

**Timo Tokola, Professor, School of Forest Sciences, University of Eastern Finland (UEF)**

Age: 47, Residence: Joensuu, Finland

**Summary of posts** contain governmental and private sector assignments:

- Researcher at the University (8 years),
- Expert and Project manager in Jaakko Pöyry Group (5 years),
- Project manager in Enso Forest Indonesia (2 years),
- Professor of "Geoinformatics" at the University of Helsinki (4 years) and
- Professor of "Forest IT" at the UEF (4 years), currently also Head of the School

**Living abroad:** more than 6 years (1 year Germany, 2 years Nepal, 2 years Indonesia, 0.5 year India, 0.5 year Laos). Also, several months working periods has been spent in Russia, Malaysia, China and Mozambique.

**Career planning:** No special planning was done related career. The interest to new challenges and professional tasks has been the major driving force. The project work has always been rather technical and mainly related very specific topics. I have worked in forestry and engineering organizations.

**Opportunities in international living and coming back to Finland:** Various work periods abroad has provided a nice opportunity to work in fast developing environment with practical issues. These tasks have giving chance to apply knowledge and research results in practice. When I have decided to work abroad, I always had a backup position in Finland. Thus, my return back to Finland has been always organized beforehand.

**Alternative career options:** There were several options always before going to abroad. Principally alternatives were scientific, industrial or governmental posts. I have selected the combination which is quite difficult to maintain.

**Main reason for international work periods:** Many attractive challenges in professional life.

**Negative side of this type of career:** The scientific publication record becomes a little bit shorter than without major breaks. The scientific records are important in academic environment and it is not always easy to combine different careers. However, I have managed to do relatively relevant journal publications, but I don't have time for seminars and other type of publications.

**Positive side of this type of career:** Life is interesting and has many dimensions.

**Tips for organizations:** 1) Too often senior people are preferred. There are not enough opportunities for young professionals. 2) Too often people with good language skills are preferred and little weight is given to technical knowhow. 3) The price competence of Scandinavian expertise is not very good. The Scandinavian forest organizations don't support much international training. 4) Tutorial system for Scandinavian young professionals needs revision.