

Forestry and Wood Update

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# COFORD’s programme of events for 2004

The following is a preliminary programme of events planned for 2004. Further details will be announced closer to the time. If you have a particular interest in participating in or attending any of these events, you can indicate this by sending an email to info@coford.ie

* March 12: Joint ITGA/SIF/COFORD conference, hosted by IFIC: *National Forest Strategy – Vision for the future*
* March 25: *Making the grade -* a workshop on mechanical strength grading of structural timber
* April 15-16: *Plant to plank –* a continuation of the series on managing broadleaves to produce quality hardwood timber
* April 28 to May 1: COFORD/INNOVAWOOD conference on *Future issues for forest industries in Europe*
* June 2: *Irish oakwoods - a celebration of 100 years of Irish forestry*
* August 10: *The virtual forest –* a workshop on information and communication technology in forest management
* August 25: *Seed workshop*
* September 9 – 10: *Forest research conference*
* September 29: *Plant quality conference*
* October 21: *Management of mammals in Irish forests*
* November 9: *First choose wood –* a workshop on advances in wood preservation

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# Conference on future issues for forest industries in Europe

A special Forestry/Wood Products event is being held in Dublin from April 28 to May 1, 2004 to coincide with Ireland's Presidency of the EU in the first half of 2004. Innovawood and COFORD are organising a conference and field trip to highlight issues facing the future of the European Forest-Wood Chain. The draft agenda is as follows:

Wednesday April 28

Session 1: EUROPEAN POLICY IN RELATION TO FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES

* Future direction of forest-based industry policy in the enlarged EU
* Industry vision of the forest industry 2020
* Impact of accession countries on the forest/wood products industry

Session 2: INTEGRATED FORESTRY-WOOD CHAIN

* What the market wants from the forestry-wood chain
* Bringing about change to meet market demands

Thursday April 29

Session 3: BIOMASS – FEEDSTOCK FOR ENERGY GENERATION OR PANELBOARD PRODUCTION

* View from European panelboard sector
* View from DG Energy
* Biomass – too valuable to burn? Potential of extractives and cellulose derivatives

Session 4: INNOVATION IN WOOD PRODUCTS

* Case study examples of successful interaction between industry and the research community

Session 5: KEY NOTE ADDRESSES (beginning of COST Technical Committee meeting, open to all)

* Future supply/demand of forest products in Europe
* Forest externalities – who pays?
* Overview of the Irish forest industry

COST Technical Committee meeting (closed session)

Friday April 30 – Parallel Sessions

A) COST Technical Committee meeting (closed session)

B) Education and training in the forest-based industries sector - influencing the future

The conference will be followed by a field trip to a forest nursery, forest management, sawmill and/or panelboard mill on Saturday 1 May.

To request further information on the event, contact Innovawood or COFORD.

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# Conference: National Forest Strategy – Vision for the future

On 12 March, IFIC (in association with ITGA, SIF and COFORD) will host a conference on a vision for the future of the forest industry in Ireland. The event will be held in Johnstown House, Enfield, Co Meath, and will feature a number of high profile European and Irish speakers. The agenda will include four formal presentations and a panel discussion featuring a number of the key industry leaders within Ireland. Given the pending review of the Government's National Forest Strategy, Growing for the Future, this promises to be a lively and most timely event.

Full details, including details on how to download a booking form, will appear in next month's newsletter. Members of ITGA and SIF will receive booking forms directly from their own executive teams.

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# Carbon Corner

## Outcomes from COP9

The ninth conference of the Parties to the UN Climate Change Convention (COP9) took place in Milan in the weeks just before the Christmas break. Once again sinks featured strongly during the negotiations. At stake was how to incorporate forestry projects under the clean development mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol. Resolution of this issue was important, as all of the other issues in relation to sinks had been resolved – in fact the CDM issue was the final part of the forestry package in the international climate change arena.

Benefit sharing is the concept that underpins the CDM as a whole. It is designed to contribute to sustainable development in developing countries, result in climate benefits, and at the same time enable developed countries and companies[[1]](#footnote-1) that invest in CDM projects to use the carbon credits that are generated to meet their Kyoto greenhouse gas reduction commitments.

Sinks were accepted in the Marrakech Accords (the detailed rules for the implementation of the CDM), with the proviso that their use in any one year does not exceed 1% of Party’s base year emissions. In the Irish case the base year (1990) emissions were 53.7 M t CO2. Therefore, CDM sink credits can only be used up a maximum of 531,000 t CO2 per annum over the first commitment period (2008-2012), or just over 3% of the national target of emission reductions.

In the negotiation process at Milan the EU had a number of issues that it wished to see addressed in the CDM sinks text. One of the most important was that non-permanence should be fully taken into account. This relates to fact that carbon stocks in terrestrial vegetation can be returned to the atmosphere as a result of planned or unplanned activities (such as harvesting, fire or pest attack). Where reversal of the sink occurs it needs to be fully accounted for, so that environmental integrity is maintained within the Kyoto process. The EU proposal of temporary crediting was accepted and, together with a related mechanism of long-term crediting, will ensure that any reversals will be fully compensated for.

In the CDM two forestry activities, afforestation and reforestation, are eligible for the generation of carbon credits. Afforestation is defined in the Marrakech Accords as the direct human-induced conversion of land that has not been forested for a period of at least 50 years to forested land. Reforestation is defined in a similar way with the difference that it is on land that was once forested but did not contain forest on the 31 December 1989. The later date was chosen to be consistent with the 1990 base year used in emission calculations. It is also sufficient to rule out areas regenerated under the normal harvest/regeneration cycle becoming eligible for the generation of credits. Coming into Milan there was some pressure to move the date forward to 2000. If this were adopted it would almost certainly have resulted in rewards for deforestation during the 1990s. After some negotiation the EU position (supported by a number of other Parties) was agreed and the Marrakech definitions now hold for CDM forestry projects.

Environmental and socio-economic issues were high on the agenda of the EU and other Parties, such as Norway, Switzerland and Tuvalu. They were difficult to negotiate, but in the end a good compromise was achieved. Appendix E that dealt with and listed socio-economic and environmental issues to be considered by project developers and host countries was moved to another appendix dealing with the project design document. There is also a requirement for a socio-economic and environmental impact analysis to take place before each project begins.

Other technical issues relating to project boundaries and baselines were also resolved. The project boundary definition has been clarified, as have the other definitions necessary for the calculation of credits.

Definitions of small scale projects also featured during the negotiations. A threshold of 8,000 t CO2 credits per annum was agreed as the upper limit of small-scale. Simplified modalities and procedures for small-scale projects are now under discussion and are to be decided at the next Conference of the Parties at the end of this year or early in 2005.

Another important decision taken at COP9 was the adoption of the IPCC Good Practice Guidance for Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry. This document provides a comprehensive set of recommendations for the calculation and reporting of carbon stocks and sequestration in forestry and agriculture for the both the Climate Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

All told, the outcome from COP9 was very positive as far as the EU was concerned[[2]](#footnote-2). A number of issues remain to be addressed, such as harvested wood products, factoring out the growth–increasing effects of anthropogenic increases in nitrogen inputs and CO2 fertilisation. This work will be progressed during the Irish presidency.

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# First wood pellet boiler in Ireland

Laois Sawmills, a local sawmill in Portlaoise, became the first company in Ireland to install an environmentally friendly wood pellet fired boiler. The boiler will be used to heat the company's new office building. Laois Sawmills' Managing Director, Mr Jim McNamara, said: "The old offices were heated with an oil boiler but for the six new offices we opted for wood pellets because they are a highly efficient, clean fuel from a renewable source. The fuel is delivered and stored on site, and we don't even have to handle the pellets because the boiler is fed by the automated hopper feeder system."

The 15 kW pellet boiler was manufactured in Austria by the KWB group and installed by Austrian consultancy CONNESS.

(This feature is taken from the REIO E-update - to subscribe to this update service, please contact renewables@reio.ie).

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# Technical guidelines launched by EUFORGEN

EUFORGEN is a collaborative programme among European countries aimed at ensuring the effective conservation and sustainable utilization of forest genetic resources in Europe. It was established to implement Resolution 2 of the Strasbourg Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. EUFORGEN is financed by participating countries and is coordinated by the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI). It facilitates the dissemination of information and various collaborative initiatives.

During 2003 the first EUFORGEN Technical Guidelines for genetic conservation and use were published for a number of hardwoods – sycamore, black alder, common ash, wild cherry and service tree and for conifers – Norway spruce, Brutia pine, Aleppo pine and maritime pine. Technical guidelines for a number of other species are presently in preparation. The guidelines have a common layout and cover the following topics:

* Biology and ecology of the particular species
* Distribution with accompanying map
* Importance and use
* Genetic knowledge
* Threats to genetic diversity
* Guidelines for genetic conservation and use
* Selected bibliography

If you are interested in acquiring copies of any of these Technical Guidelines, COFORD has a small number in stock or alternatively visit the web site of EUFORGEN at [www.euforgen.org](http://www.euforgen.org)

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# Balcas website launched

Balcas recently announced the launch of its inaugural corporate website, [www.balcas.com](http://www.balcas.com). The site is viewed by Balcas as a major conduit for communication between the company and its present and future customers.

Balcas is one of Britain’s and Ireland’s largest wood products suppliers, with a turnover of £55 million. Balcas’ operations span across seven sites: sawmills in Enniskillen, Magherafelt, Leitrim and Estonia; an architectural mouldings factory in Kildare and pallet businesses in Newtownabbey and Cork. The group has circa 700 direct employees, with an additional 300 people engaged in forest harvesting and haulage.

The launch of www.balcas.com promotes the strength of Balcas as a corporate identity. The website functions as an essential tool in the marketing of Balcas as an international wood products supplier.

Balcas partnered with Hamill Design and Ecomm Software to organize a substantial amount of information into a concise navigational structure for ease of customer use. Critical to the success of the site is the customer’s ability to find quickly and easily whatever information they are seeking.

From the home page, users have easy access to resources, for example the extensive product portfolio, latest technological investments, company profile and product representatives. The web site provides the customer with an awareness of the extent of Balcas’ operations, especially in terms of the company’s range of high quality wood products.

An integral part of [www.balcas.com](http://www.balcas.com) is the personal feel that flows throughout the website. To order a particular product or, to simply find out more about it, customers can click on the relevant sales representative’s image and have their queries answered via email.

The site is not a static information brochure for the company, [www.balcas.com](http://www.balcas.com) is a dynamic, interactive site that is navigated with ease and efficiency. The website manager ensures any new developments within Balcas are posted daily.

Balcas see the introduction of the website as a positive channel to develop its understanding of their customer’s service requirements.

For further information, contact Lisa O'Hara (email: lisa.ohara@balcas.com).

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# UK extends renewable obligation until 2016

The UK government recently announced a proposal to increase the level of the Renewable Obligation for energy suppliers. The level, governing how much energy suppliers must provide from green power, will increase to 15.4% in the year 2015/2016.

Until recently the Renewable Obligation arrangement ended in 2010/2011 at a level of 10.4%. This obligation is regulated via a system of Renewable Energy Certificates (ROCs). Energy Minister Stephen Timms announced the proposal at the first annual meeting of the Renewables Advisory Board. The extension, by 1.0% each year, was welcomed by the renewable energy industry as a first concrete step towards the ambitious goals set in the recent [Energy White Paper](http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/whitepaper/) (60% renewables in 2050). Marcus Rand of the British Wind Energy Association said: “This is a wonderful early Christmas present for the UK wind and renewables industry.” Joe O'Carroll, Operations Manager with COFORD, stated that this is also a boost for the UK forest industry as it will further stimulate market pull for sawmill residues and pulpwood from Forestry Commission and private woodlands. The announcement adds greater security to the policy environment in which companies producing electricity from biomass operate. This may also provide an export market for producers of wood pellets in Ireland. It is envisaged that up to three pellet manufacturing plants may be operational on the island of Ireland within the next three to four years. These pellets could be purchased by UK coal burning power station operators as they seek to meet the growing obligation for ROCs.

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# New group to advise government on bioenergy

The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, in conjunction with Sustainable Energy Ireland has established a Bioenergy Strategy Group. The objective of this group is to consider the policy options and support mechanisms available to government to stimulate increased use of biomass as an energy source and to make specific recommendations for action to increase the penetration of biomass energy in Ireland. The group is chaired by Dr Kevin Brown and comprises of Government departments and agencies, industry and other experts. Joe O’Carroll, Operations Manager of COFORD, is a member of the 11-person group. Brian Motherway, a private consultant, will act as rapporteur. The group will complete its work by the end of 2004.

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# Centre for Renewable Energy at Dundalk Institute of Technology (CREDIT) opens

CREDIT was established in June 2002. Its mission is to assist with Ireland’s transition to a renewable energy-based economy. CREDIT seeks to become a national focal point for renewable energy research and development and academic programmes. The manager of the centre is Lawrence D. Staudt, whose main experiences are with the wind energy sector in the US.

It offers a Masters degree in Renewable Energy Systems Technology as well as custom training in renewable energy technology. In 2004 it will install the world’s first large commercial turbine to be located on a college campus, which will be used in the MSc programme. It will generate all of Dundalk IT’s electricity needs.

**One project of significant interest to our readers will be the proposed Willow Biomass heating project** – local farmer, Andy Collier, is growing coppice willow which will be chipped and stored, and brought to Dundalk IT as needed to heat the new campus creche when it is built in 2004. The campus creche is being designed according to the principles of “green” architecture by architect Paul Leech, and will have a heating system that uses a wood boiler. There will be no net carbon emissions, since the willows remove carbon from the atmosphere as they grow. Although the cost of the boiler is high, the chipped willow fuel cost is about one-third of the cost of oil. This project received an An Taisce Environmental Award.

More information is available at [www.credit.ie](http://www.credit.ie)

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# Study on timber frame housing for public consultation

Mr Martin Cullen T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, published an expert study on the use of timber frame housing in Irish conditions for public consultation, on 15 December 2003. The study is open for comments by interested parties until 19 March 2004.

The study was undertaken in the context of the need to supplement traditional methods of housing provision in order to achieve the level of output envisaged in the National Development Plan 2000-2006. The study examined all aspects relating to the use of timber frame housing in Irish conditions including private sector, local authority and voluntary housing. In particular, the study examined whether changes were needed in the Technical Guidance Documents and other guidance documents in relation to the compliance of timber frame housing with the Building Regulations

Given the extensive nature of the findings and the recommendations in the report the Minister has decided, before acting on the report, to initiate a consultation process and is encouraging interested parties to submit their views on the report and its recommendations. The Minister said: "The recommendations in the report have wide ranging implications for the housing construction industry and for my Department in relation to the Building Regulations and public procurement policy. I want to hear the views of all parties with a legitimate interest, including timber frame manufacturers, designers, builders, insurers and standards agencies".

The study was undertaken by the Timber Frame Housing 2002 Consortium, led by Anthony Reddy Associates, Architects and Planning consultants. The other members of the Consortium are TRADA Technology Ltd, Timber Consultants, Coll + McCarthy Architects/JA McCarthy, Fire Safety Consultancy, Arup Consultancy Engineers and Gardiner & Theobald (Ireland) Ltd, Cost Consultants.

The Report is also available on CD-Rom from Aidan Smith, Building Standards Section, Custom House, Dublin 1 phone 01 8882371.

The Report, the Executive Summary, the Terms of Reference and the main recommendations can be accessed online at the following links:

* [Terms of reference for the Timber Framed Housing Study](http://www.environ.ie/DOEI/doeipub.nsf/0/47987bebc561d33780256dfa0038edee/%24FILE/APPENDIX%20A.doc)
* [Main recommendations of the TFHC Report](http://www.environ.ie/DOEI/doeipub.nsf/0/47987bebc561d33780256dfa0038edee/%24FILE/Main%20Recommendations%20of%20the%20TFHC%20Study%20of%20Timber%20Frame%20Housing.doc)
* [TFHC Executive Summary](http://www.environ.ie/DOEI/doeipub.nsf/0/47987bebc561d33780256dfa0038edee/%24FILE/TFHC2002_Chapter%201.pdf)

The main recommendations contained in the report are:

* The Technical Guidance Documents (TGDs) on the national Building Regulations should be strengthened in relation to timber frame construction standards.
* The Technical Guidance Document B on Part B (Fire Safety) of the national Building Regulations should be amended to allow for timber frame separating walls in buildings with floors up to 4 storeys (the current limit is 2 storeys). The proposed new limit should be reviewed in 2008, in the light of practical experience gained from relevant timber frame projects.
* Timber used in timber frame construction should be specified and certified as being sourced from stocks recognised by the Forest Stewardship Council, or equivalent certification bodies, as being from sustainable and managed sources.
* Where timber frame manufacturers are departing from the standard open panel form of construction, or dispensing with timber preservative treatment, independent third party certification should be required (e.g. from the NSAI Irish Agrément Board).
* A ventilated and drained cavity in the external wall is an essential feature for timber frame construction in Ireland.
* Customised education and training in timber frame design and construction should be developed by FAS, the Department of Education and Science (DES), the Higher Education Authority (HEA), third level education institutions, the Irish Timber Frame Manufacturers Association (ITFMA), and the building professions.
* In the case of all timber frame housing of 3 or more storeys, it should be mandatory that a certificate is lodged with the building control authority certifying that the timber frame building has been constructed and erected in accordance with the Building Regulations.
* A Code of Practice for Timber Frame Construction for residential developments should be prepared and published by the NSAI, in consultation with the Department and other interested parties, including the ITFMA.
* The Department should make membership of the NSAI manufacturing and erection certification schemes or equivalent schemes mandatory for contactors on Social Housing developments.
* The Department should ensure that all those involved on Social Housing developments involving timber frame construction including contractors, sub-contractors and technical personnel demonstrate experience or training in timber frame construction.
* Contractors for Social Housing developments should be allowed, on a pilot basis, to submit alternative designs and specifications (e.g. based on timber frame construction) to those set out in prescriptive tender documents.
* The Design and Build (D&B) procurement option for Social Housing developments should be introduced, on a pilot basis, allowing timber frame contractors to submit designs based on, for example, timber frame construction.
* Pilot schemes to assess the foregoing innovative procurement options to be assessed on up to a dozen specified Social Housing projects around the country, over a concentrated period of 1-2 years.

Amendments to public construction procurement policy to be considered, in the medium term, to address issues such as appropriate public (GDLA) contract conditions, and insurance.

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# Study released targeting more green energy power, including wood biomass

Mr Dermot Ahern, T.D., Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, published a new study in December which targets an indicative increase in Ireland’s green energy output between now and 2020.

The Consultation Document on “*Options for Future Renewable Energy Policy, Targets and Programmes*” lists a range of green energy penetration targets for the electricity market. It targets 13.2-20% for the year 2010 and 15-30% for the year 2020.

The document will be used to map out a future strategy for green energy in the coming years and follows a commitment given by the Minister after the conclusion of the AER VI competition several months ago.

The consultation document looks at key areas in the future including:

1 Future renewables policy;

2 Future green energy contribution to Ireland’s electricity markets;

3 How to overcome barriers to the deployment of renewable energy;

4 Future options for market support mechanisms.

Respondents are required to cost and justify each proposal for future targets and support.

 The document acknowledges the recent decision of the Commission for Energy Regulation to place a “pause” on further wind energy connections to the grid, above the 600 MW or so already agreed, because of concerns raised by the ESB National Grid.

The report states: “Historically, electricity infrastructure in Ireland was principally designed and operated to facilitate the deployment of electricity from conventional energy sources. In parallel with market liberalisation, steps have been initiated over the last decade to adapt the legal, administrative and technical framework to accommodate renewable energy sources.”

“The electricity network was largely designed and is currently operated to take generation from a relatively small number of central thermal power stations connected to a meshed transmission system (400, 220 and 110 kV) and then distributes it through a radial distribution system (38, 20 and 10 kV) to final customers. Historically system design, connection guidelines, protection, operation, metering and charging systems were established to reflect this arrangement. High economic growth rates in the late 1990s and consequent high growth in electricity consumption outpaced electricity infrastructure development and the national electricity grid now requires upgrading in many areas.”

 Minister Ahern said the consultation document will provide a template and a forum through which the constraints on future green energy connection can be addressed. He urged the Renewable Sector to advance workable solutions to the grid problem through the consultation process.

 The report details how the contribution from renewables is projected to rise under the influence of Government policies and support measures to around 3.4% of primary energy and 10.6% of electricity consumption by 2005 in order to meet the existing national targets.

 In his foreword to the report, Minister Ahern said one of the most striking aspects of the sector is the level of change in less than a decade including:

* a timetable for full liberalisation of the electricity market is in place;
* the green electricity market in Ireland is already fully liberalised;
* the establishment of the Commission for Energy Regulation
* establishment of Sustainable Energy Ireland;
* the additional costs of supporting green electricity under the AER programme are now passed transparently to final customers.

The Minister said: “I am publishing this consultation document to stimulate debate and encourage all interested parties to make submissions to ensure that their views, knowledge and experience can be taken into consideration in developing future renewable energy policy in Ireland.

 “The consultation process is open to all, however I particularly encourage industry representatives, potential investors and consumer representatives, to adopt a proactive stance by availing of this opportunity to help shape future policy and set challenging yet realistic targets for the long term development of the renewable energy industry.

“The priorities discussed are targets and support mechanisms. There is, however, an overarching legitimate concern about the cost impact of any such proposals on electricity consumers. Ultimately the consumer is the most important party in this process, so I encourage developers in particular, therefore, to justify targets and support mechanisms proposed rather than make recommendations simply to generate the best possible business case irrespective of total final cost to consumers.”

The consultation document includes many references to wood biomass and is available at: [http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/display.asp/pg=460](http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/display.asp/pg%3D460)

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# Future policy and programmes for renewable energy

The Irish government is currently considering its future policy and programmes on renewable energy for the period beyond 2005, taking into account future climate change commitments and the European Directive on "*The promotion of electricity produced from renewable energy sources in the internal electricity market*" (2001/77/EC). Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) is commissioning a series of studies to assist the formulation and implementation of the policy.

Electrowatt-Ekono Jaakko Poyry Group (www.electrowatt-ekono.fi) and Byrne O Cleirigh www.boc.ie) have been commissioned by SEI to undertake a study of the potential for co-firing biomass with conventional solid fuels (coal or peat) in the generation of electricity in Ireland. The study is intended to examine the economic, technical and environmental implications of co-firing with biomass. It will be carried out as a public good research project, funded and published by SEI, and will inform the Bioenergy Strategy Group which has been established by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.

Through discussions with existing power generators in Ireland, the consultants have been tasked with assessing the requirements in terms of biomass supply (qualitative and quantitative) in order to achieve substitution levels up to the maximum level that is technically feasible for each type of power plant. They have been asked to assess both the infrastructural requirements relating to fuel supply and the plant modifications required to implement this level of substitution.

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# European Squirrel Initiative

The objective of the European Squirrel Initiative is the restoration of the native red squirrel and the protection of the natural environment by removing the impact of the alien grey squirrel in Europe. Its strategy both in the UK and in Ireland is to emphasise the damage caused to woodlands and wildlife by grey squirrels and persuade conservation bodies that the only feasible way of saving the red squirrel is the complete removal of the alien grey. Over the last fifty years costly measures to control the spread of the grey squirrel have failed. They have failed to save the red squirrel, failed to conserve woodland bird populations and failed to protect our woods. The reality is that red squirrels will very soon become extinct on mainland Britain and in Ireland.

The group works to inform and motivate conservationists by well researched technical publications such as the Grey Squirrel Review. They are also working towards the completion of a European policy on Invasive Alien Species, including a robust response to the grey squirrel danger.

For further information, contact Miles Barne, Chairman of the European Squirrel Initiative at Estate Office, Lower Green Farm, Sotterley, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 7TY, Email miles@sotterleyestate.co.uk.

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# Conference on timber markets and marketing

The Scottish Forest Industries Cluster in association with the Forestry and Timber Association, Scottish Woodlands Ltd, Tilhill Forestry Ltd and the Timber Marketing Group will be presenting a conference on Timber Markets and Marketing at the Hilton Dunblane Hydro on 4 February 2004.

Excellent marketing of the increasing volumes of timber that are becoming available in Scotland will be crucial to the development of the industry. This is the first Cluster conference to deal specifically with timber marketing and it promises to attract a lot of interest.

The first part of the conference will explore the global marketing issues which impact on the industry, and strategies for managing them. The second part will focus on the Scottish context and will look at supply and demand, supply chain management, and then lead on to exploring marketing strategies for both the private and public sectors – and the ways and means of fostering the most efficient and effective timber market in Scotland. This one-day event will comprise presentations of 25 minutes. No workshops are planned but there will be the opportunity for questions and some general discussion.

The programme includes presentations on the following topics:

* Strategies for market development
* Global market trends in the forest industries
* Future demand for the UK wood resource
* Investment opportunities for the Scottish forest industries
* Stakeholders in the marketplace: the Södra model
* Connecting the private growers’ trees to the processor
* Maximising the value of the resource – the marketing response

For further information, contact Scottish Forest Industries Cluster, Forest Industries Development Council, 53 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2HT. Email: scotcluster@fidc.org.uk or visit the website [www.forestryscotland.com](http://www.forestryscotland.com)

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# Wood plastic composites: Opportunities in the construction industry

This seminar will be held at West Hall Park, Dundee, on Wednesday 21 January 2004.

Environmental pressures are driving the demand for new materials that are sustainable yet also perform better than current alternatives. Eco-composites, in particular those based on wood fibre, have developed as a result. Wood plastic composites (WPCs) may not be a new technology, but it is starting to attract huge interest in many areas of the building industry. The market is well established in the USA with applications in decking, fencing and garden products, and although currently somewhat smaller in Europe it is set to increase rapidly.

New markets are being explored with products developed for applications such as windows, doors, exterior trims, profiles, roofing tiles, siding, cladding, marine structures and furniture components to name but a few. The ability to use existing plastics processing equipment and waste wood products means that both plastic building profile and wood products manufacturers are being attracted by the economic and technical possibilities of combining wood fibres and polymers.

The seminar will draw on international experience, but will focus on UK markets, highlighting areas of realistic commercial potential for wood plastic composites. An exhibition will run alongside the seminar programme allowing delegates to gain hands-on experience of these products and discuss in more detail potential opportunities.

The programme will ensure delegates leave with a good understanding of the technology involved as well as commercial opportunities. Presentations on the following topics will be given by key players in the industry:

Material Benefits

* Introduction to wood plastic composites
* Processing technologies
* Pelletised processing

Market Opportunities

* Applications and limitations
* Key market drivers– an environmental focus
* Taking the product to market

Case Studies

Eco-composites

* Producing useful fibres for eco-composites
* Development of eco-composites for practical applications
* The way forward

To register for the conference, please contact WPC Conference, Scottish Forest Industries Cluster, FIDC, 53 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2HT. Email: scotcluster@fidc.org.uk

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1. At present sinks are excluded from the draft EC Directive that links the Emissions Trading Directive to the Kyoto flexible mechanisms, which include sinks in both Articles 6 (Joint Implementation) and 12 (the Clean Development Mechanism). The draft is under discussion at EU level. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. An unedited version of the decision text: *Modalities and procedures for afforestation and reforestation project activities under the clean development mechanism in the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol* is available for download at the UNFCCC website [www.unfccc.int](http://www.unfccc.int). Click on the COP9 icon and go the part of the page headed Decisions adopted at COP9. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)