



Media release

Women – the new face of forest management

The Institute of Foresters of Australia's conference. 14 - 17 August 2017 in Cairns.

Today's face of a professional forest manager is unlikely to be a rugged bearded bushman type but is much more likely to be a very technologically savvy female who is a skilled communicator, business analyst and people manager.

Since the 1970's when university graduating classes in forestry contained 1 or 2 women (< 5% of the total class) the number of women studying forestry has gradually increased to today where about two-thirds of all students enrolled in Forestry education undergraduate and post-graduate degree courses are women.

Three of the key-note speakers at the IFA conference on **Tropical Forestry: Innovation and Change in the Asia Pacific Region** are women and nearly a quarter of the 84 papers being presented at the conference are from professional women.

Chair of the Conference organising committee Dr Kevin Harding said; 'It is very pleasing to see the very large contribution of women to this IFA conference; from active roles in planning and delivering the conference to presenting papers covering the spectrum of the diverse range of topics being covered.

'Although the history of the male-dominated forestry profession still means that many of our current senior leaders and very experienced speakers are male I expect that this will change rapidly over the coming decade as more and more highly skilled women emerge from the professional ranks of forestry and will dominate both the Institute organisation and the conference program at future conferences.

'Our female speakers range from world recognised University, CSIRO and Australian Institute of Marine Science researchers to international trade and investment managers, forestry consultants, bush fire and carbon sequestration management experts, to community and small-scale forestry project managers from many parts of the world. The contribution that women are making to the Forestry profession reflects a huge diversity in skills and experience and brings new perspectives', said Kevin.

<http://www.ifa.consec.com.au/register.html>

Media contact: Dr. Kevin Harding 0410471957