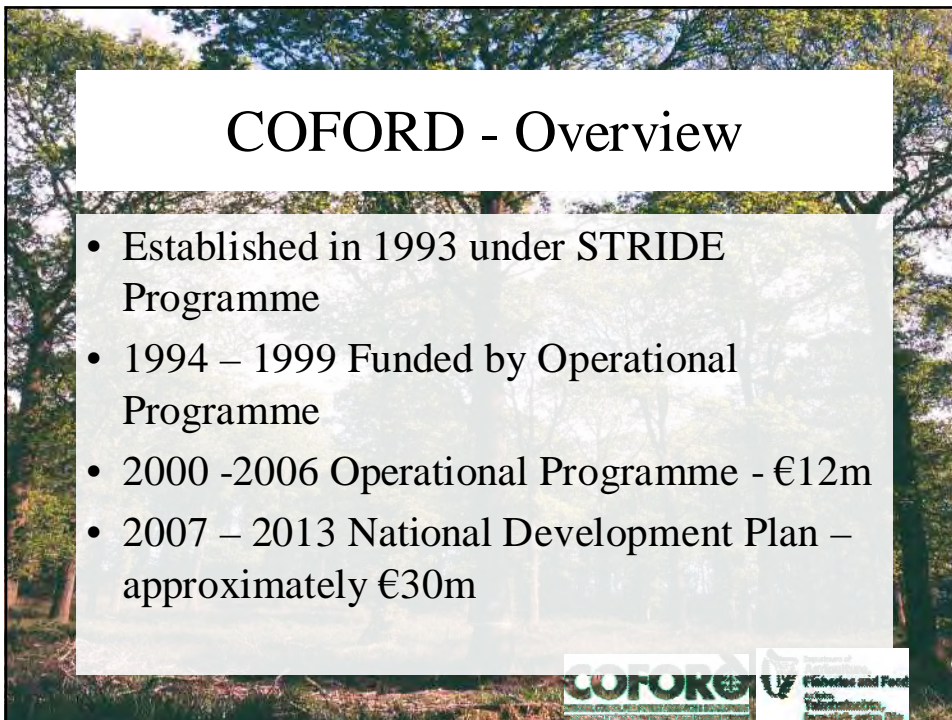




Presentation to Farm Woodland Forum
21st June 2010



by
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Forestry Development and Promotion
COFORD
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food



COFORD - Overview

- Established in 1993 under STRIDE Programme
- 1994 – 1999 Funded by Operational Programme
- 2000 -2006 Operational Programme - €12m
- 2007 – 2013 National Development Plan – approximately €30m



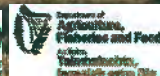
COFORD – what it does “Mission”

- Establish and strengthen links between research and industry
- Determine forest research and development needs to maintain international competitiveness, provide sustainable employment, encourage innovation and enhance environmental harmony



COFORD – what it does “Mission”

- Evaluate research and development progress and transfer technology to ensure maximum benefit for all in the industry





Research Programme – Thematic areas

- Forest reproductive material (9 projects)
- Silviculture (4 projects)
- Forest planning and management (9 projects)
- Forest economics and policy (4 projects)
- Forest health and protection (1 project)
- Forest harvesting (3 projects)
- Wood products (1 project)



Research Programme – Thematic areas

- Wood energy (1 project)
- Non-wood forest products (3 projects)
- Forests and climate change (5 projects)
- Forest biodiversity (5 projects)
- Forests and water (3 projects)
- Forests and recreation (1 project)

COFORD Structure

- Council appointed by Minister – 12 members including the Chairman, all representatives of the Irish forest industry
- Executive staff – Just five people
- Location: Agriculture House, Kildare Street
- Website: www.coford.ie



COFORD – Farm woodland values

- COFORD plays a key role in the scientific support it provides in establishment and growing of forests, harvesting the wood product, development of public goods and in the overall development of forestry policy in Ireland.
- Time – focus on a few important areas





COFORD – Farm woodland values

- (1) Broadleaf forestry - a new, very important and challenging area.
- (2) Non-wood forest products – early stages of development in Irish forestry
- (3) Tree improvement – possibility of increasing the productivity and quality of the forest



(1) Broadleaves

- Since the early 1980s area of broadleaves has increased substantially (estimated at around 30,000 ha over last 10 years)
- Predominantly private growers – approximately 16,000 - and for many first experience with forestry
- Lack of a broadleaved forestry tradition much still to be learned on the management of broadleaves – even among professional foresters

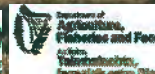
Broadleaves

- Some consider the establishment of broadleaves is reasonably easy but is it? - No.
- As broadleaved estate develops the need for management a more critical issue – COFORD in co-operation with other organizations such as Forest Service and Teagasc working together.
- With the great lack of experience that exists management becomes a learning process for all.



Broadleaves

- Management areas requiring attention - (shaping, tending and thinning) – broadleaves need shaping and/or tending & of course thinning
- Highlight the importance of early management of broadleaves to forest owner – what do the owners expect from their plantations?
- Furthermore as grants/premium decline – need to maximize financial returns for these owners.



Management of Broadleaves

- Simple and practical management models easily understood and implemented by owners.
- Experimentation and field trials – species performance.
- Enhance information through publications (Growing Broadleaves) and various COFORD Connects and other information notes.
- Several other initiative such as workshops and conferences on the many aspects of broadleaved establishment and management – Hands on.



Management of Broadleaves

- COFORD published “*Growing Broadleaves*” in 1998 - became the “bible” on broadleaves.
- BROADFORM and related field trials - oak, ash, beech and sycamore.
- Pre-commercial thinning of ash - guidelines for forest owners.
- New Programme on Broadleaf Silviculture



Management of Broadleaves

- QUALIBROAD – nursery experiments on plant quality.
- Series of COFORD Seminars - Carrick-on-Shannon ('02); Kilkenny ('03); Cork ('04) and Enfield ('05).

More recently workshops directed at managing ash stands in Kilmeague('07); Crookedwood and Murroe ('08). The Rower ('09) and Summerhill ('10). Later this year in Cork



Silviculture & Management of Broadleaves (2010)

- Establishment of Mixtures
- Review thinning methods of broadleaf stands - both pure and mixed
- Develop methods for the rehabilitation of poorly performing broadleaf stands



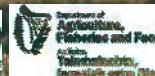
(2) Non-wood Forest Products

- Forest Foliage – large markets for foliage in Europe, opportunities
- Forest Fungi – increasing demand for natural foods, large unutilized resource
- Farm fungi – Potential for forest owner
- Publication – Forest Fungi in Ireland



(3) Tree Improvement

- Tree improvement programmes long term
- Experience suggests that a species popular today may become unfashionable tomorrow.
- Several examples – conifer breeding programmes in Europe: Belgium, Denmark and in the USA.



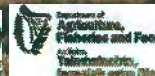
Tree Improvement

- Series of native provenance trials in oak, ash and cherry in mid 1980s – Forest Service
- EU Programme in early 1990s – ÉCLAIR – 4 species = oak, ash, sycamore and cherry.
- Development of broadleaf seed orchards and clone banks.



Tree Improvement

- Birch Improvement Programme – Currently at development stage of indoor seed orchard with Teagasc. Improved material will shortly be available.
- Alder Working Group and Alder Improvement Programme – Although not as advanced as the birch programme it too is developing along similar lines.



Tree Improvement

Looking to the future - In 2005 COFORD established a Working Group to formulate a strategy for the development of forest genetic resources in Ireland – The findings published as a report in 2007 entitled: *“Sustaining and Developing Ireland’s Forest Genetic Resources: an Outline Strategy”*



Tree Improvement

The report envisages the establishment of a National Forest Genetic Resources Advisory Group.

This group would direct policy on a key area of forestry – forest genetic resources



COFORD's Response

I have outlined the main areas of work in just three areas (Broadleaves; Non-wood Forest Products and Tree Improvement) where COFORD is working to enhance farm woodland values but of course there are many others.



COFORD's Response

Any questions?

In conclusion -

Thank you for your attention

- **Further information**
- **www.coford.ie**

