



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

*Opatija, Croatia
19th October 2017*

1. Welcome to participants

Participants were welcomed by Gregory Valatin, Chair of the Action.

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

With the minimum of 2/3 of the parties present (25 out of the 31 signatory COST countries being represented), 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 agreed to adopt the draft meeting agenda circulated in advance, while noting 3 further issues raised by the Working Groups for consideration under ‘Any Other Business’, if time allowed.

4. Matters arising from last meeting and recent Core Group meetings

i) **PESFOW-W logo** – A logo for the Action had been designed and adopted since the last MC. The Chair expressed his thanks to Attila Tóth (MC member for Slovakia) for designing it, including re-working the initial design to address issues raised by Core Group members.

ii) IUFRO World Forestry Congress session on Woodlands for Water PES.

The Chair reported that the session on Woodlands for Water PES at the IUFRO World Forestry Congress 2017 in Freiburg had gone well, with a good attendance of in the region of 30-50 participants, despite the 17 parallel sessions occurring simultaneously. The session included a total of 9 presentations, of which all but one were given by participants in PESFOR-W. The one not by a current participant in the Action had been presented by someone from Japan, who had subsequently expressed an interest in being kept in contact with the activities of the Action and potentially, in participating in the future.

As only one of the 2 dissemination grants awarded for participation in the conference had been taken up, €1971 remained unspent from the budget allocation that could now be used for other activities in GP2 instead (e.g. funding an additional STSM – subject to the COST Officer’s approval).

iii) ITC conference grants

Only one application had been received for the first call for ITC conference grants (which had had a deadline for submissions of 12th October 2017) and the Chair noted that in addition to considering whether to accept the application, discussion was needed to consider why there had not been more applications.

5. Update from the Action Chair

The Chair reminded participants of the timing of remaining grant periods. No further COST countries had joined the Action since the last MC meeting, so the number of COST signatory countries in the Action currently remains at 31 - although an application from one of the five COST countries still to join (Turkey) would be considered later in the agenda. MC participants were encouraged again to also contact those in the





other 4 remaining COST countries (Lithuania, Cyprus, Iceland and Malta) who might be interested in participating in the Action and to pass on details about the Action.

The Chair noted that the Action currently has 59 MC members and 45 MC subs, as well as MC Observers from 4 near neighbour countries (NNCs) - Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia and the Ukraine, from 2 international partner countries (IPCs) – China and New Zealand, and 2 international organisations (IO) – the European Forestry Institute and UNECE/FAO. MC Observers from New Zealand and UNECE/FAO had joined since the last MC in March.

6. Update on Short Term Scientific Missions (STSM)

Since the last MC a new webpage had been created for information about completed STSMs. The report by Theresa Bodner on payments for watershed services in Switzerland can now be found on this page (<https://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/bee-h-aqwet3>).

The Chair noted that as 2 of the 3 applications for STSMs had been accepted under the first call of GP2 (submission deadline 31st May 2017), half the budget allocated for STSMs in GP2 (€5k of the total €10k allocated) had been left to cover STSMs approved under the second call. 6 applications had been received under the second call (submission deadline 30th Sept 2017) and the Core Group had met to consider which of these to accept. Their recommendation was for the application by Guilia Amato on 'Utilities engagement in watershed investment and PES' to be accepted, along with that of Cristian Accastello on the topic 'approaches to quantify the cost-effectiveness of forests for water payments for ecosystem services' (subject to a further conversation with WG3 leaders to ensure a good fit with WG3 activities and goals). These recommendations were accepted by the MC. The Core Group further recommended that Martina Stabova and Viera Baskova be invited to submit more detailed applications over the next 2 weeks to clarify the outputs they envisage and more specifically, how these will help in meeting the objectives of the Action and fit with working group activities. Once more detailed applications had been submitted, it was recommended that these be considered further by the Core Group in the light of available funds (including any budget remaining from the Croatia meeting and subject to the approval of the COST Science Officer to transfer of surplus funds to cover additional STSMs). The MC accepted these Core Group recommendations. Applications by Soumia Touhami and Eros Borsato were on topics considered insufficiently related to the scientific objectives of the Action and were not accepted.

The STSM Coordinator noted that the next call is likely to be in May/June 2018 (i.e. at the start of GP3), although a further call in GP2 remains a possibility if funds remain unspent at the end of GP2 (as was the case in GP1).

7. Update from the Grant Holder: Action budget status

The Chair (as representative of the Grant Holder) noted that the COST Association had increased the budget for the second grant period (1st May 2017 to 30th April 2018) from €156,000 to €170,000. In the amended GP2 budget the COST Association had allocated an additional €4,940 to the meeting in Croatia and €7,233 to ITC conference grants.

8. Update from the COST Association - presentation by the Science Officer if present

The COST Science Officer was not present at the meeting.

9. Monitoring of the Action

The Chair noted that a 12-month report was due from the Action on monitoring COST policies and addressing the Scientific Committee recommendations on the proposal, with a fuller report due after another 12 months (i.e. at month 24) which would cover the Action's achievements to date in meeting its objectives, and wider metrics including publishing journal articles and submitting H2020 bids. Grant period one and



Grant period two goals were noted, as were the Scientific Committee's recommendations, with WG4 asked to consider further how to better involve stakeholders from the water management sector and agriculture, as well as ways in which the Action could potentially contribute to improving existing EU legislation.

10. Implementation of COST policies

The Chair noted that just under half of the participants in the meeting in Nancy reimbursed (27/57) were from ITCs, with more than half the participants at the Croatia meeting to be reimbursed from ITCs.

Where in future vacancies for leadership roles in the Action arise, the Chair again highlighted scope for improving the proportion from ITCs, of ECIs and also the gender balance.

11. Follow-up of MoU objectives

No specific concerns about objectives or specific GP goals were raised.

12. Scientific planning

a) Scientific strategy (MoU objectives, GP Goals, WG tasks and deliverables)

In developing the spatial repository, it had been agreed to build upon information on woodlands for water quality PES collected for the Ecosystem Market survey of European payments for watershed services schemes and for the UNECE/FAO study on woodlands for water PES that Theresa Loeffler had outlined in her presentation. (The full UNECE/FAO study is to be published later in the year, or early next year, with pre-release case study information available at <http://www.unece.org/forests/areas-of-work/policy-dialogue-and-advice/ecosystem-services/table-of-case-studies.html>). Potential for linking the PESFOR-W spatial repository to the OPPLA repository (developed under the OPERAs, OPENNESS and ESMERALDA's H2020 projects; www.oppla.eu) was noted, with the WG4 vice-leader planning a meeting to explore this possibility in the near future. Potential for links with the Forest Europe project web-based portal was also mentioned and will also be explored by the STSM Coordinator.

b) Action Budget Planning

The call for applications for ITC conference grants launched in mid-September with a deadline for a month later had elicited only one application. The abstract submitted related to the impact of trees on air quality improvement, rather than on water quality improvement, and the MC decided it was insufficiently related to the scientific objectives of the Action to accept. On discussing why only one application had been submitted, it was suggested that the time-scale for both submitting an abstract and presenting at a conference within a single grant period (i.e. within 12 months) is too tight because abstracts often have to be submitted at least a year in advance of a conference. Given this, the MC agreed that the Chair approach the COST Science Officer to request that the €7,233 allocated in the amended GP2 budget for ITC conference grants be reallocated to other uses identified by the Core Group as priorities. Potential for allocating the funding for further STSMs, or WG meetings were highlighted.

c) Long-term planning (including anticipated locations and dates of future activities)

The WG1 leader outlined plans to hold the next meeting of the Action in Italy from 13th- 15th March at a villa owned by the University of Padova in Castelfranco Veneto. The meeting will include a woodlands for water PES case study visit that will aim to trace the logic of establishing a woodlands for water PES by including meetings with both upstream landowners and downstream water users, as well as a visit to a woodlands for water PES pilot scheme.

It was agreed that the following meeting will be held south of Stavanger, Norway from 20th-22nd June 2018, with a similar format for the woodlands for water PES case study visit to that in Italy under consideration. A visit to a nearby beauty spot will be available as an option for any participants wishing to stay an additional day. Efforts to raise local sponsorship to help cover meal costs are currently ongoing.



Further consideration will be given at the MC in March 2018 to plans to hold a meeting near the Persina National Park in Bulgaria in September 2018, as well as to locations for subsequent meetings during 2019-2020, possibly including Denmark, Portugal, Ireland and/or Belgium.

d) Dissemination planning (Publications and outreach activities)

The Chair noted statistics on ResearchGate that indicate around 600 reads to date since the introductory article about the Action had been published in the journal *Research Ideas and Outcomes* (RIO) in May (<http://riojournal.com/articles.php?id=13828>). An introductory article entitled 'Towards a Woodlands for Water Code?' had been published in the October 2017 edition of the Institute for Chartered Foresters magazine 'Forestry and British Timber'.

Since the last MC the WG4 leader had designed and printed flyers about the Action, and circulated a pdf version (email of 9th August 2017). MC Members were encouraged to take the hard copies of the PESFOR-W flyer that the WG4 leader had brought and to circulate them at other events.

Potential links with broader initiatives were briefly considered. The WG4 leader confirmed no specific information is still outstanding in order to formulate a written Dissemination and Communication Plan incorporating relevant material from the MoU.

13. Requests to join the Action

The Chair reported a number of applications to join the Action, with one new applicant since the last MC – from the International Water Management Institute, Ghana. The MC considered the request by Turkey to nominate Prof Engin Eroğlu as a representative based upon his project on 'determining of landscape character of urban water corridors as visual and ecological; a case study of Asar Suyu in Duzce'. However, the MC decided that the nominee's research interests were not sufficiently aligned with the scientific objectives of the Action and decided not to accept his nomination. (The Chair has since written to the COST national coordinator for Turkey, relaying the decision and expressing the hope that a more suitable candidate or candidates will be identified and nominated).

14. AOB

The Vice-Chair reported on a COST Connect event in Brussels that he and another representative of the Action had participated in. A proposal to organize a Woodlands for Water PES Session at the Ecosystem Partnership conference be held from 14th – 19th October 2018 in San Sebastián, Spain was noted, as was a suggestion to create an IUFRO working group on Woodlands for Water PES to ensure a continuing legacy of the Action. These ideas were referred to the Core Group for further consideration. It was agreed that an invitation for the Action to participate in the International Climate Show 2018 be planned from 6th-8th April 2018 in Geneva (Annex I) be circulated to those members of the MC living relatively nearby to see if they would be interested in taking up this opportunity.

The next MC meeting will be held on 15th March 2018. The Chair reminded participants to submit their claim for reimbursement of expenses on eCOST as soon as possible – preferably by Wednesday 15th November 2017 at the latest in order to allow the Core Group to consider any GP2 budget adjustments at their next meeting on 17th November.

The Chair again thanked the Local Organiser and her team for all their efforts in organizing the meeting.

15. Closing

The Chair thanked MC members for their participation and closed the meeting at 15:30h.

Prepared by:

Action Chair: Gregory Valatin



COST is supported by
the EU Framework Programme
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List of Annexes

Annex 1: Invitation to participate in the International Climate Show 2018, 6th-8th April 2018, Geneva

Annex 2: Presentation from the Action Chair

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From: Jean-Paul Schwitzguebel [mailto:jean-paul.schwitzguebel@eptes.com]

Sent: 29 August 2017 13:21

To: Valatin, Gregory

Subject: International Climate Show 2018 (Geneva, Switzerland)

Dear Colleague,

The International Climate Show 2018 will be held in Geneva from the 6 to 8 April 2018. This event will be dedicated to the most innovative technologies and industrial solutions for climate protection and carbon emission reduction. Industry professionals will have the opportunity to present their technologies and know-how in the fields of energy, building, mobility, green finance and investment, food waste, mitigation of the effects of climate change and other related services.

Please visit Climate Show web site for more details: <http://www.climateshow.ch/en/home/>

The visitors of this event are professionals and from the large public (several thousands of visitors are expected). In addition to the exhibition space with industrial solutions, two days discussion with academia, investors, governments and companies are planned including a PitchTime with investors.

For that, I would like to see with you if possible for you to use the space that is available for presentations of EU projects and COST Actions, to organize within the Climate Show your event for your members and network. This will give to your project visibility and the opportunity to link with companies, investors and scientists present at the Climate Show who potentially would be interested to attend as well.

Please see <http://www.climateshow.ch/en/workshops/>

Forward this message to anybody you know who could be interested in such an event and let me know if you are interested to actively participate in this event; then I will send you more details.

Looking forward to receive your feedback, I send you my best regards

Dr Jean-Paul SCHWITZGUEBEL

EPTES Scientific advisor

Former chairman of COST Actions 837 and 859

Former Swiss delegate on the COST Technical Committee on Food and Agriculture



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