

COFORD Forestry and Wood Update

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## Editor: Joe O’Carroll, Operations Manager

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# Introduction

COFORD activities during January centred on the BIOFOREST launch and our workshop on Forest Roading held in Athlone on January 29th. In addition we facilitated a visit by the Scottish Forest Industry Cluster to discuss future collaboration of research and development.

This month’s newsletter carries details of several seminars which will held overseas during the coming months. It also carries information on research vacancies.

In next month’s newsletter we hope to bring you more details of our seminar/workshop programme for 2002.

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# 2. National Survey of Native Woodlands – Call for tenders

Tenders are invited from suitably qualified and experienced parties to undertake a national survey of native woodlands for a period not exceeding 5 years beginning early in 2002. The survey aims to ascertain the extent, distribution, variation, conservation significance and silvicultural status of the resource and classify the stands using standard phytosociological analytical techniques.

***The work will include:***

1. Identifying and locating sites from maps, aerial photos, etc
2. Field surveys, including relevé sampling, phytosociological analyses, vegetation classification
3. Silvicultural assessments
4. Production of regular reports and a final written report.

The successful party will report to a steering committee consisting of members of Dúchas, Forest Service and COFORD. Day to day co-ordination will be with Research Section of Dúchas National Parks & Wildlife.

## Qualifications and abilities required

Personnel engaged on the survey will have a degree in botany, ecology, forestry or an equivalent qualification together with practical and field experience and in particular knowledge of the ecology, phytosociological and taxonomy of the flora of Irish woodlands. An understanding of the soils of Ireland and silvicultural practices would be an advantage. Good organisational abilities, expertise in data processing and use of vegetation analytical programmes are essential. Access to suitable vehicles and current, clean driving licences will also be required.

***Order of magnitude of work envisaged***

As an approximate guide it is envisaged that the work will involve 25 person years. Tenders, together with a current Curriculum Vitae, which will be assessed by the steering committee, must be marked D/T/29 and submitted in triplicate to Rónán Whelan, Dúchas National Parks & Wildlife, 7 Ely Place, Dublin 2 or by email to [rwhelan@ealga.ie](mailto:rwhelan@ealga.ie) no later than 5.00 p.m. on Friday, 8th February, 2002. Further details are available from Mr Whelan at LoCall: 1890-474847.

The steering committee will interview some or all of the applicants as part of the selection process.

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# 3. Centre for Timber Engineering

A new Centre for Timber Engineering has been established in Edinburgh at Napier University. The stimulus for the centre was provided by the Scottish Forest Industries Cluster ([www.forestryscotland.com](http://www.forestryscotland.com)). The objectives of the new centre are to:

* Upgrade knowledge and skills of the construction industry technical and engineering workforce;
* Upgrade the knowledge of timber engineering among engineering and architectural graduates
* Upgrade technician level skills
* Be a source of new ideas and innovative technology to help create new markets for the use of timber
* Be grounded in technology and market ‘foresight’ in which industry plays a key role
* Provide solutions to known technical problems facing the industry
* Give access to problem solving capability relevant to the needs of individual companies

These objectives will be achieved in partnership with industry, trade organisations, research institutions and education and training establishments.

COFORD wishes the Centre every success in its pursuit of these objectives and looks forward to working with them in the coming years on collaborative R&D projects.

# 4. INTERFORST 2002

The 9th International Trade Fair for Forestry Technology takes place in the new Munich Trade Fair Centre from July 3rd to 7th. The event is held every four years, and is considered to be the most important trade fair in its field. In 1998 it was home to 417 exhibitors with 44,000 visitors. The exhibition is an international forum for many aspects of the forestry and timber business.

Further details are available at [www.interforst.de](http://www.interforst.de). Irish companies interested in exhibiting should contact John Couzens on 075 41741 (email [joncpattern@eircom.net](mailto:joncpattern@eircom.net))

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# 5. BIOFOREST – Official Launch

The conservation and enhancement of forest biodiversity (the variability and range of living organisms) in Ireland’s forests received a major boost with the official launch of a €1.3 million R&D project co-funded by COFORD and the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency).

Launching the project at a ceremony in UCC last week, Mr Hugh Byrne, Minister of State at the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources, stated that “The conservation and appropriate enhancement of Ireland’s biodiversity in forest ecosystems and general forest operations is one of the key measures identified in the National Forest Standard, the Forest Biodiversity Guidelines and in the draft national biodiversity action plan. Biodiversity must be protected and enhanced at all stages in the forest cycle. This is particularly important in view of Ireland’s status as a signatory to the International Convention on Biological Diversity.”

Following a call for research proposals a successful research consortium led by UCC's Department of Zoology and Animal Ecology, in collaboration with TCD and Coillte has been chosen by the two funding agencies following international peer review. The partners have just signed a contract with COFORD and the EPA for an in-depth five-year study. Interim results will be used to inform and revise policy and practice where appropriate.

Professor Gerry Wrixon, UCC President, welcomed the €1.3 million project and said that this major research programme will complement the activities of UCC's new Environmental Research Institute.

The project was summarised by Dr Eugene Hendrick, Director of COFORD: “The project will examine the impact of afforestation and forest operations on the biodiversity of flora and fauna on a range of site types. It will also quantify the changes in biodiversity that occur throughout the forest cycle and most importantly, it will outline best practice for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in the forests of Ireland.”

Mr David Nevins, chairman of COFORD welcomed the new project stating: “The research, at a cost of €1.3 m, and will be the biggest national project to date on any aspect of Ireland’s biodiversity. I am confident that it will have a significant impact on forest policy and practice in the coming years.”

Dr Padraic Larkin, Director, EPA was pleased to see the new initiative launched and pointed out that: “In taking the lead in this area the EPA and COFORD are demonstrating the importance of biodiversity as shown by the level of funding from both agencies for this project”.

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# 6. Research Vacancies

## PEnrich Project Manager

A project manager is required to manage a major field-based forest environment research project investigating the loss of phosphorus from forest lands - PEnrich. This is a collaborative project between Coillte and University College Dublin, and is co-ordinated by the Forest Ecosystem Research Group, UCD.

The project is co-funded by COFORD and the EPA.

The overall objective of the project is to determine the impact of forestry practices on concentrations and loads of phosphorus in surface waters. It will use the information gained to review the efficacy of the recommendations in the Forestry and Water Guidelines and the Code of Best Forest Practice, published by the Forest Service.

The PEnrich project requires a manager who is highly motivated and self-driven, willing to accept a challenging position. He/she will be responsible for co-ordinating the work of the project partners, organising experimental and investigative tasks, preparing detailed management plans for each task and implementing these plans.

The [detailed project description](http://www.ucd.ie/~ferg/Vacancies/Project_Description.html) as agreed with the COFORD and the EPA specifies the tasks and forms part of the job description for the post.

As the project progresses, data management will become an increasingly important component of the project manager's responsibilities. The manager will be expected to continually assess the progress of the project in meeting its objectives, to be flexible in programming field and office work and to be innovative in recommending solutions to new problems as they arise. A knowledge of soil processes is a prerequisite for the post. A background in forestry would be an asset, but is not essential. The successful applicant will be based in UCD, Belfield, but the project will involve significant fieldwork at a number of sites, which have yet to be selected.

Essential qualifications:

* A masters or PhD in forestry, agriculture, ecological sciences or a related discipline
* At least two years project management experience
* High skill levels with Microsoft Word and Excel or equivalent
* Good communication, planning and scientific report writing skills
* A full clean driving licence

The initial appointment will be for a probationary period of one year. On satisfactory completion of this period, the appointment may be extended to the full term of the project (2005). Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. Please send your Curriculum Vitae to:

Professor E.P. Farrell, Forest Ecosystem Research Group, Department of Environmental Resource Management, Faculty of Agriculture,   
University College Dublin, Belfield   
Dublin 4. Email: ted.farrell@ucd.ie

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# 7. Vacancies - INRA

As a follow up to the new Forest Policy Act passed by the French Parliament in 2001, INRA (l’Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique) is to increase its research activities in the field of forest science, environmental science and related human activities.

One of the components of forest research expansion is the recruitment of 30 additional scientists and research engineers (approximately 10 per year for three years).

Within INRA forest research is carried out in the following areas:

* Forests and the natural environment
* Agricultural economics and sociology
* Environment and agronomy
* Plant health and the environment
* Hydrobiology and wildlife
* Biometrics and artificial intelligence.

For further information see: <http://www.inra.fr/Internet/Directions/DRH/infodrh/index.htm>

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# 8. Timber Best Practice Programme - BRE

Our colleagues in BRE have asked us to bring to your attention another of their workshops. The event, Timber Best Practice – Enhancing your business performance, will be held in BRE, Garston, Watford on March 14th.

The workshop will present delegates with the opportunity to learn more about the positive business advantages which accrue through adoption of best management practices by:

* Sharing the experiences of companies which have already championed new ways of thinking and working in order to meet key commercial challenges facing the industry
* Learning how quality management principles and value management standards can boost profitability and competitiveness
* Understanding what sustainability is all about and how to develop a more sustainable way of doing business.

Real business benefits that have been achieved will be presented by speakers at this event.

The list of speakers is as follows:

* Martin Wyatt, Chief Executive, BRE
* Geoff Rhodes, Marketing Director, Willamette Europe Ltd
* Sharon Barnes, Inside UK Enterprise
* Robin Davies, Westbury Homes
* David Moore, Property Repair Systems
* Stephen Craig, James Jones & Sons
* Chris Sheldon, The SIGMA project
* Stan Terry, Wood Waste Millennium Project
* Peter Bonfield, BRE.

Those interested can find out more at [http://www.timberbestpractice.org.uk](http://www.timberbestpractice.org.uk/)

Alternatively, contact Ms Angela Mondair, BRE, Garston, Watford, WD25 9XX for a registration form - Tel +44 1923 664775 or email [GranthamR@bre.co.uk](mailto:GranthamR@bre.co.uk). Completed registration forms must be returned by March 4, 2002.

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# 9. Carbon Corner

Among the bodies that have been established as a result of the international climate change process is the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It was set up by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1988. It is “… open to all members of the UNEP and WMO. The role of the IPCC is to assess the scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant for the understanding of the risk of human-induced climate change. It does not carry out new research nor does it monitor climate related data. It bases its assessment mainly on published and peer reviewed scientific technical literature.”

In the Marrakesh Accords (agreed last November) the IPCC has been invited by the conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC to:

“(a) To elaborate methods to estimate, measure, monitor, and report changes in carbon stocks and anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks resulting from land use, land-use change and forestry activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, and Articles 6 and 12 of the Kyoto Protocol, on the basis of the *Revised 1996 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*, taking into account the present decision (11/CP.7) and draft decision -/CMP.1 *(Land use, land-use change and forestry)* attached hereto, to be submitted for consideration and possible adoption to the Conference of the Parties at its ninth session;”

Also allocated to the IPCC at Marrakech was a related task:

“(b) To prepare a report on good practice guidance and uncertainty management relating to the measurement, estimation, assessment of uncertainties, monitoring and reporting of net carbon stock changes and anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks in the land use, land-use change and forestry sector, taking into consideration the present decision (11/CP.7) and draft decision -/CMP.1 *(Land use, land-use change and forestry)* attached hereto, to be submitted for consideration and possible adoption to the Conference of the Parties at its ninth session;”

These tasks will involve revisiting the 1996 guidelines as a result of new scientific information gained in the interim. Part of the work will involve re-examining biomass expansion factors. This is a key variable that is used to convert forest inventory stemwood volumes stocks to carbon stocks. Apart from stemwood volume trees have a considerable carbon store in other parts including branches, leaves (needles) and in the roots. The biomass expansion factor is the ratio of these parts plus the stemwood to the stemwood. It can vary from 1.2 to over 2.0.

Ireland is represented in the IPCC process by Dr Ken Byrne of the Department of Environmental Resource Management at UCD, the well-known expert in carbon dynamics in forest ecosystems. He will be the lead author of the revised Chapter 3 of the 1996 guidelines – Land-use change and forestry – Good Practice Guidance. This will be the standard international reference for the compilation of forest carbon stocks under the Kyoto protocol. Dr Byrne is one of the scientists working in the new COFORD-funded CARBIFOR project team.

Dr Kevin Black of the Botany Department in UCD, another member of the CARBIFOR team, has just installed the first carbon dioxide flux tower in Ireland at a Midlands forest location. This apparatus will measure the instantaneous uptake and loss of carbon dioxide at the forest for the next year or more. Net changes in carbon stocks can be estimated for any period from an hour to a full year. Brian Tobin of the Forestry Department at UCD will estimate carbon stocks at the same site using full tree sampling.

Carbon Corner will keep readers informed of progress in the IPCC process and in the CARBIFOR project.

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# 10. Forestry Servicing Urbanised Societies – IUFRO Conference, Copenhagen

Our colleagues in the Danish Forest and Landscape Research Institute (DFLRI) have asked us to bring this meeting to your attention. In particular they have launched their 2nd Announcement and Call for Abstracts. The conference is organised in collaboration with the European Forest Institute (EFI) and hosted by DFLRI. It will be held in Copenhagen from August 27-30, 2002.

The conference aims to present and discuss innovative research and development recognising the increasingly urban face of forests and forestry. Researchers and policy-makers from all over the world are invited to participate and share their views and experiences.

The plenary sessions of the conference will have the following themes:

1. The development of urban forestry
2. The environmental functions & benefits of forests and trees in urban societies
3. Socio-economic aspects of forests and trees
4. Degraded land areas in urban societies & the need for innovative forest management
5. Threats to forests and their sustainability in urban societies
6. Forests in urbanised societies – the social agenda

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# 11. UCD Forestry Students Society Inaugural Lecture

The UCD Forestry Students Society is holding its annual Inaugural Lecture on the 20th of February at 7.00 p.m. in the Agriculture Building UCD. The theme this year is ‘**The Future of Farm Forestry in Ireland**’. The Auditor of the Society, Mr. Daniel McInerney, will deliver the opening speech. The respondents to Daniel’s speech will be:

* Mr. Hugh Byrne TD, Minister of State at the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources
* Mr. Pat Lehane, Chairman of the Forestry Committee of the Irish Farmers Association
* Mr. Michael Davoren, Coillte.

For further details please check the Society web page at <http://www.ucd.ie/~forsoc/>

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# 12. Forestry and wood processing R&D achieve a higher priority in the new Framework RTD Programme

As the Fifth Framework Programme of the EC comes to an end the Commission has been formulating the structure of the new framework programme. In fact the process started back in 1999 and in January 2000 the Commission submitted a communication - ‘Towards a European Research Area’ to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Following extensive consultation the specific programmes implementing the Framework Programme 2002-2006 was presented to the Council in May 2000. It contained six priority thematic areas with the budgets indicated.

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| --- | --- |
| Priority thematic areas of research under the Sixth Framework Programme | Budget  €  000,000 |
| Genomics and biotechnology for health | 2,000 |
| Information Society technologies | 3,600 |
| Nanotechnologies, intelligent materials, new production processes | 1,300 |
| Aeronautics and space | 1,000 |
| Food safety and health risks | 600 |
| Sustainable development and global change | 1,700 |
| Citizens and governance in the European knowledge-based society | 225 |

In addition funding of €1,660 m was allocated to what were called “Specific activities covering a wider field of research”. A further amount of €450 m was earmarked for strengthening the foundations of the European research area.

When the Commission’s proposals were first presented there was virtually no reference to forest research. Many industry and research organisations (including COFORD) lobbied hard for forestry and forest research to be specifically referenced in the programme. As a result, the current draft, which emerged following the European Parliament process and Council meetings, has forestry included with greatly increased visibility. There are now specific references to forestry in priority area 6 – Sustainable development and global change and in what is now being referred to as priority area 8 – Support for community policies. For a small country like Ireland continued participation in Framework-funded forest research projects is a must as we build competence and research excellence. We will also be looking to participate in R&D networks and co-ordinated national programmes that will be funded under the new programme.

The current state of play regarding the Framework Programme is that the new Commission proposal will be submitted shortly to both the Council and Parliament for approval under the codecision procedure. It is anticipated that it will be the autumn of 2002 before the programme is finally agreed. Calls for proposals should follow in late 2002 or early 2003.

Don’t forgot that the Framework programme is not confined to research – there is funding available for SMEs who wish to get involved in collaborative R&D with EU partners, for demonstration and scaling-up projects. For further details contact COFORD.

A history of the development of FP6 and an outline of the current state-of-play is available at

<http://www.cordis.lu/rtd2002/fp-debate/roadmap.htm.>

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# 13. COFORD Project Details Online

COFORD has uploaded details of all projects we are currently funding onto our website. From our homepage ([www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie)) select Research Projects, 2000-2006 to see a list of these projects. Details such as project leader, project partners, objectives, background and methodology are provided for each project. Some projects have also set up their own website and links are provided from the COFORD website.

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COFORD, Agriculture Building, UCD, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.

Tel: (01) 7167700 Fax: (01) 7161180

Email: [info@coford.ie](mailto:info@coford.ie) Web: [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie)



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