

Ad hoc Expert Group on Meteorology and Phenology

Workshop on Phenological Observations on Intensive Monitoring Plots

"Phenology - Level II" , Prague, Czech Republic, 11-13 February 1999

Minutes

1. The Workshop "Phenology - Level II" was held from 11 to 13 February 1999 in Jiloviste - Strnady, near Prague in the Czech Republic, and hosted by the "Forestry and Game Management Research Institute" (VULHM) . It was attended by 18 experts from 11 European countries (Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and United Kingdom), including representatives of European Commission, FIMCI, the Lead Country of ICP Forests/PCC and the expert panel on Crown Condition Assessment (see list of participants, annex 1).
2. Mr. Preuhsler (chairman) welcomed the expert group and proposed Mr. Beuker as co-chairman for the workshop as well as some actual additions to the agenda. These proposals and the agenda were adopted (see annex 2).
3. The 14th Task Force meeting (Segovia, 23 May to 27 May 1998) mandated the expert group to assess an one year test phase phenology at Level II plots on basis of the proposed submanual and to report to the Task Force at its fifteens meeting on the experience gained and taking also into account the financial impact.
4. The representatives of ICP Forests/PCC (Mr. Fischer), European Commission (Mr. Herkendell) and FIMCI (Mr. Vel) informed in respect of Phenology and Meteorology about the results of the questionnaire, circulated in November/December 1998 for the Internal Evaluation of ICP - Forests. It was pointed out, that at present 66% of the countries regard phenology on level II plots as important, whereas 33% give less or no importance; by the other hand the demand for phenological observations may increase with respect of global change and biodiversity issues. After discussion of possible contributions of Meteo/Phenology -Monitoring for further tasks and needs on the issue "forest and climate change" it was agreed that very soon proposals in this field of monitoring can be necessary and the expert group should be prepared for it.
5. The representatives of Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and United Kingdom reported about their experience with phenological observations on level II plots in the test phase of 1998. The presented papers are included in annex 3.
6. Conclusions of the in depth discussions to the reports were:

- The existing Proposal for Sub-Manual and Technical Instruction for Phenological Observations on Level II plots may be reformulated with concentrating all details of observation, recording, evaluation and submission in the technical annex.
 - It is useful to continue with the proposal for mandatory observations at plot level and optional observations at an individual tree level.
 - The proposed mandatory recording of biotic and abiotic (damaging) events at plot level can be easily made by the technical staff working on Level II plots without incurring additional time penalties. It should include simple phenological observations of occurrence of flushing, colour change and leaf/needle fall.
- In general special in depth training will not be required.

-The proposed optional phenological monitoring at individual tree level needs well trained staff. The phenological phases to be monitored are reduced on flushing, flowering, colouring and leaf fall by reason of low expense.

- Additional monitoring techniques like litterfall sampling, girth bands and pollen information can provide quantitative data, also under timing aspects.

7. The results of the discussion were included in a new version of the Proposal for Sub-Manual and Technical Instruction for Phenological Observations on Level II plots (see Annex 3) and of the proposed forms for recording and submitting (see Annex 4)
8. All National Focal Centres are invited to comment on the draft sub-manual before 30.04.1999 to Mr. Preuhsler, chairman of the ad hoc expert group (address see annex 1).
9. The meeting agreed on the following steps:
 - Comments from the participants on the draft minutes and the draft sub-manual^{*)} on phenological observations distributed by e-mail at beginning of March to be sent to the chairman (Mr. Preuhsler, Freising, Germany) by mail, fax or e-mail by 19 March 1999.
 - Amendment to draft minutes and draft proposal for the sub-manual will be made by the chairman and revised version will be circulated to the participants, all NFC's, the European Commission and ICP Forests. end of March 1999.
9. The participants warmly thanked Mr. Petr Zahradnik, Director, and Mr. Bohumir Lomsky, Vice-Director of the "Forestry and Game Management Research Institute", and their team - namely Mrs. Ludmila Bohacova and Mr. Vit Sramek for the organization and technical arrangements and the kind hosting of this meeting, and Mr. Pavel Benes for accompanying the participants with the car.

^{*)} *not completed yet (05.03.99)*