



4TH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC FORUM ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

6 OCTOBER 2016

BRUSSELS

MINUTES

The fourth meeting of the Scientific Forum on Invasive Alien Species was held in Brussels on 6 October 2016. The following Member States participated in the meeting: AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK and UK.

The European Commission (COM) was represented by Unit ENV.D.2 (chairing) and Unit JRC.D.2. A full list of meeting participants is provided in Annex 1.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

COM welcomed the delegates to the meeting. The proposed agenda was adopted without comments. The agenda can be found in Annex 2.

2. DISCUSSION ON THE DELEGATED ACT ON RISK ASSESSMENTS

COM presented the working document intended to provide the basis for a delegated act as per Article 5(3) of Regulation 1143/2014 (the IAS Regulation) which was circulated to the Scientific Forum ahead of the meeting.

The draft document was generally well received by the Scientific Forum. The approach was welcomed by the group and the text proposed was thoroughly discussed. Constructive suggestions were made and concrete wording suggestions were debated and agreed upon by the participants.

Follow up:

COM will introduce the changes proposed during the meeting in the draft document and circulate it to the Scientific Forum setting a deadline for submitting further comments and textual suggestions by e-mail to **ENV-IAS@ec.europa.eu**. COM will then integrate the new comments and prepare a new version of the draft delegated act. This new version will be discussed by the Scientific Forum at a meeting during the 1st quarter of 2017.

3. AOB

Some members of the Scientific Forum asked whether it would be possible for COM to disclose the number of positive opinions and negative opinions of fellow members of the Forum on the risk assessments submitted for written consultation, together with their comments. Some suggested this would be very useful information for the IAS Committee members too.

COM explained that the rules for expert groups do not allow for disclosing individual opinions. However, at the IAS Committee meeting, COM did explain the main points of disagreement by those members who did not have a positive opinion regarding certain risk assessments, without naming those members.

COM nevertheless recalled that the opinion of the Scientific Forum is the one of the group and according to the rules of procedure it is decided by a simple majority of the members. Therefore all risk assessments that received at least 15 positive opinions were considered to have received the positive opinion of the Scientific Forum.

COM also recalled that one of the main tasks of the Scientific Forum is to evaluate whether risk assessments are compliant with Article 5(1) of the IAS Regulation. When asked for an opinion on a risk assessment, each Member should evaluate the science and the compliance with the IAS Regulation, rather than issuing a negative opinion because they think the species should not be listed.

While any member is welcome to express their opinion on whether a species should be listed or not, a very clear differentiation should be made between an assessment on the robustness of a risk assessment and its compliance with Art 5(1) on the one hand, and an opinion on the compliance of the species with all the criteria for listing, including based on risk management information, on the other hand.

Some members claimed the right of expressing such opinion as a forum. COM recalled that the individual opinions can certainly be shared and discussed with the corresponding Member State's authority, but that the evaluation of the robustness of the risk assessment should not be influenced by an opinion on how a species should be managed.

Other members were persuaded of the need for the Scientific Forum to focus exclusively on the science. However, making reference to the role of the Forum as per the IAS Regulation, COM added that it is possible that the IAS Committee refers a species back to the Scientific Forum for advise on whether it should be listed or not. In that case the Scientific Forum would be called upon to reflect on the issue and provide its opinion. Nevertheless, a clear distinction must be maintained between risk assessment and risk management.

Annexes:

Annex 1: Agenda of the meeting of 6 October 2016

Annex 2: List of participants at the meeting of 6 October 2016

Annex 1 - List of participants

MS	Member State authority & Individual Representative
AT	Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
BE	Belgian Biodiversity Platform
CY	Department of Environment
CZ	Institute of Botany CAS
DE	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (Bundesamt für Naturschutz, BfN)
DK	Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark, Agency for Water and Nature Management
EE	Ministry of the Environment
ES	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment
FI	Natural Resources Institute Finland
FR	Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Énergie et de la Mer
GR	Ministry of Environment & Energy
HR	Croatian agency for the environment and nature
HU	Ministry of Agriculture
IE	Department of Art, Heritage, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
IT	ISPRA Institute for Environmental Protection and Research
LT	Nature Research Centre
LV	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia
MT	Environment and Resources Authority (ERA)
NL	Radboud University Nijmegen
PL	Forest Research Institute
RO	University of Bucharest
SE	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management & Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
SI	Zavod Republike Slovenije za varstvo narave / Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation
SK	State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
UK	APHA - GB Non-Native Species Secretariat

List of participants – European Commission:

- DG Environment, Unit D.2
- JRC, Unit D.2

Annex 2 - Agenda

Point	Timing	Description	Documents	Action
1	9:00	Opening and Welcome Adoption of the agenda	Draft agenda	Adoption
2		Presentation by the Commission and discussion on the preparatory work towards the delegated act foreseen under Art.5(3) of R.1143/2014	Working document ¹	Discussion
3		AOB		
	17:00 pm	End of the day		

¹ Document is available at CIRCABC

<https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/25db87a4-71c8-4a26-b63b-0468d11e7af4>