

**Draft Minutes of the  
Farm Woodland Forum  
Annual General Meeting  
13 June 2013  
at Falkland Centre for Stewardship, Fife, Scotland**



**Present** Mike Strachan (Chairman), John Holland (Treasurer), Jim McAdam, Matthew Upson, Jo Smith, Scott McG Wilson, Bob Wilson, Tim Earle, David Pilbeam, Sally Westaway and Ewan Nugent.

**Apologies:** Paul Burgess (Secretary), Jo Secker Walker, Mark Malins, Alec Dauncey, Ian Lane, James Walmsley, and Tim Pagella,

The meeting started at 8.30 p.m, chaired by Mike Strachan, minutes taken by Jo Smith in the absence of Paul Burgess.

**1) Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting**

The minutes of the AGM of 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012 held at Bangor University, Wales and posted on the Forum's website ([www.agroforestry.ac.uk](http://www.agroforestry.ac.uk)) were accepted as being a true record of the meeting.

**2) Matters arising on the minutes**

12/02. Speakers at the last Forum meeting had made their presentations available on the website – thanks to James Walmsley for sorting this out and David Pilbeam for posting on website.

12/04. Lobbying on the future agroforestry proposals at a national level, and to engage with Defra and MEPS. Jo Smith, Mike Strachan and Stephen Briggs have been in discussions with policy makers within England and Scotland.

12/09. Lynton Incoll Memorial. The two suggestions put forward at last year's meeting were discussed and it was decided that the best idea was to offer a scholarship for student attendance at future FWF annual meetings, with funding to cover registration and T&S up to a maximum of £200. Students should be asked to offer a poster or presentation.

**Action: Paul Burgess to email David Incoll re. Lynton Incoll Memorial Scholarship**

**3) Chairman's report, Mike Strachan**

I am sorry to have missed last year's meeting, but on the way down the road and about Lancaster, I got a phone call to advise me that my father was in a critical condition after rupturing both femoral arteries while on holiday. As a result I was out of the country for 12 days. He is doing fine now though.

So what's been happening?

3.1. Jo Smith, Stephen Briggs and myself have been closely involved with the European Agroforestry Federation and attended a conference in Brussels last year where we

supported the case for Agroforestry to be included in the CAP and the profile raised across Europe. This did give us extra work in editing and at times rewriting proposals, but the work has paid off and support for Agroforestry systems across Europe through MEP's has been welcomed.

3.2. Following on from the work in Europe, it would appear that the 50 tree/ha rule that nobody owns up to is being revised to 250 trees/ha. We have suggested that this should be 250 trees where the average dbh is 10cm as this will allow for extra trees to be planted

3.3. The proposed Ecological Focus Area (EFA) figure looks like being settled on at 5%. This could have a significant effect on the arable farmers where trees and hedges have been significantly reduced, but there is an opportunity to allow agroforestry systems to count towards EFA. One line of thought is to plant trees in the 2 m field margins as linear features.

3.4. The Scottish consultation on the next Rural Development Plan has been published and in it we have article 22 – sets out key areas of forestry support and includes Agroforestry, and also article 24 – the establishment of Agroforestry systems which is described as 'a new article not previously funded under SRDP and will 'add agroforestry systems to the range of support through SRDP and will implement recommendation 10 from the Woodland Expansion Advisory Group of encouraging better integration between woodland creation and farming'.

3.5. In England, Natural England are taking a very keen interest in the promotion of agroforestry systems, as you heard earlier, and I am now sure of they have gone down the route of a public consultation. The same applied to Northern Ireland and Wales.

#### **4) Secretary's report, Paul Burgess**

Paul Burgess sent his apologies and had produced a written report

##### **4.1. AGFORWARD: a new EU project on agroforestry**

His main news was that a proposal submitted to the European Commission in February for a large-scale integrated research project on agroforestry has been selected for funding. It was anticipated that project would be signed over the coming weeks with an anticipated start date of January 2014.

The name of the project is AGFORWARD, which stands for AGroFORestry that Will Advance Rural Development. As the name suggests, the aim of the four year project is to promote agroforestry practices across Europe. The project comprises four objectives:

- i) To understand agroforestry where it is present
- ii) To identify, develop and field-test innovations to improve the benefits and viability of agroforestry systems in Europe
- iii) To adapt and evaluate agroforestry configurations for locations where agroforestry is currently not practised or in recession and quantify the opportunities for uptake, and
- iv) To promote the wide adoption of appropriate agroforestry systems across Europe.

Paul Burgess is co-ordinating the project from Cranfield University, working with Anil Graves. The other UK partners include the Organic Research Centre and the Agri Food and Biosciences Institute in Northern Ireland. In total there are about 23 partners. Other partners include INRA, ACTA, the European Forest Institute, ICRAF, and the European Agroforestry Federation.

Within the project, over the next 18 months, the aim in the UK will be set up four participative networks to i) improve agroforestry practices in parkland systems, and promote the use of agroforestry ii) in orchard systems, iii) on arable farms, and iv) in livestock farming. Paul indicated that he hoped that this will involve various members of the Farm Woodland Forum. It was a very exciting development and it should breathe new life into agroforestry research, promotion and practice in the UK.

#### **4.2. European Agroforestry Federation**

Paul Burgess had attended a number of the Skype meetings of the European Agroforestry Federation, where the Farm Woodland Forum is currently represented by Mike Strachan and Jo Smith. Steve Briggs is the Deputy Chairman.

The EURAF membership fee for 2013 has been set at 10 Euros for a member of a national institution (such as the Farm Woodland Forum), with the understanding that the minimum contribution from the members of a national institution will be 100 Euros.

EURAF is planning to host its biennial agroforestry conference during the summer of 2014. *Postscript: The location has since been identified as Cottbus in Germany*

#### **4.3. JISCMail contact list and activity**

As of 12 June 2013, there were 202 contacts on the Farm Woodland Forum JISCMail list, up three from last year. Use of the JISCMail service (42 postings) has been similar to previous years. The topics covered included EURAF press releases and birch dieback.

#### **4.4. Charity Commission: Annual Return and Trustee Update Form**

The 2011-12 Charity Commission Annual Return and Trustee Update form was submitted on 29 January 2013.

#### **5) Treasurer and Member Secretary's report, John Holland**

John Holland presented the Forum's accounts from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. The balance on 1 April 2012 was £4046.63. The closing balance for the end of the year was £4300.63. The accounts had been independently checked.

Statement of the account from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

		Amount (£)
Opening balance (1 April 2012)		4046.63
Income	FWF Subscriptions (2012-13)	179.00
	EURAF subscriptions (2012-13)	75.00
	Sub-total	254.00
Expenditure	Sub-total	0.00
Closing balance (31/3/2013)		4300.63

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.

There are 24 paid-up members of the FWF, and membership fees for EURAF are now being collected. It was discussed whether we should be more active in asking for membership fees and it was agreed that John Holland would email a request via the Jiscmail

**Action: John H to email membership fee renewal request to Jiscmail.**

Within the Farm Woodland Forum, members have the option to include or not include membership of the European Agroforestry Federation at a cost of £10 (made payable to the Farm Woodland Forum). The membership fee is for a calendar year (1 January to 31 December). The treasurer will arrange payment to the European Agroforestry Federation as a block payment, with a need for a minimum total payment of 100 Euros.

**Action: Jo S to send John Holland email from Christian Dupraz regarding payment of EURAF fees (done 17.06.13)**

Jim McAdam raised concerns about the accumulation of money in the account. Suggestions for using the funds included a scholarship to allow a UK student to attend a EURAF meeting (David Pilbeam), or to encourage farmer attendance at FWF meetings (Jo Smith), or to fund UK EURAF delegates to attend EURAF meetings (Jo Smith). It was agreed that this should be discussed at the next executive committee meeting.

**Action: discuss use of money in account at next Exec Comm meeting**

## 6) Election of the Executive Committee

The Constitution of the Forum states that Executive Committee members must seek election after three years. Jo Secker-Walker, who had stood for election in 2010, did not want to stand for re-election. Jo Smith, John Holland and Paul Burgess were re-elected as ordinary members and were proposed en bloc by Jim McAdam, and seconded by Mike Strachan. John Holland confirmed he would carry on as treasurer and membership secretary and there was support from the committee members for Paul Burgess to carry on as secretary. Ewan Nugent from Natural England was elected for the first time as an ordinary member and was proposed by Jo Smith and seconded by David Pilbeam.

**7) Future meetings**

**a) 2014 Forum Meeting: Devon**

Bethan Stagg (Dartington College) had last year confirmed 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.

**Action: Jo Smith to contact Bethan Stagg to check the situation**

**b) 2015 Forum Meeting: Loddington, Leicestershire**

A possible location for the 2015 meeting would be the Allerton Project site at Loddington, suggested last year by Chris Stoate from the GWCT.

**Action: Jo Smith to contact Chris Stoate to check situation**

**c) 2016 Forum Meeting: Northern Ireland**

Jim McAdam suggested Northern Ireland as a possible venue for the 2016 meeting. It might be possible to link this in with an AGFORWARD meeting to promote a wider European focus.

**8) Any other business**

David Pilbeam kindly offered to post a meeting report on the website (done).

Jo Smith thanked Mike Strachan for organising such a great meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Jo Smith,  
26 June 2013