



Photo: Gun Lovdahl, UPSC

200 million SEK to tree biotechnology

Umeå Plant Science Center has been selected as one of four “Berzelii centres”, due to its excellent fundamental research. The center will receive 100 million SEK from the Swedish research agency VINNOVA, and 100 million SEK from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Umeå University and the forest industry.

“We are very pleased about this support”, says Professor Ove Nilsson, who will be the leader of the new center. “We receive up to 80% of our funding from external sources. The new support allows us to keep our top researchers and to recruit new ones”.

The center will work on biotechnology related to the forestry sector. Umeå Plant Science Center has been responsible for a number of major breakthroughs. Inter alia, its researchers have mapped the genes of the aspen tree, identified the gene that controls flowering and budset in aspen, and proved that plants can utilize organic compounds as nitrogen sources.

Read more: www.upsc.se

1 SEK = US\$0.14 or €0.11



Photo: Mats Grenitz

Ove Nilsson, Umeå Plant Science Center

Berzelii centra

Jöns Jacob Berzelius was a Swedish chemist of the early 19th century. He is considered one of the fathers of modern chemistry.

In 1828, Berzelius created the first table of relative atomic weights, in which oxygen was given the value 100. He also invented the system of chemical notations, in which elements are given labels such as O for oxygen, Fe for iron etc.

He also identified elements such as silicon, selenium, thorium and cerium.

Jaakko Pöyry has passed away

The famous Finnish industrialist Dr. Jaakko Pöyry died in September 2006, at the age of 82.

Jaakko Pöyry founded the Pöyry companies, which became one of the world's leading independent consulting engineering organisations serving the forest-based industries.

In 1985, Jaako Pöyry sold half of the company to Henrik Ehrnroot, who became the president and CEO, while Dr. Pöyry continued as chairman. The company has 6,000 employees.

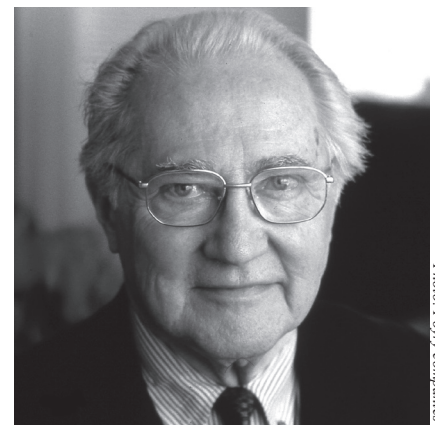


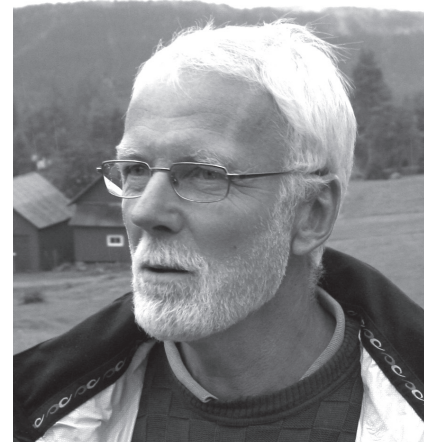
Photo: Pöyry companies



Pelle Gemmel goes to SCA Forest ...



... and Göran Örlander to SÖDRA



Ola Rosvall, a "golden branch"-winner

Swedish silviculture researchers leave academia for industry

Professor Pelle Gemmel is leaving the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), where he is currently leader of the forest research center at Alnarp, southern Sweden. His new position will be as a chief silviculturist at the company SCA. He will work closely with the present chief, Per Persson, before he takes over fully in 2008. SCA is one of the leading Swedish forest companies, with 2.6 million hectares of forest land in northern Sweden, and industrial facilities in 40 countries.

In addition, Professor Göran Örlander, who has held positions at Växjö University, SLU, the Swedish Forest Agency and the former AssiDomän, has become the chief silviculturist at Södra, the forest owners association in southern Sweden. Södra has 35,000 members who collectively own over 2 million hectares of forest in southern Sweden, which support the association's extensive pulp, timber and bioenergy industries.

Golden branch to tree improver

Föreningen Skogen (the Swedish Forestry Association) has awarded Dr. Ola Rosvall at Skogforsk its Golden Branch Prize.

Ola Rosvall is chief of the research station at Sävar in northern Sweden. Sävar hosts the seed laboratory where most of the seed used by forestry in Sweden is treated and tested.

Ola Rosvall has also played a major role in advancing Swedish tree improvement programs, which aim to combine genetic gain and variation.

Source: www.skogforsk.se

Photo: Marcus Wallenberg Foundation



Distinguished prize to French oak geneticist

The Marcus Wallenberg prize, sometimes called "the Nobel prize in forestry" for 2006 has been awarded to the French forest geneticist Antoine Kremer.

Dr. Antoine Kremer works for the French organization INRA, and has made pioneering findings regarding the genetic development and variation in oak. He has combined techniques and information from diverse disciplines, ranging from molecular genetics to evolutionary history, to gain new understanding about oaks in Europe. His research facilitates decisions on the management and preservation of oak forests, and makes it possible to predict the effects of climate change.

Source: www.mwp.org



Photo: Jereca

Norwegian prognostic tool shows that selective cutting may be profitable

Selective cutting may be more profitable than earlier believed, according to new findings from Norway.

Selective cutting systems, which allow sites to remain “eternally” forested, have usually been considered to be less profitable than clearcutting systems. However, traditional models for predicting tree growth and economic parameters are stand models, based on the “average” tree in the stand. In a selective cutting system, such a model is not valid,

since trees are distributed in many diameter classes.

Nils Lexeröd and Terje Gobakken, researchers at Skog og Landskap in Norway, have developed a prognostic tool based on the growth of individual trees. Both analytical results and practical experience of selective cutting indicate that although harvesting costs are higher when such systems are applied, the gross value of cutting can increase by 10%. Therefore, the net stand value is more or less the same as for clearcutting systems.

Furthermore, there are situations where selective cuttings may be more economically efficient, for example when sawn timber fetches higher prices than pulpwood, when there are large differences in price between timber of small and large dimensions, and when regeneration costs are high.

Selective cutting systems have become popular in Norway. Reasons for this trend include concern about biodiversity, increased demand for timber with large sawn dimensions, and increases in regeneration costs.

Read more: www.skogoglandskap.no

Shortcuts

New program uses model forests for regional development in the Baltic sea region

“Baltic forest” is a project that has been established to promote sustainable regional development based on management and use of the forest. The project, which will run over two years starting in 2006, has partners from eight countries around the Baltic sea.

The project is a continuation of three previous initiatives, all concerning sustainable use of the forests in the Baltic sea region. One of them, the

Northern European Model Forest Network, encouraged regional development by establishing a network of model forests. A major focus of the new project will be to explore how the Model Forests concept can be best employed to meet the needs for the Baltic sea region. It will also focus on small-scale state and private forest units.

The Model Forest concept stresses the importance of

communication, dissemination and participation at local, national and international levels. An example is the Vilhemina Model Forest in northern Sweden. An open “show-room” in the town of Vilhelmina provides information in diverse forms, including brochures, multimedia presentations and guided tours.

Source: www.balticforest.net

Web portal for Europe’s forests

The European Forest Institute (EFI) is to develop a new web-based entry point – a portal – for European forests. This portal will provide a state-of-the-art “first-stop-shop” source of information on European forests and forestry, and links to other relevant information sources based throughout Europe and the rest of the world.

Source: www.efi.fi

National parks – more visitors with more services

The numbers of nature tourists visiting national parks in Finland has grown strongly during the past few decades. One in five Finns uses state-owned areas, such as national parks and wilderness areas, for recreational purposes. On average, visitors spend seven days per year in these areas.

The Finnish Forest Research Institute, Metla, has identified factors that attract visitors to the national parks. Services in the form of nearby accommodation, marked trails and guidance services, are clearly liked. The number of camp-fire sites, huts and the scope for recreational activities are also factors that attract visitors.

The typical hiker in a national park is a male, white-collar employee, with a university degree. He is active in outdoor sports such as cross-country skiing.

However, a higher number of visitors means higher ecological pressure. The study showed that



Koli national park in eastern Finland has 120,000 visitors each year

Photo: Mikko Hannerz

ground and bottom layer vegetation in the northern areas is easily destroyed by trampling. In highly frequented areas, there is sometimes a need to build footbridges and to mark trails leading hikers away from the most sensitive parts.

The study also investigated attitudes towards nature tourism. Locals

usually seem to regard national parks positively, since they increase tourism and, thus, local income and employment opportunities. The local inhabitants also mainly favour further increases in tourist numbers.

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Shortcuts

Denmark: More forest than expected

The proportion of land with forest has suddenly jumped from 11 to 14% in Denmark. There are two explanations for this: the forest area has increased, and new measurements are more accurate than older data. The national forest

inventory is compiled by Forest and Landscape, Denmark. In the last five years, 7,000 plots have been surveyed with respect to land use, biomass and tree species.

Source: www.sl.kvl.dk

Earlier summers and longer autumns in northern Finland

The average temperature has not changed over the last 100 years in Finnish Lapland, according to measurements taken at Sodankylä.

However, seasonal fluctuations have changed. Summers start

earlier, autumns are longer and winters are milder. The changes in the seasonal patterns are considered to be symptoms of ongoing climate change.

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