

IUFRO PRESIDENT JOINS FORESTRY STUDENTS FOR THE 2015 IFSA INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM IN MANILA

The International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA), the world's major body connecting forestry students globally, meet in different countries of the world for their International Forestry Students Symposium (IFSS). The two-week event took place in the Philippines in July/August this year.

Forestry students from many countries around the world, including seven South African delegates, attended this year's IFSS and it was clear how important this forum has become to the world's forestry agenda.

Prof. Mike Wingfield, in his role as the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO) President, was invited by IFSA students to address the plenary session at the start of this year's meeting. Prof. Wingfield's presentation had two aims.

The first of these was to provide IFSA students with some background regarding the activities of IUFRO and to highlight some of the key elements of a deep and growing collaboration between IFSA and IUFRO. He also had the opportunity to announce the successful establishment of an IUFRO task Force on Forestry Education that will be jointly led by IFSA and IUFRO.

His second goal was to share with the student delegates some views regarding the dynamic and rapidly changing global research environment. This to encourage the foresters and forestry researchers of the future to engage more closely with established forestry researchers linked to IUFRO.

Prof. Wingfield was especially delighted to find a reasonably strong representation by South African forestry students (those from the University of Stellenbosch, Saasveld and the University of Venda). As a tree health specialist, he also enjoyed the presentation by Mmetja Trudy Sebelebele and Heinrich Hechter (both from Saasveld) covering the results of their research project on the Eucalyptus gall wasp, *Leptocybe invasa*.

Mike also used the opportunity to hold discussions with IFSA President, May Anne Then and some members of her leadership team regarding opportunities to establish a robust and long-term international mentorship programme for forestry students.



A) Mike Wingfield and May Anne Then (IFSA President) with South African student delegates (Thabo Ngubeni, Tatenda Mapeta, Lulrich Hechter, Daniel Boehnke, Heinrich Hechter and Mmetje (Trudy) Sebelebele); B) Photo illustrating a nationally held earthquake evacuation practice session (the Philippines is preparing for the eventuality of a major earthquake in the future!); C) Heinrich Hechter with Mmetje (Trudy) Sebelebele presenting their talk on Leptocybe; D) Mike Wingfield and May Anne Then