



International Conference
« The European Forest-Based Sector:
Bio-Responses to Address New Climate and Energy Challenges? »

6-8 November 2008, Nancy, France

Organized under the auspices of the
French Presidency of the European Union

Target audience

350 participants are expected:

- Scientific researchers from public or private research centres and universities;
- Professionals from the forest-based sector;
- Delegates from the European Union and its Members States;
- Delegates from other national or international organisations;
- Members of Non-Governmental Organisations involved in the forest-based sector;
- Students;
- Journalists.

Background and objectives

The forest-based sector is at the intersection of two major crises closely interlinked, one related to climate and the other to energy. The climate issue stems from the amplification of the greenhouse effect: greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, are emitted at a much faster rate than that at which the biosphere and the ocean are able to process them. The energy issue is the consequence of a gradual depletion of the most accessible fossil resources, the use of which also contributes to the greenhouse effect; it results in higher energy prices which, in turn, benefit renewable resources, among other things.

Forests sequester and store carbon, and wood-based products prolong the retention, require little energy for their manufacture and have a high calorific value. This prompts us to consider how the forest-based sector can contribute, as it must, within the limits of its potential, to the mitigation of the two crises mentioned above.

The mitigation potential of forests has long been recognized by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. However, it has not been taken into account in its entirety. The retention of carbon in forest products and the substitution of wood to other materials or energy sources are considered at their true value. It is thus necessary to review the geochemical and institutional contributions of the forest-based sector to the mitigation of climate change.

While preparing new commitments for the period after 2012, it would be particularly useful to have as much objective information as possible available for the negotiators so that they gain a better understanding of the role of the forest-based sector as regards the physical processes of the carbon cycle, the competition between wood and other materials and the energy market. Three themes will thus be developed:

- 1. Forests as carbon sinks;**
- 2. Wood-based products: carbon pools and energy conservation;**
- 3. The forest-based sector: source of renewable energy.**

Proposed Conference Themes and Topics

1. Forests as carbon sinks

- 1.1. The Kyoto Protocol takes into account the consequences of land-use change (afforestation, reforestation, deforestation) on the net changes in emissions of greenhouse gases (Article 3.3). It also makes it possible to take into account part of the effects of forest management on the carbon pool (Article 3.4). It was reached through difficult negotiation among many different parties and interests and brought about complex accounting rules. The issue is thus to confirm and, where appropriate, to improve, simplify or extend the manner in which forest sinks are taken into account.
- 1.2. The exact role of forests in relation to climatic and atmospheric changes is apparent in the carbon cycle: the carbon sequestered by photosynthesis and not released by plant respiration is stored until its potential release into the atmosphere through combustion or natural decomposition. Forests are also involved in the natural cycles of water, ozone and other greenhouse gases and play a role through their reflectance characteristics (albedo). In addition, global changes are affecting forest ecosystem processes (stands, soils) and therefore the carbon cycle. Moreover, they could cause an amplification of extreme events also likely, in turn, to interfere with ecosystem processes. Thus, an overall assessment should be drawn up so as to gain a more detailed understanding of the exact role of forests in climatic and atmospheric changes in order to determine, explain and defend the best option available.
- 1.3. Regardless of strategies for forest products (themes 2 and 3), the forest manager can enhance the effectiveness of sequestration through appropriate interventions. He can also reduce the adverse impacts of climate change through preventive measures, ie adaptation. It is worth noting that the distinction between management effects and other natural or human effects (atmospheric nitrogen deposition, increase of carbon dioxide atmospheric concentration, age-class structure of forest trees...) is still a difficult issue.
- 1.4. By analysing the current rules, reviewing the biogeochemical processes involved and assessing the opportunities for forest-related action, it becomes possible to discuss strategies, policies and measures, whether international, European or national, that are likely to substantiate the role of forests as carbon sinks.

2. Wood-based products: carbon pools and energy conservation

- 2.1. In its present form, the Kyoto Protocol does not enable to account for the retention of carbon in wood products, nor the fact that wood requires relatively less energy for processing than its alternatives. An important issue for the future is to quantify the comparative advantages of wood and develop a system that integrates them. The range of concerned products is currently expanding towards 'green chemistry' and new composite materials capable of entering the medical, pharmaceutical, food, electronic, textile, and other industrial sectors, besides bio-refinery (theme 3).
- 2.2. For an effective comparison between wood and major alternative materials, product life cycle analyses should be developed and generalised in order to include a wide range of markets and take into account a series of criteria including, of course, carbon balance.

- 2.3. Another important issue is to curb the negative effects related to certain wood harvesting and processing methods. This could be done by ensuring sustainable forest management, limiting illegal logging, implementing product traceability wherever necessary and reducing the number and toxicity of chemical products used for gluing and preserving wood.
- 2.4. After analysing the current situation, the life cycle of the various products and the obstacles to a more accurate taking into account of forest products in mitigating the greenhouse effect, attention should focus on discussing the strategies, policies and measures, whether international, European or national, that are likely to substantiate the role of forest products in carbon sequestration and energy conservation.

3. The forest-based sector: source of renewable energy

- 3.1. Unlike fossil fuels, wood is a source of energy renewable within a time scale that is immediately perceptible to people. Under wise management, forest regrowth offsets the emissions produced by the combustion of the harvested wood. The Kyoto Protocol does not take into account the emissions produced by the combustion of biomass. Wood may be used as a source of energy in many ways and at different stages of processing. New technologies of bio-energy are being developed, using lignocellulosic resources (among which wood); they may be in the context of bio-refineries in connection with paper mills.
- 3.2. The various possibilities of producing energy as heat, electricity or fuel from raw wood, forest industry residues, former by-products that have become key commodities or products at the end of their life cycle need to be assessed through multi-criteria analyses that take into account energy aspects as well as economic, environmental and social aspects in order to supply decision-makers with sound information.
- 3.3. In several European countries, forests are harvested at a level way below their biological potential while the demand for energy from biomass is on the rise. The actual available resources need to be assessed according to location, habitat type, management and possible market outlets. The objective is to balance supply and demand whilst complying with ecological constraints and preserving sustainable development. Any overharvesting is to be avoided. Possible conflicts between different forest uses and between different types of land-use (forest *versus* agriculture and fallow lands) need to be assessed and solutions need to be proposed.
- 3.4. These analyses of the current situation, of bio-energy sources and of expectations in this field can be used as a basis to discuss strategies, policies and measures, at the international, European or national level, most likely to make full use of the potential of wood as a source of bio-energy whilst contributing to the mitigation of the greenhouse effect.

Provisional conference program

Each of the three themes is first dealt with during a plenary session, then during parallel sessions. A participant attends two sessions on each theme, one plenary and one parallel. She or he is thus encouraged to get an overall vision in order to succeed in developing integrated and consistent approaches on the subject.

Thursday November 2008, 6th

Registration and reception			
Conference opening			
Plenary session	1.0	Theme 1: Forests as carbon sinks.	
Lunch break			
Parallel sessions	1.1	1.2	Theme 1
Coffee break and posters			
Plenary session	2.0	Theme 2: Wood-based products: carbon pools and energy conservation.	
Poster session			
Official conference dinner			

Friday November 2008, 7th

Parallel sessions	2.1	2.2	Theme 2
Coffee break and posters			
Plenary session	3.0	Theme 3: The forest-based sector: source of renewable energy.	
Lunch break			
Parallel sessions	3.1	3.2	Theme 3
Coffee break and posters			
Plenary session	4.0	Sessions and conference syntheses	
Closing address			

Saturday November 2008, 8th

Field session with three optional routes	
East Route (A): Hesse	Main topic: Research facilities to monitor and understand ecosystem functioning.
South Route (B): Epinal	Main topic: Wood for building, paper and energy.
West Route (C): Vitry-le-François	Main topic: Wood for building and energy.

Venue

The conference will take place in Nancy (downtown) at the Congress House (“Palais des Congrès”).

Palais des congrès de Nancy

17-19 Rue du Grand Rabbin Haguenauer

BP 60663

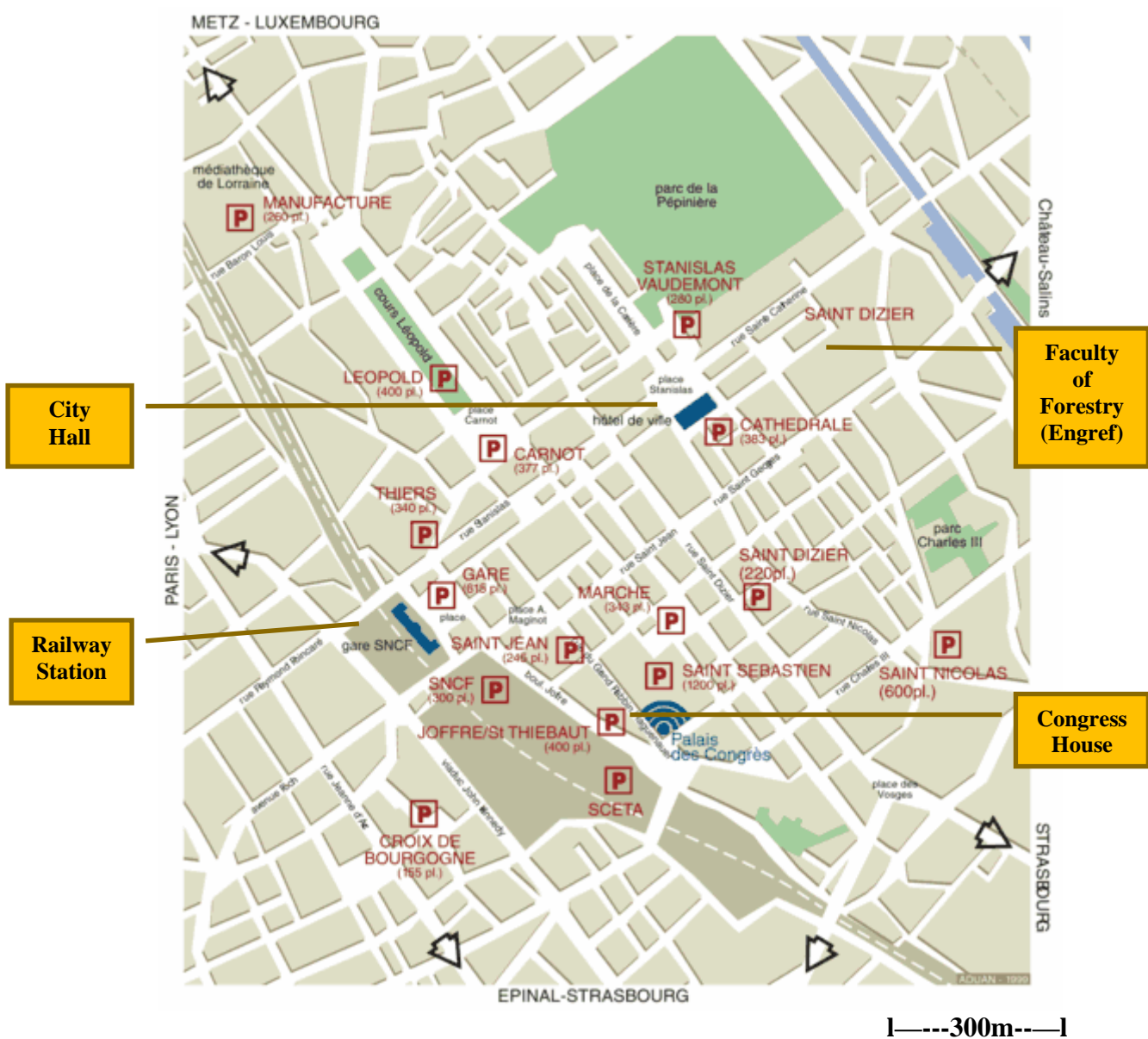
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Web site: <http://www.nancy-congres.com> (soon available in English)



Accommodation

Hotel booking is coupled to conference registration.

Registration

Official registration will be open on the website of the Congress House from the end of June at <http://www.nancy-congres.com/>.

Registration fees:

Normal fees:	registration until August 2008, 31 st : <u>132 €</u> registration from September 2008, 1 st : <u>152 €</u>
Free:	students, journalists and official guests

Additional fees

Official dinner:	<u>43 €</u> (within the limits of available seats)
Free:	official guests.

Accreditation

There are special security rules for the events held under the auspices of the French Presidency of European Union. Thus participants have to [ask for an accreditation](#) besides the registration, on the PFUE web site: <http://www.ue2008.fr/>.

Call for oral and poster presentations

Participants are deeply invited to submit voluntary contributions either as oral or poster presentations.

Last date for submission of abstracts is July 2008, 15th, before the examination by the Scientific Committee.

An abstract outlines the aims and content of the presentation and should not exceed a length of 400 words. It should be clear whether it is for an oral presentation or a poster. It has to be submitted electronically and sent by email to Viviane Appora <ecofor@gip-ecofor.org>. A form is available from the latter and on the website <http://www.gip-ecofor.org/nancy2008/>.

Presenters will need to have registered for the Conference for their abstracts to be definitively accepted. The scientific Committee will select actual oral presentations among the propositions of oral presentations and actual posters among the propositions of oral or poster presentations. Authors will be notified in August at the latest of acceptance or rejection of their contribution as oral presentation or poster.

Oral presentations are limited to 15 to 20 minutes. Contributors will be informed of the final format two months before the conference. Posters should be in A0 portrait format (841 mm x 1189 mm).

A selection of the papers presented at the conference will be published as a special issue of the French forest review (Revue forestière française). The text of the contribution should be ready by the conference time.

Important dates

July 2008, 15 th	Deadline for the submission of the second and last set of abstracts
August 2008	Notification of acceptance of abstracts sent to authors
August 2008, 31 st	End of early bird rate
November, 2008, 6 th -8 th	Conference Last date for submission of final contribution for publication in the conference proceedings
November 2008, 12 th	Summary report emailing and publication on the IISD Web site
October 2009, 31 st	Proceedings publication in the French Forest Review

Scientific Committee

The Scientific Committee is chaired by Yves Birot. Yves Birot chairs several other Scientific Committees or Advisory Boards in France and Europe and has been Chairman of the Board of the European Forest Institute (EFI) and Chairman of the Scientific Council of the European Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform.

Members : Dr Annemarie Bastrup-Birk (University of Copenhagen - Denmark), Philippe Ciais (LSCE – Laboratory of Climate and Environmental Sciences, Gif/Yvette - France), Emil Cienciala (Institute of Forest Ecosystem Research, Jilove u Prahy - Czech Republic), Giacomo Grassi (JRC, Joint Research Centre European Commission, Ispra - Italy), Wernz Kurz (IUFRO - Canada), Marcus Lindner (EFI, Forest Ecology and Management Programm, Joensuu - Finland), Denis Loustau (INRA, French National Institute for Agricultural Research, Bordeaux - France), Dr Maria Nijnik Serg (The Macaulay Institute, Aberdeen - UK), Leena Paavilainen (Metla, Finnish Forest Research Institute, Helsinki - Finland), Piotr Paschalis Jakubowicz (SGGW, Warsaw University of Life Sciences - Poland), Jim Penman (Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - UK), Davide Petenella (Università di Padova - Italy), Jean-Christophe Pouët (ADEME, French Environment and Energy Management Agency, Angers - France), Giuseppe Scarascia (President of The Forest-based technology Platform Scientific Committee), Prof. Kai Sipilä (VTT, Technical Research Centre of Finland, Espoo - Finland).

Organisation Committee

Under the auspices of the French ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (Map), the organization committee teams up representatives of the most important French institutions interested in the topic.

Partnairs

All partners are registered on the conference web site: www.gip-ecofor.org/nancy2008

Contacts

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