

THE IRISH FORESTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF IRISH FORESTERS



Produced by the Society of Irish Foresters, The Enterprise Centre, Ballintogher, Co. Sligo. Tel: 071 64434, Fax: 071 34904 email: sif@eircom.net
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Minister Byrne Secures Premia Backdates

The news announced at the beginning of August by Hugh Byrne, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources that the Government is proposing to provide, by way of Exchequer funding, for the wider application of the forestry premium increases, is certainly good news.

This follows a prolonged period of uncertainty in the forestry sector in which virtually all representative organisations, including the Society of Irish Foresters, had urged the government to recognise the need for parity in premium levels for those 10,500 farmers who planted pre-2000. The Minister is to be congratulated on convincing his government colleagues of the necessity of this action and one hopes that the official approval by the European Commission will be received as required by September, in advance of the next planting season.

The Society of Irish Foresters took an early and strong stance on this issue when, at our AGM in 2000, a motion was passed calling on the Minister to continue the established practice of backdating premia increases in order that existing forestry participants were not left behind by the system. This was based on the fact that in 1997, when premia were last increased, participants since 1994 benefited.

As the Minister said in his statement at the launch of the forestry measures under the National Development Plan 2000-2006 in Co. Roscommon, this is a strong and positive development in terms of future investment in the forestry sector. Those farmers who have been thinking about planting land can now do so with a far greater degree of confidence that they will not be left behind and forgotten about in the future. One hopes that the increase will apply to all private forestry owners, especially the real pioneers who planted in the 1980's and have not benefited from premia in the way that farmers have in recent years. The Minister is encouraged to "go the extra mile" to ensure that the package offered is absolutely complete.

There is more good news on the way with the pending launch of the Neighbourwood Scheme and the Native Woodland Scheme and the significant financial resources being committed with them. These schemes will provide a greater degree of balance within the forestry sector by engaging those with a special interest in the social and heritage values of woodland.

For us as forest managers, they represent a challenge and opportunity for the development of new and innovative skills, both in silviculture and in the way in which we interact with and involve the communities in which we live and work. This must be recognised by the Forest Service, as it is important that the schemes' objectives are practically achievable by forest managers who will be responsible for operations on the ground. There is almost certainly a requirement for training and demonstration if these schemes are to reach their full potential.

The commencement of the Neighbourwood Scheme and the Native Woodland Scheme will place further strain on existing technical and administrative staff in the Forest Service. New schemes will

require additional personnel to administer them, particularly the Neighbourwood and Native Woodlands Schemes, which will require specialist and multi-disciplinary knowledge.

Irish Foresters Form Part of Government Climate Change Team at Bonn Talks

Diarmuid McAree, Chief Inspector in the Forest Service and Eugene Hendrick, Director of COFORD, represented Irish forestry as part of the Department of Environment team at the recent talks on Climate Change in Bonn. They assisted the Irish team in aspects of the talks relating to forestry such as carbon sinks and afforestation. Forestry is generally recognised as being a positive element of the Irish National Climate Change Strategy as published by the Department of the Environment in October 2000.



Diarmuid McAree, Chief Inspector, Forest Service and Eugene Hendrick, Director, COFORD, at the recent Climate Change negotiations in Bonn, Germany.

News from the Office

Both the Technical Director (Tony Mannion) and Administrator (Paula Lahiff) took up duty in our Ballintogher office as of May 21st, 2001. Early work included fitting out the offices with office equipment and furnishings, and transferring files from the Drumcondra office.

A new computerised accounting package has been purchased and installed by the SIF office. All members will have received a statement of their account over the summer and those with arrears are requested to settle them immediately. Anyone with a query in relation to their statement should address it to Paula Lahiff in the SIF office. Those who do not settle their account, or at least discuss their situation with the SIF, will shortly be struck off the membership register of the Society. For technical members this will mean losing the designation MSIF.

Members who have changed address or are changing address are reminded to contact Paula Lahiff in the Ballintogher office so that the SIF membership database can be updated.

The Technical Director has been actively involved in an Irish Forest Industry Chain (IFIC) sub-group liaising with the Forest Service on the proposed new strategic management and environmental procedures.

There have been various new appointments and retirements from the six Management Boards in the SIF. A full list of the Management Boards for 2001 / 2002 is as follows:

Finance: Tim O'Regan (Convenor), Daragh Little, Seán Lenihan, Gerard Murphy, Aeneas Higgins.

Education: Leonard Gallagher (Convenor), John Brosnan, Pacelli Breathnach, Tom Kent, Diarmuid McAree, Michael Hoban.

Editorial: Eugene Hendrick (Convenor), Kevin Collins, Jack Durand, Padraic Joyce, Gerhard Gallagher.

Membership Services: John McLoughlin (Convenor), Darryl Ridge, Aidan Maguire, Brigid Flynn, Barbara Maguire, Mick O'Brien.

Public Relations: Patrick Purser (Convenor), Donal Magner, Michael Bulfin, Donal Keegan, George McCarthy.

Professional Standards: Tim Crowley (Convenor), Tim O'Brien, Seán McNamara, Tom Houlihan, Kevin Hutchinson.

Recent meetings attended by the Technical Director include:

- The Irish Forest Industry Chain (IFIC) - Dublin
- ICOS - Sligo
- SIF Field Day - Lismore
- SIF Management Meeting - Dublin
- Forest Industry Forum - Portlaoise
- Consultants Regional Group - Portlaoise
- Forest Stewardship Council Contact - Tullamore
- IFIC / Minister Hugh Byrne - Dublin
- Forest Service - Johnstown Castle
- Irish Forest Certification Initiative (IFCI) - Tullamore

SIF Applies For Membership of the Union of European Foresters

The Society of Irish Foresters has applied for membership of the Union of European Foresters (UEF). The UEF is a federation of professional foresters' organisations from several European countries. It was founded in 1955 in Berlin and there are now 19 associations that have joined as members from 16 countries (Bulgaria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom). In total, the UEF represents some 60,000 foresters of all ranks working for different forest owners (state, community, private).

The aims of the UEF are:

- to contribute in realising the essential role of forests in the balance of nature and the protection of the environment as well as their important economic and social roles.
- to defend and promote, within the European framework, the professional, ethical, and material interests of the associations and their members to take any favourable opportunity to improve the position of foresters within Europe.

The UEF is run by a presidency, consisting of a president, 3 vice-presidents, a secretary, an assistant secretary and a treasurer. The presidency forms part of the Governing Council, the UEF's supreme authority, which is further composed of one representative of each member-association. A UEF-congress is held every three

years. The Presidency and the Governing Council meet in between. The UEF have an office in Brussels from which member organisations are circulated regularly with relevant information.

Forestry Ireland Database now Online

The bibliography of Irish Forestry is now available online. It is a unique database that includes forestry and forest products and literature published in Ireland in the 20th century.

With funding from COFORD, the first edition of this database was completed using in-Magic DB Textworks software and published in 1998 in the form of a CD-ROM under the title FIR CD. Further funding from COFORD in 1998 enabled the updating of this database to include material written on Irish forestry between 1996 and 1999. This database is now available online as a searchable database.

Material selection for inclusion in the database was obtained from journals, technical reports, theses, conference proceedings and other published and unpublished information contained in libraries and research centres throughout the country.

The number of records held in the database now stands at 1800, an increase of 300 records from the first edition. The format of the records remains the same, each containing an abstract, publishing details, location of document and, where possible, address of principal author.

Users can search the database by entering data into the following fields - author, title, year, keyword and abstract. The database is hosted on the Coillte website at www.coillte.ie/products_and_services/database.htm. A link to the database is also available from the COFORD web site.

WOODSPEC

The Wood Marketing Federation has published a comprehensive new guide on wood design and specification. WOODSPEC: A Guide to Designing and Specifying Timber in Ireland was launched in the Visitor Centre, National Botanic Gardens, Dublin on Wednesday June 27th by Mr. Hugh Byrne TD, Minister of State at the Department of Marine and Natural Resources.

The Guide is the first of its kind to be published in Ireland and "reflects an increasing confidence in wood usage and design in Ireland" said Mr Ciaran O'Connor, award winning architect and chief technical advisor to the WOODSPEC project team. Mr. O'Connor, who is Senior Architect with OPW, said "the guide recognises wood as a renewable and ecologically friendly resource awaiting architectural and engineering development and it will provide users with comprehensive information to ensure the efficient production of precise specification in relation to the appropriate use of timber".

Minister Byrne said he was delighted that his Department had supported and part-funded the project, because it represented an important step in promoting wood usage in Ireland. He congratulated the project team and hoped that architects and engineers would respond positively to the guide and to using timber creatively in many applications.

The guide is the result of four years work by an editorial, design and management team comprising of architects, engineers, wood scientists, foresters, designers, builders and a range of specialists including processors, wood treatment experts and academics. Donal Magner, Project Manager, said the result illustrates the versatility of wood and will provide the user with large scope for architectural and engineering expression.

Although WOODSPEC is designed with the specialist in mind, its clear and accessible format makes it adaptable to a wide audience.

It is the first guide of its kind in Ireland to highlight designing, detailing and specifying timber. "It provides a challenge for architects, engineers, contractors and specifiers to use wood creatively and in turn WOODSPEC will play a major role in creating a wood culture in Ireland" said Mr Magner. Leonard Gallagher, Editorial Co-ordinator said that WOODSPEC stresses the importance of good practice in the use of timber. The guide will help increase awareness and usage of timber, especially Irish timber. WOODSPEC has six parts including an introduction on correct timber usage, followed by sections on design practice, detailed drawings, specifications and also a reference section.

COFORD was responsible for the production of the CD-ROM and the development of the website. The website is located at <http://www.coford.ie/woodspeg>. Since the launch of the CD-ROM and website COFORD have received a lot of very positive feedback. To further explain the objectives and technical content of this publication, a series of regional workshops will be arranged during October. These workshops will be targeted at architects, engineers and other specifiers of timber.

COFORD are also creating a feedback mechanism to take on board suggestions from the target audience on how to further develop the functionality of the website. The email address woodspeg@coford.ie will be available shortly for this purpose.

Information Days on Forest Service Environmental Guidelines

The Forest Service is hosting two information days on Forestry Environmental Guidelines on September 28th and October 12th in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. The purpose of these sessions is to provide an overview of each of the guidelines in a practicable fashion to empower operators, foresters and other stakeholders with a high level of awareness of the environmental aspects of the guidelines as they apply on the ground. The guidelines to be covered will be those on Biodiversity, Landscape, Archaeology, Harvesting and Water Quality. The authors of each set of guidelines will present an overview on their particular topic and a representative from the Forest Service will give a presentation on the practical implementation of each guidelines as they apply on site. Further information on these days can be got from Noel O'Connor of the Forest Service, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford.

COFORD News

Study Tour

The COFORD study tour to Denmark to view existing and emerging markets for sawmill residues and small diameter roundwood logs has just taken place. The main emphasis of the tour was on fuel markets for sawmill and forest residues. Among the sites visited were a district heating plant, a CHP plant, whole-tree harvesting operations, sawdust drying and wood pellet production. The tour group primarily consisted of members of the Irish Timber Council, but various other organisations and forestry companies also participated. A workshop was held on August 11th to draft a policy paper on the development of fuel markets for wood. A report on the study tour is currently being prepared. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of this report should contact the COFORD office. It is envisaged that COFORD will organise further study tours in the years ahead, targeted at address specific problems being

encountered in the Irish forest industry.

New Projects

Since the last issue of Irish Forester COFORD have prepared contracts for several new projects. Many more will follow in the coming months, as negotiations are finalised with project leaders.

The first new project is a research programme into the "Selection and Improvement of Irish Birch". This project is being led by Prof. Martin Steer of the Botany Department in UCD and Michael Bulfin of Teagasc. It follows from the work already undertaken by Dr Niamh O'Dowd under a previous COFORD-funded project. The objective of the project is to continue the selection and testing of Irish birch to provide the basis for an improvement programme. A breeding population will be developed and will provide a source of quality planting stock for the continuing broadleaved planting programme.

The second new project involves UCD, Coillte and a private forest owner. It is lead by Dr Áine Ni Dhubbáin and is entitled "An Evaluation of Continuous Cover Forests in Ireland". The project will assess a range of species for their suitability as an understorey. Silvicultural regimes, which do not involve clearfelling large areas, will be examined. Demonstration areas will also be established so that the research results can be used to educate a wider forestry audience.

The third project forms part of the Forests and Water research area, co-funded by COFORD and EPA. One the important aspects of this area is acidification. Before embarking on a wider, more long-term project, a desk study will be conducted on liming of afforested catchments in Ireland. Dr Norman Allott of TCD will supervise this review. It will also cover other aspects of buffer zones. The review will begin shortly and will take six months to complete.

Pending Publications

COFORD expect to launch the following publications before the end of this year. Subsequent issues of this newsletter will update you on launch dates and venues.

1. A review of relevant studies concerning farm forestry trends and farmers' attitudes to forestry, by Brendan Kearney.
2. Carbon Credits in Ireland: Issues and Potentials, by Barry, Clinch and Convery.
3. Christmas Tree Research Report 2000, edited by Eugene Hendrick.
4. Vegetative propagation techniques for oak, ash, sycamore and spruce, by Douglas, Thompson and Hennerty.
5. Forest Mammal Management, by Rooney.
6. Biodiversity and Harvesting Manual.
7. Sitka spruce in Ireland, by Joyce and OCarroll.
8. Guide to Irish Hardwoods, by Stella Xenapoulou.



Participants at the 17th Task Force meeting of ICP Forests, Ennis – May, 2001.

COFORD Connects

In March 2000, COFORD launched their COFORD Connects series of practice notes. The next three notes in the series have recently been circulated to all subscribers. Subscription costs just £5 (plus P&P) and this price includes a purpose made folder and all eight practice notes published to date. The titles of the three new notes are:

1. A pre-harvest timber valuation system.
2. Soil and site indicators for the production of high quality ash.
3. Effect of physiological condition at time of plant lifting.

Further details on the above are available from Joe O' Carroll, Research Manager, COFORD, Agriculture Building, UCD, Belfield, Dublin 4. Tel: 01 7167700, Fax: 01 7161180, Email: joe.ocarroll@coford.ie, Web site: <http://www.coford.ie>.

On the Move

The Society of Irish Foresters would like to congratulate the following on their recent appointments:

Cara Doyle has been appointed as Research Consultant to develop a community based forestry strategy with the Wicklow Uplands Council.

Liam Kelly has been appointed as a forestry adviser with Teagasc.

Useful Homepage Address

- Forestry Ireland Database - a bibliography of Irish Forestry www.coillte.ie/products_and_services/database.htm
- WOODSPEC - A guide to designing and specifying timber in Ireland <http://www.coford.ie/woodspeg>

New Members

The SIF would like to welcome the following new members:

Technical	Associate	Student
Ralph Barron	Rose Ryan	William Flynn
Jhan Crane	Mark Dooley	Niamh Hourigan
Kevin Doherty		Aran Ryan
Peter McGloin		Alan Sparling
Pól Ó'Donncha		
Rob Jones		
Deidre McGuire		

Recent Publications

Coillte Annual Report & Accounts 2000. Available from Coillte, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2.

Our Trees - A Guide to Growing Ireland's Native Trees in Celebration of a New Millennium. Available from The People's Millennium Forests Project 2000, c/o Coillte, Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow.

Forest Residues: Harvesting, storage and fuel value (Hoyne, S. and Thomas, A. (2001)). Available from COFORD, Dublin.

Intensive Monitoring of an Oak Woodland in Western Ireland - Development of an Irish Ecological Monitoring Network (IEMN) (Little, D.J., Boyle, G.M., Ryan, D. and Farrell, E. P. (2001)). Available from COFORD, Dublin

Carbon Sequestration - Policy, Science & Economics. Proceedings of a COFORD seminar on Carbon Sequestration and Irish Forests, Dublin, Ireland, June 15th 2000. Editors: Eugene Hendrick and Miriam Ryan. Available from COFORD, Dublin.

Planting the Idea - The Role of Education in Urban Forestry. Proceedings of the COST Action E12 'Urban Forest and Trees' Seminar, Dublin, 23March, 2000. Edited by Kevin D. Collins and Cecil. C. Konijnendijk. Available from the Tree Council of Ireland. Price £6.

NeighbourWood Scheme. Explanatory Booklet available from the Forest Service, Department of the Marine & Natural Resources, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford.

Irish Forest Species - Information Sheets. A set of 18 information sheets on different species used in Irish forestry. Available from the Forest Service, Department of the Marine & Natural Resources, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford.

COFORD Annual Report, 2000. Available from COFORD, Dublin.

Dates for the Diary (2002 dates provisional)

The following events are planned over the next 12 months. Members will note that many of these are actually rescheduled events that unfortunately had to be called off due to the Foot and Mouth crisis earlier this year. Dates for 2002 are still provisional and will be confirmed in a later edition of The Irish Forester.

DATE	EVENT & VENUE
September 1 - 7	Annual Study Tour Hungary
September 21	Field Day Ken Gill, Charcoal Production, Clonbullogue, Co. Offaly Trench 14, Edenderry, Co. Offaly
October 16	Sean McBride Memorial Lecture UCD
March 2002 3 - 9	National Tree Week
March 2002 6	Augustine Henry Memorial Lecture "Trees in Irish Folklore" by Prof. Daithí O'hOgáin, Folklore Dept. UCD RDS Ballsbridge, Dublin 4
March 2002 23	Field Day Dundrum Sawmills, Co. Tipperary - hardwood utilisation. Young Broadleaved Plantations - Peter Alley
April 2002 12	Annual Symposium "Farm Forestry" Stand Hotel, Curragh, Co. Kildare
April 2002 12	Annual General Meeting Following Annual Symposium Stand Hotel, Curragh, Co. Kildare
April 2002 27	Field Day Northern Ireland - Balcas Sawmill