

# Minutes of the 1st Meeting of Working Group 2

Tagungshotel Kolping

Karlstr. 7  
Freiburg, Germany

20 March 2000 at 14:00 – 18:00

21 March 2000 at 9:00 – 12:30

## 1. Welcome to participants

Professor Willi Zimmermann, the leader of working group 2 of the COST Action E19, opens the meeting and welcomes the participants. Starting with him, every participant gives a short introduction on his/her background. The list of participants of WG2 is presented in Annex 1.

## 2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda of the meeting has been approved. The presentation of the items in these minutes follow the agenda items.

## 3. Report of WG2 leader about the WG programme

Mr. Zimmermann presents the **main objective** of WG2, which is to provide policy makers in Europe with improved means for formulating and implementing national forest programmes (NFPs). He points out that the term NFP is still not clear, thus the **secondary objectives** and expected benefits of WG2 are:

- to specify existing understanding and definition of NFPs in European countries
- to evaluate the significance of NFPs in comparison to other policy means
- to assess supportive and impeding factors for the development of substantial NFPs

The formulation of the objectives is closely related to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Mr. Zimmermann stresses that the research topics of WG1 are the basis of the work of WG2. Thus, close co-ordination is very important in order to avoid overlapping work.

**Research topics** of WG2 (corresponding to the MoU) are:

1. international legally binding instruments on forests
  - NFP-elements in international agreements
  - impacts of international agreements on NFPs (binding or non-legally binding)
2. pressure from outside
  - co-ordination and comparison with other National Plans or policy fields (e.g. regional planning policy, environmental policy,...)
  - learn from other National Plans
3. financial incentives
  - international programmes with financial incentives
  - national reaction on international programmes with financial incentives
4. multilevel governance
  - co-ordination between national and regional governments
  - co-ordination between government and interest groups
5. competing advocacy coalitions
  - existing competing advocacy coalitions
  - possible compromises between forest policy actors

In addition, the following research topics of WG2 are emphasized by Mr. Zimmermann:

- elements of substantive NFPs
- supportive and impeding factors of substantive NFPs
- main deficits of existing NFPs
- to learn from other national policy programmes

During discussion some more influential factors of NFPs came to light which are either supportive or impeding factors of substantive NFPs; these are:

6. land tenure (Mr. Berge, seconded by Mr. Glueck)
7. political culture and social environment (proposed by Mr. Zimmermann and Mr. Berge)
8. institutional questions (proposed by Mr. Rojas Briales)

It worked out that all WG2 members agree with the following rationale of WG2: **Evaluation of supportive and impeding factors of NFPs as enumerated from 1 – 8** above. This list can still be extended during the research process.

When discussion came to the understanding and definition of NFPs, Mr. Glueck recalled the findings of the Freiburg Seminar 1998 which are published in EFI Proceedings no. 30, 1999, particularly in volume 1 out of 3.

#### **4. Presentation of ongoing research projects closely related to NFPs and WG2**

**Germany:** Mr. Volz says that there is no ongoing research project closely related to NFPs, but there is an intention to start at least one project this year.

Mr. Reining describes the political situation on NFPs in Germany. The starting point was the Six-Country-Initiative established by IFF. Now there is a national process at the federal level and a process in Baden-Wuerttemberg, which are observed by the other German states.

**Austria:** Mr. Voitleithner presents four ongoing research projects. Two of them are evaluating sustainable forest management policy in Austria. One analyses the obstacles of the international forest policy dialogue as regards strengthening the international forest regime. The last one gives accompanying support of the development of the Austrian NFP by doing research into effects of basic principles and external factors to structure and relationship of political actors. Austria does not have as yet an NFP process but is in the starting phase.

**The Netherlands:** Mr. van Vliet says, there is no NFP on its way and no closely related research project. As an NFP is not regarded as a distinct topic by the ministries, probably no research project will be approved in the next years. But a new policy plan on forestry and rural areas is in the development stage. Additionally he mentioned three interesting research areas. First, an office of multi-disciplinary scientists is monitoring and evaluating the implementation policy in the green environment. Second, a team on social policy is looking at financial and legal instruments and ownership. Third, stakeholder participation and network approach are topics of ongoing university research projects.

**Norway:** Mr. Solberg describes the following projects:

- impacts of changing international frame conditions to the forestry sector;
- costs of change in forest management as a consequence of environmental pressure;
- state of the art on forest policy instruments;
- impacts of subsidies on non-commercial thinning.

Mr. Berge describes a planned EU project about different forms of forest property to forest management and biological diversity.

Mrs. Aasen mentions a project about what happens in the pulp and paper industry if forest management practices change. She points out that it is important to do research in the use of environmental language, because public will lose confidence if it is more like a capsule. An interesting topic also would be how different instruments in forest policy work in different situations and countries.

**Finland:** Mr. Haenninen describes four research projects, which are not closely related to NFPs; these are.

- result of forest improvement investments;
- profitability of tending-of-young-stands campaign in Finland, viewpoints of the society and private forest owners;
- forest regeneration motives and choice of regeneration methods on private wood-lots;
- monitoring system for non-industrial private forestry.

In addition, the most interesting projects are an evaluation study of Finland's NFP and a comprehensive environmental impact assessment. The evaluation of the regional forest programmes is in progress.

**United Kingdom:** Mr. Sangster states that there is no NFP in process because there exists the Forestry Strategy 1995 at the national level. He mentions the following three research programmes, which could be interesting for the COST E19:

- policy for sustainable forest management – voluntary system for environmental development;
- qualitative and quantitative social science research about: "What is forestry?"
- devolution strategies.

Research projects related to NFPs are about the language which is used to explain sustainable forest management to stakeholders, the place of forestry in contemporary culture and what resources do forests provide in South Wales.

**Portugal:** Mr. Carvalho Mendes describes three projects which are in the pipeline or starting phase. The first project is an evaluation of financial incentives on forests in Europe. The second is about the total economic value of Mediterranean forests. The third is investigating if NFPs are more promising to control forest fires.

**Greece:** According to Mrs. Vakrou there is no specific ongoing research project now, but there is a new political document like a Forest Strategy which considers international documents. Now it is assumed that the Ministry of Agriculture will pay for an evaluation study, for which data are already collected by a working group. Another interesting question is the influence of institutional change in 1999 where environmental NGOs got more influence to

policy. Mr. Papageorgiou described a MULTIFOR-project about private and traditional public forests which is in the launching phase and would give feedback about obstacles for the development of a substantial NFP.

**Switzerland:** Mr. Zimmermann presents a research project which is completely integrated in the Cost Action E19 and funded by the Federal Office of Education and Science. It asks to what extent Switzerland already fulfils the requirements of an NFP and what are the requirements as regards to content and procedures.

The discussion of the country reports reveals that many projects are more or less closely related to NFPs. Mr. Zimmermann asks the participants to indicate until the next WG2 meeting in Spain which projects in their countries are closely related to NFPs. He also asks for recommendations for invited speakers to the seminar in Spain. As most countries are working on NFPs or have already finished this process (e.g., Finland) – this proves particularly true for EU member states due to the EU Regulation on Support of Rural Areas which requires an NFP as a precondition for subsidies – Mr. Glueck proposes to describe this process in each participating country by using common terms of reference and to publish the country reports by WG2.

## **5. Discussion of shortcomings (barriers to success)**

The discussion makes it obvious that there is no common understanding of the meaning of “shortcomings”. Mr. Glueck points to the fact that the research topics of WG2 are only partly covered by national projects of the participating countries. This means that additional sources of knowledge have to be employed in order to meet the research tasks. One opportunity is to invite external speakers to the COST E19 Seminars in Spain and Norway. These topics should be specified as soon as possible; proposals by the participants to the WG Chairs are requested.

Other shortcomings of crucial significance for the Action were proposed by the Steering Committee meeting on 27 November in Vienna; Mr. Zimmermann recalls the items:

1. state of the art in general policy planning
2. definition of the term sustainable forest management
3. definition of NFPs

Ad 1: There are no objections against it.

Ad 2: According to Task 6 of the COST Action E19 Tasks List all participating countries are requested to deliver an operational definition of SFM. Such a definition can be either already politically achieved or in the process of definition. The operational definition can be pursued by using the pan-European C&I of SFM (H1, H2, L2) and additional ones applied to the special situation of the country. Furthermore, many countries are involved in the PEFC process from which national indicators of SFM can be derived.

The discussion reflects reservations about the possibility to define SFM. Mr. Sangster proposes to replace the term “definition” by “common characteristics”. Furthermore, Mr. Sangster argues, seconded by Mr. Berge, that it will be difficult to find a definition of SFM at the national level in their countries due to the political culture. Mr. Glueck stresses that the term SFM stems from the international forest policy dialogue which comprises “the sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests” (Statement of Forest Principles, Chapter 11 of Agenda 2000). Since UNCED the pan-European Process has been looking for an operational definition of SFM at the national level (Helsinki Process) and the sub-national levels (L2, PEFC, FSC). The operational definition of SFM at the national level is important because it determines the content of an NFP. For example, a country who does not put much weight on biological diversity in her definition of SFM will not pay much attention on this issue in her NFP. Mr. Glueck states in this context that a clarifying letter that will be sent to the national delegates.

Ad 3: Mr. Schanz is going to give a paper on the definition of NFPs at the Spain Seminar based on the findings of the Freiburg Conference 1998 and the country reports presented there.

## **6. Preparation of the meeting in Spain**

The WG2 participants agreed with the tasks and topics of general interest for the Seminar in Spain. In addition, the WG2 members agreed with the proposal to report on the progress of the development of NFPs for each country; common terms of reference to be used will be delivered by the Chairman.

## **7. Adaption of a preliminary working plan**

Mr. Zimmermann presents the commonly elaborated Work Plan of WG2. The rationale is the promotion of substantive NFPs. The tasks are: Evaluation of supportive and impeding factors such as international agreements, pressure from outside, financial incentives, multi-level governance, tenure, political culture and social environment, and institutional aspects.

The 5 research topics of WG2 of the MoU are extended by tenure questions, political culture/social environment, and institutional questions. The general research question is how these factors influence NFPs.

The proposed **Work Plan** for WG2 was intensively discussed and finally approved as follows:

Freiburg (20-21 March 2000)	topics, work plan
Spain (19-21 Oct. 2000)	political and social context (Seminar)
Scotland (29-31 March 2001)	influence of legal regulations
Norway (13-15 Sept. 2001)	financial framework and incentives (Seminar)
Finland (Spring 2002)	advocacy coalitions, institutional aspects
Portugal (Autumn 2002)	multilevel governance, land tenure (Seminar)
Austria (Spring 2003)	synthesis, conclusion, results

Mr. Berge promised to present a paper at the Seminar in Spain about political culture and social environment.

### **8. Other topics**

Mr. Glueck reminds the Chairman to specify the terms of reference for the homework of the WG2 members and to propose a list of invited speakers for the Spain Seminar.

### **9. Closing of the meeting**

Mr. Zimmermann thanks the participants for their interest and closes the meeting.

Vienna/Zurich, 7 April 2000

Mr. Zimmermann

Leader of WG2

Johannes Voitleithner

Minutes checker

## ANNEX 1: List of participants in WG2 at the Freiburg meeting

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SC:                   Steering Committee

**ANNEX 2: List of members of WG2**

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SC:            Steering Committee