

Environmental Woodland Management Tour to North Germany

28th March – 4th April 2007¹

Setting the scene

The tour is dedicated to the study of woodland management on an environmental basis as part of sustainable land use. Sustainable land use has received a major impetus since the United Nations Commission on Economic Development (UNCED) summit at Rio 15 years ago. The new definition states that forest resources and forest lands should be sustainably managed to meet the social, economic, ecological, cultural and spiritual needs of present and future generations (United Nations, 2001). Consequently alternative forms of woodland management have been introduced to the United Kingdom for which various terms have been coined such as *continuous cover forestry* and *near-natural forestry*.

These alternative forms of woodland management have been practiced for generations in Germany. I have specifically selected North Germany as a study area because site conditions are similar to those found in Britain. This and the fact that alternative management practices were only introduced 10-20 years ago allows a detailed study of growth and ecological processes involved whilst providing a vision and demonstrating techniques that can be taken home.

The tour programme will include

- the management of *mixed* and *uneven-aged* stands along the German North sea coast in a particularly *windy climate*, afforestation of former agricultural land with mixed broadleaves/conifers (Schleswig-Holstein),
- regeneration of *mixed stands* on *poor sandy soils* under a first generation *Scots pine canopy*, *underplanting* of *oak* and *beech* under Scots pine canopy, management of valuable *Douglas fir* woodlands (Lower Saxony: Lüneburg Heathlands),
- the management of *mixed ash-sycamore-beech*, *Norway spruce-beech* and *oak-beech* woodlands (Lower Saxony: Göttinger Wald, Solling, Harz mountains),
- grazing experiments, restoration of ancient wood pastures, wildlife management involving the re-introduction of the lynx,
- restoration of ancient woodland sites,
- half a day of lectures on the topics of the tour by specialists from the University of Göttingen,
- practical information on individual tree silviculture including tree marking for thinnings and the frame tree method; training in silvicultural systems,
- identification and discussion of soils and ground vegetation,
- identification of trees and vascular plants, the role of indicator species.

The study tour will be co-organised and hosted by the Forestry Services of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein, the University of Göttingen and the directors of the Forestry Research Stations of Lower Saxony.

Costs: ~ £460 per person including transport, accommodation, breakfast and tuition. Places are limited. First come first served.

A specific website (Blackboard) will provide detailed information on the tour as planning goes ahead.

Interested? For more information please contact:

Dr Arne Pommerening, arne.pommerening@bangor.ac.uk

¹ Dates subject to slight changes by 1 or 2 days.