

# **FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF POPLAR CULTURE**

## **Final Synthesis Statement**

14 November 2003

### Introduction

The First International Conference on the Future of Poplar Culture was hosted by the National Poplar Commission of Italy, with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Agricultural and Forest Policies. The meeting, in collaboration with FAO was held at the headquarters of FAO, 13-15 November in Rome, Italy. The highlights of the conference are summarized in Annex 1, the Agenda in Annex 2 and Participants List in Annex 3.

### Purpose

The purposes of the Conference were to:

1. Inform decision-makers at the European and international level about the role that poplars and willows can play in social and economic development, their beneficial environmental impact and the potential for scientific, technical and economic cooperation in poplar and willow culture, and related industrial sectors.
2. Discuss the implications of integration of the forest sectors of the European Union (EU), candidate countries to the EU, and the broader Pan Europe region for the forestry sector and poplar culture.
3. Outline the role of the International Poplar Commission (IPC) in providing a network to facilitate transfer of technology and in connecting individuals and institutions for the development of sustainable poplar and willow culture and use.

### Proposed Actions

The conference participants concluded that poplars and willows had an exciting future, within an expanded European Union for its economic, social and environmental benefits. The following actions are necessary to translate this potential into a reality:

1. Make explicit reference to forestry and its tangible and intangible benefits as key elements of the rural development policies of the EU.
2. Develop coherent and consistent forest related policies which avoid bias and market distortions.
3. Create a favourable investment climate in candidate countries in poplar and willow culture and processing through joint ventures and equitable partnerships to realize mutual benefits.

4. Recognize, quantify and value environmental benefits of planted forests of poplars and willows, as a contribution to policy development, with particular attention to the carbon exchange accounting and phyto-remediation.
5. Harmonization of rules regarding the environment and worker safety as a prerequisite for developing sound markets and avoiding conflicts between industries in developed and developing countries.
6. Promote sustainable forest management with emphasis on participatory approaches and benefit sharing. Certification can contribute to achieving this.
7. Protect genetic resources and natural poplar and willow populations where they are threatened by human activities.
8. Exploit the enormous potential of molecular biology in tree improvement without sacrificing conventional, long term research and experimentation.
9. Intensify efforts to strengthen poplar and willow research in the expanding EU with particular regard to testing in different sites, ecological and climatic conditions, including through institutional collaboration and twinning.
10. Fast growing planted forests of poplars and willows for wood and fibre production can take the pressure off natural and semi-natural forests managed for primarily conservation, protective and other environmental functions.
11. Membership of the International Poplar Commission may contribute by linking at international, regional and national levels to collaboration in the implementation of these actions

### **Highlights of presentation and discussions 13-14 November, 2003**

#### **Goods and services provided by poplars and willows**

Poplars and willows, which account for an estimated 46 million ha of natural and planted forest associations globally, are among the fastest growing trees in temperate regions. They are easy to cultivate and grow, and form an important component of forestry and agricultural systems, often for small-scale farmers, whether wealthy or poor, across the globe. Poplars and willows are used for a wide range of wood products that add value, create employment, boost exports and contribute to social and economic development and sustainable livelihoods in rural areas. Non-wood products from both poplars and willows include fodder, biomass production and fuel.

Poplars and willows provide a broad range of environmental benefits including protection of soil and water, combating desertification and shelter for communities, livestock and crops. They also provide valuable benefits in sequestering carbon, phyto-remediating contaminated soils and rehabilitating degraded sites

The production and processing of wood products, including those from poplars and willows is more energy efficient than steel, concrete and aluminium. Additionally they are renewable and environmentally friendly.

#### **Status, trends and issues**

The relatively wealthy and ageing populations of the present EU are using high-technology processing to make high-value products out of low quality fibre, with increasing quantities arising from recycled material. About half of the annual increment is not used, and these countries are giving more emphasis to the service functions of forests. These include diversifying the landscape, maintaining quality of water and air, flood prevention, slope stabilization, landfill leachate treatment, remediation of chemically contaminated sites, providing shelter and shade for agricultural crops and livestock and valuable resources for recreation uses. Carbon sequestration and the development of renewable energy are also environmentally related services. Methods to fully account for the economic, social and environmental benefits of forests are being developed as current accounts under-value the full benefits beyond forest products.

In the past the provisions of the Common Agricultural Policy have encouraged productive land to be taken out of agriculture, although that land is not necessarily available for forestry development. Although there is no EU Common Forestry Policy there is a European Forestry Strategy (1998-2003). The EU and the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) expect greater harmonization of forestry policy and legal frameworks, strengthening capacity and capability of forest institutions and integration of forestry in national development and the rural landscape.

The economies of the candidate countries, and of the CIS countries, are expected to grow rapidly in response to market reform and liberalisation over the next two decades, which will contribute to strong markets for forest products. Ownership of the forest sector in the ten candidate countries has reverted to private owners to a large extent, but many of the holdings are small, and the new owners have limited experience of management. There is also a trend for investment in forests in the candidate countries from existing EU member countries.

In forest products trade, including poplars and willows, there are socio-economic and political differences between post industrialized countries and developing countries that lead to production and trade difficulties. Industrialized countries have stringent social, environmental and economic regulations that increase their costs of production, whilst developing countries may have less stringent regulations and lower costs of production.

There is an increasing importance of planted forests in future wood supply and changes in technology to utilize this raw material in more efficient ways. However, in developed countries the consumers are increasingly demanding the forest products from sustainable managed forests. Certification offers one alternative as a means to meeting this demand. There are however, considerable constraints for developing countries and small scale owners, mainly costs, to meeting the requirements of certification schemes. This is very relevant to poplars and willows. However, to date the distributors and consumers have not yet demonstrated that they are willing to pay more for certified products.

Poplars were seen by participants as a “model” tree, especially in advances in tree breeding, the development of management systems, and the identification of novel uses. The opportunity should be taken to establish collaborative networks to exploit the advanced scientific knowledge of its genome, and the relatively short time from lab to field. The temptation should be avoided to fund high-tech research at the expense of more traditional approaches e.g. long term breeding and selection plans, epidemiological studies, field experimentation and demonstration.

Environmental resistance to planting of monocultures, particularly with hybrids and clonal reproduction is, in some instances, leading to constraints on the establishment of planted forests with poplar species in areas of its natural distribution where there is potential for use not only as commercial crops but also riparian strips and buffer zones. At the same time, natural populations of poplars are under threat from unsustainable forestry and agricultural practices, storms and tempests, diseases and insects, fire and genetic pollution.

The benefits of poplars and willows to support sustainable livelihoods in developing economies may be considerable, if unquantified. Poplar growing, to a lesser extent also contributes to the economies in transition and the industrialized economies, but are insufficiently integrated with other forms of land-use. The trend in post-industrialized countries is towards the integration of poplar and willow growing in the mosaic of the wider landscape managed more in accordance with the ecosystem approach.

## Conclusions

The expansion of the EU to 25 members offers a good opportunity to draft clearer and simpler provisions on forestry support, especially in relation to afforestation, both short- and long-term, of agricultural land taken out of production. Producers and users should collaborate to make the case for these reforms.

Short-rotation planted forests of poplar and willow species can play an important role in wood supply for energy, wood and fibre. Environmental, social and landscape impacts must be ascertained by engaging key stakeholders in a rational way, combining scientific and traditional knowledge to respond to their needs and aspirations in a balanced manner to improve rural livelihoods. Short-rotation poplar and willow culture can also have an increasingly important role in remediation of contaminated sites and rehabilitation of degraded lands. The commercial/production functions of poplar and willow culture are inseparably interlinked with their social and environmental dimensions.

Forests in the EU and later in the candidate countries will increasingly be managed for their environmental functions. Reliable methods, accepted by all stakeholders, should be developed to value these services, and for planted forests of poplar and willow species in particular. There is already sufficient proven research and field experimentation and demonstration to allow adoption of proven applications of poplar and willows in a wide range of environmental rehabilitation and remediation roles. Future work is needed to better quantify benefits and outcomes in a range of situations and to communicate existing information to wider stakeholders in a fashion that can be readily understood and applied.

Most of the proposed European increase in renewable energy production is likely to come from woody biomass; it was concluded that there may be considerable challenges in ensuring that financial incentives for wood production for energy do not distort the pulpwood supply.

A healthy genetic base is essential for tree breeding and is the basis for poplar and willow culture. It was concluded that excellent collaborative programmes, involving many European countries, are in place for the conservation of *Populus nigra* and to a lesser extent *P. alba*, and their continuation and expansion were strongly supported. It was also concluded that other indigenous poplar and willow species should be included in similar conservation networks.

## Agenda

### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF POPLAR CULTURE Rome, 13-15 November 2003

#### **13 November**

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*8:00 Registration of participants at FAO*

*9:00 Opening of the conference (Chair, Paolo Ducci)*

- P. Ducci – Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Coord. FAO/IFAD/PAM - CNP
- A. Blefari Melazzi - UN Rome – Representative - Italy
- V. du Marteau – FAO Rome – Representative - European Union
- F. Radice Fossati – Chairman of the National Poplar Commission: "Activities of the NPC and aims of the Conference"
- H. El Lakany - Assistant Director General, Forestry Department (FAO)

*9:30 Setting the EU Stage (Moderator, Jim Ball)*

- A. Whiteman (FAO) – Where is the EU wood market going?
- J. Carle (FAO) – Forestry in the expanded European Union: principles and practice.

*10:30 Coffee break*

*11:00 Poplar in the Common Agricultural Policy (Moderator, Jim Carle)*

- A. Padró Simarro (Spain) – The poplar growers' view.
- N. Reni (Italy) – The wood industry's view.
- A. Cafiero (Italy) – The paper industry's view.

*12:30 Lunch (FAO Cafeteria)*

*14:00 Science, research and international cooperation (Moderator, Sven M. G. De Vries)*

- R. Stettler (USA) – The actual and the possible – the role of science in poplar's future.
- J. Turok (IPGRI) – Scientific networking.

*14:45 Poplar genetic resources (Moderator, Sven M. G. De Vries)*

- P. Sigaud (FAO) – Populus conservation and use in China.
- A. Tsarev (Russia) – Native and cultivated Poplars in Russia.

*15:30 Coffee break*

*16:00 Poplars in the environment (Moderator, Stefano Bisoffi)*

- D. Terrasson (France) - Poplar: an element in a complex landscape.
- D. Riddell-Black (United Kingdom) - Environmental role of poplars and willows.
- D. Pettenella (Italy) "Sustainable Forest Management" and poplar plantations.

## **14 November**

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*9:00 Communications by official delegations (First part) – (Chair/Moderator, Antonio. Padró Simarro)*

*10:30 Coffee break*

*11:00 Communications by official delegations (Second part) - (Moderator, Stefano Bisoffi)*

*12:30 Lunch (FAO Cafeteria)*

*14:00 Round table - "Development and cooperation policies for the future" - (Moderator, Claudio d'Aloya)*

*Participants:*

- A. S. Birlir (University of AIB, Turkey)
- F. Vecchioni (Member of Confederazione Italiana dell'Agricoltura)
- D. Pettenella (University of Padua, Dipartimento Territorio e Sistemi Agro-Forestali - Agripolis, Italy)
- F. Martinelli (Vice-Director General of Forests, Mountains and Hydric Resources, Ministry of Agriculture)
- E. H. Sène (Director, Forest Resources Division, Forestry Department, FAO)

*15:00 Coffee break*

*16:00 Conference's Closure (Chair Paolo Ducci)*

Final Statement's Approval

A. Sanhueza Silva - *Presentation of the 22nd Session of the International Poplar Commission (Chile, 2004)*

S. Bisoffi (Chairman International Poplar Commission)

E. H. Sène (Director, Forest Resources Division, Forestry Department, FAO)

## **15 Novembre – Excursion to Tivoli**

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*9:00 Departure from ES Hotel (Via Turati 171 – Roma)*

*10:00 Visit of the experimental farm "Cesurni" at Bagni di Tivoli*

*Populetum mediterraneum (collection of poplar clones)*

*Juglandetum (collection of walnut species and provenances)*

*Ceresetum (collection of wild cherry provenances)*

*12:30 Lunch*

*14:00 Guided tour of Villa d'Este*

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF POPLAR CULTURE (Rome, 13-15 November 2003)

## Participants List

## Foreign Delegates

Name	Country/ Int. Org.	Affiliation	Position
DARRAIDOU Jose Luis	Argentina	Secretería de Agricultura Ganaderia Pesca y Alimentos (SAGPyA)	Director de Forestación
OBRADOR Martin	Argentina		
PETRAY Elvira Matilde	Argentina	Dirección de Forestación - Segretería de Agricultura, Ganaderia, Pesca y Alimentos (SAGPyA)	Técnica a/c del área Silvicultura y Plagas Forestales Secretería Técnica de la Comición del Álamo de Argentina
SLYCKEN Jos Van	Belgium	Insitute for Forestry and Game Management	Director
STEENACKERS Marijke	Belgium	Ministry of the Flemish Community Insitute for Forestry and Game Management	Forest Pathologist Senior Researcher
BOJINOVA Svilena	Bulgaria	National Forestry Board	Head of Forest seed-control station
MIHAYLOVA Neli	Bulgaria	National Forestry Board	Chief expert in Afforestation
EL-KASSABY Yousry	Canada	The University of British Columbia	Professor, Forest Genetics
SANHUEZA SILVA Armando	Chile	Corporación Nacional Forestal	Secretario Ejecutivo Comición Nacional del Álamo de Chile Miembro Comité Ejecutivo Comición Internacional del Álamo
ULLOA BRAVO Jaime	Chile	CIA. Agricola y Forestal el Álamo Ltda.	Miembro Comición Nacional del Álamo de Chile
LI Jinhua	China, People's Republic	Forest Research Institute – Chinese Society of Forestry	Doctor



LIU Hesheng	China, People's Republic	Accademic Department - Chinese Society of Forestry	Director
SAN Ting	China, People's Republic	Green Great Wall Industry Co. Ltd. GGWI	Director
KAJBA Davorin	Croatia	Faculty of Forestry	Assistan Professor
PFEIFER Dragomir	Croatia	Croatian Forests "Hrvatske šume" d.o.o.	Manager of Forest Office Darda
VRATARIC Pavle	Croatia	Croatian Forests "Hrvatske šume" d.o.o.	Manager of Forest Department Osijek
ABDEL-DAYEM Ahmmmed M.	Egypt	Forestry Department Horticultural Research Institute	Chairman
LAAS Indrek	Estonia	Forest Department Ministry of the Environment	Senior Officer
MARTVERK Riina	Estonia	Forest Department Ministry of the Environment	Senior Officer
BEUKER Egbert	Finland	Finnish Forest Research Institute	Researcher
TERRASSON Daniel	France	CEMAGREF - Département (DTDG)	Chef de département
MUHS Hans	Germany	Federal Research Centre for Forestry and Forest Product	Director
BACH István	Hungary	National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control	Head of Division of Horticulture and Forestry, member of FAO-IPC Executive Committee
BAGAMÉRY Gáspár	Hungary	National Institute for Agricultural Quality Control	Senior Inspector of Horticulture and Forestry, Chairman of Hungarian National Poplar Commission
KISHWAN Shri Jagdish	India	Ministry of Environment and Forests	Inspector General of Forests
KUMAR Shri Dinesh	India	Indian Council of Forestry Reaserch and Education	Scientist

KOSKELA, Jarkko	IPGRI	IPGRI	
TUROK Jozef	IPGRI	IPGRI	
HEDAYATII Mohammad Ali	Iran Islamic Rep. of	Forest Range and Watershed Management Organisation (FRWO)	Director General
MOUSAVI Seyed Aghil	Iran Islamic Rep. of	Forest Range and Watershed Management Organisation (FRWO)	
NOORI NAEINI Mohammad Saeid	Iran Islamic Rep. of	Permanent Representative to FAO	Ambassador
DOYLE Joe	Ireland	Forest Service Dept. Communications, Marine and Natural Resources	Forestry Inspector
KEARY Kevin	Ireland	Forest Service, Dept. Communications, Marine and Natural Resources	Forestry Inspector
ACTINS Ansis	Latvia	Latvia State Stock Company "Latvijas valsts meži"	Reforestation and forest certification co-ordinator
FADI S. El Hussein	Lebanon	Dept. Of Rural Development & Natural Resources (SAIDA) Ministry of Agriculture	Chief of Service
MOUAWAD BASSIL Michel	Lebanon	Dept. Of Rural Development & Natural Resources (SAIDA) Ministry of Agriculture	
SUCHOCKAS Vytautas	Lithuania	Lithuanian Forest Research Institute	Scientist of Forest Genetic and Reforestation Division
ZEBRAUSKAS Stanislovas	Lithuania	Department of Forests Ministry of Environment	Head of Silviculture Division
SBAY Hassan	Morocco	Forest Department	Doctor
DE VRIES Sven M. G.	Netherlands	ALTERRA Green World Research	Tree Breeder
Tariq NAZIR CHAUNDRY	Pakistan	Ministry of Environment and Rural Development	Section Officer

Muhammad TAHIR LAEEQ	Pakistan	Pakistan Forest Institute	
OSZAKO Tomasz	Poland	Forest Research Institute Warsaw	Senior Researcher
FILAT Mihai	Romania		
TSAREV Anatoli	Russian Federation	Petrozavodsk State University, Faculty of Forest Engineering	Professor
ORLOVIC Sasa	Serbia and Montenegro		
PILIPOVIC Andrej	Serbia and Montenegro	Poplar Research Institute	Research fellow
LONGAUER Romàn	Slovak Republic	Forest Research Institute	Department of Forest Genetic and Tree Species Breeding
NEŠTICKÝ Štefan	Slovak Republic	Forest Research Institute	Research Station Gabčíkovo
CORBÌ José Manuel Grau	Spain	CIFOR-INIA Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnologia	Investigador
GARNICA ORTIZ Pedro	Spain	Grupo de Empresas Garnica Plywood	Proprietario Empresa
MOLOWNY Alfonso Fernández	Spain	Confederación Hidrografica del Duero - Ministerio de Medio Ambiente	Jefe del Servicio del Duero
MORENO Carlos Alvarez	Spain	Grupo de Empresas Garnica Plywood	Empresa Particular
PADRÒ SIMARRO Antonio	Spain		
PERTTU Kurth L.	Sweden	Swedish University of Agricultural Scincies (SLU)	Professor
BIRLER Ali Sencer	Turkey	University of AIB, Faculty of Forestry	Professor

ZORALIOGLU Taneri	Turkey	Poplar Research Institute - Ministry of Environment and Forest	Director
DU MARTEAU Wilma	UE		Ambassador
SYDORUK Yuriy	Ukraine	State Forestry Committee of Ukraine	Deputy Head of the Science & Information Department
VOLOSYANCHUK T.Roman	Ukraine	Ukrainian Research Institute of Forestry and Forest Melioration	Chief Laboratory of Forest Tree Breeding
RIDDELL-BLACK Drusilla	United Kingdom	Lupus Science	
STETTLER Reinhard F.	United States of America	University of Washington	Professor
BARREIRO MOURIZ Oscar	USSE	Union of Forests of Southern Europe USSE	Director
ISASI PÉREZ Iñaki	USSE	Union of Forests of Southern Europe USSE	Executive President

**Italian delegates**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Country/ Int. Org.</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Position</b>
ANTONIANI Massimo	Italy	III Division International Relations Corpo Forestale dello Stato	
ARCADU Paolo	Italy	Confagricoltura	Member of National Federal Forest Resources
ARLATI Claudio	Italy	CoPAgri – CNP	
ARRIGO Mario	Italy	Regione Sicilia Dirigente Responsabile	
BEDENDO Pietro	Italy	Azienda Agricola Dal Soglio Lorenza	
BERTI Stefano	Italy	CNR IVALSA – NPC	Dirigente di Ricerca
BISOFFI Stefano	Italy	Istituto di Sperimentazione per la Pioppicoltura IPC - CNP	Director
BOZZOLO Livio	Italy	Confagricoltura	Member of National Federal Forest Resources
CAFIERO Armando	Italy	Assocarta	Director General
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DE LUCA Giuseppe	Italy	Confagricoltura	Chairman of National Federal Forest Resources
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GAETANI Nicolò	Italy	Confagricoltura	Member of National Federal Forest Resources
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MAGLIANO Gian Domenico	Italy	MAE – DGCE - Director General	
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MONTINI Giorgio	Italy	Confagricoltura	Member of National Federal Forest Resources

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PANTALEO Luca	Italy	Confagricoltura	Member of National Federal Forest Resources
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ZORGNO Edoardo	Italy	Confagricoltura	Member of National Federal Forest Resources
BLEFARI MELAZZI Anne	Italy	ONU Roma Rapp. d'Italia (Ambassador)	
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TINELLI Aleandro	Italy		
CRESCENZI Vincenzo	Italy	Min. Attività Produttive CNP	

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d'ALOYA Claudio	Italy	Consiglio dell'EU	
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DEL FIACCO Chiara	Italy	Fedecomlegno – CNP	
DUCCI Fulvio	Italy	ISS – CNP	
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MACRÍ Antonio	Italy	ISTAT CNP	
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ALASSIA Enrico	Italy	Azienda Agricola ALASSIA Sebastiano F.lli S.S.	Amministratore delegato
VISIOLI Paolo	Italy	SADEPAN CHIMICA Srl - Ingegnere	

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Delegates and Conference Team**

Name	Country/ Int. Org.	Affiliation	Position
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ALBONETTI Domenico	Italy	MAE - Coord. FAO/IFAD/PAM - CNP	Consultant
MORGANTI Riccardo	Italy	MAE - Coord. FAO/IFAD/PAM - CNP	Consultant
AURELI Vincenzina	Italy	MAE - Coord. FAO/IFAD/PAM - CNP	Consultant
MATTEU Alessandro	Italy	MAE - Coord. FAO/IFAD/PAM - CNP	Consultant

**FAO - Delegates and Conference Team**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Country/ Int. Org.</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Position</b>
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BALL Jim	FAO	Forestry Department	Consultant
CARLE Jim	FAO	Forestry Department	Senior Forestry Officer Plantation & Protection Forest Resources Division
DEL LUNGO Alberto	FAO	Forestry Department	Consultant Plantation & Protection Forest Resources Division
EL LAKANY Hosny	FAO	Forestry Department	Assistant Director-General
MILLANES Michele	FAO	Forestry Department	Secretary
SENE El Hadji	FAO	Forestry Department	Director Forest Resources Division
SIGAUD Pierre	FAO	Forestry Department	Officer Forest Resources Division
WHITEMAN Adrian	FAO	Forestry Department	Officer
VALERI Claudio	FAO	Forestry Department	IT Specialist