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Forestry and Wood Update

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# Research Programme

# Project update

*Each issue of the newsletter carries a short article on new and ongoing COFORD-funded projects. Feedback on the articles is welcome and should be addressed to the project leaders (contact details at the end of the article).*

## PractiSFM2 – Update

### Decision-making tool developed further to meet needs of private forest owners

PractiSFM2 is one of the projects in the PLANSFM Programme lead by Prof. Maarten Nieuwenhuis, UCD. The original PractiSFM project resulted in the development of a multi-resource inventory protocol and a Microsoft Excel-based Decision Support System (DSS) which were designed to support the implementation of SFM in private forests. The aim of PractiSFM2 is to further develop the system and its capabilities to meet the needs of private forest owners and facilitate reporting on private forestry outputs. It is also planned to develop an optimisation tool, that will take account of owners’ weighted objectives, to simply the decision making process in relation to stand management options.

The three partner forest management companies in the PractiSFM2 project are conducting robust field testing of the multi-resource inventory protocol and the DSS. These companies, Greenbelt Ltd., PTR Ltd. and FEL, manage a wide variety of site types, forest ages and represent a wide range of private forest owners with an array of objectives for their forest estates. This field testing will inform a review of the current content and structure of the system and facilitate its updating and expansion to create one that may be used in the management of private forest estates. It is hoped that some initial feedback from the management companies will be forthcoming in coming weeks and that ensuing discussion will be a starting point for the expansion and redevelopment of the DSS.

Contact has been established with FSC Ireland and PEFC Ireland, the two forest certification schemes that are developing forest management certification standards for Ireland. It is envisaged that input from FSC Ireland and PEFC Ireland will help to refine the type and scale of data required in the multi-resource inventory and ultimately facilitate the certification of private forests. It is imperative that any additional requirements are practical and possible in an inventory collection setting.

The PractiSFM DSS was developed using Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) within Microsoft Excel. This makes the DSS particularly user-friendly but also brings certain limitations. The platform for the DSS is also under review as an internet-based option may prove to be more flexible in the long term. A key objective is to retain the user-friendliness of the system.

*For more information, contact Charles Harper – email: charles.harper@ucd.ie*

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# Introducing some of the new projects funded by COFORD

## Objectives of new projects funded by COFORD outlined

## Low impact silvicultural systems (LISS)

Low impact silvicultural systems (LISS) are increasingly being considered in private forests in Ireland and to date, over 1000 ha of the Coillte estate have LISS prescriptions drawn up for them. Yet there remains a lack of experience and awareness as to what LISS are about among the forest industry in Ireland. Thisproject sets out to expand the knowledge base on LISS through a number of initiatives, including the setting up of a database of both private and Coillte-owned stands in Ireland currently being transformed to LISS, as well as an evaluation of the methods used to transform the stands. A number of these stands will be selected for inclusion in an international network of LISS sites. A field experiment investigating different thinning interventions that are likely to be used in transforming stands to LISS will be established. In addition, a desktop comparative study of the economics of LISS and the clearfell system will be conducted. The project is being coordinated by the Forestry Section at University College Dublin with Purser Tarleton Russell Ltd and Coillte as project partners. A Project Steering Group consisting of the Project Coordinator and representatives of the participating companies and national and international experts will be established to advise on the direction of the project.

*For more information, contact Dr Aine Ni Dhubhain, email:* [*aine.nidhubhain@ucd.ie*](mailto:aine.nidhubhain@ucd.ie)

## Broadleaf silviculture

A new COFORD-funded 5-year project on Broadleaf Silviculture began on 1 July this year. The project, led by Dr Ian Short, Teagasc Forestry Development Unit, is in collaboration with Dr Conor O’Reilly, UCD, and has the following objectives:

* To provide a suite of silvicultural options and guidance for broadleaf plantation management regarding establishment of mixtures, thinning of pure and mixture crops, and rehabilitation of poorly performing broadleaf stands
* To provide a national network of well designed experimental and demonstration sites that can be used into the future to inform forest policy and the industry
* To build a critical mass of broadleaf silviculture expertise.

The project has four main streams of research:

* Establishment of optimum species mixtures: spacing, mixture configuration, establishment of advance shelter, response of mixtures to environmental factors
* Remedial action for under-performing broadleaf stands: pilot sites of various silvicultural options e.g. coppice with standards, underplanting, free-growth
* Thinning of broadleaf/conifer mixtures: timing of thinning, method of thinning (e.g. fell all nurse crop, fell alternate lines of nurse crop, selectively fell nurse crop), products from thinnings, thinning protocols
* Thinning of pure broadleaf stands: intensity of thinning, products from thinnings, thinning protocols

The majority of the experimental sites established by the project will be designed to facilitate long-term research beyond the 5 years. The project also has a strong focus on dissemination, including the establishment of demonstration sites and demonstration days to be held throughout the life of the project.

*For more information, contact Dr Ian Short, email:* [*Ian.Short@teagasc.ie*](mailto:Ian.Short@teagasc.ie)*.*

## Forest Energy 2010 – 2014

The use of wood for energy in Ireland has increased over the last five years, particularly amongst commercial heating and domestic consumers. The introduction of efficient woodfuel combustion systems and availability of incentives such as the REHEAT and Greener Homes Scheme have created a wood fuel supply sector in Ireland, utilising product from Irish forests. The recent announcement of subsidised biomass electricity tariffs, guaranteed to CHP and electricity producers for 15 years under the REFIT scheme, will further cement the demand for woodfuel.

The Forest Energy Research Programme 2010–2014 aims to investigate cost-effective wood fuel supply chains to meet this growing demand. Previous work focused on farm forestry first thinnings, and this research will continue as more forests are now in need of this first intervention to secure the future financial optimisation of these stands. Further, the programme will investigate supply chains from sources, in particular, the logging residues from clearfelling. The whole supply chain will be investigated from forest to end-user, as one specific work package will focus on road transportation of wood fuels.

Completed research on storage of wood fuels has already made clear the importance of the conditions and time of storage. Further work is planned to better describe the dynamics of moisture content reduction and the factors that affect this. In addition, the programme will characterise the energy parameters of six commercial tree species in Ireland: Sitka spruce, Norway spruce, lodgepole pine, ash, birch and alder. Accurate, relevant information on the physical and chemical properties of these species will be useful for specifying fuel by the end-user and describing fuel by the supplier. Harvesting, transport, storage, quantifying for payment purposes and combustion are all affected by these properties. A database will be prepared and made available through COFORD.

The project team is made up of Waterford Institute of Technology, University College Dublin and the Danish Forestry Extension. The team aims to work in conjunction with Coillte, Bord na Mona and the private forestry sector in securing trial sites and machinery and methods for testing. The team will work with the Department Agriculture, Food & Fisheries/COFORD , the Forest Service and Teagasc in disseminating project results and in organising demonstration events. It is interesting to note that the project coincides with a new EU COST Action on Wood Biomass Harvesting. The project team are also members of this scientific group which will provide excellent opportunities for knowledge and technology transfer over the project duration.

*For more information, contact Tom Kent, email:* [*tkent@wit.ie*](mailto:tkent@wit.ie)

## Ecotoxicological and growth promoting properties of wood ash

Wood (biomass) is recognised as a very efficient and renewable source of energy for the production or heat, or combined heat and power (CHP). A by-product of the combustion process is wood ash. The central aim of this project is to examine the physical, chemical and ecotoxicological properties of wood ash and to investigate the potential sustainable use of the end product (current waste) as a forestry fertilizer using Sitka spruce saplings in experimental pots. Additional end use options for the ash will also be considered and include its use as a fertilizer on lands other than forestry. Ash spreading is common in Sweden and Finland, countries with extensive experience in sustainable forestry. However, ash-spreading is not yet widespread on a European scale, owing to a lack of local knowledge, local limits, and local regulatory obstacles. Consequently, there is an urgent need for more research and development of the ecological, technical, economic, logistical, legal and administrative aspects of wood ash recycling. Deliverables of the proposed project include: (1) an up to date summary of international research work on wood ash recycling, (2) an assessment of the potential hazardous elements and substances present in wood ash, and (3) optimal application levels for plant growth stimulation. Results pending, this proposal will underpin potential future ash-spreading trials in commercial forestry plots in Ireland.

The project is about to commence with input from the local timber industry and recruitment of a graduate PhD student to deliver the project is underway. Investigators are: Dr Marcel Jansen School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and Environmental Research Institute, UCC and Dr Frank van Pelt, Dept of Pharmacology and Therapeutics, UCC, Cork. Dr Brian O’Gallachoir, School of Engineering, UCC.

*For more information, contact project leader, Professor John O’Halloran, School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences, and Environmental Research Institute, UCC – email:* [*j.ohalloran@ucc.ie*](mailto:j.ohalloran@ucc.ie)*.*

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# Information and support services

# Annual report 2009 now available

## Latest overview of COFORD-funded research

The COFORD Annual Report for 2009 is now available to download from [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie). It is also available on CD in English and Irish, and limited printed copies can be obtained – email [info@coford.ie](mailto:info@coford.ie). The report provides a comprehensive account of the extent of the forest research programme, the value it is adding to the forest sector and the outputs that are being achieved.

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# New COFORD Connects notes

## New information notes available on a variety of forestry topics

A set of 18 new COFORD Connects notes has been produced. These notes can be downloaded as pdfs from the COFORD website and address the following topics:

*Reproductive material*

* Economic benefits and guidelines for planting improved Washington Sitka spruce
* Irish oak – genetic diversity and the Iberian connection

*Silviculture and Management*

* Assessing the potential for spreading fertiliser in forests using ground-based machines
* A preliminary evaluation of the application of multi-return LiDAR for forestry in Ireland
* The Avondale initiative 1905

*Harvesting and Transport*

* Units, conversion factors and formulae for wood for energy
* Fuel consumption of timber haulage versus general haulage
* Harvesting birch woodland on cutaway peat for wood chip production
* Producing firewood from broadleaf first thinnings
* Whole-tree harvesting of softwood first thinnings for energy wood chip production, chemical thinning
* A synthesis and comparison of forest energy harvesting methods in conifer plantations
* A synthesis and comparison of forest energy harvesting methods in broadleaves

*Products and Processing*

* An overiew of the Irish wood-based biomass sector in 2007-2008
* Preview of European standards for solid biofuels
* An overview of the 2009 UNECE Timber Committee Meeting

*Socio-economic Aspects*

* Modelling the economics of forestry in Ireland - the returns to farm afforestation

*Environmental Aspects*

* The use of forested landscapes by Hen Harriers in Ireland
* The greenhouse gas balance of peatland forest

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# National and international news

# PhD Opportunity - Low Impact Silvicultural Systems in Ireland

## Research post available at UCD

The Low Impact Silvicultural Systems in Ireland (LISS) research project aims to expand the knowledge base on sustainable forest management in Ireland. The project is run by University College Dublin, the forest management research company Purser Tarleton Russell Ltd. and the semi-state forestry company Coillte, and is funded by COFORD. The project is directed by the project coordinator, guided by the project steering group consisting of the project coordinator and representatives of the participating companies and national and international experts. The LISS Project is seeking a PhD Student for 46 months. The research will consist of the following tasks:

* familiarisation with the existing (international) research on: LISS; thinning systems used in transformation of stands to LISS; and the economics of LISS.
* development of a database of stands in the Republic of Ireland currently being transformed to LISS in collaboration with project partners, and an evaluation of the methods used to transform the stands.
* field experiment investigating different thinning interventions that are likely to be used in transforming stands to LISS.
* desktop study of economics of LISS and clearfell systems.

Mandatory requirements for this position are an Honours Degree in forestry or relevant discipline, ability to combine field work with office-based activities, good writing and communication skills, and an understanding of, and interest in, low impact silvicultural systems. Desirable skills are: a full, clean driver’s licence, an understanding of forestry in Ireland, a Masters Degree in forestry or relevant discipline, and knowledge of experimental design and statistical analysis.

The project starts in July 2010 and will end in June 2014. The starting date of the PhD research position is flexible, but preferably close to 1 September, 2010. Closing date for applications is July 30, 2010 at 5 pm. The PhD scholarship will have a value of circa €17,000 per year. Tuition fees sufficient for an EU student are available.

For more information or to apply, please send a cover letter and CV, along with the names and addresses of two referees, to the Project Coordinator, Dr Aine Ni Dhubhain - [aine.nidhubhain@ucd.ie](mailto:aine.nidhubhain@ucd.ie) or phone 00353 1 716 7755. Also see <http://www.ucd.ie/research/people/agriculturefoodvetscience/drainenidhubhain/>

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# TCD–UCD Innovation Academy - UCD Innovation Bursary: PhD studentship

## Research opportunity at UCD

Applications are invited from outstanding, enthusiastic graduates with a background in Ecology, Entomology, Geochemistry, Forestry or a related discipline to undertake research towards a doctoral degree (PhD) at University College Dublin (National University of Ireland, Dublin) on a project titled: “*Development of novel ‘green’ insecticides for commercial forestry plantations*”.

This project will develop a novel protection strategy against herbivorous insect pests for woody plants with particular reference to coniferous plantation species. The approach will exploit the anti-feedant properties of selected natural mineral elements. The bioavailability of these elements from different soils and amendments will be assessed using geochemical and isotopic methods. Then, the effects of enhanced mineral levels in tree seedlings on feeding damage by pine weevils (*Hylobius abietis*) and seedling survival will be assessed under controlled conditions and in commercial field plantations in collaboration with the industry partner, Coillte. The project will involve analytical, experimental and field-based research work. The project will also provide training opportunities in innovation and technology transfer. The student will be supervised jointly by Dr Olaf Schmidt (School of Agriculture, Food Science and Veterinary Medicine) and Prof. Frank McDermott (School of Geological Sciences). The value of this bursary is €16,000 (tax exempt) per year for up to 4 years, commencing in September 2010. The registration fee for European Union citizens will also be paid.

The application form for this project is available at: [www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/prospectivestudents/  
studentshipsscholarships/phdopportunities/](http://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/prospectivestudents/studentshipsscholarships/phdopportunities/) and further details are contained in the form. The closing date for receipt of applications is Monday, 9 August 2010. Recruitment will continue after this date until the position is filled.

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# PhD Opportunity - Teagasc Walsh Fellowship

## Research opportunity at Teagasc, Ashtown

***Physiological responses of underplanted broadleaf tree species to thinning intensity*** is the title of a PhD study that will focus on the potential implications of thinning on the growth and physiological responses of underplanted broadleaf tree species. A controlled shade (simulating different canopy densities) experiment will form the main part of the study. The phenology of growth, photosynthetic rates, water-use efficiency, leaf area, growth and biomass allocation, root growth interactions and nutrient uptake will be studied. Less intensive measurements will be carried out on trees growing in conventional field trials.

The study will be based at the Food Research Centre, Teagasc, Ashtown, Dublin 15, but some travel between Ashtown and UCD, and to other field sites, will be required. The project will be supervised by Dr Conor O’Reilly (UCD) and Dr Nuala Ní Fhlatharta (Teagasc). The PhD position is being funded mainly by a Teagasc Walsh Fellowship, with some additional funding being provided by COFORD. For application details and other information, see <http://www.ucd.ie/agfoodvet/Attachments/safsvm/O'Reilly_UnderplantedBroadleaf.pdf>.

The deadline for the receipt of applications is 5.00 pm, Friday 17 September 2010. For enquiries, contact Dr Conor O’Reilly – tel: 01-716 7191 or email: conor.oreilly@ucd.ie.

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# Visit the Forest and Energy Section at the Tullamore Show 2010

## 8 August – Tullamore, Co Offaly

Teagasc and the Forest Service are hosting the Forest and Energy Section of the Tullamore Show 2010 on Sunday 8 August at the Butterfield Estate near Tullamore, where Ireland’s exciting and rapidly expanding farm forestry sector will be showcased. The Tullamore Show is Ireland’s largest one day agricultural show with in excess of 50,000 visitors expected to attend this year.

The Teagasc Forestry Development Unit has been associated with the Tullamore Show since 2005. Last year, over 40 trade exhibitors were in this section alone. The Forest and Energy Section will have a premium location this year within the greater trade stand area with very good access before, during and after the show for exhibitors and spectators. Visitors will be able to visit an indoor exhibition area, an outdoor trade stand section and a demonstration area. The indoor and outdoor trade areas will have stands representing a wide range of forestry and renewable energy companies. The display and demonstration area will have live demonstrations throughout the day displaying different aspects of modern forestry and the production of quality timber products and crafts.

For further information, travel directions, site layout and more, visit [www.teagasc.ie/forestry](http://www.teagasc.ie/forestry).

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# Overwhelming interest in small-scale solutions for managing farm forests

## Teagasc/Forest Service national forestry demonstration of small scale harvesting and extraction options

The recent national forestry demonstration of small scale harvesting and extraction options attracted well over 400 people, many of whom are small farm forest owners looking for practical and workable solutions to manage, thin and improve their small farm forests.

Most of the felling and extracting in Irish forestry is carried out using harvesters and forwarders, however, these are large and expensive machines that require a large volume of timber to justify their use.. The purpose of this demonstration was to investigate what other options are available to small forest owners to manage and thin their forests. It was very encouraging to see various contractors willing to share their expertise in small scale harvesting methods with visitors.

Advantages and disadvantages of timber trailers of varying sizes and capacity were discussed: what weight the trailers can take, how is the timber loaded onto the various sized trailers, how to present the timber for easy loading, what to do with the brash, how much can be extracted out of the wood in a day, how much does it cost? etc.

Alternative methods of extracting timber were also highlighted. A real horse and an iron horse demonstrated their environmental credentials through their low impact on forest soils. Quads, mini-forwarders and tractors of varying shapes and sizes were also discussed and demonstrated. It became apparent to participants that it wasn’t always necessary to use high-tech equipment because very ordinary farm machinery such as a tractor, buck rake and trailer can also be put to very good use in a farm forest. Such different harvesting and extracting options can be put to work in both broadleaf and conifer woodlands extracting timber of various assortments; from firewood to stakewood.

Visitors were also shown the difference thinning can make if done correctly. Teagasc’s forestry researchers were on hand to give people an appreciation how to go about marking the top quality trees while removing inferior competitors in a broadleaved woodland.

The importance of safety was a key feature of the day as a working forest can be a dangerous place. Arthur Kierans of Teagasc’s Ballyhaise College explained to visitors how to use a chainsaw safely.

To facilitate the exchange of information and to assist forest owners to manage their forests, a list can be downloaded with the contact details of the forestry contractors present on the day from the Teagasc Forestry website: [www.teagasc.ie/forestry](http://www.teagasc.ie/forestry). For further information on any of the above topics, contact your local Teagasc forestry development officer. Contact details are available on www.teagasc.ie/forestry.

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# 5th European Forest Pedagogy Congress

## 21-22 October 2010 - Lahti, Finland

The topic of this congress will be: "*Forest Pedagogics – Beneficial Impacts on Education and Society*". Active Forest Pedagogues and other engaged actors in environmental education will discuss how Forest Pedagogics can raise more awareness, acceptance and support in society and policy. This shall be done especially in prospect of the approaching International Year of Forests 2011, as it is declared by the United Nations.

For more information, contact [sirpa.karkkainen@smy.fi](mailto:sirpa.karkkainen@smy.fi)

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# "Healthy People, Healthy Forests" exhibition

## 30 July – 8 August 2010, Callan, Co Kilkenny

Mr Seán Connick TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with responsibility for forestry, opened Coillte's "Healthy People, Healthy Forests" exhibition at Bun Scoil MacAuley Rice, Callan, Co Kilkenny. The exhibition is being hosted by Coillte in Callan as part of the town's week long Abhainn Rí Festival and showcases the best of the environmental and recreational amenity provided by Coillte Forests, highlighting 2010 as the 'International Year of Biodiversity'. It brings together information on a number of Coillte's significant projects and activities in managing the environment. It features forest recreation, habitat restoration, nature conservation and nursery trees.

Minister of State Connick thanked Coillte for organising such an informative and interesting exhibition and Bun Scoil MacAuley Rice for hosting it. Minister of State Connick commented that the exhibition provides an invaluable opportunity for people to learn about, and appreciate, the recreational and environmental benefits of forestry and hosting it in locations around the country made it accessible to everyone. He commended Coillte for their initiative in developing the exhibition.

Highlighting the renewable energy theme of the Abhainn Rí Festival, the Minister of State added that, "Renewability and sustainability are key traits of forestry. Wood energy has a two-fold impact - as a home grown, renewable, sustainable, carbon neutral form of energy and, crucially, as a replacement for imported fossil fuels".

He also noted the contribution forestry makes by way of employment, tourism, enhancement of biodiversity and the provision of recreational facilities in addition to its traditional role as the source of timber and wood energy.

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# The healing effects of forests

## Maybe there's something to that "hug a tree" idea

"Many people," says Dr Eeva Karjalainen, of the Finnish Forest Research Institute, Metla, "feel relaxed and good when they are out in nature. But not many of us know that there is also scientific evidence about the healing effects of nature."

Forests – and other natural, green settings – can reduce stress, improve moods, reduce anger and aggressiveness and increase overall happiness. Forest visits may also strengthen our immune system by increasing the activity and number of natural killer cells that destroy cancer cells.

Many studies show that after stressful or concentration-demanding situations, people recover faster and better in natural environments than in urban settings. Blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension and the level of "stress hormones" all decrease faster in natural settings. Depression, anger and aggressiveness are reduced in green environments and ADHD symptoms in children reduce when they play in green settings.

In addition to mental and emotional well-being, more than half of the most commonly prescribed drugs include compounds derived from nature – for example Taxol, used against ovarian and breast cancer, is derived from yew trees, while Xylitol, which can inhibit caries, is produced from hardwood bark.

Dr Karjalainen will coordinate a session on the health benefits of forests at the 2010 IUFRO World Forestry Congress in Seoul. "Preserving green areas and trees in cities is very important to help people recover from stress, maintain health and cure diseases. There is also monetary value in improving people's working ability and reducing health care costs." she says.

Find the original story at: <http://www.iufro.org/media/iwc2010-news-stories/jul10-healing-effects/>.

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# Heads of European forest research institutes meet in Dublin

## 5-7 July - Dublin

The heads of national forest research institutes from around Europe meet every two years to discuss issues of common interest. This year the meeting took place in Dublin, hosted by COFORD. Mr Seán Connick, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with responsibility for forestry, officially opened the meeting which was held at the Royal College of Physicians, Dublin from 5 to 7 July 2010. Representatives from 15 European countries, as well as the European Forest Institute, based in Finland attended.

Opening the meeting, Minister of State Connick stressed the importance of such a meeting as "It affords a unique opportunity for participants to share approaches to solving common research issues, and to explore ways to better co-operate, and in some cases, pool scarce resources".

The Minister of State noted that "Ireland's tradition in forest research dates back to the middle of the last century" and that it "remains an essential part of our drive to expand forest cover over the coming decades". He added "that funding for forest research under the various headings of the COFORD programme has doubled in real terms since 1994, to reach close on €4m today. R&D and innovation investment in the wood supply chain by other state agencies, principally Enterprise Ireland, Teagasc and Coillte brings the annual level of investment close to €8 million". Minister of State Connick stressed that "Investment in research needs to be strongly linked to value-for-money outcomes in terms of policies and practices. As well as supporting competitiveness, it must address society's needs in areas such as climate change mitigation and water quality. It must look outwards to policy processes, and engage and advise the policy makers." He highlighted the example of TreeMetrics - a young Irish company that has developed novel ways to measure trees and noted that their product offering grew out of research that was part-funded under the COFORD programme and through collaboration with a number of European forest-research institutions. "Such collaboration is, in our view, highly desirable and likely to greatly increase in the future, as we seek ways to get better value from scarce resources".

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# Connick launches RDS-Forest Service Irish Forestry Awards 2010

## Award to promote standards of excellence in the management of forests

Mr Seán Connick, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with responsibility for forestry, officially launched the RDS-Forest Service Irish Forestry Awards for 2010 at Donadea Forest Park in Co Kildare. The Awards competition, organised each year by the RDS with funding from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, is to promote standards of excellence in the management of forests.

The RDS-Forest Service Irish Forestry Awards 2010 competition comprises two categories - Farm Forestry and Bio-Diverse Forestry/Woodlands. Minister of State Connick encouraged plantation owners to enter their plantations in the appropriate category as "These awards represent a means by which good forestry management can be acknowledged and rewarded." and added "it is appropriate that forest owners, who are employing the principles of sustainable forest management on their properties as well as sound commercial management, environmental protection, social amenity and bio-diversity, receive credit and recognition".

Speaking on forestry generally, the Minister of State highlighted that, "The forest industry overall, comprising growing, harvesting and processing of forest products, makes a significant and growing contribution to the Irish economy. The productive capacity of Irish forests and the mobilisation of our timber resource are crucial issues in the wood supply chain. It is also vital that planting levels are maintained and, if possible, increased in order to provide a supply of timber into the future for both the processing and renewable energy sectors as well as the various non-timber benefits."

The 2010 Awards competition, which encompasses the island of Ireland, is now open for entries. It is intended that the presentation ceremony for this year's awards will take place in October. Further details on the RDS-Forest Service Irish Forestry Awards may be obtained from the RDS.

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