

Erik Larnøy



I was born and raised in [Nesodden](#), a peninsula just outside Oslo, Norway. [Nesodden](#) is a beautiful, low populated area which is both close to Oslo and has a lot of forest and nature experiences. From where I live I have a 25-minute commute to NIBIO, which I do enjoy with a cup of coffee.



Growing up in Nesodden in the seventies with only 10 people in your class does not give a large possibility for further education, so at the age of 15 I moved to Kongsberg (Saggrenda) to join the State Forest School to learn practical forestry. This was a boarding school, and even though moving away from home at the age of 15 is somehow early, this is where I met many of my long term friends, and we still meet several times a year for fun.

After two years of practical forestry, learning everything from chainsaws to forwarders, my academic side came to life, and to be able to get into the university I needed more of the basics so I moved to Skien (Ulefoss) to join the last year of forestry, with extra basic subjects. This then got me into the Forestry bachelor studies at the University of Gjøvik. There my interest in wood technology really started to appear! Unfortunately, I found out that to get into the master program of wood science at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, I needed much more natural science subjects to get in. So then it was 6 months of a lot of chemistry, math and physics, and then I got to do my masters at NMBU.

My master thesis was performed together with Wolman in Sinzheim, Germany. Here I met among others Stephan Breyne and Jörg Habicht, whom were the first to introduce me to industrial wood protection and are probably familiar to you. For the trials, I brought wood from Norway down to Sinzheim where the samples were royal treated, and I got my first crash course in the German language. My supervisors then suggested to me that I should test my samples at the University of Göttingen. I then drove up to Göttingen in the centre of Germany to visit Holger Militz and his group there. As some of you might already have found out, I do like to talk and mingle, and within one week there, I had made many contacts there. One thing led to another and I was given the possibility to do my PhD in Göttingen.

This was my first large crossroad in my life, where I needed to take a life changing decision. I was also at the same time offered a possibility to work at an impregnation plant in the south of Norway. So what should I do, take the industry or the academical route? Many factors led to the right decision, but the major contribution to this decision, was that I at the same time met my lovely wife Marianne. Marianne

was an exchange nurse from Germany, and I met her on the top of mountain in Stavanger, one thing led to another, and all signs directed me to Germany. Blinded by love, I did not calculate the distance between Göttingen and the alps of Germany, where Marianne lived. That turned out to be 5 hours apart, but we still met every weekend, and finally Marianne moved to Göttingen after a year of weekend travelling.



The studies in Göttingen were both fun and hard work. During the studies in Göttingen I got my first grey hairs. This is probably just a coincident and has not to do with the workload from Holger 😊. I met several of my friends in Göttingen there and learned a lot. My friend and colleague, Andreas Treu, took me for ice cream on one of my first days, and we have had a lot of fun and ice creams after that. I also met my friend and colleague, Ulrich Hundhausen, who now is also my neighbour.

I did my PhD in wood protection, more in detail on the use of chitosan in wood protection. Besides learning all the standardized test and academic writing, I learned an important lesson during my PhD. Always check if your research has an economical potential as a wood protection agent before you start your studies. Chitosan did not 😊.

In November 2006, I defended my PhD in Göttingen. It was also about time, as my first son Felix came into this world in January 2007; perfectly planned time scheduling.



Then a new life-choice was in front of us, should we live in Norway or in Germany? I showed my wife my beautiful property, just next to where I grew up at Nesodden, and told her that we could build a house there if we just moved to Norway. She fell in love with the place, and we moved to Norway, now, 14 years later, we still did not move there, so I am happy that the love is still strong, and that my wife is patient 😊

So, after 16 years of forestry and wood technology studies, it was time to get a job! I was offered a research position at NIBIO, and I loved both the research and the colleagues. In addition to research, I love to organize and lead a team, so from 2009 I have been the head of the wood technology group at NIBIO. I now get both the opportunity to do research and lead our team and I love it. We are more or less the same team since that time, and I am still looking forward to go to work every day with these nice colleagues.



In 2012 I tried the position as division head for forestry without the possibilities to do any research. I missed the research too much, and was allowed back into wood technology, where all the cool science is!

In my spare time, me and my youngest son Lukas, goes to a lot of karate lessons, and I am also a soccer coach for the 50 kids in the 2008 group. I also play a lot of football with the Old boys team at Nesodden. Our family is very active, and we love to be outside. Our latest passions now are mountain climbing, scuba diving and skiing- when the snow returns.



I considered that after Marianne and I had been together for 15 years, it was time to ask her to marry me. We had a beautiful wedding in our favourite holiday country, Costa Rica. To round up the personal section, I can now say that I am a man of my word, and that Marianne and I are now building a house on the same property that I promised her, so many years ago. It will of course be a wooden house with royal treated claddings and will be finished in the summer of 2020.

See the start of the house project: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/7CaYeyXUaoBCby8s7>

In my spare time, when I am not building the new house or renovating the old 😊, I like to do sports together with family and friends, the two sports I use most of my time on is football, where I both play myself, and teach the kids. My family likes to go to karate training which is a great way for the family to train together.



My first encounter with IRG was in Tromsø, Norway in 2006. That was the first time that I got to meet all the interesting people of the IRG family. Some of you might remember IRG in Tromsø for the rather wet Wednesday excursion, and some might remember having a nice beer while the midnight sun never set. Since then I have attended most of the IRG meetings which have given me many new insights in research, a lot of friend and colleagues, and a great opportunity to see the world. The few IRG meeting that I have not attended is the ones that interfered with our independence day, which is a large family day in Norway. IRG also took me to Australia for nearly a year, where Lesley Francis, Jack Norton and Michael Kennedy took good care of me.



I still love wood protection, and looking forward to join all the future IRG meetings to learn all the new information, and catch up with good friends and colleagues.