



Summary report of the Working party on seed legislation (Forest Reproductive Material) – Verona (IT) 22-23 October 2014

Chairperson: Ms D. Charels

Twenty-one out of 28 Member States were present. Experts from Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, Luxemburg, Malta, Romania and Slovakia did not participate.

1. Welcome of participants

Commission welcomed MS's experts and thanked Italy for willing to host the event.

2 Working party on forest reproductive material, 4-6 June 2012, Hissar, Bulgaria

The Bulgarian delegate presented the outcome of the previous working party meeting which took place in Hissar (BG) in 2012.

3 Update from the European Commission

Commission presented the state of play of the Plant Reproductive Material (PRM), Plant Health and Official Controls Regulations. With respect to the PRM Regulation it was stated that the Commission is awaiting instructions from the hierarchy on the way forward with this proposal following its rejection by the European Parliament in first reading. Articles 93, 94 and 97 of the Official Controls Regulation were presented. The Commission's intention to create European Union reference centres for plant reproductive material was explained. There was a discussion about the specific needs of a reference centre for forest reproductive material. MSs were asked to also provide input in writing.

4 Management of national lists and EU list

The current approach and the future semantic approach for the management of national lists of approved basic material were presented. In the semantic approach MSs will locally publish their data and a link will be established with DG SANCO's repository resulting in an update of DG SANCO's website with MS's data. With respect to a possible future enlargement of DG SANCO's published data with other structured public data sources, MSs proposed creating links with the European Forest Data Centre (EFDAC, <http://forest.jrc.ec.europa.eu/efdac/>), the European Forest Nursery Association (EFNA) and the maps with regions of provenance. One MS asked for the publication of test results from FRM of the tested category and also stated that more information will be needed about the utilisation areas in the future.

With respect to the EU list of approved basic material MSs asked whether the Commission could publish two lists i.e. a first list with an overview of EU-listed species occurring in Annex 1 to Directive 1999/105/EC on the marketing of forest reproductive material and a second list containing species which do not occur in the aforementioned Annex.

5 Notifications under Decision 2008/989/EC

Commission explained the difference between Decision 2008/971/EC on the equivalence of forest reproductive material produced in third countries and Decision 2008/989/EC authorising Member States, in accordance with Council Directive 1999/105/EC, to take decisions on the equivalence of the guarantees afforded by forest reproductive material to be imported from certain third countries. Commission highlighted that MSs are obliged to notify the Commission and other Member States of any decisions taken pursuant to Decision 2008/989/EC.

Several MSs asked the Commission about the possibility to include FRM of the qualified and tested categories in Decisions 2008/971/EC and 2008/989/EC. The absence of the qualified and tested categories in the aforementioned Decisions cause problems for MSs wishing to import FRM from those categories from third countries. Moreover, one MS highlighted that Decision 2008/989/EC will expire on 31 December 2014.

6. Discussion on important OECD issues on Forest Reproductive Material (FRM) held during the period 2012-2014

An overview of important issues discussed at the OECD meetings of the Forest Seed and Plant Scheme in the period 2012 to 2014 was given. Regarding OECD's proposal on the use of synonyms in the OECD forest database there was no consensus amongst MSs on the use of the accepted scientific names, listed also in Annex 1 to Directive 1999/105/EC, versus the corresponding synonyms. Certain MSs were in favour of using the synonyms instead of the accepted scientific names.

7. FAO 2014 report on the state of the world's forest genetic resources and FAO Global plan of action for the conservation, sustainable use and development of forest genetic resources

The French member of FAO's working group on forest genetic resources presented the State of the World's Report on Forest Genetic Resources. It is based on 86 country reports – representing over 85 % of global forest cover – and involved the participation of representatives from national institutions and nongovernmental and community-based organisations.

8. Quarantine and alarming fungal diseases in Europe: Pine Pitch Canker and Walnut Thousand Cankers Disease (L. Montecchio)

The last presentation of the day was given by Professor Montecchio from Padova's University. He wanted to draw MS's attention to two pests recently discovered in Italy: Pine Pitch Canker (*Gibberella circinata*) and Walnut's Thousand Cankers Disease. At EU level emergency measures already exist for *Gibberella circinata*. It will be proposed for classification as a quarantine organism. Walnut's Thousand Cankers Disease is a fast-spreading pest that has recently been discovered in Italy on *Juglans regia* and *J. nigra*. The European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) is currently conducting a Pest Risk Analysis. In January 2014 the pest has been added to EPPO's alert list. Prof. Montecchio asked MSs to provide one or more geographical provenances of *Juglans regia* containing an indication of the origin in order to identify provenances which are less susceptible to Walnut's Thousand Cankers Disease (*Geosmithia morbida*) and its insect vector (*Pityophthorus juglandis*).

9. Any other business

No points were raised under this heading due to time constraints.

Field visit

On the second day of the meeting a visit was paid to the National Center for the Study and the Maintenance of the Forest Biodiversity of Peri. The centre has a wide range of activities going from collection of forest fruits, seed selection, long-term conservation of seeds, production of forest plants for reforestation to seed quality testing and population genetic research. The latter two activities are carried out in the molecular biology laboratory. In 2005 the laboratory obtained an International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) accreditation regarding the certification of the quality of seed lots. The laboratory organises ISTA proficiency tests for laboratories analysing forest seeds.