



# XV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS

Building a Green, Healthy and Resilient Future with Forests

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

## Session 2 - Forests and holistic health benefits for all: Perspectives from the Health Sector

**Session organizer(s) and partners:** FAO, WHO, International Nature and Forest Medicine Society, Korea Forest Therapy Forum, IUFRO Working Group, Korea Forest Welfare Institute

**Format:** keynote, speaker presentations and moderated discussions in two sets

**Date/time:** Tuesday, 3rd May 2022, 11:00-12:30 (90 min)

### Focus and objectives:

- The importance of forests for human health and well-being worldwide, particularly from the health sector perspectives will be shared through review of: (i) forest pharmaceuticals, (ii) nutraceuticals, (iii) medicinal plants, and (iv) forest therapy and healing that will be covered in this session.
- This session forms an important part of the Congress Sub-theme 4, titled “forests and human health: revisiting the connections”. An overview of this sub theme is appended.

**Moderator:** Nancy Aburto, Director of Food and Nutrition Division (ESN), FAO

### Keynote speaker:

- Prof Maxine A. Whittaker, Co-Director of WHO’s Collaborating Centre for Vector Borne Diseases and Neglected Tropical Diseases and Professor at James Cook University, **Australia** – the health sector perspective

### Programme of the Session (90 Min):

- **Introduction by moderator (8 min): Dr. Nancy Aburto (FAO ESN Director)**
- **Keynote (10 min): Prof. Maxine A. Whittaker, Co-Director of WHO’s Collaborating Centre for Vector Borne Diseases and Neglected Tropical Diseases – 2.0 the health sector perspective**
- **Panellist 1 (8 min): Dr. Qing Li, Physician and Immunologist, Nippon Medical School Hospital. Tokyo, Japan – 2.1 Forest medicine**
- **Panellist 2 (8 min): Prof. Won Sop Shin, President, Korea Forest Therapy Forum – 2.2 Forest therapy and healing**

### Moderated Discussion (12 min) – discussion of the challenges and ways forward

- **Panellist 3 (8 min): Dr. Francesco Riccardo Becheri, Founder and Scientific Director, Pian dei Termini Forest Therapy Station, Italy – 2.3 The holistic benefits of forest therapy and medicine beyond health.**

- **Panellist 4 (8 min): Dr. Melanie H. Adamek, Head, IM-WALD-SEIN® Institute for Forest Medicine and Forest Therapy, Germany** – 2.4 Promoting forest medicine and therapy in a contemporary world: practical approaches and the role of professional and stakeholders.
- **Panellist 5 (8 min): Dr. Chizuru Nishida, Unit Head of Healthy and Sustainable Diets, WHO OR Amy Ickowitz, Senior Scientist and Leader of Sustainable Landscapes and Livelihoods Team, CIFOR** – 2.5 Healthy and sustainable diets

**Moderated Discussion (12 min) – discussion of the challenges and ways forward**

- **Wrap-up by the moderator (8 min)**

**Note: The proposed speakers, panellists, etc. are tentative pending approval of programme, revision and re-assessment of best candidates for each role, and final confirmation with individuals or organizations. In some cases, initial outreach has been made, but in other cases, this is yet to happen.**

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#### **Overview of the XV WFC Sub-theme 4**

This subtheme will provide a forum to build understanding and revitalize the connections between forests and human health and wellbeing. Forests are sources of nutritious plant and animal-based foods, fodder, innumerable medicines and fuel for human societies from villages to major cities. Sales of forest goods and services generate income that support health and wellbeing spanning rural to urban economies. Forest landscapes and their resources provide a foundation for vibrant rural organizations, including for Forest and Farm Producers and culturally rich Indigenous Peoples, as well as small and large enterprises that support communities, women and various marginalized sectors of society. The populaces of cities to towns to remote hamlets, all enjoy the health-giving benefits of recreation in forested areas, including psychological and spiritual. Forests also play role in supporting harmony within societies, and as part of conflict resolution and peace building at sub-national, national and international levels. This is exemplified by peace parks and forest strips along once contested borders.

Much of the planet is forest covered, and some 2.5 billion people live in or in close proximity to forests. Even many of the billions of people that live in major urban centres benefit from the contributions of forests and trees to their physical and mental health and wellbeing, included for reducing the stresses of day-to-day city life. Yet with forests under threat, their ability to sustain these contributions are at risk. Many forest dwelling societies are socially, politically and economically marginalized, with severe consequences for health and wellbeing. There are also high levels of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition in populations that depend on forests. As worrying is the breakdown in connections between forests and people in our fast-moving urban-focused world. Yet solutions exist. New visions and revalued old approaches can strengthen the connections and ensure that forests and the people that steward them thrive, now and in the future, so that everyone benefits.

The subtheme will encompass five technical sessions, including the Session 2 and various side events, which will present evidence from the latest science and traditional knowledge regarding the connections between forests and human health and wellbeing. We will give voice to forest actors and diverse stakeholders – urban and rural – and elucidate challenges and review innovative solutions.

The Sessions will use various approaches including keynotes, talk show formats, roundtables, group discussion, and other innovative means to share knowledge. The subtheme sessions are structured as follows:

Session 1: An overview of the connections between human health and wellbeing – from remote forest communities to dense urban populations - with a focus on building an enabling policy environment considering the full diversity of stakeholders and the different ways forests and trees can benefit them.

Session 2: New understandings of multi-faceted contributions and challenges will be presented regarding the direct relationships between forests and health. Threats to the ability of forests to provide their health-giving services and the abilities of societies to appreciate and use them will be discussed. The One Health Concept will be presented, along with reflection on the implications of COVID-19 for forests and their peoples.

Session 3: Requirements to ensure that forests can sustain livelihoods essential for human health and wellbeing. Issue reviewed will include poverty alleviation, food systems, land tenure and rights, and the resilience of rural organizations in the face of growing risks.

Session 4: Review the roles of forests in supporting social cohesion in forest communities essential to their health and wellbeing. Social protection, building social capital, women and youth empowerment, migration, and the roles and need of indigenous peoples will be reviewed.

Session 5: A final session will bring the complex set of issues together into a synthesis and review of the evidence, and present holistic technical and policy solutions for forests and trees to support health and wellbeing, harmony and peace from local to national to global levels and considering both rural and urban settings.

The primary outcomes of the subtheme will be a deeper appreciation by participant of how forests are linked to and benefit human health and wellbeing from deep in the forest to the major metropolises, the challenges these connections face, and clear solutions to move forward.