

COST Action E43 on

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

Minutes of the 2nd Working Group 1 meeting (task force meeting)
21–22 October 2004, Gembloux, Belgium

1 Participants

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2 Sessions

The task force met in 3 sessions, one as a joint session with representatives from WG2:

- Session 1, Thursday, 21 October, 14:00-17:00: questionnaire
- Session 2, Friday, 22 October, 09:00-10:30: joint session with WG2
- Session 3, Friday, 22 October, 11:00-12:30: questionnaire

3 Task force

The task force has been initiated at the Hørsholm meeting. Task: prepare a draft questionnaire for discussion and approval at the next WG1 meeting in December.

4 Questionnaire

On the basis of a draft questionnaire from France included in the work plan of WG1, and decisions and recommendations from the first WG1 meeting and steering committee meeting in Nogent-sur-Vernisson, the TF discusses and decides the following important items:

- The questionnaire focuses on the variable *total growing stock of standing living trees in forests*; this variable is not only highly important for national and international reporting, but its estimation depends also on fundamental definitions and concepts, and working data are available from all NFIs in Europe;
- In later steps, such a basic questionnaire could be extended with reasonable effort to OWL (other wooded land), TROF (tree resources outside forests), total volume of standing dead trees, biomass and similar variables, if needed; total volume of standing dead trees, however, might be integrated into the first questionnaire;
- Questions with respect to tree definition, tree measurement and volume functions are more or less finalised and discussed in detail during the meeting (Annex); questions related to forest definition, forest measurements, sampling design and estimation techniques should be included (see timetable);
- Questionnaire will refer only to those NFI data which are later used for international reporting.

5 Timetable and tasks

The following timetable has been accepted:

- review of tree definitions, tree measurements and volume functions (AUT, BEL, CZ, SWE)
- proposal and review of forest definition and measurement (SWE, FIN)
- proposal and review of sampling design and estimation techniques (AUT, F, IT, CH)
- examples of completed questionnaire (IT, SWE, CH)
- Finalisation and dissemination of draft questionnaire by 17 November (CH, FIN)

6 Cooperation with WG2

It was agreed that WG1 will incorporate a general question on soil sampling from WG2 into its questionnaire. Several other variables and characteristics of the NFIs (e.g. managed forests, OWL, TROF, dead wood, biomass functions, ...) are important for WG2, but can not be taken into this first WG1 questionnaire.

7 Annex (Questionnaire)

7.1 General

The task force adopts the terms observed and derived variables.

7.2 Tree definition

The definition of tree in the sense of a NFI can be asked in two questions:

- Conditions which disqualify a wooden plant species from being considered a NFI tree species

condition	specification	explanation
exotic plant	yes no	
morphology	yes no	
potential height	yes no	
other	yes no	

- Conditions which disqualify a tree (being a tree from the NFI tree species list) from being considered a NFI tree (at the moment)

condition	specification	explanation
minimal diameter	yes no	
minimal height	yes no	
use of wood	yes no	
vegetation status	yes no	
standing	yes no	
other	yes no	

7.3 Tree measurement

We ask the observed attributes and their measurement technique on NFI sample trees for volume prediction.

attribute	full sample	sub-sample	measurement technique
species	yes no	yes no	
DBH	yes no	yes no	
upper diam.	yes no	yes no	
lower diam.	yes no	yes no	
stem form	yes no	yes no	
stem fork	yes no	yes no	
social position	yes no	yes no	
crown length	yes no	yes no	
crown form	yes no	yes no	
bark thickness	yes no	yes no	
branchiness	yes no	yes no	
other	yes no	yes no	

7.4 Volume functions

We may ask for a description or ask detailed questions. Important points are:

- last update of reference database
- for how many species
- list of explanatory variables in volume function
- number of functions and transformation functions
- naming and role of sub-samples
- broken trees handling