



International Society
of Forest Therapy (ISFT)



MINUTES

April 1st, 2025

ISFT Board Meeting

Time: April 1st 2025 04:30-6:30 pm (Central Europe Time) in Krems (Austria)

Date: 1st of April 2025

Attendees: Manfred Baum, Horst Klinkmann, Heinz Boyer, Udo Brändle, Sven Rüger,
Darija Cvikl,

Guest: Wolfgang Schütt, Nina Schwarz

1. Opening and confirmation of the Agenda

President opened the meeting and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

The agenda has been distributed to all participants.

Apologies from Alex Gesse and Dr. Stefan Seiberling.

Additional agenda point: Website discussion at the end.

2. Management Structure Development

Overview given by Darija Cvikl. The development of the ISFT membership structure remains based on the same premises as discussed in the last ISFT Board meeting. This means that ISFT has not yet reached a stage where members can be categorized according to a structured membership fee system. As of now, no membership fee has been implemented, and the process is still a work in progress.

At this moment, the membership status is as outlined below:

19 members, of which 8 new members in total plus 1 community (Municipality of Lohmen) and 1 University (IMC University of applied Science Krems)

12 countries represented → by 12 governors:

Austria: Dr. h.c. Mag. Heinz Boyer.
Bhutan: Kunzang Wangmo.
Brasil: Wolfgang Böhler.
Germany: Dr. Stefan Seiberling.
Iran: Prof. Dr. Sepideh Arbabi Bidgoli.
Japan: Prof. Dr. Hiroko Ochiai.
Lithuania: Dr. Stanislovas Čepinskas.
Portugal: Miguel Vasco.
Republic of Korea: Prof. Dr. Won Sop Shin.
Slovenia: Asst. Prof. Dr. Darija Cvikl.
Spain: Stefan Esser.
USA: Amos M. Clifford.

Invoice issue was discussed.

Invoices must comply with Austrian law and accounting requirements.

Format currently being adjusted to meet necessary criteria.

Invoices for 2025 expected to be sent out in the next weeks.

ISFT has been officially registered under Austrian association law since 2024

Iran remains a local governor despite inability to pay membership fee. Bhutan should be removed from the list of governors, as Governor Kunzang Wangmo has not responded to the ISFT email, which was last sent on March 13, 2024.

Honorary President suggested inviting official Healing Forest organizations and Foresters,

as well as other participants of the Symposium Tourism goes Health(?) to become ISFT members

- Office of the President to prepare a list of potential new members from Germany.
- Invitation to Healing Forests for the congress should align with membership applications.

Unanimous decision: Membership fee will remain at 150 euros until conditions are suitable for the structured implementation of membership categories.

3. Financial Report and Trademark Registration

- Deputy Treasurer Udo Brändle presented the financial situation.
- Sven Rüger provided updates on ISFT's trademark application and Consultation with a patent lawyer.
- ISFT owns the trademark (word and logo).
- Potential ideas: Trademark as a certifier brand.
- Possibility of selling the logo under a certification model was discussed.
- Need for certification criteria and monitoring system was highlighted.
- BioConValley currently provide certifications for Healing Forests.
- Heinz Boyer suggested ISFT could adopt and implement these criteria, originally developed by Prof. Klinkmann and Landesforstanstalt Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

Decision: Sven Rüger is authorized to develop further steps.

First step: Establishing ISFT as an umbrella brand.

Second step: Developing a trademark and certification framework.

Sven Rüger is tasked with compile criteria from BioConValley and Landesforst and subsequently sending them to Udo Brändle and Heinz Boyer for further refinement.

Goal: To create a concise booklet outlining international certification requirements for Healing Forests to be distributed at the 7th ISFT Congress.

If legally feasible, ISFT should also certify Cure Forests.

Unanimous board decision to proceed as outlined

Final outcome to be certified by ISFT (logo/certification mark).

4. Healing Forest Göttweig

Udo Brändle provided updates on the upcoming activities and events related to the Healing Forest Göttweig Opening ceremony will take place on June 18 at 10 AM, with the Governor of Lower Austria attending.

ISFT logo will be present at the opening.

If possible, first ISFT certification logo should be developed by June 18.

Designation of the model Healing Forests: Germany: Heringsdorf. Austria: Göttweig.

5. Congress Preparation in Germany

Committee structure was discussed and following proposal is confirmed.

Scientific Committee: Darija Cvikl to invite Won Sop Shin and Bum Jin Park, Stanislovas Čepinskas, also considered.

Organizational Committee: Chairperson Sven Rüger, Nina Schwarz and Susanne Bauer are committed as well and Auste/Monika from Lithuania are to be asked, Manfred Baum to ask Ulf Tielking

Board decision: Wolfgang Schütt to advise the organizational team

Advisory Committee: Chairperson Heinz Boyer, members includes Prof. Klinkmann, Boyer and Klinkmann to send a list of suggested members to Udo Brändle (e.g., Dr. Karin Lehmann, Amos Clifford tbd)

The discussion regarding the scientific proceedings was opened. It was proposed that a single institution be responsible for editing the proceedings. University of Greifswald was suggested as editor, proposal to be sent to Alex Gesse for final decision.

The congress timeline for issuing the proceedings is critical, and it was recommended that it be developed as soon as possible. Among the first activities, it is essential to ensure the

publication of the Call for Abstracts by April 15th, with the evaluation process to be completed by mid-May.

Congress topics with following changes confirmed.

1. Medical applications and new scientific studies on Forest Therapy.
 2. Forest Ecosystems, Policy and Economical aspects.
 3. Tourism Aspects of Forest Therapy.
 4. Innovation, Product Development & Future Perspectives.
- + Symposium: Childrens Health (and Forest Therapy).

6. Other Issues

Website access issue, currently inaccessible, making it unusable.

Paul Tucek is being unresponsive → action is needed to regain access.

Udo Brändle will discuss with Gerd Tucek, to resolve the issue, with a resolution expected by April 10, as the call for abstract submissions must be published no later than April 15.