

## ICP Forests & Forest Focus

**2ND MEETING OF  
THE EXPERT PANEL ON GROUND VEGETATION AND BIODIVERSITY IN FORESTS  
ACCADEMIA ITALIANA DI SCIENZE FORESTALI  
FIRENZE, ITALY, 21 MARCH 2007**

<http://www.icp-forests.org/EPbiodiv.htm>

### **Minutes**

Meeting co-chaired by Pat Neville and Bruno Petriccione

The meeting was formally opened by the Chairman Pat Neville. Gherardo Chirici of the AISF outlined the history of the Accademia to the participants. Bruno Petriccione formally welcomed the participants on behalf of the Italian State Forest Service and outlined its role and function.

The meeting agenda was adopted.

Bruno Petriccione informed the Panel of the work since the last EP meeting. At the Nicosia meeting a draft vision table was formed which outlined some of the potential parameters that could be involved in future surveys of forest biodiversity. These parameters should be used to form the basis of a project proposal for biodiversity monitoring in the forests of Europe. An informal meeting, hosted at the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission held in January 2007 explored this further. Also a ground vegetation species code sub-group had also met at the JRC in March 2007 to work on the issue of species coding at European level.

Annemarie Bastrup-Birk presented information on the BioSoils biodiversity demonstration project. More than 90% of Level I plots across the EU are represented in the study. Field sampling is ongoing during 2007 and calls for data transmission will be made in the future.

Bruno Petriccione informed the panel on progress at EU level on the proposed LIFE + Regulation and the proposed European Forest Monitoring Programme. LIFE + remains in draft format only at present but a meeting is expected on May 8<sup>th</sup> 2007. If both the European Council and the European Parliament agree then the new Regulation could be published as early as Autumn 2007 with a call for work programmes later the same year. A proposal drafted by the German EU presidency following the Finnish presidency on a new European Forest Monitoring Programme was also outlined. This new EFMP acts as a background to future European forest monitoring surveys and all Member States have been invited to comment. Bruno Petriccione has been asked to produce a revised version to be further discussed at the PCC meeting of ICP Forests in Hamburg March 2007.

Bruno Petriccione also outlined the work of the SEBI 2010 initiative. A final set of indicators is due to be published for adoption in April 2007. The proposed indicators, Tree condition, forest deadwood, naturalness, ground vegetation, forest structure and

protected status are similar to the indicators employed in both the BioSoil and ForestBiota projects.

Roberto Canullo informed the panel of the work of the species code sub-group and some of the difficulties associated with preparing a European harmonised species code list. Some of the difficulties revolve around the use and updating of the Flora Europaea and the use of the nine digit species code format. He also emphasised the strong need for a common European Flora.

Roberto further recommended that international inter-calibration courses were necessary to ensure data quality control and data quality assurance of the Expert Panel. The Expert Panel fully endorses this recommendation. The data submission forms of the Ground Vegetation Manual of ICP Forests will also need to be updated. Richard Fischer offered the assistance of PCC in this matter.

The Chairman Pat Neville asked the countries if a survey of ground vegetation will be carried out at the Level II plots in 2007. Some countries indicated it would, others that it was not scheduled for 2007, while one said they would not.

Maria Christina Allegrini presented information on quality control in ground vegetation assessments. Quality management and quality evaluation are absolutely necessary to ensure data quality assurance. The conclusion of this work is that field training and calibration courses are required for true pan-European harmonisation of ground vegetation data.

This presentation concluded the meeting of the Expert Panel. The chair and co-chair thanked the panel members and invited them to participate in the joint Expert Panel COST Action meeting in the coming days.