



days, symposia, workshops, study tours etc. Full details are provided on a separate circular. It is important to point out that the onus is on the member to record his / her attendances at events. The SIF will conduct random checks to test the system and verify claims. Particularly in the first year of operation, the SIF seeks comments and suggestions from members on the CPD Programme. Constructive input from members can only help improve the scheme.

**BALCAS Gets STG 2 Million For Bio-Energy Initiative**

Balcas have announced plans for a wood fired combined heat and power (CHP) generator. The new CHP plant is to be built at their headquarters at Ballycassidy, Enniskillen and will produce power for the sawmill operations and refined wood pellets which can be used to heat homes, offices, factories and other buildings.

The new generator will benefit the company through reduced electricity costs (up to STG 1 million) and the production of a new wood based product for the market. The project will also help the environment through reduced emissions and the production of a new source of green fuel. Also, by processing by-products on site, a significant reduction in timber haulage costs will be achieved.

A grant of STG 2 million has been confirmed for the project by the Department of Trade and Industry's Bioenergy Capital Grants Scheme.

The plant will use surplus sawdust and woodchips from the sawmill and will generate approximately 2 MW of electricity, 10 MW of heat for use at the facility and a further 30 MW of heat for other users per annum.



*Society Members at a Field Day in Portumna Forest Park in May 2002. Photo: Donal O'Hare*

**Appointments**

*Co. Clare Study On Market For First Thinnings*

Under the current LEADER programme in Co. Clare, a study of the market for first thinnings from farm forestry will be undertaken, commencing in September 2003. The study will assess the quantity, quality and accessibility of first thinnings product available from farmers in the county, as well as the economics of harvesting the product. In addition the demand

for first thinnings product from processors, their willingness to do business with farmers and the terms, conditions and price they are prepared to offer will be assessed.

The study will be conducted over a 6 month period in Co. Clare. Rural Resource Development Ltd, the organisation which operates the LEADER programme in Co. Clare is seeking tender proposals from suitably qualified and experienced individuals or organisations to undertake the study. A detailed tender document, including budget, is available from Rural Resource Development on request. The closing date for receipt of proposals is **Friday 22nd August 2003**.

To receive a copy of the tender document by email or post please contact Dóirín Graham, Rural Resource Development, Town Hall, Shannon, Co. Clare. Email: doirinrrd@eircom.net Tel: 061 361144.

**Some Members Subs are Still Outstanding**

There are still a number of members whose membership subscriptions are outstanding. While we thank those members who have paid their subs, in light of the fact that there is no public funding of the SIF in 2003, defaulters are asked to send in their subscriptions promptly. Paid up members cannot be expected to subsidise defaulters. Clarification of any queries can be sought from Paula Lahiff in the Sligo office (Tel. 071 64434 or email sif@eircom.net).

**On the Move**

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

Sean McGinnis has been appointed as a forester with Forest Enterprises Ltd.

**New Members**

The SIF would like to welcome the following new members:

<i>Technical</i>	<i>Associate</i>	<i>Student</i>
Paul Butler	Jim Simpson	Adrian O'Boyle
Henry Stagg	John Conneff	Hugo Deasy
Jacques Hamel	Michael Lynn	Gerard Keane
Dan Creedon	Emmet Byrnes	Gionata Spazzi
Gary Wynne		
Declan Coulter		

**Recent Publications**

"Forestry: A Growth Industry in Ireland." Peter Bacon and Associates. Available from the SIF website, www.societyofirishforesters.ie .

"Code of Practice for Managing Safety and Health in Forestry Operations." Published in May 2002. Available from Health and Safety Authority, Regional Offices.

# 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  
Editors: Patrick Purser, Tony Mannion

## Bacon Report Published

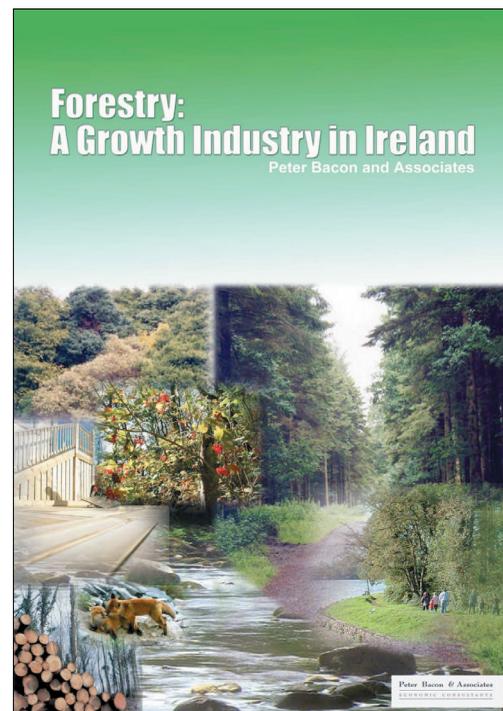
An independent report commissioned by IFIC (Irish Forest Industry Chain), the IFA, Self Assessment Companies, Nurseries and Consultant Foresters and carried out by Peter Bacon & Associates Economic Consultants clearly indicates that it makes economic and environmental sense for Government to stick to its 1996 commitment to fund the development of 20,000 hectares of new forests on an annual basis.

The report states that it is highly regrettable that the Government reduced funding in 2003 by 27% in comparison to 2002 figures. This is far in excess of reductions in many unproductive sectors and it cannot be justified as returns from forestry compare favourably with many other capital investments of the State. The analysis in the report illustrates that there is a benefit: cost ratio of 1.59 on public expenditure in forestry. That is, for every euro invested in forestry the economy will earn a return of 1.59 euro. This return compares very favourably with other state investments. Bacon concludes that the reduction in funding cannot be justified on economic grounds and would endanger an opportunity to create a renewable natural resource.

In addition, there is a vast environmental benefit from forests as they act as a "carbon sink" by taking carbon dioxide from the air and producing oxygen. If the Government's targets were implemented, this would play a significant role in meeting Ireland's GHG emissions targets. One hectare of forest can sequester about four tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually which, the report concludes, could have a value of between €40 and €100 per tonne.

The report states that the performance of the forest sector in delivering the forest programme has been commendable, considering that at the time the strategy was formulated the difficulty of convincing farmers to enter into a permanent land change use was underestimated. The continued promotional and educational activity sponsored by the Forest Service has led to applications in excess of 23,000 hectares in 2003 which is well above the target of 20,000 hectares per annum. However, as foresters know, only 12,000 hectares of new forests will have been planted this year due to the lack of Government funding and that is after bringing forward some 2,500 hectares out of next year's budget allocation.

As argued repeatedly by the SIF over the last year, government policy with regard to forestry must avoid a 'stop go' approach: continuity of scale within the many segments of the forest industry is vital. The long-term nature of the industry development outlined in the Government's forest strategy necessitates continuity,



*The Cover of the Bacon Report, Forestry: A Growth Industry in Ireland. A full copy of the report is available from the SIF website [www.societyofirishforesters.ie](http://www.societyofirishforesters.ie)*

protection from the vagaries of the annual budgetary process and regulatory stability.

Since the report was published, an industry delegation has accompanied Mr. Bacon to meetings with the Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources, the Department of Finance and the Department of Environment and Local Government. A press release also resulted in significant media coverage of this report at the beginning of July. However, as far as the media is concerned, forestry is not a life and death issue and continued press coverage of this issue is unlikely. Despite this, it is essential that the momentum generated by the Bacon Report is continued and that the case is taken up by the Forest Service in conjunction with the industry that has been so proactive in commissioning and concluding the report.

In the meantime, the Minister for Finance instructed all Government Departments to have the 1st draft of their departmental 2004 budget estimates available for Cabinet discussion by June 30th. His riding instructions to all Government Departments were clear - stay within the budget figures for 2003 and provide savings where possible. What are the implications for forestry in 2004?

There is a clear expectation that the support measures withdrawn in early 2003, such as the Woodland Improvement Scheme (including pruning and shaping), Reconstitution and Forest Roads, and other support measures, would be restored. However, these are to be restored without an increase in the budget. In compiling the 2004 budget, the Forest Service will also have to take on board the costs of the wage agreement, inflation, and bench-marking payments. The impact of the foregoing suggests that the Afforestation Target for 2004 could be as low as 3,000-4,000 ha, and the implications, both short and long term, for forestry companies, forest contractors and workers, nurserymen and foresters, are frighteningly obvious.

### ***The European Union & Forestry - A Statement of the Position of the Union of European Foresters***

The Union of European Foresters (UEF) has member organisations in 20 different European countries. Each member organisation represents a broad band of highly skilled foresters working in many positions for a sustainable forestry on a European scale. It aims to achieve a balance between economic, social and environmental aspects of forestry. Through this position statement, the UEF offers an opinion for use at different stages and levels of decision making about forestry matters in the European Union (EU).

#### *EU Forest Strategy*

Forestry is a sustainable use of renewable natural resources. The balance of economic, social and environmental aspects optimises forestry's use to society. Development of forestry within the EU could be carried out within the framework of an internationally ratified agreement concerning a common position on strategically important matters. Any EU Forest Strategy recommendations should be implemented further at national and local levels. The development of an EU Forest Strategy and EU policies must originate from an appreciation of needs at national and local level.

#### *The EU Contribution to Forestry*

The new EU programme should ensure that contributions to the forestry programme are expanded to include not only forestry but also rural activities and social needs. A clear segregation of responsibilities between the EU and national levels should be outlined with regard to all activities in the forestry and wood sectors. The new programme should ensure the development of training and education opportunities for all those working in the wood chain. The EU should encourage the interchange of views and experience between foresters belonging to member countries. The EU contribution to forestry should concentrate on developing further new and promising activities associated with the sustainable use of forest resources, for instance the use of wood for bioenergy and greater use of wood in all forms of construction. The work should concentrate on developing sustainable and economically functioning activities. With the increase in EU membership, information on, and greater attention to, the requirements and support of private forestry, in particular the development of small scale family forestry, in all member states will be critical. More emphasis should be placed on the use of forests in preventing environmental damage by and to water. The EU should continue to support the existing

certification schemes and work towards mutual recognition between all schemes.

#### *The Principle of Communalty for Silvicultural Programmes*

It is important to ensure that sustainable forest management delivers profitability. The UEF recognises that the wider attainments of sustainability as well as the further development of all forest functions will require continuous public funding. Silvicultural programmes, as well as biodiversity, should be managed and developed further in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and sustainability within the EU while respecting the integrity of property rights. In this regard, the definition of illegal logging requires clarification.

#### *Development of Forest Research*

Forest research within the EU has shown that developing common basic terms for forest resources, forest management and forest protection within Europe is very important. The use of existing monitoring systems should be used efficiently when completing the European Forestry Information and Communications System (EFICS). Research within the European framework should be continued. In accordance with the principles of sustainable development, the progress and financing of forest research should be improved so that account is taken of the needs of society, foresters and forest owners. Systems for demonstrating the enhancement of public benefits in sustainable forestry, such as biodiversity, reduction of air pollution and enhancement of recreational space should be developed further. Research on the impact of sustainable forestry on global changes should be continued and developed. Benefits to the global situation should be widely publicised.

#### *Interests of the EU at a Global Level*

Ensuring European representation and the interests of foresters and forestry knowledge in a global forum is crucial. It is important to have a common intergovernmental position and to ensure the forestry interests of the EU are fully expressed.

### ***Professional Indemnity Insurance Cover***

The SIF has had a lot of discussions with various insurance brokers in the past 12-18 months re Professional Indemnity Insurance. The hard fact is that there are very few insurance underwriters interested in the forestry business in Ireland. However, at this stage, a Professional Indemnity Insurance package has been put together for SIF members by:

Peter Fitzgerald and Associates  
13-15 Rathfarnham Road  
Terenure  
Dublin 6W  
Tel: 01 4925170  
Fax: 01 492 5172

Contact Persons: Tony Ryan and Peter Fitzgerald

If any member has a query re Professional Indemnity Insurance or require an insurance premium quote, please contact Peter Fitzgerald and Associates direct, citing the fact that you are a SIF member and/or a member of the SIF Consultant Foresters Group. Please note that the SIF Office does not act on behalf of the above broker, or any other insurance broker.

### **SIF Host Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) Study Tour in September**

The Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) is holding a study tour in Ireland from September 14th to 17th, 2003 and this tour is being partly hosted by the Society of Irish Foresters. The tour is titled "Forestry and Rural Development in Ireland" and will focus on commercial forestry, covering the following topics:

- Conifer and Broadleaf Silviculture
- Nursery Management
- Sustainable Forest Management
- Farm Forestry

The tour will commence in Dublin on Sunday 14th and will take in Hollywood and Avondale Forests (Wicklow) and Ballintemple Nursery on Monday 15th, two private forests in Kilkenny, Continuous Cover Forestry in Tipperary and Upland forestry in Limerick on Tuesday 16th, returning to Dublin on Wednesday 17th. For more information on this tour, members should contact Paula Lahiff in the SIF office. CPD points will be awarded to members attending this tour.

### **Two Courses Offered by UCD Continuing Education Programme in Forestry**

The Continuing Education Programme in Forestry, University College Dublin, is presenting two three-day courses as follows:

#### *Practical Auditing for SFM - three-day course*

This course builds on material previously covered in the two-day course *Certification and Auditing for SFM*. The presenter is William B. Walker, the Principal Forestry Consultant of the Forestry and Environmental division of the Timber Research and Development Association (TRADA), UK. This intensive three-day course is designed to give participants experience in conducting a field audit for forest certification purposes. Due to the intensive nature of this course, places are limited to 10 participants. As well as conducting an audit, participants will be guided through the audit planning process and audit report preparation.

Topics to be addressed include:

- Examination of forestry legal issues, codes of practice etc.
- Examination of the Irish Forest Standard with reference to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard and the FSC Standard.
- Preparation of audit plan, and consideration of necessary checklist aids.
- A forest certification audit of two areas of forest against the Irish Forest Standard/UKWAS.
- Completion and presentation of audit reports.
- Chain of Custody auditing.
- Auditing code of practice.

The course dates are 17th-19th September, 2003 and it will

take place in the south-east of the country. The registration cost for the course is €275.

#### *Forest Design and Planning - three-day course in Tullamore*

With the adoption of the principles of sustainable forest management, the need for landscape enhancement and maintenance through the use of planting plans, diverse species mixtures, felling and extraction plans and public consultation is crucial in maintaining public support for forestry. Appropriate forest design and planning can facilitate this. In the initial two days of this course, participants are introduced to the tools and principles used in forest design planning. A third optional day will bring participants through a practical forest design exercise. The course presenter, Simon Bell, is a specialist in forest landscape planning and design. Mr. Bell has worked extensively in Ireland on the provision of forest landscape design training, recreation design training and forest design projects in Counties Louth, Donegal and Wicklow. A presentation detailing the attitudes and perceptions of the Irish public to landscape and forestry will be made by Tomás O'Leary. Mr. O'Leary will also discuss the Forest Service Forestry and the Landscape Guidelines.

Topics to be addressed include:

- Introduction to the principles of visual design, incorporating practical exercises and case studies.
- Forest design and the introduction of the techniques and tools available in the forest design process.
- An exercise in forest design.

The course dates are 2nd-4th September, 2003 and the course venue is the Moorhill House Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. The registration cost for the course is €60 for two days or €75 for three days.

Further details on both courses are available from:

Marie Doyle  
 Continuous Education in Forestry  
 Department of Crop Science, Horticulture & Forestry  
 Faculty of Agriculture  
 University College Dublin  
 Dublin 4  
 Tel 01-7167806  
 e-mail: [mdoyle@ucd.ie](mailto:mdoyle@ucd.ie)

This programme is funded by the Forest Service of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources under the National Development Plan.

### **CPD Programme**

As members know, the Society has introduced a Programme of Continuous Professional Development as a means of confirming that professional foresters are up to date in current forestry practice and other matters in professional development. Members have been circulated with full details of this programme and should read this documentation carefully. To maintain one's standing within the programme, members will need to accumulate 90 credits over a three year period, or on average 30 credits per year. Credits are awarded for a range of activities such as attendance at lectures, field