

Institute of Forest Biotechnology Elects George Weyerhaeuser as Chair, Initiates Worldwide Responsible Use Initiative

Raleigh, NC, June 26, 2008 – Mr. George Weyerhaeuser, Jr. has been elected Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Forest Biotechnology.

Mr. Weyerhaeuser is a Senior Fellow, President’s Office at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development in Geneva, Switzerland. In this position, he works on issues regarding the impact of innovation and technology on sustainability and society. He manages the Council’s Eco-Patent Commons project and is the focal point for its work on bioenergy. Prior to this work, Mr. Weyerhaeuser was Senior Vice President of Technology at Weyerhaeuser Company. He has served on the Board of the Institute of Forest Biotechnology since 2004.

Outgoing Chair Alan Lucier, PhD, noted the respect accorded Mr. Weyerhaeuser by his fellow board members. “George wonderfully combines the ways of thinking and doing required as the Institute addresses expansion of forest biotechnology worldwide: partnership-building, smart strategy, and sound awareness that trees and technology are all key to our future.”

Mr. Weyerhaeuser will assume leadership oversight for a significant and unique new initiative of the Institute, *Responsible Use: Forest Biotechnology Principles*. The project will convene a wide range of parties worldwide to develop verifiable principles for the use of forest biotechnology. The highly transparent and collaborative process will be driven by a broad set of international stakeholders comprising private, academic, government, and public interest participants, each from different vantage points to ensure good decisions and safe outcomes.

Mr. Weyerhaeuser views the *Responsible Use* initiative as vital to the future of forest biotechnology worldwide, affirming, “Biotechnology can in coming decades make a tremendous contribution to the productivity, survival, and health of forests across the planet. The Institute of Forest Biotechnology will make sure these gains are accompanied by verifiable environmental and social principles to give customers of forest products and the public at large a way to know when these technologies are being used responsibly.”

Biotechnology is a powerful tool for developing and growing trees with targeted characteristics. Research worldwide is directed to meet increased demands for wood and wood-based products, improve the health and productivity of trees, and protect valued native forests against invasive threats. To date, three genetically modified tree species have been legally planted; papaya, plum, and poplar.

The next five years will begin a revolution in forestry. However, there are so far no long-term principles guiding stewardship of these trees. Adam Costanza, President of the Institute is adamant about making the principles benefit society and the environment. “I’m excited to work with international stakeholders to develop these principles. Our forests are being attacked by illegal logging, invasive species, and unsustainable use at an unprecedented rate. Forest biotechnology is a tool we can use against these threats.”

The Institute of Forest Biotechnology is entering its seventh year of advancing the societal, environmental, and economic benefits biotechnology can bring to forests around the world. The Institute is the only non-profit organization to address the sustainability of forest biotechnology on a global scale. More information about the Institute and its initiatives that include the Pine Genome and Heritage Trees among others is available online at www.forestbiotech.org.

REFERENCE:

Institute of Forest Biotechnology: www.forestbiotech.org

Responsible Use initiative: www.responsibleuse.org

Adam Costanza at: adam.costanza@forestbiotech.org

Alan Lucier at: alucier@ncasi.org

George Weyerhaeuser at: george.weyerhaeuser@weyerhaeuser.com

EDITORS:

A photo of George Weyerhaeuser is available at:

<http://forestbiotech.org/images/GWeyerhaeuser.pdf>