

## **MINUTES OF THE WG3 WORKING SESSIONS AT THE JOINT WORKING MEETING AT VIENNA, MAY 14-15, 2005**

The chair of the WG3, Annemarie Bastrup-Birk, welcomed the participants and thanked for their contribution to the work with the questionnaire

The agenda was adopted after addition of two extra presentations: Elmar Hauk on stand structure and Georg Frank on the work of the COST E27 "PROFOR Protected forest areas in Europe".

The minutes of the working group session are written by Anna-Lena Axelsson, SLU and Annemarie Bastrup-Birk

A working plan for 2005 with deadlines and all the presentations of the Vienna WG3 working sessions can be found on the private web page of the WG3.

### **I. TABLE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The different variables were commented and discussed. It was agreed that the deadline for the last comments and eventual adding of new variables was end of April.

Jan-Erik Nilsen presented the work with the current on-line questionnaire. The work started with 95 variables. Overlapping information was taken away and the table was restructured. This work was performed during a small task force meeting in Bergen where Annemarie, Jan-Erik and Pat participated.

Gherardo Chirici presented the current questionnaire. Further explanations and definitions are needed. They will be provided on-line, as Gherardo offered to write guidelines on how to fill the questionnaire, and also to explain the procedures when opening an account to the questionnaire.

#### **Some comments on the questionnaire set-up**

- It was agreed that the table questionnaire could be filled by anybody upon request, even by several persons per country. However it is very important for the future treatment of the questionnaire to state one's role in the NFI as a subset will be taken from the persons responsible of the national reporting will be taken for NFI and COST E43 purposes.
- In the left bottom of the screen you are told which variable you are treating
- It is recommended to use the save button frequently to avoid loss of data.
- WG3 used closed variables while the other WG groups used a more open questionnaire. The main advantage with closed variables is that the analysis work is easy. The group was in general satisfied with the closed answers of the questionnaire

#### **Specific comments to the table questionnaire:**

- Forest type = ecologically based definition not only based on tree composition
- OWL: follows the definition given by FAO
- Regeneration should be put in one box
- Compartment assessment should be replaced by stand assessment in the table
- Dead parts on living trees will replace dead branches in tree of the questionnaire
- It was proposed to have a text box for supplementary comments
- The definition of different level of expertise was discussed. It showed out that different countries have interpreted this question in slightly different ways. This question as well as the

two last questions of the questionnaire on technical feasibility and importance of the variable to forest biodiversity is all subjective/qualitative questions. It is important that answers are provided for the three last questions for all variables – even if these factors are not included in the forest inventory. The group would appreciate if examples could be given on how to answer to these 3 last questions

### **Extra proposed variables**

- Site variables
- A temporal perspective will be added to the questionnaire. How long times series can be provided for each variable. Units? Times series = compiled number of years
- Naturalness
- Tree vitality
- Crown structure
- Stand structure was again taken up. However it was pointed out that different variable height, age, shrub layer etc. can be used to describe stand structure. Further, it is important to consider that this is the first stage of the work. A more in-depth analysis will follow. There was agreement that stand structure is an important biodiversity variable and few doubts that it would be selected as a core variable.

**Further variables and comments are welcome until end of April and should be addressed to Gherardo and Annemarie until April 22.**

Further work with the questionnaire will be done by the Subgroup on the questionnaire:  
Annemarie Bastrup-Birk, Gherardo Chirici, Jan-Erik Nilsen, Anna-Lena Axelsson, Susanne Winter

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE FILLING THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS MAY 15**

### **II. FOREST TYPE CLASSIFICATION**

Marco Marchetti presented an EEA-funded project "European forest types for biodiversity assessment"

The forest type approach was adopted as very valuable to the work of WG3 with some adding –. Some modifications were suggested like increasing the number of subcategories including plantation forest and exotic plantations. This will be included as the recommended system by our group.

Marco will send out the latest version of the classification.

A subgroup will work with refining the suggestions for forest type classification.

### **SUBGROUP ON FOREST TYPE CLASSIFICATION**

Marco Marchetti (leader), Anna Barbati, Icar Alberdi Asensio, Nadia Barsoum, Anna-Lena Axelsson

### **III INDICATORS, ETC.**

Elmar Hauk (BFW) presented MOBI Austrian Monitoring Biodiversity

- Landscape pattern - fragmentation of forest
- Naturalness of tree species distribution
- Forest types. Main type, mix type

Elmar presented a survey of how age is assessed in NFI. Seven answers came in.

Jürgen Boehl (WSL) presented his work with Forest structure as an indicator of forest biodiversity. The presentation can be seen on the private web-page of the COST E43.

#### Stand structure

A subgroup on stand structure was set including  
Elmar Hauk, Susanne Winter

#### STATISTICS

The statistical issues were not taken on board during the Vienna meeting but the subgroup lead by Professor Pelz will have some email exchange and will present a report to the next joint working meeting in September in Freiburg.

The participants of the subgroup on statistics are:  
Prof. Dietrich Pelz (leader), Elmar Hauk, Gherardo Chirici

#### METHODOLOGIES

Vivian Kvist Johannsen (S&L) presented "Ranking indices of forest biodiversity".  
The presentation can be seen on the private web-page of the COST E43.

#### IV. OTHER PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Anna-Lena Axelsson presented the ENFIN-1 project. It is important that the variables within this project are included in the new version of the questionnaire. The presentation can be seen on the private web-page of the COST E43

Pat Neville presented the BioSoil project, which is a ForestFocus demonstration study on the assessment of forest biodiversity using the Pan-European Level I grid. The presentation can be seen on the private web-page of the COST E43

Georg Frank presented the COST E27 Action and its state-of-work. Georg Frank offered most kindly to send the questionnaires of relevance to the work of WG3.

#### V. CORE VARIABLES

The rest of the meeting was used to discuss core variables and references. Several persons were appointed to describe selected core variables for analysis of definitions and methodologies. The selected variables will be sent to all participating countries for in depth description. See the working plan for 2005 at the end of the minutes.

There was a general discussion on direct and indirect indicators of biodiversity, selected assessment versus complete assessment of variables. What is feasible to measure in an NFI. To present such definitions will be an important part of the work of the WG3 during 2005.

A subgroup was set for future work with the core variables.  
SUBGROUP ON CORE VARIABLES: Annemarie Bastrup-Birk , Jan-Erik Nilsen, Tiina Tonteri, Susanne Winter, Floor Vodde, Gherardo Chirici

It was stated that it is important that the variables of the ENFIN-1 project are represented in the questionnaire. It was also suggested and accepted that the herb layer should be replaced by ground vegetation. ENFIN 1 groups will be responsible for this work.

A short term scientific mission will be held in Viterbo or Firenze, Italy to treat the incoming answers from countries on the definition and methodologies of the selected core variables. The aim is to map differences and to attain ways of harmonisation by conversion and bridges.

**Deadline for proposal of participants 3-4 is May 15**

**WP2005- WG3**

Task	Deadline /date
Last comments to the table questionnaire	April 22
Final version of questionnaire on line: NFI+	April 25
Filling the questionnaire	May 15
Response for interested participants to a STSM in September/October in Viterbo	May 15
Definition and methodology questionnaire for selected core variables: Belgium → deadwood Spain → Ground vegetation Sweden → lichens Austria → stand structure Denmark → regeneration France → naturalness/nativeness Italy → forest type	June 15
Compilation and sending to countries of core variable questionnaire	June 30
Deadline for country reports	September 10
Freiburg meeting: Results of the table questionnaire= report Report of the statistical subgroup Report of the forest type group Report of the core variable group	September 19-20
Short term scientific mission: Compilation of country reports and publication Hosted by Italy Viterbo Leaded by Annemarie B-B/Marco Marchetti	NEW DATES 1. 17.10.-21.10.2005 or 2. 24.10.-28.10.2005