

# EUFORGEN

## European Forest Genetic Resources Network

### PROJECT TEAM

National co-ordinator – John Fennessy, COFORD\*

Species networks national representatives:

Conifers – Alistair Pfeifer, COFORD

Scattered Broadleaves – Dr Ellen O'Connor, University College Dublin/Teagasc

Stand-forming Broadleaves – John Fennessy, COFORD

Thematic Networks (Forest Management) – Noel Foley, Forest Service

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**COMPLETION DATE:** This is an ongoing programme on gene conservation at European level with Phase III scheduled to end on 31 December 2009.

### OBJECTIVES

In 1994, the European Forest Genetic Resources Programme (EUFORGEN) was established as an implementation mechanism for Resolution S2 (Conservation of forest genetic resources) adopted by the first Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) in 1990. EUFORGEN is co-ordinated by Bioversity International and has participants from over 30 European countries. The programme operates through networks in which policy makers, scientists and managers from participating countries agree work programmes, exchange information and identify needs and priorities to enhance pan-European collaboration on forest genetic resources. In Ireland the programme is serviced by COFORD working in close co-operation with the Forest Service.

### PROGRESS

The EUFORGEN Networks are currently developing common action plans for target tree species to strengthen gene conservation efforts on a pan-European basis. The common action plans aim at sharing of responsibility for forest genetic resources conservation among European countries. During 2007 the EUFGIS (Establishment of a European Information System on Forest Genetic Resources) project, co-ordinated by Bioversity International and co-funded by the European Commission under the Council Regulation (No 870/2004), on genetic resources in agriculture initiated the development

of an information system for dynamic gene conservation units of forest trees in Europe and work in this area is continuing.

### ACTIVITIES PLANNED

- Third Stand-Forming network meeting in Turkey, March–April 2009.
- Phase III of EUFORGEN steering committee meeting in Thessalonica, Greece, June 2009, to discuss outcomes from the current phase and develop future plans for EUFORGEN.

### OUTPUTS

During 2008 the Scattered Broadleaves network meeting (Skipphelle, Norway, 20–22 May) progressed the common action plans and reported on the development of common action plans in a number of member countries. Progress on the work programme for Phase III was evaluated and tasks to be completed before the end of the phase were highlighted.

The Conifers network meeting (Sopron, Hungary, 10–12 June) continued work on the development of common action plans for conifers. Four categories were considered: (1) stand-forming widespread conifers, (2) scattered widespread conifers, (3) rare and threatened conifers and (4) exotic conifers. Development of technical guidelines was reported for a number of new conifer species. The meeting included a seminar on the use of forest genetic resources in Hungary.

The Forest Management network meeting (Louvain, Belgium, November 2008) reported on developments in forest management issues in Europe and how these impacted on forest genetic resources, and provided updates on relevant European programmes. It agreed to finalise working plans for the completion of the programme in Phase III of EUFORGEN with:

- the publication of guidelines on genetic aspects of forest management,
- the summary report to be developed by all networks and published at the conclusion of Phase III will include a chapter on policies and practices related to gene conservation and forest management and a chapter on policy tools to promote the use of high quality forest reproductive material.

It was also agreed that the network would review climate change strategies in European countries with a view to developing a comprehensive set of recommendations for the use of forest genetic resources in Europe.