

**Forest Products Society
Visioning and Strategic Planning Listening Session
June 19, 2010**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On June 19, 2010 the Forest Products Society convened a Visioning and Strategic Planning Listening Session at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin, USA. The Listening Session served as the first step in a process to evaluate the current vision and mission of FPS and to assess opportunities and challenges facing the organization and the members it serves. The Listening Session was attended by the leadership of FPS, including the full Executive Board and Executive Vice President, as well as approximately 15 leaders from within and outside the Society.

The Listening Session was guided by three key objectives: (1) review and discuss visioning background information; (2) identify key elements of a future vision for FPS; and (3) provide other advice to the leadership of FPS as they continue the visioning and strategic planning process. To achieve these objectives, the professional facilitator who led the meeting convened a series of small and large group activities. Activities included discussion about a preliminary examination of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing FPS, a brainstorming and visioning exercise about the future potential of FPS, and an iterative affinity process involving the full group that resulted in key elements of a future vision for FPS.

Based on the data collected during the Listening Session and comments from participants, it is clear that if FPS is to be successful in the long term the organization will need to consider significant changes in its scope, starting with an expansion of its vision. The Listening Session identified seven elements that should be considered in a new vision for the organization: (1) develop a stable and diverse financial base; (2) expand to a global scale and foster communication across generations and cultures; (3) integrate bio-based materials and other forest “products” within the broader sustainable green economy; (4) develop a vibrant organization focused on the needs of clients, including members and partners, as well as the general public; (5) be a major force in shaping policy standards through providing scientifically based information; (6) be a globally recognized and trusted source for accurate and unbiased information; and (7) aim to have FPS recognized as a leading environmental organization that promotes wood as a green material.

Building on the momentum gained during the June Listening Session, the FPS Executive Board has planned a second meeting for this coming fall. The meeting will be held on November 6, 2010 at the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin. The November meeting will focus on developing a new vision and mission for FPS that integrates the elements identified above, as well as identifying strategies for repositioning FPS for a sustainable future.