

Forestry and Wood Update

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**The Chairman, Council and staff of COFORD**

**wish all readers a safe, happy and peaceful festive**

**season, and all the best wishes for the New Year.**

# COFORD report on markets for non-wood forest products

On 12 November, COFORD’s latest publication ***Markets for non-wood forest products*** was launched by Minister John Browne, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture and Food, at the annual conference of the IFA. The report was written by Pat Collier, Ian Short and Jim Dorgan. It is available from COFORD at a cost of €10.00 plus postage and packaging.

This COFORD publication is the first comprehensive treatment of non-wood forest products in Ireland. It reports on COFORD-funded research that had a strong market focus. Forest owners who are interested in increasing their income will find the publication of particular interest. Foresters will find useful information on forest design and species selection geared towards an early return from foliage and other products. Overall the publication will contribute to the development of a sector that has significant potential.

From the farming perspective a drawback to forestry is the absence of cash returns from the crop until age 15 or so for conifers and much later for broadleaves. Ideas on revenue generation in the prethining stage are therefore very welcome.

Changing fashions and consumer preferences have resulted in increased demand for uncultivated and organic foods. Likewise, more discrimination among tourists market has generated demand for special interest holidays that can be provided in and around forests. Small, though increasing, markets also exist for a variety of non-wood forest products such as game, fruit, fungi and particularly foliage.

The publication is structured around addressing the market opportunities for non-wood forest products, based on the following objectives:

* Assess domestic and export market potential for non-wood forest products;
* Assess the marketability of non-wood forest products;
* Assess the feasibility of supplying the market;
* Identify issues hindering the development of markets for these products;
* Assess the likelihood of generating a positive return on investment;
* Develop a research programme for non-wood forest products.

Potential markets for the main categories of non-wood forest products are assessed as follows:

* **Foliage**: The foliage market in the UK and Ireland is estimated at €195m per annum. There are opportunities for the development of foliage as a sub-sector of the forest industry, but a strategy incorporating technical research, market research and enterprise must be developed to realise these opportunities. (COFORD will address the R&D issues).
* **Forest tourism**: According to the report, Irish forests provide opportunities to engage in a range of outdoor pursuits. Forests play a very important role overall in tourism and recreation in Ireland.
* **Alternative healthcare:** In the last ten years there has been an enormous increase in the popularity of alternative healthcare. A wide range of herbs can be grown under a forest canopy including some that are the top selling in world markets. Some of these are successfully grown in other countries but their cultivation under Irish conditions has yet to be established. A number of Ireland’s native trees including ash, birch cherry, elder and yew have long traditions of use in alternative medicine.
* **Oils and oleoresins:** Essential oils are aromatic oily liquids obtained from plant material. They are used in the food industry as flavouring, in the perfume industry for fragrances and in the pharmaceutical industry for their functional properties. The report concludes that there is little or no potential for import substitution in this sector as the main imported oils into Europe are orange, lemon and lime, which are sourced from low cost, fruit-growing countries.
* **Edible forest products:** Forests are the source of a number of wild edible plants and fungi. Foods that are come from the forest include berries, nuts, mushrooms and maple syrup. They are harvested in developed and developing countries. The need for ongoing market intelligence regarding trends in wild food products is highlighted.

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# CARBON CORNER

## Russian ratification not hot air

Lodgment by the Russian Federation of its instrument of ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on the 18 November 2004 means that on 16 February 2005 the Kyoto Protocol will finally enter into force, and become legally binding on thirty industrialized countries – including Ireland - to meet emission targets over the period 2008-2012. A new world of emissions trading is about to begin, with its own exotic currency of tCERs, lCERs, RMUs, ERUs and AAUs, each one equivalent to one tonne of CO2, and each probably varying in price, but with a current central value of somewhere close to €10.

Russia itself will have no difficulty meeting its emission target (which is set in the Kyoto Protocol at the 1990 level). Closure of many heavy industry plants since the early 1990s means that it will have surplus emissions to trade (AAUs - assigned amount units), so-called hot air. It will also have potential to use credits from Article 3.4 of Kyoto – forest management to trade under Article 6 – Joint Implementation (JI). This mechanism facilitates sink projects implemented jointly by two Annex I Parties (industrialised countries with greenhouse gas emission targets). Typically in the forestry sector it would involve Ireland buying ERUs (emission reduction units) from a forestry project in say an eastern European country.

Russia has the largest forest area by far in the world - some 851 million ha according to the last FAO statistics, or over 20% of the world’s forest, half as much again as Brazil, the next highest country. By comparison, Ireland’s forest resource of 0.7 million ha is just a tiny faction - three orders of magnitude less. (Incidentally Carbon Corner is not alone in having an interest in Russia – at the turn of the 20th century an Irish provincial newspaper, the Skibbereen Eagle, famously thundered in an editorial that Czar had better watch his behavior as it was keeping its eye on him; see <http://www.skibbereen.ie/top-ten.html> and related sites.)

During the climate negotiations at Bonn in 2000, and later in 2001 at Marrakesh, the Russian Federation made it very clear that it regarded sinks as a key issue in its signing up to Kyoto. Near the end of the Marrakesh marathon a deal was first struck that resulted in Russia getting a forest management allocation capped at some 65 million tonnes of CO2 per year. This was changed very late in the day to 121 million tonnes of CO2 per year (see FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1 available at http://www.unfccc.int). By comparison Ireland’s annual forest management cap is 0.18 million tonnes of CO2 per year, not quite as big as the difference in forest area. It must be borne in mind that the Russian sink figure was arrived at following protracted negotiations and was not determined on the same basis as the numbers for some other Parties.

However, in order to issue sink credits for forest management projects, Russia will have to have a fully operational forest inventory that is capable of supplying information on changes in the carbon pools specified in Marrakesh Accords. These data will be subject to scrutiny by the UNFCCC secretariat. Also Russia, under Article 3.3, will have to report any deforestation that occurs over the period 2008-2012 and related changes in carbon stocks. Losses can be partly compensated for using credits from Article 3.4, up to a limit of 33 million tonnes of CO2 per year. Hence the actual potential for Joint Implementation may be considerably less than the numbers in the Marrakesh Accords now indicate.

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# Foresight Study on the Rural Environment in Ireland

The objectives of this study, which is funded by the Department of Agriculture and Food, the Marine Institute, EPA and COFORD are *to develop perspectives of rural and costal areas by 2025, in terms of the quality of the physical environment and rural viability, including forestry and other economic developments having regard to the international drivers of change and the possible impact they will have on the economic and environmental sustainability of rural and coastal areas.*

The study will lead to the identification, in conjunction with key stakeholders, of a coherent set of policy initiatives, and other interventions that will need to be implemented to ensure the economic and environmental sustainability of rural areas.

The project was initiated in late 2003 by an inter-institutional research team comprising staff from three collaborating institutions, namely: UCD, NUI Maynooth and Teagasc. In order to prepare the forestry sector response, a meeting was recently held for stakeholders. A draft paper from that meeting was prepared and circulated in preparation for a Foresight Stakeholders Consultative Forum scheduled to take place in Maynooth, in late November. The draft paper can be viewed on the COFORD web site ([www.coford.ie/Foresight/ForesightForestry.pdf](http://www.coford.ie/Foresight/ForesightForestry.pdf)).

For further information contact John Fennessy at 01-2130725.

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# Alder Working Group

Alder is a scheduled species for grant aid under the current forestry schemes. As it is one of the native broadleaf species, there has been a major increase in demand for the species over the past number of years. The Forestry Scheme Manual suggests the use of native material as first choice, but plants from many parts of Europe are finding their way into our forests. Some of these sources may be of unsuitable or dubious origin. For instance, some roadside planting of alder in recent times has been very susceptible to dieback.

Alder is considered easy to establish and is unattractive to deer and grey squirrel. As the push for more broadleaves intensifies with the proposed increase from 20% to 30% by 2006, alder is likely to feature prominently and seed supply is likely to become even more problematic. As stated, much of the reproductive material used is of foreign, mainly UK and European, origin. In some way this defeats the objective of increased use of native species and, in any event, Irish material is much more adapted to our growing conditions.

To address these and other issues, COFORD established a working group earlier this year. The most recent meeting of the group took place in Carrick-on-Shannon and was followed by visits to a number of alder stands in the vicinity.

If you require further information on any aspect of the species or have information on a good stand or individual trees please visit the COFORD web site where you can download information on alder survey that is underway ([www.coford.ie/AlderSurvey.pdf](http://www.coford.ie/AlderSurvey.pdf)), or contact John Fennessy at 01-2130725, email: [john.fennessy@coford.ie](mailto:john.fennessy@coford.ie).

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# New COFORD Connects notes produced

COFORD has just issued a set of nine new COFORD Connects information notes. These have been distributed to subscribers for inclusion in their purpose-made folders. They are also available to download from the COFORD website. Anyone interested in obtaining a folder with all the notes produced to date should contact COFORD, or order it on-line at www.coford.ie/bookshop.html

The latest notes are on the following topics:

* Common alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) as a forest tree in Ireland.
* Realising the potential of private plantations.
* Thinning to improve stand quality.
* Pruning adds value to plantations.
* Considerable savings possible by planning harvesting systems.
* Uses of home-grown Irish timber.
* Improving the stability of structural timber.
* Liming options in afforested catchments in Ireland.
* Global forest certification - 2004 update.

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# Seminar presentations available on COFORD website

The PowerPoint presentations made at the following events are now available to download as pdf files from the COFORD website:

* [Forest research and development in Ireland 2004 – Underpinning industry development](http://www.coford.ie/newsandevents/seminars.html#RnD)
* [Wood Energy 2004](http://www.coford.ie/newsandevents/seminars.html#WoodEnergy04)
* [IFA annual conference](http://www.coford.ie/newsandevents/seminars.html" \l "IFA04)

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# Forestry industry adopts Code of Practice for Road Haulage of Timber

The Irish Forest Industry Chain (IFIC) presented Mr John Browne, TD, Minister for State at the Department of Agriculture and Food, with a Code of Practice for the Road Haulage of Round Timber on 3 November 2004. The code sets out standards for safe road transport of round timber and assists haulage operators in correctly loading their vehicles.

During his remarks to the minister at the presentation of the report George McCarthy, chairman of IFIC, commented that the road haulage of round timber is one of the more visible forestry operations and has come under increasing scrutiny by both local authorities and the public. He went on to say that the Code of Practice underlines to the public and authorities the responsible nature of the Irish forest industry.

The code provides guidance on best practice in the transportation of round timber. Haulage operator Safety and that of the public at large, and the need to limit road damage, are of prime importance in the code.

The forest industry currently sustains approximately 14,500 jobs in the production of 3 million m3 of timber, the majority of which are rurally based[[1]](#footnote-1). In addition to its economic contribution to rural development, forests fulfil a number of important environmental functions such as carbon sequestration, leisure and recreation provision and landscape enhancement.

The Government’s Strategic Plan for Forestry highlighted the need for codes of practice for transport in order to develop an efficient, economically viable, safe and environmentally compatible transport sub-sector, and industry has risen to this challenge. In adopting this Code of Practice, the forest industry recognises the requirement to improve the competitiveness of the industry in the context of health and safety, and environmental standards and the need to act in a co-operative fashion to ensure continued endorsement of the code. Elva Duggan of IFIC said that Ireland’s forest industry has to compete on international markets and transport of timber represents a significant cost.

With the publication of this Code of Practice, industry aims to:

* Allocate sufficient resources for haulage-related health and safety to secure safe operations for drivers as well as for other road users.
* Direct research and development to improve productivity and reduce costs for road haulage.
* Encourage co-operation across the industry through regular discussion and debate.
* Engage in dialogue with industry partners, local communities and Local Authorities to resolve and/or prevent difficulties at local level.
* Improve environmental awareness for timber transport.

For further information, please contact the Irish Forest Industry Chain, tel: 01-6051674.

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# Irish scientists make significant contribution to book on forest insects

A number of Irish scientists contributed to a recently published major synthesis on all European research directed at bark and wood boring insects in living trees. Keith Day (University of Ulster) was co-editor and author of several chapters, Christine Griffin (NUI Maynooth) authored a chapter concerned with the natural enemies of bark weevils, while Declan Ward (Coillte) and Gerard Cahalane (Irish Forest Service) provided data on damage and control of these insects. This was the final product of a four-year research project (COST Forest Sector E-16) gathering together 100 scientists from 24 countries with the book being the fruit of the work of most European specialists in the subject. It reviews and comments on the European literature, while considering the biology (trees, insects, associated organisms, and their relationships), forest management, and the prioritisation of future research.

The book is published by Kluwer:

Lieutier, F., Day, K.R, Battisti, A., Gregoire, J-C. and Evans, H.F. (eds.) 2004. *Bark and wood-boring insects in living trees in Europe: a synthesis.* Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 569pp. ISBN 1-4020-2240-9

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# Conference on the effects of afforestation on ecology, landscape and rural development

The AFFORNORD scientific committee has announced an open conference on the effects of afforestation on ecology, landscape and rural development that will be held from 18 to 22 June 2005 at Reykholt in western Iceland. The organizers invite all scientists, consultants, planners, forest owners and others interested in the influence of afforestation and its broad effects to submit a scientific contribution.

The contributions should be sent to the conference secretary (email: [edda@skogur.is](mailto:edda@skogur.is)) by 15 January 2005. Further information on the programme, registration form and more can be found at [www.skogur.is/page/affornord](http://www.skogur.is/page/affornord)

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# Global Forest Information Service (GFIS)

*Source:* [*IUFRO E-notes, Issue 5/2004*](http://www.iufro.org/iufro/news/newslet.htm#enotes)

The Global Forest Information Service (GFIS) has now become an initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). Based on a concept paper developed by IUFRO in close co-operation with FAO and CIFOR, the CPF welcomed and adopted the initiative in September 2004.

The important pioneer development work of IUFRO that had led to the current GFIS prototype was appreciated by CPF partners. This was an essential prerequisite for this positive new step. The current GFIS prototype shall now be transferred to a production level with stable and long-lasting arrangements, especially with regard to partnerships and system development.

The next development steps of GFIS as a CPF initiative led by IUFRO shall be implemented in close co-operation with CPF partners such as FAO, CIFOR and others. A first milestone on this way will be the IUFRO World Congress in Brisbane where GFIS will be presented as a fully functioning tool for providing access to and search facilities for all types of forest information. Thus, GFIS will contribute to an improved understanding of complex forest related issues, to better decision making as well as to a more informed public involvement in forest policy and forest management at all levels.

For further information, go to <http://www.gfis.net/>

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# Conference: Clean Energy Power 2005

The international conference ‘Clean Energy Power ® 2005’ will take place from 26-27 January 2005, at the International Congress Centre (ICC) in Berlin. The conference offers a mixture of impulse and initiative congresses, application-oriented seminars, and trade forums, giving a comprehensive overview of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable building and renovation. The conference and the accompanying exhibition brings into account the international growth in the market for renewable energy and energy-efficiency through international focus and communication.

Further information about Clean Energy Power ® 2005 can be found at: <http://www.energie-server.de>. The associated newsletter can be downloaded from [www.energy-server.com/newsletter/kontakt3.htm](http://www.energy-server.com/newsletter/kontakt3.htm)

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1. Annual volume production is set to rise to 10 million m3 by 2035 (if the national afforestation targets are achieved) further increasing the potential for rural job creation. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)