Options for International Poplar Commission Reform

Concept Note

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For quotation:


Web references:

For details relating to the International Poplar Commission as a Technical Statutory Body of FAO, including National Poplar Commissions, working parties and initiatives can be viewed on http://www.fao.org/forestry/ipc.
Executive Summary

The 80 million hectares of poplars and willows (90% natural and semi-natural, 10% planted and agroforestry systems) in temperate, boreal and tundra ecosystems provide multiple benefits for tens of millions of families in industrialized and developing countries and those with economies in transition. They provide a wide range of products (wood and non-wood) and ecosystem services that are socially, environmentally and economically important.

For the past 65 years, the International Poplar Commission, through National Poplar Commissions, Working Parties and the Sub-Committee on Nomenclature and Registration has provided a bridge linking research of poplar and willow cultivation, conservation and utilization with development policies, planning and implementation practices. Through effective networks, long established partnerships, comprehensive databases and outreach programmes, the IPC has successfully transferred poplar and willow germplasm, knowledge and technology between scientists, growers, processors and users around the globe. The IPC has achieved an impressive list of activities, outputs and outcomes.

There remains strong interest in the IPC by poplar and willow specialists around the globe, but membership has been stagnant due to institutional complexities in joining. Developing countries are the minority as members of the IPC.

The Secretariat has suffered from a lack of resources in recent years; disconnect has emerged between the technical fields of the Working Parties and the multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral nature of environmental and development issues facing member countries; and some National Poplar Commissions have become dormant. Because of the relatively narrow geographic and technical focus of the IPC, it has been difficult to attract multi-lateral and bilateral donor and international programme interest and funding as the links with sustainable livelihoods and land-use are not always apparent.

There are opportunities to build upon the existing partnerships (IUFRO, IEA Bioenergy Tasks and International Commissions for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants) and to secure new partnerships. Expansion of the scope to include poplars, willows and other genera/species of high socio-economic or ecological significance can potentially provide the IPC with new options to better support sustainable land-use and livelihoods, including food security and poverty alleviation. Clarification and simplification of the Convention and rules for membership could encourage new members; revision of Working Parties and National Poplar Commissions into topical themes (e.g. climate change adaptation and mitigation; sustainable supplies of wood, fibre and short rotation bioenergy/biofuel; conservation of biodiversity; sustainable livelihoods; sustainable ecosystems and landscapes; and provision of environmental services). In this respect, the way forward should be more cognisant of the outcomes and recommendations of Rio+20, UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, UNFF and MDGs. Opportunities exist to pursue international support for sustainable forest management, REDD+, UN-REDD and international programmes.

This concept note considers 3 options for the way forward for the IPC:

1. **Status quo**: maintaining poplar and willow scope; no change to Convention, Working Parties, NPCs or Secretariat;
2. **Institutional Reform**: maintaining the poplar and willow scope; clarification and simplification of the Convention; revised Working Parties, NPCs and Secretariat to address thematic environmental and development needs of countries; and iii)
3. **Integrated Reform**: broadening the scope to integrate poplars and willows with other genera/species of high economic or ecological significance for sustainable land-use, livelihoods, food security and poverty alleviation; clarification and simplification of the Convention; and revised Working Parties, NPCs and Secretariat to better integrate specialist activities, outputs and outcomes into the thematic environmental and development needs of countries.

The Proactive, Integrated Reform option is recommended to stimulate membership interest, broaden environmental and developmental scope and to attract a broader range of international partners, funding agencies and donors. In this way, the IPC has the potential to increase its relevance and impacts on sustainable livelihoods and land-use.
1.0 Poplar and willow resources

1.1 Geographic Distribution and Scale of Resources

Poplar and willow species of the Salicaceae family are indigenous principally in the temperate, boreal, and tundra regions of the northern hemisphere. A few species are native to subtropical and tropical regions of North America, Africa, and Asia, and a single species of willow naturally occurs in South America. Many poplar and willow species have become naturalized in areas outside their natural range.

Globally there are about 80 million hectares of poplars and willows (2% of global forests), of which about 72 million hectares are natural and semi-natural forests (mainly Canada, Russia, USA); 6 million hectares planted forests (overwhelmingly in China, then France, Turkey, Italy, Germany and Spain) and a conservative estimate of 3 million hectares in agroforestry systems. Planted poplars and willows (including agroforestry systems) account for more than 3% of global planted forest area. Natural and planted poplars and willows are managed primarily for productive purposes, but also for protective and multiple use purposes. Poplars and willows grow in mixed species associations in nature, but plantings can be grown effectively as monocultures or mixed species.

Figure 1

Source: Native areas of Salicaceae in the World (Image: FAO)

1.2 Multiple Functions

Poplars and willows can be propagated and managed with ease, are generally fast growing, thus favoured by researchers, growers, processors and users for their resilience to a range of soil and climatic conditions. They provide a wide range of goods (wood and non-wood) and services (social and environmental) that impact sustainable land-uses, rural development and peoples’ livelihoods. They provide wood fibre and fuel supplies for industrial processing for pulp, paper, engineered wood products, plywood, veneer and other boards, sawn timber, packing crates, pallets, furniture and increasingly bioenergy. They can also provide valuable non-wood products such as livestock fodder, medicinal extracts and associated food products. However, poplars and willows are increasingly valued for their provision of social and environmental services including shelter, shade and protection of soil, water, crops, livestock and dwellings. They are increasingly used in phytoremediation of severely degraded sites, rehabilitation of fragile ecosystems, combating desertification.

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and restoration of forest landscapes, often integrated with agriculture, horticulture, viticulture and apiculture in agroforestry systems. As fast growing species, they are effective at sequestering carbon, carbon sinks and adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change.

Poplars and willows have become a significant forest resource that supports communities, smallholders, farmers and companies towards socioeconomic development and sustainable livelihoods in many parts of the world, particularly in rural areas.

2.0 Background to the International Poplar Commission

2.1 Brief History

The International Poplar Commission (IPC) is a Technical Statutory Body of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The First Session of the IPC was held during the “Semaine international du Peuplier” in Paris in April 1947. The FAO Conference, at its Tenth Session in 1959, approved the Convention placing the IPC within the framework of FAO. The Convention came into force on 26 September, 1961; was amended at the IPC Second Session (1967) and Third Session (1977) and approved by the FAO Conference Fourteenth Session (1967) and Nineteenth Session (1977), respectively. The Convention is governed by the provisions of Article XIV of the Constitution of FAO.

2.2 Purpose

The purpose of the IPC is to study the scientific, technical, social and economic aspects of poplar and willow (Salicaceae) cultivation; to promote the exchange of ideas and material between research workers, producers and users; registration of poplar clones and cultivars; to arrange joint research programmes; to stimulate the organization of congresses combined with study tours; to report and make recommendations to the FAO Conference through the Director-General, and to make recommendations to National Poplar Commissions through the Director-General and the Governments concerned.

The IPC facilitates transfer of germplasm, scientific knowledge and technology to improve policies and management practices to improve the cultivation, conservation and utilization of poplar and willow species to enhance their contribution towards sustainable livelihoods and land-use.

2.3 Member Countries

Presently 37 Member Nations have accepted the Convention and established a National Poplar Commission (NPC):

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Argentina</th>
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<td>Iraq (Republic of)</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
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24 Article III, Convention Placing the IPC within the Framework of FAO.
2.4 Institutional and Technical Mechanisms

Sessions of the IPC are held in different countries around the world every four years and the Executive Committee every two years. The Executive Committee fulfils a pivotal role in making proposals and recommendations on strategic decisions to the IPC such as these reform options and programmes of work and provides oversight on technical issues and implementation programmes approved at IPC Sessions. This decision-making function of the Executive Committee is stipulated in the text of the Convention, Art. VII, para 4: "The Executive Committee shall, between sessions of the Commission, act on behalf of the Commission as its executive organ. The Executive Committee shall in particular make proposals to the Commission regarding the general orientation and the programme of work of the Commission, study technical questions and implement the programme as approved by the Commission".

Member Countries are required to actively contribute through their National Poplar Commissions (NPC) and encourage participation of poplar and willow specialists in Working Parties, Sessions, Meetings and other activities of the IPC. The Secretariat for the IPC is located in the Forestry Department, FAO. The Working Languages are English, French and Spanish.

Subsidiary Bodies of the IPC include:

1 Working Parties

Inter-disciplinary Working Parties manage networks, websites, publications, directories/databases, national and international fora and study tours and technical support to scientists, academics, producers and processors to improve poplar and willow cultivation, production, provision of ecosystem services and forest products trade. The Working Parties, designated by technical fields, include:

- Poplar and Willow Diseases⁵;
- Poplar and Willow Insects and Other Animal Pests⁶;
- Harvesting and Utilization of Poplar and Willow Wood⁷;
- Poplar and Willow Genetics, Conservation and Improvement⁸;
- Poplar and Willow Production Systems⁹; and
- Environmental Applications of Poplars and Willows¹⁰.

To address the inter-disciplinary needs of adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change and major sustainability issues (livelihoods, land-use, forest products, bioenergy and environmental services), the IPC response has been to integrate their activities within and between Working Parties to address these themes.

2 Sub-Committee on Nomenclature and Registration

At its seventh session in 1953, the IPC set up the Subcommittee on Nomenclature and Registration¹¹ to establish and manage a register of new poplar cultivars and clones and to check congruence with nomenclature rules. The IPC was designated the International Cultivation Registration Authority (ICRA) for registration of the names of cultivars and clones of the genus *Populus* by the International Commission for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants in 1958. The Register is maintained by the Breeding and Selection Department, ISP-Casale Monferrato, Italy with the Working Party on Poplar and Willow Genetics, Conservation and Improvement¹².

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¹² Register available on IPC Web site [www.fao.org/forestry/site/ipc](http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/ipc)
3.0 IPC Key Outputs and Outcomes

3.1 Key Outputs:

**Institutional**

- Sessions (21st, Portland, USA, 2000; 22nd, Santiago, Chile, 2004; 23rd, Beijing, China, 2008; 24th, Dehra Dun, India, 2012) and Executive Committee Meetings;
- International, Regional and National Technical Meetings and Study Tours:
  - First International Conference on the Future of Poplar Culture in collaboration with the NPC of Italy, Rome, Italy, 2003;
  - Forest Research and Afforestation in the Korquin Sandy Lands, Tongliao, Inner Mongolia, China, 2002;
  - Engineered Wood Products Based on Poplar and Willow Wood, Nanjing, China, 2008;
  - Potential of Willows, organized by the NPC, Argentina (Mendoza, Argentina, 2009; Neuquén, Argentina, 2011; Islas del Ibicuy, Argentina, 2011);
  - Pro-populus and Poplar Culture in Italy, Mantova, Industrial Association, Mantua, Italy, 2009;
  - Meetings of Pro-populus, European Growers, Promoters and Industrial Users of Poplars (1st, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2009; 2nd, Mantua, Italy, 2011);
  - Improving the Contribution of Poplars and Willows in Meeting Sustainable Livelihoods and Land-use in Selected Mediterranean and Central Asian Countries, Izmit, Turkey, 2009;
  - Siyang Delegation to Strengthen Cooperation with FAO and Italy on Poplar Cultivation, Italy, 2010;
  - International Conference on Sustainable Management of Multi-purpose Poplar Plantations, Siyang, China, 2010;
  - Poplar Energy Crops in North-Central USA: Breeding, Production Potential and Environmental Aspects, Monterotondo, Italy, 2010;
  - Forest Restoration in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia Using Treated Water Waste to Sustain Smallholders and Farmer Livelihoods, Tunis, Tunisia, 2010;
- Support to IUFRO Division 2.08.04 on Physiology and Genetics of Poplars and Willows initiatives and meetings including IUFRO’s International Symposia (IPS I, Seattle, USA, 1995; IPS II, Orleans, France, 1999; IPS III, Uppsala, Sweden, 2002; IPS IV, Nanjing, China, 2006; IPS V, Orvieto, Italy, 2010; and IPS VI, Vancouver, B.C. Canada, 2014);

**Technical**

- Technical Exchanges and fellowships for poplar and willow specialists between industrialized countries and developing countries, or those with economies in transition;
- Demonstration and pilot projects:
  - Populetum Mediterraneum of poplar clones in Tivoli, Italy; Cologne, Germany; and Ankara, Turkey.
  - Afforestation to combat desertification and restore livelihoods, North East China;
  - Afforestation to restore flood plains and livelihoods on the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers, China;
  - Afforestation and agroforestry systems to restore landscapes and livelihoods, Turkey;

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14 Technical Meetings and Study Tours http://www.fao.org/forestry/ipc/69642/en/
16 Forest Research and Afforestation in the Korquin Sandy Lands, Tongliao, Inner Mongolia http://www.fao.org/forestry/5686/en/
18 IPC Executive Committee jointly held with the International Poplar Symposium, hosted by IUFRO Division 2.08.04 on Physiology and Genetics of Poplars and Willows: http://www.iufro.org/science/divisions/division-2/200000/208000/20804/
Afforestation, agroforestry and use of treated water waste to restore landscapes and livelihoods, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Egypt.

**Publications and Networking**

- International publications:
  - Poplars and Willows of the World (commercial publication, 2012)\(^{19}\)
  - Review of Fungal Diseases in Poplars\(^{20}\)
  - Damaging Poplar Insects: Internationally Important Species (e-book)\(^{21}\)
  - Field Handbook on Poplar Harvesting\(^{22}\)
  - Unasylva Issue Volume 221\(^{23}\)
- Session Documents (Book of Abstracts of Submitted Papers, National Reports, Synthesis of National Reports, Bibliography of Papers Listed in National Reports and Formal Session and Executive Committee Reports);
- IPC website and sub-portsals for Working Parties and Partner Events as a repository of all activities, outputs and outcomes
- Directories/databases:
  - Poplar and Willow Experts\(^{24}\)
  - Register of Poplar Cultivars and Clones\(^{25}\)
  - National Poplar Commissions\(^{26}\)
  - Executive Committee Members\(^{27}\)
  - Elected Working Party Members\(^{28}\)

### 3.2 Key outcomes facilitated by the IPC

- Genetic stock, technical knowledge and technology transferred from Europe and North America to the Near East, Central Asia, Asia (including Oceania) and Latin America;
- Poplars and willows integrated into large scale landscape restoration (including combating desertification) and phytoremediation of contaminated sites.
- Millions of hectares of smallholder poplars planted and the livelihoods of tens of millions of people benefited directly and indirectly, particularly in Central and North Eastern China and Central Turkey;
- Cultivation and utilization of poplars and willows pioneered for a wide range of end-use mechanisms through smallholders, communities, cooperatives, companies and State enterprises to successfully produce sawn lumber, MDF, chipboard, pulp and paper, veneer, plywood, bioenergy.
- Early warning, detection and control of outbreaks of poplar and willow insect pests or diseases and technical support undertaken to mitigate such risks;
- Quarantine and sanitary measures instituted for safe movement of plant material, including poplars and willows;
- Conservation of native populations of poplars and willows (in-situ and ex-situ) undertaken to conserve genetic diversity as one basis for tree breeding; and
- Conventions adopted for the protection of breeder's rights to facilitate the exchange of superior poplar and willow cultivars.

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\(^{19}\) Poplars and Willows of the World. A 13 chapter commercial book edited by Jim Richardson and Jud Isebrands

\(^{20}\) Review of Fungal Diseases in Poplars by Gian Pietro Cellerino,
\[http://www.fao.org/docrep/004/AC492E/AC492E00.HTM\]

\(^{21}\) Damaging Poplar Insects: Internationally Important Species. E-book available on

\(^{22}\) Field Handbook on Poplar Harvesting, by Stefano Verani, Giulio Sperandio, Rodolfo Picchio, Raffaele Spinelli, Gianni Picchi:
\[http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/k3305e/k3305e00.htm\]

\(^{23}\) Poplars and Willows. Unasylva Volume 221, 2005/2:
\[http://www.fao.org/docrep/008/a0026e/a0026e00.htm\]

\(^{24}\) Directory of Poplar and Willow Experts
\[http://www.fao.org/forest/IPC/69989/en/\]

\(^{25}\) International Register of Populus Cultivars:

\(^{26}\) Directory of National Poplar Commissions:
\[http://www.fao.org/forest/IPC/69988/en/\]

\(^{27}\) Directory of Executive Committee Members:
\[http://www.fao.org/forest/IPC/69990/en/\]

\(^{28}\) Directory of Elected Working Party Members:
\[http://www.fao.org/forest/IPC/69991/en/\]
4.0 SWOT-Analysis

4.1 Strengths

Strengths of the IPC proven after 65 years:

- Remains an active global network of internationally respected and motivated scientists, academics, growers, processors, users and policy makers who share their specialist expertise and services voluntarily to improve the cultivation, conservation and utilization of poplar and willow species;
- Effective transfer of genetic stock and new scientific knowledge and technology of poplars and willows to enhance their contribution towards sustainable development, livelihoods and land-use;
- Long established international partnerships:
  - International Commission for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants (ICNCA)29;
  - IUFRO Division on Physiology and Genetics of Poplars and Willows30;
- Long established North → South and West → East institutional twinning between institutions in Central and Western Europe and North America with institutions in the Middle East, Asia Pacific and Latin America;
- The IPC and Statutory Bodies, through their website is a repository of key data and information and access to specialist expertise on poplar and willow research, management and utilization;

4.2 Weaknesses

- The natural and planted Salicaceae range is primarily in temperate, boreal and tundra ecosystems;
- IPC membership conditions have become a perverse disincentive for attracting new members. (since 2000 there have been no new IPC member countries approved despite strong interest by new institutions and specialists, e.g. in Uzbekistan and Russia);
- Working parties, the engines of the IPC are based upon technical fields, whilst major environmental and developmental issues require greater integration and multi-disciplinary approaches, which have not always been achieved;
- Whilst a small number of NPCs are extremely active (Italy, Canada, Argentina) too many are becoming dormant because they lack leadership, institutional support and in some instances, an appropriate institutional setting;
- The IPC Working Parties, NPCs and formal sessions of the IPC depend heavily upon voluntary contributions and self-funding by poplar and willow specialists, who have heavy commitments to their own organizations;
- With shrinking FAO regular programme budgets, there are insufficient resources to sustain effective functioning of the Secretariat and subsequent outreach;
- The current geographic, biological and technical scope of the IPC has had limited appeal to potential donors; and
- National poplar and willow research and development programmes face decreased priority, funds and other resources.

4.3 Opportunities

- Greater collaboration with existing international partners (IUFRO, IEA Bioenergy Tasks and ICNCA);

29 ICRA for Populus http://www.ishs.org/sci/icralist/37.htm
30 IUFRO Division 2.08.04, Physiology and Genetics of Poplars and Willows http://www.iufro.org/science/divisions/division-2/20000/20800/20804/
• Expansion of the scope of the IPC to a wider range of genera/species, growing mechanisms, partnerships and programmes that support sustainable land-use and livelihoods approaches at the sub-national, national, regional and international levels;

• Expansion of IPC membership, particularly in countries where poplars, willows and associated other species have historically been important for sustainable land-use and livelihoods or where potential exists to extend poplar and willow cultivation, conservation and utilization into new areas;

• Adoption of integrated, multi-disciplinary, thematic approaches to Working Parties and to revitalize NPCs to address major themes of our times (e.g. climate change adaptation and mitigation; sustainable supplies of wood, fibre, biofuel, forest products and non-wood forest products; conservation of biodiversity; sustainable livelihoods; sustainable land-use and development; sustainable ecosystems and landscapes and the provision of environmental services);

• Revision of the contribution of poplars, willows and other genera/species of high socio-economic or ecological significance to contribute more towards achievement of the outcomes and recommended actions of the Rio+2032, UNFCCC33, CBD34, UNCCD35, UNFF36 and the MDG37s.

4.4 Threats

• The major environmental and developmental issues that countries face require increasingly inter-sectoral, multi-disciplinary and integrated approaches whilst the IPC is strongly technical discipline based, within the forestry sector;

• The mandate, outputs and outcomes of the IPC are being perceived as narrowly focused by FAO members and donors;

• Without additional FAO and donor support, the existing IPC is threatened with less resources, which further undermines the capacity and capability of the Secretariat, Working Parties and NPCs to function effectively;

• Climate change is causing vulnerability of forest resources, including poplars and willows, to greater biotic, abiotic, wood processing and market threats that require adaptation and diversification to better manage risks in growing, conserving, utilizing and marketing of poplars and willows.

4.5 Lessons Learned

• Poplars and willows grow well in a range of mechanisms from natural associations of species, to planted forests and agroforestry systems grown as monocultures or mixed species to provide a wide range of forest products (wood and non-wood) and ecosystem services (social and environmental) that support sustainable livelihoods and land-use;

• Expansion of new IPC members has proven a challenge due to the institutional requirements, despite interest by poplar and willow specialists and institutions;

• The 6 Working Parties based upon technical fields do not adequately fit major topical themes without more integration and multi-disciplinary approaches to address sustainable land-use, sustainable ecosystems, climate change mitigation and adaptation and sustainable livelihoods;

• A few NPCs are very active, but the majority less so, with some becoming dormant due to a lack of leadership, institutional setting and a lack of resources;

• The IPC Secretariat is under-resourced so unable to fully serve NPCs, Working Parties, partners and programmes;

• Dedicated poplar and willow specialists volunteer their services to IPC publications, pilot projects, partnerships, technical exchanges and databases;
• The outcomes of poplar and willow cultivation, conservation, utilization and marketing have positively contributed to sustainable land-use, landscape restoration and livelihoods, particularly in developing countries in the Near East, Central Asia, Asia and Latin America, but these are not quantified or sufficiently recognized;
• Twinning and networking in poplar and willow research, cultivation, utilization and trade remain robust in exchanging species and clones, cultivation, conservation, utilization and trade in poplars and willows between researchers, growers, processors and users;
• On-going budgetary support for the IPC from within FAO regular programme budgets and extra-budgetary donor sources has been declining because FAO member countries and donors do not relate poplar and willow cultivation, conservation, utilization and trade sufficiently with sustainable land-use and livelihoods.

5.0 Alternative Ways Forward

There is an increasing recognition that the flexibility, productivity and social, environmental and economic sustainability of growing and using poplars and willows can make positive impacts on peoples’ livelihoods, restore landscapes and provide a wide range of ecosystem services. However, there remains greater potential to integrate the cultivation, conservation, utilization and marketing of poplars, willows and other genera/species of high socio-economic or ecological significance to contribute even more towards sustainable land-use, landscape restoration, livelihoods, food security and poverty alleviation.

Alternative ways forward are summarized according to the Status Quo; Institutional Reform; and Integrated Reform in Table 1 according to Scope, Advantages, Disadvantages, Assumptions and Risks.

Maintaining the status quo is not really a viable option for long term relevance and impact of the IPC in environmental and development programmes in member countries under prevailing conditions.

A partial institutional reform has the potential to better integrate poplars and willows in multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral approaches and help reform the Secretariat, Working Parties and NPCs to better support environmental and developmental themes. However, without committed support from FAO members and funding agencies/donors, the IPC and Secretariat will struggle to secure the resources to deliver benefits and impacts.

**Recommended Option**: Adopt the integrated reform that includes poplars, willows and other genera/species of high socio-economic or ecological significance for livelihoods, food security and poverty alleviation; clarification and simplification of the convention; and reform of Secretariat, Working Party and NPC mechanisms according to themes most relevant to member countries in more inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approaches.
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<th>Scope</th>
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<th>Assumptions</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1 Status Quo</strong></td>
<td>• Build upon existing institutional and technical settings, outputs and outcomes; • Protocols and mechanisms known; and • Existing networks, twinning, partnerships and pilot projects can potentially be built upon.</td>
<td>• Membership remains strongly dominated by industrialized or mid-income countries • Relatively narrow genus/species focus; • Limited scope to attract new members; • Working parties not well aligned or integrated to address major environmental and development issues; • Continued erosion in strength of NPCs; • Secretariat struggles to secure sufficient resources to provide effective support to IPC; • Limited scope to attract new donors; • National research and development programmes on poplars and willows continue to erode.</td>
<td>• IPC Convention not revised; • Institutional mechanisms remain the same; and • Technical focus remains the same.</td>
<td>• New potential members unable to join IPC; • Disconnect grows between IPC activities, outputs and outcomes and needs for integrated, multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral ecosystem and landscape approaches to environmental and developmental growth; • FAO, FAO members and donors do not fully support the IPC; • FAO discontinue their role as Secretariat on relevance issues; • Ability of the IPC, NPCs and Working Parties become increasingly difficult to function and outputs and outcomes become increasingly difficult to achieve; and • IPC relevance eroded in a changing political, institutional, social, environmental, economic, technical and physical climate despite the increasing relevance of forests and forestry</td>
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Table 1
Alternative Ways Forward
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<td><strong>2 Institutional Reform</strong></td>
<td>• Greater integration of existing institutional and technical settings, outputs and outcomes; • IPC Convention and mechanisms updated and streamlined to strengthen current relevance; • Working Parties and NPC mechanisms more aligned with FAO and IPC member environmental and developmental needs (e.g. climate change, intensive bioenergy cultivation etc); • Secretariat refocus to support Working Parties and NPCs and other activities and outputs; • Existing networks, twinning, partnerships and pilot projects potentially more integrated into environmental and development initiatives.</td>
<td>• Limited poplar and willow focus retained • Uncertainty with partial reform; • Continued erosion in strength of NPCs; • Secretariat continues to struggle to secure sufficient resources to provide effective support to IPC; • Limited scope to attract new donors; • National research and development programmes on poplars and willows continue to erode.</td>
<td>• IPC Convention can be clarified and simplified, including for new members; • Institutional settings and mechanisms of NPCs, Working Parties and Secretariat can be revised; • Poplars and willows can be integrated more effectively into environmental and developmental themes; • Working Parties and NPCs become the engine rooms of relevance for the IPC, supported by the Secretariat; • Working sessions of IPC, NPCs and Working Parties help to define the new institutional and technical focus of the IPC.</td>
<td>• IPC Convention difficult and protracted to change; • Protracted multi-stakeholder processes to reform institutional mechanisms of NPCs, Working Parties and Secretariat; • Period of uncertainty whilst IPC activities, outputs and outcomes more integrated, in inter-sectoral ecosystem and landscape approaches to environmental and developmental growth; • FAO and FAO members don’t fully support partial reform of IPC; and • Slow IPC adaptation to changing political, institutional, social, environmental, economic, technical and physical climate.</td>
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| Integrated Reform | • IPC scope expanded to poplars, willows and other genera/species supporting sustainable land-use, livelihoods, food security and poverty alleviation;  
• Working parties revised to reflect environmental and developmental themes;  
• Convention revisited to simplify procedures and clarify scope;  
• NPC mechanisms reformed in line with environmental and developmental themes in line with FAO and IPC member needs;  
• Secretariat mechanisms revised to more effectively support more integrated NPCs, Working Parties, Sub-committee, Sessions and other IPC activities, outputs and outcomes;  
• FAO, at all levels, actively market revised IPC to new multi-lateral and bilateral donors and international programmes (e.g. REDD+, UN-REDD);  
• Sessions, Executive Committee and other national, regional and international meetings focus on how poplars, willows and other genera and species can better contribute to environmental and developmental programmes; and  
• Actively integrate poplars, willows and other genera/species twinning and projects into environmental and developmental processes and programmes at regional, national and sub-national levels. | • Poplars and willows exist in nature and planted mechanisms in associated mixed genera/species;  
• The larger scope of poplars, willows and other genera/species opens many opportunities for managing integrated environment and development programmes;  
• Simplified, clarified convention and wider mandate may encourage new memberships & stimulate new activities;  
• New NPC, Working Party and Secretariat mechanisms will be in line with FAO and IPC member needs;  
• Secretariat, NPCs, Sub-committee and Working Parties work more in a more integrated and effective manner;  
• Marketability of revised IPC to funding agencies and donors enhanced;  
• Widening the scope may revitalize Sessions, activities, outputs and outcomes; and  
• Enhanced opportunities for networking, twinning, partnerships and pilot projects. | • Uncertainty during the reform process – revision of the convention, Secretariat, Working Parties, NPCs etc; and  
• Convincing a 65 year old IPC to embrace reform for growth and enhanced relevance. | • Poplars, willows and other genera/species can be integrated promptly and effectively into environmental and developmental themes and add a significant, positive dimension;  
• IPC Convention can be clarified and simplified for new scope, including for new members;  
• Institutional settings and mechanisms of NPC’s, Working Parties and Secretariat can be revised as proposed;  
• Working Parties and NPCs become the engine rooms of relevance for the IPC, supported by the Secretariat;  
• Working sessions of IPC, NPCs and Working Parties help to define the new institutional and technical focus of the IPC in transparent, participatory processes.  
• FAO, funding agencies and donors commit funds and other resources to the IPC and particularly the Secretariat to more effectively undertake their new tasks. | • Loss of focus on Salicaceae may result in a unstructured conglomerate of working parties, activities, outputs and outcomes;  
• IPC Convention difficult and protracted to change;  
• Protracted multi-stakeholder processes to reform institutional mechanisms of NPCs, Working Parties and Secretariat;  
• Period of uncertainty whilst IPC activities, outputs and outcomes more integrated, in inter-sectoral ecosystem and landscape approaches to environmental and developmental growth;  
• FAO and FAO members don’t fully support partial reform of IPC;  
• Funding agencies, donors and international programmes do not support IPC activities; and  
• Slow IPC adaptation to changing political, institutional, social, environmental, economic, technical and physical climate. |