

**Minutes of the
Farm Woodland Forum
Annual General Meeting
24 May 2012
at Bangor University, Wales**



Present: Bianca Ambrose-Oji, Rob Brook, Paul Burgess (Secretary), Tim Earle, Edward Goff, John Holland (Treasurer), Richard Ince, Tom Jenkins, John Kort, Genevieve Lamond, Ian Lane, Gerry Lawson, Michael Nworgi, Tim Pagella, David Pilbeam, Mark Raiment, Jo Smith, Chris Stoate, Tamas Szedlak, Matthew Upson, and James Walmsley,

Apologies: Mark Malins, Jim McAdam, Ian Short, and Mike Strachan (Chairman).

The meeting started at 8.10 p.m. Paul Burgess chaired the meeting in the absence of Mike Strachan, who was unable to attend as his father had suddenly become ill. Paul thanked James Walmsley and the staff at Bangor University for arranging such an interesting range of talks on the first day, and expressed his anticipation for an interesting field visit on day two.

1) Minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the AGM of 1 July 2011 held at Wakelyns Agroforestry, Metfield, Suffolk, England and posted on the Forum's website (www.agroforestry.ac.uk) were accepted as being a true record of the meeting.

2) Matters arising on the minutes

11/03: Paul Burgess noted that David Pilbeam had kindly agreed to act as the webmaster for the Forum. He also thanked David for writing up the report of the Forum's 2011 meeting, which was available on the web.

11/03: Speakers at the last Forum Meeting had made their presentations available on the website. James Walmsley would ask presenters if their presentations at the 2012 meeting could also be made available on the website. **Action: James Walmsley**

3) Chairman's report

Subsequent to the meeting, Mike provided the following report:

“Before I start to provide an insight into my understanding of what has been happening in the agroforestry sector, I would like to put on record our condolences for the passing away of Lynton Incoll. For those who never met Lynton, he was a stalwart of agroforestry research, often becoming frustrated at the lack of progress around certain issues, but also a very good ally in advocating change. If he was still with us, I'm sure that he would be very supportive of the formation of the European Agroforestry Federation and what it is trying to achieve.

So, what's been happening?

1. In October 2011, the long awaited CAP reform discussion paper surrounding the proposed measures was published. Establishment of agroforestry systems appears once more as a measure although now covered under article 24 rather than the previous article 44. The wording of the article is general enough for interpretation, but although Europe is promoting this, it is up to member states to 'choose their main courses from the menu'. If there is no desire from member states to support this, then once more, it will not receive direct rural development support.

2. In parallel with this, we have the 'rules for single farm payment (SFP) eligibility' and the proposed 7% ecological focus areas (EFAs). The thrust of this is to ensure that recipients of SFP payment are managing their land in an environmentally friendly manner. It identifies land

management which is classed as being ecologically good, such as permanent pasture, set aside, landscape features, buffer strips and woodland planted since 1999. If this goes ahead, the impact for landowners will be significant where intensive arable production is a prime consideration, e.g. the eastern counties of the UK. The trick therefore is to make sure that measures are in place that can accommodate the EFA approach, whilst maintaining food production. Agroforestry options are therefore a key consideration and I will come back to that later.

3. In December 2011, a conference was convened in Paris to look at agroforestry across Europe and to also establish a European Agroforestry Federation. Stephen Briggs was duly elected as a UK member on the Executive Committee and Jo Smith and I became UK representatives. As a result of that meeting, Jo and I volunteered to co-ordinate a review of the published EU papers on CAP reform and with representatives from across Europe a paper was presented to the Agriculture Directorate that suggested wording changes and a change of emphasis. The executive group has held a number of teleconferences since the meeting in Paris, and has also had the opportunity to lobby MEPs in Brussels. I produced a one page article for presentation at the meetings. The summary of the main lobbying meetings indicates an open door approach for agroforestry in support of EFA, but concerns around stocking density, tree location and food production. Further work might be required to pull supporting information together, but a generally positive feeling for the future. There is also a plan for a second conference to be held in Brussels in September 2012.

4. Closer to home, and apologies for not being fully aware of what is happening outside Scotland, but I am sure that the representatives from the other UK countries can fill in the gaps.
- a. Scotland had a target of 25% tree cover but this has been reviewed recently and revised to an annual target of 10,000 ha of new planting for the next 10 years. This is not an easy target to reach given the various pressures on the land, so a Woodland Expansion Advisory Group (WEAG) was established to look at this and report back to ministers
 - b. What came out of the initial thought process were a range of options for tree planting on farms that included shelterbelts, hedges with trees, riparian and floodplain woodlands, productive woodlands, short rotation coppice, short rotation forestry, productive woodlands with grazing re-admitted, silvopasture, silvoarable, and small holdings with woodlands.
 - c. The conclusion from this, was that many of these aspects could be funded through our normal grant processes, but others may require a bit more imagination.
 - d. Six public meetings for landowners, farmers agents and others were held across Scotland, that attracted in excess of 400 people, and comments relating to agroforestry systems included:
 - i. Some were sceptical of the approach, but the majority felt that they could work and that support for these could help to overcome cultural barriers between farming and forestry,
 - ii. They would require the right financial incentive,
 - iii. People were keen to allow grazing in young woodlands, and to also heavily thin young woodlands to permit this,
 - iv. There were concerns that agroforestry would do little to support a timber industry and that a combination of this and productive areas would be required,
 - v. There was a feeling amongst many that they could accept up to 10% tree cover on their land without any significant detrimental effect on production.
 - e. A complementary paper produced by James Hutton Institute (formally Macaulay) considered the impact of taking 100,000 ha of land out of production. It focused on land of class 3 and worse. The study identified over 1.25 million ha of land currently being grazed at less than 0.5 Livestock Units, and that by planting at least 100,000 ha based on these numbers, it could result in a worst case scenario of a 2% loss of total Livestock Units in Scotland. Properly planted and located woodlands of various types would negate this loss.

The Scottish Government is very keen to pursue the idea of all types of woodland establishment and to also pursue a desire to have a more integrated land management approach. We are not there yet, as we are very anal in the UK at accepting what Europe says without challenge and also our policy makers are very often bean counters seeing the picture relating to agricultural subsidies only and not looking at true integration. Forestry, although just “farming in slow motion” is very much a minnow in a huge pond where the size of your European allocation dictates control. We have the opportunity to mutate and to become a bigger fish but to achieve this we all have to work together to advocate and lobby for change. If we did not have change, we would not have butterflies!”.

4) **Formation of European Agroforestry Federation**

Jo Smith and Paul Burgess explained that there was strong representation from the Farm Woodland Forum for the first European Agroforestry Meeting held on 16 December 2011. Paul Burgess had made two presentations which are available on the Farm Woodland Forum’s website. At the meeting, it was agreed to form the European Agroforestry Federation (EURAF). Christian Dupraz was elected as Chairman and Stephen Briggs was elected as Vice-Chairman. Mike Strachan and Jo Smith were actively involved on the Agroforestry Policy Working Group. Tamas Szedlak praised the early work of EURAF in delivering good material to support future changes to regulations within the European Union. He noted that the development of video material was particularly helpful.

EURAF was planning to have a newsletter and a website (www.agroforestry.eu) with content from national correspondents. It was proposed that we would elect four correspondents at the end of the meeting.

FWF members who wish to be member of the European Agroforestry Federation can opt to pay an additional annual £5 alongside their Farm Woodland Forum Membership fee. Once EURAF had established a bank account, we would transfer the money to the EURAF account

The European Agroforestry Federation was planning to hold their first annual meeting on 25-26 September 2012 in Brussels. This will include a half day meeting with members of the European Parliament.

Ahead of the meeting, there was a need to lobby on the future agroforestry proposals at a national level, and to engage with Defra and MEPS. Representatives of the Agricultural Working Group are available on the EC Website. It was agreed that Jo would talk with Mike about how best to take this forward.

Action: Jo Smith and Mike Strachan

4) **Secretary’s report**

JISCmail contact list and activity

Paul Burgess reported that there were 199 contacts on the Farm Woodland Forum JISCmail list on 23 May 2012, up five from last year. Use of the JISCmail service (27 postings) was less than last year (46 postings). The major topics covered were the agroforestry meeting, the formation of the European Agroforestry Federation, and the death of Lynton Incoll.

Web activity

David Pilbeam has been receiving the Google Analytics reports on the FWF Website for the past 5 months. There is an average of 381 visits per month. David has produced an excellent report of the 2011 meeting, and has updated the “History” section of the sites, and has updated, where necessary, the links to other websites.

Charity Commission: Annual Return and Trustee Update Form

Paul Burgess reported that he had submitted the Charity Commission Annual Return and Trustee Update form on 14 December 2011

5) Treasurer and Member Secretary's report

John Holland presented the Forum's accounts from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012. The balance on 1 April 2011 was £3976. The closing balance for the end of the year was £4047. The accounts had been independently checked.

Statement of the account from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

	Opening balance	£3976.56
Income		
	FWF membership subscriptions (2011/12)	£186.00
	FWF membership subscriptions (2012/13)	£42.00
	EURAF membership subscriptions (2012/13)	£10.00
	Bank interest	£0.74
	Sub-total	£238.741
Expenditure		
	Travel expenses	168.67
	Sub-total	£168.67
	Closing balance	£4046.63

In view of the state of the accounts, it was proposed that the annual subscription for an ordinary and student member be maintained at £10 and £1 respectively.

6) Election of the Executive Committee

The Constitution of the Forum states that Executive Committee members must seek election after three years. Tony Waterhouse, who had stood for election in 2009, did not want to stand for re-election. Mark Malins, who has been elected at the last meeting also indicated that he wished to stand down. Gerry Lawson, Jim McAdam, David Pilbeam, and Ian Short were re-elected as ordinary members. James Walmsley and Tim Pagella were also elected for the first time as ordinary members. Following James's election, he would no longer be a co-opted member. Peter Bottoms, who had been co-opted in 2009, would also be removed from the co-opted list

	Nomination	Proposed	Seconded
Ordinary Member	Gerry Lawson	Paul Burgess	John Holland
Ordinary Member	Jim McAdam	David Pilbeam	John Holland
Ordinary Member	David Pilbeam	John Holland	Paul Burgess
Ordinary Member	Ian Short	Paul Burgess	John Holland
Ordinary Member	James Walmsley	Paul Burgess	John Holland
Ordinary Member	Tim Pagella	James Walmsley	David Pilbeam

Existing members: Paul Burgess (2011), John Holland (2011), Jo Smith (2011), Jo Secker Walker (2011), Mike Strachan (2012)

Co-opted members: Martin Wolfe (2009), Stephen Briggs (2011), Alan Sibbald

7) National Representative to EURAF

The Farm Woodland Forum needs to elect a national delegate to the European Agroforestry Federation. It was agreed that Mike Strachan should be the UK delegate. The following would act as country representatives: Tim Pagella (Wales), Mike Strachan (Scotland), Jim McAdam (Northern Ireland), and Jo Smith (England), with support from Bianca Ambrose-Oji. It was noted that Mike needed some advice regarding the use of Skype.

8) Future meetings

a) 2013 Forum Meeting: Elmwood College, Fife

At the 2011 meeting, Mike Strachan had proposed Elmwood College at Cupar in Fife as a host for the 2013 meeting. Unfortunately Mike was not present to provide an update.

Action: Mike Strachan

b) 2014 Forum Meeting: Devon

Bethan Stagg (Dartington College) had recently contacted Paul Burgess to indicate that the location for the 2014 meeting could still be Devon in South-West England. There was a silvopastoral agroforestry trial at North Wyke, and the Agroforestry Research Trust managed by Martin Crawford.

c) 2015 Forum Meeting: Loddington, Leicestershire

A possible location for the 2015 meeting would be the Allerton Project site at Loddington. Chris Stoate explained that whilst there was little agroforestry work, the Project site had a new visitors centre, and the farm was demonstrating how farm management could be integrated with game conservation.

9) Lynton Incoll Memorial

Following the sudden death of Lynton Incoll, there was some discussion about how best the Forum could remember Lynton's contribution. The two suggestions made so far included a prize for the best presentation at the annual meeting, or a scholarship to encourage students to attend the annual meeting. It was felt that travel scholarships, tied in with the need to write a report for the website, would probably be the easiest to manage.

10) Any other business

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

P.J. Burgess
Secretary; 11 June 2012