



EUFORGEN

EUROPEAN FOREST GENETIC
RESOURCES PROGRAMME

EUFORGEN STEERING COMMITTEE: REPORT OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING

8-9 NOVEMBER 2022, ONLINE MEETING



17th Meeting of the EUFORGEN Steering Committee 8-9 November 2022, virtual meeting

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1. Introduction and approval of the agenda (Michele Bozzano, EFI)

M. Bozzano opened the virtual meeting and welcomed the participants to the 17th Steering Committee meeting. A total of 37 participants joined the meeting online. The meeting was attended by 25 National Coordinators from Phase VI member countries, five observers from relevant European initiatives, organisations or alternative representatives, and six members of the EUFORGEN Secretariat. The National Coordinators and the Secretariat presented themselves.

M. Bozzano introduced the agenda (Annex 1) for the meeting on 8 and 9 December and the agenda was approved, Tor Myking and David White were nominated Rapporteurs of the meeting.

2. Draft Annual report of 2022 (M. Bozzano, EFI)

M. Bozzano briefly presented the draft 2022 annual report. The report will be finalised in due time, in 2023, after the closure of the accounts. The draft report can be used by the national representatives for the internal reporting, if needed. M. Bozzano informed that Portugal joined Phase VI.

M. Bozzano reported about the deliverables for Phase VI and their status. He gave background information on the establishment of the Discussion Platforms (DP).

During the previous Phase V, a report was produced on “genetic aspects linked to production and use of forest reproductive materials (FRM)”¹. This long and detailed publication now needs to be tailored for optimum dissemination to policy makers and practitioners. Two dissemination pathways are currently being prepared in parallel. A policy brief was prepared and shared with the SC for feedback, and a plan was proposed for the production of a series of publications on six themes, including animated videos. A first set of products will be presented at the next SC meeting.

In 2022 the SC has released an open letter² on the role for the EUFORGEN Programme in the framework of the new EU Forest Strategy for 2030, which was submitted to the relevant offices of the EC regarding. This open letter was prepared by a task force and approved by the SC. Another task force prepared a position paper (also revised by the SC) on the revision of the Plant and Forest Reproductive Material legislation³. The paper was submitted directly to the service of the European Commission responsible for the revision (DG SANTE). As per information received from EC, the new Plant and Forest Reproductive Material legislation will keep forest reproductive material separated from the rest. The Process has been delayed and is expected to be finalised in early 2023. A representative of the EC will be invited to the next SC meeting to report on the process.

On 28 April 2022 the EU Council Working Party on Forestry discussed the need for long-term support⁴ for the EUFORGEN programme. Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Spain and The Netherlands supported the initiative and asked the Commission to analyse the possibility for the EU to become a funding member of the Programme.

¹ <https://www.euforgen.org/publications/publication/genetic-aspects-linked-to-production-and-use-of-forest-reproductive-material-frm/>

² <https://www.euforgen.org/openletterEUF2030>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13083-Plant-and-forest-reproductive-material-revised-rules-/feedback_en?p_id=25832044&page=6

⁴ The implementation plan of the FGR Strategy identifies the actions to address all the key commitments to improve the conservation and sustainable use of European forest genetic resources. Within this strategy, Countries individually and through the EUFORGEN programme have identified 28 key commitments and make this recommendation: “The European Commission is urged to provide direct funding to the EUFORGEN Programme in order to strengthen its capacity and ensure the participation of all European countries”.

Similarly the EU Working Party on Genetic Resources discussed on 20 June 2022 the overarching strategy on genetic resources for Europe⁵ and among the elements that were presented was also the importance of having a permanent contribution for the networking programmes.

In case any similar discussions will be on the agendas again, then the Secretariat will inform the SC in so that the National Coordinators (NC) can inform their respective Delegations.

The EUFORGEN Secretariat, in collaboration with the FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit Bonn and its FoRISK mechanism organized a webinar titled “Manage to Conserve - Forest Genetic Resource conservation as part of Sustainable Forest Management”.

The event, in addition to raising the awareness on the importance of FGR as integral part of SFM, had two main objectives:

1. Kicking off the work of the Discussion Platform on adaptation of GCU to Climate Change (Its final recommendations will be presented to the Forest Europe Process in 2024) and
2. Raising the awareness on the risk of losing genetic resources when preventing any kind of management of old growth forests.

Following the general presentation on EUFORGEN and the FGR Strategy (by the Secretariat), a Panel discussed the subject. The panel was composed by Mari Rusanen NC for Finland and Felipe Pérez Martín – NC for Spain, Marjana Westergren – IUFRO Div. II, Brigitte Musch, National Forest Organisation and Peter Loeffler of DG CLIMA EC.

The recording of the webinar is available online⁶ and an article will be published in the next issue of the EUFORGEN newsletter.

3. Update on the implementation of Phase VI activities (A.M. Farsakoglou, EFI)

A.M. Farsakoglou presented the implementation plan of EUFORGEN Phase VI. (Annex 4) and gave an update on the activities that were achieved, ongoing, planned and pending. Some of the pending issues are:

- Under objective 2: “Coordinate conservation of forest genetic resources in Europe - Implement the pan-European conservation strategy”,
 - the development of the Minimum Requirements for static and dynamic *ex situ* conservation, is pending. and will be finalized by end 2024.
- Under objective 3: “Promote the appropriate use of forest genetic resources”,
 - The Working Group on strategies for the adaptation of GCUs to climate change will be established
 - the activities regarding the dissemination of the FRM report are being finalised.
 - The support to the implementation of pan-European genetic monitoring scheme is pending.

⁵ www.genresbridge.eu/GRs4e

⁶ <https://youtu.be/vaNcdxBwZW0>

The Secretariat will prepare a document with the key decisions taken immediately after the meeting and draft minutes will be circulated at a later point.

4. Report on Discussion Platform “Adaptation of the Genetic Conservation Units to climate change” (A.M. Farsakoglou, EFI)

The meeting of the DP on “Adaptation of the GCUs to climate change” took place at the end of October 2022 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 19 participants from 19 different countries attended. The draft report on the outcomes was sent to the Steering Committee shortly before the meeting and A.M. Farsakoglou reported on the outcomes.

The SC will receive the report of the meeting, which included the list of possible outputs to be elaborated, once the feedback of the DP will be finalised.

Decision

The consolidated report of the outcomes of the Discussion Platform on adaptation of GCU to climate change will be submitted to the Steering Committee with a prioritised list of relevant topics that can be addressed during Phase VI. The SC will be invited to give inputs and through a consultation, will agree on the formation of one or more WGs to work on the identified topic(s).

5. Plan for Discussion Platform on “GCU Network management in case of biotic outbreaks: the case study of ash dieback” (M. Bozzano, EFI)

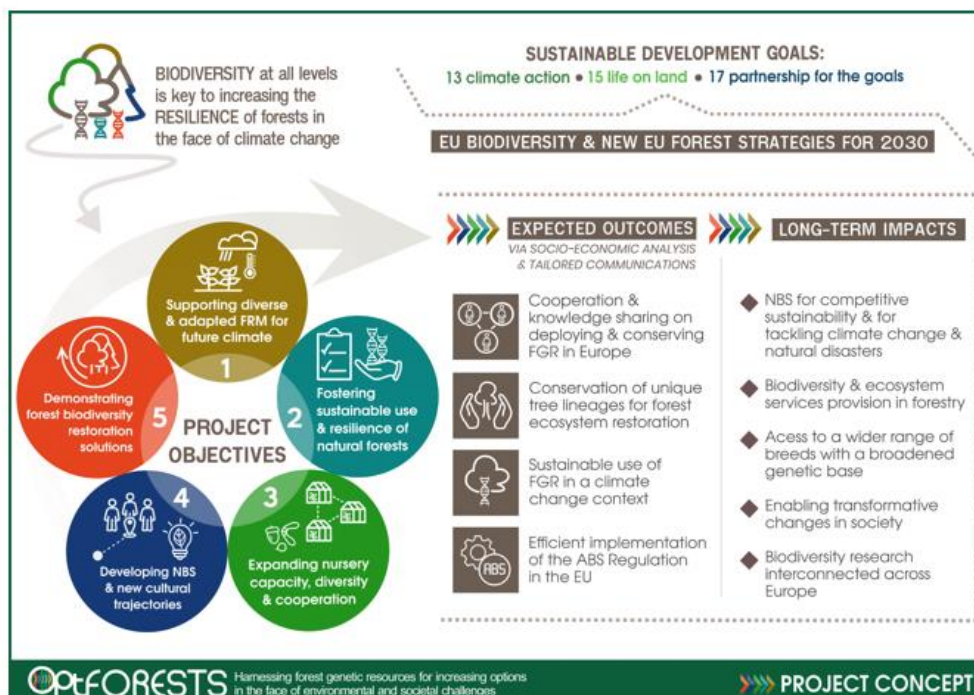
The meeting of the Discussion Platform on “GCU Network management in case of biotic outbreaks: the case study of ash dieback” will take place 21-23 February 2023 in Ahrensburg, Germany. A Task Force composed by Bernd Degen (Germany), Joukje Buiteveld (The Netherlands), László Nagy (Hungary), Rita Verbylaite (Lithuania) and Marjana Westergren (Slovenia) defined the topic, the title, the agenda, and the selected speakers for this DP. All EUFGIS National Focal Points will be invited to the event. A series of 3 preparatory webinars will be given a month before the meeting and will be open to larger audience.

M. Bozzano informed that no deliverable was foreseen for this Discussion Platform. Based on the outcomes of the Discussion Platform the SC will decide if nominating a Working Group to prepare an output. The DP will meet in February 2023 and the report of the meeting will be prepared as background document for the next SC meeting.

6. Horizon Europe Project Presentation - “OptFORESTS” (S. Gonzalez-Martinez)

Santiago C. González-Martínez of INRAE, France (Coordinator) gave a presentation on the Horizon Europe OptFORESTS project “Harnessing forest genetic resources for increasing options in the face of environmental and societal challenges”. The project is financed by the European Union under Horizon Europe GA number HORIZON-CL6-2022-BIODIV-01-07, will have a duration of five years and the consortium consists of 19 partners.

The five project objectives, the main expected outcomes and long-term impacts were presented (see slide below).

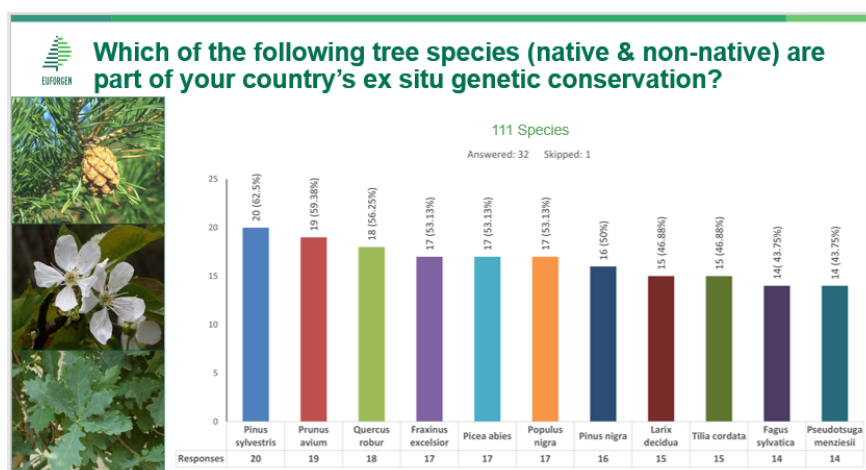


Relevant for the EUFORGEN community, in addition to the overall effort in deploying the value of FGR, the project will make the linking between FOREMATIS and EUFGIS Information systems direct and dynamic.

Discussion

7. Survey results on *ex situ* minimum requirements (Edoardo Esposito, EFI)

E. Esposito presented the survey “Outcomes of the online survey on *ex situ* Forest Genetic Resources conservation data status in Europe” on *ex situ* conservation in Europe that was carried out during the first half of 2021. The survey outcomes will be one of the starting points for a Working Group that will be established and operate in 2023-24.



Top ten of the *ex situ* genetic conservation tree species

M. Rusanen suggested broadening the mandate of the Working Group so to address dynamic and static *ex situ* conservation and the linkages with *in situ*.

A Task Force was established to define the mandate for the working group that will develop the minimum requirements for static and dynamic *ex situ* conservation. Task Force will be composed of **M. Rusanen (Finland)**, **F. Lefevre (France)**, **F. Pérez Martín (Spain)** and **A. Rudow (Switzerland)**.

8. *Ex situ* conservation experiences of the National Coordinators

The NCs presented issues in their countries closely related to *ex situ*, giving some good examples and/or difficulties they encountered. The approach was greatly appreciated and found very instructive by the National Coordinators and was decided to make similar initiatives publicly available in the future.

9. Data-Sharing Agreement (DSA) (J. Brolén and M. Bozzano, EFI)

M. Bozzano introduced Jerker Brolén, Legal Counsel at EFI and gave some background information on the progress of the Data-Sharing Agreement.

To date, data have been transferred from the National Focal Points to EFI without any formal agreement regulating such transfers and allowing EFI to freely share the data. To address this gap in regulation, EFI has been limiting the general public's access to this data. In order to provide a comprehensive service, allowing access to all data (unless limited by privacy restrictions) EFI, in consultation with the EUFORGEN National Coordinators, has developed a Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) concerning the transfer of data to EUFGIS and the management and use of that data once transferred.

The Data-Sharing Agreement is necessary to regulate access to the data in EUFGIS and to share the data externally and linking it to other information systems.

The National Coordinators provided feedback on the draft Data-Sharing Agreement and asked for amendments to articles 3, 9 and 12. EFI will integrate the received feedback into the draft and send the new version to the Steering Committee. In case there are still modifications needed, then an updated version will be sent to all the countries but otherwise, if the final version will be approved by the SC, EFI will formally send the DSA to all countries for signature.

Felipe Perez Martin and Maurizio Sabatti informed that, considering the purpose of the data collected and stored in EUFGIS and the use that EFI will make of these data, a Data Sharing Agreement is not needed to regulate the transfer between Spain and Italy and EFI. Both national views are that EFI hosting the EUFGIS information system, can openly share the data and make them available for monitoring the conservation of FGR in the country and in Europe, without needing a formal agreement to be signed from the national side. The SC agreed that for those countries that do not intend to sign the DSA, EFI will prepare a draft letter listing the elements needed from EFI. In this way it will not prevent these countries to access the data in the EUFGIS information system.

The updated version of the DSA will be shared with the SC by 15 December 2022, the National Coordinators will be given a month to provide feedback.

Decisions

- EFI will prepare the revised wording by 15 of December 2022.
- More reiteration will be possible, in case additional amendments will be asked
- For those countries that do not intend to sign the DSA, EFI will prepare a draft letter listing the elements needed from EFI

11. Situation in Ukraine (M. Bozzano, EFI)

M. Bozzano introduced the agenda point, suggested by the Advisory Committee, to reflect on the situation in Ukraine and to see if anything can be done as a Steering Committee, either a position or to help a country in difficulty.

After discussion, the Steering Committee decided to proceed on three different levels of action:

1. Declare publicly the support of the EUFORGEN community to Ukraine by preparing an open letter to be published on the website and send to relevant contacts. The SC nominated a task force composed by T. Maaten (Estonia), T. Myking (Norway) and H. Kraigher (Slovenia) to draft the open letter. Progressive drafts will be sent to the SC for feedback and final approval and **full consensus** will be needed.
2. Invite Ukraine to join EUFORGEN, waiving any kind of financial contribution for the current and next Phase.
3. Commit to identify relevant actions, once the landscape will be accessible again, to support the activities related to the conservation and sustainable use of FGR in the Country.

Decisions

- The SC decided to invite Ukrainian Forest Europe representative to nominate the EUFORGEN National Coordinator and to waive the fees for current and next Phase of EUFORGEN.
- A task force (TF) (**T. Myking – H. Kraigher and T. Maaten**) will draft an open letter to express the SC position and support to affected actors. The SC will provide input to the letter, which will be released once and if full consensus will be reached,

12. Proposal for the State of the Europe's FGR report (M. Bozzano, EFI)

M. Bozzano presented a proposal (as requested by the Steering Committee at its 15th meeting) for a roadmap for the preparation of the State of Europe's Forest Genetic Resources report (see Annex 3).

M. Bozzano presented the proposal indicating the possible sources of data, the coverage of existing reports, the expected contributions by countries, the resources required and the possible timeline.

The SC decided not to go ahead with the preparation of a report since it will be a major effort. At a later stage the Steering Committee will decide if developing an online system, to present the state of Europe's FGR in an interactive and continuously up-to-date way.

Decision

The SC decided not to proceed with the preparation of the State of Europe's Forest Genetic Resources Report. At a future SC meeting the NCs will consider the need and modalities (including dynamic interactive ways) to develop and make available the information on the State of the Europe's FGR.

13. Communication activities (Sarah Adams, EFI)

S. Adams gave an update on the communication and dissemination activities. She informed about the current staffing situation in the communications team of the EUFORGEN Secretariat.

The communications Team is composed by S. Adams (Communications Manager), Gerard Fernandez (Communications Officer), Carola Chiusi (Communications Trainee) and there is an open position for a Communications Officer (recruitment process ongoing).

During the first quarter 2023, the updated EUFORGEN's communication strategy will be prepared and circulated to the Steering Committee and presented in May 2023 to the SC.

The EUFORGEN website will be reviewed and updated in 2023 and an example of the species pages based on expert's contributions will be proposed.

The Call for contributions for the next EUFORGEN Newsletter was launched and the Newsletter will be finalized and published by the end of 2022.

S. Adams presented the dissemination activities that are in process for the report "Genetic aspects linked to production and use of forest reproductive material (FRM)"⁷. These will include material for practitioners and a policy brief.

The dissemination products targeted towards practitioners (ie forest managers, nursery managers, seed collectors, etc) will be composed of six main themes, each presented through a packages. Each package will contain 1 (short) video leading into the theme + 1 text with the main content + 1 poster / infographic.

S. Adams presented the process for the production of all the materials. The first on "Seed harvesting, treatment, storage, and nursery practice" is currently in the process of finalization.

The first package will be presented at the next Steering Committee meeting and the whole material drafted during 2023.

Based on the same Report, the Secretariat prepared a Policy Brief "Ensuring forest resilience and productivity in Europe's changing climate - Urgent call for improved policy and practice in the production and use of forest reproductive material". The Steering Committee will be able to provide feedback on the file until 10 December 2022.

The Steering Committee decided to establish six different small working groups, to each revise one of the six themes. The National Coordinators will have the possibility to revise the list of nominated experts and to nominate a new one, if necessary. The selected experts will be asked to verify that the original messages of the report have retained their meaning in the tailored version. Subsequently, the content should be validated by stakeholder representatives to ensure it is understandable and accessible for the target audience.

Decisions

Dissemination materials for practitioners the SC decided to nominate six small Working Groups to review the prepared drafts. Once completed, each theme package will be presented to relevant stakeholder representative(s) for validation, before it is finalised.

Dissemination material for policy makers: the SC will comment to the circulated draft until 10 December 2022. A consolidated version will be submitted to the SC for validation in early 2023.

14. Phase VI 2023-2024 Workplan preparation (M. Bozzano, EFI)

The Steering Committee went through the Phase VI workplan by objectives, took note of the progress and made recommendations for its implementation. In particular:

⁷ <https://www.euforgen.org/publications/publication/genetic-aspects-linked-to-production-and-use-of-forest-reproductive-material-frm/>

Under strategic objective 1 “Facilitate knowledge sharing and communication with key stakeholders”

- “Identify country experts with knowledge on specific tree species and topics”: a model species will be identified, and a page developed as an example to be commented, before the experts will be asked to volunteer to contribute.
- “Get coverage of the topic of FGR in international media by strengthening media partnerships and developing products of interest to media”: the dissemination materials of the FRM report will be used for this purpose.

Under strategic objective 2: “Coordinate conservation of forest genetic resources in Europe

- Regarding the Working Group developing Minimum Requirements for static and dynamic *ex situ* conservation, the Steering Committee nominated a Task Force to draft the Terms of Reference and the mandate for the Working Group.

Under strategic objective 3: “to promote appropriate use of forest genetic resources”.

- Regarding the Working Group on a strategy to adaptation to climate change, it was convened that this Working Group would be established as soon as the Steering Committee defines the mandate (based on the outcomes of the Discussion Platform).
- Regarding the “Linking of EUFGIS with FOREMATIS”, the SC was informed that the semantic linking of the two information systems will be done through the OPTFORESTS project.
- The Discussion Platform: “The case study of ash dieback” was not in the original workplan but the community perceived it to be an important element. The outcome of this DP will be presented to the SC at the next meeting in order to take decisions on the next steps.

Phase VII planning:

- The next phase is expected to start in 2025. The SC will define the principle under which EUFORGEN will operate in the next Phase and evaluate possible improvement in its *modus operandi* during the next Steering Committee meeting, planned for the end of May 2023.

Decisions

Species experts for species pages on the website: The Secretariat, supported by selected national representatives (to be identified), will prepare an example of one species page for the website, which will be used as a model for the other species and to present the expected product to the nominated national experts that will contribute.

Recommendation for a Forest Europe Resolution. At the next meeting, the SC will discuss if there is the need for a resolution from FOREST EUROPE regarding the movement of the material between countries for conservation purposes.

Discussion Platform on ash dieback: The Secretariat will make the report available a month before the next SC meeting describing the possible follow-ups so that the SC can decide on the next steps. A Working Group could then start and complete its work by 2024.

Phase VI planning: As background material for next SC, the Secretariat will prepare a report summarizing all the activities achieved, the ongoing activities in the projects (FORGENIUS and OptFORESTS) and what remained unaddressed by this phase of EUFORGEN.

15. Any other business

The next, eighteenth meeting of the Steering Committee will take place on 8-11 May 2023 in Barcelona.

Closure of the meeting

M. Bozzano closed the meeting and thanked the participants for joining.

Annex 1 – List of Participants



17th meeting of the EUFORGEN Steering Committee 8-9 November 2022, virtual meeting List of participants

EUFORGEN National Coordinators

Heino Konrad
Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests,
Natural Hazards and Landscape
Austria

Alain Servais
Public Service of Wallonia
Belgium

Mladen Ivankovic
Croatian Forest Research Institute
Croatia

Josef Frýdl
Forestry and Game Management Research Institute
(FGMRI)
Czech Republic

Ditte Christina Olrik
Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark,
Nature Agency
Denmark

Tiit Maaten
Institute of Forestry and Rural Engineering
Estonian University of Life Sciences
Estonia

Mari Rusanen
Natural Resources Institute Finland (LUKE)
Finland

François Lefèvre
INRAE - Ecologie des Forêts Méditerranéennes
France

Bernd Degen
Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute
Germany

László Nagy
Forest Research Institute, University of Sopron
Hungary

Adalsteinn Sigurgeirsson
Icelandic Forest Service
Iceland

Brian Clifford
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
(DAFM)
Ireland

Maurizio Sabatti
University of Tuscia
Innovation in biological systems, food and forestry
(DIBAF)
Italy

Frank Wolter
Administration de la nature et des forêts
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Joukje Buiteveld
Centre for Genetic Resources Netherlands
Netherlands

Tor Myking
Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research
Norway

Marcin Beza
The Kostrzyca Forest Gene Bank
Poland

Isabel Carrasquinho
Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e
Veterinária (INIAV)
Portugal

Mirjana Šijačić-Nikolić
Faculty of Forestry, Belgrade
Serbia

Roman Longauer
National Forest Centre
Slovakia

Hojka Kraigher
Slovenian Forestry Institute
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Felipe Pérez Martín
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Sanna Black-Samuelsson
Swedish Forest Agency
Sweden

Andreas Rudow
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH)
Institute of Terrestrial Ecosystems
Switzerland

David White
Forestry Commission
United Kingdom

Observers

Jerker Brolén
Legal Counsel
European Forest Institute (EFI)

Carola Chiusi
Communications Trainee
European Forest Institute (EFI)

Bart De Cuyper
Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO)
Belgium

Santiago C. González-Martínez
Coordinator OptForest
INRAE
France

Robert Mavsar
Deputy Director
European Forest Institute (EFI)

Marjana Westergren
Slovenian Forestry Institute
Slovenia

EUFORGEN Secretariat

European Forest Institute (EFI), Barcelona Office
Sarah Adams
Michele Bozzano
Edoardo Esposito
Anna-Maria Farsakoglou
Gerard Fernandez
Lidwina Koop

Unable to attend

Darius Kavaliauskas
Vytautas Magnus University Agriculture Academy -
Lithuanian Forest Research Institute
Lithuania

Maria Masini
Representing Darrin T. Stevens
Environment and Resources Authority
Malta

Annex 2 – Agenda

Tuesday 8 November

Time	Session	Purpose Outcome	Background documents	Participants
9.30	<i>Moderator: Michele</i> Connection with persons attending online	The virtual space is open to allow the meeting participants to informally gather and get ready for the meeting		NC remote
9.35	Opening of the meeting Introduction and approval of the agenda (<i>Michele Bozzano</i>)	For discussion and decision The agenda is approved	Draft Agenda of the meeting	NC remote
9:40	Round the table introduction		List of participants	NC remote
10:00	<i>Moderator: Sarah</i> Draft Annual Report of 2022 (<i>M. Bozzano</i>)	For information	Draft Annual Report 2022	NC remote
10:30	Update on the Implementation of Phase VI activities (<i>Anna-Maria Farsakoglou</i>)	For information SC is updated on achieved, ongoing and planned activities	EUFORGEN's Implementation Plan for Phase VI Roadmaps for deliverables	NC remote
11:00	Coffee break			
11:15	<i>Moderator: Sarah</i> Report on Discussion Platform on "Adaptation of the Genetic Conservation Units to climate change" (<i>AM Farsakoglou</i>)	For information The SC is updated on the discussion and outcomes of the DP		NC remote
11:30	Working Group Mandate " Adaptation of the Genetic Conservation Units to climate change " (<i>M. Bozzano</i>)	For discussion and decision The SC defines the expected output of the WG and the modalities to nominate it		NC remote
12:00	Plan for Discussion Platform on "GCU Network management in case of biotic outbreaks: the case study of ash dieback" (<i>M. Bozzano</i>)	For information The SC is updated on the plan the DP		NC remote
12:15	Lunch break			

13:30	Session	Purpose Outcome	Background documents	Participants
	<i>Moderator: Sarah</i> Horizon Europe Project Presentation “OptFORESTS – Harnessing forest genetic resources for increasing options in the face of environmental and societal challenges” (Santiago González-Martínez – Project Coordinator)	<i>For information</i> The SC is informed on the new H-Europe project		NC remote
14:00	Survey results on <i>ex situ</i> minimum requirements <i>(Edoardo Esposito)</i>	<i>For information</i> The SC is updated on the outcomes of the survey		NC Remote
14:15	<i>Moderator: Michele</i> <i>Ex situ</i> conservation experiences of the National Coordinators and synthesis	<i>For information and discussion</i> <i>The national coordinator of each country will be asked to share one of these in 2 minutes maximum:</i> <i>(a) An action in your country that is a success story for ex situ conservation</i> <i>or</i> <i>(b) A difficulty in your country on ex situ conservation</i>		NC Remote
15:30	Closing of the day			

Wednesday 9 November

Time	Session	Purpose Outcome	Background documents	Participants
9:30	<i>Moderator: Michele</i> Data-Sharing Agreement (DSA) between EFI and European Countries concerning the transfer of data to EUFGIS , and the management and use of that data once transferred. (<i>Jerker Brolén and M. Bozzano</i>)	For information and discussion The SC is updated on the process for the development of the DSA and how to give input to the draft. The roadmap for the DSA finalisation is updated	Draft DSA	NC Remote + Jerker Brolén, EFI
10:30	Situation in Ukraine and suggestions for support (<i>M. Bozzano</i>)	For discussion The SC discusses the opportunity and the possibilities to support the Ukrainian FGR community		NC remote
11:00	Coffee Break			
11:15	<i>Moderator: Anna Maria</i> Proposal for the State of the European FGR report (<i>M. Bozzano</i>)	For discussion and decision The SC discusses the possibility to prepare the State of the European FGR report and decides on the next steps	Proposal for the "State of Europe's FGR report"	NC remote
11:45	Communication activities (<i>Sarah Adams</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General update on communication activities • Dissemination activities of the Report "Genetic aspects linked to production and use of forest reproductive material (FRM)" • Policy brief 	For discussion and decision The SC is informed on communication activities The SC discusses the draft dissemination products and defines the modalities to nominate a WG	Draft of policy brief Draft dissemination material targeting practitioners (i) overview and (ii) example on Theme 5	NC remote
12:30	Lunch break			
13:45	<i>Moderator: Michele</i> Phase VI 2023-2024 Workplan preparation (<i>AM Farsakoglou</i>)	For discussion and decision The SC goes through the Phase VI workplan and decides on how to implement it		NC remote
15:45	AOB			NC remote
16:30	Close of the meeting			

Legend:

SC: Steering Committee

DP: Discussion Platform

WG: Working Group

NC Remote: National Coordinator attending the meeting from remote

Annex 3 – Proposal for the preparation of the State of Europe’s Forest Genetic Resources (SoE-FGR)



European Forest Genetic Resources
programme (EUFORGEN)

Proposal for the preparation of the State of
Europe’s Forest Genetic Resources (SoE-
FGR)

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1. Background

The Forest Genetic Resources Strategy for Europe recommends the development of the “State of the Europe’s Forest Genetic Resources Report”, arguing that information on forest genetic resources (FGR) should permit relevant stakeholders to assess the importance of those FGR in the pan-European context, help identify gaps and overlaps in conservation, and offer insights into potential for use. At the EU and European level, data on FGR conservation should support the interlinked goals of the Green Deal (i.e., the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the New EU Forest Strategy 2030, etc.), and the Forest Europe process to address threats to FGR and the conservation and use of FGR.

There is a need of building knowledge of the impact of environmental changes and management actions on FGR. Effective monitoring should be based on consistent documentation of standardised information and management practices over time. In conjunction with the advancement of tools and technologies, the availability of time series data will improve our understanding of FGR and Conservation Genetic Units (GCU) management.

In 2013, FAO released the first report on the *State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources (SoW-FGR)*. In June 2019, countries were already invited to submit national reports for a second global assessment on Forest Genetic Resources. These outputs constitute a major step in building the information and knowledge base required for action towards better conservation and sustainable management of FGR. However, the status was assessed from a global perspective, and, in both circumstances, many European countries did not provide any data.

The "*State of the Europe's Forest Genetic Resources Report*" (SoE-FGR) will be fundamental to cover knowledge gaps in Europe, and it will serve as a consistent documentation on the conservation and sustainable use of FGR, collecting and synthesising information that is already available in existing reports or that will be retrieved from additional data sources.

2. Introduction

The SoE-FGR will provide a detailed snapshot of the status of knowledge on Europe's Forest Genetic resources and how they are conserved and managed.

The content and the structure of the report will be in accordance with the guidelines provided by the EUFORGEN Secretariat. Specifically, standardized forms will be used to gather similar information from different countries. This will facilitate data comparison and analysis.

The SoE-FGR will be composed of:

- 1) A series of thematic papers
- 2) Country factsheets
- 3) Species Factsheets

Information as compact factsheets for each country and/or indicator, will provide a useful aid for national stakeholders to tackle the main constraints and to assess the progress needed to date to reach Pan-European targets and goals related to the conservation and sustainable use of FGR.

3. Source of Data/information

- Country reports submitted for the FAO Second State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources (to be submitted by countries directly to the Secretariat)

European countries reporting for The **Second** State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources:

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| 1. Bulgaria | 4. Denmark | 7. Germany | 10. Lithuania |
| 2. Croatia | 5. Finland | 8. Iceland | 11. Malta |
| 3. Czechia | 6. France | 9. Italy | |

12. Netherlands	14. Poland	17. Sweden	19. Ukraine
13. Norway	15. Portugal	18. Switzerland	
	16. Serbia		

European countries reporting for The **First** State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources:

1. Austria
2. Bulgaria
3. Cyprus
4. Denmark
5. Estonia
6. Finland
7. France
8. Germany
9. Hungary
10. Ireland
11. Netherlands
12. Norway
13. Poland
14. Russian Federation
15. Spain
16. Sweden
17. Turkey
18. Ukraine

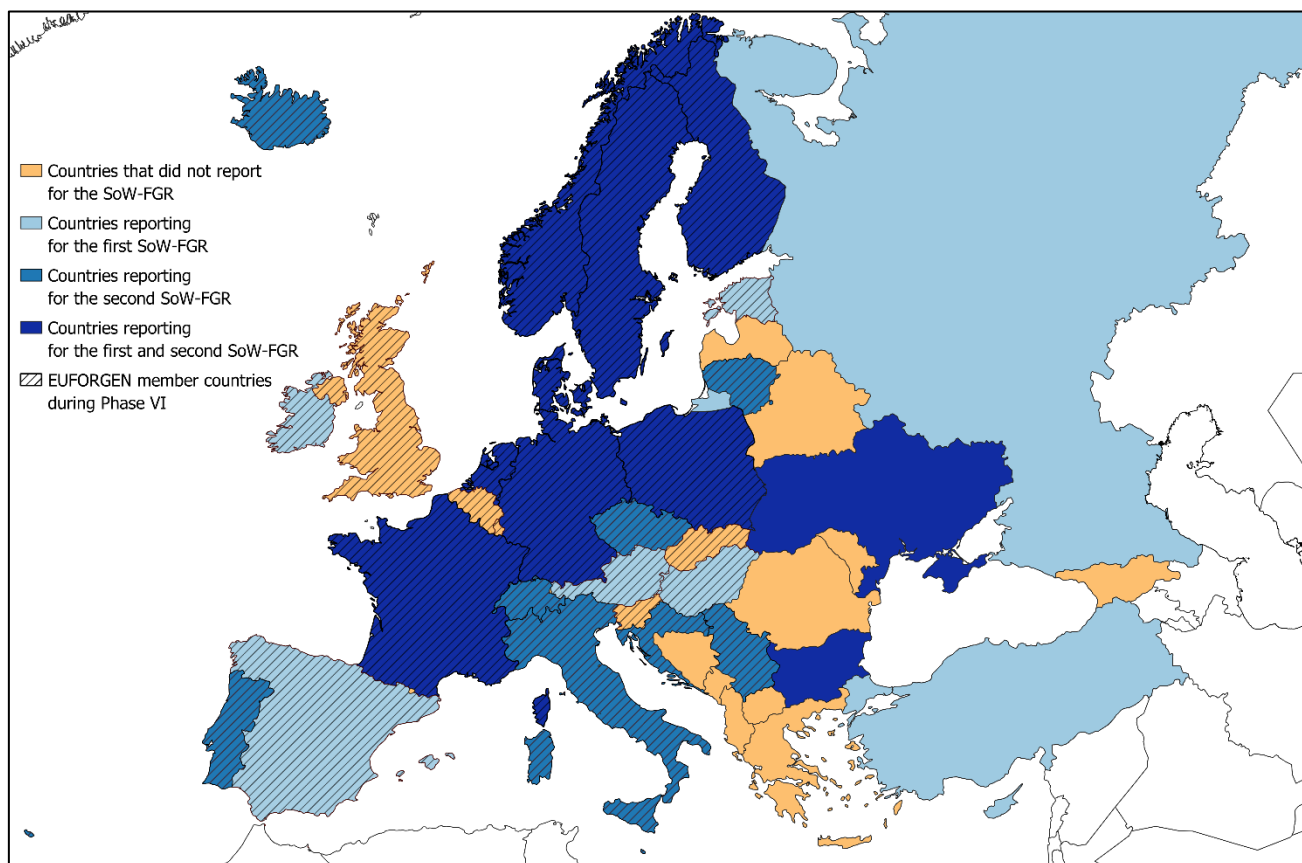


Figure 1: Within the countries that have signed the Forest Europe Resolutions (all coloured countries), the map distinguishes countries that have reported only for the first SoW-FGR, only for the second SoW-FGR, for both, and countries that did not report for none of the two.

- Data currently in EUFGIS
- Data collected through the ad-hoc Survey
- Bibliometric analysis to assess the state and the trend of FGR research in Europe

4. Contributions by country

- Countries are kindly asked to share the report submitted for The Second State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources or, if not available, a brief overview.
- Countries will fill in an ad-hoc survey.
- Countries that did not submit the report to any of the two SoW-FGR will be asked to fill in a standardised template that will be developed by the WG.
- The Secretariat, in collaboration with the countries that submitted at least one report to a previous report, will fill-in the template based on provided information.
- Countries will validate data currently available in EUFGIS to be used for the report.

5. Roadmap

Relevance of this work is mainly based on the number of countries that agree on sharing national information on FGR. Before allocating the necessary resources, It would be important to assess if countries that did not provide any data for the two reports on the “*State of World’s Forest Genetic resources*” (countries in yellow ochre in Figure 1) are willing to contribute to the SoE-FGR report. For this reason, the first step (phase I) would be to contact all countries via a survey to verify their interest in supporting such initiative by providing national information on FGR. Once the number of countries that are willing to participate is assessed, phase II can follow with the preparation of factsheets to retrieve data and with the bibliometric analysis.

PHASE I

- 1) **January/February 2023** -> first working group online meeting.
 - i. Prepare a survey to assess the willing of countries to share data on FGR (assessment would be fundamental for Countries that have never reported for the SoW-FGR).
 - ii. Further elaborate the roadmap
- 2) **February/April 2023** -> Launch of the survey (aiming to verify the results by October/November 2023)
- 3) **October/November 2023** -> Assessing results from the preliminary survey. (Based on the number of countries participating, phase II can follow)

PHASE II

- 4) **January/February 2024** -> Second working group online meeting
 - i. Define how to run bibliometric analysis
 - ii. Propose the chapters of the SoE-FGR report
 - iii. Draft template for National factsheets (that will be published as integral part of the SoE-FGR)
- 5) **May 2024**-> EUFORGEN Steering Committee will:
 - i. endorse the process.
 - ii. agree on the template of the factsheets (to be filled in by National representatives?)
 - iii. validate the proposed chapters of the report
 - iv. comment the results of the survey and agree on what will be included in the report
- 6) **June 2024 to May 2025** ->
 - i. countries to elaborate and submit the National factsheets.
 - ii. Secretariat to prepare standardised data analysis
 - iii. the *overall coordinator* will prepare the narratives for the first draft of the report.
- 7) **October/November 2025**-> Final endorsement from Steering Committee and publication

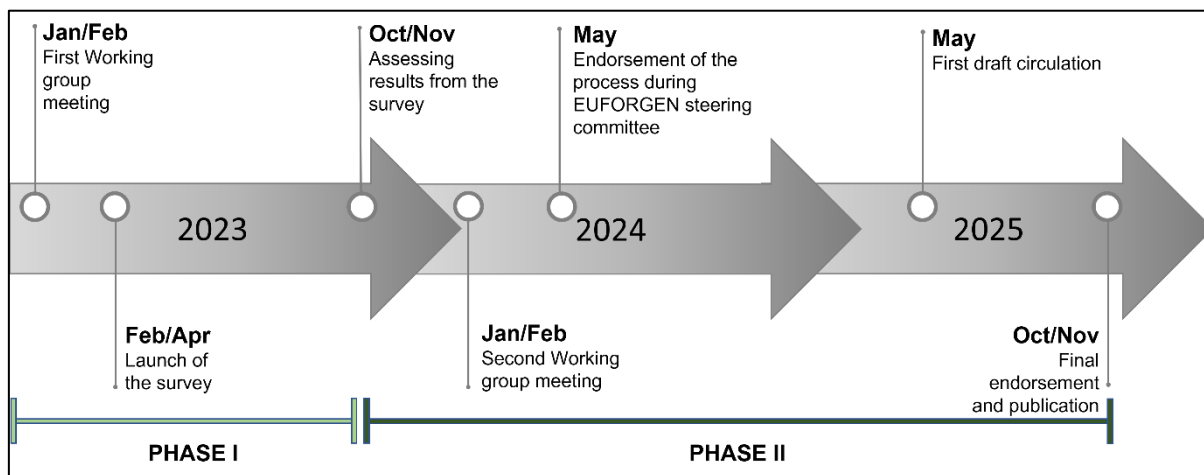


Figure 2: Roadmap for the development of the “State of the Europe’s Forest Genetic Resources” SOE-FGR

6. Resources needed

- Overall coordination: seconded senior scientist by INRAE (Bruno Fady).
- Coordination and management of the whole process; EUFORGEN Secretariat will support in conducting analyses and gathering results (resources needed for an estimated time of **3-6 months**)
- Editing as needed (resources needed for an estimated time of **0,5-2 months**)
- Layout and printing as appropriate (resources needed for an estimated time of **1 month** in addition to the costs related to the printing)
- Support the development of the SoEFGR (ad-hoc EUFORGEN WG)

7. Questions for the Steering Committee

- Is the Steering Committee willing to produce the report?
- How to motivate all countries to contribute? (It would be also important to retrieve information from countries that are not currently members of EUFORGEN network).
- How to mobilise additional resources?
- Only electronical printing?
- Year of cut-off for collecting data

Annex 4 - Progress against the Implementation Plan for Phase VI

The three tables below (one for each Strategic Objective) present the planned activities for EUFORGEN Phase VI, and the status of their implementation, as of 31 December 2022.

Strategic Objective 1: Facilitate knowledge sharing and communicate with key stakeholders

Status colour coding: **achieved**, **ongoing**, **planned**, **pending**

Operational Objective	Activities Phase VI	Responsibility ¹	Time frame	means of verification	Status as of 31 December 2022 / Date of achievement
Facilitate knowledge sharing and learning among relevant Actors (eg scientists, national competent authorities, practitioners and policymakers)	SC meetings with invited observers from non-member countries	S +NC	ongoing	agenda, list of participants and minutes of the meeting	Achieved – ongoing
	Advisory Committee meetings	S +NC	ongoing	agenda, list of participants and minutes of the meeting	Achieved – ongoing
	Support the preparation of new project proposals	S	ongoing	number of Project consortia where the Secretariat is involved in early stages	Achieved – ongoing (one project proposal preparation supported in 2021)
	Identify country experts with knowledge on specific tree species and topics	S +NCs	ongoing	Interface developed / number of species with identified reference person	Pending
	Cross border collaboration with non-European Neighbor Countries	S+NC	ongoing	list of event and initiatives	Achieved FGRS4 Europe includes actions for Neighbour countries

Operational Objective	Activities Phase VI	Responsibility ¹	Time frame	means of verification	Status as of 31 December 2022 / Date of achievement
Communicate the importance of genetic diversity and outputs of EUFORGEN to policymakers, forestry professionals and practitioners on the ground, wider scientific community and society	Communicate the programme results to stakeholders)	S + EFI comms unit	2024	list of events, presentation and leaflets released and disseminated	Achieved – ongoing
	Establish/strengthen communication channels with relevant policy makers	S + NCs	ongoing	# of high level meeting where EUFORGEN is represented. with reference to EUFORGEN in relevant policy documents	Achieved – ongoing EUFORGEN represented at X Forest Europe, X OECD, X ITWG-FGR, X CGR-FAO.
	Promotion campaigns raising awareness on the FGR conservation strategy;			number and list of leaflets and infographics, evidence of their dissemination	Ongoing
	Get coverage of the topic of FGR in international media by strengthening media partnerships and developing products of interest to media	S		list of relevant events and coverage	Pending
	Present EUFORGEN, its activities and products outside the circle of forest geneticists	S	ongoing	list of selected scientific and practical events	Achieved – ongoing Forest Europe
	Maintain or strengthen communication channels with key actors such as Forest Europe, OECD FRM,	S + AC	ongoing	list of Forest Europe, OECD FRM, FAO CGRFA, FAO ITWFGFR, IPBES, CBD and other relevant events attended by Secretariat and AC	Achieved – ongoing Forest Europe, OECD FRM, FAO CGRFA, FAO ITWFGFR, JRC, Bioversity, ECPGR, ERFP

Operational Objective	Activities Phase VI	Responsibility ¹	Time frame	means of verification	Status as of 31 December 2022 / Date of achievement
	FAO CGRFA, FAO ITWFR, IPBES, CBD				
Maintain and further develop the EUFGIS information system and contribute to the further development of the distribution maps of European forest trees	Connecting EUFGIS with FOREMATIS IS to provide information of the availability of FRM to potential users	S	2021	feature in place and results operative	Ongoing will be a new functionality of the revised EUFGIS (point below) testing example available in existing interface at: https://www.euforgen.org/member-countries/luxembourg/?showForematitis=true
	Improving the functionality of EUFGIS to facilitate the national reporting efforts	S	2024	new version of EUFGIS Portal and Intranet available	Ongoing (FORGENIUS) https://www.forgenius.eu/eufgis
	Collaborate with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission in improving distribution maps, serving as a link between the FGR scientific community and JRC. Provide access to maps via EUFORGEN website	S + MC	ongoing	list of new maps where EUFORGEN's contribution is acknowledged, number of maps in EUFORGEN's website	Achieved – ongoing https://www.euforgen.org/species/ new maps available from https://data.mendeley.com/datasets/hr5h2hcg4/9#file-2b32e368-04f0-40d2-bb82-ac5eacdb79e8

Operational Objective	Activities Phase VI	Responsibility ¹	Time frame	means of verification	Status as of 31 December 2022 / Date of achievement
Contribute to relevant international reporting efforts, such as the State of Europe's Forests reports	contribute to the preparation of FAO State of the World FGR, by providing national & Europe Region perspectives	S+ EUFGIS Focal Points + MC	2020-2023	list and text of relevant chapters	ongoing Regional contribution submitted (S). 19 National Contribution submitted to FAO by MC.
	Support the monitoring of the implementation of the GPA- FGR. Provide the Regional perspective	S + MC	ongoing	EUFGIS is used as source of data for National and Regional reporting	Achieved – ongoing
	Contribute to the State of Europe's Forest (Responsible for report on Indicator 4.6)	S + MC	2024	data on Indicator 4.6 are provided in due time and reference to EUFORGEN and EUFGIS is made in the report	Planned
	Publish reports of the WG or proceedings of relevant events		2024	Reports released electronically	Planned
	make available the overview of the State of Europe's FGR report, presenting 4.6 data for all species	S + MC	2024	data on indicator 4.6 are presented for each species in EUFORGEN's website	Planned (in the framework of the FORGENIUS project)

Strategic Objective 2: Coordinate conservation of forest genetic resources in Europe

Operational Objective	Activities Phase VI	Responsibility ¹	Time frame	means of verification	Status as of 31 December 2022 / Date of achievement
Update the pan-European conservation strategy also including response to large scale risks	Working group to guide and support the GenRes Bridge project in updating the European strategy for the conservation of FGR	S + WG + SC	2021	composition of the WG records of the inputs to the development of the strategy. updated strategy	Achieved FGR Strategy published (2021) www.genresbridge.eu/grs4e
	Involve non-member countries and neighbour countries in revising the Pan-European FGR conservation strategy	S + Project partners	2021	list of non-member and neighbour countries consulted and involved in the development of the strategy	Achieved FGR Strategy published in 2021 www.euforgen.org/fileadmin/templates/euforgen.org/upload/Publications/Thematic_publications/FGR_Strategy4Europe.pdf Non-member countries consulted: Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, North Macedonia, Portugal, Romania , Turkey, Ukraine.
Support National implementation of the GPA-FGR	attend relevant meetings of FAO ITWG-FGR and CGRFA Global and maintain the link with the Member Countries	S +AC+ NC+ SC	ongoing	list of ITWG FGR and CGRFA meetings attended by Secretariat and AC	Achieved – ongoing

Operational Objective	Activities Phase VI	Responsibility ¹	Time frame	means of verification	Status as of 31 December 2022 / Date of achievement
Implement the pan-European conservation strategy	Working Group developing Minimum Requirements for static and dynamic <i>ex situ</i> conservation	WG+ NEs	2023	composition of the working group and report (minimum requirements for <i>ex situ</i> conservation)	Pending
	Optimize the European network of genetic conservation units (training of EUFGIS FPs)	S+ GenRes Bridge Partners+ EUFGIS FPs	2021, 2024	list of trained EUFGIS FP, agenda, report and list of recommendations for the improvement of EUFGIS	Achieved – ongoing (GenRes Bridge and FORGENIUS. Two more trainings planned before the end of the Phase)
	implementation of the decision support tool for the management of the genetic conservation units' network	S+ EUFGIS FPs	2024	the tool is available and the EUFGIS information system modified. EUFGIS FPs trained	Ongoing (FORGENIUS)
	Support the implementation of a pan-European genetic monitoring scheme with focus on the core network of GCUs	S +NCs	2024	composition of the WG, report (in case of a WG) or newly created opportunities	Pending?

Strategic Objective 3: Promote the appropriate use of forest genetic resources

Operational Objective	Activities Phase VI	Responsibility ¹	Time frame	means of verification	Status as of 31 December 2022 / Date of achievement
Prepare science-based recommendations and tools for better incorporating genetic aspects into Sustainable Forest Management practices	Discussion Platform (DP) on strategies for the adaptation to climate change	MC+ S	2024	list of participants, agenda, minutes and recommendations	Achieved 18-20 October 2022, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
	WG on strategies for the adaptation to climate change	MC+ S	2021-2024	list of members, minutes of meetings, report of WG	Planned Postponed to 2022 due to COVID 19 traveling and meeting limitations SC to define expected output
	WG(s) building on Phase V WG on FRM - Customisation of guidelines for various audiences	MC+ S	2024	list of members, minutes of meetings, report of WG	Ongoing – Planned
	workshop to identify research needs and priorities on FGR in Europe (also apply to the other objectives)	MC+ S	2020	list of participants, minutes, prioritised list of research and policy needs	Achieved GenTree final conference www.gentree-h2020.eu/fileadmin/Gentree-uploads/documents/GenTree_stakeholders_consultation_30Jan2020_report_short_final.pdf
	link EUFGIS with FOREMATIS (conversion of EUFGIS into a	S	2021	new Semantic EUFGIS Information system released, effectively linked to FOREMATIS	Planned / ongoing

Operational Objective	Activities Phase VI	Responsibility ¹	Time frame	means of verification	Status as of 31 December 2022 / Date of achievement
	Semantic Information System)				the semantic linking will be done through the OptFORESTS project
Analyse policy issues and recommend changes when they conflict with the appropriate use of FGR	Working Group on FGR-related policies	S + SR	ongoing	list of members, minutes of meetings, recommendations of WG, reports to SC	Ongoing -

1 S=Secretariat, NC= National Coordinators, SC= Steering Committee, SR = Selected Representatives, FP = Focal Points, MC = designated Member countries representatives, AC = Advisory Committee, NE = National Expert, WG= working groups

2 FE = Forest Europe, CBD= Convention on Biological Diversity, GPA FGR = Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources
ExtRev= External Review, ToC= Theory of Change

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