

In The Name Of God

## **Poplar Planting in Iran**

By Mohammad Ali Hedaiaii<sup>1</sup>

Having 165 million ha, I.R.Iran is located between 25°to 40° north latitude in the Middle East. Iran has a variant climate, characterized as follows:

- Hyrcanian region in the north (humid temperate forest similar to the European broad leaved temperate forest)
- Arasbaran region in the North West (semi humid temperate broad leaved forest)
- Zagrosian region in the west (semi arid broad leaved forest)
- Irano-Touranian region in the central and west (mountainous semi arid and desert arid forests)
- Tropical region in the south (Tropical and sub Tropical pseudo-savannah forests)

At present, 7.4 % of the country total area (12.4 million ha) is covered by these forests.

### **Background:**

Poplar planting in Iran dates back to long ago. The people have planted *Populus nigra* and *Populus alba* species in the most mountainous parts of the country. These two species are not found in the natural forests of Iran.

### **Poplars in Iran:**

Besides of *P. nigra* and *P. alba* there are two other species of *P. caspica* in the Hyrcanian forests in the north under reservoir management as well as *P. euphratica* in the other areas of the country naturally in their specific sites.

### **Improved poplar:**

Poplar International Commission adopted I.R.Iran membership to the commission on 1955 and immediately National Commission on Poplar was established in Iran. Then,

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<sup>1</sup> Ph.D. in forestry, Directorate of Afforestation and Parks Bureau, F.R.W.O Iran

numerous improved clones were introduced to the country for the purpose of its compatibility. The followings showed good results:

*P. deltoides* 7751-6955-7251-6351

*P. euramericana* 4551-5556- i.214

The first poplar conference was held in Tehran on 1965.

### ***Poplar plantation area:***

At present, 50,000 ha in the north are under improved poplar species plantation and 100,000 ha in some other parts with *P. nigra* and *P. alba* in the form of extensive and intensive.

At average, there is 2.5 million m<sup>3</sup> wood production in a year, mainly used in the building and paper industries as well as heating and veneering.

Poplar is planted by the rural people, private sectors and rural cooperatives outside forests.

Since, Iran is located in arid and semi arid zone and have a poor forest cover (less than 10%), poplar plantation plays a major role and mitigates pressure on natural forests.

To encourage poplar planting, the government should take the following measures:

- Promoting poplar planting among public and private sectors
- Giving low interest and long term loans to poplar planters
- Supplying inputs such as insecticide, fertilizer and agricultural tools
- Guaranteeing wood purchase by cellulose and paper industries
- Specifying suitable sites outside the forests
- Supplying saplings
- Providing scientific and technical advice on planting, conservation and harvesting

### ***Recommendations:***

- Poplar planting namely fast growing species is encouraged and FAO is expected to provide technical and financial support in this regard
- Research on the other fast growing species is required
- Hybridizing native poplars with other fast growing species is effective
- There are considerable cold mountainous sites where the improved fast growing cold resistant species can be experimented
- FAO support and collaboration of member countries would lead to wood production as well as rural communities subsistence improvement