

## **Second meeting of the EUFORGEN Working Group on forest reproductive material**

Freising, Germany 4-6 July 2012

### **Summary of the meeting**

#### **Opening of the meeting**

M. Konnert and B. Fady, the co-leaders of the working group, welcomed the participants to Freising and provided some observations on the progress made since the first meeting which was organized in March 2012.

J. Koskela welcomed the participants to the meeting on behalf of the EUFORGEN Secretariat and introduced the meeting agenda which was then adopted. J. Koskela and M. Bozzano were nominated as rapporteurs of the meeting.

#### **Updates on topics and initiatives relevant to the working group**

##### **EUFORGEN update**

J. Koskela briefly updated the participants on the progress made by the other two working groups. The working group on genetic conservation strategies has nearly finalized its draft report. The working group on genetic monitoring organized its second meeting in Madrid, Spain on 22-24 May 2012 and it is now also finalizing its draft report. Both working groups will present their draft reports to a broader group of experts at a workshop on FGR conservation and monitoring that will be held in Järvenpää, Finland on 18-20 September 2012. The workshop will be organized in collaboration with the FORGER project.

He further reported that a workshop on inventories of forest genetic resources took place in Szombathely, Hungary on 8-10 May 2012. It was also organized in collaboration with the FORGER project. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss further development of the EUFGIS Portal, provide an overview of other relevant FGR databases, discuss linking of databases (especially EUFGIS and GD2), and exchange information on progress made in national FGR inventories and other new developments in this area.

He then informed the participants that the eighth meeting of the EUFORGEN Steering Committee will be held in Paris, France on 27-29 November 2012. All three working groups, including this group on forest reproductive material (FRM), should finalize their draft reports by the end of October 2012.

##### **AGRI GEN RES Committee meeting**

J. Koskela informed the participants that the meeting of the AGRI GEN RES Committee took place in Brussels on 13 June 2012. EUFORGEN and other European programmes on genetic resources were not invited to the meeting this time but the EUFORGEN Steering Committee and the Secretariat sent written inputs to the EC by email before the meeting. They

encouraged the EC to continue its investments to the management of genetic resources and develop a new AGRI GEN RES programme. He noted that the EC is expected to make a decision on the new funding programme by early 2013.

### **European workshop on access and benefit sharing**

M. Konnert briefed the participants on the outputs of the European workshop on access and benefit sharing that was held in Bonn, Germany on 27-28 June 2012. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss and prepare the European position on this topic prior to the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Working Group on Access and Benefit-Sharing for Food and Agriculture, to be held Svalbard, Norway in September 2012. The working group was established by the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA). Furthermore, additional objectives of the European workshop were to elaborate and consolidate viewpoints regarding the specific nature and specific features of genetic resources for food and agriculture, including possible solutions for legislation and regulatory approaches, and to provide guidance to the European representatives nominated to the Ad Hoc Technical Working Group.

Following the workshop, the European countries prepared a position document to the next session of the CGRFA (April 2013) which is expected to continue the debate on the ABS issues. The document is available on the FAO website (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/026/ap539e.pdf>).

### **FORGER project**

J. Koskela presented an update to the FRM-related activities of the FORGER project (Towards the Sustainable Management of Forest Genetic Resources in Europe). The project is funded by the EC (FP7-KBBE Programme) and it will last from March 2012 to February 2016. FORGER will 1) collate data on impacts of both forest management (including transfer of FRM) and environmental change on genetic diversity, 2) assess the present status of transfer of FRM at the pan-European scale, and 3) develop optimized seed harvest strategies for sustainable use of FGR.

J. Koskela informed that the project partners involved in collecting of data on FRM transfer in Europe faced some difficulties in identifying national data providers on current FRM transfer in different countries but that some progress had been made. Furthermore, potential partners and case studies were discussed during the recent workshop held in Szombathely, Hungary on 8-10 May 2012.

The FORGER partner leading the FRM work has not yet made final decisions on the specific case studies but the development of a database on the production and exchange of FRM has already been started. These efforts will focus on beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) oaks, (*Quercus* spp.), Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), maritime pine (*Pinus pinaster*) and Norway spruce (*Picea abies*). Regarding the historic use and transfer of FRM, the collection of available literature has also

been initiated and the project partners have identified contact persons (experts in forest history) who can provide access to grey literature and relevant historical information.

J. Koskela continued by explaining that, as part of the FORGER dissemination activities led by Bioversity, expert consultations are scheduled with different EUFORGEN working groups. The purpose of these expert consultations is to create synergies between the project activities and EUFORGEN. He noted that the current meeting serves as one of these expert consultations and welcomed the participants to provide comments and feedback on FRM-related topics. Unfortunately, no other FORGER partners were unable to join this meeting of the working group. However, he mentioned that the interactions between FORGER and this working group will continue after the meeting and that the project will share preliminary results during the EUFORGEN workshop on FRM which is scheduled for 2013.

Several working group members expressed their concern that the results of their efforts might end up being used as project deliverables by FORGER. J. Koskela clarified that the findings and recommendations of the working group will be made available as a EUFORGEN report and that the report of the working group is not a project deliverable. He further clarified that when the EUFORGEN Steering Committee will discuss the report of the working group and decide further actions on FRM, it will consider any additional information, such as results of relevant European projects, including FORGER. He further noted that similarly to other EUFORGEN working groups, this working group can also benefit from the results of the FORGER project. Other members of the working group commented that the FORGER case studies and the data on current and historic FRM transfer will be useful for EUFORGEN but that the working group may not benefit much from the project as it has to finalize its report to the Steering Committee before the project has produced any preliminary results. It was also noted that the report of the working group will be more useful to the project, i.e. that FORGER should further address topics and issues on FRM that have been identified as important by the working group. It was concluded that this aspect is good to keep in mind when the working group will finalize its report and that these topics and issues should be further discussed during the planned workshop in 2013.

### **Other updates**

B. Fady informed the participants that a new COST Action, titled as “Strengthening conservation: a key issue for adaptation of marginal/peripheral populations of forest tree to climate change in Europe (MaP-FGR)” has been approved and it is expected to be launched by the end of the year. The project is coordinated by Fulvio Ducci (CRA-SEL, Arezzo, Italy) and it involves research institutions in 25 European countries as well as several partners on North African countries. Further information on the project is available at the COST website ([http://www.cost.eu/domains\\_actions/fps/Actions/FP1202](http://www.cost.eu/domains_actions/fps/Actions/FP1202)).

T. Maaten reported that another new COST Action, called as “Fraxinus dieback in Europe: elaborating guidelines and strategies for sustainable management (FRAXBACK)” was also launched recently. The aim of the project is generate comprehensive understanding of the ash dieback phenomenon, and to develop practical guidelines for sustainable management

of ash forests in Europe. More information on the projects is available from the COST website ([http://www.cost.eu/domains\\_actions/fps/Actions/FP1103](http://www.cost.eu/domains_actions/fps/Actions/FP1103)).

Other participants noted that several new COST actions are also under preparation for other tree species, such as beech, Douglas-fir and silver fir.

M. Konnert informed that the Slovenian Forestry Institute (SFI) has also initiated a new EU project called “European Forest Research and Innovation (EUFORINNO)” which is funded by the FP7 Infrastructures programme. The project is expected to start in 2012 and it is designed to increase the scientific excellence of SFI in the areas of genetic monitoring, biodiversity and carbon fluxes by upgrading research equipment and strengthening SFI’s expertise and human capacity through secondments, seminars, workshops, networking, conferences, IP management and publishing efforts.

### **Tasks of the working group, the first meeting and the report outline revisited**

#### **Tasks of the working group and discussion of the first meeting**

J. Koskela reminded the members of the working group about the tasks assigned by the Steering Committee. The working group is expected to:

- Review existing work from EUFORGEN Networks and relevant European projects
- Synthesize existing (national) guidelines
- Select (widely used) model species
- Identify critical factors related to climate change and future needs to transfer of FRM
- Summarize lessons from provenances trials for seed transfer
- Analyze if any relevant information should be added to the *accompany documents* as specified in the EC Directive and other relevant schemes covering the movement of FRM
- Compile a list of existing models and tools that can be used for future forest management planning and transfer of FRM
- List the issues related to the climate change context
- Prepare a draft report (including recommendations)

He then briefly presented the minutes of the first meeting and highlighted the main points and issues discussed in March 2012.

#### **Outline of the report and summary of the text available**

M. Konnert revisited the draft outline of the report that was agreed during the first meeting and reported the inputs received so far. She noted that she received written inputs from several working group members just before the second meeting and that the inputs are still missing for some chapters or sub-chapters of the report. She and B. Fady commented briefly each text chapter and other members of the working group also provided further comments

and observations. The overall structure of the report was then discussed again in detail and it was agreed that a chapter on research needs will be added to the report.

## **Update on relevant EC initiatives**

### **Development of a new EU Forest Strategy**

F. Wolter updated other members of the working group on the development of the new EU Forest Strategy and discussions of the recent meeting of the Standing Forestry Committee, held on 4 July 2012. He noted that the new strategy is part of the “Forest Package” discussed by the Standing Forestry Committee. Other elements include efforts to improve forest information and monitoring, and development of a communication on wood processing industry. He explained that the strategy is an updated version of the first EU strategy adopted in 1998. The purpose of the new strategy is to address the increasing demands and emerging needs that call for improved EU coordination and to ensure society that the EU forests are managed according to the principles of sustainable forest management. The new strategy has identified 10 interrelated priorities and forest genetic resources are highly relevant to many of these priorities, such as climate change, forest protection, ecosystem services and biodiversity, research and innovation, and forest information and monitoring. The EC is planning to finalize its proposal for the new strategy by the end of the year and it will be then sent to the European Council and Parliament in early 2013. Next year, it is also likely that a new EU Forest Action Plan will be developed to implement the strategy.

### **Development of the new EU Seed Law**

F. Wolter continued by briefly reporting on the development of the new EC Regulation on plant reproductive material. He noted that the EC has not yet released the draft text of the new Regulation. However, it is expected to be submitted to the Member States very soon. The EC is still planning to merge the existing Council Directive 1999/105/EC on FRM into the new Regulation despite of the objections expressed by the Standing Forestry Committee. F. Wolter explained that the EC (DG SANCO) has noted that the content of Council Directive 1999/105/EC will be kept unchanged when merging it into the new Regulation. Regarding the new control system, the EC has indicated that it should be based on the principle of full cost recovery but the EC has not yet confirmed this. The members of the working group agreed to wait the release of the draft Regulation and then continue discussion by email to develop the chapter on this topic to the report.

### **Review and further development of the draft report**

The meeting participants discussed the content of the draft report in detail and reviewed the available text chapter by chapter. The recently received contributions were incorporated into the draft report and specific comments and feedback were provided to the authors of different chapters.

It was also clarified that the report is targeted to readers who are familiar with forest reproductive material and other forestry issue but who do not necessarily have scientific background. Therefore, each author was asked to avoid the use of scientific terms as much as possible and to explain any terms used in the text, as needed.

The participants exchanged their views on the definitions of “use” and “transfer” of FRM while discussing the introduction chapter. It was agreed that the use of FRM for production and research and development (R&D) should be better explained. It was also decided that climate change and its relevance to the use and transfer of FRM should be mentioned briefly in the introduction chapter. In addition, it was concluded that discussion on the consequences of inappropriate use of FRM (both economic and ecological aspects) should be added to this chapter.

It was decided to move the chapter on climate change right after the introduction and before the chapter on legal frameworks. Basic genetic processes which shape the genetic diversity in tree populations should be explained briefly, as well as how they influence the genetic diversity within FRM. It was also pointed out that, in the sub-chapter on challenges related to climate change and the use of FRM, it needs to be explained why it is so difficult to make specific recommendations for FRM transfer.

Considering the legal frameworks, it was noted that the sub-chapter on the draft Regulation on plant reproductive material can only be developed once the EC has released the draft text. It was agreed that more information is needed on national laws and guidelines related to the use of FRM, in addition to the information received from F. Ducci (collected earlier as part of the TREEBREEDDEX project). M. Konnert and F. Wolter agreed to develop a questionnaire which will be then circulated to the members of the EUFORGEN Steering Committee by J. Koskela to collect their inputs on national laws and guidelines. Furthermore, it was agreed that a sub-chapter on the Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit sharing needs to be added to the report.

The meeting participants agreed that the role of tree breeding should also be discussed in the report, and especially what kind of contributions tree breeding can make to the development of FRM for future climatic conditions. The participants further concluded that some discussion is needed on the balance between selection and maintenance of genetic diversity as part of tree breeding. Concerning new approaches to defining transfer rules for FRM, it was proposed that this chapter should focus on the recent work on updating seed zones in British Columbia, Canada and in Oregon and Washington States in the USA. Finally, all participants felt that a recommendation related to the new EU Regulation on plant reproductive material should be added to the chapter on conclusions and recommendations.

**Next steps and deadlines**

The participants discussed the deadlines for the finalization of the draft report. It was agreed that all members of the working group should send their inputs to leader authors of different chapters by 31 August 2012. The lead authors should then send their chapters to M. Konnert and B. Fady with a copy to J. Koskela and M. Bozzano by 10 September 2012. M. Konnert and B. Fady will prepare an updated draft of the report and will circulate it to all members of the working group for their final comments by 25 September. The draft report will be also circulated to other EUFORGEN experts (email contributors) for their comments in early October. The draft report should be finalized by the end of October 2012 so that it can be circulated to the EUFORGEN Steering Committee before its meeting which will take place in Paris, France on 27-29 November 2012. M. Konnert and B. Fady informed that they are unable to join the Steering Committee meeting and it was agreed that F. Wolter will present the draft report to the Steering Committee.

**Wrap-up session**

The meeting participants discussed the dates of the planned workshop on FRM. It was proposed that the workshop could be organized in summer or autumn 2013. By that time, the new EC Regulation on plant reproductive material should be ready and its implications for the forest sector can be better assessed. Furthermore, some results of the FORGER project would also be available by then.

Several participants noted that the new working group approach of EUFORGEN is an effective one. However, others were concerned that experts from only a few countries had an opportunity to contribute to the preparation of the draft report. J. Koskela clarified that the workshop on FRM will be specifically designed for a broader group of European experts to comment and to provide inputs to the draft report. Furthermore, comments received from the EUFORGEN Steering Committee will be discussed during the workshop.

B. Fady thanked all participants for their inputs to the discussions and M. Konnert and the Secretariat for organizing the meeting. With no other business, he then closed the meeting.

## Annex 1. Agenda of the meeting.

Wed 4 July		
12:30	Lunch	Palottiner Haus
14:00	Opening of the meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome to Freising (M. Konnert)</li> <li>● Update by Co-Leaders (M. Konnert &amp; B. Fady)</li> <li>● Introduction to the meeting (J. Koskela)</li> <li>● Adoption of the agenda</li> <li>● Nomination of rapporteurs</li> </ul>	Palottiner Haus
14:15	General updates on topics/initiatives relevant to the Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● EUFORGEN update (J. Koskela)</li> <li>● AGRI GEN RES Committee meeting (13 June 2012) (J. Koskela)</li> <li>● European workshop on access and benefit sharing (27-28 June 2012) (M. Konnert)</li> <li>● FORGER project (J. Koskela)</li> <li>● Other updates</li> <li>● Discussion</li> </ul>	
14:45	Tasks of the Working Group, discussions of the first meeting and the outline of the report revisited <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● WG tasks (J. Koskela)</li> <li>● Minutes of the first meeting (J. Koskela)</li> <li>● Outline of the report and summary of the text available (M. Konnert &amp; B. Fady)</li> <li>● Discussion</li> </ul>	
15:30	Coffee/tea break	
16:00-17:30	Tasks of the Working Group, discussions of the first meeting and the outline of the report revisited <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discussion continued</li> </ul>	
19:00	Dinner	Palottiner Haus



<b>Thu 5 July</b>		
09:00	Update on relevant EC initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a new EU Forest Strategy (F. Wolter)</li> <li>• Development of the new EU Seed Law (F. Wolter)</li> <li>• Other initiatives</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>	Palottiner Haus
10:30	Coffee/tea break	
11:00	Review and further development of the draft report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Legal frameworks</li> <li>• Existing guidelines and recommendations</li> </ul>	
12:30	Lunch	
14:00	Review and further development of the draft report (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change and the use of FRM</li> <li>• Lessons from experiments and practice</li> </ul>	
15:30	Coffee/tea break	
16:00-17:30	Review and further development of the draft report (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing models and tools for use and transfer of FRM</li> <li>• Conclusions and recommendations</li> </ul>	
19:00	Social dinner	(in Munich)

<b>Fri 6 July</b>		
09:00	Further development of the report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compilation of existing information, data, publications etc.</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>	Palottiner Haus
10:30	Coffee/tea break	
11:00	Next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tasks and deadlines</li> </ul>	
12:15	Wrap-up session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any other business</li> </ul>	
12:30	Lunch	Palottiner Haus
13:00-	Transport to Munich Airport, as needed	

## Annex 2. List of participants

Tiit Maaten  
Institute of Forestry and Rural  
Engineering, Estonian University of  
Life Sciences  
Kreutzwaldi 5  
51014 - Tartu  
Estonia  
Tel. (372) 5296523  
Fax (372) 7313156  
tiit.maaten[at]emu.ee

Jan Kowalczyk  
Forest Research Institute (IBL),  
Silviculture and Genetics Department  
Braci Lesnej Street, No. 3, Sekocin  
Stary  
05-090 - Raszyn  
Poland  
Tel. (48-22) 7150473  
Fax (48-22) 7150313  
j.kowalczyk[at]ibles.waw.pl

Bruno Fady  
INRA - Unité de Recherches 'Ecologie  
des Forêts Méditerranéennes'  
Domaine St Paul, Site Agroparc  
84914 - Avignon cedex 9  
France  
Tel. (33-4) 32 72 29 08  
Fax (33-4) 32 72 29 02  
fady[at]avignon.inra.fr

Dusan Gomory  
Faculty of Forestry, Dept. of  
Phytology, Technical University  
T.G. Masaryka 24  
960 53 - Zvolen  
Slovakia  
Tel. (421-45) 5206 226 / 223  
Fax (421-45) 5332 654  
gomory[at]vsld.tuzvo.sk

Monika Konnert  
Bayerisches Amt fuer forstliche Saat-  
und Pflanzenzucht (ASP)  
Forstamtsplatz 1  
83317 - Teisendorf  
Germany  
Tel. (49) 8666 988313  
Fax (49) 8666 988330  
monika.konnert[at]asp.bayern.de

Stuart A'Hara  
Forest Research, Northern Research  
Station  
Bush Estate, Roslin  
Midlothian EH25 9SY  
United Kingdom  
Tel. (44) 131 4456919 (direct)  
Fax (44) 131 4455124  
stuart.a'hara[at]forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Frank Wolter  
Administration de la nature et des  
forêts  
16, rue Eugène Ruppert  
2453 - Luxembourg  
Luxembourg  
Tel. (352) 402201216  
Fax (352) 402201250  
frank.wolter[at]anf.etat.lu

**EUFORGEN Secretariat**

Jarkko Koskela  
Regional Office for Europe  
Bioversity International  
Via dei Tre Denari 472/a  
00057 Maccarese (Fiumicino)  
Italy  
Tel: (39) 06 6118223  
Fax: (39) 06 61979661  
j.koskela[at]cgiar.org

Michele Bozzano  
Regional Office for Europe  
Bioversity International  
Via dei Tre Denari 472/a  
00057 Maccarese (Fiumicino)  
Italy  
Tel: (39) 06 6118221  
Fax: (39) 06 61979661  
m.bozzano[at]cgiar.org

**Unable to attend**

Fulvio Ducci  
CRA - Centro di Ricerca per la Selvicoltura, Lab. Risorse Genetiche Forestali  
Viale Santa Margherita 80  
52100 - Arezzo  
Italy  
Tel. (39) 0575 353021  
Fax (39) 0575 353490  
fulvio.ducci[at]entecra.it