



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

G(2012) 349497

**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
“SEEDS AND PROPAGATING MATERIAL FOR AGRICULTURE,
HORTICULTURE, FORESTRY AND VINE” held on 2 March 2012**

Chairperson: Eric Poudalet: item 5, Bruno Foletto: other items

All the Member States were present except Denmark, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal and Romania, who were absent and not represented. Croatia participated as observer.

1. Presentation and discussion of the Open Data and Semantic Web Approach.

The Commission Directorate General for Health and Consumers (SANCO) presented an application permitting increased public access to information in the area of forest reproductive material, which is not private or restricted for general security reasons. This information can have various forms, for example documents, images, measurements, species, forests, maps locations etc. The information is organised using the concepts of linked open data, uniform resource identifiers (URIs) and semantic web. The URIs are the sole means to identify all information and information sources in the application. The links between data and information sources are established via relations with some conceptual meaning (semantic web) and can lead to complex collections of linked data (published by the Commission, Member States (MS) or other organisations).

This first presentation provided examples of connections (linked data) between Commission data (Community List, Europhyt interceptions, Eur-Lex), other publicly available data and some MS's public data. Member States appreciated this new approach which permits a rapid search of official information and declared their availability for an improved cooperation with the Commission Services. The purpose is to arrive at a new form of Community List, where MS will no longer have to submit Excel forms of their public lists, but simply publish these lists on their own sites, and give the Commission application access to this information in order to create the links to it.

The Commission will contact the IT departments of MS in order to provide the tools and techniques and explain to MS how their data and information on the forestry domain can be linked and accessed via this new application.

2. Possible amendments to Decision 2008/971/EC on the Forest Reproductive Material (FRM) equivalence.

The Commission informed the Committee that a proposal amending Decision 2008/90/EC by including the new category of forest propagating material 'qualified' and the names of the official bodies of third countries, as updated by the OECD FRM Scheme, will be submitted to the Council in May.

3. Follow-up to the OECD annual meeting.

Member States agreed to continue the discussion about the inclusion into the Scheme Rules for certification of FRM of the 'tested' category and the reference on short rotation plantation, and to extend the scheme for fruit trees production, in particular for tropical countries, where the multi-purpose trees are very important for reforestation.

4. State of play of the implementation of the Forest Action Plan as regards Directive 1999/105/EC.

The Commission (Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development) informed the Committee that the EU Forest Action Plan was concluded in 2011 and that the EU Forestry Strategy from 1998 is under revision. The aim is to have a holistic forest strategy by the first quarter of 2013, a vehicle for coordination, interaction, collaboration and proactive development of policies related to and affecting forests and forestry, and providing good opportunities for developing synergies with other policy areas. The action is managed by the Commission internally via the Inter-services group on forestry, in cooperation with Member States via the Standing Forestry Committee and Working Party on Forestry, and in cooperation with stakeholders via the Advisory Group on Forestry and Cork, and the Advisory Committee on Forestry Industries. The Standing Committee on Seeds and Propagating Material for Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry and Vine will be regularly informed.

5. Information on the Review of the EU legislation on marketing of seed and plant propagating material.

The Commission informed the Committee that internal work on finalising the impact assessment and preparing the draft legal proposal for a Regulation on Plant Reproductive Material is ongoing. Particular attention will be paid to the forest section, taking into account the multifunctional role of forests and coherence with other EU legislation on forestry. The best way to achieve these purposes is to combine all twelve existing Directives on the marketing of seed and propagating material (S&PM) in one Regulation, where the identity of forest reproductive material (FRM) is maintained by a separate chapter on FRM. The legal instrument of a Directive on FRM needs to be changed to a Regulation. A Regulation will facilitate the harmonised application of the rules in all Member States and will allow the principles of official control to apply to S&PM. As regards the revision of the Regulation EC (No) 882/2004, it will be adjusted to take into account the specificities of the new sectors so that the whole production chain, including S&PM and plant health, can be covered. The rules shall be proportionate to the aims and will take into account the 'identity' of FRM. Member States highlighted that the existing legislation is the result of long experience and negotiations and should be maintained, taking into account that both stakeholders and

official bodies recognize its good performance. Referring to the Commission proposal to include the FRM requirements into the new Regulation, Member States proposed to maintain the existing structure and objectives clearly identifiable under that Regulation.

6. Community list and information to be provided.

The Commission gave an update on the information notified by Member States as regards the national list (Article 11.1), maps of regions of provenance (Article 9.2), list of official bodies (Article 2k) and notification of importation under Article 2 of Decision 2008/989/EC. As proposed by Member States, the Commission's website includes links to 14 national websites to improve the communication system and to facilitate the gathering of information. The other Member States were requested to provide the address of their national website and the relevant authorisation for the publication.

7. Information about the dossier "supplier's document"

The Commission informed the Committee that the Commission Recommendation 2012/90/EU on guidelines for the presentation of information for the identification of lots of forest reproductive material and the information to be provided on the supplier's label or document, was adopted by the Commission on 14 February 2012 and published in the OJ L43/38.

8. Miscellaneous.

Bulgaria proposed to host the next meeting of the WP on FRM in June 2012. Member States were invited to provide information sufficiently in time to permit an appropriate preparation of the meeting.