

Forestry and Wood Update……………….January 2003 - Volume 3 Issue 1

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COFORD

Agriculture Building, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.

Tel: (01) 7167700

Fax: (01) 7161180

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

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This newsletter was compiled and edited by Lauren MacLennan, Technology Transfer Co-ordinator.

Email: lauren.maclennan@coford.ie

# COFORD Events for 2003

21 March: Forestry and land use planning – policy and practice.

3 April: Effective use of recovered wood.

10-11 April: Managing our broadleaf resource to produce quality hardwood timber.

25 April: Advances in wood preservation.

8-9 May: Managing our broadleaf resource to produce quality hardwood timber.
(to be held in Northern Ireland)

6 June: Forestry’s role in the national climate change strategy.

20 June: Thinning field day/demonstration.

10-11 July: Wood for Energy annual conference.

25-26 September: Managing our broadleaf resource to produce quality hardwood timber.

7 October: Certification for the private sector.

21 October: Deer management – Developing regional control plans.

13 November: Annual ITGA/COFORD Conference.

Venues will be confirmed closer to the event. Updated information will be announced in the COFORD newsletter and on the website [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie).

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# Greetings and Wishes for 2003

The COFORD team wishes to extend its very best wishes to all readers of the COFORD ‘Forestry and Wood Update’ newsletter. We thank you for your support throughout the past year and wish you continued success in 2003. The COFORD team is always keen to improve the service we provide to our subscribers and would like to receive suggestions on any additional features, items or functionality you would like us to add to our newsletter and technology transfer programme.

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# Carbon Energy Tax to focus interest in wood biomass

 The Minister of Finance, Mr Charlie McCreevy, TD, announced on budget day that a carbon tax would be introduced from the end of 2004. Announcing this development, the Minister stated: "We have international obligations under the Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For this reason, the Government has asked the relevant Departments to advance the plans for a general carbon energy tax, with a view to introducing this from the end of 2004. Given the many implications of such a tax, both environmental and economic, there will be full consultations with interested parties on the design of the tax and a reasonable period is being allowed for its effective introduction."

As the exact details of the tax are yet to be negotiated it is certain that energy generated from wood biomass will be exempt from the tax.  This will mean that the relative competitiveness of wood biomass as a source of energy will be increased.  Fossil fuels are likely to be hit in the following order - coal, oil, gas - reflecting the reducing CO2 intensity of these fuels.

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# Carbon Corner

Estimating and reporting carbon stocks and carbon stock changes in forests in Ireland has been underway for several years. Reports are made annually to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by the EPA on behalf of the Department of the Environment and Local Government. COFORD and the Forest Service provide the data to the EPA.

Estimates of carbon stocks are made based on the *Revised 1996 IPCC[[1]](#footnote-1) Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* (*IPCC Guidelines*). However, it had been recognised for some time that there was a need to develop *Good Practice Guidance* (GPG) to provide advice in the use of the guidelines. This task was assigned to the IPCC in 1998. The guidelines were finished in time for their acceptance by the IPCC plenary in 2000; and they were subsequently accepted by the UNFCCC. However, the 2000 GPG did not cover land-use and forestry activities (LULUCF) described in Chapter 5 of the IPCC guidelines. This was mainly because significant negotiations were underway on LULUCF as part of the IPCC process. The IPCC recognised that it would be preferable to await the outcome of these negotiations before developing GPG for LULUCF activities.

After the successful conclusion of the negotiations at the UNFCCC conference at Marrakech in November 2001, a decision was adopted inviting the IPCC to elaborate methods to *estimate, measure, monitor and report changes in carbon stocks* … *resulting from land-use, land-use change and forestry* *activities* *under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4 and Articles 6 and 12[[2]](#footnote-2) of the Kyoto Protocol*, on the basis of the Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories … *to be submitted for consideration and possible adoption to the Conference of the Parties at its ninth session*. Included in the decision taken at Marrakech was that the IPCC would be asked to prepare a report on good practice guidance and uncertainty management relating to the measurement and estimation of net carbon stock changes and anthropogenic emissions and removals by sinks in the LULUCF sector.

As the requests are closely linked, the IPCC has responded by producing a single *Good Practice Guidance for LULUCF* under what has become known as IPCC Task 1. A first order draft of the report has been issued for comment by governments, with a closing date of the end of January 2003. The document is likely to be the key reference for national reporting of carbon stocks and carbon stock changes in forestry and other land uses. Issues such as representation of land areas, changes in soil organic matter and non-CO2 greenhouse gases all need to be fully and transparently addressed. Good practice implies that inventories of carbon stocks contain neither over- nor under-estimates as far as can be judged and uncertainties are reduced as far as practicable.

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# National Catalogue of Seed Stands

## Table 1: Area (ha) of new stands selected in 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Species** | **1997** | **1998** | **1999** | **2000** | **2001** | **2002** |
| Sitka spruce | 107.2 | 189.4 | 217.0 | 273.4 | 237.2 | 8.6 |
| Norway spruce | 49.8 | 137.7 | 218.0 | 252.3 | 136.6 | 19.1 |
| Pedunculate oak |  | 31.3 | 13.0 | 4.4 | 10.7 | 186.2 |
| Sessile oak | 4.5 |  | 43.0 | 27.6 | 42.9 | 595.8 |
| Japanese Larch |  |  |  |  | 3.9 |  |
| Noble fir |  | 7.0 |  |  |  |  |
| Douglas fir |  | 31.7 |  | 15.6 | 52.1 |  |
| Sycamore |  |  | 11.2 |  |  |  |
| Monterey pine |  |  | 2.0 |  |  |  |
| Western red cedar |  |  | 1.4 | 4.5 |  | 2.0 |
| Ash | 3.1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Scots pine | 2.2 |  |  |  |  | 24.1 |
| European Larch |  |  |  |  | 2.0 |  |
| Beech | 1.2 |  |  | 3.0 |  | 13.7 |
| Lodgepole pine  |  |  |  | 5.6 | 3.8 |  |
| Common Alder |  |  |  |  |  | 6.7 |
| **Totals** | 168.0 | 397.1 | 505.6 | 586.4 | 489.2 | 856.2 |

During 2002 a total area of 856.2 ha of new seed stands were selected and added to the National Catalogue of Seed Stands. This is a substantial increase in area from previous years (see Table 1). In 1997 the area added was 168.0 ha, in 1998 it was 397.1 ha and in 1999 505.6 ha were added. In 2000, some 586.4 ha of new seed stand were selected while an additional 489.2 ha were selected in 2001.

It is interesting to note the shift in emphasis in species, with a decrease in the area of conifer stands selected and an increase in the area of broadleaved seed stands. In 1997 seven stands of Sitka spruce were selected, with a total area of 107.2 ha, while in 2002 just one stand with an area of 8.6 ha was selected. On the other hand, the area of sessile oak stands has grown from one stand selected in 1997 (4.5 ha) to 11 stands selected in 2002 (total area selected 595.8 ha). This represents an

increased demand for broadleaves, particularly native broadleaves, as a result of the Native Woodland Scheme (NWS). It also reflects a new EU Directive, which came into force on 1 January 2003. This new Directive covers a much wider range of species of importance to forestry in Ireland, including ash, alder, sycamore, cherry and lodgepole pine.

Selected seed stands are a valuable resource that guarantees the sustainability and productivity of our forests. Forest owners and managers should always seek out the best and most productive forest reproductive material. Anyone wishing to find out more about the National Catalogue of Seed Stands should consult the Forest Service or COFORD.

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# BIHIP AGM and Conference on “Tree improvement and regional diversity”

The Second Annual General Meeting of BIHIP took place at the Northmoor Trust Offices in Little Wittenham in Oxfordshire on 24 September 2002. A number of important issues were discussed at this meeting and there was welcome news about funding of projects. Horticulture Research International (HRI), who up to now had concentrated their research work on cherry improvement, has decided to extend their tree improvement work into oak, ash, walnut and sweet chestnut, which will be funded jointly by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural affairs (DEFRA) and the Forestry Commission, amounting to £120,000 a year for the next six years. The main focus of this work will be on plus tree selection, propagation and breeding as appropriate for each species. The Forestry Commission has also supported the BIHIP oak, ash and birch groups with a grant of £3000 to each project during 2002 with an additional £1000 to the Northmoor Trust to support the secretarial work of BIHIP. For many years BIHIP has been attempting to establish a sycamore group and this was finally agreed at the meeting. This new group will be chaired by Dr Michael Carey, former General Manager, Coillte Forest. It was also agreed that the next meeting of the Management Committee of BIHIP would be held in Ireland in mid January 2003, to conclude with a field day.

## Conference on tree improvement and regional diversity

At the conclusion of the AGM, a conference on “Tree improvement and regional diversity” took place. This conference was opened by Sir Martin Wood, Patron, Northmoor Trust, who welcomed all of the participants. Professor Jeff Burley, Chairman of BIHIP and Director of the Oxford Forestry Institute, introduced the topic and chaired the meeting.

Dr Sam Samuel, Head, Tree Improvement Branch, Forestry Commission presented a thought provoking paper on “Current knowledge and issues” in relation to tree improvement and regional matters. He gave a clear explanation on variation in forest trees:

1. Adaptive or selective variation, which is the basis of most field trials to determine suitability of genotypes for planting. Trials with many species generally show that native material performs better than foreign material since it has adapted best to the locality in important traits such as time of bud burst and time of cessation of growth.
2. Neutral, non-selective or random variation, which is most commonly determined by molecular methods, which can help elucidate such questions as origin of particular populations and gene flow.

Dr Samuel went on to discuss a number of terms used in tree improvement, which often tend to lead to confusion. The first of these is adaptation, which is the variation in a population that exists as a result of selection in the local environment. Adaptability is the potential of a population to adapt to heterogeneous or changing environmental conditions. Conservation aims to maintain or increase adaptability. The important questions for BIHIP are whether a combination of adaptation and selection for quality and performance are acceptable, or whether they are mutually exclusive, and at what level, breeding programmes should address the region of provenance or seed zone structure? In Britain there are four regions of provenance, which are subdivided into 24 local seed zones. At present, Ireland, as a whole is regarded as only one region of provenance and one seed zone.

Mr Gordon Patterson, Principle Biodiversity Advisor, Policy and Practice Division, Forestry Commission, gave a paper entitled “Reconciling tree improvement with the conservation of genetic variation”. He gave a valuable overview of a number of issues concerning policy on the genetic conservation of native trees. Among the issues of importance to BIHIP are:

* The use of genetically improved material rather than local seed sources.
* The choice of seed origin and rules about seed transfer.
* The use of foreign reproductive material (e.g*.* eastern European oak) in existing woods.
* Response to environmental change.
* The influence of tree genotype on woodland fungi and fauna.

Research needs to be done on adaptive variation and choice of seed origin, and the potential for seed supply in Britain. At present about two thirds to three quarters of all broadleaved planting stock comes from continental Europe, and large scale movement of seed across Britain is common. In Ireland the situation is quite similar for oak, while there is almost self-sufficiency with most other broadleaf species. In Britain the Forestry Commission’s current policy is to encourage the use of local seed sources, especially in ancient semi-natural woodland. Though the use of improved material in this type of woodland is unlikely to be ruled out if genetic conservation is not compromised. However, a problem is likely to arise if a large amount of specially selected stock is planted in native woodlands, especially if introduced from distant sources. In Ireland, the Native Woodland Scheme has a requirement that “all sessile and pedunculate oak planted under the scheme must originate from a registered seed stand included in the National Catalogue of Seed Stands and regarded as being indigenous” while “all planting stock of native species, other than sessile and pedunculate oak, must originate from within Ireland from sources identified through good seed collection practices as being indigenous and heterogeneous”.

In both Britain and Ireland, a wide spectrum of policy response is likely to be developed between conservation on the one hand and production forestry on the other. Where timber production is a major objective, the use of improved stock may be allowed, and even encouraged. The main aim is not to allow the native gene pool to be changed too rapidly, and the challenge is to determine the desirable balance between genetic conservation and production forestry.

A paper on “Regionalisation in Ireland and the New Native Woodland Scheme” was presented by John Fennessy, COFORD, on behalf of Diarmuid McAree, Chief Inspector Forest Service. The paper gave a brief overview of the scheme, described its origins, highlighted its wide-ranging consensus on ecological and silvicultural principles and explained its main elements, including the unique partnership between landowners, statutory bodies, environmental interests and the private sector.

Dr Hugh Williams, Grant and Land Management Advisor, National Forest, spoke on the development of the new National Forest in the Midlands. His paper, “The National Forest – quantity and quality in woodland creation” gave an insight into the problems and opportunities faced by the people charged with the creation of the new National Forest.

Dr David Boshier, Senior Research Associate, Oxford Forestry Institute, presented a paper on “Local seed sources – how can research help us”. He quoted the EC Biodiversity Strategy guideline which states that “native species and local provenances should be preferred where appropriate”, and forest certification requires this approach too. The problem is to decide what “local” means. For example, should seed be collected from the same wood, the same watershed or anywhere in the same country? Two sources of information are available to help determine this:

* Molecular studies which enable neutral variation, gene flow and population structures to be investigated.
* Field trials, which allow adaptive variation to be studied. The extent of this variation will depend on the number of generations over which selection has occurred, and also the extent of environmental variability.

Dr Boshier suggested that it is necessary to maintain genetic variation in trees to provide adaptation to a changing environment and because it can be utilised, as in the case of BIHIP’s work. It is also important to maintain viability of populations in the short term and to avoid inbreeding and outbreeding depression. Dr Boshier went on to explain that the “reciprocal transplant” experiments currently being established at Oxford with ash, will for this species, elucidate the scale at which adaptation occurs, relating geographic distances between seed sources to ecological differences. This will provide a scientific basis for any adjustments that may be needed to the existing provenance regions and seed zones in the UK. However, policies for one species may not necessarily apply to another, for example due to different dispersal mechanisms or responses to site differences. He suggested that it would be important for BIHIP to identify where there is genotype-environment interaction in its trials and what is the cause of this interaction.

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# European Commission calls for experts to evaluate scientific projects

On 4 December the European Commission published two calls for experts to assist it in evaluating and selecting proposals for research projects to be funded within the Sixth EU Research framework Programme (FP6 2002-2006). Under FP6, proposals will continue to be evaluated and selected for funding with the help of independent external scientists. This "peer review" system will be further streamlined to ensure the procedure is even more transparent and efficient. Within the Fifth Framework Programme (FP5 1998-2002) the Commission's database containing over 35,000 experts was used to select some 10, 000 experts to assess 60,000 proposals. "Our programmes are based on excellence," said European Research Commissioner Philippe Busquin. "The idea of the European Research Area, a true internal market for knowledge and science, is to make Europe share best practice in the scientific field. To identify best projects and reward outstanding performance, we have to rely on high-quality experts to advise us. I invite research institutions to put us in touch with the best scientists and I invite researchers themselves to present their application and help us discover and support innovative research projects, to enhance Europe's competitiveness and quality of life."
 The first call for applications focuses on individual experts, who are invited to register directly in a newly developed database, while the second one concerns research institutions and other organisations with an interest in research, which are invited to present lists of candidates.

This is the first time such organisations have been asked to suggest names of experts. The lists of suggested names would be submitted via a web site developed for this purpose. Candidates will then be contacted individually by the European Commission to invite them to register in the database mentioned above. Experts appointed by the Commission will assist it in evaluating proposals and may be called on to monitor projects as well.

FP6 aims to target its resources on a smaller number of well-focused projects, to achieve added value and critical mass at EU level. This will require a high level of expertise. Evaluators will also have to change on a regular basis. At least 25% of the evaluators working on a specific priority will change annually. Independent experts may also come from outside EU Member States, as this call is open to individuals from every country. In fact, given the ambitious nature of the new instruments to implement the FP6, it is particularly important to the EC to have access to the very best experts from all over the world. To promote equal opportunities, the Commission will continue to try to achieve a 40% quota of women for evaluation panels. Those experts who were already in the database for the previous framework programme are invited to renew their registration, according to the new FP6 "thematic priority areas" and their related key words. Another innovation lies in the possibility of access by other Commission departments as well as Member States and Associated States to this database (following an official request and only if the expert agrees to this when registering). The procedure for having access to the names of the experts will guarantee data protection, following the strict quality controls existing in the EC databases. Data will be stored only as long as needed.

For registration, please visit the website:
 http://www.cordis.lu/experts/fp6\_candidature.htm
For further information, contact Graham Stroud,
E-mail: graham.stroud@cec.eu.int

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# Irish Electricity – A Directory and Guide

COFORD recently received information about the publishing of the first edition of an Irish electricity directory and guide. The Irish Electricity Directory and Guide will be published every year to back up the Electricity component of the very successful Irish Energy Map. The first edition of this directory is now being prepared by La Tene Maps and is expected to be published in January 2003.

The directory is being designed to be a complete reference guide to the electricity industry in Ireland (North and South). It will include electricity generators (including renewables), transmitters and distributors (electricity sales), promoters/developers, suppliers, government agencies, development bodies, consultancies, educational and research institutions. It will also contain articles on subjects such as finance, licensing procedure, education, and future developments. Renewable and traditional generation sectors will be dealt with, as will combined heat and power.

For more information, contact John Coleman, La Tene Maps, P.O. Box 6098, Foxrock, Dublin 18. Tel: (01)2847914; Email: johncoleman@latene.com.

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# Congress on “Globalisation, localisation and tropical forest management in the 21st century”

This congress will be held on 22 and 23 October 2003, at Roeterseiland, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The focus will be on the effects of global-local partnerships and agreements related to climate change and the international trade in forest products, being two topical aspects of globalisation with a potential impact on forest management and forest-related livelihoods. The first encompasses processes around the certification of timber and non-timber forest products, WTO, CITES and strategies to combat illegal logging. The second centres on developments around the Kyoto protocol, such as the Clean Development Mechanism, Joint Implementation and the CO2 emissions trade. The objectives of the congress are:

* to bring together current knowledge on and experience with international partnerships and their effects on tropical forest conservation, management and poverty alleviation;
* to identify 'lessons learnt' and conditions for successful and effective multi-scale partnerships;
* to discuss opportunities and bottlenecks in relation to multi-scale partnerships for the livelihoods of forest-dwelling people and communities at the forest fringe, including potential exclusion of stakeholders under the new management arrangements;
* to define recommendations for policy and research on tropical forest management in a globalising environment.

The organising agencies are the Amsterdam Institute for Global Issues and Development Studies (AGIDS), Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation (CEDLA), Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM), Amsterdam Institute for International Development (AIID) and Tropenbos International (TBI).

Registration information can be found at <http://gp.fmg.uva.nl/agids> and [www.tropenbos.org](http://www.tropenbos.org). The contact person is Dr Mirjam A.F. Ros-Tonen, of the Amsterdam Research Institute for Global Issue and Development Studies (AGIDS), University of Amsterdam. Email: m.ros@frw.uva.nl.

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# International Conference: Forest Research Crossing Borders

In 2003 the European Forest Institute (EFI) will celebrate its 10th anniversary of pan-European forest research. To mark the occasion, a two-day scientific seminar, the Annual Conference and a post-conference excursion to Russia are being organised. These events will take place from 28 August to 1 September 2003 at Joensuu, Finland and St. Petersburg, Russian Federation.

Topics of the scientific seminar on ‘Forest Research Crossing Borders’ include:

* Role of forests in creating welfare;
* Does global change hamper sustainable forest management?
* Forests in the pressure global policy-making;
* Better information for good governance of forests.

At the end of the seminar, the following questions will be discussed and debated:

* how to respond to emerging research needs in Europe?
* what do we want from our forests?
* what kind of research does this imply?
* how should research be organised to best respond to the needs?

Confirmed keynote speakers include Björn Hägglund, Deputy CEO of StoraEnso, Sweden; David Kaimovitz, Director, Center of International Forest Research (CIFOR); and Risto Seppälä, President of IUFRO, Finland.

The excursion to St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, provides the opportunity to visit Russian forests, learn about the management of this vast forest reserve and to meet Russian forest researchers, policy-makers and forest managers.

More information can be found at [www.efi.fi/events](http://www.efi.fi/events)

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# International Conference:Issues of hardwood research and utilization in Europe

This conference will be held on 25 and 26 September 2003, at the University of West Hungary, Sopron. The emphasis of the conference will be on new challenges in hardwood utilization and on hardwood-related research. The event will feature international speakers, with technical and poster presentations on various topics including:

* Breeding and cloning of hardwoods;
* Hardwood processing;
* Biodegradation and preservation;
* Hardwood utilization in composite materials;
* Product design and marketing.

For further information, visit the website [www.nyme.hu](http://www.nyme.hu).

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# International seminar:Investment opportunities in the Australian forest sector

AUSTIMBER 2004 will be held at Albury, New South Wales, Australia, from 29 March to 3 April 2004. An international seminar examining investment opportunities in the Australian forest sector will be held as part of AusTimber 2004, on 1 April 2004. Presenters will be drawn from leading global and Australian companies, including companies and organisations operating in Asia, financiers, experienced investors and leading Australian and New Zealand companies. Key issues to be considered at the seminar include economic drivers for the forest sector in the Asia-Pacific; Asian investment opportunities; financing opportunities for forest sector investment; environmental perspectives; retailer perspectives; and opportunities for Australian and New Zealand investors.

For further information visit the website <http://www.austimber2004.com>

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1. The IPCC was established by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1988. Its main objective is to assess scientific, technical and socio-economic information relevant to the understanding of human-induced climate change, potential impacts of climate change and options for mitigation and adaptation. The IPCC has completed three assessment reports, developed methodology guidelines for national greenhouse gas inventories, special reports and technical papers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Article 3.3 is afforestation, reforestation and deforestation since 1990, Article 3.4 is forest management, Article 6 is joint implementation and Article 12 is the clean development mechanism. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)