

Minister of State Wallace Announces Increased Rates For Forestry 'Neighbourwood' And 'Native Woodland' Schemes

18 April, 2008

Ms. Mary Wallace T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with responsibility for forestry, has today announced an increase in the grant levels for certain elements of the NeighbourWood Scheme and the Native Woodland Scheme.

Commenting on the NeighbourWood Scheme, Minister of State Wallace said "*The NeighbourWood Scheme grant package is all about bringing communities and woodlands together, by helping local authorities and others to create 'close-to-home' woodland amenities in partnership with communities, for local people to use and enjoy. These woodlands can provide other benefits including habitats for wildlife, biodiversity, improving the landscape while also providing a place for people to get closer to the natural world*". The Minister of State announced that two elements of the NeighbourWood Scheme were being increased: the Enhancement Grant is being increased to EUR5,000 per hectare while the grant rate for the Facilities element is being increased to EUR4,500 per hectare for the first 10 hectares of forest area submitted and EUR3,000 per hectare for all subsequent area submitted, up to a maximum of 40 hectares.

Turning to the Native Woodland Scheme, Minister of State Wallace commented that "*Native woodlands are a key part of Ireland's biodiversity and represent diverse vibrant ecosystems that are significant at a national, European and international level*" and added "*The Native Woodland Scheme aims to provide landowners with the resources needed to enable them to protect and enhance existing native woodlands, and to develop new native woodlands*". The grant for the Conservation of Existing Native Woodland element of this scheme is being increased to EUR5,000 per hectare while the Native Woodland Conservation Premium is being increased to EUR350 per hectare per annum and will be payable for a period of seven years.

The Minister of State added that, having announced the reopening of these schemes in December 2007, she was delighted now to be able to announce these significant increases in the grant rates available for these community and society orientated forestry schemes.

Concluding, Minister of State Wallace said "*it should be noted that my Department is providing support for innovative and life enhancing schemes as well as focusing on the commercial aspects of timber production. Forests have benefits for everyone in our society, right from the farmer to local authorities and communities developing facilities for their town or city*".

Native Woodland Scheme

http://www.client.teagasc.ie/docs/training/forestry/financial_info/neighbourwoodscheme_december2007.pdf

Background Reading & Links

Urban forest an essential component of urban infrastructure

Dublin – Friday, 2 November 2001

Hugh Byrne, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Marine and Natural Resources, today opened a seminar on the recently launched 'NeighbourWood'

scheme at the Botanic Gardens, Dublin. The scheme is designed to support the establishment and improvement of recreational and amenity urban woodlands.

The Minister said that *"...with the rapid expansion of Ireland's urban centres over recent years, there has never been a greater need to provide urban communities with woodland amenities..."*.

Minister Byrne added that urban trees and woodlands contribute greatly to the value of life in our towns and cities. He said, *"...The urban forest resource is fast becoming recognised as an essential component of the urban infrastructure..."*.

The scheme will offer considerable support to local authorities to develop woodland amenities in and around villages, towns and cities. Minister Byrne said, *"...Such amenities, designed and equipped for public access, recreation and enjoyment, will impart a huge range of benefits to the surrounding communities and will become an integral part of the locality and community life..."*.

The Minister also emphasised the important role that trees play in the improvement of air quality and stated that roadside tree planting reduces the dust content of air as well as absorbing noise levels.

'NeighbourWood' provides for financial support of up to £5,300 per hectare and is aimed primarily at lands under the ownership or long-term management of local authorities. Involvement of local authority associations and NGO's is also being encouraged.

Background Note

The **'Urban Woodland'** grant-aided scheme (which preceded the **'Neighbourwood'** scheme) was initiated under the Operational Programme for Agriculture, Rural Development and Forestry, 1994-1999. The aim of the scheme was to support the establishment or development by local authorities of woodlands in or near centres of population for the purpose of public enjoyment and recreation.

The new **'NeighbourWood'** scheme offers considerable support to local authorities to develop woodland amenities in and around villages, towns and cities. Such amenities, designed and equipped for public access, recreation and enjoyment, will impart a huge range of benefits to the surrounding communities. These so-called 'neighbourwoods' will represent a resource for all and will become an integral part of the locality and community life.

The **'Neighbourwood'** scheme is funded by the Department of the Marine and Natural Resources under the National Development Plan, 2000-2006, and is supported by the European Union. It is administered by the Forest Service and will operate until the end of 2006.

The scheme represents a unique opportunity for local authorities, community associations and NGOs to provide communities in villages, towns and cities with their own neighbourwood amenity. Such initiatives will contribute greatly to the development of sustainable, liveable and enjoyable environments for urban-based communities, while further broadening the growing range of public benefits generated by Ireland's woodland resource.

Grant aid available subject to the following per hectare maxima:

- Woodland establishment: £5,300
- Woodland improvement: £3,500
- Facilities provision: £2,000

The Forest Service Biodiversity Plan

<http://www.ria.ie/publications/journals/journaldb/index.asp?select=fulltext&id=100071>

Balrath Wood

http://www.treecouncil.ie/pdfs/balrath_notes.pdf

Forest Link - Donegal Forestry Service

<http://www.forest-link.com/default.aspx>

Forestry Schemes Manual 2004

http://www.agriculture.irlgov.ie/index.jsp?file=forestry/forestry_manual2004/index.xml

Neighbourwood Scheme

http://www.client.teagasc.ie/forestry/financial_info/fin_suppt/neighbourwood_scheme.asp

http://www.client.teagasc.ie/docs/training/forestry/financial_info/neighbourwoodscheme_april2008.pdf

Neighbour Woods for Better Cities

http://www.sl.kvl.dk/upload/neighbourwood_eng_net.pdf

Conservation, Preservation, and Environmental Activism: A Survey of the Historical Literature

<http://www.nps.gov/history/history/hisnps/NPSThinking/nps-oah.htm>

Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations

<http://www.fao.org/>

SUST.org, *Scotland's dedicated web site to sustainable design in architecture and the built environment.*

<http://www.sust.org/>

A Literature Review of the Social, Economic and Environmental Impact of Architecture and Design

<http://openscotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/07/21095819/10>

Non-wood forest products from conifers

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/X0453e/X0453e00.HTM>

Neighbourwoods

<http://www.sl.kvl.dk/euforic/nbw.htm>

Tree Planting and Woodland Creation

<http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/publications/publicationsmore/urbanwoodlandguide4.pdf>

Urban Forestry for Livelihoods and Poverty Alleviation

http://km.fao.org/urbanforestry/banque_d_information/library0.html?no_cache=1&L=1#c3322

Greenscom - Urban Growth and Green

<http://www.greenscom.com/default.htm>

Greenspace Project

http://www.ucd.ie/greensp/work_programme.htm

Friends of Terryland Forest

<http://friendsoftheterrylandforest.blogspot.com/>

Protection of biodiversity or more wood for bio-energy?

As the EU promotes renewable energy with clear targets for 2020 and the wood markets show increasing demand of raw material, the present political discussions are focussing on availability and mobilization of wood in Europe. On the other hand, policies are being developed to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010 and beyond. Protecting biological and landscape diversity has resulted in various protection regimes across Europe, which affect the economic exploitation of forests. But to what extent do currently protected forests limit the potential wood supply?

A recent study carried out at the European Forest Institute provides an estimate of the felling restrictions imposed by biodiversity and landscape protection in European forests that are currently protected and the wood volume affected. It was found that the wood volume affected by protecting forests for biodiversity or landscape was about 68 million m³, which is approximately the same as the volume of roundwood production in Germany and Italy combined in 2005.

The report serves as a source of information in discussing whether to protect European forests for biodiversity or to harvest more wood for producing bio-energy. This information can be adopted by policy makers, industry and NGOs alike to ensure we make decisions that promote sustainability of forest land use.

The study was funded by the Confederation of European Paper Industries (Agreement No 5500/11) and by the European Commission as part of the EXIOPOL project (A New Environmental Accounting Framework Using Externality Data and Input-Output Tools for Policy Analysis (contract no. 037033-2).

The full report "*Impacts of biological and landscape diversity protection on the wood supply in Europe*" by P.J. Verkerk, G. Zanchi and M. Lindner has been published as an EFI Technical Report and can be downloaded at:
http://www.efi.int/attachments/publications/tr_27.pdf

Additional Links and Reading material welcomed

Contact: info@aughty.org

<http://www.aughty.org>