

REPORT

Rome,
Italy,
19 February
2007

Executive Committee of the International Poplar Commission

Forty-third Session

INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION

Executive Committee

Report of the Forty-third Session

Rome, Italy, 19 February 2007

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INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION

Executive Committee

Report of the Forty-third Session

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Forty-third Session of the Executive Committee of the International Poplar Commission (IPC) was hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at FAO Headquarters in Rome on 19 February 2007. The meeting, which opened at 0900, was chaired by Dr S. Bisoffi (Italy), Chairman of the Executive Committee. Mr Jim Carle, Secretary of the IPC, was responsible for the work of the Secretariat. Twenty five participants attended, including representation of nine of twelve Elected Members, one of two Co-opted Members, six Chairpersons or Vice-chairpersons of its seven Subsidiary Bodies, two Resource Persons from the Poplar Research Institute, Casale Monferrato, Italy, and seven persons from FAO, including the Secretary, IPC (Annex 2).

2. The Session was preceded by an informal meeting of the members of the Executive Committee and Chair and Vice-chairpersons of subsidiary bodies on 18 February, to discuss options for the future development of the IPC and its working parties.

3. The meeting observed a minute of silence in memory of the late Oscar Fugalli, former Secretary to the IPC and M. Quiquandon, active scientist within the IPC.

4. The Session was opened by Mr Jan Heino, Assistant Director-General of the Forestry Department of FAO. Mr Heino welcomed participants and outlined the roles of the FAO Conference and Council, the Commission on Forestry (COFO), the regional Forestry Commissions and Statutory Bodies in meeting the Millennium Development Goals. He stressed that the IPC potentially has a powerful voice in setting FAO policy priorities and strategic goals. He noted that the IPC provides links with other bodies working in poplars such as the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) and Bioversity International (IPGRI) and helps to bridge the gap between the setting of national policies and plans and the achievement of practices at the operational field level. He emphasised the important role of National Poplar Commissions in providing inputs to the IPC, and conversely, the support that can be provided by the Executive Committee and its subsidiary bodies to strengthen National Poplar Commissions.

5. Dr S. Bisoffi presented the global potential of Poplars and Willows in meeting FAO priority goals, especially poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods and land-use. He emphasized that Poplars and Willows were of increasing importance to combat desertification, rehabilitate degraded lands, phyto-remediate contaminated sites, produce wood, fibre and biofuels and provide environmental and social services, particularly in temperate regions of the world. The science of genome mapping was pioneered with Poplars.

6. Mr Jim Carle expanded upon the opening remarks of Mr Heino and explained the role of the IPC within the FAO organization. He raised questions for discussion on how to work more effectively to serve the priority needs of Member Countries through the Working Parties and National Poplar Commissions.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The provisional agenda as detailed in Annex 1 was adopted.

III. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES AND THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON NOMENCLATURE AND REGISTRATION SINCE THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE IPC

8. Dr S. Bisoffi highlighted the need of Working Parties to report their programmes of work for the past two years in a transparent and accountable manner to emphasize their delivery of outputs and activities. He emphasized the need to detail the work programmes, including for the next two years through the working party sub-portals on the IPC website and to establish more effective links to the National Poplar Commissions.

III-a Working Party on Poplar and Willow Genetics, Conservation and Improvement

www.fao.org/forestry/site/3770/en

9. On behalf of Ms Teresa Cerrillo, (Chairperson and coordinator of the working party's work), Mr Sasa Orlovic (Vice-chairperson of the Working Party) reported that during 2005-06 the Working Party had undertaken an inventory of "*Poplar and Willow Breeding Programmes and Pollen Collections*" through a questionnaire to 31 colleagues in 25 IPC member countries. The 27 responses provided a basis for progressive development of a database. Some breeding highlights included: research programmes were generally conducted by government institutions; more widely undertaken with Poplars than Willows, but with increasing interest in Willow breeding for environmental applications and biomass production; focused primarily on clonal selection for short rotation, commercial production of wood, fibre and biomass; some longer term breeding programmes were to maintain genetic variation and options for the future; some conserved indigenous species e.g. European EUFORGEN project that conserved *Populus nigra in situ* and *ex situ*; and reduced Government funding in some countries e.g. New Zealand and Argentina. The pollen collection highlights included: pollen collections were part of breeding programmes and exchanges that occurred between organizations; the most common Poplar species included *Populus deltoides*, *P. nigra* and *P. alba*; the most common Willow species included *Salix alba* and *S. matsudana* with increasing interest in Willow pollen exchanges for biomass and environmental uses. There were active links between State, private sector and University breeding programmes in Italy, France, United States of America, Canada, China, India, Japan and Chile. There were active pollen exchanges between State, and private sector organizations in the USA with Europe and Asia, and Canada with Finland. The results of the inventory will be posted on the sub-portal for the Working Party.

10. The proposed programme of work for 2007-08 includes managing the data collected from the inventory of "*Poplar and Willow Breeding Programmes and Pollen Collections*" in a web based database for clonal collections, together with the Sub-committee on Nomenclature and Registration; and preparation of a photographic portfolio of Poplar and Willow cultivars to post on the Working Party sub-portal on the IPC website.

III-b Working Party on Harvesting and Utilization of Poplar and Willow Wood

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/3767/en>

11. Dr Joris Van Acker (Chairperson of the Working Party), reported that for 2007-08 it is anticipated that the Working Party will provide harvesting and utilization inputs to the book *“Poplar and Willows in the World: Meeting the Needs of Society and the Environment”*; collaborate with other Working Parties on cross cutting topics such as bio-energy; sustainable rural development; review plantation management for high-value end-products and environmental impacts of harvesting and utilization; update the sub-portal for the Working Party on the IPC website; examine the prospects and mechanisms for initiating new research and development; prepare an out-reach programme; update the Harvesting and Utilization Section of the Global Directory of Poplar and Willow Experts; and organize a technical and scientific conference on utilization to coincide with the IPC 23rd Session in 2008.

III-c Working Party on Poplar and Willow Diseases

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/site3768/en>

12. As Ms Marijke Steenackers (Chairperson) was unable to participate, Mr Maurizt Ramstedt (Vice-chairperson), submitted a summary report in absentia. During 2005-06 the Working Party had participated in joint meetings and study tours in Sweden, Estonia and Ireland with the Working Parties on Environmental Applications of Poplars and Willows and Production Systems for Poplars and Willows. During 2007-08 it is proposed that the Working Party will participate in the Quebec, Canada meeting and study tours, 5-8 June, 2007 being coordinated by the Working Party on the Environmental Applications of Poplars and Willows; update the membership list of active researchers on Poplar and Willow diseases and post these on the sub-portal on the IPC website; prepare a database of Poplar and Willow disease projects and post these on the sub-portal; post an annotated bibliography of Poplar and Willow disease publications and post these on the sub-portal; and coordinate the Chapter on Diseases for the book *“Poplar and Willows in the World: Meeting the Needs of Society and the Environment”*.

III-d Working Party on Poplar and Willow Insect and Other Animal Pests

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/3769/en>

13. Ms Sylvie Augustin (Chairperson of the Working Party), demonstrated the e-book *“Damaging Poplar Insects – Internationally Important Species”* available on the IPC website (<http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/38255/en/>). The initiative was a collaborative effort led by Ms. Sylvie Augustin (National Institute for Agricultural Research, France) and Mr John Charles (Horticulture and Food Research Institute, New Zealand) to update, expand and translate the original French version of the Insects of Poplars and Willows, prepared by Mr Ludovic Nef (<http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/004/AC489F/AC489F00.HTM>) available on the IPC website. Feedback, additions and refinements were invited to strengthen the e-book. Consideration for a CD or printed version can be considered in the future. The technical inputs by Roberto Cenciarelli and Alberto Del Lungo, FAO consultants were acknowledged.

14. In the work programme for 2007-08, it is anticipated that the Working Party, through Ms Sylvie Augustin and Mr John Charles, will coordinate the Chapter on Animal Pests in the book *“Poplar and Willows in the World: Meeting the Needs of Society and the Environment”*; strengthen and update the Working Party sub-portal on the IPC website; review the e-book

“*Damaging Poplar Insects: Internationally Important Specie*” and present to the 23rd Session of the IPC; update the Entomology Section of the Global Directory of Poplar and Willow Experts; and prepare a bi-annual Newsletter and country reports on key Poplar and Willows pests.

III-e Working Party on Production Systems for Poplars and Willows

www.fao.org/forestry/site/3771/en

15. Mr Theo Verwijst (Chairperson of the Working Party), reported that during 2005-06 the Working Party had participated with the Working Parties on Environmental Applications of Poplars and Willows and Poplar and Willows Diseases in international meetings and study tours in Sweden and Estonia (May 2005) and in Northern Ireland (May 2006); supported and participated in the IUFRO International Poplar Symposium, Nanjing, May 2006; enhanced cooperation revived between Scandinavian and Baltic countries in willow culture; supported policy issues related to cropping systems, agricultural crop status and taxation; and supported and participated in IEA Bio-energy meetings.

16. In the work programme for 2007-08 it is anticipated that the Working Party will provide inputs to the book “*Poplar and Willows in the World: Meeting the Needs of Society and the Environment*”; participate in multi Working Party meetings (e.g. Montreal, June 2007) to address cross cutting topics such as biomass for bio-energy; forge stronger links with the Bio-energy Agency and the International Poplar Symposium of IUFRO; address sustainability issues related to balancing Millennium Development Goal 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger) and Goal 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability); provide technical advice to improve management of plantations for high-value end-products and positive environmental impacts of production systems; update the sub-portal for the Working Party on the IPC website; and update the Production Systems Section of the Global Directory of Poplar and Willow Experts.

III-f Working Party on the Environmental Applications of Poplars and Willows

www.fao.org/forestry/site/26359/en

17. Dr Kurth Perttu (Chairperson of the Working Party) reported on the overall aims of the Working Party: to identify work that had been done, address gaps in knowledge, identify research needs, and to transfer and share information. Activities addressed by the Working Party included site and landscape improvement (bank stabilization, combating desertification and salinization, shelterbelts, soil rehabilitation), phyto-remediation of polluted soil and water (buffer zones and riparian planting, contaminated sites, waste water management) and other environmental uses (urban and peri-urban forestry and carbon sequestration). International meetings and study tours were hosted, in collaboration with the Working Parties on Poplar and Willow Diseases and Production Systems of Poplars and Willows, in Sweden and Estonia (May 2005) and Northern Ireland (June 2006). Working party members participated and presented papers in the International Poplar Symposium meeting, Nanjing, May 2006. A new web sub-portal was established that details the activities and scope of the Working Party and a repository of meetings, case studies, list of experts, links to useful sites and a reference library of useful publications. The website is a model for other Working Parties on how to use the IPC sub-portals for outreach to National Poplar Commissions and the Poplar and Willow fraternity, in a simple but effective manner.

18. In the work programme for 2007-08 it is anticipated that the Working Party coordinate the preparation of the Chapter on the Environmental Applications of Poplars and Willows in the book “*Poplar and Willows in the World: Meeting the Needs of Society and the Environment*”; host the third international workshop and study tours in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, June 2007; maintain and update the web sub-portal; and encourage a range of papers on different environmental applications of poplars and willows be prepared in advance of the 23rd Session, 2008.

III-g Sub-committee on Nomenclature and Registration

www.fao.org/forestry/site/3765/en

19. Dr Stefano Bisoffi, the Chairperson of the Sub-committee, assisted by Mr Gaetano Castro, clarified the aims of the Register: to promote uniformity, accuracy and stability in the naming of cultivars; to avoid ambiguity in communications and records; and to seek consensus among users. He described the hierarchy of registers and the phases of registration. The goals of the Sub-committee include the development of a network of contact persons, the establishment of a network of living collections, a standard portfolio of pictures of registered cultivars, and the consideration of a willow register (with the possibility that the IPC may become the International Cultivar Registration Authorities (ICRA) for *Salix*. Few additions have been made to the Register since the last report, although a large number of new cultivars have entered into use. National Poplar Commissions must be involved in providing new records. An on-line registration was made available through <http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/3765/en/> together with rules for nomenclature, instructions on the phases of the nomenclature process, a glossary of selected terms and a registration form.

20. In the work programme for 2007-08 it is anticipated that the Sub-committee prepare the Chapter on Genetic Resources of Poplars and Willows in the book “*Poplar and Willows in the World: Meeting the Needs of Society and the Environment*”; liaise with FAO on streamlining maintenance and update procedures for the Register of cultivars; prepare a standard portfolio of photos of registered cultivars on line to assist in identification (in collaboration with the Working Party on Genetics, Conservation and Improvement); explore feasibility of the IPC becoming the ICRA for *Salix*; explore opportunities, constraints and resources to establish a Register for the genus *Salix*; start a database on molecular fingerprints of cultivars; and raise awareness of the National Poplar Commissions on the need to register cultivars approved for afforestation, reforestation for landscaping, energy, remediation, etc.

21. It was agreed that Mr Lorenzo Vietto of CRA-ISP, Casale Monferrato, Italy be appointed Technical Secretary to the Sub-committee.

IV. STATUS OF THE BOOK POPLARS AND WILLOWS IN THE WORLD

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/32608/en>

22. Messrs Jim Richardson and Jud Isebrands, Coordinating Editors reported satisfactory progress in preparation of the Poplars and Willows book “*Poplar and Willows in the World: Meeting the Needs of Society and the Environment*”. The objective is to produce a major update of the 1980 edition to have a more global overview and guide to the characteristics, cultivation and uses of Poplars and Willows as well as issues, problems and trends in their cultivation, management and use. The audience will be for public and private sectors, decision makers and policy makers in forestry, agriculture and environmental activities, foresters,

ecologists, botanists, agronomists and environmental engineers. The scope will be more worldwide, include the major changes in technology (biotechnology and utilization), greater emphasis on willows, new sections on environmental applications of Poplars and Willows and their role in sustainable rural development. The book will provide a comprehensive bibliography, index, contacts and links to internet resources.

23. Each chapter has a lead author, assisted by contributing authors, all on a voluntary basis. It is proposed that the book chapters will be prepared electronically for IPC web posting for feedback and strengthening before publishing individual chapters as FAO Working Papers. As resources allow, the consolidated CD and book versions will be published in English, French and Spanish. The role of voluntary authors was acknowledged.

24 The indicative schedule: June 2007, most chapters expected in draft; September 2007, 2-3 chapters produced; December 2007, all chapters produced; mid 2008, project completed in readiness for the 23rd Session, IPC.

V. DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION AND ITS WORKING PARTIES

25. After a wide-ranging discussion, members reached conclusions on the following topics:

V-a Rationalization of Working Parties

26. The Chair presented two proposals to rationalize working parties for consideration, including:

- Merge the Diseases and the Insects Working Parties and broaden to include Biotic and Other Stress Factors. It was agreed that the proposal should be presented both to the members of the two Working Parties and to the National Poplar Commissions.
- A Working Party or cross-cutting team could be developed on Socio-economic Issues of Poplar and Willow Development - stressing people and livelihoods. Major cross cutting issues that could be addressed in this integrated manner are Poplars and Willows in: i) Sustainable Land-use; ii) Sustainable Livelihoods; iii) Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change; and iv) Bioenergy/Biofuel production. It was agreed that this proposal be developed before the 23rd Session of the IPC.

V-b Directory of Poplar and Willow Experts

27. A registration form for the directory of experts was prepared following the 22nd Session, IPC 2004 and made available on the IPC website on: www.fao.org/forestry/site/19227/en. The categories of experts are to be reviewed to take into account new applications of Poplars and Willows. It was agreed that a drive be initiated through National Poplar Commissions to get the register updated. It was recommended that countries be the initial clearing house for expert applications before sending the expert applicants and summary CV to the Secretary, IPC and Mr Lorenzo Vietto, CRA-ISP, Casale Monferrato for their evaluation before adding to the register. Mr Magnus Grylle (Information Technology (IT) team, FAO) and Mr Lorenzo Vietto are to clarify the update the register update procedures. Useful sources of information of expert contact coordinates include

IUFRO's 4th International Poplar Symposium, Nanjing, China, 2006; 21st Session IPC, Portland, USA in 2000 and 22nd Session IPC, Santiago, Chile, 2004 and lists of experts from the Working Party sub-portals.

V-c IPC Website

28. The Secretariat, through Mr Roberto Cenciarelli, reported on the potential of the IPC website for a number of different purposes, including storing photo-databases, holding e-conferences, a repository of PDF-format publications, sub-portals for each Working Party, sub-portals for National Poplar Commissions and access to National Reports. Mr Alberto Del Lungo demonstrated the use of the IPC website, including the sub-portals for Working Parties, meetings, sessions, registration of cultivars and other databases. The potential for more effective outreach to member countries was emphasized.

V-d Assistance to Developing Countries and Countries with Economies in Transition

29. The Chairperson and Secretary outlined the intention to submit a project proposal to the Italian Government, through FAO, to promote twinning to strengthen Poplar and Willow knowledge and technology between industrialized and developing countries in the Mediterranean and Western-Central Asian regions. The proposal will strengthen the technical support, identify demonstration projects and facilitate more effective networking in Poplar and Willow culture.

V-e National Poplar Commissions

30. There was a broad discussion on the need to stimulate the activities of National Poplar Commissions and the Secretariat was requested to continue to explore ways of encouraging the activities of National Poplar Commissions. Access to a sub-portal within the IPC website could be used to stimulate some National Poplar Commissions to be more proactive on Poplar and Willow activities and applications.

VI. PROPOSALS FOR THE DATE AND PLACE OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE IPC AND FORTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

31. Mr Jaddish Kishwan, Director General, Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, presented a justification to host the 23rd Session in Dehradun, India in April or November, 2008. Mr Weilun Yin, Professor, President of the Beijing Forestry University, President of the Poplar Committee of China, presented a justification to host the 23rd Session in Beijing in the 4th quarter of 2008 (to avoid the 2008 Olympics in the 3rd quarter). Both submissions offered excellent opportunities to learn from a wide range of activities in Poplar and Willow culture in these countries.

VII. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TWENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE IPC

VII-a Place and date of the Twenty-third Session

32. The Executive Committee expressed appreciation for both presentations and recommended to FAO that China host the Twenty-third Session in 2008 and India host the

Twenty-fourth Session in 2012 (should their offer still stand at that time). The State Forest Administration and the Beijing Forestry University subsequently confirmed the dates 28 October to 2 November 2008.

VII-b Selection of a theme for the Twenty-third Session

33. The Executive Committee discussed alternatives for the theme, but generally agreed upon linking Poplar and Willow culture with the Millennium Development Goals, particularly Goals 1 (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), Goal 7 (ensure environmental sustainability) and Goal 8 (develop a global partnership for development).

34. The members requested the Secretary and Chairperson to liaise with the Organizing Committee, China to refine the theme to reflect the development priorities in the use of Poplars and Willows in China.

VII-c Arrangements for the Twenty-third Session

35. In the participant questionnaire completed following the 22nd Session, there was satisfaction with the format combining plenary and concurrent scientific and procedural sessions. There was strong support for greater use of interpreter services, including in concurrent scientific sessions. Due to the anticipated high participation from China, interpreter services will include English, French, Spanish and Chinese. The practicality and costs of providing interpreter services will be reviewed by the Secretary and the Organizing Committee. The Secretary should visit Beijing to provide guidance to the Organizing Committee at least 12 months prior to the 23rd Session.

36. Members recommended that the organizers should appoint a local Organizing Committee, with responsibility for the local arrangements for the meeting.

37. The members recommended that a Scientific Committee be appointed to improve the coherence and quality of the scientific papers presented, to provide liaison between the Working Parties and to set the targets for publication of the papers and the Proceedings. It was agreed that membership of the Scientific Committee should include the Chairperson and Secretary of the IPC, a representative from China, the host nation and Chairpersons of the Working Parties. The Terms of Reference of the Scientific Committee are to be agreed by the Secretariat and the officials of the Working Parties.

38. Review of the administrative, logistical and technical arrangements and the responses to the participant questionnaire of the 22nd Session will be consulted to assist in planning and managing of the 23rd Session.

39. The Secretary is to coordinate the preparation of National Reports, a Book of Abstracts and a Global Synthesis to be available to participants at the 23rd Session.

VIII. OTHER MATTERS

40. The 43rd Executive Committee wished to formally register their appreciation of the services of Mr Alberto Del Lungo in regular maintenance and development of an informative

IPC website, providing Working Party sub-portals and in providing technical backstopping in other technical, administrative and Information Technology (IT) matters relating to the IPC.

41. The 43rd Executive Committee recommendations to COFO included:

- Recognize the key role that Poplars and Willows fulfil in achieving sustainable livelihoods in the mosaic of land uses on rural and urban landscapes, particularly in combating desertification, rehabilitating degraded and contaminated lands, providing raw materials to a wide range of industries, increasingly for biofuel production and in providing other environmental and social services, including recreational and amenity;
- Recognize that investment in Poplars and Willows can contribute positively to achieving Millennium Development Goals (particularly Goals 1, 7 and 8);
- Encourage greater synergies between the IPC, IUFRO, Bioversity International, other international agencies, national research institutions and National Poplar Commissions;
- Support twinning in Poplar and Willow culture between industrialized and developing countries through collaborative scientific research, networking and demonstration projects; and
- Encourage the transfer of knowledge and technology in Poplar and Willow culture from science into policies and ultimately to field applications in development initiatives.

**INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION
FORTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Rome, Italy, 19 February 2007

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Summary Reports on the activities and outputs of the Working Parties and Sub-Committee on Nomenclature and Registration of Poplars since the Forty-second Session of the Executive Committee in Santiago, Chile, 28 November 2004 and their programmes of work towards the Twenty-third Session of the IPC
4. Status Report on the Poplar and Willow Book
5. Development of the International Poplar Commission and Working Parties
6. Proposals for the date and place of the Twenty-third Session of the IPC and Forty-fourth Session of the Executive Committee
7. Arrangements for the Twenty-third Session of the IPC
8. Other matters

**INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION
FORTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Rome, Italy, 19 February 2007

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2. WORKING PARTIES

2.1 Working Party on Poplar and Willow Insect and Other Animal Pests

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