

COFORD Forestry and Wood Update

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## Editor: Joe O’Carroll, Operations Manager

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# 1.Update on COFORD Activities

April was another busy month for COFORD. The highlight of the month was the hosting of a major workshop on ‘Innovation in Wood Products’. This event was held in Dublin and was well attended, with delegates from France, Finland and Britain. The Scottish Forest Industry Cluster repeated the event in Edinburgh on April 30th. Further collaboration between COFORD and SFIC will develop over the coming months.

Having operated below its full staff complement for well over a year, COFORD has added a new staff member to enable the maintenance of service levels

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# 2. New COFORD Recruit

The COFORD team has been further strengthened by the addition of Mr John Fennessy. John began his role as Research Programme Manager – Tree Improvement on Monday April 29th. John will be responsible for compiling the National Catalogue of Seed Stands and will continue to represent Ireland at EUFORGEN meetings. He will also run the non-wood products R&D programme.

John previously worked for the Forest Service and later Coillte. He was first appointment as Assistant Research Forester in the west of Ireland in 1968. Worked mainly on experimentation on fertilisation, drainage, cultivation and crop establishment in western peats. John moved to the Eastern Region in 1970 and worked on forest fertilisation and species and provenance trials. He moved to research headquarters in late 1970 and worked in forest tree breeding.  At this time Ireland was about to become a member of the European Union (EU) and on of the main tasks under EU regulation was the implementation of the Forest Reproductive Material Regulation.  John had the responsibility of the establishment and management of the National Catalogue of Seed Stands and also worked on various tree breeding programmes in pine and later in Sitka spruce as well as seed orchard establishment and management. During this period he also worked on containerised plant production and nursery experimentation. In 1989 he was appointed Seed Manager in the Coillte’s newly established Nursery Division and later became Manager of Coillte's Tree Improvement Research Station at Kilmacurra.

In 1986, John completed a five year part-time course of study leading to Batchelor of Arts in Public Administration at the Institute of Public Administration and was awarded a Master of Science (Agriculture) degree in 1998 from University College, Dublin. He completed an Advanced Training Programme in Forest Gene Resource Management at the Faculty of Forestry of British Columbia in 2000.

John is a welcome addition to the team and can be contacted at the COFORD office on +353 (0)1 7167700 or by email at john.fennessy@coford.ie.

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# 3. Wood For Energy 2002

COFORD and the Renewable Energy Information Office of the Irish Energy Centre are finalising plans for a major Wood for Energy Conference in July. The main event will be held on July 18 and 19 at the Landmark Hotel in Carrick-on-Shannon.

The event will bring together leading experts in the optimum conversion of wood to energy. Presentations will be given on:

* The Potential of wood energy in Ireland
* Markets for wood fuels in Europe
* Forest residues as a source of wood fuels
* Specialised equipment for bundling bioenergy from forest residues
* Technology for wood fuel chip production in Ireland
* Accelerating the use of wood residues as a source of fuel in Ireland
* Profitability of wood-fuelled CHP generation
* Wood-fuelled power plant
* Wood-fuelled CHP plants: success stories from Sweden/Finland
* Large-scale production of heat from wood residues in the wood processing industry
* Danish experiences acquired in the field of wood energy
* Wood fuel heating applications in France

The conference will feature morning sessions of presentations and afternoon sessions of visits to wood biomass fuelled energy plants and whole-tree chipping operations in the forest. The event will be of interest to all of those involved in the wood supply chain including forest owners, contractors, sawmillers, panelboard management, energy companies and community leaders.

The conference will be preceded by a one day training course **‘Wood Fuels Basic Information Pack’.** This course will be run by **BENET** (bioenergy network) Finland. Numbers will be limited. Further information will be issued shortly.

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# 4. COFORD/IUFRO workshop on Pine Weevil

From August 14-17 the forestry department at Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology will host a COFORD/IUFRO workshop on ‘Recent Advances in Research on *Hylobius abietis*, the large pine weevil’.

 The meeting will bring together European researchers who have an interest in the biology, ecology and management of one of Europe’s most important forest pests, the large pine weevil. Presentations will provide an opportunity to share landmark results in research, and to probe, through open discussion, the most important areas for research development. The forum will direct attention to areas where synergism can be achieved by multinational research teams. There will be a focus on the means by which international support can be given to provide momentum for further collaboration in future.

The meeting convenors are Dr Patrick Walsh, GMIT (pwalsh@merlin.gmit.ie) and Dr Keith Day, University of Ulster (kr.day@ulster.ac.uk). Further details will follow in next month’s newsletter.

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# 5. VACANCY – Postgraduate Fellowship

A postgraduate position in the Department of Botany, Trinity College Dublin (TCD) is available as part of a research programme on Forest Biodiversity (BIOFOREST), in collaboration with the Department of Zoology & Animal Ecology, University College Cork and Coillte, funded jointly by EPA & COFORD under the National Development Plan.

The Postgraduate student would contribute to the overall project, and would carry out specific research on *The relations between epiphyte diversity and plantation forest structure and composition.* This research would be submitted for the degree of Ph.D./M.Sc. under the joint supervision of Drs D.L. Kelly, P. Dowding & S.F. Iremonger.

Duration of fellowship: 3 years: 1 October 2002 – 30 September 2005

Stipend: 14,000 Euro per annum (This includes fees, c. 3170 Euro per annum).

Prerequisites: a good B.Sc./B.A./M.Sc. in Botany/Biology/Environmental Science; skill in plant identification.

The successful candidate must be willing to undergo training to become proficient in tree-climbing techniques. A full, clean driving license would be a distinct advantage. Prior knowledge of bryophyte and/or lichen identification is desirable. The candidate will participate in the wider vegetation survey work of the team, as well as working specifically on epiphytes.

Further details of the project are available on the following web page

http://[www.tcd.ie/Botany](http://www.tcd.ie/botany)//Bioforest.ucc.ie

Applications, in the form of a letter, three copies of a CV and names of three referees, should be sent to:

Dr. D. Kelly, Dept of Botany, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin 2, Ireland (dkelly@tcd.ie)

Closing date for applications is ***31 May 2002.*** Late applicants may be considered if no suitable candidates apply.

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# 6. Elite birch trees sought

The COFORD funded pilot study for genetic improvement of Irish Birch was established in 1998 and is being conducted by the Botany Dept in UCD and Teagasc. Initially it involved an island-wide geographic collection of seed and scion material. An indoor seed-orchard was established from scion wood and used to produce half and full sibling progeny for inclusion in field trials. The seed was used to establish a series of provenance/ progeny trials. A total of 9 ha of provenance progeny trials were planted.

***About birch:***

* Birch currently suffers from a bad reputation and is not considered as a tree with marketable timber production potential in Ireland.
* It is capable of growth on a wide range of sites and has the potential to satisfy the 10% minimum commercial broadleaf requirement on sites with poor quality soil.
* Birch timber has a strength and density intermediate between oak and beech. It veneers well and yields high quality pulp.

Two species are native to Ireland: silver birch (*Betula pendula)* and downy birch (*B. pubescens).* The greater utilisation of these species would greatly facilitate the fulfilment of the publicly stated desire to diversify the species mix in the national afforestation programme.

Birch has excellent potential as a commercial crop. Birch improvement projects in Finland, Sweden and Scotland have shown substantial genetic gain can be made within the first generation of selection. Birch now constitutes 17% of forest planting in Finland.

The task

An island wide selection of superior birch was carried out from 1998 to 2000. The majority of trees selected were *B. pubescens*.

The project team now wish to locate ‘elite’ birch trees and wish to co-opt the help of people involved in forestry. Assistance is sought with locating ‘elite’ birch so that they can be included in the Irish Birch Improvement Project. The emphasis is on selection of *Betula pendula*.

If you know of silver birch stands or individual trees of superior form in your area, whether planted or naturally regenerated and would like to assist the team, you are asked to please contact Dr Williams with details of the location:

Dr. Linda Williams

Teagasc

Kinsealy Research Centre

Malahide Road

Dublin 17.

Tel: 01-8460644

Fax: 01-8460524

***Characteristics of an ‘ elite’ tree:***

* Retention of leader
* Straight stem
* Thin branches at right angles to the stem
* Round cross section
* Minimal taper
* Narrow crown
* Smooth peeling bark (often associated with fast growth)

***Differences between downy and silver birch:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Silver birch | Downy birch |
| ***B. pendula*** | B. pubescens |
| Silver white upper bark | Brown, grey or upper white bark |
| Black downward fissures | Fissures on lower bark/ horizontal banding |
| Pendulous branches | Branches upswept, spreading or pendulous |
| Twigs – small, no hairs, rough, warts | Twigs - black/brown can be pubescent when young, may have smooth bumps |
| Leaves - generally tri-angular, base angular, double serrated margin | Leaves - pubescent on lower veins. Oval-shaped, single-toothed margin |
| Free draining mineral soils | Common on peat soils |
| 30 m maximum height  | 25 m maximum height |

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# 7. Carbon Corner

The sixteenth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change takes place in Bonn from the 5th to the 14th of June next. SBSTA serves as the link between the information and assessments provided by expert sources (such as the International Panel on Climate Change) on the one hand, and the policy-oriented needs of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the convention on the other.

The provisional agenda for the event is available on the UNFCCC web site in pdf format at <http://unfccc.int/sessions/sb16/proagsbsta.pdf>. Agenda item 4 has two items dealing with forestry methodological issues:

(d) Development of good practice guidance and other information for land use, land use change and forestry;

(e) Land use, land-use change and forestry: definitions and modalities for including afforestation and reforestation activities under Article 12 of the Kyoto Protocol.

Article 12 of the protocol deals with the clean development mechanism or CDM. The objective of the CDM is to assist Parties (to the convention) not included in Annex 1

(Parties committed to adopting policies and measures aimed at controlling their greenhouse-gas emissions) in achieving sustainable development and in contributing to the ultimate objective of the convention, and to assist Annex 1 Parties in achieving compliance with their emission reduction commitments. In the Marrakesh Accords Decision 11/CP.7 which deals with land use, land-use change and forestry (document FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1) limits the eligibility of these activities under the CDM to afforestation and reforestation, for the first commitment period (2008-2012). It also limits (again for the first commitment period) the extent that a party can use CDM credits that result from forestry projects to 1% of the parties base-year (1990) emissions. This cap was agreed as part of the negotiation process as the EU, and other parties, were very concerned at the potential scale and use of CDM sinks and the extent that they would reduce the need to curtail emissions. It should be pointed out that forestry is but one part of the CDM which also deals with renewable energy projects, energy efficiency improvement activities and other project activities that reduce anthropogenic emissions by sources and directly emit less than 15 kilotonnes of CO2 equivalent annually. The full text of the CDM decision text is available on the UNFCC web site (<http://unfccc.int/>) as FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.2.

It is envisaged that work on the definitions and modalities for forestry in the CDM will be finished in time for the ninth Conference of the Parties which is due to take place in 2003.

Although the use of CDM projects to achieve compliance is not envisaged in the National Climate Strategy there may be opportunities for Irish companies to develop suitable projects and sell the resulting verified carbon units to countries or other entities. A CDM Executive Board was appointed at COP7. This body is now responsible for the validation and registration of CDM projects. Under the so-called prompt start agreement, projects that begun as of year 2000 and which have been registered by the CDM executive board before 31 December 2005 can have the crediting period begin from before the date of registration, but no earlier than 1 January 2000.

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# 8. VACANCY – GIS Analyst

Teagasc – The National Agency for Food and Agricultural Research, Advice and Training is expanding its GIS research programme at Kinsealy Research Centre and wishes to make the following appointment.

Teagasc requires a new member of staff to join a major research project funded by the Forest Service, Department of Marine and Natural Resources. The objective of this interdisciplinary research team is to develop a Soils Classification and Forest Productivity Ranking and ancillary datasets on a national basis using remote sensed imagery and other relevant digital datasets.

The project is based at the Kinsealy Research Centre near Malahide, County Dublin.

**Essential Requirements:** An Honours University Degree in GIS or an appropriate degree with a post graduate Certificate or Diploma in GIS. Appropriate degrees include: Soil Science, Forestry, Agriculture, Geology, Geography, Environmental Science, or other relevant degree. Experience in GIS based research or in a commercial GIS enterprise would be valuable.

The appointment will be on the basis of a one-year contract

Further details and application form using the above reference code from:

Recruitment Section, Teagasc, 19 Sandymount Avenue, Dublin 4.

Fax (01) 6376191

Email: recruit@hq.Teagasc.ie

Please quote Reference No in all correspondence.

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# 9. United Nations Forum on Forests

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) was established as a new permanent body by the UN Economic and Social Council on the 18th of October 2000. It succeeded the *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests which met over the period 1995-2000 see <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/unffdecision.htm>

The aim of the UNFF is to provide a permanent high-level forest policy forum. Among its major functions are the promotion of agreed actions towards sustainable forest management, enhancement of coordination of forest related issues, and strengthening political commitment to sustainable management of all types of forests. Within five years from 2000 it is to consider recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework for all types of forest.

One of the main tasks of the UNFF is to progress the implementation of a wide-ranging-set of approximately 300 proposals for action that arose form the IPF and IFF processes. These deal with a wide range of forest related issues including:

* decision making (policy tools including national forest programmes and criteria and indicators;
* traditional forest related knowledge;
* assessing and reporting on progress towards sustainable forest management;
* forest resources and their management (including deforestation and forest degradation);
* forest health and productivity;
* rehabilitation and maintenance of forest cover;
* forest conservation and the protection of unique types of forests;
* international cooperation and capacity building;
* international trade and transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

There are five main types of proposals for action:

1. General guidelines;
2. Cooperation;
3. Coordination and collaboration;
4. Reiteration of previous agreements;
5. Areas that require further consensus.

The IPF/IFF proposals for Action are aimed at five main actors:

1. countries
2. intergovernmental organisations
3. the interagency taskforce of forests (ITFF)
4. the private sector and
5. other major groups including non-governmental organisations.

The IPF/IFF proposals for action are to provide guidance to the main actors on further development implementation and coordination of national and international policies on sustainable forest management.

At the Second Session of the UNFF held in March last the draft report (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/unffdocs/unff2draftreport.pdf>) on the meeting includes a Ministerial Declaration and Message from the United Nations Forum on Forests to the World Summit on Sustainable Development that states, *inter alia*:

*We, the Ministers responsible for forests in our countries, reaffirm our commitment to the Forest Principles and Agenda 21, adopted at the United Nations Conference on*

*Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Since then,*

*significant progress has been made. Deliberations within the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), as well as the United Nations Forum on Forests, have enriched our common understanding of forest issues and their complexity. We recognize the significant contribution made by the regional processes and encourage their continued strengthening. We also recognize that much remains to be done.*

*We commit ourselves to the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. While recognizing that countries have the primary responsibility to implement the IPF/IFF proposals for action, we underline the importance for the international community to strengthen cooperation in the areas of finance, trade, transfer of environmentally sound technology and capacity-building, which are essential to ensure sustainable forest management in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. We stress the importance of national forest programmes or similar approaches, the role of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, and voluntary certification systems.*

The Forest Service is at present examining the degree of implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

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# 10. INVITATION TO TENDER – Aerial Fertilisation Monitoring of Forest Sites and Receiving Waters

The Forest Service of the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources invites written expressions of interest from competent persons, companies, organisations and institutions wishing to be included on a list from which tenders will be sought for the provision of monitoring and reporting services relating to aerial application of fertiliser on forest sites and the impact of aerial fertilisation on receiving fresh waters and the forest crop area taking into account water quality, fertiliser nutrient concentrations, rate of fertiliser application, eveness of distribution and compliance with exclusion zones as set out in the Forestry and Aerial Fertilisation Guidelines.

Written submissions should include evidence of previous experience of similar contracts and an outline of the services that may be offered. Written submissions must be received no later than **12:00 noon on Friday May 17th, 2002**.

Submissions should be sent to: **Environmental Policy Section, The Forest Service, Department of the Marine and Natural Resources, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co Wexford**.

The Forest Service reserves the right to shortlist suitable applicants on the basis of information supplied for invitations to tender. Details of the closing date for receipt of tender will be supplied with the tender documents.

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# 11. Seminar – Non Timber Forest Products

Great potential exists for foresters and land managers to generate income from non-traditional sources of income.  The Institute of
Chartered Foresters is organising, in association with the Scottish Forest Industries Cluster, a seminar on Non Timber Forest Products.  The
seminar will be held at New Lanark Mill Hotel, New Lanark, Central Scotland on Monday 13 May 2002 and will address the following areas:

* Deepening understanding of the potential of non-timber forest
products
* Illustrate opportunities currently available
* Highlight routes to commercialisation and areas for future
development

The seminar fee is £45 (incl. VAT where applicable) which includes lunch, tea & coffee and seminar notes.  For further information and registration, please contact: Neville Elstone
Institute of Chartered Foresters
7a St Colme Street Edinburgh
EH3 6AA

Tel: +44 (0)131 225 2705
Fax: +44 (0)131 225 6128
Email: neville@charteredforesters.org

The seminar programme is as follows:

 1000   Welcome & introduction - Stefan Kay OBE, Chairman, Scottish
Forest Industries Cluster

1010   The Scottish and world market in non timber forest products -
Alison Dyke, University of Glasgow

1040   The current and future market in non timber forest products -
David Primrose, RFM Marketing

1130   A technical perspective on the potential for non timber forest
products - Melvyn Askew, Central Science Lab, York

1200   Open forum

1330   Introduction to afternoon - David Henderson-Howat, FICFor, Chief
Conservator, Scotland

1335   The view of the woodland manager and owner - Fergus Tickell
MICFor, Chief Executive, Ormsary Estate

1405   A producer's perspective, from concept to market - Richard
Constanduros, Highland Natural Products Ltd

1435 Dick Peebles, Caledonian Wild Foods

1530   Workshops:

 - Researching new forest product opportunities
 -Accessing NTFP markets
- Woodland management for NTFPs

1600   Plenary session and discussion

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# 12. The Energy Show 2002

Dramatic changes have taken place in the Irish energy sector in recent years. This has resulted in new choices for energy users and new opportunities for energy producers and the suppliers of energy-related products and services. It is against this background that the forthcoming Energy Show 2002 is being organised by the Irish Energy Centre. The show, which will be held in the Industries Hall, RDS, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 on May 15-16, comprises a unique formula of product presentations and accompanying workshops where new and innovative products and services are unveiled to a dedicated audience of key decision makers in the energy sector.

 The morning session on May 16th features a workshop on Biomass – Power from the Land. Of particular relevance will be the presentations on:

* Forest Residues – the clean solid fuel for local small and large-scale requirement, and
* Wood wastes – efficient and eco-friendly fuel in CHP generation

Further information is available at www.irish-energy.ie

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# 13. Soil Science Symposium

The Soil Science Society of Ireland will hold a symposium on ‘Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Farming and Water Quality - An International Perspective’ on Thursday 30th May 2002 in the Agriculture and Food Science building, UCD, Belfield, Dublin 4.

 If you are interested in attending, please contact Dr Jim Collins at james.collins@ucd.ie

The background to the event is described as follows:

Deleterious anthropogenic impacts on water quality are causing serious concern world-wide. In Ireland the EPA, and its predecessors, have been reporting on water quality for over 30 years. Over most of that period the trend has been one of deterioration, with eutrophication, arising from elevated levels of nitrogen and phosphorus, being identified as one of the main problems. Industrial and urban waste-water discharges are major contributors, but they are widely perceived to be of less significance than contributions from agriculture, either as point or diffuse sources. Generally, the approach has been to make estimates of contributions from agriculture based on total loadings of nutrients, adjusted by subtraction of other known and/or admitted contributions. Such indirect estimates frequently identify agriculture as a larger contributor of nutrients to water than when its contribution is measured directly. Point sources of agricultural pollution, mainly from farmyards, or injudicious handling of fertiliser or manure, though often of great significance need not be a problem in that they can be eliminated, or at least controlled. Diffuse agricultural sources are more problematical, for not only are they difficult to identify and control, their real contributions to the loadings in water bodies have so far not been quantified for the pertinent range of soil conditions in Ireland. In the absence of verifiable, scientifically based estimates of the contribution of diffuse agricultural sources of nutrients to water, under defined conditions, it is of the utmost importance to the agricultural industry in Ireland that measures are not introduced that will curtail the economic viability of farming without compelling evidence that they are justified on scientific grounds. This symposium will review the issue of agriculture’s contribution to nutrients in water, and will compare the measures adopted internationally to control its environmental impacts with those now in effect, or under consideration, in Ireland.

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# **14. aNSwer - a North-South website for Environmental Research**

A new website was launched on 17th April, in Dublin. The site was launched by Environmental Ministers Dermot Nesbitt (NI) and Noel Dempsey (RoI). This was followed by an aNSwer and EDS Research Conference.  The conference generated much interest and attendees voiced the opinion that a resource of this nature was very welcome.

aNSwer is now fully online at <http://www.answer-online.org>. The organisers welcome comments and suggestions from all stakeholders.

One of the benefits of the aNSwer site is that it is self-managing.  Environmental Organisations will be able to edit and maintain their own details online using simple online forms.  If you are an appointed Organisation Administrator or Project Co-coordinator, you will shortly be contacted with instructions to help you update your organisation and project details online at aNSwer.  If you would like to know more, please contact Caroline Irwin at sitemanager@answer-online.org

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