



Background document for the 50th IPC Executive Committee Meeting

ITEM 1 PROGRESS SINCE THE 49TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Since the 49th Meeting of the Executive Committee, the following work has been accomplished:

- Organization of a Special Session of the IPC in February 2019
- plans for the 26th of the IPC Session were initiated, and adjusted due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- national country progress reports were requested and compiled in a draft report;
- a flyer on the IPC was produced, and a presentation of the IPC to the IUFRO World Congress was made;
- updates were provided to 25th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO);
- Benjamin Caldwell, Forestry Officer Planted Forest, was appointed Secretary of the IPC.

Work of the IPC proposed in 2020-2021:

- Organization of the 26th IPC Session in October 2021
- Publication of a “Green book” on fast-growing trees to be created by SISEF in 2020
- IPC Newsletters
- IPC Session announcements
- Videos and communications products on the Green Book to be created by SISEF
- Policy briefs on fast-growing trees to be prepared to build the IPC’s work in this area

The Executive Committee may wish to:

- Note progress on work decided in the 49th Executive Committee meeting
- Recommend priority areas of work and focus leading up to the 26th Session of the IPC (October 2020 – October 2021)

ITEM 2 RESULTS OF THE PRESENTATION OF IPC UPDATES TO THE 25TH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY (COFO)

The International Commission on Poplars and Other Fast-Growing Trees Sustaining People and the Environment (IPC)

A. The IPC Reform

1. The IPC has been working to reform its Convention and organization so that it can better contribute to the SDGs. At its 5th Special Session (February, 2019), the IPC adopted amendments to its Convention, with the subsequent approval of the Conference at its 41st Session (June, 2019). The amendments to the IPC Convention are therefore in force. These amendments include expansion of the IPC scope to all fast-growing trees that sustain people and the environment, from a prior exclusive remit in the poplars and willows. The new title of the IPC is the "International Commission on Poplars and Other Fast-Growing Trees Sustaining People and the Environment". At its Fifth Special Session, Members of the IPC encouraged the IPC Executive Committee to continue its work, making the IPC an effective instrument in light of the expansion of the IPC's scope.

B. Developing an IPC Vision and Strategy

2. The IPC has prepared a Vision Statement that articulates its mission and planned contribution to the Decade of Action for the 2030 Agenda, the UN Decade for Family Farming, and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. The vision articulates:

a) **IPC Mission:** the IPC improves livelihoods and facilitates production of ecosystem goods and services by fostering the sustainable management of fast-growing trees worldwide.

b) **Actions to achieve this Mission:** 1) the IPC will seek to foster innovation in production systems involving fast-growing trees; 2) the IPC will rigorously assess innovations to establish best management practices of fast-growing trees; and 3) it will make recommendations to Members and FAO so that good practices achieve scale.

c) **Means to achieve the Mission:** The IPC will seek to work with existing Members through the IPC National Commissions, and will work with any new member nation that wish to establish a National Commission affiliated with the IPC.

C. The 26th Session of the IPC in Rome

3. Co-hosted with Italy, the 26th Session of the IPC, initially planned to be held in Rome, Italy, at FAO headquarters from 6 to 9 October 2020, has been postponed to 4 to 8 October 2021. The meeting is open to all FAO Members.

4. The IPC Session will include discussions on the IPC Vision, a draft IPC Strategy and draft terms of reference for the IPC Executive Committee. The Session will include thematic and technical presentations on fast-growing trees that support livelihoods and the provision of ecosystem services.

- D. Points for consideration
5. The Committee may wish to:
- Take note of the achievements of the IPC Reform process;
 - Encourage the IPC Executive Committee to take concrete actions through fast-growing tree species to support the UN Decade of Action for the SDGs, UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and UN Decade on Family Farming;
 - Encourage participation in the 2021 IPC Session and membership in the IPC in view of the expansion of the IPC scope.

The adopted report on this item reads:

The Committee, reviewing the work of the International Commission on Poplars and Other Fast-Growing Trees Sustaining People and the Environment (IPC):

- took note of the achievements of the IPC Reform process;
- encouraged the IPC Executive Committee to take concrete actions through fast-growing tree species, where appropriate, to support the UN Decade of Action, UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and UN Decade of Family Farming;
- encouraged participation in the 2021 IPC Session and membership in the IPC in view of the expansion of the IPC scope;
- encouraged the IPC to enhance sharing of information and consult on its work with the Committee;
- encouraged the FAO Forestry Division to share frequent updates of the work of the IPC with Members.

The Executive Committee may wish to:

- Consider the support of COFO members for:
 - Concrete actions to support the SDGs the IPC can take
 - Participation in the upcoming IPC Session
 - Active communication and consultations with IPC members

ITEM 3 IPC VISION AND STRATEGY

After more than seventy years focusing on improving productivity, restoring forests and protecting landscapes, soil and water through the use of poplars and willows, the IPC recently undertook an institutional reform that envisaged enlarging its geographic, biological and technical scope. In 2019 the IPC Convention was revised to include work with other fast-growing tree species with similar functions as the poplars and willows.

In 2020, the IPC Secretariat retained the services of a consultant (Jürgen Blaser, supported by John Stanturf) to develop a background document the IPC could use to develop a five to ten year implementation strategy. A synthesis and selected elements of the consultant's report were provided to the Executive Committee for consideration.

The Executive Committee may wish to:

- appoint some Members from the Executive Committee with the Secretariat as a task force for the finalization of the IPC Implementation Strategy, developing it for presentation and consideration for adoption at the 26th IPC Session;
- meet again on this matter in full Committee to review the Strategy before the 26th Session;
- actively update National Commissions on the possibilities identified in the Synthesis and explore possibilities for action.

Annex

Synthesis of the background document from the consultant

ITEM 4 PLANS FOR THE 26TH IPC SESSION

The 26th IPC Session is currently planned to be held physically in FAO Headquarters, 5-8 October 2021. Organization is a joint responsibility of the Organizing Committee, guided on the content by the Scientific Committee of the Session.

Composition of the 26th IPC Session Organizing Committee

- Italy: Directorate-General of Forests Italy, Research Center for Forests and Wood
- France: Catherine Bastien (INRAE)
- IPC Secretariat

The Organizing Committee has had seven meetings to date.

Composition of the 26th IPC Session Scientific Committee

- **Co-chairs** Martin Weih, Stefano Bisoffi,
- **Members** Giuseppe Scarascia Mugnozza, Davide Pettenella, Maurizio Sabatti, Pierluigi Paris, Giuseppe Nervo, Luisa Cagelli, Julia Kuzovkina, Teresa Cerrillo, Marijke Steenackers, Joris Van Acker, Sharon Doty, Barbara Thomas
- **Secretariat** Benjamin Caldwell

The Scientific Committee has had two meetings to date.

Key note speakers

The following key note speakers and their topics are confirmed for the upcoming Session

- Dr Giuseppe Scarascia-Mugnozza, University of Tuscia, Italy. Topic: Poplars and other planted forests: their role for mitigation and adaptation in a changing world
- Dr. Zhiqiang Zhang, Professor and Dean of College of Soil and Water Conservation at Beijing Forestry University, China. Topic: the use of fast-growing trees for environmental restoration and wood production in China; transferable learnings and successes
- Patrick Worms, Senior Science Policy Advisor, World Agroforestry Centre; Topic: what we have achieved and what is the potential of fast-growing trees for agroforestry
- Marielle Brunette, INRAE Expert on the economics of risk management in forestry. Topic: Foresters' approach to risk mitigation in the context of climate uncertainty

Side events

- Co-hosted with Italy, the Session and technical discussions in FAO will be accompanied by informative and optional side events.
- The IPC welcomes interested organizations to host side events at the margins of the IPC meeting. Proposals for side events should be submitted to the IPC-Secretariat (IPC-Secretariat@fao.org).

Points for discussion: the Executive Committee may wish to

- Take note of the new dates for the 26th Session
- Encourage the membership of their national commissions to take part to the maximum extent possible
- Suggest current topics of interest to link to the theme of the Session and enrich its organization and outcomes

ITEM 5 DRAFT COUNTRY PROGRESS REPORTS: KEY FINDINGS

The IPC Secretariat solicited in 2019 reports from its member countries, as is the custom of the IPC. The main purpose of the consolidated report is to identify issues, innovations and trends for fast-growing species' culture and use, and draw attention to the diversity of national experiences.

This year, the report was compiled during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Submissions were received from 17 member countries. The reports contained useful information to the IPC, and would be amplified by additional information from the balance of the IPC countries regularly reporting.

The Executive Committee may wish to:

- Note the value of the national reports for the IPC, particularly in the context of the recent reform and current strategy development
- Thank those countries that submitted a progress report despite the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Request the balance of countries in the IPC which did not submit a report to submit their updated reports to the Secretariat in May 2021 for inclusion in the compilation of national reports for the 26th Session

See also:

Draft Compilation of National Reports

ITEM 6 WORKING PARTY REPORTS

See the reports from working party chairs



ITEM 7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS