



“Forestry management for biodiversity”

« *Gestion de la Forêt en faveur de la biodiversité* »

„Forstmanagement für die Biodiversität“

Minutes – Procès verbal – Protokoll

Strasbourg, 10.03.2010
Room / Salle / Raum N 3.2 - 16h00-17h00

1. Opening remarks / Mots de bienvenue / Begrüßung

MEP Marcus PIEPER (DE) - Intergroup Secretary General / Secrétaire Générale /
Generalsekretär

Mr. PIEPER welcomed the participants to the Intergroup meeting. He presented Madame President Mathieu’s apologies for her absence; unfortunately she had to attend an urgent meeting. He welcomed a group of visitors from southern Germany, consisting of auditors and representatives of private credit unions, who were guests of MEP H.-P. Mayer. In his opening statement, Mr. Pieper said that issues of forest and hunting are directly linked. In forest management, there are different strategies, as well as various national tasks, dealing with sustainable management.

2. Interventions/ Presentations/ Präsentationen

- Etienne Snyers – President of “Nature, Terre et Forêt-NTF” Specialist Natura2000
“Forest and Biodiversity: Experience and questions from a forest owner”

Representing the NTF organisation for Wallonia, Mr. Snyers explained his personal experience related to forestry. He stated that after 30 years, lots of things have changed especially related to species. Lots of species appeared, for example the black stork, the black woodpecker and the beaver. He explained however that he received messages from environmentalist and administrative authorities that some species, like bats and dragonflies, are under threat. So there is a difference of perception. There is a trend to show that everything is going badly but it seems not credible for the workers on the field.

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There are still alarming messages from the authorities or from environmental agents on the endangered species.

Mr Snyers explained that for biodiversity in forest, there are 2 main areas of interest: hunting and forestry. Those two functions are the only ones that are remunerated with the production of timber, through the sale of timber and the hunting activities. Other activities, such as water, biodiversity, soil conservation, agriculture, nursing, and the social aspect, are not financially rewarded as they are considered as public property. So we have to be careful when we maximize those types of activities since they can directly affect biodiversity.

There are 3 imperatives:

- Awareness
- Recognition of the role of land managers.
- Encourage people to run their activities in a sustainable way. So Landowners need the support to act for biodiversity. The community has to help them without imposing constraints and laws that are not working and that don't bring good results.

Thus, Mr Snyers raised the issue of biodiversity and climate change. Some issues could be discussed as the differences between the native and exotic species and what is in favour of biodiversity. It is often said that we need to promote native species of trees which are really native to our respective region. This vision is a very conservative approach that comes from the past. We need to promote open areas, deforestation, and finally promotion of set aside areas, and game reserve. If there is climate change, then we need to adapt the ecosystem. In practical terms, we know that trees are very slow to adapt. The forester doesn't need to change the tree species, but if we get problems in our regions we can try to import some good seeds. He emphasized the question of carbon sequestration: the role of the forest is a carbon capture system. Some native trees do not capture as much carbon as others trees. Finally, Mr Snyers described the Natura 2000 experience in Wallonia. The designation was scientifically based without any consultation of rural actors, landowners, agriculture, and environmentalist. Those people were very sceptical about the implementation of complex regulations. So the administrative authorities decided to leave the project to those actors. They finally reached an agreement after 3 years of discussion, thus they achieved a good result with a simplification of Natura 2000. At the end of the project, they constituted an association to implement Natura 2000 to civil society.





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- Robert Flies – European Commission – DG Environment – Directorate Nature
“Overview on latest EU activities in relation to forestry and biodiversity”

Mr Flies wished to present the latest political developments with regard to forests and biodiversity. First he said that we have living landscapes in which man and nature are working together in Europe. Nature has been shaped by man for more than 2000 years. The traditional land use practise that we have in Europe is helping us maintain and to promote biodiversity. Secondly he spoke about biodiversity which *per se* is not the best way. To find the balance is very difficult for the land area we are speaking of. With regard to biodiversity at the EU – Level:

1) A Green Paper on Forest Protection entitled “Preparing forest for climate change” came out on the 1st of March 2010. The aim of this green paper is to launch a public debate on how we can best protect forests against climate change. A website was set up for everyone who is interested and people can contribute to the discussion about how we can improve our actions in different EU policies. The green paper is composed of 5 key questions that everyone can answer.

2) The European Commission (EC) created a network of protected areas, called Natura 2000 and other areas where they are active on how to integrate biodiversity into all other relevant EU – policies such as rural development

3) Natura 2000: It is constituted of bio-geographical regions; now we are coming to the implementation level, but we will face three problems:

- Problem of governance: Natura 2000 is implemented by Member States and in the member states it has to be implemented by all stakeholders that are involved for nature, as well as land users, hunters and the civil society.

- Financing: The EC will organize in 2010 a conference in July on the financing issue of Natura 2000 and we plan to do a communication early in 2011 on that subject. The timing is excellent because the budget will be under discussion from 2014 – 2020 so we can have better chance to have money for Natura 2000 in the future.

- Communication: Biodiversity is implemented by Member states, therefore, the European Commission can only support them. However, for the implementation of biodiversity, operational actors are responsible and have to communicate the concept to the society, because they need them to implement it.

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3) Biodiversity in general: 2010 is the year of biodiversity and there will be a conference in Japan in autumn this year. Mr. Flies pointed out that there is a website, where we can find information about it.

Furthermore, Mr. Flies stated that there is a need to integrate biodiversity in other sectoral policies. The future biodiversity action plan need to look into how to fill knowledge gaps, because there are different ideas about it. The EC is working on how to improve the information and communicate on what biodiversity is for people. Another point is the question of ecosystem services. In this case, the EC is thinking about how it could implement payments for ecosystem services. The services that are given to society trough land users activities.

- Vidar Holthe – Norweigan Forest Owners' Federation

Mr Holthe gave a broader perspective of the family forestry in the Nordic countries. They are all under the Logo of the confederation of forest owners. 23 countries are members of this organization of family foresters. In Norway there are a lot of forests which are unproductive, because they contain more than 50% mountains terrain and tundra. Ownership in the Nordic countries is divided into private ownership, state forestry and family forestry which is predominant in all countries.

In Sweden, some forestry is industrial forestry. In Denmark and Finland, state forestry is rather important. It is up to the forester's decisions how to log and how to cultivate within national legislation, which makes forests look like they do. The average size of private family forest in Norway is around 50 – 80 ha and all of the forests are certified. The main certification is the PEFC. In 2009, the Norwegian legislation adopted a new biodiversity act and this new act set the guidelines for all national research managements. Every forester has to protect at least 5% of his forest, where he is not allowed to log at all. Standards are not decided by the foresters themselves. It has been negotiated between conservation organizations, NGO's, labour organizations and forestry associations.

Norway and Sweden do have a biodiversity information centre which is responsible for the red list database, the alien species database, the habitat database and they are under the ministry of science and education, not under the ministry of environment or under the ministry of agriculture and forestry. They supply owners with data, at the same time NGOs, hunters and conservation organizations are collecting those data and you will find all of this in the wildlife mapping.





- Richard W. Aishton – ENPI FLEG Program Coordinator, IUCN – “Improving Forest Law and Governance in European Neighbourhood Policy Countries and Russia”

Mr Aishton managed the program ENPI FLEG, which is done in partnership with the World Bank and the WWF, and is financed by the European Commission. Taking part are Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Asserbaitshan; Armenia and Russian Federation. Mr Aishton raised the question of: “Why is biodiversity so important, why do we need it”. He argued that it is very difficult to explain it. It needs to be explained with different context, for example the one of forestry. He explained this statement with a simple example: What is more associated with the risk? Monoculture plantations or a forest with various species or more various age classes? From his point of view, the answer would be that the Monoculture planttions are more vulnerable to risks, because they only need one disease or a natural disaster and it is all completely gone.

When we take a look at the direct impacts on biodiversity, we think about harvesting, roles, ride away, and buffering. Most of the time, there is an interrelation between those aspects. We might be able to regulate or to stop such things. What we need to understand is that we have incomplete knowledge; we don’t have any idea about the capacity or the potential tipping point. We have to look in a multisectoral version and not in specific lands of forestry, not specific lands of wildlife, and not specific lands of soils.

In Europe there are lots of different types of forests. The EU habitats directive listed 58 Forest habitats. Why do we have so many different types? Forests grow but forests by definition includes plantation and include non native species. 58 different types of forest habitat is too much. People will ask themselves why we have so many different types of forest habitats. He considered that “forest contains biodiversity and forest is biodiversity!”

To conclude, Mr Aishton enumerated some threats for biodiversity, such as fragmentation, poor management, inventories, climate change and fire. He finally stated: “Understanding the true value of biodiversity. Good practical management does not oppose biodiversity, economic development, forestry conservation is comparable – that should be understood”

3. Any other business – Divers – Verschiedenes

4. Next meeting – Prochaine réunion – Nächste Sitzung





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Presence:

MEPs:

Markus PIEPER (DE) – Chairman

Giancarlo SCOTTA (IT)

Eduard KUKAN (SK)

Hans-Peter MAYER (DE)

John ATTARD-MONTALTO (MT)

Robert STURDY (UK)

Herbert DORFMANN (IT)

Bogdan MARCINKIEWICZ (PL)

Roger HELMER (UK)

Ioan ENCIU (RO)

Jaromir KOHLICEK (CZ)

Assistants/advisors:

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Marie-Therese STÄRK (Intern; MEP Hans-Peter MAYER)

Sophie BUSAM (Ass. MEP Hans-Peter MAYER)

Harald WELSCH (Ass. MEP Elisabeth Köstinger)

Observers:

Gilbert. de TURCKHEIM (FACE)

Jean-Louis BOSTEELS (FACE, Belgium)

Peter LEBERSORGER (Zentralstelle österreichischer Jagdverband)

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Ralf PÜTZ (Deutscher Jagdverband)

Goddert von WÜLFING (Deutscher Jagdverband)

Jessica BROBALD (Syngenta)

Mélanie LAMAISON (EBCD)

Kathleen LAISSY, (EBCD)

Guests:

Richard W. AISHTON

Robert FLIES

Vidar HOLTHE

Rolf PFLÜGER

Etienne SNYDERS

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