



Brussels, 18-10-2016

Subject | Minutes of the First Management Committee Meeting of COST Action CA15206 “Payments for Ecosystem Services (Forests for Water)”

*Brussels, Belgium
18th October 2016*

1. Welcome to participants

The participants were welcomed by Dr. Monica Perez-Cabero, Science Officer and by Mrs. Aranzazu Sanchez, Administrative Officer of the Action. Dr. Monica Perez-Cabero chaired the first part of the meeting, including the election of the Action Chair, Vice Chair, and Grant Holder that was carried out under agenda item 8.

2. Verification of the presence of two-thirds of the Participating COST Countries (quorum)

With the minimum of 2/3 of the parties present (26 country representatives out of 30 attended the meeting), the necessary quorum was achieved allowing the Management Committee meeting to officially take place in accordance with Article 8 of the Rules of Procedure for the Management Committee (see http://www.cost.eu/action_management)

3. Adoption of agenda

The meeting participants agreed to adopt the draft meeting agenda received with the official invitation to the meeting.

4. Tour de table / introduction of the MC members

At point 2 of the Agenda, the delegates presented themselves in a “tour de table” (Participants list see Annex 1).

5. General information on COST mechanism and on the funding and reporting of coordination activities:

Dr. Ralph Stübner, on behalf of Dr. Monica Perez-Cabero, gave a presentation on the COST mechanism, Actions, networking instruments and policies of the COST Association (Annex 2). Relevant information can be found on the COST website at: <http://www.cost.eu>.

Mrs. Aranzazu Sanchez continued with an introduction on the COST Grant System and administration of COST Actions). Relevant information can be found on the COST website at <http://www.cost.eu/participate>.



6. Agreement on the internal rules of procedure for the Management Committee of the COST Action

The participants acknowledged and agreed to comply with the Rules of Procedure for the Management Committee given in *COST Action Management, Monitoring and Final Assessment (COST 134/14: http://www.cost.eu/action_management)*. Meeting participants are listed in Annex I.

7. Setting the frame for the Action - presentation by the Science Officer

CSO Approval: 26/02/2016

Start of the Action: 18/10/2016

End of Action: 17/10/2020

| Parties | | | | | | | |
|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| Country | Date | Country | Date | Country | Date | Country | Date |
| Austria | 26/04/2016 | Belgium | 03/10/2016 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 05/04/2016 | Bulgaria | 10/05/2016 |
| Croatia | 21/07/2016 | Czech Republic | 27/05/2016 | Denmark | 01/04/2016 | Estonia | 19/08/2016 |
| Finland | 30/03/2016 | France | 20/04/2016 | Germany | 30/03/2016 | Greece | 09/03/2016 |
| Ireland | 29/03/2016 | Italy | 12/05/2016 | Latvia | 04/08/2016 | Luxembourg | 27/07/2016 |
| Montenegro | 17/09/2016 | Netherlands | 28/09/2016 | Norway | 15/08/2016 | Poland | 14/03/2016 |
| Portugal | 28/04/2016 | Romania | 09/05/2016 | Serbia | 07/04/2016 | Slovakia | 29/04/2016 |
| Slovenia | 04/05/2016 | Spain | 03/05/2016 | Sweden | 13/09/2016 | Switzerland | 30/06/2016 |
| United Kingdom | 29/02/2016 | fYR Macedonia | 11/03/2016 | | | | |

Total number of COST Countries having accepted the MoU: 30

The budget for the first grant period (1st Nov 2016 to 30th April 2017) is maximum 70.500 €.

The MC took note of the recommendations of the Scientific Committee at the selection of the proposal for this COST Action and agreed to follow them.

8. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair

Dr. Gregory Valatin (United Kingdom) was elected unanimously as Chair, who chaired the session from this moment.

The MC decided to elect as Vice Chair, Dr. Gebhard Schueler (Germany).

9. Selection of The Grant Holder institution (Scientific Representative)

Forest Research (United Kingdom) was elected as the Grant Holder Institution, represented in the MC by Dr. Gregory Valatin (United Kingdom), who was elected as the Scientific Representative of the Grant Holder Institution.

The MC decided to set the FSAC rate to a maximum of 15% of the Total Scientific Expenditure.

10. Presentation and discussion of the Action`

The elected Chair presented the Action based on the Memorandum of Understanding (Annex 3). The MC agreed to:

- *Validate Working Groups as described in the MoU*
- *Approve the following Founder members of the Action as MC observers:*

- 1) European Forestry Institute
 - Georg Winkel (colleagues Elena Gorriz, Inazio Martinez...)
- 2) Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II, Morocco
 - Abdelmohssin El Mokaddem
- 3) Scion, New Zealand
 - Richard Yao
- 4) Auburn University, USA
 - Daowei Zhang
- 5) Beijing Forestry University, China
 - Jianhua Zhou

(Potential interest in MC observer status has been expressed by several others including FAO/UNECE, institutes in Ukraine, Tunisia and Japan. After encoding requests, it was agreed that they should be put to an e-vote of the MC).

- Hold the first full meeting of the Action in **Nancy, France** – subject to a case study **visit to Vittel** (less than an hour's journey away by road) being feasible. (The distribution of existing woodland creation for water quality PES schemes and the desirability of linking meetings with a visit to one of these was noted. No other proposals to host the first full meeting were put forward).
- Schedule the first full meeting of the Action in **mid/late Feb 2017**, with 2 days allocated to plenary/WG meetings/case study visit, to be followed by half a day for the second MC meeting.
- *Accept the proposal from Forest Research to host the Action's website and for the €3k WBP allocation for dissemination in the first grant period to be used by Forest Research for the initial work on development of the website and spatial hub.* (Experience suggesting the cost of developing a fully interactive website would far exceed amounts permitted under the Vademecum were noted. Availability of an interactive communication platform developed under the ForeStClim INTERREG project that might be used without charge as a template in developing the new website was noted by the Vice-Chair, with subsequent investigation suggesting a cost of adapting it for the Action would be around €4k).
- *Consider submitting joint abstracts for the session being organized on woodlands for water PES (Session 124, Division 9: Forest Policy and Economics) at the **2017 World Forestry Congress**, with the following acting as contact points for those interested in collaborating:*
 - **Tom Nisbet** (tom.nisbet@forestry.gov.uk) on Environmental effectiveness of Woodlands for Water PES;
 - **Alex Chikalanov** (ctmdevelopment@yahoo.com) on Cost-effectiveness of Woodlands for Water PES;
 - **Lars Högbom** (lars.hogbom@skogforsk.se) on Stakeholder engagement as key to success of woodlands for water PES;
*(WG1 members will also consider potential for a collaborative abstract and who the best contact person is – although Paola Gatto (paola.gatto@produzione.agraria.unipd.it) potentially may be the best contact initially. The **deadline** for abstracts is **30th Nov 2016**).*
- *Consider further at the next MC meeting potential for arranging a meeting of the Action to fit with the IUFRO World Forestry Congress 2017 session.*
- *Consider opportunities to address some issues raised by the Scientific Committee through bidding for linked research and innovation funding. (Interest was expressed by around 20 participants in a collaborative bid under the current H2020 call and Rhys Evans <rhys@hln.no> offered to organize a meeting of those interested to discuss and see if someone willing to coordinate a bid emerges. A mid Feb 2017 deadline is quite tight for the call discussed, but a primary impediment is that a coordinator for a collaborative bid is currently lacking. Noting the nature of the specific call as an Innovation Action, the COST Science Officer suggested avoiding fundamental research in a proposal and, based on the call budget, limiting a consortium to no more than 10-12 partners).*
- *Follow up on the SC recommendations and COST policies at subsequent meetings.*
- *Ask WG4 to circulate questions (drawing upon those suggested at the meeting) to MC members to engage them in thinking about what they would like the Action to achieve and elicit their interests in*

communication and other activities, in order to help inform development of the Dissemination & Exploitation Plan. (Members were also encouraged to consider potential for useful links to other projects that they are involved in and with wider events such as potential for circulating a note on relevant areas covered by the forthcoming ACES conference <<http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/aces/index.html>> should any members participate in this).

- Consider how impacts such as success stories in meeting the Action's main objectives (increasing woodland cover leading to increasing water quality and helping meet WFD objectives and other policy objectives) can be captured.
- Discuss further the Deliverables and Timeline described in the MoU at the first full meeting of the Action. (In break-out groups, WG members expressed concerns about the ambitious nature and feasibility of some deliverables and time-scales, suggesting changes may be needed – albeit in some cases relatively minor. The view of the COST Science Officer that we should be careful not to 'lighten' the proposal was noted, as was a need for all countries signing the MoU - not just the small number involved in writing the proposal, to take ownership of the Action's proposed workplan. Doubts expressed by the Scientific Committee which evaluated the proposal about whether some aspects would be achievable within the COST framework were also noted. Further consideration is also needed as the plenary discussion occurred towards the end of the meeting after some MC members had already left, with the Science Officer raising concerns about whether the meeting remained quorate).

11. Establishment of Action Management structure

The MC elected the following MC members/substitutes for the relevant positions:

WG1:

- Leader: **Paola Gatto** (University of Padova, Italy);
- Vice-leader: **Alessandro Leonardi** (Etifor, Italy);

WG2:

- Leader: **Tom Nisbet** (Forest Research, UK);
- Vice-leader: **Yiying Cao** (ADAS, UK);

WG3:

- Leader: **Alex Chikalanov** (University of Library Studies & Information Technologies, Bulgaria)

WG4:

- Leader: **Lars Högbom** (Skogforsk - the Forestry Research Institute of Sweden)
- Vice-leader: **Rik De Vreese** (BOS+ vzw, Belgium)

STSM:

- Co-ordinator: **Zuzana Sarvasova** (National Forest Centre, Zvolen, Slovakia)
- Vice Co-ordinator: **Kazimierz Banasik** (Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Poland)

(No candidates stood for the role of Vice-leader for WG3, so this position remains open, and it was decided that a vice-leader will be elected at the first full WG3 meeting).

The MC agreed to establish a core group to prepare MC decisions comprising:

- Action Chair and Vice-Chair;
- WG leaders and Vice-leaders;
- STSM co-ordinator and Vice-Coordinator.

At the start of the MC, those present indicated a preference to participate in the WGs as follows:

| Name | Country | WG1 | WG2 | WG3 | WG4 |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Alessandro Paletto | Italy | | ? | | |
| Alex Chikalanov | Bulgaria | | | X | |
| Alexandru Maxim | Romania | X | | | |
| Anže Japelj | Slovenia | | | X | |
| Attila Toth | Slovakia | X | | | |
| Daire O Huallachain | Ireland | ? | X | ? | ? |
| Dijana Vuletic | Croatia | X | | | X |
| Fernando Gordillo | Germany | | | X | |
| Gavril Stefan | Romania | X | | | |
| Gebhard Schueler | Germany | | X | | X |
| Gregory Valatin | UK | ? | | X | ? |
| Ivan Mincev | fYR Macedonia | | ? | | |
| Ivonne Trebs | Luxembourg | | X | | |
| Javier Martinez Lopez | Spain | | X | | |
| Jens Abildtrup | France | | | X | |
| Kazimierz Banasik | Poland | | X | | |
| Katrin Heinsoo | Estonia | | ? | | ? |
| Kristina Potocki | Croatia | | X | | X |
| Lars Högbom | Sweden | | | | X |
| Leena Finér | Finland | | X | | |
| Magdalena Frac | Poland | | X | | |
| Maria A. Cunha e Sá | Portugal | | | X | |
| Mary Kelly-Quinn | Ireland | | X | | |
| Mersudin Avdibegović | Bosnia and Herzegovina | ? | | | |
| Mette Termansen | Denmark | | | X | |
| Paola Ovando Pol | Switzerland | | | X | |
| Rhys Evans | Norway | X | | | X |
| Rik De Vreese | Belgium | X | | | X |
| Spela Pezdevsek Malovrh | Slovenia | X | | ? | |
| Tatiana Kluvankova | Slovakia | X | | | |

In order to facilitate the daily management of the COST Action, the MC agreed to give the following mandates:

- *In case where not of strategic importance or legally requiring approval by the MC under Vademecum*



rules, the core group may make decisions rather than referring these to the full MC. (Noting that there is a delicate balance to be struck between ensuring efficient decision-making that avoids overloading MC members with emails and e-voting for relatively minor decisions, and ensuring all MC members are sufficiently involved in making decisions, we agreed to return to this issue at subsequent MC meetings in order to ensure the core group strike a good balance).

- After the invitation for a meeting has been sent to the partners, the time to accept the invitation is one month, after which it is cancelled and someone else can be invited instead. (Decided towards the end of the meeting, please let the Chair know if you disagree and would like an e-Vote initiated).
- The time to submit your tickets and other relevant documents electronically to the GH is 14 calendar days after the meeting is finished. (Decided towards the end of the meeting, please let the Chair know if you disagree and would like an e-Vote initiated). Exceptions to this rule can be allowed when you inform the GH beforehand.

12. Action implementation planning

The MC revised and approved the Action long term planning presented in Annex 3, including the proposed contents for the WBP.

The agreed WBP for grant period 1 (covering Nov 2016 – April 2017 inclusive), incorporate the following:

- **5 Goals**
 - **GP1:** Define a Dissemination & Exploitation Plan;
 - **GP2:** Create Website
 - **GP3:** State of the Art: Commence evidence review on the effectiveness of woodland creation for reducing agricultural diffuse pollution
 - **GP4:** State of the Art: Commence discussions on a common protocol to assess cost-effectiveness of woodlands for water PES schemes;
 - **GP5:** State of the Art: Commence characterisation of design & governance aspects of European woodlands-for-water PES;
- **Science Budget of €61304** (net of 15% admin costs allocated to grant holder) *allocated as follows:*
 - **€3k** for dissemination (website/spatial hub development) – also allowing €3k to be allocated in GP2 (giving more time to consider how best to design the spatial hub and pushing this work largely into the second grant period);
 - **€5k** for 2 short term scientific missions (STSMs)

€53304 for expenses in holding the first full meeting of the Action

The MC agreed on the content of the draft Work and Budget Plan - including STSMs on the following topics:

- **Effectiveness of woodland creation for reducing agricultural diffuse pollution** (linked to WG2)
- **Approaches to quantifying cost-effectiveness of woodlands for water PES** (linked to WG3)

(A proposal to broaden the STSM call to permit applications covering other topics linked to the work of the Action was discussed, but elicited mixed responses with some members considering a specific call better).

13. Any Other Business (AOB)

14. Closing

The MC Chair thanked the participation of all the MC members and closed the meeting soon after 17:00h.

Prepared by:

COST Association: Dr Monica Perez-Cabero

Action Chair: Dr. Gregory Valatin



List of Annexes

Annex 1: Participants List

Annex 2: Presentation from COST Association

Annex 3: Presentation from the Action Chair



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