

International Poplar Commission

Environmental Applications of Poplar and Willow Working Party

Minutes of Business Meeting, Friday 19th May 2006, Northern Ireland

The business meeting was held as part of the Working Party workshop held 18th to 20th May 2006 in Northern Ireland. The venue was the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute at Loughgall.

Chair: Kurth Perttu, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

Present:

Linda Walsh, Alistair McCracken, Mari Noel Dos Santos Utmazian, Nick Dickinson, Maud Fillion, Katrin Heinsoo, Scott Laidlaw, Richard Lord, Linda Meiresonne, Boudewijn Michiels, Andrej Pilipovic, Ian Pulford, Jason Purdy, Mauritz Ramstedt, Brett Robinson, Ben Searle, Larry Smart, Nathaniel Street, Naresh Thevathasan, Robin Twizell, Drusilla Riddell-Black.

Minutes

Kurth Perttu welcomed all to the meeting and thanked the hosts in Northern Ireland for facilitating the Working Party's visit. He went on to reprise the previous meeting in May 2005 held in Sweden and Estonia, a brief summary of which is on the IPC website.

Acknowledgement was given to the UK Poplar Forum who had provided financial support to four young scientists to enable them to attend the Working Party meeting. The papers from these four will be included in the UK Poplar Forum's Newsletter.

These full papers and the paper summaries from the other speakers will be placed on the Working party web pages.

Next meeting

An invitation to hold the next meeting at the Montreal Botanic Garden hosted by Michel Labrecque and the Institute Recherche en Biologie Végétale, had been sent by email prior to the meeting. Maud Fillion from the Institute was asked to introduce the work of the institute to the meeting. The suggested time for the meeting was early to mid June.

Naresh Thevathsan told the meeting that the Association of Temperate Agro-Forestry (AFTA) will be holding their 10th annual conference in Quebec from 10th to 13th June, and suggested that it might expand the community of potential participants in the Working Party meeting if it were held either immediately before or after the AFTA conference. As a member of the organising committee for the AFTA conference, Naresh undertook to see if it were possible to publicise the IPC Working Party (WP) meeting to AFTA members.

Larry Smart extended an invitation to WP members to visit SUNY College of Environmental Sciences and Forestry at Syracuse as an add on trip after the end of the main WP meeting in Montreal.

The meeting accepted the invitation from the Montreal Botanic Garden (MBG) to hold the 2007 Working Party workshop in Canada.

Actions: Maud Fillion to ask Michel Labreque and colleagues to prepare an outline programme.
Naresh Thevasasan to co-ordinate with MBG regarding timing of, and publicity for the meeting in relation to AFTA.
Larry Smart to suggest length and content of additional visit to Syracuse.

Website

(<http://www.fao.org/forestry/foris/webview/forestry2/index.jsp?siteId=6582&siteTreeId=26214&langId=1&geoid=0>)

Drusilla Riddell-Black reminded participants of the existence of the IPC website and the Environmental Applications Working Party's pages within that site. Members were asked to (a) provide details of topic specific case studies for inclusion in the web pages, using the form on the website. Likewise they were asked to provide details of their activities for inclusion in the List of Experts, again using the form on the website. It was agreed that the name 'List of Experts' would be changed, as it might make people reluctant to include their details.

The meeting was also asked that if they were aware of any relevant publications or web links which could be included in the Working Party web pages, these should be sent to Drusilla.

Meeting participants were reminded that participation in the Working Party is open to all, there is no membership as such, and anyone who is interested in the topic areas covered by the Working Party is welcome to participate.

Actions: All to provide information as described for inclusion in the web pages.

Working party outputs – topic specific introductory guides

One of the purposes of IPC Working Parties (WP) is to disseminate information about WP topic areas, creating a route by which information flows between the research community and those who can employ the research such as industry. A suggestion was put to the meeting at a series of topic specific information notes be prepared by the Working Party members. Individual topics could include buffer zones and riparian planting, willow and poplar use in wastewater management, phytoremediation of contaminated soil, land and slope stabilisation. This information notes would provide an introduction to the topic to a non-specialist readership and would be less than 10 pages long.

Concern was expressed that this would overlap the Environmental Applications chapter of the forthcoming IPC book on poplar and willow (Larry Smart). However, it was pointed out that publications were needed that farmers, foresters and the general public could use and that such introductory documents could point these and other stakeholders towards more detailed, technical publications (Robin Twizell). It was agreed that any information notes should be downloadable via the Web, but that a means of distribution in addition to through the FAO website might be necessary since this could put some potential users off. It was agreed that further discussions on the tone and style of the information notes would be necessary. It was further

agreed that these information notes should be ready for launch at the next IPC Session in 2008, but that work on preparing them should start now.

One possible route of distribution (not discussed at the meeting) is through participants own organisational websites, via the website of National Poplar Commissions, or via Farmers Union websites.

Maria Noel Dos Santos Utmazian asked what languages the proposed information notes would be published in. Drusilla Riddell-Black indicated that formal IPC publications must be produced in all five official languages of the FAO, but that since money is in short supply at the FAO, this may not be possible to do. It was suggested that perhaps Working Party members could provide the translation, at least into French and Spanish. Translation into Arabic or Chinese may have to depend on attendance from these language areas at a EA WP meeting.

It was agreed that a start could be made on those topics which to date have been most active within the WP, namely wastewater management and phytoremediation. It was suggested that a sub-group be formed to prepare each topic specific Naresh Thevathasan volunteered to commence with a note on buffer zones. Drusilla Riddell-Black said that she would co-ordinate development of the information Notes and that she would contact Jim Carle at the FAO in Rome to obtain guidance on what types of publication would be acceptable to the FAO.

Actions: Naresh to provide preliminary buffer zone document;
Drusilla to contact Jim Carle;
WP members to offer to lead/participate in developing information notes on topics of interest to them.

COST Action bid

Drusilla Riddell-Black told the meeting that the deadline for outline applications to the European Commission's COST Action fund for networks was the 31 May. COST Action networks typically have a life of four years and a budget of around 90,000 Euros. The networks are designed to bring together researchers and industry working in similar areas. Each Network has specific topic areas it covers. The funding provides funds for attending meetings and supports exchanges between institutes and organisations. It was proposed at the previous Environmental Applications Working Party meeting in May 2005, that an application be made for a COST Action Network. It is not necessary to be an EU Member State or candidate country to participate in COST networks.

Participants were asked to email Drusilla if they wanted to be included in the list of organisations which are interested in joining the network application. Drusilla undertook to prepare a draft bid and send it for comment to those who are interested in participating.

Actions: Drusilla to prepare bid;
All to send email to Drusilla if want to be included in COST bid.

*Prepared by:
Drusilla Riddell-Black
Technical Secretary, Environmental Applications of Poplar and Willow Working Party
25th May 2006.*