



## Science and Business News July 2005

### Proposed changes to FR's powers in England and Wales

Proposals to amend the Forestry Act were laid before Parliament on 19 July. The statutory changes proposed are intended to bring the Act into line with current government policies and will enable the Forestry Commission to:

- enter into Joint Ventures with the private sector to provide recreational facilities within publicly owned forests;
- to have wider powers to participate in projects with others for forestry purposes;
- to exploit commercially the results of Forest Research;
- to remove the requirement to convict a person for felling growing trees without a licence, under the Forestry Act 1967 (as amended) before serving him with a restocking notice requiring the land to be replanted and to allow enforcement action to be taken against lessees and licensees.

The draft Order was laid following a 12-week public consultation period earlier this year and the text is available on the FC website, at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/rroforestryact>.

As detailed in the explanatory document available on the website, the proposals will not alter FR's policy of providing free information about its research findings to industry. However, all UK research institutions are required to ensure that new knowledge is converted into new products, services and policies which generate wealth for the UK. The proposed changes will enable Forest Research to manage its intellectual property in line with current best practice in the UK research community, where necessary forming or participating in companies to secure these opportunities.

The requested changes will be discussed by Parliament and the outcome is expected to be known in Spring 2006. A similar reform process is underway to amend the Forestry Act in Scotland. However, since research cannot be owned separately in relation to Scotland, it will not be necessary to await Scottish reform to obtain dispensation relating to research exploitation.

### FR joins new EU project to examine innovation in forest recreation

FR's Suzanne Martin has been invited by Dr. Ewald Rametsteiner (BOKU) to join a new EU COST Action project, to explore innovation in the forestry sector. COST is an intergovernmental framework for European co-operation in scientific and technical research.

COST Action E51 will provide an opportunity to act on recent findings about the nature of innovation in Central European forestry, which have arisen from Dr Rametsteiner's leadership of the EU INNOFORCE project. It will also provide an opportunity to follow up ideas generated from Suzanne's recent work on Non-Timber Forest Products. The final report for the Wild Harvests from Scottish Woodlands project, conducted by Suzanne in collaboration with Dr Marla Emery of the US Forest Service, is expected to be available during August. The work was jointly funded by the Scottish Forestry Trust, Scottish Enterprise and Forestry Commission. The new COST action links with work Suzanne is conducting in Cost Action E33 (which explores the integration of forest tourism into the economy) in which she, in collaboration with Gerhard Weis, also of BOKU, is developing a publication on innovation within forest recreation and tourism.

### Scottish Executive consults on Scottish forestry industry

Scottish Environment & Rural Development Minister Ross Finnie launched a public consultation into future plans for Scotland's woods at the Forestry Commission Scotland and forest industries' pavilion, at June's Royal Highland Show. The consultation seeks views on the Scottish Executive's direction for Scotland's woods and forests over the next five years and it is open to all organisations and members of the public until 16 September 2005. Full details are available from [www.forestry.gov.uk/sfs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/sfs). This consultation will be the first of two. When the Scottish Executive's draft strategy is published, a second consultation will be held to obtain views on the proposed strategy, before the final new strategy is published in mid-2006.

At the launch event, Mr Finnie cited some of the emerging new roles for forestry that have grown in significance during the period of the current strategy, and on which the new Strategy

will be able to build. These include forestry's role in ameliorating and adapting to the effects of climate change, and forestry's growing role in health promotion and education. He encouraged all people with an interest in the future of Scotland's woods and forests to 'make full use of this review opportunity'.

## **Forthcoming Events**

Full details of FR's events are available on FR's Internet site:  
[www.forestresearch.gov.uk/events](http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/events)

**15 August, 13:45 Alice Holt Seminar, Conference Room and  
19 August, 13:30-15:00 NRS Seminar, Forest Research Library**

Dr Travis Glare from Lincoln University, New Zealand and Dr Steve Reay (freelance forest entomologist working on restocking pests) are to visit Tree Health Division for discussions on microbial control of forest pests. Travis has kindly agreed to give a seminar on their work, at both Alice Holt and NRS. The title of the seminar will be: 'The potential of *Beauveria* spp. for the control of bark beetles in New Zealand.'

**13 September, Timber research update, NRS**

'Strategic Timber Research, Making Best Use of the Home Grown Resource'. Updating the forest and timber processing industry on the latest research findings. <http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/fr/INFD-6C3H86>

**14-16 September, Atlantic Oakwoods Symposium, Oban**

Collating current knowledge with a view to identifying the need for further research and the role of these woods in conservation planning. <http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/fr/INFD-6A5HK4>

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