

CONVENTION ON LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION
International Co-operative Programme
on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests (ICP Forests)

Minutes of the Programme Coordinating Group (PCG) Meeting,
8/9 February 2011, Vienna, Austria

I. Opening

1. The meeting was attended by 22 experts. The list of participants is attached as Annex 1. The meeting was hosted by the Bundesforschungs- und Ausbildungszentrum für Wald, Naturgefahren und Landschaft (BFW), Austria. It was opened by Mr. Martin Lorenz and chaired by Mr. Martin Lorenz and Mr. Richard Fischer.

II. Evaluations

2. Mr. Richard Fischer presented an overview on ongoing evaluations of ICP Forests data coordinated by the Programme Coordinating Centre (PCC) or by Expert Panels.

3. Mr. Oliver Granke presented an overview on data requests received by PCC. In all, data were requested from the central data base for 27 projects and evaluations. Out of these 19 projects were internal projects coordinated by the Programme Coordinating Centre (PCC) or by Expert Panels.

4. Mr. Georg Kindermann (BFW) presented a descriptive evaluation of forest growth data based on Level II plots. This evaluation will be finalized in the coming weeks. BFW will approach NFCs in case of remaining uncertainties; NFCs are asked to respond before 16 March. BFW will export the results into aggregated data formats ("INV format"), these will be made available for NFCs with a copy to vTI in order to be available for future internal data evaluations. In order to enable BIOME-BGC modelling by ZALF (see below) the following countries will be handled with priority: Austria, Finland, Italy, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland.

5. Mr. Stephan Raspe presented results of the water budget model intercomparison from 6 Level II plots. After the methodological work on water budgets the next step will be the parameterization of the models for Level II plots with high quality data. This work will not be included in the ongoing activities and the Expert Panel still seeks additional capacities to carry out the work.

6. Mr. Pasi Rautio informed on planned evaluations of the Expert Panel on foliar analyses focussing on forest foliar data.

7. Mr. Bruno De Vos presented results from the ongoing evaluation of BioSoil+ data currently being carried out at FSCC.

8. Mr. Peter Waldner informed on ongoing evaluations of deposition data specifically focussing on trend detection carried out by the Expert Panel on deposition.

9. Mr. Egbert Beuker presented latest results from the evaluation of phenological webcam images and an approach for automated digital image analyses.

10. In a side meeting Mr. Konstantin Olschofsky informed that the vTI - Institute for World Forestry had started to evaluate meteorological data from Level II plots in contact with the Expert Panel on Meteorology and Phenology and with respect to IPCC climate change scenarios. The activities are aiming at the provision of meteorological scenarios for Level II plots with high temporal resolution. For the plots involved in the critical loads and BIOME-BGC modeling, these meteorological data will be made available until mid March.

11. In a side meeting Mr. Hubert Jochheim and Mr. Michael Jannott (both from Leibniz-Zentrum für Agrarlandschaftsforschung, ZALF) presented results of a first screening of the ICP Forests data base that had been carried out under a contract for vTI in order to parameterize the BIOME – BGC carbon budget model for Level II plots. The evaluation will utilize aggregated growth data provided by the Expert Panel on Forest Growth (“INV format”). The following countries were asked or will be asked for additional data: Austria, Finland, Italy, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland. Additional countries interested in the participation of the modelling are asked to take contact with PCC. The data requests and –submissions will be handled by PCC.

12. Mr. Marco Ferretti presented a first outline for a process developing more comprehensive scientific evaluations of ICP Forests data by the programme’s experts. The PCG invited all Expert Panels to carry out a descriptive data analyses of the respective surveys under the responsibility of each Expert Panel. The results shall be presented in a scientific symposium organized back to back with the ICP Forests Task Force Meeting 2012. The possibility to publish a series of these evaluations in a Special Issue of a scientific journal will be explored by Mr. Marco Ferretti and Mr. Marcus Schaub. Taking into account the data availability and improved data quality in the Level I and Level II data base, scientific evaluations and modelling will gain increased importance. PCG asked Mr. Marco Ferretti to elaborate a more detailed evaluation strategy, that - after circulation among the PCG members - will be presented for adoption at the 2011 ICP Forests Task Force Meeting.

13. Mr. Pasi Rautio informed that preparations for a new LIFE+ project proposal on biodiversity assessments on Level I / BioSoil plots had started under the lead of METLA/Finland and in cooperation with the Expert Panel on Biodiversity. Action Groups will be chaired by INBO/Belgium, Coillte/Ireland, vTI/Germany, Forest&Landscape/Denmark and University Camerino/Italy. All NFCs of EU member states will be invited to participate.

14. Mr. Richard Fischer informed on first experiences with the new Intellectual Property Policy of ICP Forests, showing that the envisaged communication between external data users and experts of the programme was difficult and that administrative burdens in the application of the new property policy were high for PCC.

III. Further development of the Programme

15. Mr. Nils König informed that a meeting with Rebecca Harms, MEP had been arranged for 15 Feb 2011. Mr. Harald Mauser informed on latest political developments in the context of future forest monitoring. The PCG discussed and drafted main messages that should be presented in such a meeting.

16. Mr Richard Fischer reported on results from a questionnaire asking NFCs on planned monitoring activities in 2011 and 2012. Based on a response rate from approx. 80% of the countries, in 2011 (2012) standard assessments are planned to be carried out on 116 (111) Level II plots, core assessments are foreseen on 87 (65) plots and other combinations of surveys focusing on national preferences are planned on 155 (152) plots. However, financing is still uncertain on 20% of these plots in 2011 and on 50% of these plots in 2012. The results show that plotnumbers will be reduced compared to FutMon and that the lack of co-financing will make it harder to guarantee a harmonized programme. All countries will continue the programme, but national preferences will gain importance. The Level I monitoring will be continued in most countries; however, only basic crown condition assessments will be carried out. PCC will remind the remaining countries to reply, and will present a final document at the Task Force Meeting.

17. Mr. Martin Lorenz informed that according to current plans funds for the financing of the ICP Forests data base management at vTI were available until 2013.

18. Mr. Oliver Granke informed that in view of increasing data evaluations by Expert Panels and PCG the existing data base will be amended by a module for the storage of plotwise aggregated information. Expert Panels are invited to submit such data to vTI including a documentation based on a scientific description of the methods used to derive aggregated data. Plotwise aggregated information from ongoing evaluations at PCC will be included in this database module as well. All such data will be available for internal data evaluation by the Expert Panels.

19. Mr. Oliver Granke presented the WebGIS application of the existing Level I and Level II database. This application will be opened for the members of the PCG in February 2011. The Expert Panel chairs are invited to provide suggestions in March specifying those parts of the application that should be opened to the public. Based on these recommendations a public area will be prepared and will firstly be made available to the NFCs before the Task Force Meeting 2011.

20. Mr. Oliver Granke informed on the time slots for data submission in 2011:
Large Scale Monitoring (Level I): 2011 Data Submission: 01/09/2011 - 30/11/2011
Intensive Monitoring (Level II/IM1/D1-D3 plots): 2010 Data submission: 01/04/2011 – 31/10/2011

21. The PCG expressed its appreciation with the circulation of the new ICP Forests Manual. The following parts still need to be updated and finalized. Respective drafts need to be sent to PCC before end of April 2011 in order to include them into the meeting documents for the Task Force Meeting:

Part II: amendment for the submission of tree coordinates (prepared by PCC)

Part VII: Biodiversity (prepared by the EP on Biodiversity)

Part XI: Soil Solution (prepared by the EP on Soil and Soil Solution, WG on Soil Solution)

Future manual parts on nutrient budgets of ground vegetation and on indirect leaf area measurements still depend on ongoing data evaluations. The drafts of these parts will be prepared before that Task Force Meeting in 2012 by the Expert Panel on Foliage and Litterfall and by a cooperation of the Expert Panel on Crown Condition Assessments and the Expert Panel of Meteorology and Phenology respectively.

Additional hard copies of the newly edited manual can be ordered by e-mail from astrid.khalil@vti.bund.de

22. Mr. Marco Ferretti informed that the publication of a book on monitoring methods based on the new manual was foreseen and invited the authors of single manual parts to become authors of single chapters. A respective inquiry to potential authors needs to be answered before 19 Feb 2011.

23. Mr. Richard Fischer thanked the Bundesforschungs- und Ausbildungszentrum für Wald, Naturgefahren und Landschaft (BFW) for the hospitality in Vienna and for providing excellent meeting facilities and closed the meeting.

Annex 1:

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