

Forestry and Wood Update

JULY 2004 - Volume 4 Number 7

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COFORD’s activities are funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan, 2000-2006.

# Forest Road Manual launched

Mr Joe Walsh, TD, Minister for Agriculture and Food, launched the latest COFORD publication at the joint ITGA/SIF field day at Blarney Castle, Cork, on 24 June. *Forest Road Manual – guidelines for the design, construction and management of forest roads* was written by Tom Ryan and John Dempsey of Coillte, and Henry Phillips and James Ramsay, private consultants.

As this publication illustrates, forest roads serve many purposes, not just timber extraction. Properly designed forest roads can enhance biodiversity; give access for inspection, management and fire-fighting; and subject to landowner approval, give access to the public for recreational purposes.

The publication of this guideline for the design, construction and management of forest roads, is the result of many months of work by the authors, as well as wide consultation with forest owners, forest contractors, sawmillers and other stakeholders.

Copies of the *Forest Road Manual* are available at a cost of €40.00 (plus packaging and postage) from COFORD. Click [here to order online](http://www.coford.ie/bookshop/default.html#project).

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# Call for Proposals and Grant Applications

## Call for Proposals

Tenders are requested from suitably qualified individuals or organisations to conduct desk studies on the following issues:

1. EC Nitrates Directive – impact on, and potential role of, forestry.
2. Assessment of the chemical, lignin and cellulose content of wood in Ireland.
3. Assessment of the component costs of a range of roadside fencing methods and key criteria for material selection.
4. Engineered wood products – opportunities and threats.
5. Verification of heat treatment of wood for phytosanitary compliance purposes.

The closing date for receipt of tenders is Friday August 6th, 2004 at 5:00 pm.

## Networking and Knowledge Transfer Supporting Initiative

Applications are invited from suitably organisations, companies, institutions or individuals for the following supports:

1. Workshop/Seminar Grants – call open until June 2006 or until further notice.
2. Travel/Mobility Grants – call open until June 2006 or until further notice.
3. Networking Knowledge Transfer Grants (both inward and outward working visits) – closing date is Friday, August 6th at 5:00 pm. The priority areas are:
	1. Wood energy supply chain
	2. Forest economics
	3. Land-use policy
	4. Wood products
	5. Harvesting technology
	6. Non-wood forest products
	7. Integrated pest management
	8. Effective grower co-operatives

Interested parties should download scoping documents and application forms from the COFORD website: [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie) and submit tenders/applications to: Joe O’Carroll, Operations Manager, COFORD, Agriculture Building, Belfield, Dublin 4. Tel: +353-1-7167700; Fax: +353-1-7161180; email: info@coford.ie

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# Survey of stands of common alder in Ireland

A working group has been established to examine a number of issues around the large areas of common alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) currently being planted in the country. Common alder, one of our native broadleaf species, is easy to establish and not as vulnerable to deer and grey squirrel damage as other broadleaf species. Over the past six years, demand for transplants has risen dramatically while similar increases have been recorded in demand for seed.

The group was established to “examine the current supply and demand for seed and plants of the species and to develop suitable seed sources to meet a projected increase in future demand on a sustainable basis”. The group is currently carrying out a survey of alder stands throughout the country. If you known of any stands of alder (young or old) and wish to participate in this survey please [click here for the survey form](http://www.coford.ie/newsletter/AlderSurvey.doc). Complete and return the form to COFORD, Agriculture Building, Belfield, Dublin 4 or email it to John Fennessy (john.fennessy@coford.ie).

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# Carbon Corner

## SBSTA 20 outcomes

The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded its 21st meeting last Friday in Bonn.

A number of methodological issues were discussed, including common formats for Parties to use when reporting sink activities under Articles 3.3 and 3.4 of the Kyoto Protocol. Draft reporting tables had been prepared in advance by the Secretariat based on submissions by Parties, including the EU. Many Parties used the tables presented in Chapter 4 of the IPCC Good Practice Guidance for LULUCF as the basis for their submissions. Discussions and negotiations took place over a number of days on the construction and layout of tables and how best to include emissions and removals resulting from the different activities. Eventually a set of tables was agreed that can be used to report on sink activities under the Protocol. Data supplied in the tables will form the basis of the calculation sink assigned amounts for Parties and, where appropriate, for the issuance of removal units (RMUs).

Removal units can be used by a Party to comply with its emission reduction target. Say a Party has emissions of 100 units in 1990 (the base year). It has a target to reduce emissions by 7% each year over the period 2008-2012. Its emissions therefore must not exceed 93 units per year. But if its forests sequester carbon to the extent that it can issue 10 units per year emissions can reach 103 units and the Party will remain in compliance.

Other methodological issues such as how to deal with factoring out direct human induced changes in carbon stocks from indirect effects due to factors such as increased nitrogen deposition and higher CO2 concentrations also featured in the negotiations. Parties agreed to return to this issue at SBSTA 21 but were unable to agree on a broader agenda for discussion of sinks in future commitment periods. This is regrettable as much of the complexity surrounding sinks stems from their last-minute introduction at Kyoto. In the interim much of the work on sinks has been to clarify the Kyoto decisions and devise a workable system to allow their inclusion in national emission reporting and accounting systems. Discussion of issues related to sinks at an early stage prior to 2012 would help in having better decisions on how sinks would be treated, irrespective of the extent to which they may be included post 2012.

Harvested wood products also featured in the discussions at Bonn, with an agreement on the scope of the workshop to be held in Norway in September. A number of Parties feel that harvested wood products should be included in the accounting framework. At the moment the assumption is that once wood is harvested the CO2 it contains is returned to the atmosphere. Clearly this not the case and the lifetime of wood products can extend to hundreds of years. However, extending the coverage of reporting and accounting to wood products poses considerable methodological difficulties and raises many policy issues.

Modalities and procedures for small-scale afforestation and reforestation project activities under the CDM were also discussed and negotiated at Bonn. These activities are aimed at low income communities. The EU was successful in securing simplified rules that will reduce project transaction costs and enable such communities to better participate in small forestry and agroforestry projects. A draft decision text that incorporates these rules and modalities was forwarded to the next meeting in Buenos Aires for final agreement, pending a number of outstanding issues.

For those interested in more details of the negotiations visit the UNFCCC web site - <http://unfccc.int/> - and follow the links to SBSTA 20 and the documents FCCC/SBSTA/2004 L.3 (+ Add.1), L.9 and L.15 (+ Add.1). A webcast of the plenary sessions is also available at the UNFCCC site. Useful summaries of daily events and negotiations, and a photo diary of each day are also available in the Earth Negotiations Bulletin which can be accessed at the website of the International Institute for Sustainable Development <http://www.iisd.ca/climate/sb20>.

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# Future Issues for Forest Industries in Europe

The presentations made at the conference held in Dublin from 28 April to 1 May are now available to view and download from the COFORD and InnovaWood websites. [Click here](http://www.innovawood.com/Innovawood/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabindex=-1&tabid=346) to find the full list of [presentations](http://d96968.u29.jodoshared.com/coford/future_issues/default.asp).

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# Postgraduate Studentship

## Forest seed and nursery research

COFORD and Coillte are funding a major nursery research project on the seed biology and growth of alder, birch, ash and pedunculate oak seedlings in the nursery. A postgraduate student is required to carry out seed and nursery research in this project. The position will be based in UCD Belfield. However, field experiments, to be carried out at the Coillte Nursery, Ballintemple, Co Carlow (ca 100 km from Dublin), will form an important part of the research. It is envisaged that the successful candidate will commence work in August 2004.

Duration of study: Funding will be provided to end of project (PhD) on 31 December 2006 or for two years (Masters). Additional funding for PhD studies might be available after 2006.

Financial support: Stipend will be €12,500 (Masters) or €16,500 (PhD) per year (tax free) plus university tuition fees (value ca €3,000).

Requirements: An honours university degree in Forestry, Horticulture, Botany or related discipline.

Closing date for receipt of applications: 31 July 2004 or as soon as suitable candidate is found.

Applicants are invited to submit their curriculum vitae to: Dr Conor O’Reilly, Dept. of Crop Science, Horticulture and Forestry, Faculty of Agriculture, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4. Tel: 01-7167191; Fax: 01-7161104. Email: Conor.oreilly@ucd.ie

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# Natural Forest Reserves in Austria

As a signatory to the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe in Helsinki in 1993, Austria committed itself to accelerate the process of establishing a network of Natural Forest Reserves. Since the mid 1990s work has been ongoing and today the country has a network of 180 reserves with a total area of over 8,000 ha. Natural Forest Reserves are forests where the free development of the ecosystem takes place without any direct human influence. These reserves contribute to the conservation and natural development of biodiversity and serve research, training and educational functions. The following direct human interventions are prohibited: forest utilization, logging of dead wood and the artificial regeneration of forest trees. Hunting is an exception as it is a necessary requirement because Natural Forest Reserves are resting zones for game. Without regulation game pressure on the small reserves would be too high and would not reflect natural game densities.

The Austrian Federal Office and Research Centre for Forests is charged with the selection and scientific monitoring of these areas, under the legal and institutional framework of the Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management.

Natural forest reserves are particularly suited to long-term basic ecological research because the dynamics of these forest ecosystems are not influenced by human activities, with the exception of air pollution impact and game pressure. At the beginning, natural forest research concentrated specially on vegetation and forest management questions. Today, biodiversity research, population genetic relationships, vulnerability to disturbances or the adaptability of forest ecosystems to possible climate changes are gaining greater importance. The declared goal of applied research is the future development of an ecologically orientated, close to nature type of forest management.

For further information visit the project website: <http://fbva.forvie.ac.at>

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# Ireland’s Native Woodland Conference

The Woodlands of Ireland group was established in 1998 to represent all those with an interest in native woodlands, including ENGOs, foresters, ecologists, forest owners and statutory bodies. Since then, it has been at the forefront of native woodland conservation in Ireland through initiatives such as the People’s Millennium Forest Project and the development of the Forest Service Native Woodland Scheme.

The Native Woodland Scheme serves to protect, enhance and expand Ireland’s native woodland resource and its associated biodiversity. Once covering most of the island of Ireland, surviving fragments of native woodland today comprise less than one percent of the country’s land area. Without active management and protection, this valuable part of our natural heritage will be lost forever.

The theme of the Native Woodland Conference is “The past, present and future of Irelands Native Woodlands”. The conference, which will take place at the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology in Galway from 8 to 11 September and is aimed at landowners, foresters, ecologists, researchers, students, policy makers and native woodland stakeholders and will examine:

* The background to native woodland development in Ireland;
* The ecology and current status of native woodlands;
* The legal framework and policy considerations surrounding native woodland;
* Current initiatives in the development of Ireland’s native woodland;
* Possible future developments.

For further information and a booking form see the website [www.woodlandsofireland.com](http://www.woodlandsofireland.com)

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# Protection of forest resources in Central Europe

A summer school and workshop is scheduled to take place at the Forest Research Institute in Sekocin close to Warsaw from 23to 27 August. The general theme is “Promoting genetic diversity of pine” and will feature items such as:

* Genetic diversity conservation systems and their relationship with practical tree breeding methods as practised in Poland;
* Practical methods for genetic diversity conservation;
* Training in methods used to measure genetic variability for adaptive traits.

The meeting will conclude with a visit to conservation stands of Scots pine in the forests of Hajnowka and Bielsk forests and the primeval forest of Bialowieza.

For further information e-mail: j.kowalczyk@ibles.waw.pl

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# Fourth EUFORGEN Steering Committee Meeting

The Fourth European Forest Genetic Resources Steering Committee Meeting was held at Zidlochovice in the Czech Republic from 26 to 29 May 2004. Over thirty countries were represented at as well as a number of observers from FAO and IPGRI and the EUFORGEN Secretariat.

In April 2003, the European ministers responsible for forests came together for the Fourth Ministerial Conference in Vienna. Among other commitments, the ministers highlighted the importance of linking conservation of forest genetic resources with sustainable forest management and endorsed the continuation of European collaboration in this field. In response to this commitment, the EUFORGEN Steering Committee initiated the development of the third phase covering the period 2005-2009. In January 2004, the EUFORGEN Secretariat requested feedback from National Co-ordinators on what was considered the best way to progress EUFORGEN in the third phase. As a result of the feedback, a task force was established to develop and prepare a set of proposals for Phase III to be discussed at the Fourth Steering Committee Meeting. This proposal formed the basis of most of the discussion during this meeting.

## New Developments for Phase III

During Phase II EUFORGEN has operated through the following five species-orientated networks: Conifers; Mediterranean Oaks; Noble Hardwoods; Temperate Oaks and Beech; and *Populus nigra.*

Although many Networks have expressed a wish to continue the work based on this species-orientated approach, many also favoured the establishment of new thematic networks during Phase III. Based on the survey in early 2004, a majority of representatives from participating countries favoured a mix of thematic and species-orientated Networks. The meeting decided to reduce the number of species-oriented networks to three. Supplementing these species oriented networks are two new thematic working groups:

1. a Forest Management Group, designed to promote gene conservation as part of sustainable forest management and
2. an Information Working Group focusing on information management. It was agreed that a new task force would be established to define the scope and brief of the combined networks and their role in a new Phase III structure.

For further information on developments within EUFORGEN contact John Fennessy at COFORD (email: john.fennessy@coford.ie).

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# Restoring active blanket bog in Ireland

Restoring active blanket bog in Ireland is a nature conservation project, jointly funded by the European Union DG-Environment and Coillte under the EU Life-Nature Project. Mr Joe Walsh, TD, Minister for Agriculture and Food launched the project at Eskeragh Bog, Crossmolina, Co Mayo on 3 June 2004.

The peatlands of the west of Ireland are among the most important intact areas of active blanket bog found in Europe. Since 1997 approximately 135,139 ha of active blanket bog have been proposed as candidate Special Areas of Conservation [SAC] under the Habitats Directive. These proposed SAC Blanket Bog sites are located mainly in the Atlantic Seaboard counties of Ireland, especially Co Mayo.

The project aims at bogland restoration on 14, unplanted, or partially or wholly afforested sites covering 1212.3 ha within candidate SACs. Consistent with the principles of sustainable forest management, Coillte has divided its estate into environmental forest management units (FMUs). The project area is on land owned and managed by Coillte in seven FMUs.

Special emphasis will be placed on sites in the North Mayo Forest Management Unit, where the full range of blanket bog types occur from lowland to mountain blanket bog (involving sensitive river catchments). In other FMUs, the sites are representative of afforested peatlands around the country. Five of these sites (No. 3, 5, 7, 13 and 16) have been selected as project demonstration sites, these will be the focus of a public awareness programme over a four-year period.

For further information about this project, click on to [www.irishbogrestorationproject.ie](http://www.irishbogrestorationproject.ie)

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# Funding available for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects

It was recently advertised that EU INTERREG IIIA funding is available for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in Northern Ireland and the Border area.

The funding is targeted at those who are involved in small to medium sized enterprise, belong to a community group, community business or socially excluded group, are involved in the tourism or farming sectors or are a public or voluntary organisation and are interested in securing EU funding for renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies at a local level.

Prospective applicants will be provided with information on how to apply to the EU’s INTERREG IIIA funding and on types of projects which may be considered. For further information please contact Action Renewables, WoodchesterHouse, 50 Newforge Lane, Belfast, BT9 5NW, email: julie.casson@actionrenewables.co.uk or fiona.johnson@actionrenewables.co.uk. Log on to [www.eugrants.org](http://www.eugrants.org) for details of the EU INTERREG IIIA.

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# Inaugural ForestLeadership Conference

This conference will take place from 1 to 4 March 2005 at Wyndham Bristol Place, Toronto, Canada. For further information, info@ForestLeadership.com or visit the website: [www.ForestLeadership.com](http://www.ForestLeadership.com)

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