

Forestry and Wood Update

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# Ministerial Changes

An Taoiseach, Mr Bertie Ahern, TD, announced a new Minister for Agriculture and Food on 29 September. Ms Mary Coughlan, TD, will take over the post from Mr Joe Walsh, TD. Minister Coughlan previously held the position of Minister for Social and Family Affairs. The Minister will be assisted by two Ministers of State, Mr John Browne, TD, and Mr Brendan Smith, TD.

We wish the new Ministers every success in their new roles and extend a sincere thank you to Mr Joe Walsh on his retirement from ministerial office. We wish him well in his new endeavours.

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Pictured at an industry presentation to Minister Joe Walsh, TD are: John Jackson (IFA); John O'Reilly (Greenbelt, representing Self Assessment Companies), Gerry Farrell (IBEC); Minister Walsh, TD; Joe O'Carroll (Vice-chairman, IFIC); George McCarthy (Chairman, IFIC); John Phelan (Woodland, representing Self Assessment Companies); Barbara Maguire (IFA). The presentation was made to Minister Walsh in recognition of his contribution to the forest industry throughout his ministerial career.

# Wood Energy 2004

SEI and COFORD are hosting the annual **Wood Energy** conference at the Rochestown Park Hotel, Cork on October 7-8. **Wood Energy 2004** is aimed at companies interested in installing, producing or investing in wood energy including wood pelleting and wood for heat and power production. The two-day conference sessions cover the following key areas:

* **Wood Biomass Opportunities, Targets and Potential**

National and European wood biomass resource and potential

Employment and investment benefits

Opportunities for agriculture

The role of short rotation crops

* **Wood Heating Markets**

Wood heating market development in Austria

Graingers - Ireland's first wood combined heat and power plant

Irish commercial heating markets

Balcas - Ireland’s first wood pellet production plant

* **Biomass Technology**

Wood pellet production technology and investment

Steam drying for wood biofuels

Grain combustion

* **Exhibition Area and Biomass Marketplace**

Hear from companies offering wood energy services in the Irish market

Wood energy services: *Balcas, Celtic Flames, Clearpower, Green heat/Galtee Fuels, National Biofuels, Natural Power Supply, Powertech Ireland, South Western Services*

Wood pelleting equipment: *Buhler, CPM, Crowleys*

Wood fuel storage: *Darionti/Silobau, Kingspan*

Demonstration/site visits have been arranged. On 6 October there will be a demonstration of a Timberjack Residue Bundler, and on 8 October there will be a visit to the biomass CHP at Graingers Sawmill, Cork

The conference brochure and online booking facility can be found at [www.sei.ie/reio/reioconfshop.html](http://www.sei.ie/reio/reioconfshop.html)

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# Carbon Corner

## Russian ratification moves bring Kyoto closer

Followers of the international climate change policy debate will be aware that Russian ratification of the Kyoto Protocol is critical for it to become legally binding. Russia’s ratification will bring the percentage of 1990 emissions accounted for past the 55% figure and the protocol will enter into force. Parties will then be obliged to keep their aggregate emissions over the 2008-2012 period within the limits stipulated in the protocol. Russia itself will have little or no difficulty meeting its target, as its overall emissions have substantially declined since 1990, mainly as a result of the fall-off in heavy industry activity that followed the collapse of the communist regime.

So the news that steps are now underway in Russia to ratify the protocol must be welcomed by all those committed to tackling climate change. An attitude of ‘what if’ will be replaced by ‘what now’ – what must be done to reduce emissions to comply with Kyoto targets. And to reinforce the growing importance of the climate change process emissions trading will be introduced to the commercial sector in Ireland from the beginning of 2005.

Regrettably, this process will exclude the use of forestry, at least for the time being. There may be an opportunity from 2006 onwards to include forestry projects initiated under the Joint Implementation Mechanism (between two developed countries that have ratified Kyoto) or the Clean Development Mechanism (between a developed country and a developing country that have ratified). Many of the countries of the former communist bloc have sizable forest areas that they may use in Joint Implementation Activities.

The allowances for such activities are set out in the Marrakesh Accords in the Appendix to document FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1. The Russian Federation has by far the largest allowance: 33 million tonnes of carbon per year for forest management. Other countries such as Poland (0.82 million tonnes) and Romania (1.10 million tonnes) also have sizable annual allowances of carbon resulting from forest management. These Parties will be eligible to enter Joint Implementation Activities if they elect forest management as an activity and can demonstrate that they have an inventory system that meets the reporting demands of the UN Framework on Climate Change. Such activities have the potential to generate income for host countries and bring investment to the forest sector.

The outlook for the use of sinks in EU countries – so called domestic sinks – in the EU emissions trading system is not as hopeful. A number of member states have opposed the use of sinks in this manner. They are unsure of the consequences and wish to place the emphasis on reduction of emissions at source. In the Irish situation, however, it is a mechanism that should be further explored. For instance, it could allow emitters to offset a portion of their emissions against sequestration in newly planted forests. This would bring investment into forestry directly from the private sector. The value of carbon on the national scale has already been recognised in government policy and in the recently published Bacon report on Ireland’s forestry development strategy. Work on preparing the case for domestic sink inclusion should begin now in order to be ready for the 2006 review.

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# COFORD Working Visits Programme

The COFORD working visit programme aims to address specific knowledge gaps in areas central to forest industry development in Ireland. The initiative provides for both either inward and outward working visits with a strong emphasis on disseminating knowledge gleaned through appropriate channels. Eight priority areas are identified under this programme. Further details and applications forms are available at: <http://www.coford.ie/funding/00to06.html>.

We are please to announce the award of two new grants under this scheme:

WIT to host Mr Pieter Kofman - Wood Energy Supply Chains

The objective of this working visit is to allow Mr Pieter Kofman, who has over 20 years experience researching forest harvesting for wood energy, to share his experience with the Irish wood energy sector. Through individual and group meetings, Pieter will identify opportunities for the development of wood energy supply strategies in Ireland. Key work programme elements include meeting all the main industry and research actors involved in wood energy, identifying problems and potentials in harvesting wood for energy in Ireland and carrying out a literature review of relevant Irish and international work. The main deliverable will be a report on recommendations for developing suitable wood energy harvesting systems in Ireland. Pieter will also organise a major demonstration of whole tree chipping technology involving the purpose-made Silvatec chipper. Further details of this event will follow in next month's newsletter.

Anyone interested in contacting Pieter Kofman during his working visit should email Tom Kent at WIT ([TKENT@wit.ie](mailto:TKENT@wit.ie)).

GMIT staff to be hosted by CSIRO European Lab - Integrated Pest Management

The purpose of this visit is to study mass rearing techniques for parasitoids in biological control programmes. Parasitoids are a biological control agent against pine weevil, the main insect pest of Irish forests. Dr Patrick Walsh and Ms Martine Blaix from the Forest Health and Protection Group at GMIT will be hosted by the CSIRO European laboratory at Baillarguet. New laboratories of the USDA and INRA at Baillarguet have established the complex as the foremost international grouping engaged in biological control.

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# COFORD Seminar Grants Programme

This is a programme whereby COFORD offers financial support to organisations hosting forestry related events that are in line with COFORD's overall objectives. Two events are currently being supported under this programme:

IFA Farm Forestry Conference - Forward Thinking Forestry: This event will take place at the Hodson Bay Hotel in Athlone on Friday, 12 November. The provisional programme of speakers includes Paul Kellet (SEI), a speaker from the European Commission, Brendan Friel (Balcas), John O'Reilly (Greenbelt) and Dr Michael Carey. For further information contact Barbara Maguire, IFA ([barbaramaguire@ifa.ie](mailto:barbaramaguire@ifa.ie)).

FITG Haulage of Roundwood - Issues and Best Practice: This event will take place at the Hotel Montague near Portlaoise on 3 November. The Code of Practice for the transportation of roundwood will be officially launched at this event. The seminar will explain the importance and relevance of the Code of Practice along the forest industry chain and will provide a platform for future collaborative actions.

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# Advances in the drying of wood

**COST Action E15 - Advances in the Drying of Wood** has recently held its final meeting. The main objective of this action was to improve understanding of the fundamentals of wood drying and to further develop industrial application of all levels of wood drying research. Five major conferences were held as well as other meetings including one in Limerick, with over 150 papers published. Many of these are on topics which are directly relevant to Irish industry. These are all available on the web at [www.vtt.fi/rte/ts/coste15/indexe.html](http://www.vtt.fi/rte/ts/coste15/indexe.html)

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# Bacon Report

The Bacon report A ***Review and Appraisal of Ireland’s Forestry Development Strategy*** was launched by Mr Joe Walsh, TD, Minister for Agriculture and Food, on 23 September 2004 and can be downloaded from the Department of Agriculture and Food website at <http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/publicat/publications2004/forestryfinalrep.pdf>

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# Changes at the Wood Technology Centre

Michael Bourke has been appointed Project Manager of the Centre, based in the Schrodinger Building at the University of Limerick. Over the last three years he has worked on a number of COFORD-funded projects, including ***Roadfence*** and ***Minor Species***. He has contributed papers to the European COST action E15 on **Advances In Wood Drying** and is currently a member of the management committee and working groups of COST E29 **Innovative Timber and Composite Elements/Components for Buildings**. In addition, the current director, Sean Moloney, is retiring from his academic position within the university and will take up a consultancy post with the WTC. Donal Canty, a lecturer in wood technology at UL, who formerly worked with the centre, will act as a co-director with Sean Moloney. Denis O Toole, an honours graduate of the B.Tech. materials and construction technology programme, joins as a technician in product development and processing. Denis has extensive related industrial experience. Bob Davis of NSAI has been appointed as a member of the WTC advisory board.

The role of the centre is to *promote, create and commercialise value added opportunities for Irish timber*. The centre was originally established in 1992 and is based at a 1,000 square metre facility within the university. Services to the wood industry include: technical support, training, in-house development of applications for Irish timber and facilitating communication between firms. They are currently engaged on a number of product development projects with key timber processing companies.

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# Forest Research and Development in Ireland 2004 – Underpinning Industry Development

This event was held on 20 and 21 September 2004 at the Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co Offaly, as part of COFORD’s information dissemination programme. Marcus Breathnach, Forfás, gave an overview of ***ERA and Framework Programmes - Trends and Opportunities***, and Dr Yves Birot, Chairman COST FFPTC, spoke about the ***COST Forests and Forestry Products Domain - Opportunities for European Networking***. These keynote addresses were followed by a presentation on COFORD’s knowledge transfer programme by Lauren MacLennan, COFORD. The remainder of the two days showcased COFORD-funded research, with a programme of presentations on various COFORD projects. In addition, there was a poster session, where researchers and industry representatives could engage informally and discuss the projects.

Due to the success of this event, it will become a feature of COFORD’s calendar, and the next R&D conference is planned for May 2006. PowerPoint presentations from this conference will be made available on the COFORD website in the coming weeks.

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# Conference on Forest Mammal Management

COFORD will be hosting a conference on forest mammals on 26 November, at the Tullamore Court Hotel. The objectives of this conference will be to outline the best management practice for deer and grey squirrel in Ireland, and to discuss policy and practice in relation to deer management and selection of broadleaves in the face of the grey squirrel threat. COFORD has invited a number of experts to make presentations at the event. In addition to these presentations, there will be two panel discussions dealing with the questions: *Putting deer management policies and practices in place – how, by who and when?* and *Do we need to change species selection policies away from sycamore and other vulnerable species?*

Details will be made available via the COFORD Newsletter and the website [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie) as they are finalised. You may indicate your interest in attending by contacting COFORD – tel 01-2130725 or email [info@coford.ie](mailto:info@coford.ie)

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# Hardwood Sales Catalogue

COFORD will be publishing a free catalogue for advertising hardwood stands and/or logs in an attempt to increase growers’ knowledge of what hardwood merchants require in terms of quality, presentation, species and volumes. The catalogue will feature both ‘for sale’ and ‘wanted’ sections and aims to bring producers and buyers together in a more coherent manner. The catalogue will be produced periodically and while the objective of this exercise is to create a more active market for hardwood timber, COFORD will not be involved in the sales transaction - it will merely bring growers and hardwood users together.

This COFORD catalogue, which will be called ‘*Hardwood Matters*’, will be issued to a wide audience including timber merchants, hardwood sawmills, timber growers and forestry professional.

A standard form must be completed by all those wishing to advertise their hardwoods. This form can be downloaded at [www.coford.ie/hardwoodmatters/default.html](http://www.coford.ie/hardwoodmatters/default.html) or can be obtained from the COFORD office by calling 01-2130725.

We encourage all growers and buyers to use this catalogue to build up a greater forum for discussing hardwood matters! Any comments on this initiative should be addressed to John Fennessy at the COFORD office, tel: 01-2130725 or email [john.fennessy@coford.ie](mailto:john.fennessy@coford.ie).

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# RDS 2004 Irish Foresty Awards

The Royal Dublin Society Irish Forestry Awards recognise and reward forest owners who are employing the basic principles of sustainable forest management on their properties: sound commercial management; environmental protection, biodiversity; and social amenity. They promote the forestry industry of Ireland and the challenges it is facing and measures it is undertaking to provide for commercial timber production while maintaining a rich ecosystem to pass onto future generations.

There are two categories in the Awards – farm forestry and biodiverse forests/woodlands.

**1. Farm Forestry:** To promote excellence in forestry wood production for commercial use.

Farmers and co-operatives using sound silvicultural management on their farms are encouraged to enter this category. While the focus of this category is on the management of the area for wood production, judges will also take into account additional innovations, and ecological and social measures employed in the area for example, wildlife conservation or enhancing biodiversity.

**2. Bio-Diverse Forests/Woodlands:** To encourage diverse forest habitats for ecological benefit.

Individuals and organisations which are expanding or developing existing or new forest habitats through natural and environmentally sensitive methods are encouraged to enter this category. Judges will take into account the planning and management of the area, ecological awareness, methods (i.e. regeneration, recopsing), control of grazers and invasive species, and sensitive felling and thinning.

Entries close on 18 October and the award ceremony will take place on 9 December.

The Awards are organised by the RDS and are sponsored by the Forest Service – Department of Agriculture & Food under the National Development Plan 2000 – 2006.

Contact Patrick McDermott, tel: 01-6680866. Further information can be found at <http://www.rds.ie/foundation/agriculture/forestry.htm>

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# Four new biomass projects to be funded by Interreg

A recent call for projects to be funded under Interreg III has led to the approval of eight renewable energy projects - four relate to wood biomass. The successful projects, to which about €5 million has been allocated, are:

1. Action Renewables/SEI Installer Academy

2. DARD - Biomass

3. Balcas - Wood Pellet Boilers

4. Craigavon Borough Council - Biomass

5. Strangford Wildfowlers -Hydro

6. Belfast Energy Agency/SEI - Biomass

7. Sion Mills - Ground Source Heat Pump

8. John McCambridge - Hydro

The Balcas project involves a network of wood pellet installations. This €88,000 project will see the installation of a number of pellets stoves and boilers to demonstrate the environmental and economic benefits of pellet heating equipment. The installations will comprise of a number of different applications, equipment, installers, and locations. The installations are in the domestic sector and large buildings including one charity and one local authority. The counties where the installations are to be installed are: Antrim, Louth, Sligo, Fermanagh, Tyrone, Donegal and Cavan.

Wood pellets are carbon neutral and, if being used to replace electricity as an energy source, one tonne of pellets will mean a reduction of 2.5 tonnes in carbon emissions (Source: SAP2001). Ireland has an indigenous supply of these pellets but the industry is embryonic. This project will help to foster these indigenous energy supplies by priming the market and providing case studies to raise awareness.

Best practice will be demonstrated by using only Clear Skies approved installers and equipment. The project is innovative as pellet installations have not yet taken place at a market-sustainable rate.

 Balcas pellet production (due to begin in November 2004) will be the largest producer in Ireland and the UK and is located in Enniskillen. The development of pellets as a fuel in the northwest is environmentally and economically preferable as the cost savings and carbon savings are maximised due to reduced transport distance. Balcas’ initial capacity of pellet production is 50,000 tonnes, which is sufficient to heat 10,000 homes. The potential for job creation in the Interreg region is considerable.

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# Bioenergy in Wood Industry 2005 - call for papers

This conference will be held from 12 to 15 September 2005 in connection with the International Bioenergy and Wood Exhibition in Jyväskylä, Finland. The conference will focus on the factors affecting the future of the bioenergy opportunities in fuel production, heating and power production in wood industry. The topics are timber felling wood residues as fuel, industrial by-products as biofuel, by-product refining to pellets and their use for heating and power production in the wood industry, as well as emission trading. Technical excursions will be held after the conference.

Papers are invited on the following topics:

*Strategies, Politics, Legislation Tools and Implementation Issues*: possibilities to support the EU-targets, Kyoto Protocol, national targets and free energy markets, security of energy supply

*Bioenergy Markets and Business*: international bioenergy markets, financial instruments, green certificates and emission trading, price competitiveness, management systems

*Fuel Production in Sawlog Production*: production, pre-treatment, procurement, transport and logistics

*Wood Industry Fuel*: potentials, quantities, measurements methods, qualities and properties

*By-product Refining*: Pellets, briquettes and pyrolysis oil etc. production and use

*Combustion and Boiler Systems*: technologies and systems for wood industries

*Combined Heat and Power Production (CHP)*: powerplants, small scale technologies and systems for CHP production

*Environmental Technologies*: flue gas cleaning, ash handling and recycling, sustainable development

For more information, click on [www.finbioenergy.fi/bioenergy2005](http://www.finbioenergy.fi/bioenergy2005)

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