

COFORD Forestry and Wood Update

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## Overview of COFORD Activities

The COFORD Council met in Galway during July to discuss a number of new project proposals. Details of the shortlisted projects will be brought to readers of this newsletter at a later stage following negotiations on technical and financial matters.

By the end of the year projects will have been started to cover virtually all elements of COFORD’s research programme.

A further request for tenders will be launched before the end of the year to cover additional desk studies. Details will be uploaded onto our website later in the year.

We would like to continue to receive feedback on the contents and layout of this newsletter. Please drop a note to info@coford.ie with your comments. Anyone wishing to be added to the circulation list should visit <http://www.coford.ie/frames/newsletter.html> and enter their details. Back issues of the newsletter are available to download at: <http://www.coford.ie/newsletter/issues.html>

## Staff Changes at COFORD

Ms Meaghan Daley has been appointed to the position of Finance Officer on a temporary basis. Meaghan replaces Mel Molloy, who, after many years of loyal service with COFORD, has moved to a new position within the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources. We wish Mel the best of luck with his new role.

Further staff developments will be unveiled during August. Two new positions have been created and will be advertised during August. The first is a Technology Transfer Officer and the second is a Co-ordinator of tree breeding and genetic conservation activity.

Further information on these positions will be uploaded onto our website shortly.

## Woodspec

Following the launch of the Woodspec CDROM and website (<http://www.coford.ie/woodspec>) we have received a lot of very positive feedback. To further explain the objectives and technical content of this publication, a series of regional workshops will be arranged during autumn. These workshops will be targeted at architects, engineers and other specifiers of timber.

We are also creating a feedback mechanism to take on board suggestions from the target audience on how to further develop the functionality of the website. The email address woodspec@coford.ie will be available shortly for this purpose.

In the meantime we would encourage all interested parties to explore the full range of woodspec’s functionality. It is the first thorough guide to timber specification to be hosted on the Internet.

## Irish Hardwood Imports

The publication *hardwoodmarkets.com* published some interest trade figures for Ireland in its July 2001 issue. To subscribe to the publication visit [http://www.hardwoodmarkets.com](http://www.hardwoodmarkets.com/). The report points out that Ireland is heavily dependant on imports from Africa and the US to satisfy the demand for hardwoods. The year 2000 saw significant increases in the value of these imports. While the import of tropical logs was down by 9% to 4.6 M Euro, imports of sawn tropical lumber rose by 19% to 48 M Euro. Cameroon is the largest supplier of this material, accounting for over one quarter of total imports.

 Imports of beech logs were up from 88,000 Euro to 565,000 Euro. Oak log imports rose to 5.7 M Euro. Significant increases were also experienced in the importation of veneers, wooden windows and frames, wooden doors, sleepers and plywood.

## Study Tour to Denmark

From August 7th to 12th, Joe O’Carroll will lead a study tour to Denmark to view existing and emerging markets for sawmill residues and small diameter roundwood logs. The main emphasis of the tour will be on fuel markets for residues. Among the sites to be visited are a district heating plant, a CHP plant, whole-tree harvesting operations, sawdust drying and wood pellet production. The tour group primarily consists of members of the Irish Timber Council, but various other organisations and forestry companies will also participate. A workshop will be held on August 11th to draft a policy paper on the development of fuel markets for wood.

## New Projects

Since our last newsletter we have prepared contracts for two new projects. Many more will follow in the coming months, as we finalise negotiations with project leaders.

The first new project is a research programme into the Selection and Improvement of Irish Birch. This project is being led by Prof. Martin Steer of the Botany Department in UCD and Michael Bulfin of Teagasc. It follows from the work already undertaken by Dr Niamh O’Dowd under a previous COFORD-funded project. The objective of the project is to continue the selection and testing of Irish birch to provide the basis for an improvement programme. A breeding population will be developed and will provide a source of quality planting stock for the continuing broadleaved planting programme.

The second project forms part of the Forests and Water research area, co-funded by COFORD and EPA. One the important aspects of this area is acidification. Before embarking on a wider, more long-term project, a desk study will be conducted on liming of afforested catchments in Ireland. Dr Norman Allott of TCD will supervise this review. It will also cover other aspects of buffer zones. The review will begin shortly and will take six months to complete.

## Short-term Research Missions

Our short-term research mission programme continues to attract applications from researchers and practioners. This month COFORD is part-funding a trip by Sean Moloney from the Wood Technology Centre (WTC) at the University of Limerick to attend the prestigious 15th International Wood Machining Seminar. Sean will be presenting a paper title *Routing of Low Density Edge-glued Pine Panel Board*. This paper will report on the very promising outcome of a COFORD-funded research project undertaken by WTC, with Lifestyle Furniture and Enterprise Ireland as partners.

Application forms and full details are available under the *Funding Programmes 2000-2006* section of our website.

## COST E9- Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of Forestry and Forest Products - Update

The aim of this cross-sectoral COST (Co-operation in Science and Technology) Action, begun in 1997 and finishing at the end of 2001, is to expand multi-disciplinary life cycle assessments (LCAs) to cover the whole forestry and wood chain. LCA offers an effective and acceptable approach to assessing the environmental effects of forestry and forest products. However, due to the special characteristics of forestry there has been a need to expand LCA techniques for this area. Three working groups were established to deal with the following topics:

* Integration of Carbon, energy and other material cycles in LCA;
* Development of methods to compare different kinds of land use and to compare forest management systems;
* Multi-product systems, recycling, energy generation and disposal.

COST Action E9 has hosted a workshop in London (September 1998) and a mid-term meeting in Espoo, Finland in March 2000. The final conference of COST E9 is proposed for the end of November 2001 in Hamburg. A three-day meeting is planned, where the final reports of the working groups will be presented as well as updates from national LCA projects. More details will be provided in future issues of COFORD's 'Forestry and Wood Update' once the venue and programme have been finalised.

To find out more about this COST Action and all other COST actions please visit the COST Website at:

www.cordis.lu/cost

## Carbon Corner

The sixth Conference of Parties (COP6) has just finished at Bonn with overall agreement at the political level on the adoption on the Kyoto protocol. There has also been broad agreement on the level of inclusion of forestry sinks under articles 3.3 (afforestation, reforestation and deforestation) and 3.4 (forest management). The overall framework for the agreement is set out in document FCCC/CP/2001/L.7. This is available at the UNFCC web site http://www.unfccc.de/index.html or we can supply a copy from COFORD. The draft decision text for land use, land-use change and forestry is also available at the UNFCC site as FCCC/CP/2001/L.11/Rev.1. It sets out definitions for afforestation, reforestation and deforestation – these had proved to be highly contentious at The Hague. Accounting rules for articles 3.3 and 3.4 are also proposed. Some issues remain to be resolved and the final adoption of the text has been postponed to COP 7. This will take place at Marrakech in Morocco from the 29th of October to the 9th of November next.

During the lead up to the negotiations the EU position was that it wanted to reduce the level of forest management sinks both domestically and under the clean development mechanism (CDM). The latter is specified in Article 12 of the Protocol. The CDM has the twin aim of assisting Parties which do not have reduction commitments to achieve sustainable development, while at the same time assisting Parties with commitments to achieve compliance with their greenhouse gas reduction commitments. It involves energy conversion and forestry projects that generate carbon credits. Other Parties, such Canada and Japan wanted to use sinks (under article 3.4, forest management) to a significant level in order to help to achieve compliance during the first commitment period. Following the negotiation process the levels of forest management sinks that were provisionally agreed are as set out in FCCC/CP/2001/L.11/Rev.1. The overall scale of forest management sinks in the document is 54.5 million tonnes of carbon per year. This is just over 1% of base year (1990) emissions by Annex 1 Parties (countries with reduction commitments). The overall target is to reduce emissions by 5.2%.

If the final package is agreed at Marrakech in November Member States of the EU will be moving to ratify the Protocol in time for the Rio+10 international summit which will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2002. Pilot carbon trading schemes could begin as early as 2004, or even before.

## Pending Publications

We are pleased to bring you the following schedule of publications which COFORD will launch over the coming five months. Subsequent issues of this newsletter will update you on launch dates and venues.

1. A review of relevant studies concerning farm forestry trends and farmers’ attitudes to forestry, by Brendan Kearney
2. Carbon Credits in Ireland: Issues and Potentials, by Barry, Clinch and Convery
3. Christmas Tree Research Report 2000, edited by Eugene Hendrick
4. Vegetative propagation techniques for oak, ash, sycamore and spruce, by Douglas, Thompson and Hennerty
5. Forest Mammal Management, by Rooney
6. Biodiversity and Harvesting Manual
7. Sitka spruce in Ireland, by Joyce and OCarroll
8. Guide to Irish Hardwoods, by Stella Xenapoulou

Details of all COFORD publications are available at the COFORD website [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie)

## COFORD Connects

Regular readers of our newsletter will recall the launch of our COFORD Connects series of practice notes. We launched this initiative last March and the next three notes in the series will be circulated to those who have subscribed to COFORD Connects. Subscription costs just £5 (plus P&P) and this price includes a purpose made folder. The titles of the three new notes are:

1. A pre-harvest timber valuation system
2. Soil and site indicators for the production of high quality ash
3. Effect of physiological condition at time of lifting.

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