



MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT

Speech delivered by Patrice R. Tardif, President at the Forest Products Society's 66th International Convention in Washington, DC.

Thank you. I am moved and honored by the confidence you've shown in me by giving me the opportunity to head the Executive Board of the Forest Products Society this year. The Board represents each and every one of the Society's members so please, I invite you to make your voices heard.

Every president comes into this post with ideas of what he or she would like to do with a year at the helm, and I'm no different. I have learned much about FPS operations in my last 2 years on the Executive Board and I believe that there is an opportunity for an increased impact of the Society. It's a tall order, but I'll do my best to try and make a difference.

We know that we are good at preaching to the choir, it's something we hear over and over, well, we need to learn how to better reach other audiences and figure out what we can do for them. In line with our recent strategic planning efforts, I'd like to see the FPS become the go-to organization for different sectors needing information regarding wood products and by-products and their use, sectors that have not as yet been successfully integrated into the fold. Current works on the interactive library and development of the knowledge base will help with these efforts.

The Sections will have an important role to play for this to succeed as well. Works are currently underway to optimize the Section model in an effort to insure that membership divisions adequately reflect today's reality making them better positioned to be successful in their out-reach efforts. The Eastern Canadian Section made great strides last year with their organization of the Sustainable Disaster Relief Housing conference. That event brought issues to the fore that opened boundaries and spurred discussions well beyond FPS' traditional audiences.

This International Convention is another great example. I know that I learned a lot in the plenary and panel discussion sessions and we need to follow through with contacts we made in those sessions. The director of the National Building Museum offered his facility up as a vehicle and we need to take him up on that. We must take the opportunities that have presented themselves as well as create new ones that will allow us to expand target markets and invigorate our Society and its activities for

the benefit of you, its members. We have representatives from Malaysia and Nigeria at the meeting who have expressed an interest in expanding FPS activities into their regions, and the Society will be looking to create a European section in the coming year. We will address the development of tools needed to succeed in these efforts that will help to expand the reach of the Forest Products Society.

So, we will continue to address these issues that we've been working on but I'd like to give you a feel for certain new initiatives that I'd like to see implemented as well.

When we consider the forest products sector and sustainability, these can be seen as two sides of the same coin. I believe that the FPS should actively demonstrate its responsibility on this issue. I'd like to instigate sustainability reporting for FPS Headquarters operations, using the Global Reporting Initiative's model, and thereby lead by example. Most of us are aware of the proliferation of green building rating programs in the marketplace for the building materials industry, and these come with a bevy of databases for green building products. Some of these databases are associated with third-party certification programs; some are directly affiliated with the rating programs themselves. I believe we have the opportunity right here at the FPS to create a one-stop shop for registered green wood products ... who better to be the definitive source. One thing I cannot hide is that the FPS Headquarters is run by a bare-bones staff (which, incidentally, does anything but bare-bones work), and we tend to spread them quite thin. We will be continuing our efforts to optimize operations so that we can maximize our output. But I must remind you that a member-based organization is only as strong as the implication of its members – so get involved if you aren't already. Volunteers have the opportunity to move this Society forward.

In closing, I'd like to thank you again for this opportunity and thank you for your vote of confidence. Those of you who know me know that I'm approachable and not the least bit shy – those of you who don't know that will soon find out... I invite you to come up to me, introduce yourselves, let me know what you want your Society to do for you and I will do my best to be your voice.