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## **FINAL MINUTES**

*Meeting of the Civil Dialogue Group Forestry and Cork*

*Date: 05/12/2017*

Chair: Mr **Lennart Ackzel (COGECA)**

All Organisations were present except EEB and EFFAT.

### **1. Approval of the agenda (and of the minutes of previous meeting<sup>1</sup>)**

The Chair asked the members to approve the minutes of the previous meeting and the agenda. The minutes and the agenda were approved.

Before the point on the elections, the chair highlighted at the end of his mandate some of the important achievements of the CDG on Forestry and Cork: the resolutions on various topics such as: CAP and forestry, EUTR, the joint meeting with the SFC, the fruitful discussion that added value to the meetings. He thanked the Commission and the members for their support.

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

The meeting was non-public.

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

#### **3.1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chairs**

The European Commission explained the procedure for the elections and presented the three candidates for the election:

- Mr Lennart Ackzell, COGECA for a 1st mandate as Chair
- Ms Julia Christian, EEB for a 1st mandate as Vice-Chair
- Mr Pedro Albizu, CEPI for a 3rd mandate as Vice-Chair

The candidate for the chair Mr Lennart Ackzell presented himself as well as Mr Pedro Albizu for the vice-chair position. Neither Ms Julia Christian was present at the meeting nor other experts from EEB to present her candidature.

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<sup>1</sup> If not adopted by written procedure (CIRCABC)

All the candidatures were approved by the members of the CDG.

The elected chair, Mr Lennart Ackzell thanked the members for their support and stressed that for him it is important to have efficient meetings and discussion, a balanced debate and an active participation of all members.

### **3.2. Communication "The Future of Food and Farming" and the place of forests**

The Commission presented the new Communication on the future CAP and the presentation is available on CIRCA.

Questions and comments from the members

Copa stressed that the forestry sector is crucial for rural development and that measures to support the sector to continue to invest, to produce ecosystem services and jobs in rural areas need to be included also in the CAP after 2020. In addition, the transfer of innovation is very important. The EIP-Agri needs to be better adapted to forest owners as today there is too much administrative burden. Simplification and cutting red tape can make things better. Forestry plays an essential role in mitigating climate change and measures to support this are important. We need to move forward on ecosystem services and their recognition. Regarding the result based payments, we need to have a clear picture what this means in practice.

CEPF highlighted the need to have a strong link between CAP and the regional policy. They asked how MS will implement the future CAP as it looks that this is a renationalisation.

They also underlined that it is very difficult to assess, based on the current document the role of forestry in the future RD policy. They also stated that the budget is important and that forest economy has an impact on the other pillars.

They asked more information about the rural proofing mechanisms.

EURAF informed the Commission and the members of the group that they have made an analysis on the importance of agroforestry in CAP in the context of the FORWARD project. Concerning climate change it is important to address the scale of the implementation as we have different scales of farms. They also mentioned that for the advisory services the US model is a good one. The services today are not very inter-connected and do not have a direct link with practice at local level.

Viacampesina mentioned that they do not agree with the decentralisation of the CAP. They asked about proportionality between EU sovereignty and national policies.

Answers from the Commission:

The Commission explained that the current system is compliance based and that with the future CAP the compliance will be shifted at MS level and that the main objectives will be kept at EU level. Achievements will be based on local circumstances. The idea is to avoid double checking as currently this is inefficient. The CAP national strategic plan will reflect also the implementation of the forest strategy.

Forestry plays a key role in bioeconomy. There is a strong link with the EU Bioeconomy Strategy, and it should be recognised that the role of forest owners is not limited to that of providers of biomass.

For the future CAP the transfer of knowledge and applying innovative solutions will be even more important than today.

As regards the rural proofing, this will be explained in the impact assessment and after that a concrete proposal for the future CAP will be published. Simplification is a priority.

The chair thanked the Commission and the members for their contribution and concluded that this discussion is very timely and that we should continue it in the future to be well prepared.

### **3.3. Exchange of views on the Staff Working Document on the EU Bio-Economy**

The Commission made a presentation on the state of play of the Bioeconomy strategy implementation and the review process. The presentation is available on CIRCA.

Questions and comments from the members

Copa underlined that Bioeconomy is an important issue for the forestry sector and that there is specific need of coherence between EU Forest Strategy and Bioeconomy Strategy, as a very significant part of bioeconomy is ensured by forestry. They also asked about the role of SCAR in the discussions on the bioeconomy.

CEPI stressed that the forest-based sector is in the centre of the Bioeconomy Strategy. Bioeconomy is an important strategic objective for the Commission but in practice, it is not working. They called for mainstreaming it in the Commission proposal on Packaging and also in the EU Plastics Strategy.

EUSTAFOR highlighted that the forest owners are the major biomass producers. The key word is coherence and an important question is the role of ecosystem services in the bioeconomy. The most important financial support is from RD, therefore it is important that forestry will be well addressed in the future CAP. We do not have any effective system to address ecosystem services.

CEPF underlined also that forest owners are key players in the bioeconomy and they asked what the update will cover: the Strategy, the Action Plan, or both? They also mentioned that they are very interested to contribute to the review as this is a priority for them.

EOS asked how traditional industries are addressed by the strategy.

## Answers from the Commission

The role of the EU Bioeconomy is to create linkages between all relevant policies and not to substitute them. The ecosystem dimension is important, and it was stressed in various forums.

A roadmap regarding the revision of the Bioeconomy Strategy will be presented early 2018, in view of the September 2018 deadline for adoption. The Strategy and its main objectives and principles remain relevant, what is foremost needed is a streamlined action plan and improved implementation framework (including impact indicators). The two (scope and process) are interrelated, and details will be provided in the Roadmap, including the engagement of key stakeholders like forest owners. The greater effort will most likely be required when redrafting the action plan – there are 54 actions, and these are arguably too many. Quantitative indicators are needed in particular. The traditional woodworking industries are part of the bioeconomy, as are the more 'novel' branches of bio-based economy.

The SCAR has a strategic role on providing scientific advice throughout bioeconomy, including the forest based sector. SCAR also has a strategic working group on forestry.

The Chair concluded that this topic is of crucial importance for our sector. In nine months the revision of the strategy will be presented, and this will affect the whole sector fundamentally. The group will come back to this and be actively engaged in these discussions.

## **Points for information**

### **3.4.EU Timber Regulation Product Scope – State of play**

The Commission made a short presentation on the state of play on the EUTR product scope impact assessment.

During the 2015 evaluation, stakeholders considered that the product scope is not optimal, with some stakeholders asking to include certain products and others to exclude them.

The Commission is now finalising the questionnaire for public consultation that will be available in all EU languages in January 2018 and stakeholders will have 12 weeks to respond. The decision on whether or not to change the scope will be taken in the second half of 2018.

CEPF asked for how long we need the EUTR in EU taking into account the administrative burden associated with such a regulation.

The Commission answered that any consideration on the future of the Regulation can be done after review of its effectiveness.

The chair thanked the Commission for the update and welcomed that the members of the group will have the opportunity to contribute to the public consultation.

### **3.5.State of play on the discussions on Natura 2000 and forests – outcomes of the events of ENRD and joint SFC-CGBN meeting**

ENRD made a presentation on the outcome of the ENRD event on Natura 2000 that is available on CIRCA.

Questions and comments from the members

Eustafor mentioned the lack of participation of relevant stakeholders in the implementation of Natura2000 measures. They asked about the reason for the limited use of the forestry measures. Another point raised was the large carnivores. They mentioned that the Committee of the regions is working on an opinion on this that is very important also for the forestry sector. They highlighted that the management of the population, and species under protection is crucial, and concrete ideas from the colleagues dealing with environment are needed.

CEPF underlined also that we need to actualise the observation of the large carnivores.

COGECA stressed that we can continue to spend rural development funds to protect farmers and forest owners from large carnivores and to compensate them for the damages incurred. We need to find solutions as soon as possible to address this issue that has a huge impact on all aspects of sustainability.

Birdlife mentioned that one of the solution for farmers to protect against large carnivores is to fence the livestock.

Answers from ENRD:

There are 112 measures included in the RD for Natura2000 but not all MS programmed forestry in their programmes. One of the issues that make the measure unattractive is the administrative burden. Sometimes measures are covered by state aid and these are simpler.

They also mentioned that they had not had any discussion on large carnivores.

The chair concluded that we need to continue the good debate also in the future and that he highly appreciated the active participation of the members of the group on this important topic for the sector.

#### **4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions**

The new chairmanship was elected: Mr Lennart Ackzell, COGECA for a 1st mandate as Chair, Ms Julia Christian, EEB for a 1st mandate as Vice-Chair and Mr Pedro Albizu, CEPI for a 3rd mandate as Vice-Chair.

In the context of the future CAP and the review of the bioeconomy strategy it was concluded that the contribution of forestry and forest-based sector to the rural and EU economy as a whole, and to environmental and social objectives is crucial and that this needs to be taken into account in these discussions.

## **5. Next steps**

The Impact Assessment for the future CAP is expected by March 2018, the MFF proposal by May 2018 and the CAP legislative proposals by May / June 2018.

The Roadmap for the revision of the Bioeconomy strategy will be published in 2018.

For the next meeting the points on the future CAP and the review of the Bio-economy strategy will be included in the agenda.

## **6. Next meeting**

No decision was taken on the date of the next meeting of the CDG Forestry and Cork.

## **7. List of participants - Annex**

### *Disclaimer*

*"The opinions expressed in this report represent the point of view of the meeting participants from agriculturally related NGOs at community level. These opinions cannot, under any circumstances, be attributed to the European Commission. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission is responsible for the use which might be made of the here above information."*

List of participants– Minutes

*Civil Dialogue Group Forestry and Cork*

Date: 05/12/2017

	CDG MEMBER ORGANISATION	NAME OF REPRESENTATIVES
1	BirdLife Europe	AVOTINS ANDRIS
2	BirdLife Europe	COSTA JULIETA
3	CEETTAR	HELOU TAMMOUZ
4	CEI-Bois	MELEGARI SIVLIA
5	CEJA	HEIKKILA MATTI
6	CEJA	NOBREGA CLAUDIO
7	CEPF (Note Taker)	SILJAMA MERI
8	CEPF	BERGLUND EMMA
9	CEPF	BERTRAND OLIVIER
10	CEPF (President)	BUDIL BERNHARD
11	CEPF	HUGNAGL NATALIE
12	CEPF	LINNAMAA PENTTI
13	CEPF	MUIZNIEKS ARNIS
14	CEPF	SANS IGNASI
15	CEPI aisbl	ALBIZU PEDRO
16	CEPI aisbl	LEBERLE ULRICH
17	COGECA (New President)	ACKZELL LENNART
18	COGECA	GESZPRYCH MAREK
19	COGECA	JOEAAR PRIIT
20	COGECA	SOVERAL JOAO
21	COGECA	SZEP TIBOR
22	COPA	COLLINS PATRICK
23	COPA	HAKKARAINEN JUHA
24	COPA	HOEBARTH MARTIN
25	COPA	NEAGU OANA
26	COPA	ZEC SILVIJA
27	ECVC	FONTES DINIS JOAO
28	ECVC	KASME LAYLA
29	ECVC	OESTLING TORGNY

30	ELO	DUARTE SILVEIRA PEDRO
31	ELO	GAIZUTIS ALGIS
32	ELO	ROCHA ANA
33	ENFE	JAAKKOLA SIMO
34	EURAF	RIGUEIRO ANTONIO
35	EURAF	LOSADA MARIA
36	EUSTAFOR	BORKOWSKI PIOTR
37	EUSTAFOR	JOHANSSON OLOF
38	FECOF	WENDLANDT ALEXANDER
39	IFOAM EU GROUP	SLABE ANAMARIJA
40	UEF	DIEMER MICHAEL
41	USSE	LACALLE EDURNE
42	USSE	SALABERRIA ISASI LEIRE
43	WWF	SCHULMEISTER-OLDENHOVE ANKE
<i>TOTAL</i>		43