

International Poplar Commission

Sub-Committee on Nomenclature and Registration

Activity Report October 2012 – July 2014

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Foreword

The International Poplar Commission of the FAO holds the International Cultivar Registration Authorities (ICRA) for the genera *Populus* (poplars, cottonwoods and aspens) and *Salix* (willows).

The ICRA system operates under the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants* (ICNCP), and it is responsible for ensuring that each plant cultivar receives a unique, authoritative botanical name. The chief aim is to prevent duplicated uses of cultivar epithets within a genus, and to ensure that names are in accordance with the latest edition of the ICNCP. The system is a voluntary, non-statutory one and it does not grant any legal protection over the name or the plant. Legal protection should be sought through national Plant Breeders' Rights or Plant Patents. However, the registration should be felt by all sensible persons as a vital need, much as internationally accepted standards of any sort.

The ICRA produces and maintains lists of names, along with other relevant information about the cultivars, which are already in the public domain and make these lists available to the international community as a free service, without commercial interest. All individuals or institutions who wish to release a new cultivar (including clonal cultivars) must send an application to the IPC providing essential information on the origin, a synthetic description and a proposed denomination. After checking that the denomination proposed is acceptable according to international rules and that the accompanying information corresponds to the needs of the registration, the new cultivar is then included into the International Register of Cultivars. A first version of the Poplar Register was published in 1992, updated in May 2000 and widely advertised in occasion of the 21th Session of the International Poplar Commission and the 40th Session of the Executive Committee. The updated version of the Register (332 poplar cultivars) was made available at the IPC web site.

The genus *Salix* is among the woody plant genera for which the International Cultivar Registration Authority (ICRA) was not appointed until 2013 and no formal registration of its cultivars was established till then. As the clonal selections and hybridization of *Salix* are currently expanding it is important that a similar system for *Salix* cultivar registration be in place.

Toward that end, the following priorities for the next 4 years were outlined in occasion of the 46th Session of the Executive Committee (Dehradun, October 2012):

Activities planned for the 2012-2016 period:**Priority 1 – Complete the updating of the Poplar Registry**

Continue the compilation of the updated version of the Poplar Register. The most current version of the International Register of Poplar Cultivars with the accompanying information about old and new cultivars should be published on the sub-portal.

Priority 2 – Establish the Registration of *Salix* Cultivars

Continue efforts toward the establishment of the *Salix* registration and develop a viable format through discussions with willow breeders and other interested parties. Consider the possibility of a new attempt to contact the Chair of the Commission on Nomenclature and Cultivar Registration through the FAO Secretariat. Compile the first version of '*Salix* Cultivars Checklist'.

Priority 3 - Raise Awareness

Continue raising awareness of the importance of cultivar registration by identifying and contacting interested parties. Continue the discussion on how to build an effective outreach to National Poplar Commissions. A new attempt will be made to approach the NPCs through the FAO Secretariat. The active breeding programs and research centers for *Populus* will be identified and contacted directly while addressing the importance of cultivar registration. It is also important to intensify the interaction with other the working party members, especially "Poplar and Willow Genetics, Conservation and Improvement" to build an active collaboration.

Contact researchers who indicated their willingness to contribute to the work of the Sub-Committee. Maintain the updated sub-portal for the working party by compiling a new network of contact persons and by updating the documents posted on the sub-committee Website.

Priority 4 – Maintain a network and update the portal

The maintenance of an updated documentation of cultivars depends upon the co-operation of all involved with the creation and marketing of new plants. To achieve this level of cooperation it is necessary to continue raising awareness concerning the importance of submitting information on newly published cultivars to the IPC for approval of the denominations. The active cooperation of the National Poplar Commissions should be encouraged.

The following outlines the work that has been carried out for the period December 2012-July 2014.

Activities performed

Priority 1 – Complete the update of the Poplar Registry

A report concerning the data on *Populus* cultivars was sent to the International Commission for Nomenclature and Cultivar Registration of the International Society for Horticultural Sciences during February 2013 upon the Commission's request in preparation for the 6th International Symposium on the Taxonomy of Cultivated Plants. In return, some clarifications about the registration process were made by the members of the Commission to assist the IPC with the registration process (for example, how to register polyclonal cultivars).

The Poplar Register has been updated: n.343 clonal cultivars are listed in the last version, n.11 new epithets have been 'accepted' and 'included' in the Register, application for n.5 cultivars couldn't be included (not appropriately named, reference of epithet publication missing). A scanning of existing publications including the National Poplar Commissions Country Reports was completed in order to update the Checklist & passport data of cultivars released in the latest years: n. 289 clonal cultivars and n. 25 polyclonal cultivars have been recorded; the next stage – direct contacts with Poplar breeders to obtain more detailed and updated information about registered and new cultivars is currently in progress.

The forms and guidelines appearing on the IPC website with the current edition of the ICNCP were verified.

Priority 2 – Establish the Registration of *Salix* Cultivars

The IPC Sub-Committee on Nomenclature and Registration has endorsed the application of the IPC as the ICRA for *Salix* during its 24th International Poplar Commission Session held at Dehradun, India in November 2012; during the following months the IPC manifested its application to the Executive Committee of the International Society for Horticultural Sciences Commission for Nomenclature and Cultivar Registration to consider the appointment of the International Poplar Commission to serve as International Registration Authority for the genus *Salix*. During 2008-2013 various preparatory projects, including the preparation of the updated cultivar databases for poplars and willows, were conducted by the Sub-Committee to provide a solid foundation for this establishment.

As the result of such activities, as of April 2013, the ICP is designated as the International Cultivar Registration Authority (ICRA) for willows, the official body for the registration of cultivars of the genus *Salix*. This important initiative will facilitate an effective and complete compilation of the

international records which will contribute to the nomenclatural stability of cultivated *Salix*.

A compilation of The *Salix* Cultivars Checklist was identified as the most urgent step. Publication of this Checklist would serve as the starting point for the regulation of nomenclature in the *Salix* cultivars denomination class, while assuring adherence to the ICNCP rules.

A major challenge to such a comprehensive compilation of *Salix* names is presented by a subset of ornamental cultivars whose numerous records are scattered and have to be retrieved from many sources. While only a few names were published in academic journals, the majority are dispersed across conference proceedings, horticulture and landscape magazines, nursery and garden catalogues, and gardening newspapers. Only rarely have these entries been accompanied by effective publications compliant with the current rules for cultivar name establishment.

The first edition of the Checklist is in preparation and already contains more than 200 names; it will be completed in September 2014 after a thorough review by *Salix* taxonomists. Then, the registration of new cultivars will take place to build the comprehensive Register by 2016.

Priority 3 - Raise Awareness

In order to promote the registration process for *Populus* and *Salix* cultivars, the active breeding programs and research centres were identified and will be contacted directly while addressing the importance of cultivar registration. After the IPS VI researchers and breeders involved in willow and poplar cultivars selection will be directly contacted via a 'Request Letter' to submit to the Sub-Committee applications for the new cultivars and to update the passport data concerning the previously registered cultivars by December 2014 deadline. This timeframe would allow the Sub-Committee to update definitively and publish at the IPC web site the Register of *Populus* cultivars and a new Register for *Salix* cultivars before the next IPC session in 2016.

In order to further raise awareness among interested parties of the importance of cultivar registration through the cooperation of Poplar and Willow breeders, a publication "An update on the cultivar registration of *Populus* and *Salix* (*Salicaceae*)" by J. Kuzovkina and L. Vietto (*Skvortsovia* 1: 133-148) was produced by the Sub-Committee on Nomenclature and Registration which was published in the International Journal *Skvortsovia* 1: 133-148 <http://skvortsovia.uran.ru/2014/1203.pdf>.

Priority 4 – Maintain a network and update the portal

A mailing list of participants of the Network was created using various sources which included: 1) all geneticist/breeders listed in the "List of Poplar and Willow Experts" maintained at the ICP website; 2) a tentative list of contact persons

prepared by the Sub-Committee during a session at Beijing in 2008; 3) major contributors to Chapter 4 “The Domestication and Conservation of *Populus* and *Salix* Genetic Resources” by Stanton *et al*; 4) some members of the Executive Committee of the National Poplar Councils. The members of the Network will be contacted as mentioned above.

Also, an attempt was made to obtain a grant through the National Science Foundation, USA, to secure some funds for various activities related to the Sub-Committee’s work. The research proposal with the title “A Research Coordination Network for Biodiversity of *Salicaceae*” by J. Kuzovkina, M. Weih, and L. Vietto with the objective to construct the up to date database of Polar and Willow cultivars and build an effective network of the *Salicaceae* researchers, was submitted in August 2013, but has not been awarded by the Foundation.

The the Sub-Committee portal was updated after the IPC meeting in Dehradun, and will be updated again in summer 2014 after the IPS VI in Vancouver.