.

Forestry and Wood Update

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# COFORD forest energy publication launched

Ms Mary Wallace TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with responsibility for Forestry, officially launched the latest COFORD publication entitled ***"Harvesting and Processing Forest Biomass for Energy Production in Ireland - the ForestEnergy 2006 programme***", by Pieter D. Kofman and Tom Kent, at the BioEnergy 2007 conference. The report is based on the ForestEnergy 2006 programme of demonstrations and trials that investigated the harvesting of wood chip fuel from privately-owned forests. It brings together and analyses the results of ForestEnergy 2006 in terms of how well the different harvesting and processing systems worked and how cost effective they were. In forest chipping was found to be the most cost effective option, and resulted in considerable increases in harvested biomass.,

Minister of State Wallace complimented the authors Pieter Kofman and Tom Kent (Waterford Institute of Technology) for putting together a timely and comprehensive report and welcomed the latest series of demonstrations, which are again being organised by COFORD, Teagasc and Waterford Institute of Technology. This report is available from COFORD at a price of €10.00.

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# Forest Energy 2007 chipping demonstrations

The second phase of the COFORD/Teagasc Forest Energy 2007 programme, will demonstrate chipping of forest energy wood at the following locations and dates:

* Tuesday 11 September - Bweeng, Co Cork. Meet at the Bweeng Community Centre, Co Galway.
* Friday 14 September - Stranorlar, Co Donegal. Meet at the Finn Valley Centre, Stranorlar, Co Donegal.

Each event will commence at 11a.m. Buses will take groups of participants from the meeting point to the site between 11 am and 12.30 pm. Further information on the programme can be found at [www.woodenergy.ie](http://www.woodenergy.ie)

A workshop will take place on 12 December 2007 to showcase the latest results from the ForestEnergy 2007 programme. It will take place at the Mullingar Park Hotel, and if you are interested in attending, please contact COFORD (email: info@coford.ie). The event will comprise a morning session of presentations, and in the afternoon delegates will be invited to visit the bin storage trials.

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# Bioenergy 2007

COFORD, Teagasc and Sustainable Energy Ireland’s Renewable Energy Information Office presented Bioenergy 2007 on Thursday 30 August 2007 at Oak Park, Carlow. Bioenergy 2007. This event was a resounding success, attracting over 8,000 visitors. The event was opened by Minister Mary Wallace, TD, Minister of State in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

The purpose of the event was to promote the use of solid biomass and raise awareness across all sectors, from landowner to end user, on the many uses and advantages in growing, harvesting and using wood fuels and energy crops for energy generation. The event combined a comprehensive technology and product exhibition with conference, seminar and workshop sessions, field excursions, site visits and practical demonstrations.

Referring to Ireland's dependence on imported energy and the urgent need to develop alternative sources of energy, the Minister of State commented: “The good news is that there are many potential alternative and climate friendly renewable sources of energy that we can exploit,” and added: “Ireland has an excellent growing climate for trees and other biomass crops. Wood in its many forms, including willow, miscanthus and other agriculture crops, has the potential to significantly contribute to Ireland reducing its dependence on imported fossil fuels.”

She also noted that the National BioEnergy Action plan, arising from the Ministerial Taskforce on Bioenergy, recognises Ireland's significant potential in bioenergy resources and sets ambitious targets and strategies to increase deployment in the heat, electricity and transport sectors. Referring to her own area of responsibility, Minister of State Wallace added: “With the increasing evidence of climate change before us, with the need to find alternative fuels, with the demand for cleaner air and a better environment, it is more important than ever that we plant more forests and exploit all the renewable energy options available to us.”

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# COFORD Conference on Forestry, carbon and climate change – local and international perspectives

Climate change is now widely acknowledged as the most important environmental issue facing mankind. According to the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC, impacts on human settlement and ecosystems, particularly at the higher latitudes and in the tropics, are already being felt. Renewed and intensified action to address these impacts is being signalled, particularly for the period post 2012, the end of the first Kyoto commitment period. The most substantial undertaking to date has been the recent announcement by the EU that it will cut emissions of greenhouse gases by 20% by 2020. Achieving reductions of this level will mean fundamental changes in energy, land use and other policy support areas. For civil society it will mean fundamental shifts in transport and other behaviour – everybody will be affected in one way or another.

Forests too will play a key role in attaining compliance with emission reduction targets - directly through carbon sequestration and the avoidance of deforestation - and indirectly through providing renewable wood fuels and materials. Nationally, forests are already playing an important part in the Kyoto compliance regime, particularly new forest planted since 1990; while a broader role for forests and forest products may emerge post 2012. In order to better understand the current role of forests in climate change policy, and how this might develop in the future, COFORD is holding a one-day conference on 19 September 2007 on the theme ***Forests, Carbon and Climate Change - Local and International Perspectives*** at the Glenview hotel, Co Wicklow. The conference will be addressed by leading policy makers and analysts, as well as a number of eminent scientists who are dealing with forest and climate change issues.

Bringing together science and policy, the conference will outline current national initiatives, how these have come about, what they plan to achieve, their economic effectiveness and what the future might hold. In addition, the thinking used to estimate how much greenhouse gases forests actually remove from the atmosphere will be outlined. The afternoon session will feature presentations from eminent national and international experts on the latest thinking on forests and climate change, and on the balance between uptake and losses in the forest carbon cycle. Ongoing work in the COFORD-funded CLIMIT programme will be outlined, including the important area of how current and future forests will be affected by climate change, and how best to plan and manage forests into the future.

All those interested in climate change and the role of forests in mitigating rising levels of greenhouse gases, and how forests themselves may be impacted by future climate regimes, are sure to find attendance at the conference worthwhile. The programme includes the following presentations:

* *Climate change and energy policy – an economic perspective* - John Fitzgerald, Economic and Social Research Institute
* *Ireland’s national climate change strategy* - Owen Ryan, Department of the Environment
* *Forests and the UNFCCC process – an overview* – Eugene Hendrick, COFORD
* *New Zealand: Forest carbon reporting and the role of forests in climate change policy* - Peter Stevens, New Zealand Ministry for the Environment
* *Global forests and international climate change research* - Ricardo Valentini, University of Tuscia
* *Ireland’s forest carbon reporting system* - Kevin Black, FERS Ltd
* *Forest soils – a vital carbon reservoir* - Ken Byrne, University College Cork
* *The impact of climate change on forests* - Duncan Ray, Forest Research, UK

Booking information and the registration form are available on [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie/iopen24/pub/defaultarticle.php?cArticlePath=129_389_401). The cost to attend is €60.00 per delegate. If you wish to register, please email info@coford.ie or phone 01-2130735.

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# Seminar: Foliage production from forest species

Forest foliage is a growing business in Ireland. While it is still predominantly a Christmas time business, year-round uses are rapidly growing, particularly in the floral trade. Around the world, stems from trees and understorey plant species are profitably harvested from forests for such applications. While forest foliage has been traditionally used as a filler in bouquets and arrangements it is now growing in use in its own right, allied to the trend for all things natural. In fact, many floral artists now use forest foliage on its own to make attractive and saleable arrangements .

The production of foliage from many tree and shrub species presents an exciting business opportunity, well suited to the Irish climate. While forest owners wait for early thinning income,,revenue from foliage collection is a distinct possibility. With rapidly expanding markets, the time has never been better for land owners to consider forest foliage production as a viable option.

To address these opportunities COFORD is holding a seminar in Kilkenny on 18 October to provide an introduction to the industry and showcase the wide range of foliage products that can be sourced from Ireland’s forests.

The seminar will include presentations from industry experts as well as from researchers involved in a current COFORD project on forest foliage. The key-note address will be presented by Dr Simon Pearson, Commercial Director, Winchester Growers and former cut flower technologist with Marks and Spencer supermarket. He brings a depth of knowledge in the area of foliage and flower procurement, and will discuss the importance of forest species in the foliage sector and his experiences as a buyer.

An extensive range of forest foliage and other lifestyle products will be on display. Demonstrations of how forest foliage may be incorporated in floral design will be provided by Richard Haslam, well known floral designer and twice winner of the gold medal at the Chelsea flower show. There will also be a networking opportunity for researchers and others involved in the industry.

As well as the indoor sessions the seminar will be followed by field visits, on the 19 October, to a number of foliage production sites, and to a packing/processing facility in the Wexford area. A bus will depart from Hotel Kilkenny on the morning of Friday 19 Septemberand return the same evening. Any interested parties are asked to their confirm attendance on the field visit when booking a place at the seminar.

In summary the programme for the event is:

**Indoor seminar:** Thursday 18 October at the Hotel Kilkenny, Kilkenny

**Field visit:** Friday 19 October visits to foliage production and processing facilities in Co Wexford. Bus will depart from Hotel Kilkenny, Kilkenny.

Attendance at the seminar costs €50 (including lunch and refreshments).

For further information contact Amy Hingston – email: amyhingston@gmail.com.

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# CLUSTER – Identifying farm forest resources to maximise potential markets

A critical mass of private forestry and farm forestry is now developing in Ireland, with 105,000 ha currently over 10 years of age. COFORD estimates that the private sector’s market share will rise to 23% by 2015. However, the actual supply from the private sector is still far short of this target, with many farm forest plantations in Ireland currently unthinned. There is very little information at a local level about exactly where the resource is located and which plantations are suitable for thinning in the next 5 to 10 years. It is timely then that Teagasc, with the support of COFORD, intend to conduct research into methods for identifying farm forest resources to maximise potential markets.

The research programme led by Niall Farrelly and managed by Brian Clifford will quantify the material from farm forests by providing a new methodology for the assessment of the wood resources within any particular location and link that resource to end users in the region, i.e. sawmills and wood energy markets. The outputs of this research should improve the ability of farm forests owners to market and sell their produce.

The research will use a cluster approach performed in a Geographic Information System (GIS) for locating areas with large concentrations of private forest cover that are approaching first thinning (Figure 1). The method is extremely efficient in grouping large concentrations of forestry together and concentrates survey resources where forest cover has reached a critical mass.

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***Figure 1:*** *GIS cluster analysis used to locate large concentrations of farm forest plantations in Ireland with the north west circled.*

A number of target clusters will be identified and additional details will be gathered by the use of digital aerial photography, Quick BirdTM satellite imagery and radarimageryin order to capture value added data about plantations such as roading, access, development stage, and thin status. New research will also evaluate the potential of the new imagery for analysing species spatial distribution, monitoring forest cover fragmentation, planning of forest road networks and the monitoring of forest land cover change. This work will be performed by the Spatial Analysis Group lead by Stuart Green in Teagasc, Kinsealy.

It is envisaged that all plantations within a cluster, that are approaching first thinning stage, will be visited and an assessment of volume will be performed in each stand using the new COFORD Dynamic Yield Model GROWFOR. Stands will be grown forward to generate forecasts of volume production and a forecast of timber production within each cluster will be available (Figure 2) and used as the main tool for further development work especially in the identification of suitable locations for new market opportunities.



***Figure 2:*** *Information on volume, thinning cycle, thinning yield, thinning year and windthrow risk for each stand in the cluster will be available in a database.*

For further information please contact Niall Farrelly and Brian Clifford at Teagasc, Mellows Centre, Athenry, Co Galway. Tel: 091 845200. Email niall.farrelly@treagasc.ie; Brian.clifford@teagasc.ie

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# CARBON CORNER

## Climate change conventions

Anybody new to the climate change issue is faced with a wall of information, but with little orientation material in terms of background, issues and institutions. Fortunately, help is at hand in a very useful publication (*United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Handbook*), which is available as a pdf at the UNFCCC web site <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/publications/handbook.pdf>. It is structured into 18 stand-alone paragraphs, with an excellent introductory piece. The introduction is a model of brevity and clarity and very effectively summarises in a mere five pages the scientific and policy background to climate change. Carbon Corner strongly recommends anybody interested in the topic to read those pages.

COFORD will be holding its own climate change convention on the 19th of this month at the Glenview Hotel in Co Wicklow. As the name implies the venue directly overlooks that well known beauty spot, nature reserve and carbon reservoir - the Glen-of-the-Downs. A very interesting day is promised, focusing on policy and scientific aspects of climate change and forests.

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# InnovaWood news update

InnovaWood provide information on open calls in the 7th Framework programme, news from Cordis- the European Commission's Community Research & Development Information Service and various events in Europe and further afield related to the forestry sector. The information is available in one pdf (154kb) [click here to download](http://www.coford.ie/iopen24/pub/pub/iwseptember07.pdf).

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# BIHIP Meeting, Field Day and AGM

The Annual Meeting, Field Day and AGM of the British and Irish Hardwoods Improvement Programme (BIHIP) will take place in Denmark from Saturday 22to Monday 24 September. It is being organized by Prof. Hans Roulund of the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University Danish Centre for Forest, Landscape & Planning in Hørsholm. Prof. Roulund has worked for many years on tree improvement programmes in Denmark and the emphasis of this year’s AGM and field day is to discuss the Danish approach to broadleaved tree improvement and explore Danish tree breeding programmes as well as the principles and practices of broadleaved tree breeding in Denmark. The AGM of BIHIP and various other species working group meetings will be held during this period.

For further information on the BIHIP programme see <http://www.bihip.com>

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# Purdue Professor visits COFORD

A recent visitor to COFORD was Douglas F. Jacobs, Assistant Professor of Forest Regeneration at Purdue University in West Lafayette in Indiana, USA. Prof. Jacobs is a leading member of the Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center (HTIRC) at Purdue. This project is a collaborative regional research, development and technology transfer programme between industry, the university and other private, state and federal organizations, with the main partners being Purdue University and the USDA Forest Service. The main objective is to advance tree improvement of central hardwood tree species to obtain increased forest productivity in restoration and reforestation programmes.

The mission statement of HTIRC is to advance the science of hardwood tree improvement, genomics, physiology, protection and utilization in the eastern hardwood region of the United States. This is achieved through:

* Developing and disseminating knowledge on improving the genetic quality of hardwood tree species and conserving fine hardwood germplasm;
* Developing elite hardwood trees for restoration of sustainable hardwood forests and riparian zones for production of forest products and maintenance of genetically diverse ecosystems;
* Increasing knowledge and developing systems for nursery production and plantation establishment;
* Increasing knowledge and developing strategies for protection, utilization and marketing of the hardwood resource and
* Developing recognized and respected science leaders in forest genetics, physiology, regeneration, protection and utilization.

This programme has many similarities to the British and Irish Hardwoods Improvement Programme (BIHIP) and opportunities were explored to establish links with both programmes. For further information on the HTIRC see [www.htirc.org](http://www.htirc.org)

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# EUFGIS – A New Pan-European Project on Forest Genetic Resources (FGR)

On 1 April 2007, a new project on the *Establishment of a European Information System on Forest Genetic Resources* (EUFGIS) was launched with the main objective to strengthen and co-ordinate documentation of forest genetic resources at a European level. EUFGIS is supported by the European Commission under Council Regulation 870/2004 on genetic resources in agriculture. It is co-ordinated by Bioversity International and has six participating partners – The Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests (BFW - Austria); The State Forest Tree Improvement Station (SNS - Denmark); Institute National de la Recherche (INRA – France); The National Forest Centre (NLC) and the Slovenian Forestry Institute (Slovenia) and Foresty Research (UK). The project will involve all member countries of EUFORGEN and will continue until the end of September 2010.

EUFGIS will establish a web-based information system to serve as a documentation platform for national FGR inventories and to support practical implementation of gene conservation and sustainable forest management in Europe in a standardized format. The project will create a network of individual national focal points in each European country, who will provide updated data for the information system once it has been established. However, before the information system can be developed a major effort is needed in order to standardize the requirements for dynamic gene conservation units of forest trees in Europe. A further requirement is the development of a common information standard for conservation units at the pan-European level. This project will develop such standards, as well as providing training on forest genetic resources documentation to the national focal person.

The EUFGIS project will directly benefit the EUFORGEN Networks, which are currently developing *Common Action Plans* for selected target species so as to strengthen gene conservation programmes; however, such programmes have been hampered by lack of clearly defined standard across Europe. It is envisaged that *Common Action Plans* will eventually apply to all European species as well as a number of exotics species now common in several parts of Europe.

For further information on EUFORGEN and the EUFGIS Programme see [www.bioversityinternational.org](http://www.bioversityinternational.org)

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# A Global Vision of Forestry in the 21st Century

This congress is scheduled to take place in Toronto in Canada from 30 September to 3 October 2007 and the focus will be organized around the following themes:

* Global challenges, responsibility and leadership;
* Frontiers of science and a healthy and diverse environment – the forest environment, its diversity and productivity and scientific challenges and human health and the forest;
* Cultures, markets and sustainable societies.

For further information please contact Prof. Shashi Kant, Chair, Organising Committee, Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto, Canada; email shashi.kant@utoranta.ca or visit [www.forestry.utoranta.ca](http://www.forestry.utoranta.ca)

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# Government announces new phase for Greener Homes Scheme

## as applications reach target levels and budget allocation

Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Eamon Ryan TD, has announced that the Greener Homes scheme has fulfilled its initial objectives, surpassed its targets ahead of schedule and fully committed its budget allocation.

Since its inception 16,000 grants have been awarded. There has been a dramatic increase in renewable technology suppliers and a ten-fold expansion in the number of renewable energy products available on the market.

This August, approved applications reached the €47 million five-year allocation for the scheme. The intention of this scheme was to stimulate demand for renewable technologies in homes and to assist a fledgling industry. The demand is clear and the sector is now on a firm footing. Phase I is, therefore, now complete and applications under this scheme will no longer be accepted.

Announcing the revised Scheme Minister Ryan said, “Greener Homes has fulfilled its objectives. Rather than concluding the Scheme, however, I have decided that a new Phase with revised terms and conditions is necessary to continue this good work. I will be securing additional funding for this new Phase via the Supplementary Estimates process when the Dáil resumes. The additional funding will also allow Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) to fund similar energy grants for lower-income housing, school and community schemes and the roll-out of other innovative heating technologies. Furthermore, Minister Gormley will soon be introducing regulations requiring the use of renewable energy systems in new buildings. This will extend to the whole country the type of measures already secured by Green Party councillors in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown. This regulatory support for renewables is the logical next step in our support for the industry. We will continue to roll out other new support measures and variations to the existing schemes to help achieve the carbon reduction targets that are at the heart of our Programme for Government.”

David Taylor, CEO of Sustainable Energy Ireland which administers the scheme, stated, “I echo the Minister’s pleasure in the success of our initial phase. The strength of consumer demand for the three renewable energy technologies assisted to date is a wake-up call to business that sustainable energy preferences are now being well and truly reflected in consumer investment decisions. The next phase will be about ensuring that the market for these products, services and fuels continues to develop in a robust manner and that consumers continue to be guided towards discerning choices. Continuing the scheme will help secure a range of objectives including more competitive offerings, revised product standards, improved training standards and greater stability across the renewable heating industry.”

Details of revised levels

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Technology | GHS\* I | GHS II |
| Biomass – Boiler | €4,200 | €3,000 |
| Biomass – Stove | €1,100 | €1,100 |
| Biomass - Stove w/Back boiler | €1,800 | €1,800 |
| Heat Pump – Vertical ground | €6,500 | €3,500 |
| Heat Pump – Horizontal ground | €4,300 | €2,500 |
| Heat Pump - Water to water  | €4,300 | €2,500 |
| Heat Pump - Air Source | €4,000 | €2,000 |
| Solar - Flat Plate | €300/m2 | €250/m2 |
| Solar - Evacuated Tube | €300/m2 | €300/m2 |

\*Where GHS is Greener Homes Scheme

Applications under Phase II will be available when the Scheme opens on 1 October 2007.

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# ASPO Conference

The Sixth International ASPO Conference will be held in Cork on 17 and 18 September. The conference will address not only the evidence for an imminent peak in world oil supply, as imposed by natural depletion, but consider the implications in social, political and economic terms. The Oil Age opened about 150 years ago, and the abundant supply of energy it provided changed the world. The decline of this critical source of energy in the years ahead will clearly have a corresponding impact. It is by all means an important subject. Everyone will be affected, and those that understand the situation will be in a better position to plan and prepare their own responses. Details of the conference and a post-conference event are on [www.aspo-ireland.org](http://www.aspo-ireland.org/)

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# COST Action E49 conference

The theme of the second COST Action E49 conference will be measurement and control of VOC emissions from wood-based panels. The event will take place on 28-29 November 2007 in Germany. Information about the conference organised by the European Network COST Action E49: Process and Performance of Wood-Based Panels is now available at: <http://www.wki.fraunhofer.de/publikat/COST%20E49_VOC.html>

The aim of COST Action E49 is to help the European wood-based panels sector to meet future demands and competition from other materials and markets through the scientific-based advance of wood-based panels and their production processes towards higher technical, economic and environmental standards. The second conference of E49 will focus on technologies and strategies that will maximise VOC emissions from wood-based panel products during their manufacture and use.

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# Vacancy 07-ECO-ECE-413658-R- Geneva - Economic Affairs Officer, P-4

Alex Korotkov, leader of Geneva work on forest resource assessment, is retiring this summer and candidates are being sought to replace him. The main task is to lead the Section’s work on forest resource assessment, as well as to support work with countries in transition. Full details will be posted on the UN website. A forest monitoring specialist, with sufficient expertise and flexibility to take up this challenging post, and meet the emerging challenges, while maintaining quality of outputs is sought. The deadline for applications is 2 October 2007 and the only path for formal application is the UN website <http://www.un.org>: choose your language, click employment, click vacancies, find Economic Affairs Officer, Geneva, P-4.

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# AgEng2008:International Conference on Agricultural Engineering & Industry Exhibition

The Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering for a Sustainable World conference takes place on 23-25 June 2008 on the island of Crete, at Knossos Royal Village Conference Centre. For detailed information about this conference (topics, committees, venue, registration) visit the conference web site <http://www.ageng2008.com>.

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# Employment opportunity: Technical consultant with TRADA Technology UK

TRADA Technology is a multi-disciplinary consultancy company with a diverse client base in the timber and construction industries. Their technical consultants provide expert services in the use of timber and wood-based products. TRADA require an enthusiastic and self-motivated individual, educated to degree level or equivalent. Ideally, the applicant should have some experience in a science, construction or timber-related discipline. The role requires someone who can respond to technical enquiries and undertake technical investigations. The successful applicant will be able to carry out site inspections in the UK and occasionally overseas. It would be preferable for the successful applicant to hold a clean UK driving licence. Good communication skills are vital, as is the ability to deliver high quality written reports on time. Training will be given where appropriate and there will be a tailor made career development programme for this post. A competitive salary is offered together with private health care insurance and contributory pension scheme after qualifying periods of employment. If you think you meet the requirements to be successful at this role, please e-mail your CV with a covering letter to: recruitment@trada.co.uk. Alternatively, send to: Jeanette Float, Personnel Department, TRADA Technology Ltd, Stocking Lane, Hughenden Valley, High Wycombe, Bucks HP14 4ND. The closing date for applications is Friday, 14 September 2007.

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# EFI posts available

European Forest Institute - EFI - is seeking FLEGT Key Experts for the EU FLEGT Action co-ordinated by EFI. EFI was awarded by the European Commission with the project "Support to the EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) partnership agreements in developing countries" (EC project number: EuropeAid/ENV/2006-124886/TPS). The project is funded by the European Commission, DFID from UK and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland. For the execution of this project EFI is looking for a team of key experts with main competence in:

* Communication and process facilitation,
* Forest governance and timber trade,
* Chain of custody and customs.

More details regarding the specific requirements can be found at <http://www.efi.int/organisation/open-posts/>

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