



**FIRST 10 YEARS
OF
WOODEMA, i.a.**

ZAGREB 2017

Denis JELAČIĆ

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WoodEMA, i.a.

Zagreb, 2017

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PREFACE

WoodEMA, i.a. is an international association for economics and management in wood processing and furniture manufacturing established in the year 2007. It all officially started in Zalesina near Delnice, in Croatia, where 14 enthusiasts from 5 Departments for management, trade and economics from 5 Faculties of Forestry and Wood Science and Technology in 5 Central European countries met to start some association to help them and their colleagues and assistants to develop. At the time it had some un-official history with different attempts to establish some kind of association among departments dealing with same issues on different Faculties in different countries all over Europe.

Today, 10 years after, WoodEMA, i.a. is an official and recognized international association with more than 80 registered members from 17 countries and 3 continents. More than 50 members constantly participate in various activities.

This book is the way to give a presentation of what happened in the first 10 years with the association and make some kind of promotion of the association to potential future members and participants on our annual conferences, projects, workshops and other activities. Hopefully, a lot more of such books will be printed in the number of years to come.

WoodEMA, i.a. Secretary

Denis Jelačić

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1. FOUNDING OF WoodEMA, i.a.

WoodEMA, i.a., the International Association for Economics and Management in Wood Processing and Furniture Manufacturing, was founded ten years ago, in September 2007, in a small village of Zalesina near Delnice, Croatia, at the educational and experimental forest facility, belonging to the Faculty of Forestry, University of Zagreb, used as a meeting venue. The initial meeting lasted for over two days and was attended by 14 scientists from 6 Departments dealing in economics, management, trade and marketing, from 5 Central European Faculties. They exchanged thoughts, ideas and experience with a single goal - to establish an official association beneficial to all future members both in their scientific and professional life.

The participants, who already knew each other, discussed their involvement in different official and unofficial associations, speaking from personal experience as their members. Some of those unofficial associations can be considered the forerunners of WoodEMA, i.a. So, although, WoodEMA, was officially set up in 2007, its seeds were planted much earlier.

1.1. Inter-departmental meetings

Central and Eastern European Faculties of Forestry and Wood Science and Technology were, and still are, organized differently from those in Western Europe. Western European faculties usually have Wood Science and Technology as one department within a Faculty of Forestry or Faculty of Technology, while Central and Eastern European faculties have separate sections of Forestry and of Wood Science and Technology. Some of them, such as Zvolen in Slovakia, have separate Faculties. All these faculties or sections at the faculties have departments for economics, management, marketing, trade or some similar departments among those for technology, material, design, furniture and others.

Scientists and professors from the departments for economics, management, and marketing, were connected on personal basis. They knew each other and they often attended the same conferences all over Europe. Some of them collaborated with subject – related faculties abroad. They formed a kind of network, but on individual basis only:

- Ivan Aleksov and Avdo Redžić from Belgrade, Serbia,
- Jože Kovač and Franc Bizjak from Ljubljana, Slovenia,
- Wojciech Lis and Andrzej Matuszewski from Poznan, Poland,
- Petar Vasilev from Skopje, Macedonia,
- Waclaw Szymanowski from Warszawa, Poland,
- Georgi Kjutschukov from Sofia, Bulgaria,
- Julius Klein and Jiri Kniže from Zvolen, Slovakia,
- Mladen Figurić and Rudolf Sabadi from Zagreb, Croatia,
- Karoly Meszaros from Sopron, Hungary,

all of them professors at their Faculties, forming a horizontal network, while their younger associates formed a vertical part of the network.

During the late 70s of the 20th century, in former Yugoslavia, there were four Faculties of Forestry, situated in the capitals of former Yugoslav republics, now independent countries – Belgrade (Serbia), Ljubljana (Slovenia), Skopje (Macedonia) and Zagreb (Croatia). Professors, scientists and Heads of departments for management and economics, usually met each other at some forestry, or wood science and technology meetings, or at conferences but attending different presentations.

There was need for setting up some kind of inter-departmental meetings of departments dealing with economics, management, marketing and trade in forestry and wood industry exclusively. At one of their meetings, hold at the beginning of the 80s, Professors Kovač and Bizjak from Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Professors Sabadi and Figurić from Zagreb, Croatia, agreed to start a series of inter-departmental meetings in order to share their professional experience, to introduce newly employed assistants, to agree on some joined projects and publications to be issued and to discuss other issues of common interest. The first meeting was held in Zagreb, at the Faculty of Forestry, in 1985.

Two years later, Professors Aleksov and Redžić from Belgrade, Serbia and Professor Vasilev from Skopje, Macedonia decided that their Departments would join the group, so the Inter-departmental meeting grew into a Yugoslav Inter-chair meeting. The meetings were held each year in a different former Yugoslav republic, at a different venue:

- 1st Yugoslav Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Zagreb, Croatia 1985
- 2nd Yugoslav Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Čateške toplice, Slovenia 1986

- 3rd Yugoslav Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Zagreb, Croatia 1987
- 4th Yugoslav Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Goč, Serbia 1988

In Goč, in 1988, Skopje, Macedonia, was chosen to be the host of the next meeting. It was held in Struga, Macedonia. The Macedonians decided to invite their friends and colleagues from Višeslesnotehnički Institut (High Wood Technology Institute) Sofia, Bulgaria, turning the Yugoslav Inter-chair meeting into an International Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in wood industry.



Figure 1. Inter-Chair Meeting 1990

Over the next three years the International Inter-chair meetings were held as follows:

- 1st International (and 5th Yugoslav) Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Struga, Macedonia 1989

- 2nd International (and 6th Yugoslav) Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Ljubljana, Slovenia 1990
- 3rd International (and 7th Yugoslav) Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Zalesina, Croatia 1991

The number of Departments from different countries grew over the years, so in Struga, Macedonia in 1989 there were five Departments from two countries – former Yugoslavia (nowadays it would be four countries – Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia) and Bulgaria. In Ljubljana, Slovenia, in 1990, those countries were joined by former Czechoslovakia (from Zvolen, Slovakia nowadays). In Zalesina, Croatia 1991, participants from Sopron, Hungary and Saint Petersburg, Russia also attended.

Practically at the same time, at the beginning of the 80s of 20th century, at the Department for economics and management of the Faculty of Agriculture (Akademia Rolnicza) in Poznan, Poland, Professor Lis and his associates set up a conference named Forum Ekonomiczne (Economic Forum), inviting colleagues from the Polish faculties, and later from former Czechoslovakia, to join him. The publication, based on the papers presented in the conference, was named Intercathedra. The first issue was printed in 1984. Since then, the Economic Forum was held at the same venue, Laski near Poznan, where the Faculty of Agriculture has its training centre.

During wartime in 1991 and 1992, the former Yugoslavia dissolved into six independent states, whereas Slovakia and Czech Republic went their separate ways in 1993, by reaching a peaceful agreement. Regardless of political upheaval in Eastern Europe, the Inter-chair meetings continued to be held. The Department for company management on Wood Science and Technology Faculty at the Technical University in Zvolen, Slovakia, maintained close links with Zagreb and Poznan, setting up the Inter-chair meeting, as a part of Economic Forum in Laski, Poland. Since then, those two meetings and conferences were held separately, but on partnership bases. Thus, most of the participants attended both conferences and meetings the same year. Over the next few years, the work pattern remained the same. From 1992 to 1996, the International Inter-chair meeting was held each year in spring, with rotating venues, and the Economic Forum was held each year in September, in Laski, Poland.

- 7th Economic Forum with International Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Laski, Poland 1992
- 4th International Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Čateške Toplice, Slovenia 1993
- 5th International Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Zalesina, Croatia 1994

- 6th International Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Zvolen, Slovakia 1995
- 7th International Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries – Ljubljana, Slovenia 1996

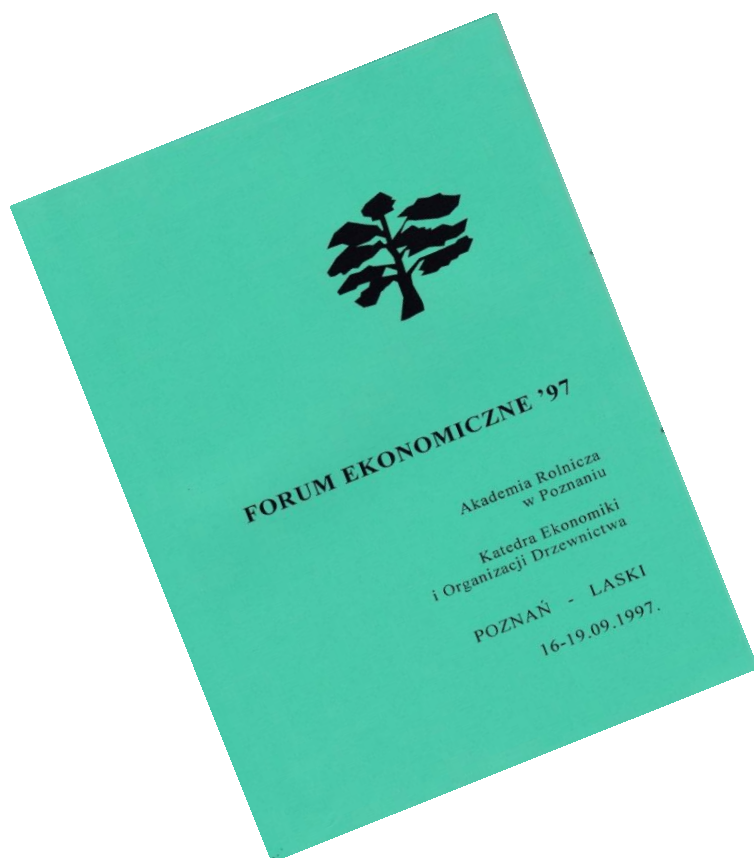


Figure 2. Economic Forum 1997

1.2. International Association of Chairs for Organization in Wood Industry – IACOWI

In 1996, at the Economic Forum meeting in Laski, Poland, the heads of Departments from Poznan (Professor Lis), Trnava (Professor Linczenyi), Zagreb (Professor Figurić) and Zvolen (Assistant Professor Rašner) decided to set up association for Departments dealing with economics and management in wood

industry, giving structure to those inter-chair meetings. The association they agreed upon, was named the International Association of Chairs for Organization in Wood Industry - IACOWI, with the aim to replace former inter-department meetings and conferences. As for the logo, they decided to use the one from the Intercathedra bulletin, issuing extended articles from the Economic Forum, published by Poznan faculty.



Figure 3. IACOWI logo and name

IACOWI was primarily meant to be the association made up of Departments, allowing each member of each Department to become the member of IACOWI.

Initially, IACOWI was supposed to be an open, non-profitable and non-political association, open to every Department for economics, management, organization, marketing, trade and similar field of expertise in the forestry and wood industry. Professor Figurić from Zagreb was chosen to be the first president. It was decided that each president would have one-year mandate.

The invitation letter was sent to Departments all over Europe and, surprisingly, 15 different Departments from ten countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine) accepted the invitation and joined IACOWI. The Czech Department joined the following year, while the Austrian and German Departments decided not to join but to attend on and off. The following year, 1997, the first IACOWI conference and meeting were held in Stubičke Toplice, Croatia. It was the 8th International Inter-chair meeting of organizers and economists in timber industries and 12th Economic Forum in one joint conference.

In 1998, IACOWI conference was held in Sopron, Hungary, and the four previously mentioned professors (Lis, Linczenyi, Figurić and Rašner), surprised and pleased by the number of positive responses from 15 Departments, decided that it was high time to draw up a statute (byelaws), describing the nature of the Association and how it was to operate, to change some pre-agreed rules, and to improve the image of the Association by making it more recognizable.

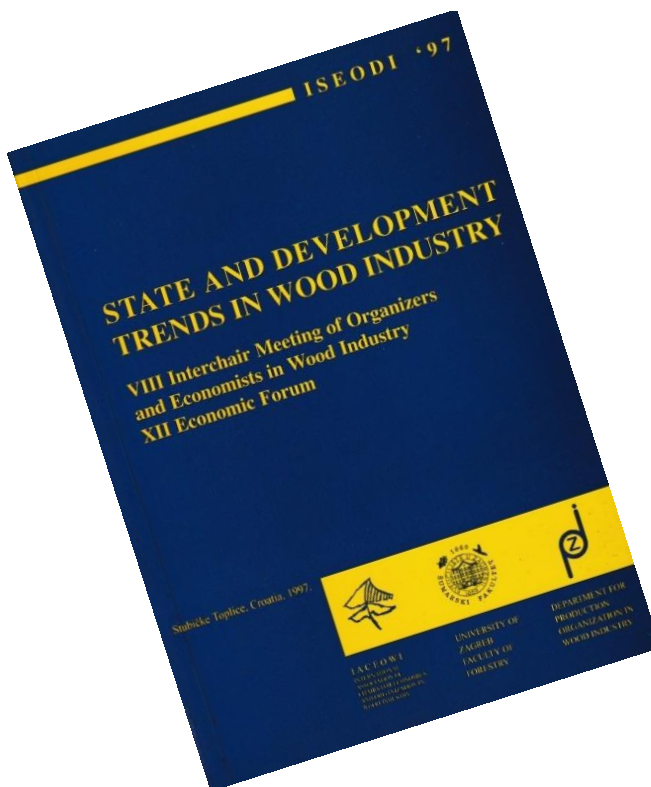


Figure 4. IACOWI conference 1997

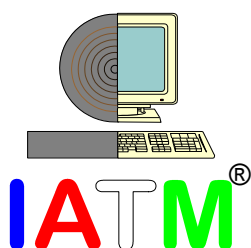
1.3. International Association for Technology Management - Wood – IATM

The invitation letter for IACOWI was therefore rewritten. The principal rules were altered:

- the Association was not open anymore, but closed among 16 Departments;
- the Association would no longer be free-of-charge, but each Department should pay € 2.000 for membership;
- elections would not be open any longer and there were only four persons (by name) who could be in the presidency of the Association and just 3 of them (Lis, Rašner or Figurić) could be elected president (Linczenyi would be the member of the presidency, but he could never be president since he originally was not from wood science and technology branch).

- the name of the Association and the logo were changed to International Association for Technology Management – Wood (IATM).

The invitation letter was sent out again to these same 16 Departments for approval. 4 out of 16 Departments answered, only 1 of them accepted all new regulations, while two Departments agreed to be members, but refused to pay membership fee. One Department responded negatively. So, IATM came into existence, but only unofficially, based on the given words of agreement.



***INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT - WOOD***

Figure 5. IATM logo and name

From 1999 to 2004 only 4 IATM conferences were held (1999 – Poreč, Croatia; 2000 – Zvolen, Slovakia; 2001 – Preddvor, Slovenia; 2004 – Ohrid, Macedonia), although it was agreed that each conference organized by any of the four Presidency Departments (Zagreb, Zvolen, Trnava and Poznan) could use the name and the logo of IATM for any conference they organized, at home or abroad. At the 2001 conference, in Preddvor, there was already much disagreement among IATM Presidency members: two of them came to Slovenia and two refused to attend.

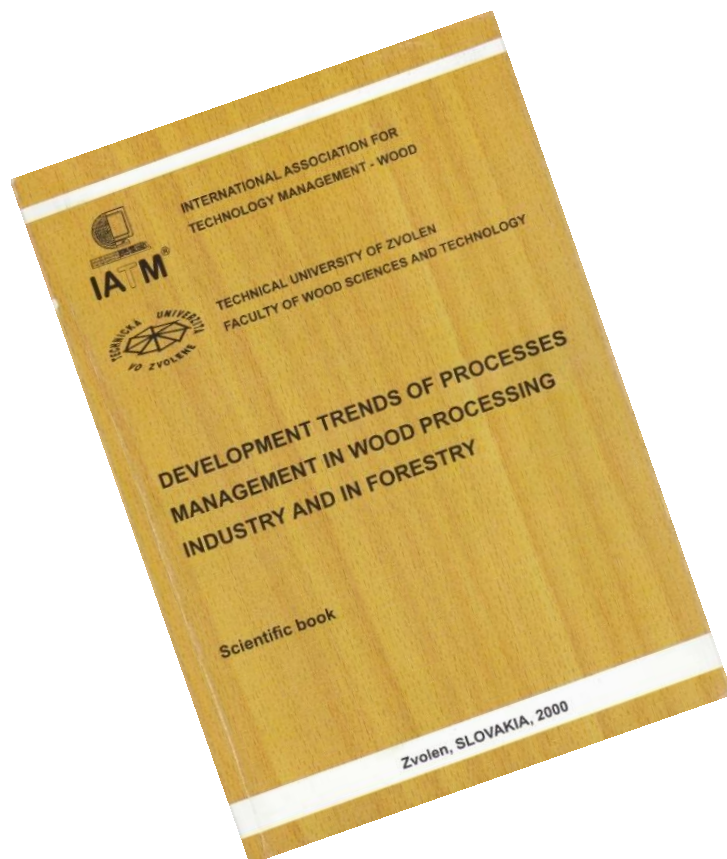


Figure 6. IATM conference 2000

The following year, 2002, the conference should have been organized in Prague, Czech Republic, but the Faculty in Prague did not want to take on the responsibility, notifying all about their decision just a few months prior to the conference. Moreover, the Presidency members could neither agree on Prague as a host, nor for a back up host. Initial problems set aside, the conference organized in Ohrid, Macedonia, hosted by the Faculty of Forestry in Skopje, Macedonia, was attended only by one member of the IATM Presidency to greet the colleagues.



Figure 7. IATM conference 2004

As agreed earlier, from 1999 to 2007, the IATM name and logo occasionally appeared on books of proceedings. Practically, IATM, the unofficial international association for managers in forestry and wood industry, ceased to exist in the same way as it came to life– unofficially by verbal agreement.

2. SETTING UP OF WoodEMA, i.a*.

During the period of “rise and fall” of IATM, especially regarding the reasons that made IATM relatively unsuccessful, the next generation of professors and scientists discussed the possibilities and needs to establish some kind of sustainable association, which could help in dealing with relevant issues. The need to start a formal group was stressed out at each meeting, conference or workshop, at PhD defences, or at some such event.

During the discussions, a lot of reasons causing the failure of IATM were recognized. Most of them were direct “mistakes” made by IATM presidency, but not all of them. The main mistakes, spotted by practically all involved, were made by IACOWI and IATM. The presidency of IATM made a major mistake when deciding to turn an open, free-of-charge, non-profitable and non-political association into closed group, with a huge membership fee. So, no one was allowed to join in (“... because IATM doesn’t want to be IUFRO...” – Presidency of IATM), and all the member departments had to pay a € 2,000 membership fee to an unofficial association, not knowing on whose bank account, what were the benefits of such membership fee, nor what were the member’s rights and obligations.

It seemed that member departments had absolutely no rights, since the Presidency was an exclusive small group of four persons, one of which could never be the president, implying that nobody had any voting rights. Consequently, there was no point in being a member or paying any membership fee. Furthermore, each department had a different number of people; some of them were big and had close to 20 members, while others were small with 3 or 4 members, meaning that the smaller the organisation is, the higher are the fees, and vice versa.

The Head of each department was the only person to be contacted with by IATM, giving him the exclusive right to decide on who was to attend IATM conference, or who was to be denied the permission. It meant that some people wanting to attend the conference were excluded, if their Head of department bore any grudge against them. So, it became obvious that the departments themselves were solely responsible for the failure of IATM. During that time, many departments went through organisational changes, including leadership, some of them were divided into two departments, some

* i.a. stands for “international association”.

of them were relocated from Faculties of Forestry to some other faculty (Faculty of Economics) or Institute.

All those reasons indicated the need to start a new association, built on totally different basis. The group of people, sharing the same interests and similar ideas, agreed to meet in order to set up association to benefit each and everyone, avoiding all previous problems.

One of the legacies of the first generation's network was the introduction of new assistants and scientists into the group of people at inter-department meetings. In the meantime, these scientists and assistants were promoted to the assistant professors, professors, vice-deans and heads of departments. They established the next level of network among them, conducting joint research, writing articles and books together, and visiting each other on some programs and projects. They all knew it was time to make a positive move.

The first move was made in September, 2007, by Assistant Professor Darko Motik and Associate Professor Denis Jelačić, from Department for production management, Faculty of Forestry, Zagreb, Croatia, inviting their network friends and colleagues to join them at the meeting in Zalesina near Delnice, in the training centre for forestry, belonging to Faculty of Forestry, Zagreb, to help them in setting up the new association. The invitations, sent to five more departments, were all accepted; 14 persons attended the meeting:

- Darko Motik, Denis Jelačić and Andreja Pirc (Department for production management, Faculty of Forestry, Zagreb, Croatia);
- Josef Drabek and Marek Potkany (Department of business economy, Faculty of Wood Sciences and Technology, Zvolen, Slovakia);
- Hubert Paluš, Hana Matova, Radomila Hornakova and Anna Dovčikova (Department of Marketing, Trade and World Forestry, Faculty of Wood Sciences and Technology, Zvolen, Slovakia);
- Leon Oblak and Jože Kropivšek (Department of Wood Science and Technology, Biotechnical Faculty, Ljubljana, Slovenia);
- Branko Glavonjić and Slavica Petrović (Department of Organization and Economics in Wood Industry, Faculty of Forestry, Belgrade, Serbia);
- Živka Meloska (at the time Department of Economics and Organization in Wood Industry, Faculty of Forestry, Skopje, Macedonia – nowadays Faculty of Design and Technology of Furniture and Interior, Skopje, Macedonia).

The meeting began on September 27th, 2007, in the afternoon, with the intention to let it last as long as it was necessary, probably until the end of the weekend.

However, the next day, on Friday, September 28th, in the early evening everything was agreed on. Most of the important decisions were made quickly, while some details were discussed a bit longer. All the participants knew what they wanted to do and how it should be done; fortunately, all participants were of the same or similar opinion.



Figure 9. Faculty of Forestry, Zagreb, Training centre building in Zalesina

All participants wanted to build up an efficient network of professional contacts. Although many of them had already collaborated with each other in writing common articles, issuing a scientific book or a textbook, giving lectures at the partner faculties, visiting professor agreements or bilateral agreements between departments, everything was, more or less, on individual basis.

The first part of the meeting in Zalesina was dedicated to creating a data base of interested scientists and teachers, with exact information on:

- their fields of interest,
- the conditions they had to meet to be promoted to higher level in particular countries,
- the number and type of publications they needed to meet those conditions,
- the amount of time needed to meet those conditions, and the time left to do so,
- subjects they taught on their faculties

- other issues needed to be in the database



Figure 10. Founders of WoodEMA, i.a., September 28th 2007

As they were all members of Faculties of Forestry or Wood Science and Technology, they agreed on creating a database only for specialists in those particular branches. The database could later be offered to anyone interested in participating, even to non-specialists in those two branches, just to keep in touch with them. So, at first, that database was offered to Faculties of Forestry in Brno, Czech Republic, Poznan, Poland and Sopron, Hungary, and afterwards to Sofia, Bulgaria.

The second part of the meeting dealt with the structure of newly established level of co-operation. Would it operate on the individual basis, as up to then, would it be bilateral between departments, would it be reconstructed IATM, or would it be something new? All participants agreed that something new and totally different from IATM was needed. Almost instantly, all participants decided that the new association had to be official, registered, with known address, e-mail address, web site, bank account and everything else required to establish the association.

All the suggestions and ideas were similar or almost identical. All different ideas were discussed in details. The main document of the new association, the Statutes, was carefully prepared. As the team needed draw up the Statutes according to legal requirements, Anna Dovčikova, as a lawyer, was very helpful in that area.

When all the conditions and regulations for the association were made, a new name was needed. There were many suggestions (ME-wood, IVPMEA, W-EMA, EMA wood, IMEWA, GOOD WOOD, ETINP, WETOMA, perWood i.a., WOOD EMA) and the first choice was perWood, and, in the case the name was already used, the second choice was WoodEMA, i.a.. The new association also needed a new logo. Hana Matova suggested her brother, a professional designer, to create the logo. A few days after the meeting, the suggestions were sent to all participants to be evaluated.



Figure 11. Logo designed for perWood, i.a.

At the same time the logos arrived, the research regarding names perWood and WoodEMA was done, and since perWood was the name already used, WoodEMA, i.a. was chosen and it became the name of the newly established association, and the logo was consequently chosen. So, the full name of the Association is **International Association for Economics and Management in Wood Processing and Furniture Manufacturing, WoodEMA, i.a.**



Figure 12. Logo designed for WoodEMA, i.a.

The main goals of the association are as follows:

1. The exchange of knowledge and research results among members by organizing conferences and publishing articles in journals and proceedings
2. The support of the development of scientific and professional organizations in Association's fields of expertise
3. The scientific and professional education by organizing scientific and professional symposiums
4. Collecting and exchanging of market, technological and technical data

The issues that the Association deals with, the fields that the Association is covering are: economics, marketing, trade, organization, production management, business management, human resources, quality assurance, IT in management and other similar issues.

As agreed at the very beginning of the meeting, WoodEMA, i.a. is open, international, non-profitable and non-political. Anyone dealing with the issues close to Association's main objectives is welcomed. The application process has two steps. The first one is to fill in the application form and to send it to general secretary, who asks the Executive Board for approval. The second is approval to be accepted and confirmed by the General Assembly.



Figure 13. WoodEMA, i.a. founders at work

The Association is open, meaning that every single member has the right to vote and to be elected, so each member's vote counts for one vote. Each member has the right to be elected as a member of the Executive Board or for any position in the Association. The bodies of the Association are similar to those as in Lions clubs – General Assembly, Executive Board, President (as a member of the Executive Board), Candidate for President (as a member of the Executive Board) and General Secretary. Each member of the Executive Board, including President and Candidate for President, and General Secretary (not a member of Executive Board) has a two-year mandate. After two years, the General Secretary and four members of the Executive Board are to be elected, while the candidate for President becomes President automatically, confirmed by General Assembly. Each member of the Association is a member of the General Assembly.



Figure 14. Moments of rest after brain-storming

With everything prepared, the meeting's participants decided that Zalesna meeting would be the Constituting Assembly of the WoodEMA, i.a., so they decided to vote for the Executive Board members, President, candidate for President and General Secretary. The members and the President were picked by ballot. The first 5 members elected to the Executive Board were: Associate Professor Živka Meloska (Macedonia), Associate Professor Branko Glavonjić (Serbia), Assistant Professor Leon Oblak (Slovenia), Assistant Professor Hubert Paluš (Slovakia) and Assistant Professor Darko Motik (Croatia). Associate Professor Denis Jelačić was elected for General Secretary. Executive Board suggested and General Assembly confirmed that the first President of WoodEMA, i.a. was to be Leon Oblak, and Candidate for President is Hubert Paluš.

First 10 years of WoodEMA, i.a.



Leon Oblak
President



Hubert Paluš
Candidate for President



Branko Glavonjić



Živka Meloska
Executive Board members



Darko Motik



Denis Jelačić
General Secretary

Figure 15. WoodEMA, i.a. management September 28th 2007 – December 31st 2009

3. WoodEMA, i.a. MANAGEMENT

3.1. September 28th 2007 – December 31st 2009

The first management of WoodEMA, i.a., along with the founders of the Association, had only two major tasks in the early stage of the Association's development:

- to set up the association so it could work properly and officially,
- to attract new members.

The setup of the Association was mainly the management's task, while attracting new members was, and still is, the task of each member of WoodEMA, i.a..

WoodEMA, i.a. was established at the end of September 2007, and the General Secretary had to do all the paperwork to register the Association, open the bank account, create the memorandum of Association, obtain a tax number and establish the visual identity of the Association to make it official. It was decided that each member of the Executive Board and General Secretary would have a two-year mandate, officially starting on January 1st and ending on December 31st the following year. Thus, the first management of WoodEMA, i.a. served the mandate from January 1st 2008 until December 31st 2009.

Notwithstanding the rapid development of new information technology, it seems that face-to-face meetings still matter. Therefore, it was decided that Annual conference of WoodEMA, i.a. would be organized each year in different country, and that the annual General Assembly meeting would be organized at the same venue, but the evening before the conference, with the aim to attract as many members as possible to attend both the conference and the meeting..

Beside the General Assembly meeting, the Executive Board holds its own meetings at least once a year, the day before the General Assembly meeting. If necessary, the Executive Board meetings can be organized several times a year. These extra meetings of the Executive Board can be organized in person, by Skype, by phone or any other way.

During two official years of the first Executive Board's mandate, they held their personal meetings – two before the conferences and one in Skopje, Macedonia during the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Faculty of Forestry in Skopje. During these three meetings Executive Board discussed issues such as membership fees, new

member applications, activities on preparations of annual conferences and the possibility of starting the WoodEMA journal.

Starting with 12 members from 5 countries (out of 14 founders two female members decided to resign from membership in WoodEMA, namely Anna Dovčikova as a lawyer and Radomila Hornakova, who had left the Faculty in Zvolen to work in a company in Prague), the Association grew to 25 members, from 5 European countries (Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia) plus the USA.

While serving the mandate, the management of WoodEMA organized two conferences and two General Assembly meetings. The first General Assembly meeting was held in Belgrade, Serbia, on June 25th, 2008, and the second one was held in Šibenik, Croatia, on October 7th 2009, when a new management team was elected.

3.2. January 1st 2010 – December 31st 2011

The second management team of WoodEMA, i.a. was elected in Šibenik, in October 2009, with its mandate starting on January 1st the following year. The Association was established, all the official documents had already been made and it was right time for the Association to start thinking about new projects. The main goal was still to attract new members, even those who were not directly involved in forestry or wood processing and furniture manufacturing branch, but came from different areas of work (management, economics, trade, communications ...), having contacts with forestry and wood industry branch through their work. However, the decision was made that each article, published in the book of proceedings or in scientific book issued by WoodEMA, i.a., had to contain data from forestry or forest based industry or implementation in them.

During the period from 2010 to 2011, the number of members was increased by 13 newcomers, to reach the number of 38 members. Although half of them did not come from forestry or wood industry, but from communications and management, they agreed that their articles had to be connected with WoodEMA, i.a. “core” branches.

At the beginning of 2010 WoodEMA, i.a. had members from 5 European countries and the USA, and by the end of 2011 the number of countries was increased by 2 Central European countries – Czech Republic and Poland. We were pleasantly surprised, but equally pleased, to find out that the new members came from Prague (CZE) and Czestochowa (POL) and not from Brno (CZE) and Poznan (Poland) as was expected.

First 10 years of WoodEMA, i.a.



Hubert Paluš
President



Darko Motik
Candidate for President



Branko Glavonjić



Richard Vlosky
Executive Board members



Leon Oblak



Denis Jelačić
General Secretary

Figure 16. WoodEMA, i.a. management January 1st 2010 – December 31st 2011

While serving their mandate, the Executive Board and General Assembly spent most of the time dealing with printed matters as well as with attracting new members. The initiative to start the WoodEMA journal was called off, since issuing a journal proved to be a difficult task for such a new and relatively small Association, requiring a lot of articles, reviewers, editorial board members and money. Therefore, the idea to join the Intercathedra journal, issued by Faculty of Agriculture in Poznan, Poland, and consequently took it over by a bigger association, was considered but not accepted by the members at General Assembly. Nevertheless, during this period WoodEMA, i.a. issued a printed brochure for each member to hand it out at meetings, conferences or

projects they attend to. The poster was designed and printed to be distributed and displayed at each Faculty by faculty- based members.

3.3. January 1st 2012 – December 31st 2013



Darko Motik
President



Mikulaš Šupin
Candidate for President



Hubert Paluš



Renata Novakova
Executive Board members



Leon Oblak



Denis Jelačić
General Secretary

Figure 17. WoodEMA, i.a. management January 1st 2012 – December 31st 2013

Four WoodEMA, i.a. annual conferences and General Assembly meetings were organized by members and faculties of Forestry or Wood Science and Technology

(Belgrade, Zagreb, Zvolen and Ljubljana). During the third management's mandate, both annual conferences and General Assembly meetings were organized by members and faculties not directly connected with the forestry or wood science and technology branch. The 2012 conference and meetings were organized by Renata Novakova with help from the Faculty for Mass-media Communications in Trnava, Slovakia, while Renata Stasiak-Betlejewska from Faculty for Management in Czestochowa, Poland organized the meetings held in Gdansk, Poland, in 2013.

Considering the number of newly accepted members, the management served their term successfully. In 2012 and 2013, 15 new members were accepted, with 4 of them coming from a new continent, Asia (all 4 of them from India). So, numbers were as follows: 3 continents (Europe – 10 countries, North America - 1, Asia - 1), 12 countries (Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland; USA; India) and 53 members. Nevertheless, many of those new members terminated their membership after two or three years.

During that time WoodEMA, i.a. started issuing a new publications. At the General Assembly meeting, held in Trnava 2012, all members supported the idea of starting to issue WoodEMA scientific books. The first issue was printed in 2013 titled *Markets for Wood and Wooden Products*.

3.4. January 1st 2014 – December 31st 2015

Serving their term, the fourth management increased the Association's membership by accepting 18 new members, thus becoming the largest ever. But only one new member came from a new country, listed in WoodEMA's registry, Switzerland. On the other hand, this was a period of time during which 16 active members gave up their membership. So, we had one European country more, minus one continent – Asia, because all 4 Indian members terminated their membership.

The second WoodEMA scientific book was issued under the name *Investments to Forests and Forest Based Production*, and the WoodEMA Annual Award was introduced and accepted by General Assembly. The rules and regulations regarding the Award were laid down in 2014, but in 2015 some rules had to be changed to avoid potential injustice.

The 4th Executive Board was left again without a female member. All five members of the Executive Board and General Secretary were men. This WoodEMA leadership team, as well as all three previous ones, consisted of the scientists and teachers belonging to the almost same age group, and were practically part of the same

level of wider network. The 2015 was the right moment to start thinking about the future of the Association. The involvement of the younger generation, the next level of leadership and the main roles were discussed. The next generation, all younger people, who were assistants of the professors involved in the wider network, who founded WoodEMA, could provide Association's sustainability by creating their own network.



Mikulaš Šupin
President



Richard Vlosky
Candidate for President



Hubert Paluš



Darko Motik
Executive Board members



Leon Oblak



Denis Jelačić
General Secretary

Figure 18. WoodEMA, i.a. management January 1st 2014 – December 31st 2015

So, Darko Motik and Leon Oblak, two out of three Executive Board members, who took part in running the Association from its very beginning (Hubert Paluš is the

third one), were substituted by new members on the Executive Board, after the General Assembly elections, held in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

3.5. January 1st 2016 – December 31st 2017



Richard Vlosky
President



Andreja Pirc-Barčič
Candidate for President



Hubert Paluš



Jože Kropivšek
Executive Board members



Marek Potkany



Denis Jelačić
General Secretary

Figure 19. WoodEMA, i.a. management January 1st 2016 – December 31st 2017

The current Executive Board is an entirely new departure for WoodEMA. As previously mentioned, the new, younger generation of members is now involved in leadership. Two former assistants, who were among founders, are now assistant

professors and they are the leading persons of their generation – Andreja Pirc-Barčić, Zagreb, Croatia and Marek Potkany, Zvolen, Slovakia.

For the first time the President of WoodEMA did not come from any founding country, not even from Europe. The fact that Professor Richard Vlosky is from the USA, and was a vice-president of the Forest Products Society during 2015 and 2016, meant that WoodEMA had excellent connections with the Forest Products Society, organizing two joint conferences.

For the first time WoodEMA annual conference was not held in Central Europe. In October 2016 it was held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the USA. However, it will be held once again in Europe, in Prague, Czech Republic.

We are absolutely certain to have, once again, a female member on the next Executive Board, as well as to have a female President serving the next mandate.

The 2016 leadership was less successful than previous ones, regarding the number of new members. Only 6 new members were accepted, one of them coming from the USA, and two females from new countries, listed in the registry – Bulgaria and Russia. So, in total, listed in WoodEMA registry are (or were) the members from 3 continents (Europe, North America, Asia), from 15 different countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, United States of America, and India). In the meantime, unfortunately, the scientists from Hungary, Italy, Spain and India terminated their membership. From the very beginning of the Association, 80 members were registered, and 50 of them are still active members of WoodEMA, i.a.

WoodEMA, i.a. – List of members

Reg. No.	Name and Family name	Member from - to	Member from - to
001	Živka MELOSKA (MAC)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
002	Slavica PETROVIĆ (SRB)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
003	Hana MATOVA (SVK)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
004	Andreja PIRC BARČIĆ (CRO)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
005	Denis JELAČIĆ (CRO)	28. 09. 2007. - today	

First 10 years of WoodEMA, i.a.

006	Darko MOTIK (CRO)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
007	Leon OBLAK (SLO)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
008	Jože KROPIVŠEK (SLO)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
009	Josef DRABEK (SVK)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
010	Marek POTKANY (SVK)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
011	Hubert Paluš (SVK)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
012	Branko GLAVONJIĆ (SRB)	28. 09. 2007. - today	
013	Anna ŠATANOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2008. - today	
014	Jan PAROBEK (SVK)	01. 01. 2008. - today	
015	Mikulaš ŠUPIN (SVK)	01. 01. 2008. - today	
016	Pavol GEJDOŠ (SVK)	01. 01. 2008. - today	
017	Renata NOVAKOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2008. - today	
018	Vladislav KAPUTA (SVK)	01. 01. 2008. - today	
019	Kristina KLARIĆ (Bičanić - CRO)	01. 01. 2009. - today	
020	Matej JOŠT (SLO)	01. 01. 2009. - today	
021	Richard VLOSKY (USA)	01. 01. 2009. - today	
022	Anton ZUPANČIĆ (SLO)	01. 01. 2009. - today	
023	Petra GROŠELJ (SLO)	01. 01. 2009. - 31. 12. 2010.	
024	Manja KITEK KUZMAN (SLO)	01. 01. 2009. - 31. 12. 2010.	01. 01. 2015. - 31.12.2015.
025	Jasna HROVATIN (SLO)	01. 01. 2009. - 31. 12. 2010.	

First 10 years of WoodEMA, i.a.

026	Ivana PERIĆ (CRO)	01. 01. 2010. - today	
027	Jozef MATUŠ (SVK)	01. 01. 2010. – 31. 12. 2014.	
028	Katarina DURKOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2010. – today	
029	Ludmila ČABYOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2010. – 31. 12. 2013.	
030	Alena KUSA (SVK)	01. 01. 2011. – 31.12.2013.	
031	Anna ZAUŠKOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2011. – 31. 12. 2014.	
032	Jan DVORAČEK (SVK)	01. 01. 2011. – 31. 12. 2016.	
033	Mariana SEDLIAČIKOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2011. – 31. 12. 2014.	
034	Martina KANOVA (Merkova - SVK)	01. 01. 2011. - today	
035	Ondrej KUSY (SVK)	01. 01. 2011. - 31. 12. 2016.	
036	Renata STASIAK BETLEJEWSKA (POL)	01. 01. 2011. - today	
037	Roman DUDIK (CZE)	01. 01. 2011. - today	
038	Rudolf RYBANSKY (SVK)	01. 01. 2011. – 31. 12. 2014	
039	Andrea HAGOVSKA (SVK)	01. 01. 2012. – 31. 12. 2012.	
040	Alberto Di Taranto (ITA)	01. 01. 2012. – 31. 12. 2014.	
041	Anna ŠTEFANČIKOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2012. – 31. 12. 2013.	
042	Dana PETRANOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2012. – 31. 12. 2014.	
043	Daniela KOLLAROVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2012. – today	
044	Maja MORO (CRO)	01. 01. 2012. - today	
045	Adam TOROK (HUN)	01. 01. 2013. – 31. 12. 2014.	

First 10 years of WoodEMA, i.a.

046	Andrea SUJOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2013. - today	
047	Stjepan POSAVEC (CRO)	01. 01. 2013. - today	
048	Magdalena BIELAWSKA (ESP)	01. 01. 2013. - 31. 12. 2014.	
049	Jana SUJANOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2013. - 31. 12. 2014.	
050	Avinash KOLHATKAR (IND)	01. 01. 2013. - 31. 12. 2013.	
051	Sachin BHALERAO (IND)	01. 01. 2013. - 31. 12. 2013.	
052	Atul BORADE (IND)	01. 01. 2013. - 31. 12. 2013.	
053	Samir DESHMUKH (IND)	01. 01. 2013. - 31. 12. 2013.	
054	Jana SAMAKOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2014. - 31. 12. 2014.	
055	Katarina LESTYANSZKA SKURKOVA (SVK)	01. 01. 2014. - 31. 12. 2014.	
056	Dalibor ŠAFARIK (CZE)	01. 01. 2014. - today	
057	Jana ČERNA (SVK)	01. 01. 2014. - today	
058	Marijan KAVRAN (CRO)	01. 01. 2014. - 31. 12. 2014.	
059	Miloš GEJDOŠ (SVK)	01. 01. 2014. - today	
060	Mira STANKEVIK ŠUMANSKA (MAC)	01. 01. 2014. - today	
061	Petra HLAVAČKOVA (CZE)	01. 01. 2014. - 31. 12. 2016.	
062	Stanislaw BORKOWSKI (POL)	01. 01. 2015. - 31. 12. 2016.	
063	Josef NOVOTNY (CZE)	01. 01. 2015. - today	
064	Ivan AMBROŠ (CRO)	01. 01. 2015. - 31. 12. 2016.	
065	Roy DAMARY (SUI)	01. 01. 2015. - today	

First 10 years of WoodEMA, i.a.

066	Leszek WANAT (POL)	01. 01. 2015. - today	
067	Jan CHUDOBIECKI (POL)	01. 01. 2015. - today	
068	Margarita BEGO (CRO)	01. 01. 2015. - today	
069	Branko LIKER (CRO)	01. 01. 2015. - today	
070	Kristinka LIKER (CRO)	01. 01. 2015. - today	
071	Josef STEFKO (SVK)	01. 01. 2015. - today	
072	Natalia PRYADILINA (RUS)	01. 01. 2016. - today	
073	Robert ULEWICZ (POL)	01. 01. 2016. - today	
074	Donald HODGES (USA)	01. 01. 2016. - today	
075	Rossitsa CHOBANOVA (BUL)	01. 01. 2016. - today	
076	Tomas SVOBODA (CZE)	01. 01. 2016. – 31. 12. 2016.	
077	Milan GAFF (CZE)	01. 01. 2016. – 31. 12. 2016.	
078	Siniša PRVANOV (TUR)	01. 01. 2017. - today	
079	Martin LIESKOVSKY (SVK)	01. 01. 2017. - today	
080	Elżbieta MIKOLAJCZAK (POL)	01. 01. 2017. - today	

4. WoodEMA, i.a. PUBLICATIONS

The Association prints at least one publication a year, since the first WoodEMA, i.a. annual conference, held in 2008. The production of conference proceedings and books is covered in the next chapter. This chapter deals with the additional publications and printed materials.

4.1. WoodEMA, i.a. Brochure / Flyer

As mentioned previously, WoodEMA, i.a. Executive Board and General Assembly decided that the Association was in need of promotional material to be distributed by the members at meetings, conferences or project activities. Such activities were essential to attract potential members to join WoodEMA, i.a., especially in its early stages.

Brochures need to contain basic information about the association, its goals, its activities, its fields of interests and all the necessary contacts (address, e-mail address, web page and phone contacts). They also need to include the application form for any potential member to be able to apply by regular mail, along with the information how to submit it on-line through the WoodEMA, i.a. web page.

The Association provided the printing studio with all the necessary information needed to make a desirable graphic design of the brochure and WoodEMA, i.a. poster.

After being designed and printed, the brochure was handed out to all members at the next General Assembly meeting. Thanks to ardent members, the brochure was distributed at conferences practically all over the world, including Australia, Asia, Africa and North America. The flyer had an A4 format.

4.2. WoodEMA, i.a. Poster

WoodEMA, i.a. poster was designed and printed at the same time as the brochure, but in a smaller edition. They were meant to be distributed to the Departments by faculty-based Association's members. Each Department got one poster to be displayed at visible place. Poster contained essential information about the Association's activities, including the main contact information. Poster had format A0.



Figure 20. WoodEMA, i.a. brochure (flyer) front side



Figure 21. WoodEMA, i.a. brochure (flyer) back side

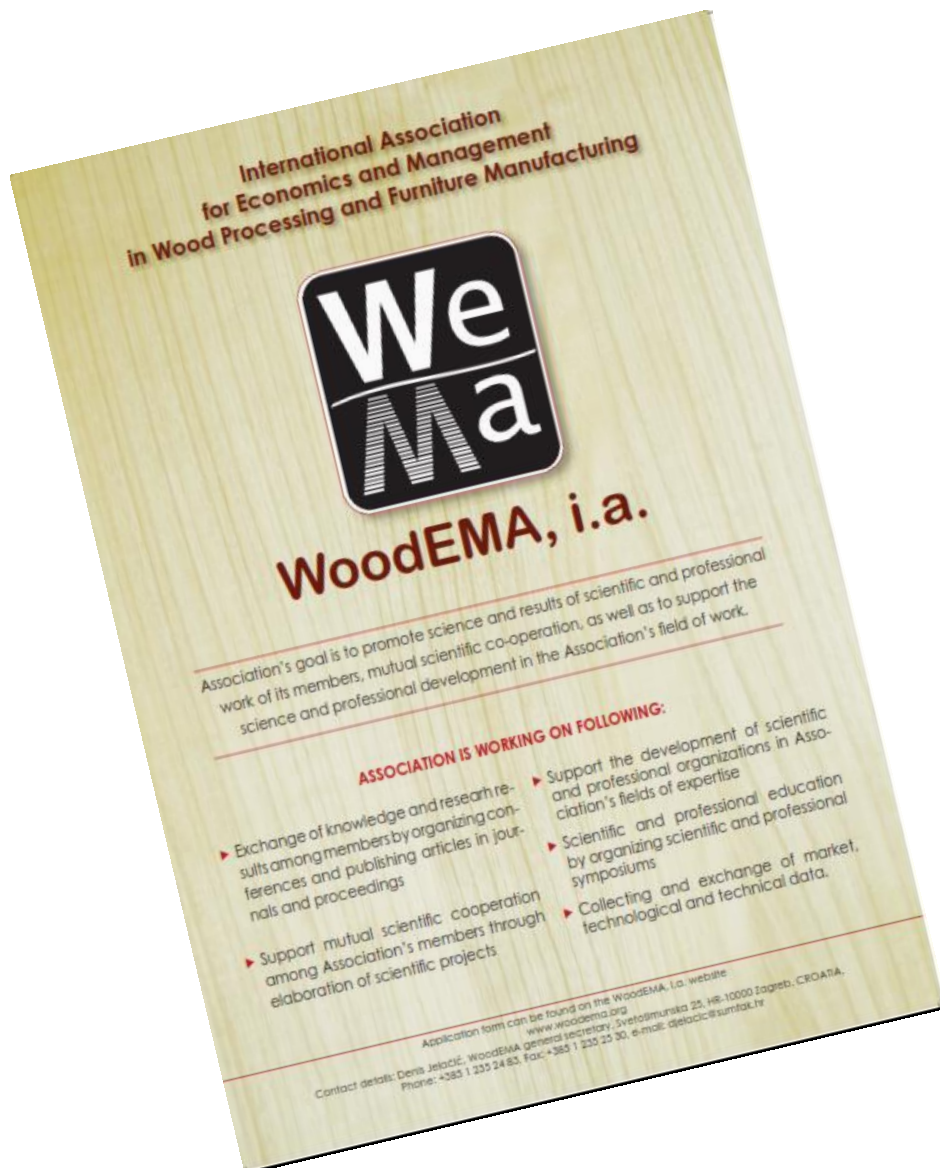


Figure 22. WoodEMA, i.a. poster

4.3. WoodEMA, i.a. Web Page

At the first founding meeting of WoodEMA, i.a. the decision was made to set up the Association's official web page. Jože Kropivšek was elected by the founders to be the web-master of the web page. He was given appointed to create the web page and to find the domain for it. In the beginning, it was on Ljubljana's Biotechnical Faculty

domain, and in a two-year time WoodEMA, i.a. web page obtained its own domain. Since the web master was from Slovenia, the domain of the web page was in Slovenia as well. Jože Kropivšek is web master and all the technical issues regarding web page are done by Anton Zupančič, our member and Jože Kropivšek's colleague in Ljubljana.



Figure 23. WoodEMA, i.a. web page

The web page has been developed over the years and nowadays it provides all the necessary information about WoodEMA, i.a., its activities and all relevant documents and publications, for all those interested in.

4.4. WoodEMA, i.a. Scientific Books

As mentioned previously, WoodEMA, i.a. General Assembly made a decision to issue one scientific book a year, depending on the date of WoodEMA's annual conference. The scientific book would be issued in autumn, with the annual conference hold in spring, to avoid having two publications issued at the same time, allowing members to prepare one article at the time. The articles for annual conferences and articles for scientific books are very different.

It was also decided that Editor-in-chief for scientific books would be the general secretary of the Association, Denis Jelačić. The Editor-in-chief suggests the book's main subject to the Executive Board, and when confirmed, the Editor-in-chief sends the invitation to all members and to wider scientific community to contribute, together with all the instructions for authors, as well as other requirements. All member-contributors could submit an article free of charge but each non-member has to pay for his article to be published. Each author gets five free copies of the book and all members who do not contribute, receive one free copy of the book.

In 2012 it was decided that the first issue of WoodEMA, i.a. scientific book would be printed and distributed in 2013. The main title of the first issue was *MARKETS FOR WOOD AND WOODEN PRODUCTS*. In eight chapters, on 160 pages, 15 authors presented their newest research results on issues connected with marketing communication, statistical prognosis based on performance indicators, roundwood delivery patterns, forest products sales, consumption and sales of primary and secondary wood products, and promotion of biomass and pellets.

The following year, 2014, the second scientific book was issued under the title *INVESTMENTS TO FORESTS AND FOREST BASED PRODUCTION*, giving the wide range of investments into forest and wood industry branch. Book contains eleven chapters on 210 pages, with 29 authors presenting their views on issues regarding investments and consequences of investments on different projects, innovations, business environment, promotion, human resource, quality and other aspects of business and management in forestry and forest based industry.

Both books, together with their contents, may be found on WoodEMA. i.a. web page (www.woodema.org).



Figure 24. WoodEMA, i.a. scientific book *Markets for Wood and Wooden Products*



Figure 25. WoodEMA, i.a. scientific book *Investments to Forests and Forest Based Production*

5. WoodEMA, i.a. ANNUAL CONFERENCES

5.1. Belgrade, Serbia – 2008

At the founding meeting in Zalesina, in 2007, it was agreed that WoodEMA should organize the Annual Scientific Conference each year in a different country. The first elected president was from Slovenia, and the first presidential candidate was from Slovakia. The Executive Board member Branko Glavonjić suggested the first conference to be held in Serbia. It was agreed upon unanimously and Belgrade, Serbia was elected to be the host of the first WoodEMA, i.a. 2008 International Scientific Conference.



Figure 26. Proceedings from WoodEMA 2008 – Belgrade

During the conference, some rules were set up to be applied in the future. The membership came up with the idea that each future WoodEMA conference should hold both the Executive Board and General Assembly meetings on Wednesday evenings, and to hold scientific (conference) programs on Thursday and Friday mornings. To promote good social relationships, some social events, such as a surprise trip or excursion, should be organized on Thursday afternoons and an official conference dinner on Thursday evenings. The conference participation fee was determined and it was agreed that non-members should pay the conference fee at price higher than the members' participation fee plus membership fee combined (one of the benefits for members). So, the conference fee for the members was fixed for first eight annual conferences.

It was also agreed that the book of proceedings in hard copy (printed book) or on USB stick or CD should be included in each participant's conference fee. The conference fee also includes surprise trip / excursion and conference dinner. Since the organizer had to cover all those costs, the participation fee goes directly to the organizer and not to WoodEMA.



Figure 27. Participants of WoodEMA 2008 – Belgrade

The conference under the title *WOOD PROCESSING AND FURNITURE PRODUCTION IN SOUTH EAST AND CENTRAL EUROPE: INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVENESS 2008*, was held at the Faculty of Forestry, University of Belgrade, from 25th to 27th June in 2008 and the main organizers were Branko Glavonjić and Slavica Petrović from the Department for Wood Industry Organization and Economics. At the two-day conference, 16 articles were presented and included in the book of proceedings, on 118 pages.

The book of proceedings also set the standard for the future conferences; starting with first conference, the book of proceedings always has B5 format. That was necessary because, from the very beginning, WoodEMA, i.a. wanted its publications (conference proceedings and scientific books) to be included in worldwide scientific data bases, such as SCI (Science Citation Index), CC (Current Contents) or SCOPUS. It was a success from the very beginning, because the first book of proceedings, with the papers presented in Belgrade conference, was included in SCI – Expanded data base, within three months after the conference.

It was also agreed that the participants' accommodation should be booked in, at least, a medium-class hotel at a moderate price, so it could be acceptable to all participants, regardless of their social status or nationality. Such level of standard has been kept ever since.

31 authors, from 7 countries, took part in the conference, and 16 articles were presented. Along with the authors from founding countries (Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia), the participants from two other countries were present (Poland and Romania), but neither joined the Association as a member.

The social program included two events – a tourist visit around Belgrade, with a surprise excursion to the wood processing and furniture manufacturing company in Belgrade, and an official dinner organized on the boat, sailing on the rivers Danube and Sava.

At the Executive Board and General Assembly meetings, 6 new members were accepted and confirmed for full membership. The Association grew from initial 12 members to 18 members in 2008. Croatia was decided to be the next WoodEMA host in 2009.

Figure 28. During the conference program



Figure 29. In the office furniture manufacturing company

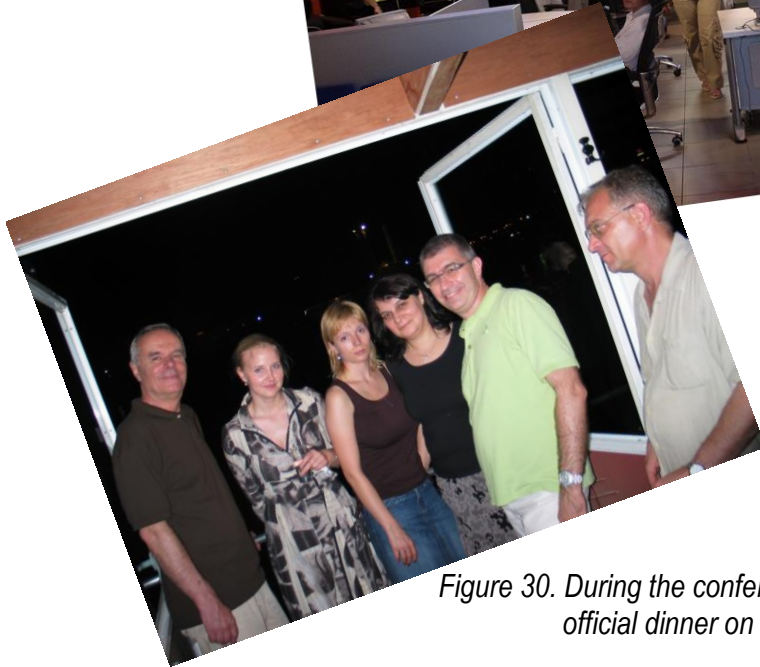


Figure 30. During the conference official dinner on the boat

5.2. Šibenik, Croatia – 2009

As it was agreed in Belgrade, the next organizer of the WoodEMA annual conference in 2009 was Croatia. The principal organizers were Denis Jelačić and Darko Motik from the Department for production management, Faculty of Forestry, Zagreb, Croatia, and they decided to organize the conference in the hotel resort Solaris in Šibenik, under the title COMPETITIVENESS OF WOOD PROCESSING AND FURNITURE MANUFACTURING.



Figure 31. Proceedings from WoodEMA 2009 – Šibenik

As the number of the Association's members increased, so the number of contacts increased, and it was to be expected for number of participants to increase. Some of the newly introduced participants applied for full membership, so 7 new members were accepted and confirmed.



Figure 32. Participants of WoodEMA 2009 – Šibenik

The book of proceedings reached the number of 168 pages, divided into 4 sections. 41 authors wrote 23 articles and presentations on the results of their research in the fields of trade and marketing, economics and investments, quality and environment, management and innovation.

The conference was held in the hotel, where the participants were accommodated, on Thursday and Friday mornings, as decided in Belgrade the year before. On Thursday afternoon, the surprise trip was organized as a boat trip to the National Park Waterfalls of the river Krka. We took a wooden pirate boat from the hotel resort in Šibenik to the National Park entrance in Skradin. A trip through the National

Park was organized on the Park's tourist boat. Since the conference was held from 7th to 9th October in 2009, the participants enjoyed magnificent sunny weather.

The conference dinner was held in the local restaurant, a typical traditional Dalmatian house, serving local specialities.



Figure 33. In the conference room

Figure 34. On the pirate ship



Figure 35. Waterfalls of the river Krka

Richard Vlosky, the first participant from the USA, attended our second international scientific conference. He was accepted to a full membership, becoming our current president. The 2009 was an election year, so the new Association's management was elected for a two-year period. Being future-oriented, the Association membership fixed the date and place for the next two annual conferences. The 2010 conference would be held in Zvolen, Slovakia, and the one in 2011 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

5.3. Vyhne, Slovakia – 2010



Figure 36. Participants of WoodEMA 2010 – Vyhne

Zvolen, Slovakia was elected to be the host for the WoodEMA 2010 conference. Hubert Paluš, the newly elected President of the Association, with the 2010 – 2011 mandate, coming from Technical University in Zvolen, took the responsibility to organize the conference, on behalf of his Department of Trade, Marketing and World

Forestry, Faculty of Wood Sciences and Technology, Zvolen, Slovakia. The main organizers were Mikulaš Šupin, the Head of Department, Hubert Paluš, WoodEMA's President and the members of Department.

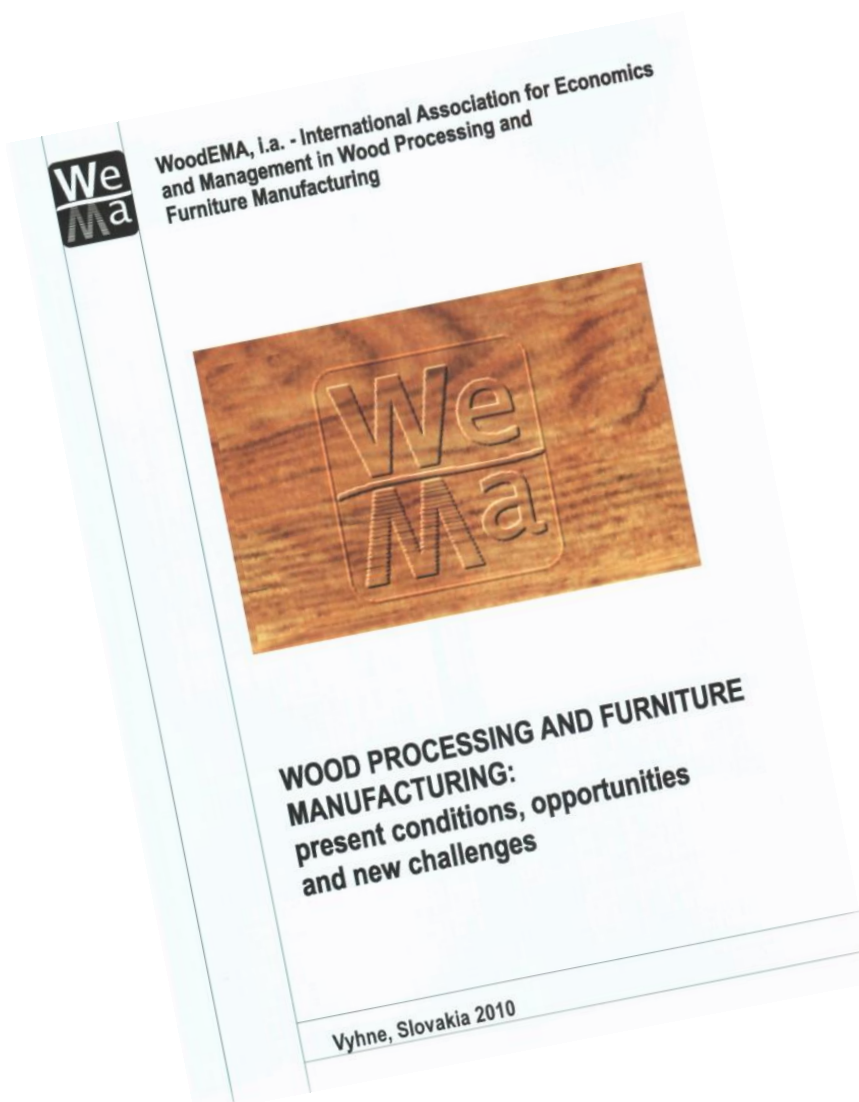


Figure 37. Proceedings from WoodEMA 2010 – Vyhne

The Department decided to organize the 3rd WoodEMA International Scientific Conference, under the title WOOD PROCESSING AND FURNITURE

MANUFACTURING: PRESENT CONDITIONS, OPPORTUNITIES AND NEW CHALLENGES, in the hotel in Vyhne, some 10 km outside Zvolen. This was the first conference to be held in Slovakia. The most of the Association's members came from Slovakia (two different Departments in Zvolen and two different Faculties in Trnava), meaning that in next four years, two more conferences would be organized in Slovakia.

The book of proceedings reached the number of 196 pages, divided into three groups of articles – Trade and Marketing, Economics and Investments, and Quality, Management and Innovation. There were 22 articles written by 44 authors, from 6 countries.

The conference, following its usual program, was held in the hotel in Vyhne, where all the participants were accommodated. At the Executive Board and General Assembly meetings 4 new members were accepted and confirmed as full members.

The surprise trip was interesting for many reasons. It was a trip to the nearby small town, called Banska Stiavnica, where we were presented with some interesting information. We found out that the Technical University in Zvolen, with Faculties of Forestry, of Wood Sciences and Technology, of Environment and other faculties, connected with forestry and wood sciences, as well as the Faculty of Forestry, University of Zagreb, with its sections of Forestry and Wood Technology, have their roots in Banska Stiavnica and its High School of Mining. The Forestry High School houses an interesting small museum of minerals. There are four beautiful castles in the vicinity, of which we visited two.

The official conference dinner was held in a traditional restaurant above Banska Stiavnica with the organized cultural program, based on the Slovak folk music. Some of the participants even tried to play some of the old instruments, used by the traditional music orchestra, entertaining the guests over dinner.

The conference was held in October (6th to 8th) and the organizers suggested that the 2001 conference should be held in Slovenia in June.



Figure 38. In the conference room

Figure 39. Cultural program in the restaurant



Figure 40. Trying to play Fujara (old native instrument)

5.4. Kozina, Slovenia – 2011

The 4th WoodEMA annual international scientific conference was held in the casino hotel in Kozina, Slovenia, from 8th to 10th June, 2011, under the title DEVELOPMENT TRENDS IN ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT IN WOOD PROCESSING AND FURNITURE MANUFACTURING. The principal organizers were Leon Oblak and his colleagues from Department of Wood Science and Technology, Biotechnical Faculty in Ljubljana, Slovenia.



Figure 41. Proceedings from WoodEMA 2011 – Kozina



Figure 42. Participants of WoodEMA 2011 – Kozina

This conference could be considered to be a breakthrough. In total, 34 articles were issued in the book of proceedings, and, for the first time, not all of them were presented at the conference. The book of proceedings exceeded 200 pages for the first time (240 to be exact). The authors and the presenters, attending the conference, came to Kozina from 8 countries (7 European and the USA). Among those 7 European countries, Austria and Bosnia & Hercegovina attended for the first time.

At the Executive Board and General Assembly meetings, 9 new members were accepted and confirmed, and among them were the first members from Poland and Czech Republic. Unfortunately, the Austrian and Bosnian representatives were not interested in becoming WoodEMA members.

The Kozina conference had interesting social program, providing new and original ideas and solutions. The surprise trip and a tourist trip were an adjunct to the excursion. We were taken to a short excursion to Cerknica, a small town near Kozina,

to visit the furniture manufacturing company. Afterwards, we were taken to a surprise trip to world-famous Postojna caves. The only thing organizers could not predict was the weather. Unfortunately, it was raining.



Figure 43. General Assembly meeting



Figure 44. Furniture company showroom



Figure 45. Giving presentation

This was also the first General Assembly meeting at which 2 of our members since 2009 terminated their membership. The same general assembly confirmed the hosts for the following 2 WoodEMA annual conferences – Trnava, Slovakia and Czestochowa, Poland.

5.5. Trnava, Slovakia – 2012

The 2011 conference, along with the 2012 conference, are considered to be innovative.



Figure 46. Proceedings from WoodEMA 2012 – Trnava

The conference in Trnava was the first one to be organized by a member, department or faculty not directly connected with forestry or wood technology branch. The main organizer, Renata Novakova and some of her colleagues, involved in organizing the conference, were members of the Department of marketing at the Faculty for Mass-media Communications, University St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava.



Figure 47. Participants of WoodEMA 2012 – Trnava

The conference under the name WOOD AND FURNITURE INDUSTRY IN TIMES OF CHANGE – NEW TRENDS AND CHALLENGES was held at the hotel in the centre of Trnava. The book of proceedings, divided into three major groups of articles – Management, Marketing and Communication, Economy and Business, and New Trends and Challenges in Woodworking Industry, was published on 270 pages with 38 articles, presenting the research results given by 63 authors.

The Rector and the Dean of the Faculty came to open the conference and to attend the Association's conference. Moreover, several PhD students took part in the conference program, as well as in the social program, held on Thursday afternoon and evening. The program included a walking tour around the city of Trnava and rich cultural

program during the official conference dinner. The art photography competition, themed “Forest and Wood”, was organized and the awards were given at the conference dinner.

Figure 48. Rector opening the conference



Figure 49. Cultural program at Official dinner



Figure 50. In wood processing company



At the Executive Board and General Assembly meetings 6 new members were accepted and confirmed. The first Italian member Alberto di Taranto, was the first non-academic member, but the owner of the research and consultancy company, dealing with IT software associated with the behaviour of wooden houses during earthquakes.

Along with the walking tour around Trnava during Thursday afternoon, the conference participants visited one of the companies manufacturing products for IKEA group named Swedwood, located in the Trnava surroundings.

Each conference was a breakthrough, and this one was not exception, setting the standards to be followed in the future by each and every organizer. The first WoodEMA conference to follow these standards was the next one, organized by Renata Stasiak-Betlejewska, from the Institute of Production Engineering, Faculty of Management, Czestochowa University of Technology, together with some of her colleagues at the Institute.

5.6. Gdansk, Poland – 2013

This was the second consecutive annual conference, organized by the Association's members not directly dealing with forestry or wood technology issues, proving WoodEMA, i.a. to be an open association, allowing each member to take part in some activities, to vote and to be elected. Czestochowa was elected to be the host of the 6th annual conference, and the only member from Czestochowa at the time, Renata Stasiak-Betlejewska, decided it would be held in surroundings of one of the most beautiful cities in Poland – Gdansk on the Baltic sea.

She took charge in organizing the conference and attracting new members. She managed to persuade a few conference guests, on the Erasmus programs, to apply for the membership. So, during the conference in Gdansk, the Executive Board and General Assembly of WoodEMA accepted and confirmed 9 new members. Six of them were from 3 new countries (1 from Spain, 1 from Hungary and 4 from a new country and continent – India, Asia), turning WoodEMA, i.a. into international association, having members from three different continents. Unfortunately, 4 members from India terminated their membership by the end of the next year. Nowadays the members of our Association came from two continents (Europe and North America).



Figure 51. Proceedings from WoodEMA 2013 – Gdansk

The conference in Gdansk was held under the title INNOVATION AS THE SOURCE OF VALUES IN THE FORESTRY, WOOD PROCESSING AND FURNITURE MANUFACTURING. The book of proceedings, issued on the CD, contained 33 articles submitted by 63 authors from 9 countries (Croatia, India, Italy, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and USA). The proceedings had 240 pages and it were divided in 3 main chapters – Trade and Marketing, Economics and Investments, and Quality, Production and Innovation. The conference was organized as a project for Višegrad fund.



Figure 52. Participants of WoodEMA 2013 – Gdansk

Some of the Association new members were not fluent in English. At the Executive Board and General Assembly meetings the language problem was discussed. The majority of the Association's members agreed to go along with the initial decision to use English as an official language. It was one of the reasons which made several members to decide to terminate their membership.

The 2013 conference was organized in a hotel in a small village at the Baltic seaside, so the surprise trip included a visit to Gdansk and to some cultural and historic places nearby. The official dinner included a barbecue party near the sandy beach. We spent wonderful time in friendly atmosphere.

The 2014 conference was held in Slovakia, with the aim to involve the conference attendants in a big project, which was being conducting at the Technical University in Zvolen.

Figure 53. At the break during the conference



Figure 54. Wooden house upside down



Figure 55. Main organizer receiving a Thank You plaque

5.7. Zvolen, Slovakia – 2014

After the initial WoodEMA conference held in Belgrade in 2008, the 2014 conference was the first one to be organized at the faculty. The Faculty of Wood Sciences and Technology, Technical University in Zvolen, Slovakia, was chosen to be the venue.



Figure 56. Proceedings from WoodEMA 2014 – Zvolen

The reason for such decision was the fact that, along with the WoodEMA annual conference, the Department for Marketing, Trade and World Forestry organized the dissemination conference regarding their international project. So, the title of the conference was somehow connected to the project – POSITION AND ROLE OF THE FOREST BASED SECTOR IN THE GREEN ECONOMY.



Figure 57. Participants of WoodEMA 2014 – Zvolen

The surprise excursion took us to the national forest near Zvolen and to a wood processing company nearby. It was decided to take the official photo of conference participants in the forest instead of in front of the venue (faculty building).

The conference proceedings had 170 pages, containing 27 articles written by 49 authors from 5 European countries and the USA.

The Executive Board and General Assembly had pleasant task to accept and confirm 8 new members, and to discuss about the future hosts for WoodEMA annual conferences. It was the first General Assembly meeting at which the Association's members confirmed hosts, as well as back-up hosts two years in advance.



Figure 58. Conference dinner in forest log-cabin restaurant

Figure 59. Preparing for the excursion



Figure 60. During the conference program

The following venues were chosen to host the Association's annual conferences: Trento (Italy) – 2015, Baton Rouge (USA) – 2016, Prague (Czech Republic) – 2017 and Belgrade (Serbia) – 2018.

5.8. Dubrovnik, Croatia – 2015

Thus, the host for the WoodEMA 2015 conference was to be Trento, Italy. The conference in Zvolen was held in May, 2014, and the conference in Trento should have been organized in spring, 2015. Unfortunately, the Italian Alberto di Taranto, the only non-academic member, but the owner of a private company, had to back out as a host, forced by private and business problems. He asked the back-up host to take over. So, the 2015 conference was held in Dubrovnik, not in spring, but in October, 2015.



Figure 61. Participants of WoodEMA 2015 – Dubrovnik

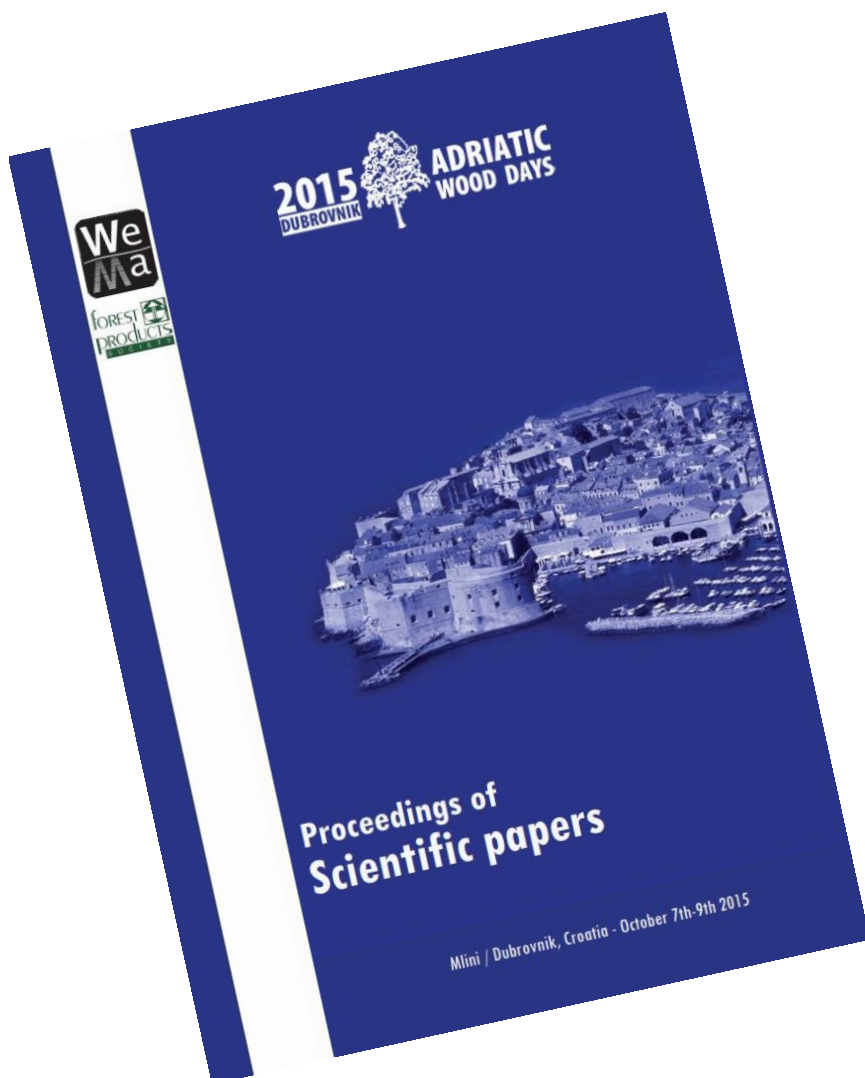


Figure 62. Proceedings of WoodEMA 2015 – Dubrovnik

As usual, there were many “firsts” at each conference, so this one was not the exception. For the first time WoodEMA had a partner to help in organizing the conference. The Association, together with the Croatian Wood Cluster, organized the whole-week ADRIATIC WOOD DAYS 2015 in Mlini, near Dubrovnik. The WoodEMA 2015 conference, as part of the AWD, was held at usual place and date, from Wednesday to Friday, October 7th to 9th. During the AWD 6 conferences were held.

For the first time WoodEMA had a partner. It was the Forest Products Society, whose then vice-president was Richard Vlosky, who was also WoodEMA candidate for President.

The book of proceedings, for the first time, exceeded the number of 300 pages, and, on 350 pages, it contained 49 articles, written by 84 authors from 11 European countries (Bosnia & Hercegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland), India and the USA. Almost 100 participants had a chance to listen to some very interesting presentations. Some of them were visitors, attending other conferences, held simultaneously the day before or after.

The conference was held from Wednesday to Friday, at the hotel in Mlini, near Dubrovnik, following its usual rhythm. The surprise trip was taken on Thursday afternoon, and it was not really a surprise at all. Since the wood processing and furniture manufacturing companies in Dubrovnik and its surroundings are small family companies and crafts, the participants took a boat trip to Dubrovnik, had a guided tour around the city and boat trip back. The conference dinner was held in a traditional restaurant.

As usual, The Executive Board and General Assembly had busy schedule, accepting and confirming 10 new members, including the one from Switzerland, a new country listed in WoodEMA registry. It was decided not to present any WoodEMA annual awards, but to review the existing regulations and to issue new regulations in years to come.

The Association is registered in Croatia, and the Law applied to associations has been changed, so the General Assembly had to accept and confirm the changes in WoodEMA Statute to match the new legal requirements.

The new management was elected, with their term starting from January 1st 2016. The newly elected President was going to be the confirmed President of Forest Products Society, so the host for the next conference was confirmed: the annual conference would be held outside Europe, namely in North America.

Figure 63. During the presentation



Figure 64. Resting on the terrace



Figure 65. A walk around Dubrovnik



5.9. Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA – 2016

The 2016 WoodEMA annual conference was held in the USA, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. With only two members from the United States, and our current president and a new member, who was to be accepted and confirmed in 2016, it was not expected that number of participants would be as high as at last several conferences. So, including our host and president, 17 WoodEMA members were physically present in Baton Rouge.



Figure 66. Participants of WoodEMA 2016 – Baton Rouge (members only)

The conference was held in October, the best time for organizing such an event, to avoid hot and humid weather and to visit other places. However, all odds against the conference ever happening were high: the interracial riots, the Mississippi flooding in Baton Rouge and surroundings, some technical difficulties regarding conference fees ... At the same time, WoodEMA tried to get a grant to pay about 20 airplane tickets for its members, which also failed due to some technical problems. Fortunately, the conference was held, against all odds.

As already mentioned, 16 members came to America (1 from Bulgaria, 3 from Czech Republic, 2 from Croatia, 3 from Poland, 1 from Russia, 2 from Slovakia, 3 from Slovenia, 1 from Switzerland) and with almost twice as many local participants, attending the conference, made it successful.

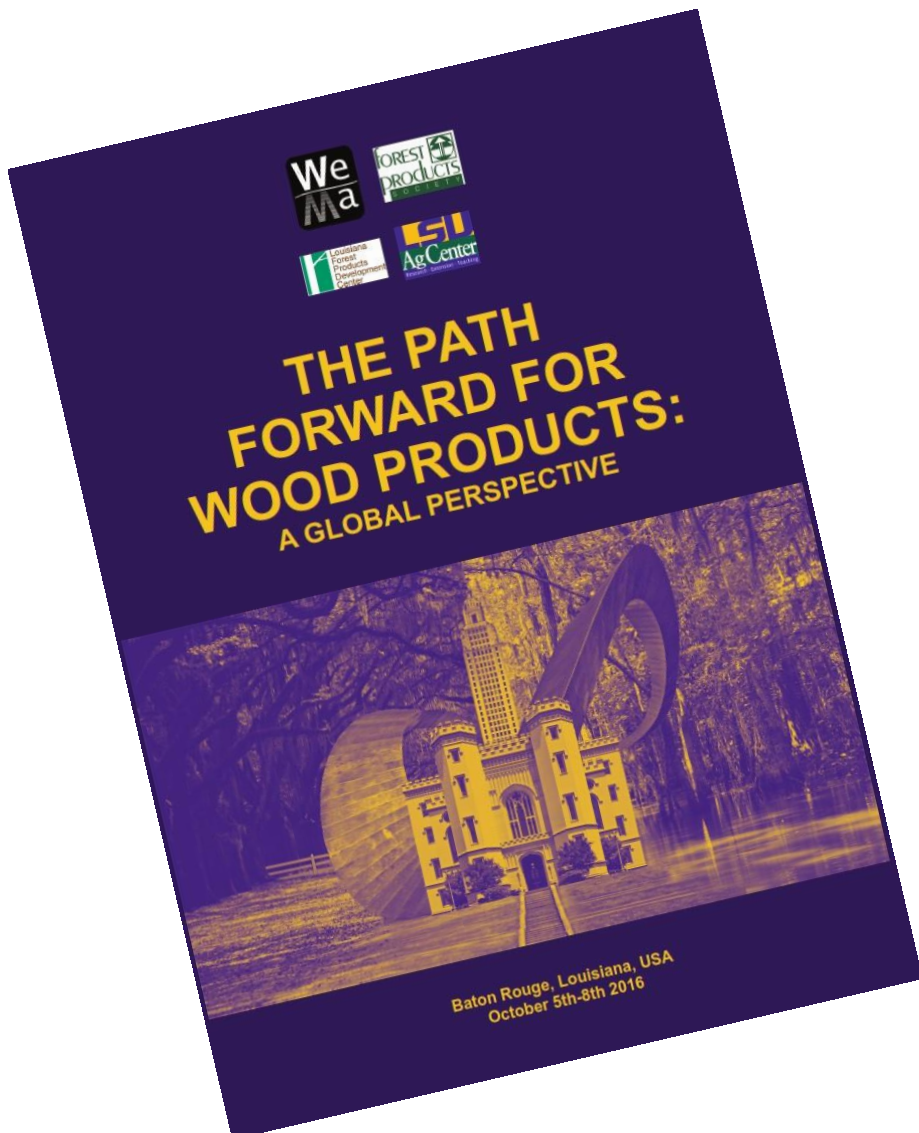


Figure 67. Proceedings of WoodEMA 2016 – Baton Rouge

WoodEMA and Forest Products Society, were joined by two new partners at the conference in Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Agriculture Center and

Louisiana Forest Products Development Center. The United States Forest Service was the partner, too. Moreover, two large companies participated in the conference.

The book of proceedings, on 220 pages, contained 28 articles, written by 61 authors from 14 countries (4 continents – 11 European countries, India, Nigeria and USA), implying that, for the first time, one article from an African country was included, along with those from Europe, North America and Asia. As usual, only some of the researchers papers, presented in the annual conference, were published in the book of proceedings.

The surprise trip did not include a visit to any company, but to a beautiful and unique city of New Orleans (*Tennessee Williams: “America has only three cities: New York, San Francisco and New Orleans. Everywhere else is Cleveland”*). Being a longer trip, the WoodEMA’s usual timetable (Wednesday – Friday) had to be changed to Wednesday – Saturday, with the conference held on Thursday and Friday, and the surprise trip on Saturday. And instead of having a conference dinner, the participants enjoyed in the official conference lunch on the Natchez, New Orleans’ last authentic steamboat on the Mississippi river.

Since the USA is not the cheapest country in the world, the conference fee (including the trip) for members was doubled, implying that in the future the members’ conference fee would be higher.

At the members’ meeting (the General Assembly meeting was not held, due to a lack of quorum) six new members were accepted by Executive Board and would be confirmed at the next year’s General Assembly meeting. One of the new members was from the USA and the other from Russia.

For many Europeans the visit to USA is a lifetime opportunity, so, bearing that in mind, some members took the chance to visit other places round the United States, before or after attending the conference. The others took the opportunity to make new contacts with their American colleagues to discuss the possibility of being invited as a visiting professors at some American universities.

The Baton Rouge Major proclaimed the Baton Rouge conference, with all events connected with it, the WOODEMA DAYS IN BATON ROUGE. All problems aside, the WoodEMA 2016 international scientific conference was a success.



Figure 68. „... big wheels keep on turning, Proud Mary ...“



Figure 69. In the conference room



Figure 70. The Major presenting the Proclamation of WoodEMA Days to Association's President

5.10. Prague, Czech Republic – 2017

At the end of May 2017, WoodEMA conference, 10th in a row, was again organized in Europe. Exactly, in its very centre – the golden city of Prague, Czech Republic.



Figure 71. Proceedings of WoodEMA 2017 – Prague

The main conference organizers were the University of Life Sciences in Prague, our member Roman Dudik and his colleagues from the Department for Forestry and Wood Sciences Economics.

Despite the fact that it was the WoodEMA's election year and that the conference was held in the easily reachable European city, only 22 active WoodEMA members attended the General Assembly meeting.

However, the book of proceedings was a different story. It was issued on 245 pages, containing 35 articles, prepared by 77 authors, from 12 European countries, but none of them from other continents. All 35 articles were presented at the conference.



Figure 72. Participants of WoodEMA 2017 - Prague

The surprise trip was organized as a sightseeing tour round the Golden city. Actually, it was hardly a surprise trip at all, since Prague is a breathtakingly beautiful city, with lots of things to be seen in the very centre. For the first-time visitors to Prague, this trip was a dream come true and a great fun.

As mentioned earlier, only 22 members attended the General Assembly meeting, but enough to make a quorum. At the meeting, three new members were confirmed, and one application was submitted two days after the conference.



Figure 73. At the opening ceremony

Figure 74. 9 out of 14 founders received the Thank you plaque



Figure 75. One of many places to see in the Golden city

The Executive Board and the General Assembly of WoodEMA accepted the motion to make some changes in the organizational structure of the Association, to make some statutory changes by introducing the Advisory Board, to establish regulations regarding abstracts and the full article submission process for conferences, and to make some strategic plans related to the Association's future. With the development of WoodEMA, some changes in election process should be thought of. All these issues were brought up at the following General assembly meeting to be accepted.

The General assembly in Prague elected and confirmed the Association's leadership for the next mandate 2018-2019. It was decided that WoodEMA would be led by Andreja Pirc Barčič, the first female leader in the history of the Association.

WoodEMA was established in September 2007, so, the Prague meeting was the ideal occasion for the members to get to know the founding members and to award them with "Thank you" plaque. Nine out of 14 founders attended the General assembly's meeting, so, the five absentees received their plaque later.

It must be mentioned that WoodEMA conference's tenth anniversary will be celebrated in 2018, hence the organizer's decision to hold the 2018 conference in Belgrade, Serbia, its first venue.

It was also decided to hold the 2019 conference in Bulgaria and the next one in Russia in 2020.

6. SOME ANECDOTES

Organizing an event, conference, meeting, project, publication or individual agreement is always highly demanding task for an association, institution or group of people, and it goes for WoodEMA, i.a., too. We have always considered setting up our conferences and meetings to be a serious business, trying to achieve results to benefit all participants and wider audience. Nevertheless, while attending meetings and presentations, funny things could happen, whether we like it or not. Some of them need to be told.

There are opportunities for members to socialise during WoodEMA annual conferences, to get together informally, taking part in social events such as a surprise trip or a trip to and from the venue. Usually, these trips include bus rides. The size of the bus depends on the number of persons applied for the trip, and buses are usually modern and fast.

On one such bus trip, we had to meet at the bus park prior to journey. There were 2-3 buses, but none meant for us. Then, to our astonishment, arrived a school trip bus with a low speed limit, posted on the back. The speed limit on highways is usually 130 km/h. Our bus was limited to 70 km/h. So, when the bus entered the highway, we had a bet on the colour of the first long and large truck to overtake our slow-moving bus, with the winner being the person who first guessed it right. Red was a winning colour.

On another occasion, only a few of us wanted to take a surprise trip, so the organizers arranged for a smaller bus to take us from and back to the venue. As mentioned earlier, modern buses can go pretty fast on the highways, but have to slow down on country roads. It was middle of the night, we were on our way back to the hotel, and our driver, wanting to cut the journey short, took some bumpy, winding country roads, driving fast. As a result, half of us ended up sick, after a wonderful and tasty official dinner.

However, no matter what the car make or model is, the quality is not always guaranteed. Sometimes it can break down, when you least expect it. When the weather is concerned, we were usually blessed with good weather during our trips. But, during that one particular trip it was pouring. The bus wasn't air-conditioned. It was hot and stuffy inside the bus, and we desperately needed some fresh air. The only way to get it was to open the roof window, because the side windows couldn't be opened.

At the beginning of the trip the roof window was opened, but during one stop the driver got up and closed it. He said something about it, but, as usual, only local participants and organizers understood what he was saying, meaning that the rest of us didn't have a clue. The atmosphere in the bus was relaxed and the spirits were high, as usual. But, once again, we needed some fresh air. One of our colleagues, physically not in the league of Arnold Schwarzenegger nor Hulk Hogan, stood up with the intention to lift up the roof window. The driver spotted him, and started to yell, but nobody paid any attention to him.

Our colleague grabbed the window above his head to lift it up. He pushed the window with all his might and, in doing this, the look on his face turned from "I am putting a lot of effort to this" to "What a surprise, I'm a Superman". He pushed the window so hard that it broke, fell off and flew away. For a second everybody was flabbergasted, but the rain was pouring in through the roof hole into the bus, so we had to find something to cover the hole.

The driver pulled up, shouting at the top of his voice, and none of us was able to understand him (except the local participants). He took his raincoat, told one of the organizers to take the umbrella and to go out with him to find the window. We were all speechless, wondering what would happen next. Would we wait for some bus service to fix it, or would we continue our trip with the hole in the roof? Would it be advisable to somehow cover the hole, preventing the rain from falling in, or to find some other solution? Not a sound could be heard.

After a while, the driver and one of the organizers came back, carrying the roof. It was in one piece because it was made of plastic, and it landed on the patch of grass by the road. Standing on two seats, the driver adjusted the window and closed it. It took him 10 seconds to do it. It was obvious that the same thing used to happen before and the driver knew about it. He yelled for a while, sat behind the wheel and kept on driving. Our "Hulk" didn't utter a word the rest of the trip.

Once, we were driven by bus to the station to get a different connection. After getting off the bus, we had to take a short walk to the harbour, some 15 meters away from the bus station, to catch the boat, which was ready to leave in about 15 minutes. The bus was on time, so there was no need to rush. On the way to the harbour we had to cross over the railway track. Some of us had managed to cross the track before we saw a big train arriving, slowing down and suddenly coming to a halt, blocking our way to the harbour. Not knowing how long it would stand there, and being afraid of missing the boat we tried to figure out what to do next.

The brave ones climbed the train between wagons and crossed over to the other side. Suddenly, the train started to move, very slowly, but without stopping. We just

needed to wait, but then we realized that it was a very long train. Helplessly counting minutes left for the boat to leave, and almost sure we were not going to make it, we just stood there in desperation, only 15 meters away from the boat.

Fortunately, the captain, fully aware of the situation, delayed the departure. The train finally left, and within minutes we were on the deck, together with other passengers, enjoying the boat ride.

During another conference we were enjoying the official dinner on the boat, unaware of who was operating it. Everybody was having a good time, after a long day of conference sessions and a visit to a company.

After dinner, half the way through the ride, one of the colleagues could not be found. The word spread out very fast and we all started looking for him. Many of us were afraid that he had fallen overboard. The ride was not as smooth as usual, so you had to be extra careful not to fall overboard. The search went on for some time until somebody yelled: "Here he is!" Since we'd looked almost everywhere, the question was where that "here" was. That "here" was in the captain/pilot cabin. Our colleague was steering the boat.

At one point, everybody was engaged in conversation, and he, being alone, decided to go to the pilot's cabin to thank him for smooth cross, bringing with him a few beers. Compliment after compliment, sentence after sentence, he offered the pilot to have a rest, while he took over. You don't have to be experienced to pilot a river boat. He was given instructions on how to pilot the boat. The smooth boat ride was a bit rougher than usual, while our colleague was behind the pilot's wheel. We all switched from "nervous because we don't know where he is" to "nervous because we do know where he is and what he is doing". Fortunately, after a few minutes the pilot took over again, since the boat had to be turned around to go back to a departure point.

When attending the conference, you can officially get to and from the airport by bus or taxi, or if it is possible to arrange to be taken by a friend in a private car. Once, however, one of the conference participants arrived at the official dinner venue in a big black limo, accompanied by two young women. That official dinner was organized in the hotel, in the centre of the city. Some of us were staying in that same hotel, while the others were accommodated in small family hotels nearby, so we arrived in front of the hotel on foot. It was a nice day, so we stood in front of the hotel talking and having fun, waiting for the official conference photo to be taken.

We were about to enter the hotel, when, all of a sudden, the big, black, six-door limo arrived and stopped right in front of the main entrance. All heads turned around to see who came, expecting a celebrity. The door opened and an attractive young woman stepped out of the car. The same thing happened on the other side of the car. Another

attractive young woman stepped out. Then they both approached one side of the car to open the third door. We were all expecting a celebrity to come out.

Upon opening the door, a young man stepped out. He was far from a celebrity, as a matter of fact, he was not even a WoodEMA member, but only attending the conference. To be precise, he was a student at the Faculty whose members organized the conference. It was not even his birthday, he just wanted to see our reaction when he stepped out of the limo. He could see utter surprise on our faces, satisfied with the effect his little performance had on us.

Where to look for beautiful women? On the beach, naturally. Several WoodEMA annual conferences were held by the seaside and all the venues were on or near the beach. And we were very lucky regarding the weather, because no matter whether the conference was held in May, June or October, the weather was always close to perfect – warm and sunny. Just ideal for a good swim in the sea.

Once, the weather was fabulous. It was about 25° C, with the clear sky and no wind. It was Friday, the last day of the conference, and after the last session, right after closing the conference, we ran up to our rooms, put on a swimsuit, and straight away rushed down and plunged into the sea, before returning home. Each and every one of us came armed with swimming essentials, with the exception of our main organizer.

He came to the hotel a day ahead of us to make all the necessary arrangements. Unfortunately, he simply forgot to pack his swimming trunks. So, he was sitting on the hotel terrace, with the sad look on his face, waving at everybody passing him by to and back from the sea.

When the conference venue is by the seaside, some attendees fulfil their “obligation” by attending the session, presenting their work, and then spent the rest of the time, usually after lunch or early in the morning, relaxing on the beach. It is nice to sit somewhere by the sea, drinking coffee and discussing some joint projects or sharing ideas.

Once, we stayed at the hotel with a winding beach. If you wanted to meet or find somebody you had to cross the beach from side to side. Two colleagues wanted to meet and discuss some items over the coffee. They didn't see each other during the conference due to different obligations. They arranged meeting over the cell phone. “let's meet on the beach bench and have a coffee”, one suggested, and went straight to the beach to wait for his colleague, who would be a little late due to prior obligations.

Being finally free, he left the hotel and went to the beach to find his colleague. He spotted several benches but they were all occupied.

He kept on searching for the right bench, walking from one side of the beach to another and back. He crossed the beach 3 – 4 times, passing by all the benches, met other colleagues, but not the one he was looking for. They missed each other.

The break was over and all the participants went back to the conference room. So, the two colleagues, who should have met on the beach and have coffee together, finally met in the conference room. It turned out that the one, who was waiting on the beach bench and set up the meeting, was not at the beach at all, but some 400 meters away, sitting on the bench in the port.

People could miss each other given the wrong directions, or getting lost in the city or in a big hotel. But, it could also happen that colleagues, after not seeing each other over years, meet at conferences. It usually happens when the organizer invites some older, retired professors to attend the conference, where they meet some past friends and colleagues.

The retired professor Doe, was invited to attend the conference. One of the participants, Professor John, knew Professor Doe well, but they hadn't seen each other almost 15 years. They immediately started a very friendly conversation. They left the conference after the first session and went to the city. They spent all day together, not leaving each other even when they met the others during the sightseeing tour and official dinner. They had a lot to talk about since they hadn't seen each other for such a long time. They talked about their professional and personal life, about mutual friends, about the retired or deceased professors, about what was new in their fields of interest, about the heads of the departments and a lot of other things.

After finishing dinner, at 1.30 in the morning, they all, including Professors John and Doe, took a bus ride to the hotel. Upon arriving to the hotel, they parted saying "good night" to each other. In a very friendly atmosphere, Professors John and Doe still had something more to say to each other, after spending all day together. The younger professor John, embraced the retired Professor Doe, put on a very sad face, shook his head and, on the verge of tears, said: "Dear professor, I am awfully sad that Professor Doe died." This brought the late night conversation to a halt, leaving professor Doe completely confused. It took him a few minutes to grasp what had just been said, replying: "Hey, John, but I am professor Doe!" It was a case of mistaken identity.

Over these past ten years a lot of funny things happened on our surprise trips, at meetings and conferences. Some of them are worth telling. Although we all regard WoodEMA, i.a. to be a highly professional association, involving serious work, it is impossible to avoid funny things from happening. After all, we are all human.

7. THE FUTURE OF WoodEMA, i.a.

The WoodEMA's future starts on January 1st 2018, with the election of the new management by The General Assembly. Therefore, its future is based on work of existing and new members, with the responsibility to keep the Association in existence, in terms of organisational development, collaboration and structures.



Andreja Pirc Barčič
President



Jan Parobek
Candidate for President



Hubert Paluš



Richard Vlosky
Executive Board members



Marek Potkany



Denis Jelačić
General Secretary

Figure 76. WoodEMA, i.a. management January 1st 2018 – December 31st 2019

There is an old saying that the future lies in the hands of young generation. So, it has the responsibility to keep on doing adequate and quality work, together with all the members. The generation of WoodEMA's founders, including the initial members, formed a horizontal network of scientists and researchers, who are now 5 to 15 years close to retirement. Their assistants are now in their prime, able enough to take over the association and to ensure its development and growth by keeping the good practice and implementing new ideas and projects. They need to form their horizontal network, closer communication and relationships among them, to attract their active and future assistants to join the Association.

WoodEMA, i.a. members have the opportunity to take advantage of the many benefits of membership, all of which should be kept and some new introduced, to attract potential members to join the Association. It is well-known that each and every person joins a group to make profit out of it, meeting other like-minded professionals face-to-face, agreeing on some projects, choosing a foreign committee member for PhD. defence, or obtaining points by publishing a paper, presented in an international scientific conference, as a journal article or in a scientific book. Furthermore, maybe just to benefit from reduced fees for attending the conference.

To sum up, WoodEMA's member has the possibility to publish a paper, presented in an international scientific conference, in a scientific book. For many younger scientists and researchers in central, east and southeast countries of Europe these journals, conferences or books are important to be included in some international databases of scientific articles, such as Current Contents (CC), Science Citation Index (SCI Expanded), SCOPUS, CAB International or similar.

Therefore, WoodEMA, i.a. has been trying to include its publications in such databases, since the very first conference and the very first publication. We were not always successful, but we managed to make our willing members, to participate with their articles in as many publications as possible.

The data of WoodEMA's Annual scientific conferences, from the first one, held in 2008, up till the last one, in 2017, were sent to Thomson Reuters, with the request to be included into CC Proceedings or SCI Proceedings data bases. Oddly enough, Thomson Reuters' administration included even years, but not the odd years as well. Therefore, only the papers presented in the conferences held in 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016, which were published in proceedings, are included as scientific articles into SCI Expanded data base (as SCI Proceedings).

As we were trying to find the way to include our books of proceedings into SCI database, we were trying to do the same thing in SCOPUS. We finally succeeded

recently, and the papers, presented in the annual conferences, held in 2015, 2016 and 2017, published in the books of proceedings, were included in the SCOPUS database.

Somebody could say: "Yes, but the fact is that non-members are also included in proceedings as authors!" It is true, but the participation fee for members are always lower than for non-members, and if you add together membership fee and participation fee for the conference, it is lower than just the participation fee for non-members. That is another benefit of being a member.

At the moment, our scientific books are not included in any database (except in Index to Scientific Books Contents – ISBC), which is not on-line database and it is not relevant for our members, but it is included in National University Libraries in countries around Europe, so authors included in it could be found if searched for. In some countries those listings from National Libraries are also relevant for promotion. Members can publish in these books for free and get copies of the book for free, while non-member authors have to pay for publishing their article in the book.

Conferences, articles, presentations, projects, these are the benefits for sure, but in our opinion meeting somebody in person, talking to somebody, with whom you want to co-operate, over a cup of coffee during a break is worth much more than cold e-mail or telephone call. When our younger researchers and scientists need a foreign member on their PhD defending committee, their mentors can easily find the right person during the conference and agree on every single detail in person. As with every conference, more work and things are done around the conference, and presentations are just the way to show the results of recent research.

There are few prominent journals (included in CC or SCI databases with a bit higher Impact Factor), willing to publish articles from wood science and technology area. And just few of them would consider including articles dealing with economics, marketing, production management, human resource management or other areas in which almost all of our members do their research. We in WoodEMA have considered the idea of starting a WoodEMA journal, but we are still not able to meet some conditions needed to be fulfilled to start a scientific journal. What's more, it takes at least 5 to 7 years for a newly started journal to be even considered to be included into any relevant database. So, that is something we need to deal with in the future.

One of the conditions for starting a journal is to have a larger base of researchers to write in such journal, because younger researchers simply have to publish their articles in indexed journals and in very short period of time before their promotions. So, logically, younger researchers will choose SCI or CC journal over WoodEMA's journal because they need points soon and they don't have time to wait for 5 or 7 years. Besides, a certain number of professors, who are not under pressure to publish in CC

or SCI journals, would be expected to publish articles in WoodEMA journal prior to including it into some relevant databases. If you want to start up a journal, it is of vital importance to have reviewers, members of editorial and scientific boards. So, to cut a long story short, WoodEMA, i.a. needs more members and even wider group of scientists to be able to start a journal.

Including WoodEMA, i.a., as a scientific association, into national or international projects is another issue to be dealt with in the future. It could help the association to grow, to be recognized in scientific community, but also to attract new scientists and researchers to join the association. Our association is already recognized in some European programs. For instance, it was already included in some projects funded by Visegrad Fund (V4 Fund), the fund established in the central European countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) to support some scientific activities and projects, primarily in those four countries, but recently even wider.

WoodEMA had members from 3 different continents (Asia, Europe, North America) and conference participants from 4 (+ Africa). The Asians were members for only 2 years and it would be nice to attract more members from outside Europe. However, the same could be said for West European countries. The next challenge could be attracting members from Germany, France and Scandinavian countries, where forestry and wood industry are strong industrial branches. The WoodEMA's visit to the USA was successful, with only 17 association's members participated, but strong connection was made between WoodEMA, i.a. and Forest Products Society. Holding conferences, as joint projects of the two associations, should be continued.

Our association was involved in two wider programs, Adriatic Wood Days 2015 in Dubrovnik and WoodEMA 2016 Days in Baton Rouge. Those two programs helped immensely in giving visual identity to WoodEMA, i.a. as recognized association for experts in economics, marketing and management in forestry and in wood processing and furniture manufacturing. It is up to all members to promote the Association through personal contacts, spreading flyers, information on our Website and in many other ways.

The management of WoodEMA wanted to establish WoodEMA Annual Award in order to give the Association more dignity and to attract potential future members. At the moment, there are no regulations for the award to be introduced and given to WoodEMA's members as well as to non-members, but it could help in creating the Association's identity, its recognition and promotion. The regulations are still in the reviewing process, since we are not satisfied with some suggested rules. It will take some more time for the Award to be presented for the first time.



Figure 77. Proclamation of WoodEMA 2016 Days in Baton Rouge

All these activities could help WoodEMA, i.a. to grow, to develop, and to the keep the Association alive for years to come. Future generation, present and future members, internal networks connected with outside networks, will have only one task to fulfil – to sustain a good work and to make it even better and to give the opportunity to every single member to take advantage of the benefits being the member of WoodEMA, i.a.

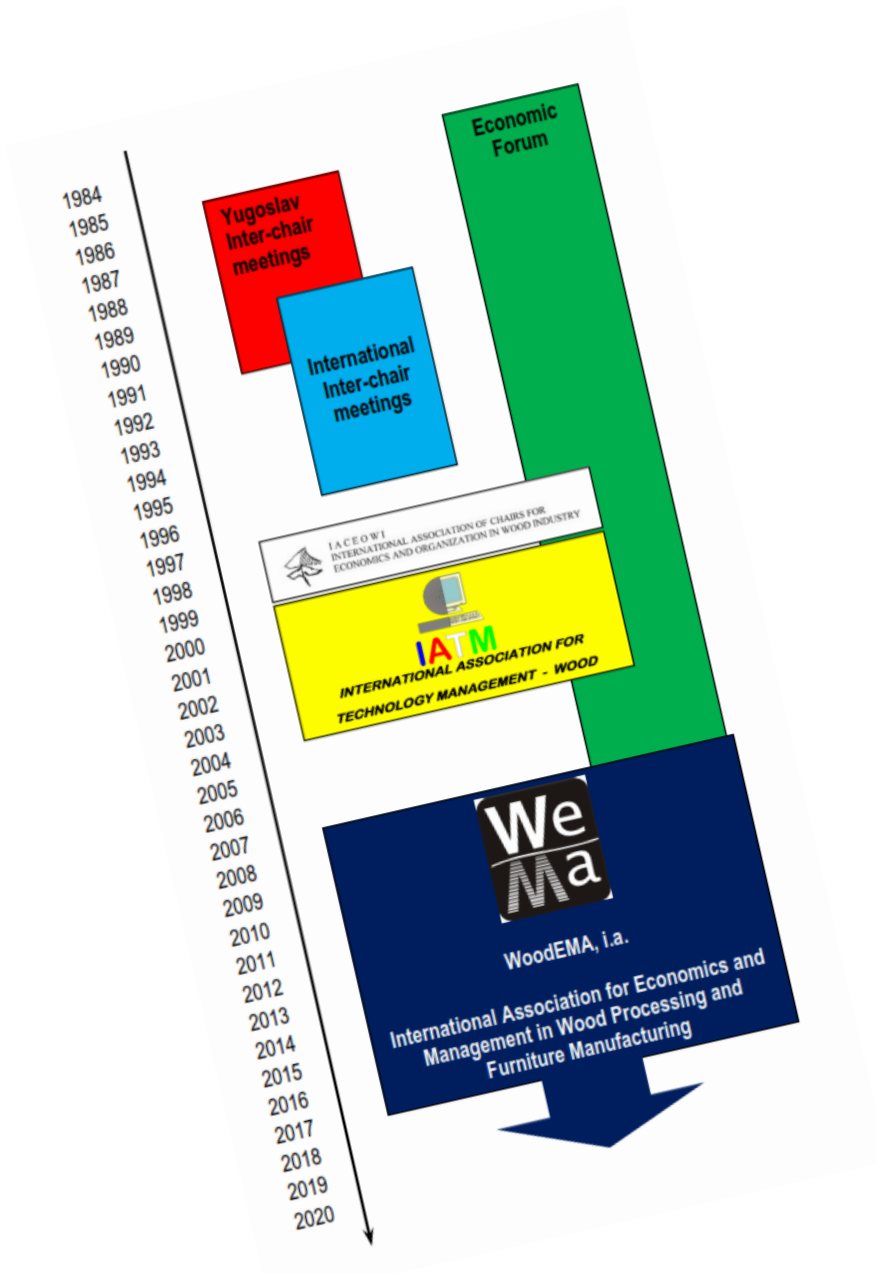


Figure 78. WoodEMA, i.a. time-line

We are very confident in our future, and as it is said in a song from a TV show: "... the future's so bright, we gotta wear shades ..." And hopefully, for many years to come.



WoodEMA, i.a.

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