

# **Century old Oriental beech introductions in Western Europe: an opportunity to study the risks and benefits of assisted migration**

Dates: 10 and 11 June 2025

Venue: [Hotellerie L'Etoile](#), Wasselonne, France

Target audience: Foresters, Forest administration officers, Researchers

## Summary

The workshop will be a forum for presenting and discussing results of research on a network of 11 Oriental beech stands across France, Germany, and Switzerland. Talks given by researchers will cover comparative analysis of European and Oriental beech regarding their phenology, growth and wood anatomy, physiology, and genetics. In particular, extensive research will be presented on the hybridization of the two species and its consequences for the long-term survival of the stands. We will also discuss if remote sensing can be used to track the spread of Oriental beech in a European beech forest. Foresters managing forests with planted Oriental beech will be invited, as well as responsible administrative bodies of the three countries. During the Workshop session, foresters and researchers will think together about the potential risks and benefits of using Oriental beech for assisted migration in Western Europe. A field trip will take place to the forest of Allenwiller, where Oriental beech was introduced over 100 years ago. The event will close with talks introducing future projects on assisted migration in Europe and a discussion on the development of a protected network of sites.

## Key information

- Participation will be limited to 70 persons and will be principally based on invitation. We estimate that approximately 20 places will be available for spontaneous participation. Please fill [this form](#) if you would like to participate.
- All talks on Tuesday, 11 June, will be given in English and simultaneously translated to French and German. Translations will be available in your smartphone. Please bring your earphones!
- Both meals and accommodation will be provided by the hotel. 43 rooms are available in the hotel (some shared) that will be filled on a first come first served basis. Several alternative accommodation options are available in the surrounding villages.
- The final registration form will be available in January with payment. Please note that a registration fee will apply to all participants to cover the real costs (conference room, hotel, food) of the event. This fee will be *\*very\** approximately 200 EUR incl. 1 hotel night and 300 EUR with 3 hotel nights.
- You will also have to cover your travel costs. There is no funding for this meeting, and the organizers are working voluntarily to make it happen.

## Preliminary program

Tuesday, 10 June 2025

10:30-11:00 Welcome coffee

### 11:00-12:30 Why a workshop on assisted migration with Oriental beech?

---

<b>When</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
11:00-11:30	Climate change & assisted migration vs assisted gene flow, hybridization: from hybrid vigor to outbreeding depression	Katalin Csilléry
11:30-11:50	How many Fagus species in Eurasia?	Thomas Denk (TBC)
11:50-12:10	Biogeography of Oriental beech from the Balkan to the Caucasus	Dusan Gomory (TBC)
12:10-12:30	The network of Oriental beech introductions and tracing their origin	Mirjam Kurz

12:30-14:00 Lunch

### 14:00-16:00 What is the difference between European and Oriental beech?

---

<b>When</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
14:00-14:15	Radial growth analyses	Martin Kohler / Adrian Kolz
14:15-14:30	Wood anatomy	Thomas Seifert / David Andermahr
14:30-14:45	Controlled drought experiments	Oliver Brendel
14:45-15:00	Phenological differences	Camilla Stefanini
15:00-15:15	Remote sensing Oriental beech	Petra D'Odorico / Gordana Kaplan
15:15-15:30	Detecting hybridization using genetics	Katharina Birgit Budde (TBC)
15:30-15:45	Is there evidence for outbreeding depression?	Camilla Stefanini
15:45-16:00	How to manage a stand with introduced Oriental beech? Influence on research if removals happen	TBA

---

16:00-16:30 Coffee break

### 16:30-18:00 Forester-Researcher Workshop session

Upon arrival all participants receive a sheet, where different management scenarios are proposed to minimize the risks and maximize the benefits of introducing Oriental beech, including a null scenario of no introductions at all. During the talks, all participants will have the opportunity to formulate their opinion and write them on the sheet. During this workshop, there will be three language groups

(English-French-German) to contrast and discuss your answers. At the end, we will also contrast the findings of the three groups.

Workshop group animation: Mirjam Kurz & Katalin Csilléry (CH/E) / Didier le Thiec (FR) / Jürgen Bauhus and Martin Kohler (D)

**19:00 Dinner at the hotel**

Wednesday, 11 June 2025

07:30-08:30 Breakfast at the hotel (for those who stay overnight)

**09:00-12:00 Field excursion to the forest of Allenwiller and its Oriental beech trees**

- Introducing the forest - representative of the village of Allenwiller (TBC)
- Participants attend some of the 4 workshops in small groups:
  - Mapping the forest
  - Coring trees and measuring growth
  - Observing leaf traits and phenology
  - “Guessing game”: participants will be presented with trees/leaves and they have to guess if it was European or Oriental beech. Genetics will reveal the answer!

13:00-14:00 Lunch

**14:00-16:00 Looking to the future: new emerging projects on Oriental beech and other tree species**

<b>When</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
14:00-14:15	ORIENT-BUCHE	Charalambos Neophytu
14:15-14:30	MigFoRest	Nicolas Dassonville (TBC)
14:30-14:45	Red oak project	Charalambos Neophytu (TBC)
14:45-15:00	How to integrate all study sites in a network	Jürgen Bauhus Didier le Thiec

The organizers

Dr Katalin Csilléry, Swiss Federal Research Institute WSL, Switzerland  
Dr Christoph Sperisen, Swiss Federal Research Institute WSL, Switzerland  
Camilla Stefanini, Swiss Federal Research Institute WSL, Switzerland  
Dr Martin Kohler, Universität Freiburg, Germany  
Prof Dr Jürgen Bauhus, Universität Freiburg, Germany  
Dr Didier Le Thiec, INRAE Nancy, France