

Prof. dr hab. Janusz Sabor (1946–2012) – distinguished geneticist-forester, critical observer, nature and arts lover

**THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREST TREE BREEDING, FACULTY OF FORESTRY
UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE IN KRAKOW**

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Professor Janusz Sabor

was born in Krakow, Poland, on 25 December 1946. His whole adult life was associated with and devoted to the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Agriculture in Krakow, which from he graduated and where he was continuously employed as of 1969. The subject of his PhD dissertation concerned *Spring flushing of Norway spruce [Picea abies (L.) Karst.] proveniences included in the 1964/68 IPTNS – IUFRO inventory provenance test carried out in the increment period 1975 on the experimental area LZD Krynica*. Professor Sabor's habilitation thesis presented characteristics of *Variability of Scots pine (P. sylvestris L.) and breeding value of its Polish proveniences at Beskid Sądecki Mts habitats*. The latter was published in the periodical *Zeszyty Naukowe AR Krakow*, 1994, Series 185. In

1999, the President of the Republic of Poland awarded Janusz Sabor the scientific title of full professor in forestry sciences.

In his career at the Faculty of Forestry, University of Agriculture in Krakow, Prof. dr. hab. eng. Janusz Sabor went through all steps of the professional development ladder. He started working as a trainee at the Institute of Forest Silviculture. Subsequently, then he held assistant lecturer (1970–1978) and assistant professor (1978–1999) positions, followed by full professor appointment at the Department of Forest Tree Breeding. For more than 30 years he was the Head of the Department.

At the same time, he underwent several internships at well-known foreign scientific centers, and among others these were: Institutionen för Skogsgenetik, Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet (SLU) in Sweden, Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) and Institut Technologique Forêt-Cellulose (FCBA) in France, Landesanstalt für Ökologie, Bodeordnung und Forsten Nordrhein-Westfalen (LÖBF-LAFO) in Germany.

Professor Sabor belonged to a very special group of experts on population genetics and selective breed-

ing of forest trees. His foremost scientific interests were reflected in broad range research on proveniences of spruce, pine and fir, in-depth observations on these species progeny and evaluations of its genetic structure with the use of genetic markers such as isozymes and terpenes. He intensely participated in launching the agenda for conservation of forest genetic resources and selective breeding of forest trees in regional gene banks within mountainous and sub-mountainous areas. Key achievements of Professor's work constituted development of work on the genetic basis of selective breeding and conservation of forest gene resources in the Regional Carpathian Gene Bank. His scientific reputation was remarkable for applicability of research results based on collaboration with forest practitioners.

Professor Sabor was highly engaged in knowledge and experiences exchange. He prepared and actively participated in numerous conferences and symposia. Both at a national and international level, he was in charge of organization of cyclic scientific conferences on management of genetic resources of major forest forming tree species in the Carpathian Mts, i.e. spruce, beech, fir and a number of admixed tree species. Under auspices of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAU) he supervised organization of the International Scientific Conference *Advances in the Population and Biochemical Genetics of Forest Trees* (2008). Concurrently, Professor organized or co-organized several meetings of the IUFRO Working Party S 2.02.2011 held in Slovakia, Czech Republic and Poland that concerned *Norway spruce provenances and breeding* (1997) as well as *Norway spruce in the conservation of forest ecosystems in Europe* (2007). Another such meeting was on Professor's schedule as planned for 13–15 September 2012.

Professor Janusz Sabor left rich and most valuable scientific and teaching legacy documented by a great number of publications. He was the author or co-author of almost 200 elaborations including 100 papers published in scientific periodicals in Poland and abroad, 7 implementation reports as well as numerous expert opinions and scientific reports. The *Program on conservation of forest gene resources and selective breeding of forest trees for the years 1991–2010* (later extended for the years 2011–2035) elaborated in co-authorship was one of his very important works.

Professor was also the editor of *Aspects of genetics and selective breeding of forest trees* – the book which was published thanks to his own initiative by the State Forest Information Centre (CILP) in 2006.

During his dynamic professional life, Professor Sabor had various functions in many national and international organizations as well scientific associations. Among others, he chaired the meeting of the IUFRO Working Party S 2.02.11 on *Norway spruce provenances and breeding* at IUFRO XX World Congress held in Tampere, Finland (1995). Following the decision of the National Committee of IUFRO he was nominated IUFRO Officeholder in Poland. Furthermore, Professor was a member of Scientific Council of the Kostrzyca Forest Gene Bank as well as the Scientific Council of the Institute of Dendrology – Polish Academy of Sciences and belonged to the editorial board of *Dendrobiology* – the periodical published by the Institute. In 2003–2004, Professor supervised the Working Group on the Programme for Testing Forest Tree Progeny which was established following the decision of the State Forests Director General. Furthermore, he actively participated in works of the Task Group on *Program on forest biodiversity protection, conservation of forest gene resources and breeding of trees in the State Forests for the years 2011–2035*. Professor Sabor presided over the National Commission on Forest Reproductive Material as of 2005.

Some of Professor's achievements concerning the implementation level are: introduction of ruling on regionalization of forest breeding material into forestry practice and evaluation of the breeding value of major forest forming tree species.

Professor Sabor was awarded several decorations for dissemination of novel research directions as well as his accomplishments in teaching along with social work for the benefit of academic environment and forestry practice, and among others these were: the Medal of the National Education Commission, the Gold Cross of Merit, the Order of *Polonia Restituta* as well as the Silver Decoration of the Polish Forest Association and the Medal 80 Years of State Forests.

Professor Janusz Sabor was actively involved in educational activities. He demanded upright teaching both from himself and his associates, and from

his students – gaining comprehensive knowledge. At the Faculty of Forestry, University of Agriculture in Krakow he not only conducted curriculum lectures as well as seminars and field trips, but also undertook new teaching challenges. In 1998, Professor organized and supervised Postgraduate Studies on Genetics and Forest Tree Breeding. The program of studies has embraced among others the topics connected with up to date issues of forest population genetics, basics of biodiversity conservation as well as genetic identification of forest trees and stands. Professor was actively involved in student exchange in cooperation with academic centers in Czech Republic and France.

Professor Janusz Sabor was extraordinary personality. He will forever live in grateful memory of Polish foresters as a great scholar and a sensitive human being who was open and kind-hearted for everyone.

*In the present day, already in silence
we salute – and express our thanks.
In the present day, we promise – we
will always remember.*

*Kinga Skrzyszewska
Małgorzata Sułkowska*