Canadian Institute of Forestry - International Night at the Canadian Ecology Centre

By John Pineau

On February 10th, the Algonquin Section of the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF) celebrated a 50th anniversary milestone by hosting its annual International Night at the Canadian Ecology Centre. Participants were able to enjoy some of the food and drink from the country discussed during the evening, which this year was Australia. Over 20 people attended the event, which included a presentation by Fred Pinto, Registered Professional Forester, and Conifer Program Leader with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources – Southern Science and Information Section in North Bay. Fred’s presentation focused on his experiences with forestry in Australia, gained during a month-long trip to the ‘land down-under’ in 2005.

“It was a very interesting and special evening for all,” said Don Willis, Chair of the Algonquin Section of the Canadian Institute of Forestry. “Fred presented some fascinating and entertaining material on forestry in Australia. It was surprising to see that they wrestle with many of the same issues that we have within the Canadian forestry sector, despite very different tree species and growing conditions.”

Australia has 155 million hectares of native forests, including multiple use forest (11.0 million hectares) and conservation reserves (8.4 million hectares). The multiple use forests are managed for wood production and less than 1% of these forests are harvested in any one year. This small proportion is regenerated following harvesting so that a perpetual supply of native hardwood and softwood is available. The forests in conservation reserves are permanently reserved from logging. About 80% of Australia's forests are eucalypt forests. These forests are unique to Australia and they occur in a wide range of environments.

“Our Section’s International Nights have consistently had good attendance and excellent revues,” said Don. “Fred’s presentation continued in that tradition – a tradition that has now spanned 50 years!”

The mission of the Canadian Institute of Forestry is to advance the stewardship of Canada's forest resources, provide national leadership in forestry, promote competence among forestry professionals, and foster public awareness of Canadian and international forestry issues. Membership includes foresters, forest technicians and technologists, educators, scientists and others with a professional interest in forestry. Members of the CIF work in government, industry, research, education and consulting and represent one of the largest professional voices for forestry in Canada.

If you would like more information about the Canadian Institute of Forestry, or would like to join, please visit their website at www.cif-ifc.org.