

LIGNOVISIONEN

Schriftenreihe des Institutes für Holzforschung (ihf)
am Department für Materialwissenschaften und Prozesstechnik (MAP)
an der Universität für Bodenkultur Wien

Band 13

Book series of the Institute of Wood Science and Technology (ihf)
at the Department of Material Sciences and Process Engineering (DMSP)
at the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna

Issue 13



Proceedings of the COST Action E40 Conference

Large diameter timber - problem or chance?

Edited by
Alfred Teischinger

in Co-operation:
COST - European Co-operation in the field of
Scientific and Technical Research
Action E40 - Innovative utilisation and products of large diameter timber
and
Bernern Fachhochschule, Hochschule für Architektur,
Bau und Holz, Burgdorf, Biel, Switzerland

The COST action E40 "Innovative utilisation and products of large diameter timber" deals with a very specific topic within the forestry-wood-chain and wants to develop solutions for a proper use of large diameter timber. A conference in Biel/Switzerland within this COST action had the focus on large diameter timber as a problem or a chance. In order to find a proper answer to these very challenging questions, the conference was structured in several parts:

- Session 1 - political statements by invited speakers from forestry, wood processing and wood research including a round table discussion. Controversial points of view were to be presented and discussed.
- Session 2 - presentations concerning chances and potentials of quality grading referring to the specific properties of large diameter timber
- Session 3 - presentations showing appropriate processing technologies and products for large diameter timber
- Poster Session - providing a survey on various research activities concerning large diameter timber
- Conference summary and adoption of a conference communiqué

The proceedings provide a documentation of all the various sessions within the conference and provides some answers to open questions so as to develop a successful processing of large diameter wood.

COST-aided

COST is an intergovernmental European framework for international co-operation between nationally funded research activities. COST creates scientific networks and enables scientists to collaborate in a wide spectrum of activities in research and technology. COST activities are administered by the COST Office.

Abstracts - Session 1: Political statements and round table

Large diameter production seen by forestry

Jens Borchers¹

¹ Prince zu Furstenberg Forestry, Donaueschingen, Germany

ABSTRACT

Seen by forestry strong economic arguments speak against the further production of LDT (large diameter timber): innovation in the harvesting process, new techniques at the sawmills, capital cost for the forestry enterprise the increasing importance of organisation costs and production risk are the main topics. It is proposed that forest enterprises led by economic targets will change their production system in order to produce small dimensions in short rotations. It is possible to combine ecological aspects, i.e. natural seedling, with the above proposed economic advantages.

Softwood sawmillers point of view

Carsten Merforth¹

¹ Rettenmeier Holding AG, Germany, E-Mail: merforth.dr@rettenmeier.com

CONCLUSION

It should be clear that mainly the economical success of the the partner Wood industry enables the forestry to make profit as well.

For good large dimensioned logs there is and will be a niche-market for high added value products. A flow of big volumes will not happen.

Large dimensioned logs of mean or bad quality will have no high-price market.

For forest owners this is bad at the moment, but in any case the silvicultural goals must be changed, if this should not be an everlasting problem. Big dimensioned softwood must not be the only goal, for the bigger volume there is other demand as well.

If the forestry seriously follows economic succes as a goal for their business, what sometimes is or was not one of the main aims, besides for big private forest owners, the demands of the potential customers concerning the products, the wood industry, must not be ignored. If for other than economical reasons this should not happen, samilling industries in a first step will import more sawn timber as rawmaterial for added value wood products and in a second step will build up new plants in the middle of the bestfitting rawmaterial, because the demand for products made of small dimensioned timber will be there in the future.

So the questions concerning softwoods to be answered are:

1. The silvicultural past does not fit to the current situation on timber markets, so what to do with the produced big dimensioned timber?
2. Should the forestry go on with the same silvicultural goals for softwoods, which are still taught at any forest university, or is it necessary at least for a part of the production area to set economical oriented goals which definitely includes only very little but good quality large dimensioned timber, but means mainly to fullfil customers demands for small and medium diameters?

Forestry and wood industry in middle europe and especially in Germany have good opportunities for economic success in the future with very potential added value productions to compete on international markets.

They should not give up these potentials but live the often cited symbiotic partnership in the forestry wood chain.

Large diameter timber - problem or chance? Forestry sector statement

Anton Bürgi¹

¹ Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research, Silviculture Strategies, Züricherstrasse 111, 8903 Birmensdorf, Switzerland, E-Mail: anton.buergi@wsl.ch

CONCLUSIONS

To fulfil the demands towards a multifunctional forest use, we should take advantage of the huge variety of forest sites, which allow for more than the production of medium-sized spruces. Mixed stands allow for the diversification of risks and, looking at the technical progress, it is likely that with increasing timber demand, harvesters for large diameter timber will be developed. We have to bear in mind, that already now most of the trees of reasonable quality are too small and not too big.

Impressum / Imprint

Verleger / Publisher:	Universität für Bodenkultur Wien University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna
Herausgeber / Editor:	Alfred Teischinger
Redaktion / Editorial office:	Robert Stingl, Daniela Romstorfer Institut für Holzforschung (ihf) am Department für Materialwissenschaften und Prozesstechnik (MAP) an der Universität für Bodenkultur Wien Institute of Wood Science and Technology (ihf) - Department of Material Sciences and Process Engineering (DMSP), University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna
in Co-operation:	COST - European Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research Domain: Forests and Forestry Products Action E40 - Innovative utilisation and products of large diameter timber Bernern Fachhochschule, Hochschule für Architektur, Bau und Holz, Burgdorf, Biel, Switzerland
Adresse / Address:	Peter Jordan Straße 82 A - 1190 Wien (Vienna), Austria
Telefon / Telephone: FAX / Telefax:	+43 – (0)1 – 74654 – 4250 +43 – (0)1 – 47654 – 4295
E-mail: Internet:	ihf@mail.boku.ac.at http://www.boku.ac.at/holzforschung

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LIGNOVISIONEN Band 13 / Issue 13



Proceedings of the COST Action E40 Conference Large diameter timber - problem or chance?

December 5th - 6th 2005; HSB Biel, Switzerland

Edited by Alfred Teischinger

ca. 120 Seiten (A4) / Pages (size A4)

Text and Summary: in englischer Sprache / in English language

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**Poster Session - providing a survey on various research activities concerning large diameter timber
Conference summary and adoption of a conference communiqué**

An die

Universität für Bodenkultur Wien
Institutes für Holzforschung (ihf)
am Department für Materialwissenschaften und Prozesstechnik (MAP)
Peter Jordan Straße 82
A-1190 Wien (Vienna), Austria

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