



WORKING GROUP
ON PLANTS, ANIMALS, FOOD AND FEED

Section Forest reproductive material

11-12 MAY 2022

SUMMARY

SECTION A **Information and/or discussion**

1. Opening statements by Germany and the European Commission

The Commission and Germany welcomed participants to the meeting.

2. Overview of the German forest sector and forest reproductive material certification

Germany presented their forestry sector and forest reproductive material (FRM) production process. Germany informed about the calamities in the period 2017-2020 that have caused great damage to their forests; extreme drought, floodings and bark beetle infestations.

3. Update on the revision of the plant and forest reproductive material legislation

The Commission informed about the state of play of the revision process of the plant reproductive material (PRM) and FRM legislation and presented the outcome of the public consultation. The Commission asked Member States to submit by 2 June 2022 trade data of the last 5 years on import, export and marketing of tree seeds and forest plants providing the mean value of the quantities traded and the value of the FRM traded. A Member State informed that the market value of the FRM sector constitutes a fraction of the total value of the forest industry. The market value of the forest sector in their country is 10 billion EUR and constitutes 18 % of export to third countries.

4. Exchange of views on the forest reproductive material focus group

The Commission presented the topics discussed in the focus group; difficulties in supply of FRM, voluntary inventory containing information on FRM characteristics and FRM performance and FRM for non-forestry purposes. The Commission informed that few Member States plan the future need and production of FRM and highlighted the importance of planning given the already visible impact of climate change and the increased demand for FRM. In relation to non-forestry purposes several Member States stated that it is very difficult to define non-forestry purposes. Member States agreed on defining the scope of the FRM legislation as production of FRM in forestland and listing the purposes.

5. Exchange of views on the forest reproductive material targeted survey

The Commission presented the issue of coherence between the plant health and PRM/FRM legislation and explained its intentions for the upcoming revision. The FRM experts did not express any comments on the envisaged approach. An exchange of views took place on the need to define certain terms in the FRM legislation. The Commission asked Member States to comment by 2 June 2022 on the proposed definitions of deployment area and seed transfer zone.

6. Exchange of views on regulated tree species

In 2019 a survey was organised on the current list of tree species in Annex I to Directive 1999/105/EC. The list with proposed changes will be recirculated to Member States for comments by 2 June 2022.

7. Exchange of views on basic material

Member States are in favour of keeping the possibility of stricter rules for approval of basic material and FRM production at national level. However, certain Member States having stricter rules in place also require the Member States marketing to their country to respect those stricter rules. Those Member States do not respect the general principle of the FRM legislation as regards the absence of marketing restrictions.

8. Exchange of views on clones

Member States agreed that the work of the OECD Forest Seed and Planting Scheme could be used as a basis for the modification of the provisions on clones upon revision of the FRM legislation.

9. Exchange of views on imports and OECD certificate

An exchange of views took place on the possibility of recognising the OECD certificates so as to avoid relabelling imported FRM with an EU label. To avoid the import of large quantities of FRM without OECD certificate, a Member State proposed defining the quantity allowed to be imported without OECD certificate.

10. Assessment of characteristics of basic material contributing to sustainable afforestation and reforestation

The Commission informed Member States that most operators assess basic material for sustainability criteria but that half of those operators do so on a voluntary basis. The Commission highlighted the importance of a mandatory assessment of sustainability criteria. Several Member States stated that the assessment of sustainability criteria can only be done for basic material because for FRM this would imply testing all FRM.

11. Exchange of views on FOREMATIS

The Commission presented the intended changes to FOREMATIS. These changes will facilitate the submission of national lists and the consultation of published data. In the absence of comments from Member States, the changes will be approved by tacit procedure on 26 May 2022.

12. Any other business

A Member State complained about the new procedure in AGM requiring participants to provide a mobile phone number. The Commission recommended to contact the AGM Helpdesk.

13. Wrap up and conclusions

The Commission thanked Member States for their active participation in the meeting and reminded to provide written comments on the topics for which input was requested by 2 June 2022.