

***REPORT***

Rome,  
Italy,  
2 September  
2002

# **Executive Committee of the International Poplar Commission**

**Forty-first session**

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INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION

Executive Committee

Report of the Forty-first Session

Rome, Italy, 2 September 2002

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
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## CONTENTS

	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES AND THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION SINCE THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE IPC	2
a) Working Party on Poplar and Willow Genetics, Conservation and Improvement	2
b) Working Party on Poplar and Willow Insect and Other Animal Pests	2
c) Working Party on Production Systems and Environmental Applications for Poplar and Willows	3
d) Sub-committee on Nomenclature and Registration	3
III. PROPOSALS FOR THE DATE AND PLACE OF THE FORTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	4
IV. DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION AND ITS WORKING PARTIES	4
V. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE IPC	6
VI. OTHER MATTERS	7
ANNEXES	
1. Agenda	8
2. List of Participants	9

# INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION

## Executive Committee

### Report of the Forty-first Session

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Forty-first Session of the Executive Committee of the International Poplar Commission (IPC) was held on 2 September 2002 at FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy. The Session, which opened at 0900, was chaired by Mr Stefano Bisoffi (Italy). It was attended by nine members of the Executive Committee and by five Chairpersons, Vice-chairpersons or Secretaries of its subsidiary bodies (Annex 2).

2. The Session had been preceded by an informal meeting of the members of the Executive Committee and Chair and Vice-chairpersons or Secretaries of subsidiary bodies on 1 September, to discuss options for the future development of the IPC and its working parties.

3. The Session was opened by Ms. Christel Palmberg-Lerche (Chief, Forest Resources Development Service, Forest Resources Division, Forestry Department, FAO). Speaking on behalf of the Assistant Director-General, FAO Forestry Department, Ms. Palmberg-Lerche highlighted the need of the IPC to integrate its objectives, outputs, activities and mechanisms of work to support the programmes and priorities of FAO, Committee on Forestry, Forestry Department, Regional Forestry Commissions, Statutory Technical Bodies in Forestry and National Poplar Commissions in responding to the priority needs of member States. Forestry-related discussions at the international and national levels in past years have centred on the concept, principles and implementation of sustainable forestry practices and sustainable development, balancing on the three main dimensions: the environment, the economic and the social aspects. The procedures of the IPC were governed by rules of FAO, which had been established by member States. Complementary mechanisms for working at more informal levels, for example purely scientific ones, existed in the form of the work of non-governmental partner organizations such as IUFRO and IPGRI. The Working Parties, the “engine room” of the IPC, were entrusted to meet and discuss issues of importance in an informal manner, forwarding their results to the IPC in formal Sessions. The National Poplar Commissions, in turn, constituted an essential link to national level action and implementation in the field. Recommendations and actions of the IPC needed to be soundly based, well targeted, specific and achievable.

4. Mr Stefano Bisoffi, Chairperson, IPC welcomed the participants and reiterated the conclusions from the informal meeting as a basis for the formal Forty-first Session of the Executive Committee. The IPC needed to mobilize the Working Parties to establish programmes of work in phase with the priority needs of member States as reflected by FAO, Committee on Forestry, Forestry Department and National Poplar Commissions. A greater commitment and understanding of the ways to support the links and outreach of these organizations and programmes was necessary. It was highlighted that the Working Parties needed to review their two-year programmes of work (who, what, when, where, why, how) in an attempt to be more transparent, accountable and timely in delivery of outputs and

activities. Particular reference was made for the need of the IPC to integrate their work more effectively through the Forestry Department, and to establish more effective links to the National Poplar Commissions. It was recognized that the Salicaceae were “model trees” of increasing importance in forest plantation development programmes, particularly in temperate regions of the world.

5. The agenda as shown in Annex 1 was adopted. Mr Jim Carle, Secretary of the IPC, was responsible for the work of the Secretariat.

6. Mr Jim Carle, Secretary of the IPC made a presentation of the IPC as a FAO Statutory Body as a foundation for the IPC to seek a more effective way forward. The presentation highlighted key elements and priority programmes and actions of FAO Conference and the functions of the Committee on Forestry; the Regional Forestry Commissions and other Subsidiary Technical Bodies in Forestry; the Convention placing the IPC in the FAO Framework; the strategies and components of the FAO Strategic Framework; objectives, programmes and priority activities of the FAO Strategic Plan for Forestry; IPC Functions; and the Major Programme on Forestry in the Medium Term Plan (2004-2009); and to the current IPC Working Party activities. The presentation highlighted questions for discussion during the Executive Committee meeting, particularly on how to work more effectively through the Working Parties to respond to the priority needs of member States and FAO Forestry Department strategies. Through the FAO mechanisms and protocols it was stressed that the IPC could achieve maximum outreach to the full range of stakeholders to influence greater sustainability and productivity in forest management and contribution to environmental rehabilitation, food security and livelihoods.

## II. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES AND THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON NOMENCLATURE AND REGISTRATION SINCE THE TWENTY FIRST SESSION OF THE IPC

### II-a: Working Party on Poplar and Willow Genetics, Conservation and Improvement

7. The Vice-chairperson of the Working Party, Mr. Sasa Orlovic detailed preparations for a standard questionnaire to be sent to member States of the IPC regarding genetic resources tree breeding and pollen collections of Poplars and Willows and how these are applied in cultivation of these species. It was proposed that the results of this inventory will be presented at the Twenty-second Session of the IPC, 2004. Another activity in association with the Working Party on Poplar and Willow Diseases was the revision of the FAO publication “Breeding Poplars for Disease Resistance (1985) to incorporate information on new techniques and to enlarge the scope to include developing countries that are now important growers of Poplars. The document will initially be published on the IPC website although it is hoped it will be published in hard copy in due course. This activity will be completed in 2002/03.

### II-b Working Party on Poplar and Willow Insect and Other Animal Pests

8. The Chairperson of the Working Party, Ms. Sylvie Augustin, supported by Mr John Charles, Vice-chairperson outlined the initiative underway to update the French version of the Insects of Poplars and Willows, prepared by Mr Ludovic Nef (currently on the IPC website in French). The publication will be reviewed initially as an e-book, provide inputs to an e-catalogue (ECOPORT), cut as a CD, published as a working paper and possibly incorporated

as a chapter in a new version of the Poplars and Willows book. The Working Party would hold a meeting at FAO, 3 September, 2002 to confirm their programme of work (2002-2004) and to explore ways to integrate their work with programmes and mechanisms of FAO. Meetings with FAO personnel responsible for entomology, integrated pest management, ECOPORT and the IPC Secretariat were confirmed to assist in this process. It was proposed to link time-bound tasks with focal persons responsible for delivery of their outputs for further dissemination through major outreach systems in FAO, including links to publications, databases and websites.

#### II-c Working Party on Production Systems and Environmental Applications for Poplar and Willows

9. The Chairperson of the Working Party Mr Theo Verwijst outlined that the Working Party had primarily been active in conducting technical discussions and preparing papers on topical issues. A Technical session and field excursions had been held in the United Kingdom on phyto-remediation applications of Poplars and Willows. An unprecedented demand for support to applications of Poplars and Willows in soil protection, conservation and phyto-remediation warranted a re-evaluation of how to service this priority need. Another priority need identified was to provide the link between research and application and integration of outputs into the forestry industry, a significant component of which was private enterprise. A meeting of the Working Party had been held during the IUFRO sponsored, International Poplar Symposium, Uppsala, Sweden, August 2002 to consider future activities, particularly use of vegetation filters to counteract environmental problems. A field trip was conducted to Enöping to view bioenergy and phytoremediation applications of Salicaceae.

#### II-d Sub-committee on Nomenclature and Registration

10. The Chairperson of the Sub-committee on Registration, Mr Stefano Bisoffi outlined that the IPC, through the subcommittee, is the International Cultivar Registration Authority for Poplars, and under consideration for Willows. Standard procedures for an electronic register were established which will be posted on the IPC website in the coming months. In 2001 six hundred copies of an IPC CD was prepared and distributed by FAO to a wide audience, including IPC member States, institutions and experts. The CD contained the international Register of Poplar and Willow Experts; and the Register of Poplar Cultivars.

11. The IPC, through the Subcommittee on Nomenclature and Registration is the International Cultivar Registration Authority for Poplars. The IPC is also under consideration as the International Cultivar Registration Authority for Willows. Standard procedures, documentation, guidelines and an electronic register have been established for Poplars. It is anticipated that a sub-group would manage the Willows register. Concern was expressed at the lack of compliance with registration, particularly by National Poplar Commissions, national institutions and other stakeholders. The Secretary of the IPC was requested to remind member countries of the IPC once more of the responsibility of the IPC for the registration of poplar cultivars, of the presence of the *International Catalogue*, and of the procedures for registration of poplar cultivars. Each member country should be requested to designate a national correspondent to liaise with national authorities responsible for the control of forest reproductive material.

12. Activities for the future include a live link through the IPC website and FAO FORICLE database on the Register of Poplar and Willow Experts; and the Register of Poplar

Cultivars to effectively allow real time update. Establishment of a network and database of what living collections of Poplar and Willow cultivars exist, where they are located, and who is responsible for their management. Close links with EUFORGEN and IPGRI were noted as important.

### III. PROPOSALS FOR THE DATE AND PLACE OF THE FORTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

13. It was agreed that the Secretary should follow up possible invitations from member countries, particularly those who had expressed an interest to host the Twenty-second Session of the IPC.

### IV. DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION AND ITS WORKING PARTIES

14. After a wide-ranging discussion, members reached conclusions on the following topics:

#### IV-a Internet site

15. The new IPC website managed and maintained by FAO was demonstrated as a full repository of outputs and activities of the IPC. The French and Spanish versions are under preparation. The Secretary was requested to explore additional features which included: e-conferencing; sub-sites for Working Parties and National Poplar Commissions; a correspondence corner for users; a photo database and a CD version for users without regular web access. It was expected that the Register of Poplar and Willow Experts and the Register of Poplar Cultivars are to be included on the site by the end of the year.

#### IV-b Titles and Responsibilities of the Working Parties

16. The Working Parties of IPC should be reviewed, rationalized and refocused to more effectively integrate with, and complement, the objectives, outputs, activities, resources and mechanisms of FAO, Committee on Forestry, Forestry Department, Regional Forestry Commissions, Statutory Technical Bodies in Forestry; and National Poplar Commissions.

17. To be more transparent and accountable, and to assist in the review process, Working Parties were requested to prepare a two year programme of work to detail focused but achievable activities, assign persons responsible, detail indicative delivery dates and show linkages and collaboration with FAO, Forestry Department, Forestry Commissions and other agencies and institutions in particularly meeting the needs of developing countries.

18. At the Twenty-second Session of the IPC the Working Parties should hold a joint meeting to discuss the relevance and integration of their programmes of work and to evaluate and rationalize how best to serve member States and National Poplar Commissions. This could result in abolition or merging of existing Working Parties and/or formation of new Working Parties, to be recommended to the members of the IPC meeting in plenary.

19. A proposal was supported to establish a new Working Party to address the high demand for application of Poplars and Willows in rehabilitation, conservation and phyto-remediation of degraded soils. It was recognized that social, environmental and economic

issues were cross cutting and their dimensions should be incorporated into the outputs and activities of all Working Parties.

20. Significant assignments in process include an e-book, e-catalogue (through ECOPORT) and CD on Insects of Poplars and Willows; review and update of the book *Poplars and Willows* (1957 and 1980) through working papers, CD and possible republication; and review and update of the FAO publication, *Breeding Poplars for Disease Resistance* (1985) to incorporate new techniques and include developing country grower needs. An editorial committee would review the table of contents, format and most appropriate methods of dissemination with respect to the target beneficiaries and messages to be delivered. Messrs. Jud Isebrands and Jim Richardson will share this responsibility. It was acknowledged that such a publication should be in response to a need and focus on the important topics required by the target beneficiaries and with close collaboration of NPCs and Working Parties.

#### IV-c Assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition

21. As developing countries and countries with economies in transition made up half of the IPC member States, an opportunity existed for the developed countries to support sustainable forestry and sustainable development in these countries. Issues such as country capacity building, technology transfer, twinning and networking, applications in production, protection and conservation aspects in sustainable forestry and use of genetic resources for present-day and future benefit were discussed. It was felt that prominence could be given to the application of Poplar and Willow species to a wide range of growing mechanisms in different ecological zones, meeting different social, environmental and economic objectives. It is common in rehabilitation of degraded soils and combating desertification in developing countries for Poplars and Willows to be grown in agroforestry mechanisms or in multi-tiered approaches, meeting the needs of local communities in addressing food security, wood energy, poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods. The IPC needed to highlight how their outputs and activities could contribute to direct support of these objectives. Papers to highlight the bridge between science and application and research and development to support the needs of developing countries or countries in transition could make a significant contribution to relating the outputs and activities of the IPC and Working Parties to developing country needs, particularly the rural poor.

#### IV-d Willows

22. Once again the need to give more prominence to the growing and use of the Willows was stressed, including co-ordination of research and development work, the need to improve quality by breeding, and genetic pollution arising from introduced Willows.

#### IV-e National Poplar Commissions

23. The interest and enthusiasm of National Poplar Commissions was noted to vary widely between countries, depending on the perception of issues connected with popliculture. There was a broad discussion on the need to stimulate the activities of National Poplar Commissions and the Secretariat was requested to continue to explore ways of encouraging the activities of National Poplar Commissions. Access to a sub-site within the IPC website could be used to stimulate some National Poplar Commissions to be more



proactive on Poplar and Willow activities and applications. A template will be prepared for reporting on the status and trends in Poplars and Willows

#### V. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE IPC

##### V-a: Place and date of the Twenty-second Session

24. The Secretary informed members that Chile and Argentina have submitted a joint bid and separately India had offered to host the Twenty-second Session of the IPC. There was unanimous agreement to recommend to FAO acceptance of the joint invitation from Chile and Argentina. If this invitation was accepted it was agreed that a suitable date would be October/November of the year 2004.

25. The IPC Session has not been held in the Asia Pacific region since 1988 (China) where Poplars and Willows play an increasing role in sustainable forestry and rural development in developed and developing countries. The proposal from India was appreciated and has been noted for future consideration.

##### V-b Selection of a theme for the Twenty-second Session

26. After considerable discussion the members recommended that the theme needed to reflect topical issues of Latin America in general and Chile and Argentina in particular. Several options were discussed, but they were narrowed down to two similar approaches:

“Economic, environmental and social dimensions of Poplar and Willow cultivation” and

“The contribution of Poplars and Willows to sustainable forestry and rural development”.

The members requested the Secretary and Chairperson to liaise with the Organizing Committee to refine the theme to reflect priorities of the region.

27. In the past a questionnaire to gather information from member countries relevant to the theme and the preparation of National Poplar Commission country report had caused some confusion. The members requested the Secretary and the Chairperson to consider integrating these requests.

##### V-c Arrangements for the Twenty-second Session

28. It was agreed that consideration should be given to adopting a similar format to that in Portland, Oregon for the twenty-first session with concurrent scientific and procedural sessions, with the possibility of the scientific sessions lasting for three days. Due to the anticipated attendance from Latin America, the necessity to have English and Spanish interpretation in these sessions would be reviewed by the Secretary and budgets sought.

29. Members recommended that the organisers should appoint a local Organising Committee, with responsibility for the local arrangements for the meeting.

30. The members recommended that a Scientific Committee be appointed to improve the coherence and quality of the scientific papers presented, to provide liaison between the Working Parties and to set the targets for publication of the papers and the Proceedings. It

was agreed that membership of the Scientific Committee should include the Chairpersons of the Working Parties, and other members suggested by the Working Parties up to a total of eight or nine. The Terms of Reference of the Scientific Committee are to be agreed by the officials of the Working Parties.

31. Reviews of the administrative, logistical and technical arrangements of the Twenty-first Session had been prepared. The Secretary was requested to consolidate these into a single document of the lessons learned and have this translated into Spanish to assist in planning and managing of the Twenty-second Session.

#### VI. OTHER MATTERS

32. There were opportunities for the IPC, Working Parties and member States to provide papers and be pro-active in the UNFF Inter-sessional meeting on the Role of Planted Forests in Sustainable Forest Management, New Zealand, March 2003 and at the World Forestry Congress, Canada, September, 2003. Both conferences were highlighting the three dimensions of sustainable forestry and rural development (economic, environmental and social).

33. The attendance and valuable inputs of Mr Oscar Fugalli and Mr Jim Ball as former Secretaries of the IPC were acknowledged. There were no other matters.

INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION  
FORTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rome, Italy, 2 September 2002

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Activities of the Working Parties and Sub-Committee on Nomenclature and Registration of Poplars since the Fortieth Session of the Executive Committee in Portland, Oregon, USA, September 2000
4. Proposals for the date and place of the Forty-second Session of the Executive Committee
5. Development of the International Poplar Commission and its Working Parties
6. Arrangements for the Twenty-second Session of the IPC
7. Other matters

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