



Teagasc Forestry and University College Dublin, Ireland

WF Ref. 2017075

PhD Scholarship: Transformation of Sitka spruce stands to Continuous Cover Forestry

Fifty-two percent of the stocked forest area in Ireland is Sitka spruce. Forest management is dominated by the clearfell system; a system that normally entails an even-aged structure of the forest. There has been increasing interest in recent years in continuous cover forestry (CCF); an approach to the sustainable management of forests whereby forest stands are maintained in a permanently irregular structure by single tree selection and harvesting. Research on CCF in Ireland has been limited and more detailed CCF methodologies specific to Irish conifer plantations are needed. This project will build on the UCD led Low Impact Silvicultural Systems in Ireland (LISS) project, completed in 2014. LISS studied the initial transformation of two even-aged Sitka spruce stands using 3 different thinning treatments. The stands require thinning in 2018 and 2019, following the previous thinning objectives, and the impact of the treatments on the transformation process of the stands will be assessed. The impact of thinning treatments on the light regime under the canopy will also be assessed. An assessment of stem quality will also be conducted.

Teagasc Forestry in association with UCD Forestry would like to recruit a PhD candidate to conduct research on the impact of thinning treatments on the transformation of pure Sitka spruce stands to continuous cover.

Preferred Selection Criteria & Award

Applications are sought from highly motivated individuals who have an excellent academic record and have a primary degree (First or upper Second Class Honours) or M.Sc. in an appropriate discipline e.g. forestry, land-use management, ecology, environmental science or equivalent. The successful candidate should have good analytical and statistical analysis skills.

The successful candidate should be capable of independent research and team work. Very good oral and written communication skills in English are mandatory. A full EU clean driving licence is also required.

The fellowship funding is €22,000 per annum and includes University fees of up to a maximum of €6,000 per annum and is tenable for 4 years. The study will commence on 1 October, 2017.

Application process

Applicants should submit, by email, indicating the post for which they are applying, a letter outlining why they are interested in the research topic, their suitability for the position, a full curriculum vitae (including the names, addresses and emails of two referees with two corresponding letters of reference) to Dr Ian Short at Teagasc: ian.short@teagasc.ie and to Dr Áine Ní Dhubháin at UCD Forestry: aine.nidhubhain@ucd.ie

Additional information about the Fellowship can be found by contacting Dr Áine Ní Dhubháin at +35317167755 or aine.nidhubhain@ucd.ie

Closing date: August 14th, 2017