SPEAKERS

BIOrural

VALTERS SAMARIKS

Scientific assistant at Latvian State Forest Research Institute "Silava", and currently a PhD student in the field of forestry at Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies. The field of study covers many aspects of forest ecosystems and tree adaptation, with the main focus on old-growth forests, especially carbon accumulation in tree biomass and greenhouse gas emissions from soil and tree stems. Participant of PROFOR network which aims to advance the sustainable use of forests in Europe by synthesizing science-based knowledge to tackle the conflicting goals of sustainable forest management in a growing bioeconomy.

ĀRIS JANSONS

Senior researcher, professor. Leader of the development of tree breeding program for main commercial tree species in Latvia, now being implemented in practice, producing seed material for regeneration of ~10000 ha annually. Currently main research topics are related to forest adaptation (natural disturbances: wind and fire) – development of forest wind resistance models and recommendations for establishment and management of resilient stands. Assessment and modelling of carbon balance in old-growth forest and forest originating from improved plant material. Lead auditor of forest management (FSC, PEFC).

MIGUEL ALMEIDA

Miguel Almeida is Senior Researcher at ADAI and Invited Professor at the University of Coimbra. He completed his Ph.D. in 2011, specializing in Natural and Technological Risks, with a focus on wildfires, a field he has been dedicated to since 2003. In his curriculum, he is listed as an author and co-author of numerous national and international scientific publications, as well as various technical reports. Noteworthy among these are the reports on the 2017 wildfires in Pedrógão Grande and October 15, as well as reports on major wildfires in 2022 and 2023 commissioned by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

JĀNIS IVANOVS

Latvian State Forest Research Institute "Silava" remote research development manager. Obtained a master's degree in University of Latvia, Faculty of Geography and Earth Sciences, developing a methodology for mapping overgrown vegetation based on remote sensing data, which later resulted in the creation of a wet area map in the territory of Latvia. Currently studying in the doctoral program at the University of Tartu and developing models for estimating forest biomass volume based on remote sensing data in the territory of Latvia.

KRISTAPS CEPLIS

The Managing Director of the Latvian Wood Building Cluster and a member of the jury for the Latvian Construction Awards competition. Is convinced that wood is an excellent construction material, capable of simultaneously achieving ambitious climate neutrality goals while also creating beautiful, secure, and sustainable architecture.

ANDRÉ DIASS

André Manuel Alves Dias, completed his Master's Degree in Civil Engineering in 2016/09 by the Department of Civil Engineering of the University of Coimbra with the thesis: "Analysis of the influence of the treatment phase in the bonding quality of Pinus pinaster glued laminated timber". Finished his Ph.D. in Civil Engineering in 2022/05 by the Department of Civil Engineering of the University of Coimbra with the thesis: "Life Cycle Assessment of Timber Structures - a Cradle to grave perspective". He is member of ISISE and Services Coordinator at SerQ - Forestry Innovation and Competence Centre. He works in the area(s) of Wood Products and Structures, and Life Cycle Assessment.

ISABEL BRÁS

Isabel Brás, with a degree in Chemical Engineering and a PhD in Engineering Sciences, is a Coordinating Professor and Researcher at the Polytechnic of Viseu, in the area of Environment and environmental monitoring and waste recovery. She dedicates part of her research to the valorization of biowaste and the application of life cycle assessment studies to proposals for treating this waste.

ELISABETE SILVA

Elisabete Silva, Graduate and PhD in Environmental Engineering, Adjunct Professor and Researcher at the Polytechnic of Viseu, in the area of waste recovery and carbon footprint.

ĢIRTS BARANOVSKIS

Head of Compensation Unit in the Nature Conservation Agency of Latvia (LIFE-IP LatViaNature project). Master's degree in Law (University of Latvia). Expertise: motivating mechanisms regarding nature conservation on private lands; biodiversity and nature conservation law.

RAQUEL MARTINHO

Raquel Martinho began her professional activity in 2007, after completing her degree in Forestry and Natural Resources Engineering from the Instituto Superior de Agronomia. Specialist in forestry and chain of custody certification, for more than 10 years she worked as a coordinating auditor in a national and international certification body. She has extensive audit experience with forest-based industries, service providers and management entities. It ensures the management of the PEFC certificate database in Portugal and is the focal point for contact with certification bodies and entities holding certificates, within the scope of the SPCF, as well as for the dissemination associated with the certification processes.

LĪGA JANSONE

Dr. silv. Liga Jansone works in State Forest Research Institute "Silava" since 2005. Since 2019 technical expert in "PEFC Latvijas Padome", since February 2023 Borad member in "PEFC Latvijas Padome".

JĀNIS RIŽIKOVS
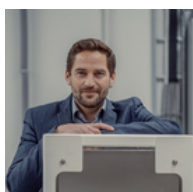
Dr.sc.ing. Janis Rizikovs, wood chemistry and materials scientist, is currently a head of the Biorefinery Laboratory research group and leading researcher at Latvian State Institute of Wood Chemistry. His research activities include: Obtaining of biologically active substances (betulin) and polymer raw materials (suberinic acids) from birch outer bark, which are promising raw materials for the synthesis of high added value derivatives for cosmetics, emulsion production and polymer/adhesives industry; ecological binders, additives, coatings and wood-based panels; understanding of the fundamentals that affect the hydrophobicity of wood after thermal treatment process; the mild hydrolysis pre-treatment of wood for improving the cellulosic part accessible to pyrolysis for obtaining anhydrosugars.