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Forestry and Wood Update

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# IT in the Forest Industry

The first event on the COFORD calendar for 2005 is a workshop and demonstration showcasing the application of information technology developments in various sectors of the forest industry.

This event will take place at the Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise, on Friday 11 February 2005. The full programme will be made available early in January, and posted on the COFORD website ([www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie)). Topics to be addressed will cover inventory and stand assessment as well as harvesting and haulage, with presentations on relevant technologies and advances in these areas.

If you would like to express your interest in attending, please send an email to this effect to info@coford.ie, or telephone the COFORD office (01-2130725).

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# Forestry – Rural Development in Action

The annual conference co-hosted by COFORD, the Irish Timber Growers’ Association (ITGA), the Society of Irish Foresters (SIF) and the Irish Forest Industry Chain (IFIC) will be held at the Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co Offaly, on Friday 11 March 2005. The theme of this year’s conference ***Forestry – Rural Development in Action*** will be dealt with in presentations on the policy drivers behind the Draft Rural Development Regulation, Foresight for Irish land use, the contribution of rural activities to the national economic wellbeing, and the potential impact of the Draft Regulation on Rural Development on the Irish Forest Strategy. The programme will also include presentations on a number of case studies of rural development in action, and there will be time for a panel discussion at the end of the day.

The final programme will be made available early in the new year, but you can express your interest in attending by contacting any of the co-host organisations:

COFORD: email info@coford.ie, tel: 01-2130725;

ITGA: email itga@eircom.net, tel: 01-2350520;

IFIC: email ific@ibec.ie, tel: 01-6051674;

SIF: email sif@eircom.net, tel: 071-9164434

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# Diary for 2005

Events planned by COFORD for 2005 are:

* 11 February: Workshop on IT in the forest industry
* 11 March: Conference on Forestry – Rural development in action
* 15 April: Seminar on non-wood forest products
* 13 May: Workshop on yield models
* 23-24 June: Seminar on managing our broadleaf resource to produce quality hardwood timber
* 20 September: Conference on plant quality
* 26-27 October: BIOFOREST conference
* 25 November: Workshop on Eurocode5

Full details of each of these events will be made available on the COFORD website and in this newsletter. You may also send an expression of interest in any of these events via email to info@coford.ie, or call the COFORD office at 01-2130725.

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# COFORD Seminar:Protecting Ireland’s Forests – the threat from deer and grey squirrel

COFORD hosted a seminar on 26 November 2004 to discuss **Protecting Ireland's Forests - the threat from deer and grey squirrel.** The objectives of the seminar were to outline best management practice for deer and grey squirrel control, and discuss policy and practice in relation to deer management and selection of broadleaves in face of the grey squirrel threat.

Over the past twenty years, more than 200,000 ha of land have been afforested, much of it with broadleaves, which tend to be more vulnerable to damage caused by animals. The population and distribution of deer and grey squirrel are increasing as is the level of damage. One of the reasons for this seminar was to commence the process of the development of a comprehensive management and control programme for these mammals.

Dr Sean Rooney, primary author of the COFORD publication *Forest mammals – management and control*, presented a paper on *Introduced mammals-ecological aspects as guidance for management and control* in which he stressed the need for integrated management as the key towards successful control. John Jackson, Chairman Farm Forestry Section, IFA presented the grower’s perspective of the implications of deer damage for sustainable forestry. Barry Coad, Game and Deer Manager, Coillte, spoke about *Deer management-integrated control policies and* *practice*, and highlighted the need for a planned, integrated and collaborative approach as an essential requirement for successful deer management. Wesley Atkinson, National Parks and Wildlife Service, discussed the *National policy development in relation to integrated deer management*. A paper on *Approaches to deer management and control in Northern Ireland* was presented by John McCurdy, Northern Ireland Deer Society.

The experience in the UK, with the grey squirrel and how control works, or doesn’t work as seems to be the case, was presented by Charles Dutton, of the European Squirrel Initiative. *Irish squirrel population dynamics – the consequences for best control practice* was discussed by Alan Poole, Department of Zoology, NUI Galway. In his presentation *Grey squirrels and broadleaves – not a silvicultural mixture*, Dr Michael Carey, Forestry and Management Consultant, highlighted the serious threat that the grey squirrel, or the ‘tree rat’, posed for the developing broadleaf resource.

Presentations made at this event are available to download in pdf format from the COFORD website <http://www.coford.ie/newsandevents/seminars.html#mammals>.

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# 2005 Industry Timber and Forestry Yearbook launched

The Forestry and Timber Yearbook 2005 was launched on 14 December 2004, by Minister Mary Coughlan, Minister for Agriculture and Food, at her offices in Agriculture House, Dublin. Copies of this very useful publication are available from the ITGA, email: itga@eircom.net, tel: 01-2350520.



At the launch of the ITGA’s Forestry and Timber Yearbook 2005 were (left to right): Joe O’Carroll (Operations Manager COFORD), Brendan Lacey (Chairman ITGA), Minister John Browne T.D. (Minister of State for Forestry in the Department of Agriculture and Food), Minister Mary Coughlan T.D. (Minister for Agriculture and Food), Donal Whelan (ITGA Technical Director), Gerry Egan (Coillte Company Secretary and Director of Corporate Services), and Donal Magner (Chairman Irish Timber Council, and editor of the Yearbook).

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# CARBON CORNER

## The end of the beginning

The tenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which concluded in Buenos Aires on 17 December also marked the conclusion of negotiations on the rules for the inclusion of forestry activities under the Kyoto Protocol for the first commitment period, 2008-2012. Finally, after more than five years of negotiations, Parties and project developers have the full range of measures available to engage in afforestation and reforestation activities under the different Articles of the Protocol.

Given the progress that has been made in the run up to Buenos Aires, and at the conference itself, it is unlikely that forestry issues will feature in the international climate change process until late 2005 or early 2006. In the meantime there is a useful breathing space and time for thought on a new regime for including forests post 2012. One major issue that will feature in addressing this regime is tropical deforestation. It is itself one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions globally – about one quarter of all anthropogenic emissions are from forest clearance. Measures to reduce this trend are being addressed in a number of international fora including the United Nations Forum on Forests and Convention on Biological Diversity. However, to date these efforts have had little effect due to a variety of factors, including a lack of economic instruments that reward conservation of existing forest cover.

The climate change process has put a value on carbon emissions and on ways to increase carbon stocks in land use. However, attempts to place a value on forest conservation - avoided deforestation – have thus far failed. New ideas are now being formulated that may provide a better basis for a system to value avoiding deforestation. These mainly address the issue at a national level whereby Parties would undertake to reduce rates of deforestation in return for a value being placed on the carbon that remains stored in the forest. There are many methodological issues to be addressed in these concepts such as establishing baselines and monitoring changes at a national level. Costs of monitoring and verification are also key issues. These are not insurmountable and could be developed by the end of 2007, when the post 2012 regime must be agreed.

In the meantime there is considerable work to be done in developing national carbon accounting under the Protocol. The way is now clear given the Buenos Aires agreements on common reporting formats and on the use of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Good Practice Guidance for reporting and accounting carbon stock changes in forests.

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# UK Biofuels Breakthrough

*(source: ITEBE Newsletter)*

All the powers necessary for the UK government to introduce a Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation are now in place. The Energy Bill 2004, given Royal Assent, contains all the provisions necessary to bring in legislation which would require the oil companies to sell a given proportion of their annual fossil fuel sales as biofuels (biodiesel, bioethanol and biogas).
For more information, visit the website [www.biodiesel.co.uk/biofuels\_breakthrough.htm](http://www.biodiesel.co.uk/biofuels_breakthrough.htm)

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# Botanical Society of Scotland announces Atlantic Oakwoods Symposium

A symposium on Atlantic oakwoods will be held in the Corran Halls, Oban, Scotland, on 14-16 September 2005. There will be two days of talks and discussion followed by a field excursion to study some of the local examples of these woods.

The aims of the meeting are to bring together research scientists, land managers, conservationists and all who share an interest in these woods; to provide a forum in which to present current knowledge on the ecological diversity and past management of the woods; and to identify needs for conservation and further research. The proceedings of the symposium will be published in a Symposium Special Issue of the *Botanical Journal of Scotland*.

The programme comprises sessions on Definition and Distribution; Genetic History; Cultural History; Present Structure and Composition; Faunal Relationships; Conservation and Management Policy. There will also be a poster session.

The Symposium will be organised by the Botanical Society of Scotland and sponsored by the Forestry Commission, Forest Research and the British Ecological Society.

Booking forms and further information will be available after 28 February 2005 from Shiela Wilson, Institute of Geography, University of Edinburgh, Drummond Street, Edinburgh EH8 9XP, or from the website <http://www.geos.ed.ac.uk/abs/bss/>

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# Meeting of the BIHIP Ash Group

A meeting of the British and Irish Hardwoods Improvement Programme (BIHIP) Ash Group was held at East Malling Research Centre in Kent. The meeting reviewed progress made with the ash programme during 2004, and the work programme for 2005 was discussed. There are plans for further ash plus-tree selection in provenance regions where numbers of selected trees were inadequate. A proposal for further scion collection and a bulking of existing selected trees was considered. The possibility of an exchange of material and the establishment of a number of clone banks to secure the selected material was proposed, as was a proposal for the establishment of a number of untested ash clonal seed orchards.

A short introduction to the British and Irish Hardwood Trust was presented. The Trust is being established to source funding for further improvement work on the BIHIP species. A number of changes have taken place in the Management Committee since the last meeting, including the nomination of Pat Doody, Seed Manager, Coillte, as Vice Chairman of the Ash Group.

The next meeting of this group is to take place in Wales in May 2005 and a field day in one of the ash breeding seedling orchards is planned.

For further information please visit the BIHIP website [www.bihip.com](http://www.bihip.com)

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# RDS Forestry Awards 2004

The Minister of State for Forestry in the Department of Agriculture and Food, Mr John Browne TD, recently presented the Royal Dublin Society Irish Forestry Awards, in Farmleigh House. A special award made on the occasion was the RDS Centenary Lifetime Award, presented to Fergal Molloy, former Director of COFORD. COFORD is very proud of his achievement and congratulates Fergal - we are delighted that his contribution to Irish and international forestry is acknowledged.

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