

Miha Humar



I was born on January 27, 1975 in Ljubljana, Slovenia (yes, 40 this year). I spent all my childhood in village Komenda on the edge of the Alps. When I finished secondary school in 1993, I began studies in the Department for Wood Science and Technology at the University of Ljubljana. This was a time before Bologna reform in Europe, so the



studies took four to five years. I started research work in the third grade in the lab of Prof. Pohleven and became expert in testing novel copper active compounds, something that now sounds rather uncommon in the current era of the Biocidal Product Directive.

However, research on novel copper-based active ingredients was the topic of my diploma thesis and my first IRG paper in 1998, the same year that I graduated, and got a PhD position in the field of wood protection, with Prof. Marko Petrič as my supervisor. My PhD was somehow a follow-up of the diploma thesis. My research focussed on understanding copper tolerance and EPR studies of degraded wood. During this time I attended my first IRG at Rosenheim in Germany. These were golden times in the IRG, with free beer at the Rütgers bar, tobacco sniffing, Bavarian folk dancers ... Next year I was awarded a Ron Cockcroft Award, allowing me to travel to the one of the most



exotic venues, Hawaii, where I had the opportunity to meet Ron Cockcroft in person. I performed part of my experimental work at Imperial College with Dave Dickinson and Richard Murphy, with support from the IRG as well. Since the Kona meeting, I have tried to attend as many IRG meeting as possible, missing only the Australia and Japan meetings. During this time we organized the IRG35 meeting in Ljubljana in 2004.



Regular attendance leads to first responsibilities within the IRG; convening WG 1.3 Bluestain and moulds, vice-chairing (2012-2014) and chairing (2015-2017) of Section 2, and membership in the Communication Committee (2015-). I have a great time at all of the meetings, mainly due to the people attending the meeting, even if

we spend an occasional afternoon on a cruise. I like the long IRG evenings, and will always remember pirate stories, wolf performances, nights in the clubs ...

My research activities have expanded over the years. I am still working with copper-based preservatives but our tests have expanded from short term lab trials to long term field testing. Furthermore, our group works on the durability of the European wood species, hydrophobisation with waxes and oils and on thermally-modified wood. We are particularly proud to our model house that was build in 2013. This model house offers as excellent platform for testing various materials. Unfortunately, responsibilities, like being a Vice-Dean in our Biotechnical faculty, does not allow me to stay in the laboratory as much as I would like to. However, the other



activities in the Biotechnical faculty have enabled us to build a new hall (600 m²) for the laboratories with windows and façade made of the thermally modified wood.



In the afternoons and weekends, I try to spend as much time as possible with my family, which includes my three kids Asja (10), Bor (7) and Žan (4) and my wife Alexandra. Living in the village enables us to spend a lot of time exploring nature in the forests and in the mountains. We all like to hike, and even my youngest son walked up to 2000m altitude this summer. We try to spend few days holiday at the Croatian coast and in the French or Italian Alps every year. This summer we enjoyed excellent holidays in Annecy. Beside that I like running, and the beer afterwards even more. I try to participate in a half marathon race in Ljubljana every autumn, unless kidney stones or something else is not stopping me. When our kids grow up, I plan to spend more time in the mountains throughout the year hiking and mountain-biking.

