

From the scientific editor:

A challenging year

This last issue of volume 16 is the place for summing up the editorial year, which has included both an exchange of scientific editor and the establishment of a new editorial board. The present author took over in April, and it has been a challenging period of hard work, with a steep learning curve before the routines were settled. But, also a period in which many new acquaintances were made, and that was full of new experiences and stimulating reading.



Mats Hanerz

75 submitted manuscripts

In the last year, from November 2000 to October 2001, 75 manuscripts were submitted. This is slightly below the level maintained over the last 10 years. Most of the manuscripts (81%) originated from the Nordic countries, with Sweden and Finland contributing the most, but an increasing proportion were also submitted from eastern Europe (see table). An important goal for the journal is to attract more manuscripts from outside the Nordic countries.

During the same period, we used the time and skills of 164 referees, some of whom even reviewed more than one paper. The referees came from 20 different countries, and they were much more widely spread than the authors of the manuscripts. Over 30% of the referees were from North America.

Over a third rejected

With the assistance of the referees we have been able to process and reach final decisions on 43 of the 75 submitted manuscripts, Twenty-one were rejected and 22 finally accepted for publication. Another 14 have passed

Table: Origin of manuscripts submitted to Scandinavian Journal of Forest Research and referees used during the period November 2000 to October 2001

Origin ¹⁾	No. submitted manuscripts	No. referees ⁵⁾
Sweden	25	43
Finland	23	26
Norway	10	8
Denmark	3	7
Western Europe ²⁾	4	20
Eastern Europe ³⁾	6	0
Canada	3	29
USA	1	23
Others ⁴⁾	0	8
Total	75	164

Footnotes:

- 1) The address of the first authors is considered the origin of the article
- 2) Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland
- 3) Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland
- 4) Australia, Brazil, Japan, Kenya, New Zealand
- 5) Some of the referees reviewed more than one paper. The total number of referee commitments during the period was 181.

through the evaluation stage and are at present under revision. Most of the manuscripts that are returned for revision will finally be accepted. If we consider this group as “accepted”, the overall rejection rate for papers submitted last year comes to 37%.

Shorter processing time

The six issues of volume 16 contain 50 articles. Twenty of these had a first author from Sweden, 10 from Finland, seven from Denmark, three each from Norway and Canada, two from USA and one each from Lithuania, Estonia, Iceland, China and Austria. The average article was 11 pages long. The average time from reception to

acceptance for the manuscripts was 8.5 months, and from acceptance to printing, six months. The printing queue has been reduced since last year, when the accepted manuscripts had to wait 8.5 months before they were printed.

Much effort is now put into reducing the processing time. Our target is to limit the time from submission to decision to 4–5 months.

Editorial board

A new editorial board was also established. The first meeting of the board is mentioned below in this issue of News and Views. The board has already been heavily used for advice

on referee candidates for discussing the quality of submitted papers.

About this issue

This last issue of volume 16 brings you what is probably the most complete, and definitely the most up-to-date, review of current knowledge of fertilization and nutrient cycling in the Nordic countries. The review articles, one per Nordic country, and the combined synthesis, are the outcome of a joint SNS project “Nutrient supplies to forest ecosystems – what have we learned?”. The journal is very grateful to professor Dan Binkley, who has acted as guest editor for these articles.

Editorial board meeting

“Help the scientific editor to find highly competent referees”. This was one “take-home-message”, when the new editorial board of Scandinavian Journal of Forest Research had its first meeting in Uppsala, Sweden.

Four of the board’s nine members took part, together with representatives from the publisher, Taylor and Francis, and SNS.

How to improve the Journal

A major issue for the meeting was to discuss how to improve the Journal. It was agreed that it is essential to attract more papers of a high international standard—and to increase the rejection rate.



Left: Henrik Andén and behind him Jean-Michel Leban, Editorial board members

Right: Lena Andreasson-Haddad, Taylor and Francis, and Rauni Strömmer, editorial board member.



Mats Hannerz and Hans-Örjan Nohrstedt, present and former scientific editors, and Boel Åström, secretary of SNS

It was also agreed that the editorial board has an important role to play in improving the journal. Besides being ambassadors for the journal, members of the board can use their networks to find more referees outside Nordic countries, and to suggest suitable topics and authors for review articles. 1–2 good review articles per volume was regarded as a desirable target.

New member of the board

Eight of the nine members of the editorial board were presented in News & Views No. 4 2001. The ninth has now been appointed: Prof. Annikki Mäkelä of Helsinki University.



New SNS project: Nordic database with field trials

12,000 field trials on the Net

There are almost 12,000 long term field trials running in the Nordic forests. And now, their details have all been gathered in a common database: NOLTFOX. SNS, the Nordic Forest Research Co-operation Committee, has taken the initiative to establish the database

In the database you can find information about each trial’s objective, location, tree-species involved, number of replications, latest measurements etc.

All information in the database is in English, and it is freely accessible on the Internet. The URL is

<http://noltfox.metla.fi>

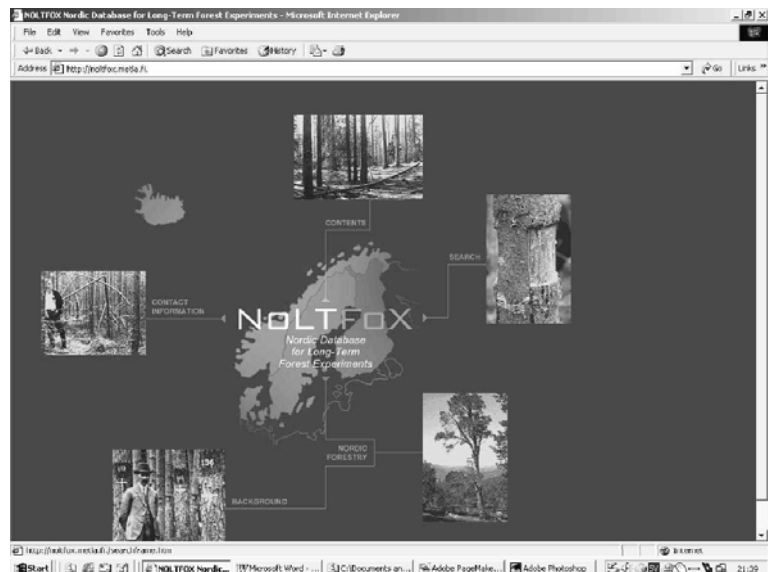
You can search using a number of variables, and search results are presented in tables or maps.

Genetic trials, such as progeny tests and trials with different tree-species are the most common. But there are also many experiments concerned with silviculture and forest yield.

Finland accounts for 60% of the trials, followed by Sweden with 25% and Norway with 10%. Together, Denmark and Iceland contribute the remaining 5%.

“This database will be a powerful research tool”, says Professor Lisa Sennerby-Forsse, current chairperson of the SNS. “By utilising experiments and experiences in all five countries, conclusions and recommendations can be based on a greater number of trials.

Establishment of expensive experiments already carried out in another country can be avoided. We are also convinced that *NOLTFOX* will be a valuable instrument for future co-operation in forest research in a broader international context.”



NOLTFOX;

Upper right: the homepage.

Lower right: example of a search. The map shows the 373 existing Nordic field trials with exotic tree species within the subject “genetic diversity and breeding”. The table shows the information available from one of these; a test of different larch species

Altitude	35
Country	I
County	S-Múlasýsla
Experimental area	0.5
Experiment number	K.27-96
Experimental series	Larix-2
Forest district	Austurland
Identification	108
Keywords	provenance trial - height,diameter,form,insect and disease
Last measurement	1996
Latitude (N °)	65.23
Local name	Höfði
West °	-14.46
Main treespecies	Larix decidua
Municipality	A-Hérað
Number of plots	155
Number of replicates	5
Number of treatments	31
Objective	Exotic tree species
All treespecies	Larix decidua,Larix sibirica,Larix laricina,Larix gmelinii
Priority	1
Research or organization	IFS
Resp. department	
Responsible or organization	RS
Stand establishment	1996
Start of experiment	1996
Subject field	Genetic diversity and breeding

Finland

Extensive natural resources research programme

In April 2001 the Academy of Finland launched a research programme called Sustainable Use of Natural Resources ("Sunare"). The aims of the programme are to provide decision-makers with appropriate information concerning natural resources. The total funding will amount to FIM55 million (9.2 million euros) for the period 2001–2004.



The programme consists of 35 research projects, which focus on forest resources, environment, waters, fishes, reindeer husbandry, agriculture, herbal medicine and green chemistry,

Forest research is the most intensively covered field in Sunare. Ten projects are devoted to it, which will receive total funding worth FIM18 million. Various aspects of the sustainable use of forest resources are to be studied. The studies are conducted by

Metla (Finnish Forest Research Institute) and the Universities of Helsinki, Joensuu, Oulu, Tampere, and Turku.

Environmental research: in Sunare various projects are focused on climate change, air pollution, waste management and environmental contamination, ecological efficiency of industry, sustainable use of water resources and eutrophication of the water system.

Water and fish based projects are focused on managing large water systems, managing vendace populations as a resource, and protecting fish farms against parasites in ecologically sensitive ways.

Reindeer studies in Sunare aim at finding socially and ecologically sustainable solutions to reindeer husbandry.



Forest receives the most attention in Sunare. It is covered in 10 projects:

- *Advanced Tools for Forestry Environmental Management*
- *Socio-economic conditions sustainable use of wood fuel*
- *Silvicultural strategies for managing risks of wind- and snow-damage in forestry*
- *Linking the ecological, economic, social and legal dimensions of forest ecosystem management*
- *Mixed forest stands as means of sustainable forest management*
- *Sustainability in Forest Use: Values affecting decision-making. A social, scientific and ethical analysis*
- *Landscape level indicators for sustainable use of forests*
- *Fire Implications in restoration ecology*
- *Economic-ecological interactions in sustainable use of forest resources*
- *Interbiotic processes between genetically modified trees, forest pests and fungi: Development of risk assessment procedure*

Agenda 2000 calls for more competitive and environmentally friendly modes of agriculture. In Sunare, there are two projects aiming to improve understanding of aspects of **sustainability in agriculture.**

Many natural plant species can be used as raw materials for **herbal medicines.** In Sunare, there are two projects focusing on the use of natural plants as herbal medicines.

The six research projects related to Sunare's theme of **green chemistry** cover many different, often overlapping issues. Green chemistry aims to replace different noxious chemicals used by industry with less environmentally damaging substances.

Co-ordinated by the University of Helsinki

The Department of Forest Ecology of the University of Helsinki is co-ordinating the programme in order to strengthen national innovation, to increase national and international co-operation between participants in this and similar programmes, to support the dissemination of research results and to enhance researcher training.

International panel

A research programme consists of a number of interrelated projects within the same target area of research. The aims of such programmes are to raise the quality of research in the target field, to create a sound knowledge base, to increase networking among the researchers and to intensify researcher training. To ensure the quality of research, the proposals are evaluated twice. First, they have to pass a national evaluation, which is conducted by the steering committee of the research programme. Most of the members in the steering committees are university professors while the others represent the financiers.

In the first phase Sunare received 180 proposals, of which the steering committee decided 49 should be scientifically evaluated by a panel of international experts. The panel consisted of five professors with strong international reputations and it was chaired by Professor Lisa Sennerby-Forsse from Sweden. Based on their evaluation, 35 projects received funding.

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Facts

The Academy of Finland is a research council that is responsible for funding all kinds of research activities in Finland. Research programmes receive one type of funding, accounting for about 20% of the total research funds of the Academy. At the moment some 20 research programmes are going on, mainly funded by the Academy. Research programmes are often co-financed by the National Technology Agency (Tekes) or relevant ministries.

The research programme on Sustainable Use of Natural Resources is co-funded by Tekes and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.



More detailed information about Sunare and its constituent projects is available at www.sunare.helsinki.fi.



Many species of natural plants growing in Finland can be used as raw materials for herbal medicines. People used these plants as natural medicines for hundreds of years, but their industrial use is just beginning. In Sunare, there are two projects focusing on the use of natural plants as herbal

medicines. One centres on the natural products made by *Hypericum perforatum*, *Rhodiola rosea*, *Drosera rotundifolia*, and *Vaccinium myrtillus*, while the other is examining the use of willow and poplar plant materials that can accumulate large amounts of salicylates. They are receiving funds of FIM4.2 million.



In Sunare, there are six Green chemistry projects which are funded with about FIM6.6 million.

- The effect of modification and natural variation of lignin on wood properties and sustainable use of Norway spruce
- Utilization of high temperature water in

purification, reactions and processing

- Use of tall oil for wood log and timber protection
- Metabolic engineering for pentose utilization pathways in yeast for the production on fuels and chemicals from renewable resources

Sweden

30,000 children met the forest in central Stockholm

In September, the Swedish Forest Industries, the Forest authorities and a number of NGO's jointly arranged "Forest Days" in a park in the middle of Stockholm. All schools in Stockholm and surrounding suburbs were invited to experience the forest and meet representatives of the forest industry.

The response was overwhelming. 29,300 children visited the exhibition during the three days. The result was a bit like a battle. More than 600 functionaries took care of the visitors at 15 different stations.

There were no dull theoretical lessons. On the contrary: the arrangement was based on emotions: "do", "feel", and "smell" were keywords. "Plant a tree". "Build your own wooden hut". "Make your own paper" were further suggestions.

"Urban children live far away from the forest. So if we can't make people

leave the city for the forest, we have to bring the forest to the city". This was the motto for the project when it started in 1994.

This was the eighth time that Forest Days have been arranged in Stockholm. Since their inception, more than 180,000 children have learnt about forestry and forest industries—the most important business sector in Sweden. Including similar activities in other urban areas in Sweden, the total number of visitors has reached 300,000!

Source: Holmen Insikt



"Making paper" and "planting": two popular activities. Photo: Micael Engström



Denmark

Big birds more common in private forests

Eagles, storks, herons and owls are more common in privately owned forests than in their state-owned counterparts. The Danish government owns 30% of all forest land in Denmark. But only a few percent of the big birds breed in those forests.

Shy birds, such as the black stork, golden eagle, sea eagle, osprey and red kite breed almost exclusively in private forests, according to a Danish bird-organisation.

"A good guess is that the public access in state-owned forests causes more disturbance", says biologist Knud Flensted. "This should be studied more closely before we decide to open up the privately owned forests more for people's access".

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- relevant to the Journal
- interesting for the readers.

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