

ENFIN COST Action E43

“Harmonisation of National Forest Inventories in Europe: Techniques for Common Reporting” Steering Committee

Minutes of the meeting
15-16 July 2004
Helsinki, Finland

Participants : Annemarie BASTRUP-BIRK (DK)
Emil CIENCIALA (CZ)
Andrius KULIESIS (LT), as an ENFIN steering group member and invited expert
Vivian KVIST-JOHANSEN (DK), as an invited expert
Adrian LANZ (CH)
Marco MARCHETTI (IT)
Risto PÄIVINEN (EFI), as an ENFIN steering group member and invited expert
Jesús SAN-MIGUEL-AYANZ (JRC), as an invited expert
Klemens SCHADAUER (A), chair in ENFIN items
Göran STÅHL (S)
Erkki TOMPPO (FIN), chair in ENFIN Cost Action E43 items
Claude VIDAL (F), meeting secretary

In introduction, the Director General of METLA stressed on the importance of the Cost Action in question and the harmonisation and integration of European forest inventories. He also explained the strategy and the main research domain of METLA.

Status of COST Action E43

The idea of a COST action was launched in Vienna in June 2004. The prepared proposal past the acceptance process fast and successfully. Twelve countries have nominated official correspondents for the Management Committee (MC) of this COST action.

Decisions and recommendations in COST Action E43

After a first COST E43 MC meeting in Brussels on June 28th and 29th, the framework was decided and dates for the meetings for year 2004 agreed. The principle of short-term missions

for experts (senior or young scientists) was pointed out in particular to prepare proposals for pilot studies.

For Working Groups of the Action (WG), countries are asked to nominate two participants maximum by WG. A first joint meeting for the three WGs is planned to be held on September 9th - 10th, 2004, in Jutland. It is expected that the WGs will do “real work” and the results will be presented to the MC. A Steering Committee of the Cost Action (SC) will prepare the next seminar during this joint WG meeting.

The first seminar is planned to be held in Gembloux on October 21st - 22nd, instead of earlier announced October 11-12 or 14-15. Each country should present status and future prospective of its National Forest Inventory (NFI) taking into account the aims of the three WGs. Guidelines for these short presentations will be sent by the SC to MC. Maximum eight participants per country could attempt this seminar. The COST action annual meeting is planned to be held on December 2nd - 3rd probably in Italy.

In order to have a good preparation for all these events, tasks were distributed with a strict timetable. The chair of MC of the Action will send a message to the MC representatives in the week July 19-23 to stress again the importance to nominate experts to the three WGs by the end of July, and to remind the other ENFIN correspondents about the signing of MoU of the Action and to nominate the members of MC. The chair and vice-chair of MC will prepare a document explaining the way of working of the first joint WG meeting by the end of July 2004. Each WG leader and deputy leader will provide a document presenting the expected work plan for the next four years and explaining the main points to discuss in line with the MoU and on which the future questionnaire will be built. After the checks by SC, these four papers will be sent to the participants of the seminar, normally by the middle of August. The WGs will agree the concepts, definitions and the way of presenting the future questionnaire concerning their topics together with chair and vice-chair of MC. Afterwards the steering committee will be in charge of finalisation of the questionnaire. For this, a SC meeting could be necessary near the end of September. If so, France proposed to host such a meeting. During October seminar, this questionnaire should be presented and answers requested by middle of December in order to compile and discuss results in the next WGs meeting, probably in spring 2005.

The COST homepage and website will be hosted by METLA. Training courses will be promoted and the chair will check what kinds of costs are eligible through the COST budget. A first training course might be organised by CZ with a title of “*up-to-date technology for ground base survey*”, normally early March 2005. Italy proposed a course “*Forest type reconnaissance in the Alps*”, perhaps in June 2005 and Denmark a course on sampling design and data analysis in 2005.

Concerning a biodiversity project, 10 to 15 countries will provide data to the project leading by Göran Ståhl by the mid of August to fulfil a small part of the EEA annual report.

Jesús SAN-MIGUEL-AYANZ presented the status of Forest Focus as well as project and funding possibilities. The objectives of the current Forest Focus scheme are to continue and further develop the work performed under the former EU regulation in collaboration with the ICP-Forests. Forest Focus is also covering forest fires and forest fire prevention. The purpose of Forest Focus is also to develop future monitoring tools for European forests. The co-operation with the ICP-Forests will continue but new issues of political relevance are emerging (biodiversity, climate change, carbon sequestration and soil questions). They will be tackled by means of studies. Countries could propose to JRC monitoring studies having an European dimension. These studies should complete the MS proposals through Forest Focus. JRC will co-ordinate, monitor and develop the Forest Focus scheme, set up a database and will provide access to data and ensure the scientific evaluation of collected data.