

IFFA committed to international communication

We are all familiar with misunderstanding of basic forestry concepts by non-foresters, concepts that all of us here take for granted. City people are less and less in touch with forested landscapes, have fewer opportunities to see and understand sustainable forest management work methods, and are increasingly suspicious about the sustainability of our practices.

One critical example is the role of forests in combating climate change. The suspicion and lack of basic understanding is especially clear in reactions to our claim that increased use of timber from sustainably managed forests is a very powerful tool of strategic importance.

Smallholder family forest owners, together with community and indigenous foresters can give a human face to sustainable forest management.

In many countries, our forests are the ones closest to the cities, the forests city people are most likely to see. We can demonstrate how deeply we care for our forests and how hard we work to look after them. We can show countless individual and landscape level examples which demonstrate how our small-scale sfm is not just compatible but in fact interdependent with increased timber production. We can explain in simple terms how our forests grow and how careful management can not only maintain but increase biodiversity and water conservation while at the same time providing income from the sale of timber. Family forest owners, with community and indigenous foresters can be a bridge between people of the cities and people of countrysides with forests. We can play a useful role in increasing the understanding and reducing the suspicions of people in the cities.

We are committed to contribute to the development and implementation of national and international communication strategies. We invite member states and the Forum to take advantage of this asset and seek the engagement of family, community and indigenous peoples' organizations when you carry out communication strategies in your countries and internationally.

(Short version)