

## **Chronology of meetings and events associated with IFCI since its initiation in 1999.**

The minutes of the annual general meetings (AGMs) held during this period are also included.

### **(a) The year 1999**

There were eight meetings of the FSC National Initiative held in 1999, as follows:

January 22 1999, Tailor's Hall, Dublin

9<sup>th</sup> February 1999, Court Hotel, Tullamore

2<sup>nd</sup> March 1999, Tullamore

1 June 1999, Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge

9<sup>th</sup> August 1999, Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge

27 August 1999, Just Forests Office, Tullamore,

22<sup>nd</sup> October 1999, Just Forests Office, Tullamore,

22<sup>nd</sup> November, 1999, Just Forests Office, Tullamore,

13<sup>th</sup> December 1999, Just Forests Office, Tullamore

The meeting of Stakeholders held on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1999 in Tailors Hall, Dublin, was chaired by the FSC Contact person Mr. Tom Roche. The issue of a fourth chamber was raised by small woodland owners, and proved very controversial. The small woodland owners stated that they would not really be represented in an economic chamber due to the presence of contractors, harvesting companies and processors. Others queried the necessity of setting up a fourth chamber, stating that small forest owners should come under the economic chamber. After much debate the proposal was put to a vote and the meeting voted to establish four chambers. A Steering Committee was established.

### **Steering Committee established in January 1999**

Mr. Brendan Kelly, Small farmer and People against Pesticides (PaP) (Social);

Dr. Declan Little, Woodlands of Ireland, (Social);

Mr. Tony Mannion, Vice President, Society of Irish Foresters, (Social);

Ms. Iva Pocock, Campaigns Director, VOICE, (Environmental);

Mr. Denis Heenan, Chairman, CRANN, (Environmental);

Mr. Donal Whelan, Irish Timber Growers Association, (Woodland Owners)

Mr. George Mc Carthy, Coillte, (Woodland Owners);

Mr. Kevin Bonnar, Irish Timber Council, (Economic);

Mr. Neil Foot, Louisiana-Pacific Europe, (Economic).

Mr. Tom Roche, FSC contact person.

The February and March meetings discussed the option of looking at other models and other documentation from other countries with a view to devising an Irish standard using principles of sustainable forest management (SFM).

The February meeting had queried the absence of the Forest Service with respect to their commitment to the process.

Mr. Diarmuid McAree, Chief Inspector and Mr. Gerhard Gallagher of the Forest Service attended the March meeting as observers. Mr. Diarmuid McAree attended a further two meetings as an observer in 1999.

Donal Whelan (Woodland Owners chamber) was appointed chairman at the March meeting. It was also agreed to seek funding, and that the initiative should register as a legal entity once funding was sourced.

Donal Whelan resigned as Chairman on August 9<sup>th</sup> because of a potential conflict of interest due to ITGA's involvement with PEFC at that time. Tony Mannion was appointed as interim Chairman.

The meetings in June and August dealt with the funding of a secretariat, registering as a company limited by guarantee, and drafting of initial standards. Funding was pledged from Coillte Teo. and Louisiana Pacific. Just Forests was appointed to act as Secretariat for 1.5 days a week. The secretariat was instructed to investigate registering as a company. Tony Mannion was appointed as a consultant to compile an initial draft standard, and resigned from the Steering Committee. Mr. Mannion was to work with a (TWG) comprising a member from each chamber, i.e. Declan Little (Social), Denis Heenan (Environmental), Neil Foot (Economic) and Donal Whelan (Woodland Owners).

Neil Foot took over as Chairman at the August meeting.

Donal Magner replaced Kevin Bonnar as the Irish Timber Council representative on the Steering Committee at the 27<sup>th</sup> August meeting.

Sean McNamara replaced Tony Mannion on the Social chamber.

In the last three meetings of 1999, the Memorandum and Articles of Association - including the objectives of the initiative - required for registration as a company limited by guarantee, were drafted and worked through by the Steering Committee.

The draft standard was completed and assessed during two meetings of the (TWG). However, the issue of resources was raised by the Environmental Chamber due to their inability to attend the second of the TWG meetings (which dealt with the second half of the draft standard). The Environmental Chamber was asked to continue to support the draft standard, which was still open to comment during the public consultation process. It was proposed by Brendan Kelly that the draft standard be sent to public consultation as drafted. This was agreed by the Steering Committee.

### **Observers at 1999 Meetings**

Mr. Gerhard Gallagher of the Forest Service attended the March meeting as an observer. Mr. Diarmuid McAree of the Forest Service attended three meetings as an observer.

Helan Kelly (Brendan Kelly's deputy on the Social Chamber) attended the October meeting as an observer.

### **Procedural matters that were dealt with in 1999 were;**

- (1) agreement on a quorum;
- (2) that a representative could nominate a substitute when they themselves could not attend a meeting, and
- (3) that a member of the Steering Committee represented the organisation to which they belonged, and as such could be replaced by another individual from the organisation if they resigned.

Various names for the initiative were discussed during the year, and the Irish Forestry Certification Initiative was finally agreed upon.

The issue of a fourth chamber was objected to at two subsequent meetings in 1999. However, it was stated that this had already been agreed at the January meeting and it was argued that it should be retained to keep the private growers in the process. It was agreed that the voting system should reflect the chambers and that a 75% majority would be required if consensus was not possible. (In the 3-chamber system a 66.66% majority is required).

The Heritage Council offered financial support towards the public consultation process, and a promotions group (Iva Pocock, Sean McNamara, Denis Heenan and Tom Roche) was set up to take this forward in 2000.

### **(b) The year 2000**

#### **Steering Committee January 2000**

Mr. Brendan Kelly, Farmer, (Social);

Dr. Declan Little, Woodlands of Ireland, (Social);

Mr. Sean McNamara, Society of Irish Foresters, (Social);

Ms. Iva Pocock, VOICE, (Environmental);

Mr. Denis Heenan, Chairman, CRANN, (Environmental);

Mr. Donal Whelan, Irish Timber Growers Association, (Forest Owners)

Mr. George McCarthy, Coillte, (Forest Owners);

Mr. Peter Wilson, Irish Timber Council, (Economic);

Mr. Neil Foot, Louisiana-Pacific Europe, (Economic).

Mr. Tom Roche, FSC contact person.

Mr. Tony Mannion, Technical Consultant.

#### There were nine meetings of the SC in 2000 as follows:

10<sup>th</sup> January 2000, Just Forests Office, Tullamore,

21<sup>st</sup> January 2000, Just Forests Office, Tullamore,

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2000, Just Forests Office, Tullamore,

19<sup>th</sup> June 2000, Just Forests Office, Tullamore,

18<sup>th</sup> July 2000, Charleville Castle, Tullamore

12 September 2000, Bridge House Hotel, Tullamore  
 29<sup>th</sup> September 2000, Charleville Castle, Tullamore  
 24<sup>th</sup> October 2000, Charleville Castle, Tullamore  
 27 November 2000, Charleville Castle, Tullamore

In addition there was a meeting of Environmental/Social Chamber, on the 21<sup>st</sup> July in Tullamore

Peter Wilson replaced Donal Magner as the Irish Timber Council representative on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2000.  
 Declan Little resigned at the 10 January 2000 meeting as he had taken up a new post,

Applications for FSC membership were received from CRANN, VOICE, ITGA SIF, Louisiana Pacific and Woodlands of Ireland.

The January meetings were mostly concerned with arrangements for setting the public consultation process in train.

#### Public Consultation/Information Meetings 2000

Date	Location	Chair	Presenter	Panel	Attendance
Feb 15	Hibernian Hotel, Main St, Mallow, Co Cork	Declan Little	Tony Mannion	Sean McNamara, Neil Foot	18
Feb 16	Butler House, 16 Patrick St, Kilkenny	Declan Little	Tony Mannion	Iva Pocock, Neil Foot	9
Feb 17	An Taisce, Tailor's Hall, Back Lane, Dublin	Declan Little	Tony Mannion		37
Feb 22	Sligo Park Hotel, Pearse Road, Sligo	Declan Little	Tony Mannion	Denis Heenan, Peter Wilson, George McCarthy	24
Feb 23	Flannery's Hotel, Renmore, Dublin Rd, Galway	Declan Little	Tony Mannion	Neil Foot, Sean McNamara, Brendan Kelly	31

A mailing list of stakeholders was compiled by the Steering Committee, who were informed of the public consultation process. Advertisements for the public consultation process were taken out in the Irish Independent, the Irish Times, the Examiner and the Irish Farmers Journal. Press releases were made to national papers, provincial papers and national and regional radio stations.

The meetings were held in the evenings, and took the format of a formal presentation, followed by a Q&A discussion session. Copies of the draft standard were distributed at the meetings.

Submissions from stakeholders were requested in writing by March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2000 (Appendix 4).

Tony Mannion rejoined the Steering Committee (Social chamber) and Tom Roche resigned as IFCI secretariat at the April meeting.

The environmental chamber stated at the April meeting that they wished to suspend participation due to lack of resources for participation, and concerns about the four chamber system and how this would work. The question was asked as to why the decision had been made at this stage to suspend participation. It was stated that both organisations were having difficulties with resources to comment on the draft standard, and also organisations they had consulted with had problems with the issue of four chambers.

John O'Reilly joined the Steering Committee at the June meeting as the Woodlands of Ireland representative.

The June meeting noted that the four chamber structure had been endorsed by FSC. Crann (Environmental chamber) stated that they had concerns about the possibility of Coillte being certified, but that they wanted the process to go forward, and pulling out would not see this fulfilled. VOICE (Environmental chamber) did not attend the June meeting.

It was agreed that funding was a key issue for participation, and further funding was to be sought.

A meeting of the Environmental/Social Chambers in July agreed to endorse the four chamber structure, although there were some reservations recorded, agreed that economic interests should not be allowed in the Social chamber, and proposed that the Environmental chamber elect another representative if VOICE did not wish to continue with the process. It was also agreed that the chamber structure and voting procedure would have to be confirmed at a meeting of all stakeholders.

A meeting of all stakeholders was held in Tullamore on the 12<sup>th</sup> September. The meeting confirmed the four chamber structure and that each would have 25% voting strength, with a 75% majority to carry a vote, with greater than 50% of each chamber in favour (of a motion). Coillte agreed to move from the Forest Owners chamber to the Economic Chamber and the Society of Irish Foresters agreed to move from the Social Chamber to the Woodland Owners Chamber. It was agreed to increase the number of representatives from two per chamber to three per chamber. VOICE were represented at this meeting by Ms. Jacinta French, replacing Ms. Iva Pocock. The Steering Committee meeting on September 29<sup>th</sup> reported that the company was now formally registered under Irish Company law.

Pat Carroll (RIP) replaced George McCarthy in September, representing Coillte.

As the number of representatives per chamber had been increased, it was necessary to seek nominations from stakeholders (as identified from existing lists and meeting attendances) by October 19<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Anne Behan (RIP) was nominated to the Environmental Chamber, Mr. Ray Gallagher was nominated to the Woodland Owners Chamber. There were two nominations to the Social Chamber, so after a debate, Mr. Noel Feely was appointed by the Steering Committee. VOICE stated that despite reservations about the four chamber structure, they were supporting the process.

The Steering Committee was then comprised as follows:

**Steering Committee, November 2000**

Mr. Brendan Kelly, Farmer, (Social);  
Mr. John O'Reilly, Woodlands of Ireland, (Social);  
Mr. Noel Feeley, Mote Park Conservation Group, (Social);  
Ms. Jacinta French, VOICE, (Environmental);  
Mr. Denis Heenan, Chairman, CRANN, (Environmental);  
Dr. Anne Behan, Environmental Consultant (Environmental)  
Mr. Tony Mannion, Society of Irish Foresters, (Forest Owners);  
Mr. Donal Whelan, Irish Timber Growers Association, (Forest Owners)  
Mr. Ray Gallagher, Western Farmers Co-op, (Forest Owners)  
Mr. Pat Carroll, Coillte, (Economic);  
Mr. Peter Wilson, Irish Timber Council, (Economic);  
Mr. Neil Foot, Louisiana-Pacific Europe, (Economic).  
Mr. Tom Roche, FSC contact person.

The November meeting reported that funding of £7,000 had been committed by Coillte. Tony Mannion made a presentation on the second draft standard, which was discussed. It was agreed that work on progressing the standard now needed to move forward again.

**Observers at 2000 Meetings**

There were no observers at meetings in 2000.

**(c) The year 2001**

The following SC meetings were held in 2001:

30<sup>th</sup> January 2001, Charleville Castle, Tullamore  
19<sup>th</sup> February 2001, Charleville Castle, Tullamore  
23<sup>rd</sup> July 2001, Charleville Castle, Tullamore  
2<sup>nd</sup> November 2001 Heritage Centre, Tullamore  
12<sup>th</sup> December 2001

Neil Foot resigned as Chairman in January and was replaced by Denis Heenan in February. At this meeting Tony Mannion was elected Treasurer, and Noel Feeley was elected Secretary.

Funding was a substantial issue for the meetings in 2001, as there were outstanding debts awaiting payment, and also as there was an agreement that any invoices over £200 had to be cleared by the Steering Committee, which slowed payment of invoices. There were also concerns at several meetings about progressing the draft standard if adequate funding was not available. A funding application was made to the Forest Service.

With regard to the draft standard, over 20 submissions had been received (Appendix 4), although a joint submission expected from environmental groups had not been received, as difficulties had been experienced compiling this due to a lack of financial resources. By July consultations were ongoing but it was agreed that work on the draft standards should wait until all submissions were received.

A sub-committee of Neil Foot, Anne Behan, Tony Mannion and Noel Feeley was set up to look at how the standard would be agreed once all submissions had been received.

The certification of Coillte was also an issue in 2001, with VOICE opposed to certification in the absence of a completed FSC-approved national forest standard.

The December meeting was declared void as it was argued that substitution of Gerry Egan for Pat Carroll had not been forwarded to the Steering Committee from the Chair.

#### **Observers at 2001 Meetings**

Helen Kelly (Social Chamber) attended the December meeting as an observer.

#### **(d) The year 2002**

The following IFCI Ltd. SC and general meetings were held in 2002:

30 January 2002,

27 February 2002, Heritage Centre, Tullamore

24 April 2002

21 June 2002

14 September 2002, AGM and EGM, Heritage Centre, Tullamore

2 October 2002

6<sup>th</sup> November 2002 Heritage Centre, Tullamore, Informal meeting FSC

George McCarthy replaced Pat Carroll as Coillte representative on the Steering Committee at the January meeting. Caroline Murphy had attended two meetings in 2001 as substitute for Jacinta French, and officially replaced Jacinta French as VOICE representative in January 2002.

Declan Little replaced John O'Reilly as Woodlands of Ireland representative. Objection was raised on several occasions to Woodlands of Ireland being in the Social Chamber, but it was clarified that Woodlands of Ireland clearly conformed to the FSC definition of the Social chamber. In addition, Woodlands of Ireland do not have an economic remit.

#### **Steering Committee February 2002**

Mr. Brendan Kelly, Farmer, (Social);

Dr. Declan Little, Woodlands of Ireland, (Social);

Mr. Noel Feeley, Mote Park Conservation Group, (Social);

Ms. Caroline Murphy, VOICE, (Environmental);

Mr. Denis Heenan, Chairman, CRANN, (Environmental);

Dr. Anne Behan, Environmental Consultant, (Environmental)

Mr. Tony Mannion, Society of Irish Foresters, (Woodland Owners);

Mr. Donal Whelan, Irish Timber Growers Association, (Woodland Owners)

Mr. Ray Gallagher, Western Farmers Co-op, (Woodland Owners)

Mr. George McCarthy, Coillte, (Economic);

Mr. Peter Wilson, Irish Timber Council (Economic);

Mr. Neil Foot, Louisiana-Pacific Europe, (Economic).

Mr. Tom Roche, FSC contact person.

Funding continued to be an issue. Negotiations were ongoing with the Forest Service seeking funding. There were invoices outstanding, but it was expected these would be cleared once the funding from Coillte had been received.

The difficulty with the issuing of cheques to a value of over £200 had been clarified with the bank, and the problem arose with this restriction being stated in the Memorandum and Articles of Association. While the restriction could remain as a working procedure, it would have to be removed from the Memorandum and Articles of Association at an AGM or EGM.

At the February meeting it was agreed to establish a Technical Working Group (TWG) to look at the submissions made on the draft standard, and progress the standard, with one nominee from each Chamber.

A grievance procedure was established, which would be initiated on receipt of a grievance. A group comprising a member from each of the four chambers would examine complaints as required. It was agreed that IFCI Ltd. did not have the remit to deal with complaints received in relation to an FSC certified organisation.

The April meeting discussed arrangements for an AGM planned for later in the year. An accountancy firm, East and Company Sligo, was employed to audit the accounts.

An issue arose from the Economic and Woodland Owners Chambers about the TWG commencing work in the absence of funds to employ secretarial support. The Social and Environmental Chambers expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of progress on the draft standard.

Tom Roche resigned as FSC contact person at the end of March, and Tony Mannion offered the services of the Society of Irish Foresters' office to circulate FSC information to the Steering Committee, who could forward it on to members as it arrived by e-mail.

Anne Behan (Environmental chamber) resigned at the June meeting, expressing a lack of confidence in the process.

The accounts were presented in June and passed by the Steering Committee after queries on inputs and outgoings, with one objection. AGM arrangements were advanced.

## **AGM 2002**

The AGM was held on 14<sup>th</sup> September. Stakeholders who had attended the meeting in Tailor's Hall in January 1999 and/or the plenary meeting in Tullamore, September 2000 were invited, and the AGM was advertised through organisations, publications etc. At the AGM stakeholders were asked to register and give their chamber affiliation.

The following attended the AGM:

Caroline Murphy Environmental Chamber  
Denis Heenan, Environmental Chamber  
Ruth McGrath, Environmental Chamber  
Andrew St Ledger, Environmental Chamber  
Stephen King, Environmental Chamber  
Tony Mannion, Woodland Owners Chamber  
Donal Whelan, Woodland Owners Chamber  
Noel Feeley, Social Chamber  
Brendan Kelly, Social Chamber  
Helen Kelly, Social Chamber  
Cormac O'Snodaigh, Social Chamber  
George McCarthy, Economic Chamber  
Joe Barry, Social Chamber  
Len Gallagher, Woodland Owners Chamber  
Myles Sterling, Woodland Owners Chamber  
Patrick Conroy (Social Chamber)  
Joe Finlay. (Woodland Owners Chamber)

Copies of the audited accounts were made available at the meeting, and after a prolonged discussion the accounts were accepted and recommended to be filed with the Companies Office. A report on the work of the Committee was presented and discussed. Some dissatisfaction with procedures was expressed, and it was agreed that these would be improved. There was also some discussion on the status of the draft standard, and a motion put that this be declared invalid. A second proposal was made to work forward with the existing draft standard, and to work through this with

submissions received and with all Principles and Criteria included in the text. Those present voted on this and the latter proposal was carried.

At the October meeting it was agreed that main priority was work on the draft standard. Some funding had been offered by the Forest Service towards the work of the TWG. The TWG had one representative from each chamber and consisted of George McCarthy, Caroline Murphy, Declan Little and Donal Whelan. It was agreed to meet on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, to work through from the start, and to meet approximately every three weeks.

It was also requested at this meeting that Brendan Kelly resign, as although he had relevant views, he seemed unable to move forward on certain issues, which was effectively blocking the process. Unfortunately he chose not to resign, and notice was served on him with respect to his imminent removal as a member of the Steering Committee.

The notice which had been proposed to be served on the Directors in relation to adherence to company procedures had been withdrawn, and it was agreed that all Steering Committee members would sign an agreement to act in accordance with the M&AoA of IFCI Ltd. It was also agreed to reconstitute the Officers of the Steering Committee.

The following officers were elected:

Dr. Declan Little, Chairman

Mr. Denis Heenan, Vice-Chairman

Ms. Caroline Murphy, Secretary

Mr. Tony Mannion, Treasurer.

A legal sub-committee comprising a representative of each chamber on the SC was also established to look at changes to the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the issue of co-option to the Steering Committee, etc.

Stephen King was present at the meeting as a replacement for Anne Behan (Environmental chamber).

An informal meeting was held between the Steering Committee and Gemma Boetekees of FSC Europe on the 6<sup>th</sup> November. The issue of FSC endorsement was discussed, and one of the pre-conditions had been met, which was establishing IFCI as a legal entity, a company limited by guarantee. Other issues of concern to FSC were the election procedures of the Steering Committee and that stakeholders largely did not appear to be members of IFCI. In order to resolve these issues it was recommended by FSC that IFCI Ltd. establish a membership list from all potential stakeholders and hold elections to the Steering Committee from this membership list. The Steering Committee stated that this had already been under discussion. The meeting agreed to contact all stakeholders (for whom contact details were available), establish a membership list, invite nominations to the Steering Committee and hold elections in early 2003.

Another issue discussed was the draft standard. FSC stated that both the content and process by which the standard was drawn up must be accounted for. IFCI reported that the TWG had begun revising the draft standard with respect to submissions received from stakeholders after public consultation in 2000 in conjunction with the FSC Principles and Criteria. Once this was done, it would be circulated to the Steering Committee as a whole, and to the membership for comment and input.

Lastly the issue of Brendan Kelly was discussed, as it needed to be resolved. Although it was acknowledged that the expulsion was not done in accordance with the Companies Act (1963), a majority of the members of the Steering Committee felt that differences of opinion between Mr Kelly and the Steering Committee had become untenable.

#### **Observers at 2002 Meetings**

Gerry Egan (Economic Chamber) attended the January meeting as an observer.

Helen Kelly attended the February and June meetings as an observer (Social Chamber).

#### **(e) The year 2003**

The following IFCI Ltd. SC and general meetings were held in 2003:

5 February 2003 Tullamore Dew Heritage Centre, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

29 March 2002, AGM and EGM, Heritage Centre, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

30<sup>th</sup> May 2003, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2

21<sup>st</sup> August 2003, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2

EGM, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2003, Tullamore Dew Heritage Centre, Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
AGM, deferred items, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2003, Tullamore Dew Heritage Centre, Tullamore,  
14<sup>th</sup> November 2003, ENFO Centre, Dublin

Andrew St Ledger attended the meeting as a replacement for Anne Behan on the Environmental Chamber. After a short discussion as to whether the maximum allowed number of co-options had been reached it was agreed to co-opt Mr St. Ledger.

With regard to Brendan Kelly, legal advice had been sought, and it was advised that sufficient notice had not been given to him regarding his removal from the Steering Committee. Once the legal advice was received an apology was sent to Mr. Kelly and he was invited to attend subsequent meetings.

Progress on the draft standard by the TWG group continued. As part of the process a further public consultation will occur before finalising the draft standard.

The issue of election of Steering Committee members was discussed as an election needed to be held in early 2003. The election required an AGM, but one had only been held the previous September and audited accounts were not due again until September 2003. It was agreed to hold an AGM in March 2003 to enable elections to the Steering Committee to take place and to defer accounts until later in the year, subject to legal advice. Audited accounts would then be submitted to the Companies Office, as required under Irish Company law.

It was agreed to hold an EGM on the same day in March 2003 to propose changes to the Memorandum and Articles of Association recommended by the Legal Sub-Committee and sanctioned by the Steering Committee.

On March 8<sup>th</sup> Brendan Kelly and Andrew St. Leger resigned formally, in writing, from the Steering Committee citing reservations about the process. Mr. St Leger had attended one meeting.

### **AGM March 2003**

The AGM was held on March 29<sup>th</sup>. Attendance was as follows:

Neil Foot, Economic Chamber  
George McCarthy, Economic Chamber  
Liam Lysaght, Environmental Chamber  
Caroline Murphy, Environmental Chamber  
Ruth McGrath, Environmental Chamber  
Tom Roche, Environmental Chamber  
Declan Little, Social Chamber  
Donal Whelan, Woodland Owners  
Tony Mannion, Woodland Owners  
Joe Barry, Woodland Owners chamber  
Ray Gallagher, Woodland Owners chamber  
FSC representative Gemma Boetekees, Invited Observer

Elections were held to the Steering Committee.

Nominations to the Social, Economic, and Environmental Chambers proceeded as nominees equalled or did not exceed places.

The Woodland Owner's Chamber had a number of nominations. Tony Mannion, Donal Whelan, Ray Gallagher, Barbara Maguire, Joe Barry and Richard Auler. Concerns were raised as to the chosen chamber affiliation of Joe Barry, Ray Gallagher, and Richard Auler. After discussion, Joe Barry and Ray Gallagher deferred their nominations, to be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting. Richard Auler was not present.

There was a proposal that a new postal ballot be held for elections. A second proposal was made that elections proceed from current nominations. Joe Barry and Ray Gallagher withdrew their nominations and the election proceeded.

Donal Whelan, Tony Mannion, and Barbara Maguire were elected to the Woodland Owners Chamber.

The Steering Committee was now as follows:

### **Steering Committee, March 2003**

Dr. Declan Little, Woodlands of Ireland, (Social);  
Mr. Noel Feely, Mote Park Conservation Group, (Social);

Ms. Caroline Murphy, FIE, An Taisce, (Environmental);  
Dr. Ruth McGrath, VOICE, IPCC (Environmental);  
Dr. Liam Lysaght, Heritage Council (Environmental)  
Mr. Tony Mannion, Society of Irish Foresters, (Woodland Owners);  
Mr. Donal Whelan, Irish Timber Growers Association, (Woodland Owners)  
Ms. Barbara Maguire, Irish Farmers Association, (Woodland Owners)  
Mr. George McCarthy, Coillte, (Economic);

A proposal was made that IFCI Ltd. revert to the three chamber structure. Liam Lysaght outlined the international model of Social, Environmental and Economic Chambers. Donal Whelan of the Woodland Owners Chamber made the case as to why they did not agree with this. Stakeholders most affected by certification (in the Irish context) in terms of implementation and costs were small woodland owners. They felt they would not adequately be represented in the Economic Chamber.

It was proposed and accepted that IFCI Ltd. work with the four chamber structure and put in place clearly defined membership requirements for affiliation to each chamber.

It was agreed to defer the accounts till September. A short update of the financial situation was presented. When all outstanding invoices are paid the account will still be in credit. There were two small bills outstanding, for which there was no documentation, which may need to be written off if the debtors could not be contacted. An EGM held on the same day passed the amendments to the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The May meeting reported that the funding application to the Forest Service had been rejected. They would only support the TWG for the time being, i.e. completion of the draft standard. It was agreed to submit a reduced funding application for other aspects such as promotion, public consultation, printing, etc. Funding continued to be an issue throughout the year.

The Technical Working Group (TWG) was reconvened after the AGM, with Declan Little replacing Brendan Kelly as the Social Chamber representative. The Technical Working Group was now comprised of Declan Little (Social Chamber), Caroline Murphy (Environmental Chamber), George McCarthy (Economic Chamber) and Donal Whelan (Woodland Owners Chamber). The TWG worked through the submissions throughout the year on a Principle by Principle basis.

The May meeting also discussed the issue of Chamber definitions, and it was agreed that a definition should be formulated for the Woodland Owners Chamber, and definitions agreed for all chambers, as this would assist with deciding chamber affiliation. A sub-committee with one representative from each chamber was established to draft chamber definitions, consisting of Donal Whelan (Woodland Owners Chamber), Declan Little (Social Chamber), Ruth McGrath (Environmental Chamber), and George McCarthy (Economic Chamber), with Liam Lysaght (Environmental Chamber) to act as facilitator.

The issue of an FSC Contact Person was discussed during the year. It was agreed that this is a separate role from the role of Secretary. Caroline Murphy had been acting as FSC Contact Person as well as secretary to the SC but could no longer continue to do this.

The position of Directors of IFCI was discussed at several meetings. Mr Brendan Kelly was asked to step down as Director subsequent to his resignation from the Steering Committee but refused to do so. An EGM held on 11<sup>th</sup> October voted to remove Mr Kelly as Director, but it emerged that 28 days rather than 14 days notice to Mr Kelly was required.

Ruth McGrath replaced Tony Mannion as Company Secretary at the August meeting.

Although Noel Feely was elected to the Steering Committee in March, he did not attend any meetings or respond to any communication.

The audited Annual Accounts were passed at a meeting of the AGM on 11<sup>th</sup> October for deferred items.

**There were no observers at 2003 meetings.**

**(f) The year 2004**

The following IFCI Ltd. SC and general meetings were held in 2004:

6 February 2004, ENFO Centre, Dublin

29 April 2004, ENFO Centre, Dublin

16 June 2004, 7 Upper Camden St, Dublin 2

28 July 2004, ENFO Centre, Dublin

AGM and EGM, 28<sup>th</sup> August 2004, Tullamore Dew Heritage Centre, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Chamber definitions had been agreed, and the next step was to work through the membership list and identify any members about whom either no information was available to allow chamber affiliation, or about whom there might be issues as to the chamber to which they were affiliated. Members were written to in advance of the AGM in August outlining this process, and where information was lacking which would allow chamber affiliation, this was sought.

David Tobin was co-opted to the Economic Chamber and attended from April onwards.

There were now two vacancies on the Social Chamber, one of which was due to the fact that Noel Feely had not attended any meetings since being elected to the Chamber. It was agreed by majority vote to fill these by co-option.

Work was done towards accreditation by FSC, the preconditions had been fulfilled and a chronological report was compiled.

The TWG continued working through the submissions on a Principle by Principle basis. The revised draft standard was circulated to the SC for comment.

Mr Brendan Kelly and Mr Ciaran Hughes made ongoing allegations in public discussion lists about the accounts. Initially this was responded to by the Chair, with all allegations addressed. However, at the April meeting it was agreed that in future no emails would be responded to, that only written correspondence would be responded to. If a written complaint was received, this would then convene the Grievance Process, and a meeting of a Grievance Committee would be called. No official complaint was received.

An EGM held on 28<sup>th</sup> August voted to remove Mr Kelly as Director.

The audited Annual Accounts were passed at the AGM held on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

**Gemma Boetekees attended the April meeting as an observer.**