

## **Annual Conference 2019, Members' Dialogue Session: Building science bridges with China**

### **Background**

The **EFI Strategy** places special emphasis on *building bridges* to support science-based cooperation between Europe and major countries that play a key global role in terms of forestry and related questions. China is of high relevance as it has become the largest producer and exporter of forest products and the largest driver of demand for timber. Furthermore, China is the largest producer of steel, cement, plastics and textile fibres globally. Any future development in China regarding the move from a fossil-based economy towards a bio-based economy will have great implications for forestry and the forest bioeconomy in Europe.

In the last two years, EFI has recognised the importance of developing a strategic approach to build cooperation with China on Europe-China forest-related questions. An important MoU between EFI and the Chinese Academy of Forestry was signed in October 2018, after a year of strategic discussions to frame the cooperation thematically within the EFI strategy. Last year, in the EFI Annual Conference 2018, the cooperation with China was discussed and it was agreed that in the Annual Conference 2019 a specific session would be organised to discuss further steps in terms of joint activities, topics and institutional developments in China. During 2019, a survey was conducted to map the cooperation of EFI member organizations with Chinese forest research institutions.

### **The aim of the parallel session is**

- to present the results of the survey to the member organizations;
- to introduce main ongoing EFI initiatives and projects on Europe-China cooperation;
- to discuss with the member organizations their interests on relevant topics, activities and mechanisms for cooperation with China in the context of EFI.
- to discuss EFI Institutional presence in China and possibilities for funding cooperation

### **Programme of the session**

*Moderator: Elena Paoletti, Chair of the EFI Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)*

Introduction (3')

Framework, survey and EFI's future institutional presence (7') by *Director Marc Palahí*

EFI's work on Europe-China forest bioeconomy (10') by *Xiaoqian Chen, EFI Senior Expert on China-Europe Bioeconomy*

Panel discussion (20')

*J. Bo Larsen, University of Copenhagen, Professor*

*Xu Xinwu, Nanjing Forestry University (NFU), Director of International Cooperation Department*

*Xia Jun, APFNet Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APFNet), Assistant Executive Director*

Discussion (20')

## ANNEX: RESULTS OF THE EFI SURVEY ON EUROPE-CHINA COOPERATION

Overall 62% (18) of the respondents indicated that their institution already collaborates with Chinese forest research institutions (Figure 1).

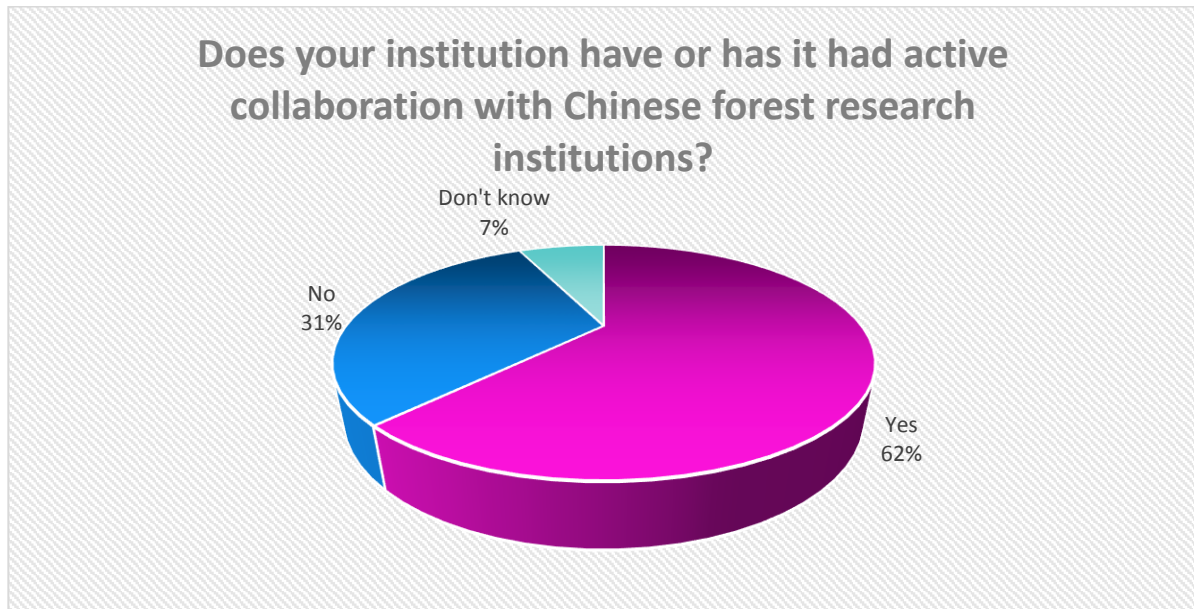


Figure 1: Collaboration with Chinese forest research institutions (N=29)

On the other hand, 31% (11) has not yet established such collaboration and 8% of the respondents were not sure whether such collaboration already exists at their institution (Figure 1). However, 36% of these respondents stated that their institution is planning to establish such collaboration in the near future (Figure 2).

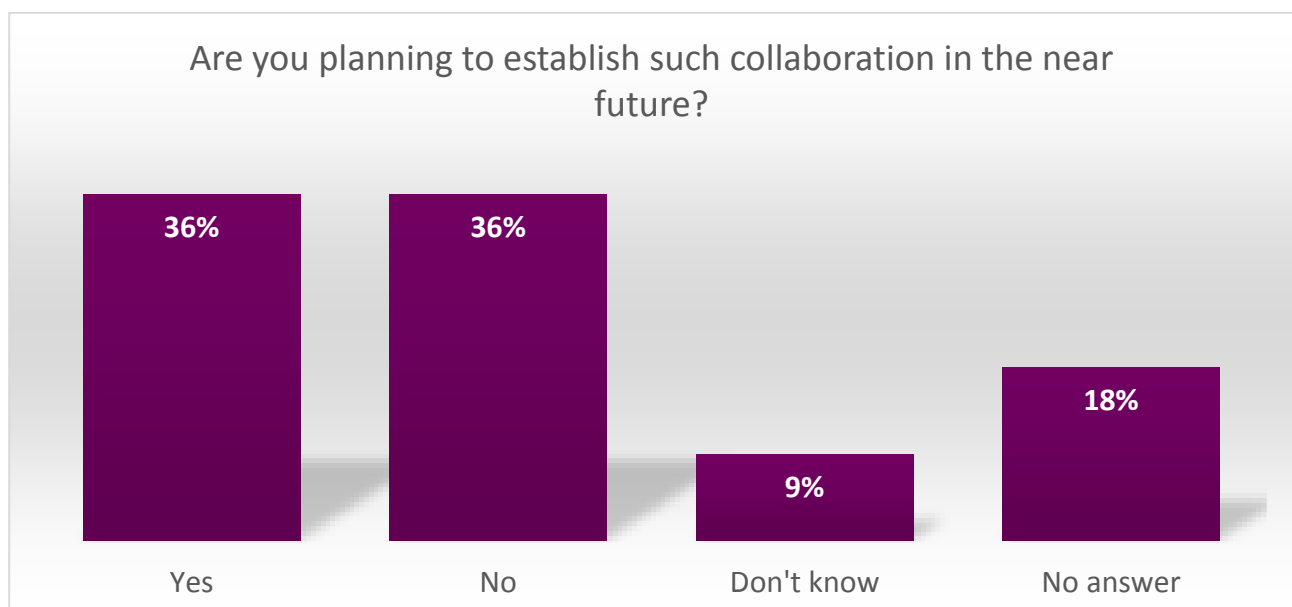
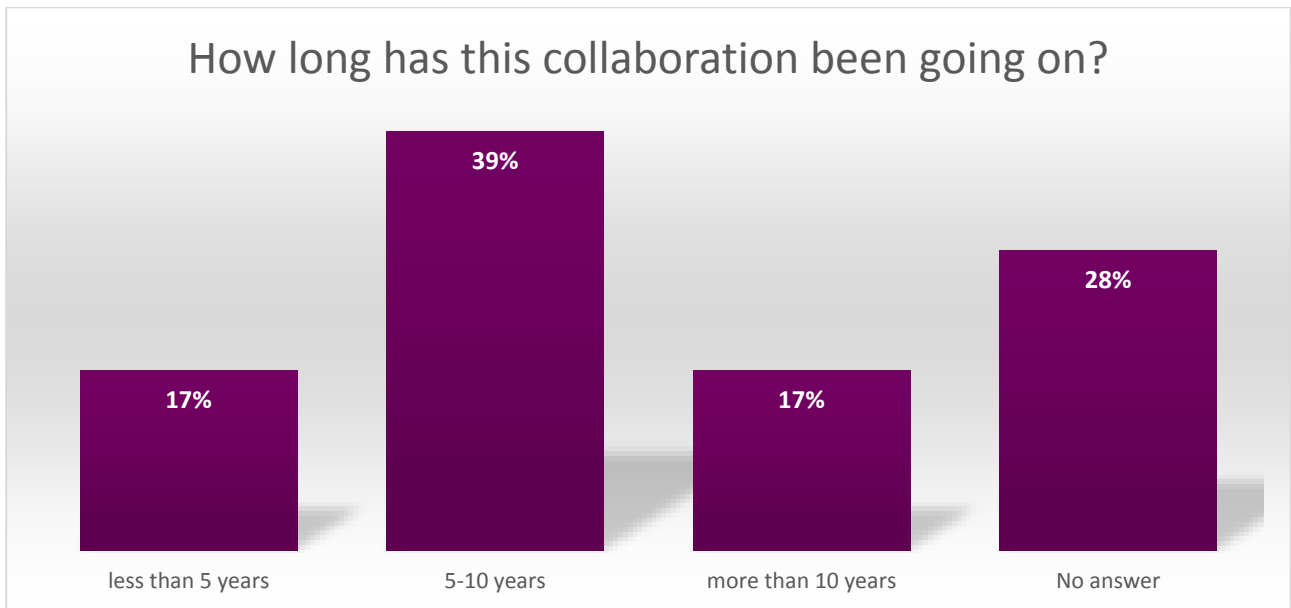


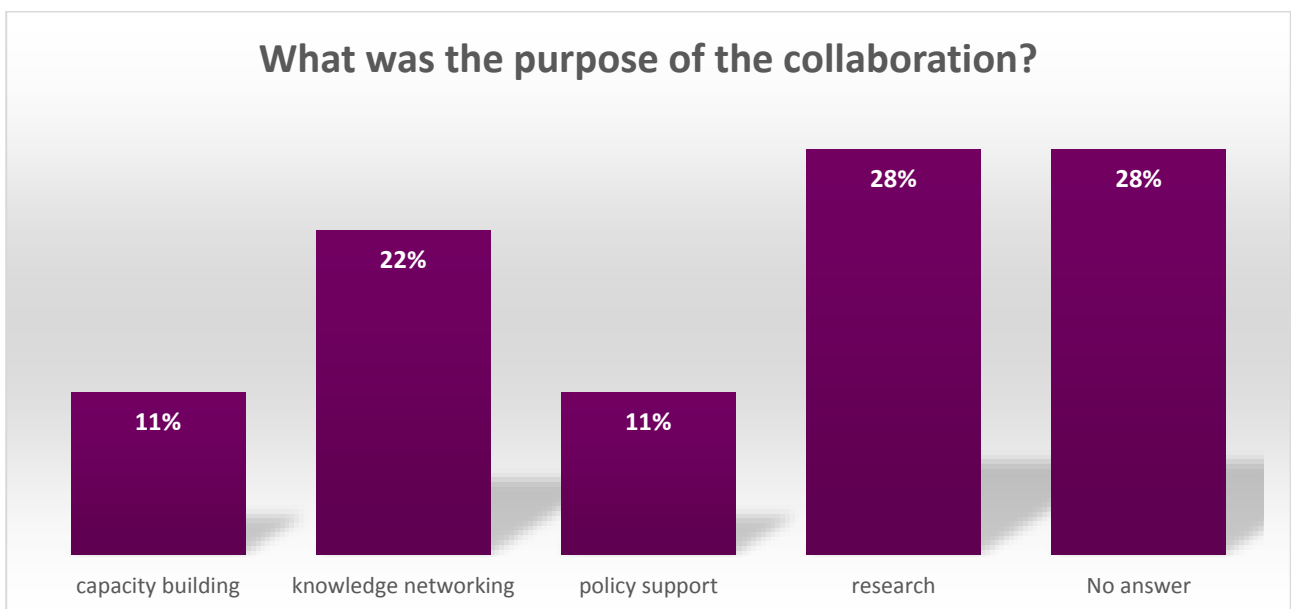
Figure 2: Plans to establish collaboration with Chinese institutions (N=11)

Member organisations that already collaborate with China, have had this already for a longer period. Namely, 56% of them have been in collaboration for 5 years or more; while 17% of the organisations started collaborating in the past 5 years (Figure 3).



**Figure 3: Length of collaboration with Chinese institutions (N=18)**

When it comes to the purpose of collaboration, research (28%) and knowledge networking (22%) are the main categories. Policy support and capacity building activities were selected less frequently (Figure 4).



**Figure 4: Main purpose of collaboration (N=18)**

If considering the strategic themes of EFI, resilience and bioeconomy are the main thematic areas of collaboration activities (Figure 5). In particular, the following topics were selected with most frequency:

- the future demand and supply of forest products, forest biomass and ecosystem services, and their implications for sustainable forest and land management, including afforestation and plantation forestry,
- sustainability impact assessment and monitoring of forest-based products and services value chains,
- the impacts of global change and related risks on forest socioecological systems, and the strategies to enhance and restore their capacity to adapt and provide forest ecosystem services and products.

### In which of the following topics has collaboration taken place?

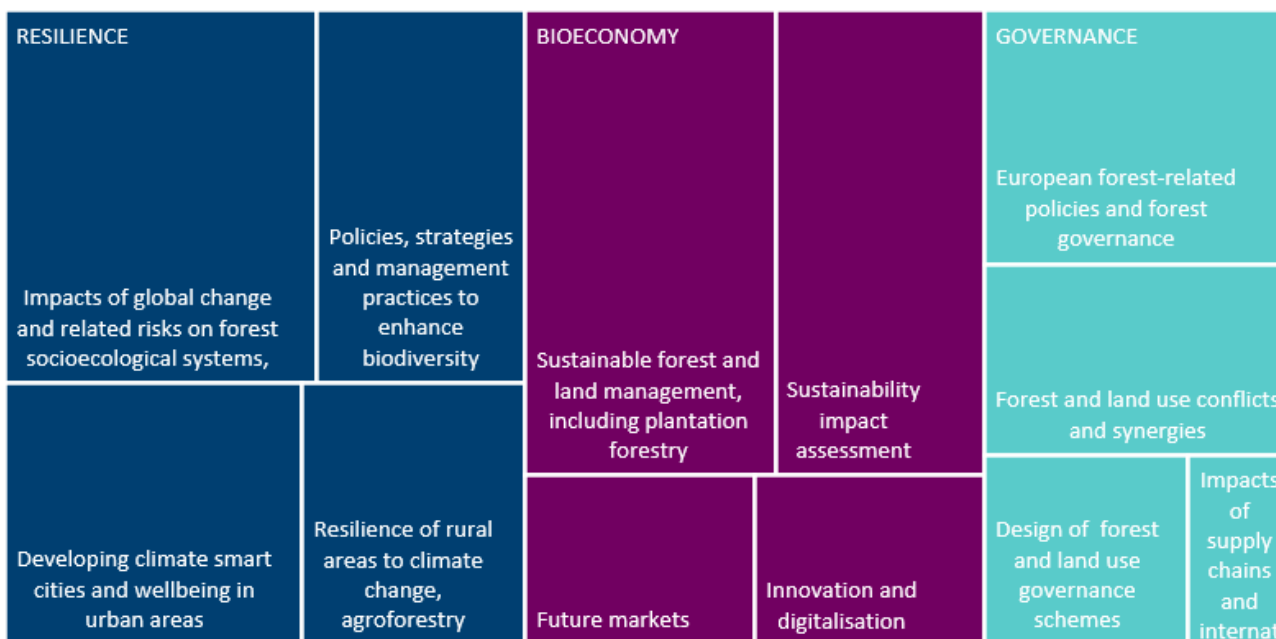


Figure 5: Distribution of research themes and topics (the size of the forms indicates the relative importance of each topic)

Finally, when inquired about the main collaboration partners in China, 14 different institutions were named. The Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing Forestry University and Chinese Academy of Sciences were named with most frequency. The full list of institutions is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: List of Chinese institutions EFI Member Organisations collaborate with

Institution
Chinese Academy of Forestry
Beijing Forestry University
Chinese Academy of Sciences
South China Agricultural University
Beijing Forestry Institute
Beijing Forestry Society
FAO
Fujian Normal University
Guangxi University, Guangxi
Institute of Botany, Beijing
NW Agricultural and Forestry University de Yangling
Sichuan Agricultural University, Chengdu
Xishuangbanna Botanical Gardens, Yunnan
Zhejiang Agriculture and Forestry University