doder</p> 	Coordinator of the Coalition for Sustainable Production, Peru	Keynote speaker

	<p>Qiang Ma</p> 	Forestry Officer, FAO	Panellist
	<p>Erdogan Atmis</p> 	Academician at the Faculty of Forestry of Bartın University, Turkey. Works on forestry policy and administration.	Panellist
	<p>Claudette Labonté</p> 	Activist, Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin	Panellist
	<p>Myline Macabuhay</p> 	Coordinator for the Youth and Land Rights Agenda of the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)	Panellist
Subtheme 4 – Session 5: Forests for humanity and peace	<p>Ki Weon Kim</p> 	Professor emeritus at the Department of Forestry, Environment & Systems in the Kookmin University, Korea.	Moderator
	<p>Ina Vandebroek</p> 	Senior Lecturer, Department of Life Sciences & Natural Products Institute, University of the West Indies, Jamaica	Panellist

Special Event: Rural finance, forest and farm producers and Indigenous Peoples at the centre of the 'green recovery	Jessica Vega Ortega 	Co-Chair, Global Indigenous Youth Caucus	Panellist
	Jude Ndzifon Kimengsi 	Group Leader, Forest Institutions and International Development (FIID) Research Group, Chair of Tropical and International Forestry, Technische Universität Dresden Germany	Panellist
	Mariano Castro Jiménez 	Consultant for Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue Initiative of the Convention on Biological Diversity; lawyer with an LL.M in Public international law	Panellist
	Mariano Castro Jiménez 	Senior Programme Manager of the World Food Programme and Team Manager Food Assistance for Asset	Panellist
	Mattias Lindström 	Co-lead for blended finance and mobilisation of capital at Sida's department for global strategies	Keynote speaker
	Anne Arvola 	Senior Development Impact Advisor, Finnfund	Keynote speaker
	Tony Baumann 	Senior Policy Officer, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany	Keynote speaker

<p>Rob Busink</p> 	<p>Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, the Netherlands. Ex- Chair of the FAO European Forestry Commission (2013 - 2015) and Ex-Vice-Chair of the United Nations Forum on Forests 14/15 Bureau (2018- 2020)</p>	<p>Keynote speaker</p>
<p>Juliaus Kamau</p> 	<p>Chief Conservator of Forests, Kenyan Forest Service</p>	<p>Keynote speaker</p>
<p>Cécile Ndjebet</p> 	<p>Founder and President, African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
<p>Andriamparany Ranoasy</p> 	<p>Director, Fikambanana Fampivoarana ny Tantsaha</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
<p>Gustavo Sánchez Valle</p> 	<p>President of the Board of Directors of the Red MOCAF in Mexico; Secretary of the AMPB Board of Directors; member of the Coordination of the AGCT and CSO representative in the Executive Board of the UN-REDD Programme</p>	<p>Panellist</p>
<p>Marco Grefa</p> 	<p>Asociación Wiñak, Ecuador</p>	<p>Panellist</p>