

Timber Quality Steering Group

8th Meeting at Forest Research, Northern Research Station, Roslin, 11th June 2009

Present:	Colin Forsyth (CF)	- Chair, Scottish Woodlands Ltd
	Alan Corson (AC)	- Forestry Commission (England), FE
	John Moore (JM)	- Napier University
	Barry Gardiner (BG)	- Forest Research, Timber Properties Programme
	Graham Gill (GG)	- Forestry Commission (England), FE
	Andy Leitch (AL)	- Forestry Commission (Scotland)
	Margaret Watson (MW)	- Scottish Enterprise, Dumfries
	John Fonweban (JF)	- Forest Research, Timber Properties Programme
	Tom Jenkins (TJ)	- Forest Research, Anglesey
	Steve Lee (SL)	- Forest Research, Conifer Breeding Programme
	Richard Ogilvy (RO)	- Christie Elite Nurseries Ltd
	Gordon Callander (GC)	- Callander's Sawmill
	David Leslie (DL)	- James Jones & Sons Ltd
	Tim Liddon (TL)	- UPM Tilhill
	Madge Holmes (MH)	- Forest Research (minutes)

Apologies: Christine Cahalan, Andrew Cameron, Jim Dewar, John Morgan and Chris Jones. Geoff Cooper, Michael Fairgrieve, and Simon Oldham were also unable to attend.

Colin Forsyth welcomed Margaret Watson, John Fonweban and Tom Jenkins to their first meeting of the Timber Quality Steering Group. For their benefit everyone briefly introduced themselves.

1. Minutes of the last meeting – 27th November 2008 at Cruickshank Building, Aberdeen

The minutes were accepted.

2. Matters Arising

- 2.1 *Impact of climate change on the planting of conifers* – Now dealt with.

Action: Dismissed

- 2.2 *Liverpool* – The EU TreeBreedEx meeting, Vegetative propagation and deployment of varieties (a.k.a. clonal forestry) – the scope for Europe 21-23 April 2009 was organised by FR's Steve Lee. Approximately 50 people from 20 countries met in Liverpool to discuss the benefits and problems associated with clonal forestry. The meeting was held in Liverpool so that delegates could visit the FC's Delamere nurseries located just over the Mersey in North Cheshire. The first 2 days of the meeting were open to TreeBreedEx members and all other interested parties and the third day was dedicated to TreeBreedEx members only. All abstracts and presentations can be found at <http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/fr/INFD-7KHFW>.

SL repeated the point made by FR CRO James Pendlebury, that there was a need for future clones to accommodate for climate change i.e. that they are 'future proofed'.

Graham Gill asked if there had been discussion on deploying blocks of pure clones compared to a multiclonal mixture. SL explained countries are predominantly mono-clonal with the exception of Canada.

- 2.3 *FC(S) Timber Development Programme (Training in Silviculture)* – Elspeth Macdonald is presently producing a series of Information Notes from the successful seminar held in Dunkeld. These will be available later this year.

- 2.4 *Information Note presenting results of the Kershope study* – [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/PDF/fcrn003.pdf/\\$FILE/fcrn003.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/PDF/fcrn003.pdf/$FILE/fcrn003.pdf)

In addition to the Information Note (FCRN003, link above) a paper by John Moore, Napier University has been accepted for publication in *Forestry*.

- 2.5 *Update on Benchmarking project* – In addition to the measurements already completed a further 9 sites have been measured concluding that trees with shorter crowns appear to have stiffer timber. JM informed the committee of a paper which is currently in press, and a second paper which is awaiting the outcome of the re-scheduling of the NDT conference where it was due to be presented. When available copies can be obtained from JM.

This year, in addition to the 64 sites already done, a further 30 sites are to be sampled jointly by Napier and FR (10: Scotland, 12: Wales and 8: England).

- 2.7 *Bruce Greaves' Report* – The model could now be up-dated with new data from two sources (i) The PhD being completed by Stuart Kennedy (Aberdeen Univ.) and (ii) John Kissock (James Jones) who had opinions on some of the variables used. SL to provide an update on testing the model to the next TGSG meeting.

Action: Steve Lee and John Kissock

- 2.8 *Economics of Improved SS* – Steve Lee and Guy Watt
[www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ICTQ1108_lee.pdf/\\$FILE/ICTQ1108_lee.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ICTQ1108_lee.pdf/$FILE/ICTQ1108_lee.pdf)

SL explained that since our last meeting things have moved on somewhat. Initially this was with the help of John Fonweban and then more recently, Stephen Bathgate and Tom Jenkins. The plan is to link up-to-date growth models with BG's timber quality models allowing manipulation in order to make predictions.

SL agreed to forward a copy of the spreadsheets he has been working on looking into variations of green:red logs, volume, discount rate etc. to a limited circulation for comment within the next 2 months to allow us to move on (Colin Forsyth, Tim Liddon, Richard Ogilvy, Alan Corson and Andy Leitch). SL would welcome feedback.

Action: Steve Lee

3. *Yield models for Improved Sitka spruce (provisional)* – Tom Jenkins
<http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/coniferquality>

TJ's presentation gives an update on the current state of development of growth and yield models within Forest Research, questions underlying their use, wider issues and example output. An electronic presentation of Booklet 48 is being prepared for publication later this year.

TJ thanked Robert Matthews and other members of the FR's Economic Group (FREG) at Alice Holt for the data used in his presentation.

4. *Linking Growth and Timber Property models* – John Fonweban
<http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/coniferquality>

With a shift from volume orientated management towards value orientated management JF's presentation illustrated how he is attempting to link growth and yield data and timber quality models as an aid to decision making and production forecasting. An online model, which will continue to improve as data becomes available, will be available in approx. 1-2 months time.

5. *Use of Improved Sitka spruce – A practitioners view* – Tim Liddon
<http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/coniferquality>

TL's presentation identified why we should use improved material (full-sib) and the possible gains which can be achieved relative to seed orchards stock. New users of VP would like to see older stands planted by FC suitably brushed to demonstrate the quality of more mature stock and to improve confidence. There is a need to prove that VP stock will straighten up. SL agreed to try and identify suitable stands with FR or FC.

Action: Steve Lee

6. Changes in Membership – Barry Gardiner and Steve Lee

BG opened discussion on future membership. After 3+ years Colin Forsyth is stepping down as Chairman and with the agreement of the Steering Group Richard Ogilvy agreed to take over as future Chairman.

SL thanked Colin Forsyth on behalf of the Steering Group for his past work and the diverse information he brought to the Steering Group. As a token of appreciation a 'bottle' and the FC's Director General, Tim Rollinson's 'A Convenient Truth' were presented to CF. Simon Oldham will take over as representative for Scottish Woodlands Ltd.

7. Future Direction and Focus of group – Colin Forsyth

CF welcomed RO to the position of Chairman and wished him every success in determining the direction to best take the Steering Group forward.

RO requested that a précis (1 A4 page) of the Steering Group's achievements be placed on the internet highlighting the achievements so far and where we are going in the future. Colin Forsyth, Barry Gardiner and Steve Lee to produce a draft and e-mail to Steering Group for e-discussion and final placement on the internet.

Action: Colin Forsyth / Barry Gardiner / Steve Lee

Discussion of a future end-user representative to TQSG meetings was discussed and it was agreed that it would be welcomed but that it may be best to invite end-users representative(s) when topics of discussion were relevant.

8. Date and location of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 3 November 2009 in The Lakes or The Marches area to look at conifers other than Sitka. Peter Walker (Bath University) and Jez Ralph (Woodland Renaissance) will be invited.

Madge Holmes
25 June 2009