

# More birch planted in Iceland

According to statistics compiled by the Icelandic Forestry Association, in the year 1999 native birch (*Betula pubescens* Ehrh.) was the most commonly planted tree species in Iceland, for the first time since 1951. About 1.4 million seedlings or just under 30% of all seedlings planted were native birch, followed closely by Russian larch (*Larix sukaczewii* Dylis).

## Birch beneficial for other species

Although Icelandic afforestation is mostly based on exotic species, native birch has always had a place in amenity planting and more recently in reclamation of degraded land. The main reason for the increased planting of birch now is its use in plantation forestry for timber production, where it

can be used as a nurse tree for spruce on rich sites or (more commonly) in the creation of edge zones to increase diversity, provide shelter and catch drifting snow.

Up to about 1950, birch was planted largely because other species were not available. Now, birch planting has increased – not in spite of, but because of the growing trend towards plantation forestry with exotics.

Source: *Thröstur Eysteinnsson*  
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*Natural birch stand in Hallormsstad National Forest*  
Photo: *Thröstur Eysteinnsson*



## Sweden

# More protected forests

The Swedish government wants to increase the area of protected forests. This is a feature of a national “environmental-quality goal” called “Living forests”. According to plans drawn up in 1998, 800,000 hectares of new protected forests were to be established by 2010. This figure has now been increased to 900,000 hectares.

The proportion of dead wood is also to be increased. By 2010 there will be 40% more than in 1995.

To achieve these goals, more money has been allocated to the forest sector. Compared with 2001 levels, the increases will come to:

**2002:** +Skr90 million

**2003:** +Skr110 million

**2004:** +Skr250 million

Source: *SNS May 2001*

1 Skr = 0.094 US\$



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# SNS visit to the Faroe Islands

**In May this year, the executive committee of SNS (The Nordic Forest Research Co-operation Committee) visited the Faroe Islands in order to study forest establishment. The visit was hosted by the Forestry Service of the Faroe Islands, Skógrokt Landsins.**

## From forest to sheep

Archaeological finds have revealed that the Faroe Islands were at least partly covered with forest (mainly birch) when humans first arrived to colonise the land. Today, the vegetation is very different, with 80,000 sheep grazing the hillsides—and contributing to increasing soil erosion problems.

## Long-term process

Skógrokt Landsins is responsible for forest administration and extension services, and also runs a nursery which supplies planting material for the region. As director Tróndur Leivsson explains, forest establishment is a long-term process, involving the challenge of increasing the awareness amongst the Faroese people. The first step towards a break-through may well be Skóg-røkt Landsins' recent success in motivating the general public to plant trees in private gardens and village commons.

## Test of tree species

Skógrokt Landsins has been active in collecting and testing indigenous as well as exotic plant material and currently has a set of 150 species and varieties that have been found suitable for local planting. Due to their position in the midst of the Gulf stream, the Faroe Islands enjoy comparatively mild winters and their annual rainfall is high (on average 1,200 mm). These climatic conditions permit the growth of many trees which do not survive in other Nordic countries, e.g. *Nothofagus spp* (South American beech).



*As a symbolic gesture in support of the Faroese forest establishment project, the chairman of SNS, Lisa Sennerby Forse, plants a young Populus trichocarpa tree in Tórshavn.*

## Facts

The Faroe Islands is an autonomous region with about 45,000 inhabitants, situated in the Atlantic Ocean between Iceland and the Shetland Islands.

## Denmark

### Natural forests registered

Self-sown stands of trees and bushes in Denmark are defined as "natural forests". It is estimated that 35,000 hectares can meet this criterion – corresponding to some 8% of all forests in Denmark. The government has recently decided to allocate Dkr3 million to register these natural forests. 1 Dkr = 0.117 US\$

## Finland

### Forest owners willing to protect ecologically valuable forests

According to an enquiry, 79% of Finnish forest owners are willing to protect ecologically valuable areas in their forest. Owners of estates concentrating solely on forestry were more positive than owners involved in both forestry and agriculture.

Source: SNS May 2001

## Norway/Sweden

### Sell-off of forest-land

Norske Skog, a Norwegian forest-industry company, has decided to sell all its forest-land. In Norway the company owns some 154,000 hectares; in Sweden, 20,000 hectares. The company's aim is to focus on its core-business: papermaking.

In Norway, the goal is to sell the holdings to a financial institute as a long-term investment.

In Sweden, the plan is to sell the forests in 56 different lots, varying in size from 40 to 2,850 hectares – in total worth perhaps Skr400 million. The real estate agent involved believes that a majority of the Swedish properties will be sold to owners of neighbouring estates.

Source: Dagens Industri June 26 2001.

# Editorial board for Scan J For R

SNS, The Nordic Forest Research Co-operation Committee, has appointed an editorial board for Scandinavian Journal of Forest Research.

The main tasks for the board are to

- ii/ assist the scientific editor in finding highly competent referees;
- iii/ assist in evaluating manuscripts and referees' verdicts;
- iii/ discuss policy issues.

The working-procedures of the editorial board will be discussed at a meeting this autumn. News & Views will cover and report from the meeting.

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## Vacancy

*Silviculture*

## Sweden

# Prescribed burning beneficial for 146 species

Prescribed burning gives benefits to 146 different species in Sweden. Fungi are the single biggest group it promotes, with 82 species showing positive effects, followed by insects (45 species). The rest are mosses, lichens and vascular plants.

### 41 red-listed species

Of the 146 species, 41 are red-listed (mostly insects) and 68 strictly depend on fire for their continued existence. The rest can survive without fire, but are favoured by it.

### Important substrates

The most important substrates created by the fire are burnt soil and dead wood. Prescribed burning is mostly carried out to promote biodiversity. To achieve this goal, it is important to burn in an appropriate way. Two pieces of advice are given:

1. Wait until the ground is really dry. Then you will get a fierce fire, that will go deep into the soil, improving conditions for a number of species.
2. Leave an appropriate number of trees on the site – preferably of different

species and sizes. After the burning, these trees will provide good habitats for a number of species – especially insects.

If you burn a totally clear-cut area too superficially there will be little or no benefit for biodiversity.

Source: *SkogForsk-Nytt* nr 2 2001 referring to a literature review by Sofi Aspengren

Photo: Areca



## Report from a SNS-funded project

# Direct seeding of hardwood trees

Traditional planting of hardwood trees is very expensive. A group of researchers from the Nordic countries, Estonia and Mississippi, USA, has studied an alternative: direct seeding. Different methods and species were tested in some 50 field trials, established between 1995 and 1998. Some seeding was done in plastic tubes and some on open land, and on both clear-cuttings and agricultural land. Some of the main conclusions are summarised here:

### Negative results with seed tubes

The seed tubes showed promising preliminary results with both light-seeded and heavy-seeded species. In many cases, the germination was good and the tubes protected the seed and the seedlings to some degree against rodents and weevils.

However, they did not provide complete protection, and in some cases the tubes even exacerbated the problems with rodents, which clearly learned that the tubes contained food.

In addition, the seedlings appeared to suffer from winter frost damage due to insufficiently developed frost-hardiness in the warm and moist microclimate inside the tubes. Other

problems noted included: water-logging in the tubes, poor light conditions caused by soil sticking to the tubes and frost heaving.

Moreover, some of the biodegradable materials used for the tubes showed a negative influence on the germination of birch, alder and beech.

In conclusion, the seed tubes did not offer a new, reliable and inexpensive regeneration method.

### Forest management

On farmland in Norway and Estonia, no reliable methods were found for direct seeding of birch and alder. Weed competition was identified as one of the main problems for the small seedlings.

Heavy-seeded species, like beech and oak, can be established successfully by direct seeding in years and on sites with low rodent populations. Weed control is, however, a necessity.

*Seed tubes (diameter 28 mm) with oak seedlings.*

*Photo: Palle Madsen*

Beech seems to take advantage of the favourable conditions under a shelterwood, while oak can perform pretty well on clear-cuts and farmland.

*Source: SNS 55 I & II and SNS64*



## Sweden

### Severe attack of *Greminiella*

Many young and middle-aged Scots pine stands in Central Sweden have been severely hit by Scleroderris canker caused by the fungus *Greminiella abietina*. Several thousand hectares are affected: stands at altitudes over 300 m a.s.l. most severely.

The attack is probably an effect of the rainy summer of 2000. The long, warm autumn probably worsened the

situation, as the conditions were favourable for the fungus.

The canker kills the previous years' shoots and substantially reduces growth. If the weather is favourable for the fungus this year too, many trees may die.

*Source: Skogseko 2 2001.*

## Sweden

### Increased cut

The gross cut in Sweden increased by 5% in 2000 – from 72.6 million m<sup>3</sup> (solid under bark) to 76.2 million. The increase was solely due to more pulpwood being cut.

*Source: SNS May 2001*

**An international meeting of IUFRO Working Party 1.17.02**

# Forest Restoration and Future Landscapes

**From April 29 to May 3, 2002, an international conference to discuss forest restoration knowledge and practice in Boreal and the Temperate zones, will be held in Denmark.**

**On the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rio Earth Summit, this conference will bring together researchers and managers to identify common approaches and explore challenges for the restoration of forest ecosystems.**

**The conference will cover:**

1. Techniques for restoration and rehabilitation of forests – including afforestation, vegetation conversions, natural and artificial regeneration techniques.
2. Effects at stand and landscape levels on biodiversity, wildlife, aquatic systems and land-use.
3. Understanding processes and changes in process levels
4. Economic and political impacts of forest restoration, including landowner participation, effects on local communities, and the role of government in restoration programmes.

For further information, contact the Conference Chairs

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The conference is sponsored by

- The Danish Forest and Landscape Research Institute and
- US Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Southern Research Station

## Denmark

### 2,000 hectares of “groundwater-forests” in Odense

2,000 hectares of new forests are to be planted in Odense, a Danish city, situated on Fyn. This is the result of a three-party-agreement involving the municipality, the local water-distributor and the Government. There are two reasons given for the project:

1. Odense has one of the lowest forested areas of all communes in Denmark. Only 3.7% of its land is forested today

2. There is a long-term need to secure its groundwater resources.

The local water-distributor will charge another Dkr0.25 per cubic metre of water to buy land and plant forests on sites of importance for the groundwater supply.

*Source: Skoven 6/2001*

## Finland

### More government subsidies for silviculture

In Finland, the forest owners are entitled to government support for pre-commercial thinning. The subsidies have recently risen by 8 to 16%. For a thinning in a young stand, the forest owner can get from FM500 in the south, to FM700 in the north if he does the work himself.

If the pre-commercial thinning is carried out by employees, he can get from FM750 in the south to FM1,050 in the north.

If it's a difficult thinning with high trees the subsidy is still higher; from FM1,250 in the south to FM1,750 in the north, if done by employees.

*Source: Skogsbruket 3/2001  
1 FM = 0.146 US\$*

## Denmark

### Subsidies for reforestation

In December 3–4 1999, Denmark was hit by a violent storm and extensive forest areas were damaged. Private forest owners have been eligible for government subsidies for cleaning and replanting destroyed stands. This option has been taken up by some 2,400 forest estates, together covering a damaged area of 15,000 hectares. In total, Dkr360 million will be paid. 4,000 hectares of state-owned forests were also spoiled by the storm.

*Source: SNS May 2001.*



Photo: Arco

## Sweden

# World's largest forestry fair

More than 54,000 visitors in four days. That is the official "record" for ELMIA Wood 2001, the world's leading forestry in-site exhibition.

"The fair attracted a lot of visitors from foreign countries", says Torbjörn Johnsson, the fair's project leader. "We had guests from Germany, Austria, France, Chile. And there was a substantial increase in visitors from Russia and Eastern Europe. These countries are in urgent need of modernising their harvesting technique".

### Break-through for cut-to-length?

"This fair may be the international break-through for the Nordic cut-to-length-method", says Ed Rapp vice president of Caterpillar in Europe. "A guess is that 70% of all harvesting will be done by this technique within 10 to 15 years".

Source: [www.elmia.se](http://www.elmia.se)

**Facts:** In the "cut-to-length-method" (CTL), you fell, delimb and cut the trees out in the forest and carry out the timber on wheeled forwarders. This method is believed to be friendlier to the environment and the timber, compared with systems where you pull out whole trees or stems to the landing.



Photos: Areca

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