

Dr P H Freer-Smith (Secretary FRCC)
Chief Research Officer
Forest Research
Alice Holt Lodge
Wrecclesham
FARNHAM
Surrey GU10 4LH



8th November 2005

Dear Dr Freer-Smith,

**Research on farming with trees: a letter for consideration at the FRCC Meeting on
November 16th, 2004**

I write as the Chairman of the Farm Woodland Forum (<http://www.agroforestry.ac.uk/>), which aims "to facilitate the generation and exchange of information that will support best practice in, and improve opportunities for, farming with trees". Our origins are in the 'UK Agroforestry Forum', but the name was changed last year to clarify that the Forum covers all aspects of research at the interface between farming with trees, crops and animals.

Members of the Forum note the fact that very little research is being sponsored in the UK on farming with trees, and that the DEFRA Farm Woodland [research] programme has recently been terminated. This is short-sighted given the substantial social, economic and environmental benefits of farming with trees, for example, in providing areas for recreation, green corridors for biodiversity enhancement, riparian-strip filtering of nitrate, and diversification of landscapes.

We would also like to bring your attention to the increased interest in agroforestry practices in many regions of Europe, and also the fact that Article 41 of the new EU Rural Development Regulation (2007-2013) includes a provision for 'first establishment of agroforestry on farmland' (http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/capreform/rurdevprop_en.pdf). Thus the new RDR emphasises the integration between forestry and agriculture, and to meet this challenge, research in agroforestry (in the widest sense) is more necessary than ever.

Executive members of the Forum would like to be invited to make a presentation about research needs for farming with trees to the FRCC at your spring meeting, perhaps accompanied by a colleague who is a leading French agroforester.

Additionally, we would like to invite delegates from organisations represented on the FRCC to attend the Forum's annual meeting on 29th June - 1st July 2005. This year's meeting has a theme of 'Ecosystem Services of Farm Trees', and includes visits to the Pontbren farmers' group and other farm woodland initiatives in the area such as UWB / Coed Cymru / CCW sites (details of which are on our web site).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'L.D. Incoll'.

Dr L.D. Incoll
Chairman, Farm Woodland Forum
School of Biology,
University of Leeds,
Leeds LS2 9JT
email: l.d.incoll@leeds.ac.uk