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COMMISSION DECISION

of 27.6.2014

setting up the Expert Group on Forest-based Industries and Sectorally Related Issues

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setting up the Expert Group on Forest-based Industries and Sectorally Related Issues

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Whereas:

- (1) Article 6 of the Treaty assigned to the Union the task of carrying out actions to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States, including in the area of industry.
- (2) With a view to carrying out its activities in accordance with the Communication from the Commission entitled “A new EU Forest Strategy: for forests and the forest-based sector”¹, the Commission may need to call on the expertise of specialists in an advisory body.
- (3) In this context, the framework created by Commission Decision 83/247/EEC², setting up a Committee on Community policy regarding Forestry and Forestry-based Industries, as amended by Decision 97/837/EC³, is no longer wholly suitable for providing the Commission with the expertise needed in order to shape and implement a sectoral strategy for the forest-based industries and to discuss sectorally related issues.
- (4) It is therefore necessary to set up a new group of experts in the field of forest-based industries and sectorally related issues and to define its tasks and its structure.
- (5) The expert group should provide the Commission with legal, economic and technical advice on the forest-based industries and sectorally related issues, in particular in relation to the preparation and implementation of Union policy and legislation.
- (6) The expert group should be composed of organisations representing the forest-based industries, including woodworking, furniture manufacture, pulp and paper manufacturing, paper and paperboard converting and printing, Member States’ authorities having specific knowledge of, expertise in and responsibility for those industries, and other relevant organisations having specific knowledge of, expertise in and responsibility for sectorally related issues, including forest management, social dialogue, publishing, bio-energy, research and innovation and environmental matters.
- (7) Rules on disclosure of information by members of the expert group should be laid down.

¹ COM (2013) 659, 20/09/2013.

² Commission Decision 83/247/EEC of 11th May 1983, setting up a Committee on Community policy regarding Forestry and Forestry-based Industries, O.J. L. 137, 26/05/1983.

³ Commission Decision 97/837/EC of 9th December 1997, amending Decision 83/247/EEC, O.J. L. 346, 17/12/1997.

- (8) Personal data should be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁴.
- (9) Decision 83/247/EEC should be repealed,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Subject matter

The Expert Group on Forest-based Industries and Sectorally Related Issues, hereinafter referred as "the Expert Group", is hereby set up.

Article 2

Tasks

The tasks of the Expert Group shall be:

- a) at the request of the Commission or on its own initiative, to provide the Commission with legal, economic and technical advice on the forest-based industries and sectorally related issues, in particular in relation to the preparation and implementation of Union policy and legislation;
- b) to establish co-operation between sectoral and Member State bodies and the Commission on questions relating to the forest-based industries and sectorally related issues;
- c) to assist the Commission in monitoring the development of policy and activities in the field of forest-based industries and sectorally related issues;
- d) to bring about an exchange of experience and good practice in the field of the forest-based industries and sectorally related issues.

Article 3

Consultation

The Commission may consult the Expert Group on any matter relating to the forest-based industries and sectorally related issues, in particular in relation to the preparation and implementation of Union policy and legislation.

Article 4

Membership – Appointment

1. The Expert Group shall be composed of competent Member States' authorities and organisations as defined in Rule 8.3 of the horizontal rules for Commission expert groups⁵ representing the EU forest-based industries⁶ and other relevant organisations

⁴ Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1).

⁵ C (2010) 7649 final of 10.11.2010.

⁶ As defined in staff working document: "A Blueprint for the EU Forest-based Industries (SWD (2013) 343 of 20/09/2013).

having specific knowledge of, expertise in and responsibilities for sectorally related issues, as follows:

- a) maximum of four member organisations representing the woodworking industries as defined by NACE⁷ Rev. 2, Chapter 16;
 - b) maximum of two member organisations representing the furniture industries as defined by NACE Rev. 2, Chapter: 31;
 - c) a maximum of four member organisations representing the pulp, paper and board manufacturing and converting industries and the printing industries as defined by NACE Rev. 2, Chapters 17 and 18.1 respectively;
 - d) a maximum of fourteen members representing other organisations having specific knowledge of, expertise in and responsibility for sectorally related issues, including at least the issues of forest management, social dialogue, publishing, bio-energy, research and innovation and environmental matters;
2. A member organisation may co-ordinate with one or more other similar organisations which are active in the same economic sub-sector or having the same or similar activities.
 3. Organisations shall be appointed by the Directorate General Enterprise and Industry from organisations representing the industries referred to in paragraph 1(a) to (c), and other organisations referred to in paragraph 1(d).

Member States' authorities shall appoint one representative each, having specific knowledge of, expertise in and responsibility for matters concerning the forest-based industries, such as woodworking, furniture, pulp and paper manufacturing and converting, and printing as defined by NACE Rev. 2, Chapters 16, 17, 18.1 and 31 respectively.

4. Organisations shall nominate one representative each. The Directorate General Enterprise and Industry, as appropriate in consultation with other Commission departments, may refuse organisations' nominations for representatives if they do not meet the profile required to carry out the tasks set out in Article 2 or to comply with the rules of procedure or if they have potential conflicts of interest. In such cases, the organisations concerned shall be asked to nominate other representatives.
5. Members shall be appointed for three years. They shall remain in office until they have been replaced. Their term of office may be renewed.
6. Provision may be made for the same number of alternates as permanent representatives to be appointed. Alternates shall be appointed in accordance with the same conditions as for representatives. Alternates automatically replace any members who are absent or indisposed.
7. Members, their representatives or alternates who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations, who resign or who do not comply with the conditions set out in paragraph 3 of this Article, or Article 339 of the Treaty, may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

⁷ NACE: "Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne"(the "statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community"): Regulation (EC) [1893/2006](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the statistical classification of economic activities NACE Revision 2.

8. The names of Member States authorities and of member organisations shall be published in the Register of Commission Expert Groups and other similar entities ('the Register').
9. Personal data shall be collected, processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001.

Article 5
Operations

1. The Expert Group shall be chaired by a representative of the Commission.
2. In agreement with the Commission representative, the Expert Group may set up sub-groups, including those composed of only the Member States' representatives or alternatively without the Member States' representatives, to examine specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the Expert Group. Such sub-groups shall be dissolved as soon as their mandate is fulfilled.
3. The Expert Group and its sub-groups may meet with representatives of third countries, such as in the context of bilateral Industrial Dialogues or other relevant fora.
4. The Commission representative may invite experts, from outside the Expert Group, having specific competence in a subject on the agenda to participate in the work of the Expert Group or a sub-group on an ad hoc basis. In addition, the Commission's representative may give observer status to individuals, and to organisations, as defined in Rule 8(1), (2) and (3) of the horizontal rules for expert groups, and to acceding and candidate countries. A maximum of two representatives, up to one each from the public and private sectors, of each accession or candidate country may attend the meetings.
5. Members of the Expert Group and their representatives, as well as experts and observers invited for a specific meeting, shall comply with the obligations of professional secrecy laid down by the Treaties and their implementing rules, as well as with the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of EU classified information, laid down in the Annex to Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom⁸. Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take any appropriate measures.
6. The meetings of the Expert Group and its sub-groups shall be held on Commission premises unless otherwise decided by the Chairman. The Commission shall provide secretarial services and may invite members to assist in this task. Commission officials with an interest in the proceedings may be invited by the Chairman to attend meetings of the Expert Group and its sub-groups.
7. The Expert Group shall adopt its rules of procedure on the basis of the standard rules of procedure for expert groups.
8. The Commission shall publish all relevant documents, such as agendas, minutes and participants' submissions, on the activities carried out by the Expert Group either by including it in the Register or via a link from the Register to a dedicated web-site.

⁸ OJ L 317, 3.12.2001.

Article 6

Meeting expenses

1. Participants in the activities of the Expert Group shall not be remunerated for the services they render.
2. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the Expert Group shall be reimbursed by the Commission in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission.
3. Those expenses shall be reimbursed within the limits of the available appropriations allocated under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

Article 7

Repeal

Decision 83/247/EEC is repealed.

Done at Brussels, 27.6.2014

For the Commission
Antonio TAJANI
Vice-President