

Forestry and Wood Update

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# Forest Energy 2006 Conference

The Forest Energy 2006 programme will conclude with a conference on 12 December 2006, at the Tullamore Court Hotel, Co Offaly. The day will focus on the core findings of the programme with an overview of Forest Energy 2006, thinning and chipping systems and their productivity and costs, chip quality, logistics and costs of transportation. Presentations will also be made on roading grants and related issues. Further information will be available in the next issue, with updates posted on [www.coford.ie](http://www.coford.ie) and [www.woodenergy.ie](http://www.woodenergy.ie). If you would like to reserve a place at this event, please email info@coford.ie or phone 01-2130725.

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# Carbon Corner

## What’s wrong with wood biomass?

Government targets for renewables to account for 30% of total energy production by 2020 have been endorsed in the Government’s Energy Green Paper Green Paper, launched at the weekend – see [www.dcmnr.gov.ie/Energy/Energy+Planning+Division/Energy+Green+Paper.htm](http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/Energy/Energy%2BPlanning%2BDivision/Energy%2BGreen%2BPaper.htm).

There are positive statements about expanding the use of wood biomass in the paper, including cofiring with peat. Action on this and other issues is, of course, another matter. For, despite well meaning words and ambitious targets, the use of wood biomass in the power generation sector is not a happy story. Last week the results of the government’s Renewable Energy Feed In Tariff (REFIT) programme were announced, with 55 potential new renewable powered electricity generating plants getting the green light. Just one wood biomass project will be receiving support, with the likelihood that most of its furnish will be offcuts from joinery manufacture. What is wrong with wood biomass is that the REFIT price is clearly insufficient to mobilise capital investment in the sector.

Policy to diversify power generation to renewables needs to be based on a core principle of a diversified portfolio of supply, including wind, wave, solar and wood biomass. The only fully dispatchable (available on demand) energy source is wood biomass. Wind, without a corresponding growth in wood biomass, is effectively supported by dispatchable fossil fuel power. Policies developed as a result of the Green Paper should take on board this core idea, otherwise an unbalanced portfolio of power generation will develop, with wind and fossil fuel as its main components.

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# COST E44 Workshop

The COST Action 44 – Wood Processing Strategy – workshop on ***Secure resource supply for the European wood industry*** will take place on 23-24 October 2006 at Enterprise Ireland, Glasnevin, Dublin. The programme includes presentations on the COST Actions; European Forestry Strategy; Forecast scenarios for timber resources in Ireland; Biomass Action Plan; Threats facing the wood panel industry; Sawmill/Biomass CHP case study; Developing woodfuel for heating in Ireland; FP7 - EU Seventh Framework Programme; Roadmap 2010 for the European Woodworking Industries; Eforwood Project Update; Forest Technology Platform; SSA – Industry Needs & Research Capability. For further information, contact Valez Picardo Construction & Timber Markets,
Enterprise Ireland, Glasnevin, DUBLIN 9.Email: valez.picardo@enterprise-ireland.com

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# COST E37 Training course

This training course will take place on 7 and 8 November 2006 at SP, Borås Sweden. It will deal with evaluation of field tests and identification of microbial decay using light microscopy. The aim of the course is to give a broader knowledge about wood degrading micro-organism in various environments and how to identify the decay type by light microscopy. For further information, contact charlotte.bjordal@sp.se

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# COFORD/InnovaWood launch FP7 information service

COFORD and InnovaWood have joined up to provide a service aimed at increasing awareness among Irish forest sector companies and researchers of R&D funding opportunities under the EC’s Seventh Framework Research, Technological Development and Innovation (RTDI) Programme. Regular updates will be provided at the [FP7 link on the COFORD website](http://www.coford.ie/iopen24/pub/pub/FP7/FP7-Aug06.pdf). Those wishing to make specific enquiries on aspects of FP7 should call InnovaWood at 01 676 3181.

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# Fergal Mulloy is awarded EFI Fellowship

At the European Forest Institute’s annual conference on 14 September, the Board unanimously agreed to award Fergal Mulloy the fellowship of EFI for his life-time work on European forest research. Fergal was the founding Director of COFORD and since retiring has continued to participate actively in forest research and development activities. Congratulations to Fergal on this well deserved recognition.

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# Energy research awards launched

Noel Dempsey T.D., the Minister for Communications, Marine & Natural Resources, has launched the Charles Parsons Energy Research Awards at the Charles Parsons Building in Trinity College Dublin. The research awards, aimed at stimulating and developing Irish energy research, will provide funding for research groups who wish to further develop their research groups and undertake projects in priority Energy areas.

"Energy research is a key component of the Government Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation. Our aim is to ensure that Ireland can develop sustainable sources of energy, increase our energy efficiency and improve the security of our energy supply and cutting edge research in the energy area will play a key role in acheiving this," said Minister Dempsey.

The Initiative announced today will provide funding for full time researchers, post graduate students who wish to undertake research leading to a PhD and undergraduate students who will be given the opportunity of working as part of a research group during their holidays, so that they can better appreciate what is involved in research.

Minister Dempsey said "My aim is provide researchers with the necessary funding to allow them to achieve significant results. This is an innovative scheme which provides up to seven years funding for the best researchers thus also making it attractive to international researchers. It is also specifically aimed at attracting more engineers into energy research ... It will generate new knowledge and increase the number of skilled individuals required to support our energy policies. These policies will be articulated in more detail in the Energy Green Paper ... It is fitting that the initiative is named after Charles Parsons (1854-1931), who in 1884 invented the steam turbine, which made affordable electricity readily available. He was raised and educated in Birr Co Offaly, the son of the Earl of Ross and the building we are in today is named after his legacy".

The awards will be advertised in the national press and research groups who apply will be evaluated by an international panel of researchers. The first awards will be made before the end of the year.

Source: DCMNR press release

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# Forest Engineering Conference

FERIC, the Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada, has announced the 3rd Forest Engineering Conference to be held on 1-4 October 2007, in Mont-Tremblant, Canada. This major international event is your chance focusses on the latest developments in forest engineering from around the world. Held every four years, this event is organized in cooperation with [COFE](http://www.cofe.org), the Council of Forest Engineering, and [IUFRO](http://www.iufro.org/science/divisions/division-3/), the International Union of Forest Research Organizations. All meeting information can be found at [www.feric.ca/FEC2007](http://www.feric.ca/FEC2007)

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# Competition Authority to investigate Coillte's acquisition of Weyerhaeuser Europe Limited

The Competition Authority has announced that it has decided to carry out a full (Phase 2) investigation in relation to the proposed acquisition by Coillte Teoranta of Weyerhaeuser Europe Limited. Both parties are involved in the manufacture of wood products in the State. This proposed acquisition has not been required to be notified in any other jurisdiction.

The Competition Authority received notification of the proposed acquisition on 22nd August 2006. The Competition Authority is required under the Mergers and Acquisitions section of the Competition Act 2002 to determine whether the result of the proposed acquisition will “substantially lessen competition” in markets for goods or services in the State.

After a preliminary investigation (Phase 1), the Competition Authority has been unable to conclude without further investigation that the transaction will not substantially lessen competition. The Competition Authority has until Thursday 22nd December 2006 to make a final determination on the transaction (the Competition Authority may conclude its investigation in advance of this date). The investigation of the proposed acquisition will examine the effect on competition across a range of vertically related markets in the sector.

Interested parties are invited to make written or oral submissions, which must be made no later than 5.00pm on Thursday 12th October 2006. Submissions should be marked “M/06/057 – Coillte / Weyerhaeuser”, and should be addressed to Barry O’ Donnell, C/o Mergers Division, the Competition Authority, Parnell House, 14 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 or sent by e-mail to bod@tca.ie

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# Wood and biofibre plastic composites

The first call for papers for the 9th international conference on wood and biofibre plastic composites has been announced. This event will take place from 21 to 23 May 2007 at Madison, Wisconsin, USA, and is hosted by the USDA Forest Service, Forest Products Laboraroty and Forest Products Society. The conference will explore the nature, structure, performance, markets and issues concerning wood and biofibre plastic composites. For further information, email conferences@forestprod.org or visit [www.forestprod.org](http://www.forestprod.org)

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# European network of forest entrepreneurs newsletter

ENFE – the European network of forest entrepreneurs – launched its first email newsletter in March 2006. The ENFE is the research organisation for the forestry contracting sector in Europe, and is involved in a number of projects across europe designed to benefit the contractor sector. The Irish Forestry Contractors Association is a member of ENFE and Donal Fitzpatrick is a member of the ENFE Board. For further information visit [www.enfe.net](http://www.enfe.net).

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# Complimentary copies of Tree Planters’ Notes

The goal of Tree Planters’ Notes is to provide an outlet for information and research results that relate to the production and outplanting of reforestation and conservation plant material. The USDA Forest Service has generously offered complimentary copies of this useful publication, for the next year. If you are interested, email nurseries2@aol.com. Electronic versions of current and past Tree Planters Notes are available at [www.rngr.net/Publications/tpn](http://www.rngr.net/Publications/tpn)

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# USDA Forest Service creates Northern Research Station

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service recently announced the creation of the Northern Research Station located at Newtown Square in Pennsylvania. Speaking at the launch, the Chief of the Forest Service, Dale Bosworth, said “This research station brings together the scientific and administrative work currently being carried out by the former North Central and North-eastern Research Stations”. The new station will allow the Forest Service to use its finite resources more wisely to meet the scientific needs of a wide range of customers throughout the 20 state region and benefits will include an integrated, cohesive landscape scale research programme and fewer work redundancies, resulting in a better utilised work force.

Deputy Chief for Research, Ann Bartuska, stated that the creation of a Northern Research Station will strengthen the Forest Service’s research and technology transfer programme, improve the agency’s overall organisation efficiency and improve the Stations capacity as a partner in research collaboration and regional partnerships. Michael T. Rains is Director for the Station and he previously served as the Director for the North-eastern Research Station.

The Northern Research Station is part of the research and development sections of the USDA Forest Service and works at the forefront of science to improve the health and use of the nation’s forests and grasslands. Research has been part of the Forest Service mission since its inception in 1905.

For further information: [www.fs.fed.us/news/subscription](http://www.fs.fed.us/news/subscription)

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# Dr Peter Savill retires from Oxford Forestry Institute

A celebration of British Forestry was held at the Northmoor Trust in Little Wittenham on Saturday 30 September, hosted by Sir Martin Wood of the Northmoor Trust. The special occasion was the retirement of Dr Peter Savill. Peter is well known and has very many friends in Irish forestry circles, as he worked for the Northern Ireland Forest Service before moving to the Oxford Forestry Institute. Peter was also active in the Society of Irish Foresters. From his many forestry friends and colleagues in Ireland, we send Peter our very best wishes in his retirement.

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# Iceland hosts the EUFORGEN Conifers Network Meeting

The sixth EUFORGEN Conifers Network meeting took place in Reykjavik from 7 to 9 September.

Iceland is the least forested country in Europe with about 0.3% of the land area under forest, it has few native broadleaf species, apart from downy birch, rowan, and aspen, while common juniper is the only native conifer.

Afforestation started in Iceland in 1899 with experimentation on the growth of different species. In 1907 a forest/soil conservation law was introduced, with the main emphasis on the management of native woodlands. Recent years have however seen the growth of afforestation - The Regional Afforestation Projects Act 1999 setting a target of increasing the forest cover to 5% of the total land area by 2040. Currently, the most widely planted species are Siberian larch (33.7%), birch (26.4%), lodgepole pine (14.9%) and Sitka spruce (14.9%).

J. Koskela, EUFORGEN Co-ordinator, provided updates on the implementation of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute’s (IPGRI) new strategy, recent developments in the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests for Europe (MCPFE) process, and various other EUFORGEN activities.

The main part of the programme was a discussion paper on gene conservation units and the development of common action plans for European conifers. The meeting also discussed a draft list of priority conifer species in the context of the common action plans. It was decided to establish four working groups to develop proposals for the common action plans:

* Stand forming/widespread conifer species (*Picea abies, Pinus halepensis/brutia*)
* Scattered but widespread conifers (*Taxus baccata*)
* Rare and threatened species (*Pinus nigra* ecotypes and Mediterranean *Abies* spp.)
* Exotic conifers (*Picea sitchensis, Pseudotsuga menziesii*)

Other new initiatives discussed included an update on EVOLTREE (Evolution of Trees as drivers of terrestrial biodiversity) – a 6th FP project. It is a consortium of 25 partners from 15 European countries and is co-ordinated by Dr Antoine Kramer, INRA, France. Dr Armin Konig of Germany presented an update on the TREEBREEDEX project which is also funded by the EC. It brings together a total of 27 participating institutes and builds on the work of European forest tree breeders and their collections of selected trees and their supporting networks. This project will focus on:

* Creating a virtual tree breeding centre.
* Assessing the geographical structure of variation of European tree species.
* Securing the long-term management of forest genetic resources.
* Improving breeding strategies, methodologies and systems.
* Developing methods to optimise mass production and deployment of improved varieties in Europe’s forests.

J. Koskela also reported to the meeting on the outcomes of the IPGRI/IUFRO workshop in Paris on 15-16 March 2006 on *Climate change and forest genetic diversity: implications for sustainable forest management in Europe*. The workshop discussed the role of forest genetic diversity in improving the adaptability of forests to climate change. A full summary report of the workshop is available on the EUFORGEN website at [www.euforgen.org](http://www.euforgen.org)

The meeting concluded with a field visit to the Headquarters of the Icelandic Forest Research and to Haukadalur Forest.

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# Working Group on Edible Forest Fungi

The first meeting of the Edible Forest Fungi group was held in early May. Since then the group has held a number of meetings and progress is being made on a number of fronts. Presently a number of the members are co-operating with Dr Tom Harrington, University of Limerick, who is acting as co-ordinator on compiling information and views on the evaluation of wild edible fungal production in selected Irish forest sites. Other issues being addressed include publicity/information on Irish woodland fungi. For further information on the working group on Edible Forest Fungi email john.fennessy@coford.ie

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# Mushroom Information Workshop and Wild Mushroom Hunt at Avondale on 7 October

Have you ever stalked a panther, or looked an angel of death in the face, or been deceived by an amethyst? Would you like to join in one of the most dangerous sports in Europe and then eat your prey? Yes - it is that time of year again: time to take to the woods, sniff the air and forage for wild mushrooms. The figure you see lumbering out of the autumnal mists is Big Bill on his quest to find the elusive cep. He looks forward to meeting veteran fungi foragers again and to welcoming new recruits to this fascinating past-time. But beware, 99% of Irish people avoid eating wild mushrooms due to the justifiable fear of serious/fatal poisoning. The other 1% has enough knowledge to be able to differentiate the good eaters from the dangerously poisonous toadstools. The rewards for these are great as few tastes compare with freshly picked ceps. If you would like to acquire this knowledge and experience then you should not miss the opportunity to take part in Big Bill’s Wild Mushroom Hunt, in partnership with Avondale House, Rathdrum, Co Wicklow, on Saturday 7 October 2006.

Programme:

* Meet at Avondale House. Tea and coffee provided
* Introduction to mushroom collecting- Bill O’Dea
* Pick and identify mushrooms
* Lunch with wine provided
* After lunch continue to collect mushrooms. Mushroom identification workshop.
* Guided tour of Avondale House optional.

Avondale provides a unique environment for mushrooms due to the great variation of tree types. In previous hunts more than 120 different mushrooms/toadstools were identified. The cost for this event is €80 per person. Good walking shoes or boots are necessary and a basket or canvas bag, also some light rain gear. If you have a mushroom identification book bring it along but there will be reference books available to consult. We also have a small number of mushroom knives for sale (€20). For further information or for bookings phone at 0404-46111 or consult [www.mushroomstuff.com](http://www.mushroomstuff.com/)

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