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OECD Scheme for the Control of Forest Reproductive Material Moving in International Trade

SUMMARIZING OECD STATISTICS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHEME

This document is prepared by Sweden in co-ordination with the Secretariat.

It is submitted to Delegations, National Designated Authorities and Observers for DISCUSSION at the Annual Meeting which will take place in Paris, OECD Headquarters, on 3-5 October 2000 [under item 7.1 of draft Agenda AGR/CA/F/A(2000)1].

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Discussion Note

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Your reference

Summarizing OECD statistics on implementation of the Scheme of Forest Reproductive Material.

Background

At the OECD Biennial Meeting of Representatives of the National Designated Authorities on 15-17 of June 1998 the summarizing of certified seed was discussed. Several parties agreed that just adding kilos of traded seed was very hard to use for reasonable interpretation of the importance of the trade. Sweden was therefor asked to present ideas for the Biennial Meeting 2000 on possible conversion and valuation of the certified amount of seeds.

From kilos to living trees

The OECD scheme on forest reproductive material handles biological material that, together with technical measures, results in growing trees. With the knowledge that e.g. one kilo seeds of *Quercus robur* corresponds to approx. 300 acorns and one kilo seed of *Betula pendula* corresponds to 5 million seeds, the summary of kilos over different species restricts the information value to transportation logistics.

There might be of equal or more interest to summarize units linked to the potential of the forest reproductive material in question. This might concern (1) number of seeds, (2) the number of germinable seeds, (3) the potential number of deliverable plants and (4) actual surviving trees in the forest. In this chain of steps it is evident that the further one moves away from the actual kilos the more assumptions will be needed and unreliable figures will be at hand.

Factors involved

1. From kilos to number of seeds there are tables available with species specific information on seeds per kilo or the weight of 1000 seeds.
2. The germination is dynamic and depends on maturing conditions, storage (type and length) and cleaning procedures.
3. The transformation from seed to plant depends on, e.g. sowing in forests/nursery culture and bare rooted/containerized production systems.

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Skogsstyrelsen

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4. The survival after planting is indeed complex and might be approximately indicated based on experiences drawn from planting activities.

What information is most suitable in the OECD Statistics?

The layout of the OECD questionnaire on *Weights of seed certified* could be amended by a new bottom field requesting the summary of one or more of the steps 1-4 described above.

A tentative proposal could be to focus on step 1 and 3 (number of seeds and number of potential seedlings). Again it has to be stressed that the conversion to these steps is based on assumptions and the interest in including the information in the OECD statistics has to be weighted against the indicative type of statistics achieved.

Who can conduct the conversion?

After trying to achieve general formulas for the OECD countries concerned, it has become evident that the necessary assumptions are best made by the designated authorities based on their experience and national networks, respectively.

In the Swedish case, e.g., the calculation of the number of corresponding seedlings has to be based on national knowledge on how the species is produced. The plant return from germinable seeds in our bare-rooted production is 25% compared with 95% in our containerized production.

The conversion should therefore be part of the information given by participating states in the questionnaire on *Weights of seed certified*, perhaps under a new name *Seed certified*.

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