



## Research School

# BECFOR

### ***"Bioeconomy-adapted forest management"***

Faculty of Forest Sciences

Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU)

**Activity report for the period: Jan 2016 June 2017**

## Activities

Year 2016 was a dedicated to preparations, and a lot of this work was carried out by Prof. Pelle Gemmel who had numerous discussions with different stakeholders, covering his broad contact network in forest industries. These discussions have resulted in a number of PhD projects that are initiated or under preparation. The work continues, and e.g. Skogforsk and the Swedish Forest Agency have recently expressed their interest to initiate new projects. Preparations included also production of PPT presentations and flyers, which aimed to facilitated communication with external partners. A [homepage](#) has been established and will be developed further in 2017.

**Management group** composed of Prof. Ola Lindroos, Docent Karin Öhman, Docent Gustaf Egnell and Dr. Emma Holmström was assembled. The purpose of the management group is to ensure good presence of the research school in campuses and adequate expertise in the three subject areas of the school (forest management and silviculture, forest planning and inventory, forest operations and biomaterial).

## Summary:

Year 2016 was dedicated to preparations (networking, proposals and planning), with a main goal of securing the financing for the school and new PhD projects, and for anchoring the initiative among stakeholders and faculty members. The work has continued during 2017, now with more precise work towards complete curriculum, organization, new PhD projects and other activities. Approximately 10 PhD students have so far expressed their interest to affiliate to the research school, representing SLU (two faculties), Linneaus university, and Copenhagen University. Importantly, BECFOR has connected with the large research program in southern Sweden (FRAS). Interaction with Finnish research schools has been developed under endorsement of the Dean and is continuously reported to representatives of the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovations.

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Dr. Emma Holmström is going to have a specific role as coordinator of external contacts; and she will be the link to a larger research project [FRAS – Future Silviculture in Southern Sweden](#) , with several PhD students. **Steering group** consisting of Prof. Sara Sjöstedt De Luna, Prof. Urban Bergsten (SLU), Per Fenger-Krog (StoraEnso) and Charlotta Bengtsson (Skogforsk) has been assembled and will have its first meeting in Oct 11, 2017. Desiree Mattsson is responsible for web design and dissemination.

**Financing proposals** were prepared to the Research Council Formas call on research schools, to KSLA and Bo Rydin foundation, unfortunately with negative outcome. A proposal was also prepared to the Faculty for research school financing, which was successful and secures the financing of the school for the next years (3 075 kSEK 2017-2020). A **kick-off meeting** was held on May 22, 2017 (see the attachments). Several meetings with supervisors and PhD students, as well as with external partners have been carried out. The management group has worked especially in **defining the profile of the school and planning the curriculum**, which was presented in an application submitted to the Faculty.

## Evaluations

The kick-off meeting emphasized the need to profile the research school among other schools. The suggestion is to profile towards:

- Broad scientific scope
- Strong interaction with sector
- Focus on gender equality

The initiative has been generally very much appreciated by stakeholders. During the kick-off meeting, stakeholders emphasized that a challenge is to create attractiveness, so that the best students will become interested in the subject fields.

### *Self-evaluation of challenges:*

BECFOR covers a broad subject field, broader than most other research schools. It is also planned to become long-term, integrated part of faculty activities. This is expected to strengthen the faculty, but also includes problems in finding unity (many different opinions and expectations, some of which can hardly be met). In the near future, more emphasis will be given on visibility and presence of the school in the operative environment (faculty, and sector)

The working time of the director has been 10%, with the exception of Sept-Dec 2016, the reason being the need to have budget also for the salaries of the management group members. This allocation was considered motivated as a means to ensure integration to involved departments. However, a larger time investment could be needed for central coordinating activities in later stages.

## Joint activities

The kick-off gathered several external partners (see attachment). BECFOR has close contact with research school FIRST2, and established dialogue with Linneaus University and research schools at University of Helsinki and University of Eastern Finland.

