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Timber Committee

European Forestry Commission

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

**JOINT FAO/ECE/ILO COMMITTEE ON FOREST TECHNOLOGY,
MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING**

Seminar on "Forestry meets the public"

REPORT

(as approved by the Seminar)

Introduction

1. The seminar on "Forestry meets the public" was held from 8 to 11 October 2001 at the Hotel Rütthubelbad in Walkringen (Canton of Bern), under the auspices of the Joint Committee and at the invitation of the Swiss Government. Participants from the following countries attended : Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Opening of the seminar

2. The seminar was opened by Mr. M. Büchel of the Swiss Forest Agency, who welcomed participants and introduced the members of the organizing committee. He was followed by Mr. H. Balsinger, chief of the forest service of the Canton of Bern, who delivered a welcome address on behalf of Ms. Zölsch-Balmer, a member of the Cantonal Government. Mr Balsinger pointed out that the Canton was an ideal venue for a seminar of this nature, because the forest functions of protection, recreation, landscape and tourism were all prominent here and a diversity of needs and aspirations needed among its population to be reconciled. This

diversity of views had to be matched with a similar diversity of forest management regimes. He exhorted foresters to come out of the forest and to the encounter of the public.

3. Mr. W. Schärer, the director of the Swiss Forestry Agency, also addressed the participants. He expressed his satisfaction with the interest demonstrated by more than a 100 registrations from over 20 countries. In Switzerland, the public was showing great interest in forestry matters. The people also owned the forest and had a legal right to access. Engaging the public in meaningful dialogue and participation was therefore an important challenge. He was confident that the seminar would contribute to finding suitable approaches.

4. The chairman of the Joint Committee, Prof. H. Höfle (Germany), thanked the host country for organizing the seminar. He emphasized that the Joint Committee had always practiced a holistic approach to forestry. The economic, environmental and social components had been integrated in its programme long before they were identified as the three dimensions of sustainable development at the Rio Conference in 1992. The present seminar fitted well into the Joint Committee's programme because it would provide a meeting place for a wide variety of people concerned with forestry and help to build bridges between individuals and countries.

Election of officers (item 1 of the agenda)

5. The following discussion leaders were appointed:

Item 4	Mr. Noel Foley (Ireland)
Items 5 and 6	Mr. Miles Wenner (United Kingdom)
Item 7	Mr. Hanns Höfle (Germany)
Item 8	Ms. Lena Kopylova (Russian Federation)

Adoption of the agenda (item 2)

6. The provisional agenda, as set out in the second announcement was adopted.

General introduction (item 3)

7. Mr. P. Poschen (ILO) set out the background and the objectives of the seminar. Efforts by the forestry sector to communicate had not been very successful and foresters and forest owners were often felt unable to make themselves understood. Media, NGOs and politicians appeared to pay little attention to the messages the forestry sector had been attempting to drive home for example about the multiple benefits of forests and the important contributions foresters were making in order to deliver these benefits. The seminar was a response to the call by the 3rd Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe to communicate better and to build partnerships with groups outside the forestry sector. The programme was designed to maximise opportunities for exchange between participants in order to draw up a road map towards more effective approaches.

8. As a way of stimulating the discussion, Mr. W. Wenger (Switzerland) formulated eight theses about public relations in forestry as perceived by an outsider. He wondered whether the sector had missed opportunities by not responding to the public's interest in more information about forest ecosystems and why foresters had been unable to build on the basically positive attitude towards forests. He maintained that foresters did basically not welcome public involvement in forestry. By the same token, they did little in order to understand the public's needs and motivations and to market forest products and services more successfully.

Customer profile - society (item 4)

9. Under this topic the following papers were presented: Ms. R. Kyburz-Graber (Switzerland) on "Development in environmental education"; Mr. I. Gschwandtl (Austria) on "Professional communication at local, national and international level – an integral part of sustainable forest management" and Mr. M. Wenner (UK) on "Participation in forestry".

10. In the ensuing discussion, the question was raised whether there was a strategy for motivating the staff of forestry organizations to work with public relations and environmental education (EE) and how that was implemented. Mr. Gschwandtl agreed that this was indeed a difficult topic. Experiences in the Austrian forestry service suggested that this was mainly a question of a clear commitment by management, providing leadership and allocating resources. In this regard Mr. Wenner referred to the study on public participation in forestry which had also involved workers and trade unions. It had become apparent that workers in forest organizations were often not properly involved in contacts with the public. Ms. Kyburz-Graber pointed out that a linear strategy from top to bottom was often not a practicable way to promote environmental education. Even where it was, it was more desirable to mesh it with a bottom-up approach, drawing on positive experience of practitioners and existing networks.

11. Ms. Kyburz-Graber confirmed her earlier statement that the impact of environmental education in schools was usually modest. Better results were obtained with longer term and more active exposure. One should not be discouraged by the limited impact though, because the objective should not simply be to condition the environmental behaviour of children once they become adults. Rather, environmental education should serve to impart a broad range of skills.

12. A general discussion on how to make environmental education more efficient and how the roles between school and forestry should be distributed, stimulated a number of comments from the audience. There was broad agreement that schools and forestry needed to work together more closely. Foresters could, for example, make up for the lack of applied knowledge among teachers for teaching in the field. Both schools and forestry should avoid short and 'one-off' events. A more longer term activity, over six to twelve months, had more impact and also allowed teachers to involve their colleagues rather than to work in isolation. This approach might also help schools to mobilize more funding for environmental education as they could tap into the general school budget. Cost sharing between schools and forestry was desirable. In Austria, public subsidies were available for such purposes.

The customer's expectations (item 5)

13. Papers were presented under this item by Mr. D. Schmechel (Germany) on "Public relations in forestry- goals, content and strategies"; by Ms D. Krumland (Germany) on "Forests in the media"; and by Ms Paivi Salpakivi-Salomaa (Finland) on "Communicating about the industrial use of forests".

14. Several questions in the discussion were addressed to Ms Salpakivi-Salomaa concerning the experience with public participation in Finland, in particular in privately owned forests. She explained, that this was a relatively recent development, following an obligation introduced in a new law for consultations concerning forests close to urban areas. There was a longer tradition in public forests, but it was often difficult to mobilize sufficient interest and to reconcile divergent interests. Public participation was, however, an effective way to communicate, for example about the new 'green strategy' adopted by the forest industry.

15. Mr. Schmechel expanded on the challenge of matching target groups for communication with the nature and complexity of the messages to be spread. He pointed out that there was a host of different target groups and a wide range of potential subjects for communication. It was important to be clear about the particular combination of these variables in every instance. Communication strategies could aim at satisfying needs expressed by the public, but could also be designed to justify current forest management strategies. He felt the latter was legitimate and economic interests of forestry for example could be defended more vigorously.

16. Various participants asked Ms Krumland for further clarification concerning the role of different media for communication about forestry. She pointed out that local papers tended to be more amenable to positive news about forestry, but national papers were important opinion leaders. She agreed that future research needed to include television and electronic media, such as the internet, as well. One of the pitfalls of media-oriented communications strategies was a tendency to confound the media with the ultimate target group to be reached. Foresters had a mixed record in generating news. They tended to react, usually to events such as natural disasters, and therefore often spread negative messages. At the same time, they managed, however, to position themselves as problem solvers.

Putting it into practice (item 6)

17. This subject was explored in presentations by Mr. G. Buttoud (France) on "The need for reciprocal communication between the forest service and the public" and by Mr. J. Eriksen (Denmark) on "The project 'Learning about forests'".

18. In the discussion, both speakers agreed that it was desirable to involve the parents in the environmental education of their children. This was very popular in Denmark and in France, educating the children was often perceived as an indirect way of reaching their parents. Asked whether his model of reciprocal communication worked at all levels, Mr. Buttoud confirmed that it was applicable from national level down to the forest management unit. The latter was indeed probably the ideal level, particularly when came to public forests.

Unfortunately, there was no practical experience with this in France. A participant questioned the need for a new mechanisms for communication given that many foresters in the field were almost flooded with information and part of many local networks already. Mr. Buttoud agreed that informal mechanisms worked quite well in some countries. In others, the dual process of communication described had, however, been indispensable and yielded excellent results. The major drawback for its wider application was perhaps the cost.

Education and participation (item 7)

19. Papers under this item were presented by: Mr. F. Lohri (Switzerland) on “Teaching forestry – a necessity”; Mr. Ch. Leuthold (Switzerland) on “Participating in sustainable action – helping to design the future” and Mr. M. Stuber (Switzerland) on “From traditional multiple use to professional forest management. Society takes leave of the forest”.

20. The discussion focussed on the role of forestry-related environmental education and on how responsibilities for it should be distributed. Mr. Leuthold underlined that the forest not only offers a possibility for recreation but also a unique forum for education. This possibility should be seized and a new field of tasks for foresters should be created. The aim was not to convert foresters into teachers, but to develop their skills to inform about the forest and to be partners of educators. He also emphasized the need for environmental education to focus on the human being rather than on the forest in order to promote the spiritual and social development of children and adolescents. Mr. Lohri called for a greater awareness of the pedagogical responsibility of foresters. They had a unique opportunity to develop the motivation of young people to contribute to society and to take responsibility for their actions. Foresters needed to develop their communication skills and at the same time to become more sensitive listeners.

21. The question was raised whether there were difficulties to motivate young people, in particular girls, to participate in education activities which included tree-felling which could be considered as destructive and damaging nature. According to Mr. Leuthold, this was not usually a problem even though he agreed that the human being was generally perceived as a destructive element in nature. This misconception needed to be corrected by showing human dependence on and partnership with nature. If participants were encouraged to articulate their doubts, even the act of felling, i.e. killing a tree could be seen in a new light. He recalled a quote from Goethe, according to which “death is nature’s way to create more life”. In a figurative sense this was the equivalent of what young persons experienced during puberty. One participant observed that mountain forests offered advantages for this type of education, but that it could and should also be practised elsewhere, in particular close to urban areas.

22. Doubts were expressed concerning Mr. Stuber’s reading of forest history and the generalization of his conclusions. It was obvious that there had always and would always be conflicts about access to resources. In order to advance these conflicts needed to be acknowledged and forests opened to the public in new ways. Mr. Stuber conceded that the period of dependence on forests for subsistence had not been idyllic, but rather one of devastation of forests. Some of the restrictions imposed as part of the ‘foresters’ sustainability’ had been necessary to rehabilitate the resource.

23. Following the discussion, the participants were divided into three workshops on the following topics: 1. The internet as a teaching aid; 2. Forest schools and 3. Participation. The results from each workshop were presented and taken into account in the conclusions and recommendations. In each of the workshops an introduction was given by Mr. B. Stöckli (workshop 1), Mr. G. Slotosch (workshop 2) and Mr. Y. Kazemir and Ms. A. Finger (workshop 3).

Selected special subjects (item 8)

24. The following speakers presented papers under this heading: Mr. P. Domont (Switzerland) on “No forest, no music”; Mr. J. Trümpler (Switzerland) on “Supplementary and novel avenues for public relations work” and Mr. K. Moser (Switzerland) on “Sustainable management of urban green areas – a comparison between Geneva, Lugano and Zurich”, authored by Mr. K. Seeland (Switzerland).

25. Participants in the discussion agreed with Mr. Domont’s view concerning the need generate opportunities for spreading positive messages, but questioned his statement that foresters could not speak on behalf of the forest. He was supported by another participant in maintaining that foresters should identify themselves and their relation to the forest rather than claim to be speaking for it.

26. Time and financial constraints seemed to be an obstacle for public relations and the audience asked Mr. Trümpler how this was possible to overcome in his organization. He replied that the most important factor was motivation. If there was enthusiasm, the time could always be found. Motivation was mainly generated by training and the delegation of responsibility instead of top-down communication and recognition.

27. The afternoon discussion was also followed by three workshops where the following topics were considered: Workshop 4 “Environmental communications”; workshop 5 “The influence of adult environmental education on the perception of natural hazards and acceptance of measures” and workshop 6 “Forest planning – opportunity for dialogue”. Introductory presentation were given by Ms. M. Conzetti (workshop 5) and Mr. D. Bettelini (workshop 6). The results from each workshop were presented in a plenary session and incorporated into the conclusions and recommendations.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (item 9)

Conclusions

28. ‘Meeting the public’ has become a vital necessity for forestry. It is also a major work item for many foresters. Trained to manage forests, they find themselves dealing with people rather than with trees for much of their time.

29. One important reason why more communication is needed nowadays, is the growing distance between forests and the public, both geographically and economically. The vast majority of the population lives in

urban areas and the number of people directly depending on forests economically is falling. The public therefore has limited exposure to and less and less knowledge and awareness about forests and forestry.

30. Another factor is the declining importance of forestry relative to other economic sectors, resulting in reduced visibility and diminishing attention, not least by political decision makers. At the same time, groups outside the forestry sector have been able to mobilize support and resources, and to gain influence in decision making at the expense of foresters, mostly thanks to very effective communication strategies.

31. Thirdly, forests will not be able to provide the full range of potential benefits to society without adequate communication. The demands of society on forests are evolving. They have become more diverse, opening up new opportunities to provide services and in some cases to generate additional income. Demands can be conflicting, both between forestry and parts of the public as well as among different groups of forest users. Forestry needs to match this diversity with an equally varied offer of forest management solutions and to reconcile conflicts of interest. This requires two-way flows of information and dialogue.

32. In order to respond to these trends, the mission for communication by the forestry sector therefore is to:

- educate about forests and forestry;
- educate through forests and forestry;
- inform and be informed; and
- establish dialogue with forest users in order to track demand and to deal with possible conflicts.

An overarching objective for all forms of communication is to build confidence and trust among the public that foresters are stewards of forests whose role is to make it possible for forests to sustainably fulfill a range of economic, social and environmental functions. It should also promote the use of forest products and services.

33. Communication is a complex task in forestry. It has to cope with a broad range of subjects, attempt to reach a variety of target groups and adapt to different geographical levels. The combination of these and other factors requires customized strategies, if communication is to be effective. While their definitions and respective roles may not be entirely clear, there is consensus that at least three complementary approaches to communication are available to forestry:

- Public relations;
- Forest-related environmental education; and
- Public participation.

34. These methods have been used to varying extent and avail. Successful communication can greatly facilitate forest management by reducing conflict. This helps to recover much of the time and money invested. By and large, however, communication by the forestry sector is considered insufficient in scale and

unsatisfactory in terms of efficiency. This is partly explained by communication strategies which are often not sufficiently clear and coherent. In spite of its pivotal role, communication is not yet recognized as a core function of forestry and of foresters. Only exceptionally is forestry communication in the hands of specialists.

35. Forestry coverage in the media is generally limited. Much of the information that is spread, is provoked by catastrophes, hence conveying negative messages of threats to forests and of devastation. Some useful research has been conducted into forests and forestry in print media. This research has provided important pointers for improvements. Very little is known, however, about forestry in mass media like television and about the use of the internet.

36. Forest-related environmental education has been making significant progress over the last decade. Well developed pedagogical approaches adapted to different age groups exist. There is a wealth of teaching materials and teaching aids. Tested programmes for teacher training are available and have produced a core of qualified environmental educators. There is also a growing body of research about the impact of this education. The findings have corroborated the experience that environmental education has discernable impacts only if it is sufficiently long in duration and enables students to make active and positive experiences with forests and forestry. Environmental education should, however, go beyond educating about forests and forestry. Making use of the forest environment and of the direct contact with nature, it can be a powerful tool to develop personalities and social skills in young persons. Environmental education has also been used successfully for adults, including for management training and team development for enterprises. Because of the encouraging results, there is strong interest in environmental education in a number of countries, but its coverage is still small for want of resources and for lack of coordination.

37. Public participation has only recently been added to the toolkit of forestry communicators and is merely beginning to be used. There is a general expectation that it will prove a valuable way of spreading messages to and of obtaining information from forest users and interested groups. It thus contributes to raising awareness and to promoting acceptance of forestry practices. This support can lead to alliances and partnerships and also translate into political and financial support for forestry. Doubts persist in countries with little tradition of public involvement about the prospects of resolving conflicts through participation. There are also reservations in some countries about its application in private forests. Ultimately, voluntary public participation will only succeed if all parties perceive their gains as exceeding their cost. More experience is needed to determine the role of public funding in balancing costs and benefits among the various interest groups.

Recommendations addressed to member countries

38. The forestry sector should recognize the importance and the role of communication in modern forestry and reflect this in its approach. Communication has to be a two-way flow of information. Much more attention needs to be paid in the future to listening to forest user groups and to the public at large.

39. Communication should be proactive and create opportunities to spread positive messages about forests and forestry. Communications strategies should involve all staff of an organization and have clear support by top level management, including in the form of adequate resources, communication policies and strategies. It should encourage initiative and take up ideas from staff. Some innovative forms of fund raising for communication efforts, such as sponsoring, have been found, but it is doubtful whether these can be replicated on a larger scale. Limited and fluctuating funding continue to be a major bottleneck for all forms of communication in forestry. Additional funding, both public and private, should be made available to overcome this constraint.

40. Job descriptions, recruitment and training should take into account that communication has become one of the key functions of forestry staff. Foresters should acquire skills in communication, but not attempt to become substitutes for public relations specialists or educators. In order to be effective, communication should be planned and delivered in collaboration between foresters and specialized professionals.

41. Public relations should actively create opportunities to spread positive messages about forests and forestry. It should be honest and non-deceptive in order to credibly position foresters as stewards and intermediaries between society and forests. The source of the information and its respective affiliation to the forestry sector should always be made explicit. Messages should be tailored to target audiences. A useful concept for creating messages that are likely to evoke interest is proximity to the target group, be it geographically, emotionally or in time. While a number of workable concepts exist, public relation methods need to be developed further. The best way to progress in this respect is to make use of existing knowledge among specialists, in other sectors, or in other countries.

42. Forest-related environmental education should be integrated into the core curriculum of schools. High-level consultations and agreements between the forestry and the education sectors are needed to achieve this. Such agreements are also a precondition for a stable financial basis and for the close cooperation between foresters and teachers that is required. The education should be delivered in cooperation between teachers, specialists and foresters. Longer term projects involving several teachers from a school should be preferred to 'one-off' events that have little impact. Environmental education should not neglect adults.

43. Public participation should be used more widely in forestry and the experience analysed and shared. Like other forms of communication, it needs to be done professionally. The strategy and the methods employed have to be adapted to the issue at hand, to the groups involved and to the social, cultural, and institutional conditions under which they are to be applied. The report of the Joint Committee's Team of Specialists on Public Participation is a valuable contribution to clarify the concept and to identify the range of possible uses. The report should be circulated more widely and be made available to foresters in the field in a condensed, user-friendly form.

Recommendations addressed to the Joint Committee

44. Much is to be gained from a continued international exchange about communication in forestry. The Joint Committee should cooperate with the FAO/ECE Forestry Communicators team of specialists in documenting successful approaches and spreading this information, in particular to practitioners. It should consider the possibility to offer international training courses on the subject.

45. The Committee should organize a follow-up seminar to monitor progress. Such an event should also involve industry and business, educational institutions, public relations specialists, educators from outside the forestry sector, as well as representatives of the public.

46. The Joint Committee should explore ways to promote the International Day of the Forest (21st of March) as an opportunity to communicate and stimulate the coordination of national efforts in this respect.

47. The Committee should ensure that the conclusions and recommendations of the seminar are brought to the attention of political decision makers, including the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Recommendations addressed to research organizations and to IUFRO

48. More research is needed to fill the present gaps in information concerning the nature and the effectiveness of public relations in forestry, in particular with regard to electronic mass media like television and the internet. Evaluation research should be initiated on environmental education activities.

49. Research should assist forestry to understand the attitudes, emotions, motivation, and knowledge in relation to forestry among the public and thus contribute to developing customer profiles and to adapt communication better.

50. Research institutions should reflect on their own communication strategies and ensure that their research results are readily accessible in forms and through media that are adapted to different user groups.

51. A study visit took place on Tuesday 9 October for a full day. The highlights of the visit are summarized in the Annex of the report.

Other business (item 10)

52. In the morning of 11 October, an 'open space= workshop session was organized. Nine themes were discussed based on proposals by the seminar participants:

- \$ 8 theses about forest communication;
- \$ Communication about forestry through the media;
- \$ How can more resources be mobilized for forestry communication?

- \$ The subject of sustainability in forest-related environmental education;
- \$ The training of instructors for forest-related environmental education;
- \$ How and with which partners can forest-related environmental education be developed further;
- \$ Forest-related environmental education oriented towards the forest or the towards the human being?
- \$ Future tools for forest-related environmental education;
- \$ Public participation processes.

The findings of the working groups will be summarized in the proceedings of the seminar to be published by the host country.

53. The Chairman of the Joint Committee, Mr. Höfle, warmly thanked the organizers on behalf of the Committee and of participants for the hospitality and the excellent organization. Many participants were going away from it with clearer concepts and new ideas. Among the staff involved in servicing the seminar, he especially thanked Ms. Kind of the ECE/FAO Timber Section for her contribution to this seminar and for the many years of dedicated work behind the scenes. Her efforts had often been critical to ensure the timeliness and quality of Joint Committee activities and products.

54. In his closing remarks, Mr. Schärer, the Director of the Swiss Forest Agency, stated that the expectations he had formulated at the opening had been met. An important conclusion of the seminar was that foresters were not marketing themselves well. They were not using the potential of their role as mediators between forests and society. Job profiles for foresters clearly had changed and communication had become a core function. This called for adaptations in job descriptions and training. Education needed to be approached professionally, and, like communication in general required cooperation with professionals from other disciplines. He called on all participants to spread the message of the seminar. For his part he announced that the Agency would publicize the results and that it would organize a national follow-up meeting. Contacts with the education sector would be established at the political level. He had already instructed the responsible unit in the Agency to draw up an action programme in the light of the Seminar conclusions that would define the areas in which the Agency would provide support for forestry communication efforts.

Adoption of the report (item 11)

55. The seminar adopted the conclusions and recommendation prepared by the secretariat with a number of modifications which have been incorporated into this text. It approved the other parts of the report with the provision that the secretariat would incorporate changes communicated by participants. The latter have been reflected in the above text.

Annex

Study visits

The study visits organized on Tuesday 9 October revolved around the theme of “information/experience” in the morning and around “interaction/public participation” in the afternoon. They were designed to enable participants to attend an effective media event, to experience typical instruments and methods in environmental education and to gain insights into the blend of interests of forest users and owners in the Emmental and the way the forest service interacts with the different groups.

The first activity of the day was a visit in the village of Arnisäge where representatives of the community, the local authority and the school gave an introduction to the project ‘Sustainability Trail Arnisäge’ (see below). The introduction was organized in the form of a dynamic press conference with a professional moderator soliciting short statements and animating a debate among the various actors.

Environmental education

Participants were divided into four groups to participate in simulated environmental education activities on: (1) The Sustainability Trail of Arnisäge, (2) Mountain forest training, (3) Animal tracks and (4) Sensory experience of the forest.

Messrs M. Stuber and S. Eggenber led the visit of “*The Sustainability Trail of Arnisäge*”. It is a follow-up project to the Rotiholz Nature Trail established in the 1970s, which had become obsolete. The new project was to provide more opportunities for activity and actual experience than the old trail. It has four sections, each of which is dealing with a different aspect of sustainability: the Senses Trail (sustainability made tangible), the History Trail (sustainable experiences from the wooden age), the Tree Trail (trees for generations) and the Woodcutter’s tack (sustainable timber production in the Rotiholz forest). Much of the design and construction work was done by local school classes and by volunteers of the Lions Club Wormental with assistance from scientific advisers and artists. The Club, along with local sponsors, also provided the funding. The design of the project started in 1996. A first section was finished in 1998, the next two sections in 1999 and the last during the summer of 2001. In addition, a path was opened in 2001 explaining the devastations of the hurricane “Lothar” which also hit the trail in December 2000.

The *Mountain Forest Training Centre* was introduced by its founder Mr. C. Leuthold. It applies an action-oriented approach where young people are involved in important forestry activities in a hands-on way. The training centre emphasizes that although forest education is not primarily about the forest itself but about the healthy development of young people, substantial benefits from such engagement will pay back to the forest and forestry. Children and adolescents who have had an enjoyable contact with the forest and who have learned about its nature and its benefits, are likely to show respect and understanding as grown up citizens and parents. After a short introduction of practical handling of axes and hand saws, the participants in the group were taught how to fell a big spruce by hand.

Ms Marlis Labudde-Dimmler led the group on *Animal tracks*. The programme was a simulation of a half-day course as she would have given it to a group of 15-20 students, typically from urban areas and aged 9-12 years. The programme started with a circle in which participants with their eyes closed passed around different objects that are tracks in that they reveal the presence of certain forest animals. The objects were then displayed and a story told about each of them. In a third activity participants were asked to gather 'tracks' themselves in the surrounding forests and the finds were identified and discussed. Two games were shown which are used often: in the first, magicians catch students and convert them into animals. These can be liberated by showing, but not telling, other players into which species they had been converted. The second game illustrates the impact of joggers and free-running dogs on raw deer. One group acts as a flock of raw deer resting when joggers and dogs all of a sudden appear and chase the animals who try to escape through the undergrowth. The final point was an inspection of an extensive system of badger holes in the vicinity. For programmes like this a fee of Sfr 150-200/morning is charged. There is no public funding for such activities and a tradition of free service in environmental education makes the selling of professional service and uphill struggle.

The fourth workshop, lead by Ms. T. Rauch, on *sensory experiences of the forest* aimed to encourage the participants to become creative and to transform concrete experiences from the forest into symbolic images. The idea behind is to adopt sustainable strategies which can only be effective if complexities of reality are approached through human beings as a whole. Analytical thinking alone does not suffice to understand reality. It has to be grasped with all faculties, including intuition. However, society prefers and promotes analytical, scientific thinking. It is therefore necessary to focus on a holistic approach which the workshop intended to do.

In the afternoon, the group was transferred to another site in the valley where the forest planning process and its interaction with the public were presented by the district foresters Messrs W. Marti and R. Bill. Representatives of interest groups explained what their position had been and what they thought of the outcomes of the planning process. This included the local government with a concern over erosion and torrent control; local private forest owners and economic constraints on harvesting; a conservation group wanting to protect habitat of rare species and sports clubs such as orienteering runners seeking to minimize restrictions to access. The forest service itself had wanted to build a road to be able to extract timber economically from overaged forests with standing volumes of more than 600 m³/ha and very large individual trees. By and large, participatory forestry planning has been successful in this case in reconciling different interests.

The wooden bridge in Schüpbach

As a last activity of the day, the group visited the new wooden bridge in Schüpbach. It is one of the largest of its kind in Europe and a demonstration of what modern engineering in wooden structures can accomplish at competitive prices.
