

# JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

## REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

**Expedition/Project/Conference Title:** DYGEN Conference .....

**Travel Dates:** 30<sup>th</sup> November - 05<sup>th</sup> December 2002 .....

**Location:** European Parliament, Strasbourg, FRANCE .....

**Group Member(s):** Cecile BACLES, PhD student .....

**Aims:** To give a talk on current research and establish contact with researchers in the same field.....

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### OUTCOME (not less than 300 words):-

The DYGEN conference I attended was a great success. 270 people attended which is high attendance considering the very specific nature of the conference : Genetic diversity of Forest Ecosystems. Internationally renowned scientists from the United-States, Canada, France, Finland, Denmark, Switzerland and Germany gave an overview of the current knowledge in Forest Genetics in a plenary session. Two sessions were run in parallel for voluntary presentations to allow more people to present their research. In general, talks were of good quality and representative of research being undertaken world-wide : Europe including Eastern Europe -as funds were made available to sponsor participants from East-Europe-, United-States, Canada, and Australia mainly but also Argentina, Malaysia and Algeria. Each session was followed by a general discussion. I very much appreciated that so much space was made available for discussion. This often lacks at conferences which sometimes makes it difficult to exchange ideas and fully understand voluntary presentations. I left the conference feeling like I had a good understanding and a global knowledge of the state of the research in forest tree genetics but could also identify which areas need to be investigated in the near future.

I gave a voluntary presentation on the first day of the Conference which went very well and was very much in line with research being undertaken on gene flow and on *Fraxinus excelsior* in other groups. This was certainly an advantage and I had very positive feedback from many participants throughout the conference. It allowed me to introduce my research and to establish contacts with very good scientists with whom I am keen to interact in the final stage of my PhD but also later on.

Another interesting and useful aspect of the conference was the attendance of European Commission officials. The European Union is a major sponsor of research in our field and with the first call for proposals in Framework 6, the conference was a good opportunity to express ideas and worries about research funding. Ideally, this conference should have taken place six months ago when texts for framework 6 were still being discussed.

The European Parliament was a great venue for the conference, the parliament itself is ideally suited for a European conference but Strasbourg is also a beautiful city. Strasbourg is the Capital of Christmas so we could all enjoy the festive atmosphere.