



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT

Directorate B. Sustainability  
The Director

Brussels,  
AGRI.B/SM/(2022)8850472

## MINUTES

### *Meeting of the CDG Forestry and Cork*

**14 October 2022**

Chair: Head of Unit B2

Delegations present: All Organisations were present, except Birdlife, EFFAT and WWF.

#### **1. Approval of the agenda**

The agenda as distributed was approved.

#### **2. Nature of the meeting**

The meeting was non-public.

#### **3. List of points discussed**

##### 3.1 EU Nature Restoration Law

DG ENV presented the Commission proposal for an EU Nature Restoration Law using a PPT presentation which is available on CIRCABC. The presentation covered the background of the proposal, its connection with the EU Green Deal and with the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the structure, its targets, the proposed indicators used, and its implementation framework.

In the ensuing debate, DG ENV responded to a variety of questions and remarks. Responding to CEPF on the need to take into account regional differences, DG ENV explained that measures will be decided at member state level. On financing (raised by CEPF) member states could apply to the available funds through their national restoration plans. DG ENV also refuted claims that the proposed targets would be in conflict with climate change objectives. Also, long term forest management was well recognised in the proposal: member states had to prepare restoration measures, but the outcome may take much longer. Responding to remarks from EURAF, CEPI and

CEPF that the presence of deadwood could have a negative effect on forest fire risks and pests, DG ENV responded that the main causes of forest fires were negligence or deliberate intent, and that there is no clear one-to-one correspondence between deadwood presence and forest fire risk. Responding to COPA/COGECA who questioned EU competence in forestry, the DG ENV representative argued that environmental aspects of forests were a shared competence. The cost/benefit ratio (questioned by COPA/COGECA) could be found in the impact assessment that was available online. Finally, responding to CEPF, DG ENV, emphasising public participation, referred to article 12 of the proposal.

### 3.2 EU Forest Strategy – Governance – Future of CDG Forestry and Cork

DG AGRI referred to chapter 6 (Inclusive and coherent EU forest governance framework) of the EU Forest Strategy. The reason why the recently adopted Commission decision setting up a new legal framework for CDGs did no longer include a specific CDG for forestry was that this new framework is limited to matters covered by the CAP, and that the new EU Forest Strategy scope went well beyond the CAP and will be managed by three co-lead DGs: AGRI, ENV and CLIMA. Instead, the Commission services are in the process of creating a dedicated Commission expert group on forests. A call for applications will be launched, and the group is planned to become operational in the beginning of 2023.

Responding to the comments and remarks made, DG AGRI confirmed that, in accordance with the Commission horizontal rules on expert groups, there will be one single membership per member organisation; however, if the agenda requires so, the chair will be able to determine the overall number of participants. On interpretation, whenever possible, and within resources available, a multilingual language regime will be the Commission's preferred choice. DG AGRI did not exclude the possibility to create sub-groups under the new expert group.

### 3.3 Outcome of the workshop “Towards harmonised Forest Observation, Reporting and Data Collection Framework”

Mr Jaroslav KUBISTA, Director Forest Management Institute, presented the outcome, including some conclusions, of the workshop, organised by the CZ Presidency on 14-16 September 2022. There were no questions from the floor. The PPT used is available on CIRCABC.

### 3.4 EU Bioeconomy Strategy

DG RTD presented the progress report of the 2018 EU Bioeconomy Strategy, using a PPT presentation that is available on CIRCABC. The presentation covered the background and concept of the progress report, the definition of bioeconomy, national bioeconomy strategies, the bioeconomy strategy in the context of the EU Green Deal, and the EU Bioeconomy Action Plan.

CEPF argued that investments are decreasing in Europe, because Europe is increasingly considered an unstable environment, and wondered if the bioeconomy was able to increase the investment appetite in Europe.

### 3.5 Forest Europe – Outcome of the High-Level Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Forest Management

Thomas HAUSSMANN and Silvia ABRUSCATO (Forest Europe) presented the outcome of the High-Level Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Forest Management - Unlocking forests' biodiversity potential – which was held on 30 August 2022. The PPT presentation is available on CIRCABC. The presentation covered the outputs of the High-Level Policy Dialogue, and a number of key messages from it. They also reported on the endorsement of the Ministerial Decision “Supporting the recovery and sustainable management of Ukrainian forests and its forest sector”.

Responding to a question from CEPF, Mr HAUSSMANN confirmed that Forest Europe, in the framework of Sustainable Forest Management, was examining if and how biodiversity indicators could be improved.

### 3.6 Forest fires in 2022

JRC gave a comprehensive presentation on wildfires in the EU in 2022, using a PPT presentation that is available on CIRCABC. The presentation covered the general trends of burnt areas, the number of fires, wildfire emissions, landcover damage, Natura 2000 sites, economic losses, and climate change.

Asked about any link between fire danger and forest management, JRC confirmed that there was a correlation between the accumulation of fuels and fires.

## 4. Next meeting

This was the last meeting of the CDG Forestry and Cork in its current form. Meetings with stakeholders will be resumed as soon as the dedicated Commission expert group will be created and operational (see item 3.2 of the present report).

## 5. List of participants

In annex

*e-signed*

Silvia MICHELINI

List of participants– Minutes  
*Meeting of the CDG Forestry and Cork*  
14 October 2022

MEMBER ORGANISATION
<b>Confédération Européenne des Entrepreneurs de Travaux Techniques Agricoles, Ruraux et Forestiers (CEETAR)</b>
<b>Confédération Européenne des Propriétaires Forestiers (CEPF)</b>
<b>Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI)</b>
<b>European Agri-Cooperatives (COGECA)</b>
<b>European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois)</b>
<b>European Agroforestry Federation (EURAF)</b>
<b>European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC)</b>
<b>European Council of Young farmers (CEJA)</b>
<b>European Environmental Bureau (EEB)</b>
<b>European farmers (COPA)</b>
<b>European Landowners' Organization asbl (ELO asbl)</b>
<b>European State Forest Association (EUSTAFOR)</b>
<b>Federation Europeenne des Communes Forestieres (FECOF)</b>
<b>International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Regional Group (IFOAM EU Group)</b>
<b>Union de selvicultores del sur de Europa, AEIE (USSE)</b>
<b>Union of European Foresters (UEF)</b>