

COST ACTION E43
Harmonisation of National Inventories in Europe:
Techniques for Common Reporting

Draft Minutes of the 6th Management Committee Meeting

Thursday, 11 May 2006, 17:00-18:00 hrs

Aquitaine Regional Council Hall
Bordeaux, France

1. Welcome to participants

The members of the Management Committee as well as in particular the members of the Midterm Evaluation Panel were welcomed by the Chair of COST Action E43 Prof. Tomppo.

Representatives from the following 25 countries have participated in the meeting:

Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda has been approved with some minor amendments which will be reflected in these minutes.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the 5th meeting of the Management Committee held on Monday, 19 September 2005 at the Department of Forest Biometry, University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany were approved without any amendments.

4. General Information from the COST Secretariat

The Science Officer of COST Action E43 Mr. Günter Siegel informed the Management Committee about the most recent developments concerning the COST Programme, addressing in particular the following issues (for details see News from COST, [Http://www.cost.esf.org](http://www.cost.esf.org)):

21/04/2006	COST & the COST EP exhibition in the media
19/04/2006	COST Days: A vision for European Science. A four Days COST Exhibition at the European Parliament in Brussels



19/04/2006	Welcome Address at the inauguration of the COST Days in the European Parliament
08/04/2006	COST participates in the EVA 2006 in Florence
04/04/2006	COST reinforces the ties with the European Commission
03/04/2006	Reforms in COST governance
31/03/2006	A new opportunity for networking sciences in Europe: COST is launching an Open Call for proposals
30/03/2006	Review documents of COST Domains Agriculture, Food Sciences and Biotechnology, Forestry and Forests Products, Meteorology and Environment
21/03/2006	The EU Competitiveness Council Supports Cost
19/03/2006	COST Participates in the 4th European Business Meeting
12/03/2006	COST in Ukraine
20/02/2006	COST JAF Group meets in Florence
19/02/2006	COST meets young Australian researchers
16/02/2006	COST in the EURONEWS
15/02/2006	COST at Exponatec 2006
07/02/2006	COST at a Hearing in the European Parliament
4/02/2006	COST Strategic Workshop “Food and Health: The Way Forward”
01/02/2006	COST President Meets the Italian Scientific Community in Milan

COST Website

The official COST web-site has been transferred to the ESF server and is now accessible under the following address: <http://www.cost.esf.org>.

Status of the COST Action E43

So far, according to the files 27 countries have joined COST Action E43:

Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Expiring date: 27 June 2008

Budget Status

After having contacted all Management Committees the budget plan for the year 2006 has been drafted. In the light of its activities 85.000 Euro have been allocated to COST Action E43.

5. Year budget planning

The office holders as well as all delegations have been asked to assure that in the light of the limited financial means all future participants of activities organised by COST Action E43 will dedicate adequate attention to the principle of the most economical overall expenditure when asking for reimbursement.

The following tables inform about spending and commitments made in the run of the years 2005 and 2006:

BUDGET 2005

E43	Place	Date	Budget (Euro)
	Birmensdorf (CH)	17 - 18 March 2005	4.512
	Vienna (AT)	14 – 15 April 2005	43.641
	Brussels (BE)	29 April 2005	420
	Graz (AT)	2 – 4 May 2005	4.440
	Helsinki	27 – 29 July 2005	5.560
	Freiburg	19 – 20 September 2005	42.748
	Prague	9 – 11 October 2005	17.426 (*)
	STSM		15.738
	TOTAL		134.485

(*) Trainings Course

BUDGET 2006

E43	Place	Date	Budget (Euro)
	Prague (CZ)	2 - 3 March 2006	6.168
	Vienna (AT)	30 March – 1 April 2006	2.576
	Bordeaux (FR)	11 – 13 May 2006	44.000
	Helsinki	15 – 16 October 2006	28.000
	TOTAL		80.744

The budget for the year 2007 will presumably amount to approximately 90.000 Euro (?) corresponding to approx. 110 reimbursements (further, more precise information will be available in the course of the beginning of the third quarter).

6. STSM status, applications

In the course of the year 2006 STSMs have to be financed out of the Action budget. Due to the existing budget constraints only a few STSMs can be financed in the course of the running year.

In this context it has to be underlined that applicants should only make binding bookings after having received the official letter of approval.

All applicants have to use the on-line registration tool whose detailed description can be found in the guidelines for STMS (see http://www.cost.esf.org/fileadmin/cost_documents/guidelines/2-financial_instruments/2.3-STSM.pdf).

The possibility of Group STSMs (two – three experts (each from a different signatory country) are going to one host institute at the same time) might be taken into consideration.

STSMs 2005

In the course of the year 2005 the following STSMs have been undertaken:

Name	From	To	Dates	Grant (Euro)
Thomas Gschwantner	AT	CH	7 – 24 March 2005	1.995
Lucio di Cosmo	IT	CH	7 – 24 March 2005	2.045
Nicolas Robert	FR	CH	7 – 24 March 2005	2.045
Karsten Dunger	GE	SE	7 – 12 March 2005	1.664
Emil Ciencila	CZ	SE	7 – 11 March 2005	1.313
Arnor Snorrason	IS	SE	7 – 13 March 2005	1.886
Lucio di Cosmo	IT	FI	17 July – 5 August 2005	1.520
Nicolas Robert	FR	FI	17 July – 5 August 2005	1.660
Thomas Gschwantner	AT	FI	17 July – 5 August 2005	1.610
Total				15.738

The Management Committee welcomed the proposal of the Working Group Coordinators to invite young researcher to participate in the analysis of the completed questionnaires and the submitted country reports by using financial means provided by the STSM scheme.

7. Publication, annual report

Following COST Document 271/05 on ‘Guidelines for assessment, monitoring and evaluation of COST Actions’ the Action Chair has submitted the Progress Report 2005 at the beginning of the running year. Copies of this report have been circulated. In this context the Science Officer recalled that each Action has to submit a Progress Report before the end of a calendar year. A revised template can be found in the annex of the COST Document 271/05.

In preparation of the next progress report it has been agreed that the Action Chair should be informed about all relevant publications and reports published by the members of the network established by COST Action E43. Furthermore, the Management Committee recommended to exchange adequate information in the course of the next MC meeting.

The Publication Strategy elaborated in the course of previous meetings has been revised as follows:

- 2006 publication of country-related State-of-the-Art reports (to be coordinated by the Working Groups)
- 2007 publication of the first outcomes concerning the harmonisation of the national forest inventories in Europe, compilation of national field manuals
- 2007 publication of the further outcomes concerning the harmonisation of the national forest inventories in Europe
- 2008 publication describing the achievements of the Action.

Furthermore, it has been agreed that the outcomes so far achieved should also be published in a folder.

8. Evaluation

In the frame of the Bordeaux Conference the mid-term evaluation of COST Action E43 has been carried out by an Evaluation Panel chaired by Dr. Janos Gal. Following the guidelines for such an evaluation the two evaluators (Dr. Janos Gal (Hungary) and Dr. Kalliopi Radoglou (Greece)) have reviewed the activities of the Action by inviting all MC-members to fill in a standardised questionnaire, conducting interviews with all officeholders as well as selected experts and attending the Working Group meetings.

Panel Chair Dr. Gal presented the preliminary results of the evaluation to the Management Committee pointing out that among others the following criteria have been used for the evaluation of the Action:

- achievement of objectives
- MOU-fulfilment
- added value of the Action
- attracting people, relevance to industry
- management of the Action and documentation
- dissemination of information
- level of participation in the Action

In view of the ambitious objectives laid down in the MoU the Evaluation Panel has rated the achievements of the Action as promising, pointing out that the Action has been able to establish a broad research network and ensure an active participation. Besides the excellent management of the activities the Chair of the Evaluation Panel highlighted the efforts and the ability of the Action to attract a broad participation from all involved sectors. The Evaluation Panel will present its findings in form of a report, which will be finalised before the next meeting of the Domain Committee on Forests, their Products and Services.

On behalf of the Management Committee the Action Chair Prof. Tomppo expressed its gratitude to the Evaluation Panel welcoming their recommendations as an encouraging stimulus for the Action.

9. Request for new members

The period within which COST member states can join a COST Action without any conditions being imposed, runs for twelve months from the date of approval of the COST Committee of Senior Officials. Therefore any request of a COST member state for accession to COST Action E43 received after 16 February 2005 has to be approved by its MC.

Since the last MC meeting the COST Office has not received a request from any COST member state.

The Management Committee has been informed that experts from the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro are interested to join the Action. In this context the Science Officer underlined that those experts have to turn to their National COST Coordinator whose address can be found on the Web-site of the COST Programme.

10. Non COST participation

Since the last MC meeting the COST Office has not received a request from any Non-COST institution.

11. Web news

Action Chair Prof. Tomppo informed briefly about the most recent up-dates of the Web-site of Action E43 (www.metla.fi/eu/cost/e43) hosted by Metla.

12. Progress Report of Working Groups

In a plenary meeting preceding the meeting of the Management Committee the Coordinators of the Working Groups informed briefly about the outcomes of the WG meetings held in Bordeaux as well as the planned activities.

The Coordinator of Working Group 1 Dr. Adrian Lanz notified the Management Committee that his WG is currently focusing on the finalisation of the Technical Report which will be presented in frame of the next meeting scheduled to be held in November 2006 in Thessaloniki. The Technical Report will be complemented by a scientific paper whose publication is envisaged for the end of the year 2006. Additionally a publication of the country reports by end of the running year has been considered.

The Coordinator of Working Group 2 Dr. Göran Ståhl informed that within his Working Group activities focused on:

- 1) Updates on reporting systems from different countries
- 2) Analysis of results from the second questionnaire
- 3) Continued work on reference definitions

The Working Group meeting started with a useful “round-the-table” update on important news regarding the development of carbon reporting systems and on important decisions made regarding, e.g., whether or not reporting according to article 3.4 of the Kyoto Protocol will be elected. It was observed that many countries will report on Forest Management to the Kyoto Protocol. This further motivates the importance of the work on harmonization conducted within our group.

Between the meeting in Freiburg and this meeting a revised questionnaire on reporting procedures and definitions was submitted and collected. In Bordeaux, work on compiling results commenced and tasks were distributed so that a journal article will be written based on the results. Preliminarily, it was decided to submit the article to *Silva Fennica*. The work plan adopted suggests that the article should be completed within one month time from the Bordeaux meeting.

The work on reference definitions that was initiated in Freiburg continued during the meeting. Discussion papers had been prepared before the meeting and the propositions in those papers were discussed. Further, remaining unclear issues were identified and a division of tasks for completing the work on references was made. The time table adopted suggests that remaining work should be completed until the beginning of August. Then, a technical report will be compiled based on the results. This report will then be submitted for review by all participants in WG2.

Lastly, it was decided that each country should initiate sensitivity analyses based on the report on reference definitions and based on the currently adopted procedures in each country. To start with, these analyses will be simple and non-quantitative; the goal is that they should provide a basis for our discussions at the next meeting (in Greece in November).

The Coordinator of WG3 Dr. Gerardo Chirici informed the Management Committee that in the frame of the Bordeaux meeting the results of the second questionnaire on Biodiversity have been reviewed. In this context the WG is closely cooperating with Forestbiota, Biosoil as well as Common, programmes of the Forest Focus as well as the European Environment Agency.

The members of WG3 agreed on the following work plan:

- Analysis of the second questionnaire (the publishing of the country reports as well as the envisaged scientific publication is planned for November 2006)
- Elaboration of definitions for the Forest Biodiversity Indicators (such as Naturalness, Deadwood, Stand structure, Ground vegetation)

- Publications
 - * Technical Report (summer 2006)
 - * Country Reports (November 2006)
 - * Scientific paper concerning the first questionnaire
 - * Scientific paper pertaining COMMON/COST.

13. Long term planning

The Management Committee identified a need for elaborating a glossary aiming at a definition of the following issues:

- Forest type
- Volumes (e.g. commercial growing stocks)
- Lying deadwood
- Above ground biomass
- Protection/protective function

The Working Groups have expressed their readiness to participate in this specific exercise.

14. Time and place of next meetings

The Management Committee revised and updated the meeting plan elaborated in the course of the last MC meetings, as follows:

Uppsala	7 –8 August 2006	Steering Committee Meeting
France	End of September	Task Group Meeting
Thessaloniki (GR)	16 – 18 November 2006	MC + WGs

The Management Committee has approved the following requests:

- Grant for the Chair (2.000 Euro)
- Publications (incl. Folder)

15. Any other business

Vice-Chair Dr. Klemens Schadauer informed the MC members about the most recent developments in the frame of the ENFIN Initiative.

The MC Members have been informed by the Science Officer about the possibilities of the instruments provided by COST Strategic Workshops (*), ESF (Research Conferences); INTAS; EUREKA as well as NATO Research programme.

(*) Strategic Workshops are an important new element in the positioning of COST. The aim is to bring researchers and decision makers together to discuss forefront topics, principally of an interdisciplinary nature, which can be used in the future development of the topic and which may form the basis of future proposals, not only to COST, but also to the framework programme and to other European organisations responsible for research networking. A previous strategic workshop has been held on “Environment and Health” and a number of new workshops, including partnership with ESF in its Forward Looks, are in an advanced planning stage. In 2006, Strategic Workshops will be held on “Food and Health” and on “Nanosciences and Technologies”.

Furthermore, the Science Officer informed comprehensively about the *COST Open Call for Proposals to support Scientific and Technical Collaboration in Europe* which has been launched on 3 April 2006.

16. Closing

In closing the Joint Management and Working Groups meeting, Action Chair Prof. Tomppo expressed his gratitude to the Working Group co-ordinators, the authors of the presentations as well as all other officeholders for their active role in preparing and conducting the ending meeting. In particular, he whole-heartily thanked the local organiser Dr. Claude Vidal and his team for the excellent organisation of the Bordeaux Meeting. Furthermore he expressed his appreciation to all delegates for their active participation.