

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

Minutes of the 5th Meeting of Working Group 1

University of Freiburg, Germany

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Participants

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1 Discussion of Reference definitions

In its 5th session, the working group discusses the draft reference definitions as elaborated and proposed by the second short-term scientific mission held in Helsinki (Di Cosmo, Gschwantner, Robert, Tomppo) and the ad-hoc Solböle group (STSM, Korhonen, Lanz, Vidal).

1.1 General comments

- a better term – instead of just *reference* – is *reference definition*
- at the moment, the reference definition does not have to be a “better” definition than any national or international definition, but
- the reference definition is a *tool* to analyse the sensitivity of national estimates with respect to a common definition of concepts like *forest* or *growing stock*
- an import additional requirement for a good reference definition is that it should be as close a possible to current national definitions
- general requirements section, introducing terms like like *neutrality*, for instance, needs refinement and better wording and explanation

1.2 Reference definition for “Forest”

- the need for a reference definition which allows a forest or non-forest decision for any point in the landscape is discussed and basically accepted
- the idea to use and formulate a “land cover” filter followed by a “land use” filter is accepted; however, several points need re-work
- LC2 and LC4 (temporarily unstocked areas) could also (better?) be understood as land use categories?
- the “LC/LU” scheme should be enhanced to show also paths leading not only to “Forest” and “Other Wooded Land (OWL)”, but also to “Tree Resources Outside Forest (TROF)” (other categories WG2 and WG3?)
- make a comprehensive list of special land use cases (plantations, parks, gardens, natural colonisation, ...) and their treatment within the reference definition
- details are difficult to handle; a new illustration may help, e.g. a flower with simple to more complex areas as concentric circles in the centre and special land use cases as leaves of the flower?

1.3 Reference definition for “Forest Border Line”

- the concept makes sense
- the need for a reference definition is understood and helpful
- distance between border trees needs re-thinking: should it depend on site conditions to cover different conditions in Europe?; should it depend on crown diameters?
- countries are encouraged to provide their field procedures and other material (images)

1.4 Reference definition for “Growing stock”

- the term tree *compartments* might be changed (even if used in recent literature) to tree *partitions, divisions, ...*
- the tree compartment *stem* includes *stump + log + tree top*
- reference definition including stump or not including stump? And what would be the reference threshold for stump height?
- further measurement and model details are needed

2 Building Bridges

Members from the STSM present a case study conducted during their work in Helsinki: similarity of empirical distribution of volumes over diameter classes between NFIs and between species.

3 Next Steps

- basically, we still have to improve our knowledge about NFI methods and techniques
- a new tool to refine and finalise questionnaires and reference definitions: *open forum / mailing lists*
- up-coming main tasks will be announced on the forum; WG members will have the chance to work on specific subjects

05-OCT-2005//Adrian Lanz