

Timber Quality Steering Group
9th Meeting at Grizedale Information Centre, Lake District, 23rd March 2010

Present: Richard Ogilvy (RO) - (Chair) Christie Elite Nurseries Ltd
Gordon Callander (GC) - Callander's Sawmill
Alan Corson (AC) - Forestry Commission (England), FE
Roger Coppock (RC) - Forestry Commission, Corporate Forestry Services
Andy Leitch (AL) - Forestry Commission (Scotland)
John Moore (JM) - Napier University
John Morgan (JM) - Forestry Business Unit, FE
Barry Gardiner (BG) - Forest Research, Timber Properties Programme
Graham Gill (GG) - Forestry Commission (England), FE
Steve Lee (SL) - Forest Research, Conifer Breeding Programme
Suzanne Martin (SM) - Forest Research, RLO (England)
Chris Jones (CJ) - Forest Research (Wales), FC
Christine Cahalan (CC) - University of Wales
Nigel Williams (NW) - Forestry Commission (England), FE
Sam Samuel (SS) - Forest Research (retired)
Tom Drewitt (TD) - Napier University, PhD student
James Ramsay (JR) - Napier University, PhD student
Madge Holmes (MH) - Forest Research (minutes)

Apologies: Andrew Cameron, Geoff Cooper, Michael Fairgrieve, Tim Liddon, Simon Oldham and Margaret Watson who were unable to attend.

With limited time because of the morning visit to Douglas fir sites in the immediate Grizedale area Richard Ogilvy welcomed everyone to the business meeting and the meeting moved on to Sam Samuel's presentation.

1. Douglas fir Bulletin on choice of origins with GB (Sam Samuel)

Sam Samuel and Alan Fletcher (Forest Research) have recently completed an analysis of all DF provenance trials. Results are given in Bulletin 129 and also the presentation which Sam gave to the group <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-6KYGHS>.

SL asked "where should we get DF seed from to-day?" SS replied we have been concentrating in Darrington, but that 041 (Twin Harbour) is also a good source. The DF Bulletin is expected to be published by the end of March shows the results from regions and how it grows in GB. However, OECD Seed Certification is to change to allow us to import again.

2. Minutes of the last meeting – 11th June 2009 at Forest Research Northern Research Station

The minutes were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 *FC(S) Timber Development* (BG)

A series of Summary Notes on each talk from the successful Timber Development seminar held in Dunkeld are available to download at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-7YDB5Q>.

3.2 *Update on Benchmarking project* (JM)

The Kershope paper has now been published. Forestry, Vol 82, No. 5, (2009).

Update - SS Benchmarking Study <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-6KYGHS>

The systems are based on standing trees with the biggest difference between trees within a site, and not between sites.

3.3 *Bruce Greaves' Report*

Steve Lee reported that he was meeting with John Kissock tomorrow to discuss the Bruce Greaves' Report. It is hoped that a publication will follow in due course.

3.4 *Economics of Improved SS – Veg. Prop v Seed Orchard Stock*

Steve Lee reported that a Practice Note will be issued soon and that he would welcome comments. Contact Steve Lee for a copy. It is intended to publish a more complete paper in Scottish Forestry.

3.5 *Use of Improved Sitka spruce – A practitioner's view*

Tim Liddon expressed that for demonstration purposes we should be seeking VP sites that have been used for at least 10 years. Issues of establishment are that crown width of VP versus seedling material and that heather control needs to be suppressed.

3.6 *Steering Group's Achievements* (See Item no. 6)

4. Quality of Scottish-grown Douglas fir (John Moore)

The project is a M.Res dissertation over 18 months with the Timber Development Programme at Edinburgh Napier University. John Moore and Tom Drewitt (student) have been looking at external characteristics such as brand model, frequency and angle as well as heartwood extent and spiral grain angle in both juvenile and mature samples.

John can supply information on identifying field sites. Steve Lee agreed to update John on any known sites in Scotland.

Action: Steve Lee

5. Modelling wood density of GB grown Douglas fir at Bath University (Jonathan Bawcombe) <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-6KYGHS>

Barry Gardiner presented Jonathan Bawcombe's South West Forestry for Future Construction. The presentation highlighted ownership and composition of the SW conifer forests of which the Forestry Commission owns 16% with the remaining 84% being private. However 50% of harvesting is carried by the FC.

The project objectives, anatomic and mechanical properties along with experimental site selection from the present 3 sites in the Forest of Dean are detailed in Jonathan's presentation.

FC Fieldbook: Classification and Presentation of Softwood Sawlogs (version 2). A live demonstration can be accessed by anyone once registered. To register send an e-mail to stephen.bathgate@forestry.gsi.gov.uk. Once registered the online Decision Support Services offer a live demonstration of a number of models although at the moment only SS is available. Details are given of the validation of stem straightness scoring system.

Barry Gardiner indicated that Elspeth Macdonald may be available at the next meeting to explain methods as we will have more information (forecast and actual) by then.

6. Steering Group Achievements (Steve Lee and Barry Gardiner)

A short paper outlining the Steering Group's Achievements and their future purpose was discussed. It was queried if this Steering Group could be PAG? Roger Coppock sits on and chairs the PAG and could give more details at the next meeting.

7. Any other Business

Glentress – Barry Gardiner informed the group that Hamish Mackintosh (PhD student) plans to take out 54 trees at 3 different heights from this area believed planted around 1936.

Press Release - Roger Coppock confirmed that a press release was planned for next month, summarising the research programmes over the last decade in various themes.

Quality Control Conference - John Moore confirmed this conference on 4-7 May and 15 May at Dynamic Earth at a cost of £75. More information can be obtained from John Moore.

New paper – The effects of Site and Stand Factors on the Tree and Wood Quality of Sitka Spruce Growing in the United Kingdom by John R. Moore, Andrew J. Lyon, Gregory J. Searles and Leena E. Vihermaa. Can be accessed at <http://www.metla.fi/silvafennica/full/sf43/sf433383.pdf>.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting would be a theme production forecast such as green logs?