

Tripti Singh

Growing up in India, I knew science was my future. My parents have always been hugely influential in my life and instilled in me from an early age, never to take the easy option, and most of you will agree that R & D can be very challenging. Another factor that lured me towards science was my uncle and his overseas trips. He was a tree breeding scientist, his research taking him all over the world. That not only cultivated my interest in all things natural, but opened my eyes to the indirect benefits in a scientist's job description: it is not just about being in a laboratory with one's nose to the grindstone - or eye to the microscope – it is also a chance to get out and see the world.



Approximately twenty years back, after completing my undergraduate degree in India, I moved to New Zealand to join my husband. I obtained MSc from the University of Waikato, and my PhD through Lincoln University both of which gave me insight into the biological factors that cause wood to decay.



Armed with this knowledge, in 2004 I accepted a position as a scientist at Scion Research (one of the Crown Research Institutes in NZ, and formerly known as the Forest Research Institute or FRI) and began to explore this area of science further. Developing benign wood protection systems is a continuing aspect of this exploration, and a central theme of my research. I was very fortunate to be recognised nationally for my work in developing an integrated bioprotection system for sapstain control in 2008, as being the runner-up in the MacDiarmid Young Scientists of the Year award.

Currently, I lead wood protection research at Scion. My current role involves a range of activities including research directions for various aspects of 'wood mycology', bioactives molecules, timber treatment, chemical/thermal wood modifications, fungal enzyme, leaky buildings, naturally durable timber and others. I work closely with the industry for product evaluations and certification, and liaise with the timber industry for commercial- or government-funded work. A lot of my time is focused on the development and amendment of Standards. Currently I serve on a number of Standards committees including NZS 3602 (Timber and Wood based products for use in building), NZS 3640 (Chemical Preservation of round and sawn timber), Joint Australian/New Zealand committee, TM-012 (Timber Grading and Preservation). Often my work is very unpredictable and I have the



opportunity to work on all sorts of stuff. Due to the leaky buildings and related legal cases, my understanding of legal terminology is growing.



My IRGWP journey started in 2005, when through the Ron Cockcroft award I attended the annual IRG36 conference in Bangalore. Winning the inaugural Gareth Williams award at that IRG meeting provided me with much needed confidence. Now I am a regular member and have attended most of the annual conferences since 2005. My IRG colleagues have had a huge influence in my career so far and I am extremely grateful to many of our senior IRG colleagues for their help and support particularly at the time when I took added responsibilities after the death of my predecessor the late Dr Mick Hedley (a long time IRG member). I enjoy the friendly, collaborative IRG environment and it is my privilege to serve as a member of the Communications Committee and as the chair of Section 4.



On a personal side, I live in the most beautiful city of



Rotorua (although tourists complain about the smell - Rotorua is in a very active geothermal area with constant H₂S emissions) with my husband and two children. I enjoy playing badminton (in my school days I was a national level badminton player), and spending time with my friends and family. I walk/run regularly in the redwood forest (adjoining the Scion campus) just to get rid of the weight I gain after eating chocolate and some “unhealthy” food when I am watching TV. I do like cooking, travelling and watching sports/current affair/Hindi movies. I believe that ‘life is for living’, and ‘life begins at the end of our comfort zone’.

