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INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION

Executive Committee

Report of the Thirty-ninth Session

Rome, Italy, 17 September 1998

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INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION

Executive Committee

Report of the Thirty-ninth Session

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The thirty-ninth Session of the Executive Committee of the International Poplar Commission (IPC) was held on 17 September 1998 at FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy. The Session, which opened at 0900, was chaired by Mr V. Steenackers (Belgium). It was attended by 10 members of the Executive Committee and by 6 Chairmen 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 Chairmen or Secretaries of subsidiary bodies on 16 September, to discuss options for the future development of the IPC and its working parties.
3. Before opening, participants stood in silence in memory of Dr Rosa Arreghini (Argentina) and Professor Wang Shiji (China), late members of the IPC Executive Committee.
4. The Session was opened by Mr J. Clément (Director, FAO Forestry Department, Forest Resources Division). Speaking on behalf of the Assistant Director-General, FAO Forestry Department, Mr Clément referred to the celebration in 1997 of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the IPC, to poplar as a “model tree” for workers with other forest plantation species, and to the continuing importance of the Salicaceae in forest plantation programmes in many parts of the world.
5. The agenda as shown in Annex 1 was adopted. Mr J. Ball, Secretary of the IPC, was responsible for the work of the Secretariat.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES AND THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION SINCE THE TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE IPC

II-a: Working Party on Breeding and Selection of Poplars and Willows

6. The Chairman of the Working Party, Dr Stefano Bisoffi, referred to recent improvements in communications within the Working Party through the appointment of contact persons in member and other countries. Some possible future activities of the Working Party had been identified, such as a database of clones available in collections; an inventory of poplar and willow breeding programmes world-wide; and leaflets on aspects of poplar breeding, with the conservation of seed and pollen and experimental designs for field trials proposed as the first two titles. Debate was on-going on a sub-theme and preparations for the next Session of the IPC.

II-b Working Party on Poplar Diseases

7. The Chairman of the Working Party, Dr Gian Pietro Cellerino, referred to continuing problems of control of the diseases of poplars, both by direct means, and by biological control. Debate was going on also in this Working Party on the sub-theme for the next Session. He stressed the importance of preventative action to combat poplar diseases and ecological aspects of such action.

II-c Sub-committee on Registration

8. The Chairman of the Sub-committee on Registration, Dr Stefano Bisoffi, confirmed that he had taken possession of all files relevant to the work of the sub-committee. He reported that the database had been developed and expanded to include four additional fields and that electronic and hard copies of the register, *The International Catalogue of Populus Cultivars*, had been prepared. Distribution would be made to national poplar commissions and national institutions. Future work would include the production of an updated application form and guidelines for the registration of new poplar cultivars, a revision of the register to include information that is presently missing, and the production of a printed version of the *International Catalogue* for the year 2000.

9. 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.

II-d 50th anniversary of the International Poplar Commission

10. The Secretary of the IPC informed members of the satellite meeting that was held on the occasion of the XI World Forestry Congress in Antalya, Turkey in October 1997, to celebrate the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the IPC. A keynote paper *Towards long-lasting and sustainable global poplar growing* was presented by the Chairman of the IPC Executive Committee, Mr V. Steenackers, along with an updated History of the IPC and histories of four of the five Working Parties. These papers would be made available to a wider audience.

**III. PROPOSALS FOR THE DATE AND PLACE OF THE FORTY-FIRST
SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

11. It was agreed that the Secretary should follow up possible invitations from member countries, including those who had expressed an interest previously, in hosting the forty-first Session of the Executive Committee in the year 2002.

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

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

Titles and Responsibilities of the Working Parties.

13. A new focus for some of the Working Parties was felt to be required to reflect newly-emerging issues. In particular there was perceived to be the need to include the environment and ecology in the coverage or title of an existing Working Party, or even to establish a new Working Party devoted to either or both subjects. Other newly-emerging issues connected with the growth and use of the Salicaceae which should be incorporated in the scope of existing or new Working Parties included: land reclamation; watershed management; waste water disposal including the absorption of heavy metals; social aspects; carbon sequestration, especially following the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol; policy issues; mycorrhizae.

14. The Breeding WP should consider the inclusion of conservation, management and use of genetic resources.

15. At the next (twenty-first) Session of the IPC the Working Parties should hold a joint meeting to discuss their Terms of Reference and possibly the abolition or formation of Working Parties, and should make recommendations on the matter to the members of the IPC meeting in plenary.

Internet site

16. Members strongly supported the further development of the Internet site (homepage) of the IPC in order to improve the exchange of information according the functions of the IPC. The Secretary was requested to follow this up, with particular reference to adding to the site the *International Catalogue of Populus Cultivars*, documents presented at the fiftieth anniversary celebrations, the recently prepared review of poplar insect pests and other documents.

Assistance to developing countries and the coverage of other species

17. The need to emphasise assistance to developing countries and to countries with economies in transition was stressed. In this connection, the work of the IPC should be inclusive of all species of poplars and willows, but not of the species or genera other fast-growing families. It was felt that prominence could be given to poplar species not widely known at present by the preparation of a special paper on the properties of different species of poplar for different uses and their adaptation to different sites, possibly in time for the twenty-first Session.

Willows

18. 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.

National poplar commissions

19. The interest and enthusiasm of national poplar commissions was noted to vary widely between countries, depending on the perception of issues connected with popluculture. 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.

V. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE IPC

V-a: Place and date of the twenty-first session

20. The Secretary informed members that three countries had offered to host the twenty-first session of the IPC. There was unanimous agreement to strongly recommend to FAO acceptance of the joint invitation from the USA and Canada. If this invitation was accepted it was agreed that a suitable date would be September of the year 2000.

V-b Selection of a theme for the twenty-first session

21. Following discussion it was agreed that the theme for the twenty-first session of the IPC would be:

Poplar and willow culture: meeting the needs of society and the environment

22. The offer of Mr Jud Isebrands (USA) to develop a questionnaire to gather information from member countries relevant to the theme and to analyse the responses was accepted by members.

V-c Arrangements for the twenty-first session

23. It was agreed that consideration should be given to concurrent scientific and procedural sessions, with the possibility of the scientific sessions lasting for three days.

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

25. The members recommended that a Scientific Committee should 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 chairs 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 should be agreed by the officials of the Working Parties. A video-conference should if possible be held to discuss the arrangements for scientific aspects of the Session.

VI. OTHER MATTERS

26. There were no other matters.

INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION
THIRTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rome, Italy, 17 September 1998

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 Thirty-eighth Session of the Executive Committee in Hungary in October 1996
4. Proposals for the date and place of the next session of the Executive Committee
5. Development of the International Poplar Commission and its Working Groups
6. Arrangements for the Twenty-first session of the IPC
7. Other matters

Annex 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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