



EU MINOR USES COORDINATION FACILITY

Newsletter

No. 8, October-November-December 2018

Minor uses, major issue!



The end of December is approaching. The last quarter of 2018 was again a busy period. The MUCF organised successful meetings of minor uses experts in October and the Minor Uses Steering Group met for the first time with its new composition. The MUCF attended several international meetings and conferences. Details of these events are given in this newsletter.

The Coordination Facility has made good progress in achieving its goals for 2018. EUMUDA now contains minor uses needs from the vast majority of the EU Member States and also Norway and Switzerland. The needs are organised and prioritised in a structured way and easy accessible for all stakeholders. Many projects have been entered, with more to follow.

2019 is on the horizon. The Coordination Facility has already started to plan its activities for the first quarter. In February we will organise the first 'Annual General Meeting' (AGM). This will be a meeting of all countries who have committed to fund the Coordination Facility. The main tasks of the AGM will be to approve the annual report for 2018 and plans and budget for 2019 for the Coordination Facility.

The AGM will be organised in the morning. In the afternoon of the same day the third Stakeholder Advisory Forum will be held, which will be open to all stakeholders. Both events will be held in Brussels on Tuesday 26 February and we are in the process of planning the agenda.

2019 will be the first year that the Coordination Facility will fully rely on voluntary assessed contributions from member countries. We are confident that countries that have supported the work of the Coordination Facility in 2018 will continue their support for coming years.

But we need contributions from more countries to continue our work in a sustainable way.

I would like to thank all minor uses experts in the different countries for their hard work and support. We can only do our work with your efforts. Your contributions are highly appreciated.

Finally, a word of farewell to Martin Ward, the Director-General of EPPO, who will retire at the end of December 2018. He, and other colleagues at EPPO enabled the creation and hosting of the MUCF at EPPO and he has always been very supportive to the work of the Coordination Facility.

An interview with the departing EPPO-DG is included in this newsletter.

With my best wishes for the New Year!

Jeroen Meeussen,
Coordinator of the MUCF

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Minor Uses Steering Group Meeting

The new Minor Uses Steering Group comprises representatives from Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. The European Commission attends meetings of the Steering Group as permanent observer. The Director-General EPPO and MUCF also attend these meetings. The first meeting of the new Steering Group was held on 12 November 2018 in Brussels.

The Steering Group will supervise and support the work of the Coordination Facility. The governing body, comprising all funding countries, will meet once a year for the 'Annual General Meeting' (AGM). The role of the AGM will be to approve the budget, and strategy, consider the draft annual work programme and reports of the MUCF and appoint the Steering Group.

For 2019 and beyond the following annual planning and reporting cycle was agreed:

- The reporting year will start on the 1 January of each year and will end on 31 December of each year.
- January - February: A provisional annual report, including a provisional financial statement, will be submitted by the Coordination Facility mid-January for discussion and approval of the AGM in February. It will also endorse the workplan and financial plan of the Coordination Facility.
- June: The EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility will send out letters to all EU Member States and EFTA-countries asking for their voluntary assessed contribution. If required, countries may pay their contribution to the Coordination Facility alongside their EPPO contribution.
- September: The Coordination Facility will collate the responses from member countries as input for the workplan and financial plan.
- October - November: The EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility will prepare a workplan and financial planning for the next year that can be discussed and approved in the Steering Group meeting in November.

The 'Rules of Procedure for the Steering Group' and the 'Rules of Procedure for the Annual General Meeting' that describe the governance of the Coordination Facility and the different roles of the Steering Group and AGM in more detail, are in the process of being finalised.

The Steering Group also approved the revised policy on the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses. From January 2019 onwards for experts attending meetings only travel costs will be reimbursed.



Announcement : Annual General Meeting and Third Stakeholder Advisory Forum: 26 February 2019

The Annual General Meeting will be held back-to-back with the Stakeholder Advisory Forum.

The Stakeholder Advisory Forum is organised annually by the Coordination Facility to gather input from Member States governments, EU Commission, growers, the agri-food chain and industry to discuss on general minor uses issues.

Please note in your calendar that the Annual General Meeting and Third Advisory Forum, will be held on 26 February 2019 in Brussels. In the morning the meeting of the AGM will be organized, followed in the afternoon -in the same venue- by the third Stakeholder Advisory Forum

More information on these events will soon be available on the MUCF website.

Minor uses expert meetings in Vienna

Our Austrian minor uses colleagues kindly hosted several meetings of the Minor Uses Experts Groups this autumn. From 10 to 12 October, the meetings of the Horizontal Expert Group (HEG), and of the Commodity Expert Groups (CEG) on Fruits & Vegetables, Ornamentals, Seeds and Tobacco took place at the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture.

The MUCF is very grateful to Vitore Shala-Mayrhofer for her very efficient support in the organization of the expert meetings.

The HEG was once again very well attended with more than 40 participants, and 18 countries represented. The Guidance Document on Minor Uses was one of the main topics for discussion. This Guidance Document describes the process from minor use need to a solution and will contain an overview of all registration issues. A draft was circulated to the minor uses experts for comments and a selection of the comments received was discussed in the HEG.

On 5-6 December a meeting of the drafting group took place to address all the comments in detail.

The comments are dealing with a variety of topics e.g. zonal process and mutual recognition, Article 51, risk envelope, draft Registration Report, renewal procedure, residues and data protection.

A revised version of the Guidance Document will be forwarded to the European Commission for adoption in the course of 2019.

Some active substances used in plant protection products are very important for growers of speciality crops. To bring this information to the attention of all Member States and the European Commission in a more structured way, the MUCF will start to prepare a list of active substances that are in the process of approval or renewal of approval. The publication of the EFSA-conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment of a certain active substance will be taken as a starting point to put this active substance on the list. Minor Uses experts can then indicate the importance of these substances for minor uses and the MUCF will then share this information with Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed. When this procedure is fully operational you will be informed.



Meeting of experts in Vienna

Minor uses expert meetings in Vienna - continued

The **CEG Fruits & Vegetables** was well attended with more than 40 participants. Representatives of BASF and Corteva Agriscience (Agriculture Division of DowDuPont) presented some possible solutions for minor uses needs. It was discussed that the decreasing availability of herbicides may also have a severe impact on minor uses authorisations. We all want Mutual Recognition to work. CEG F&V has started a pilot on Mutual Recognition for an Article 51 extension of a minor uses authorisation. A Registration Report has been prepared that can be used by Member States in granting an authorisation. The experts presented updates on ongoing projects. As there are issues of common interest part of the meeting was held together with CEG Seeds.

Representatives of IBMA, Syngenta and BASF were invited to join the meeting of the **CEG Seeds** and discuss about the development of active substances that will cover minor uses' needs for seed treatment and seed production. IBMA will use the CEG Seeds priority list of needs as basis for discussion with their members to show the potential market for seed treatment and/or seed production. BASF and Syngenta gave an update regarding the authorization status of a number of PPPs. In addition, BASF presented the development of the new fungicide that can be applied for seed treatment as well, but this is still in the developmental phase.

The **CEG Tobacco** was attended by 12 participants. For the CEG Tobacco it is planned that the chair and co-chair incorporate the pesticide database from AERET (European Association for Tobacco Research and Experimentation) within EUMUDA. Regarding the renewal of the approval of active substances, it was highlighted that tobacco has a lot of old active substances that are classified as harmful and it may be expected that the approval of these active substances will not be renewed. Some new projects were discussed especially against aphids, wireworms, blue mold and broom rape.

The **CEG Ornamentals** meeting focused on research on new growth regulators and alternative plant protection products against *Fusarium* infestations. In addition, the use of sulphur evaporators was discussed, and the companies Bayer CropScience and Fine Agrochemicals presented an update of the progress of their authorization dossiers for products with possible uses in ornamental cultures.

CEG Hops Meeting in Slovenia

A meeting of the Commodity Expert Group on Hops took place on 22-23 October in Žalec and Ljubljana, Slovenia

The specific needs for hop that are currently listed in EUMUDA were considered to inadequately match the needs that hop experts of the CEG would compile. Elaboration of a CEG Hops-specific list of needs was agreed.

The CEG is highly concerned about new Cut-off criteria for active substances within the EU. The currently used hazard-based approach for the assessment of pesticides should be changed towards a risk-based assessment; otherwise the danger of losing too many active substances which are required for an adequate hop production within the EU could be imminent.

A hop-specific approach prior to the necessary shift to Leaf Wall Area (LWA) for all efficacy trials in hops within the EU was discussed and has to be developed quickly by a 'LWA task force' for hops; a sound transition from surface area as the currently used reference value has to be assured.

The next meeting of CEG Hops will be convened during the back-to-back meetings in Brussels from 26-28 March 2019. The autumn meeting of CEG Hops is planned for the end of October 2019 in Poperinge, Belgium, including a visit to the hop growing area and an organic hop farm.



CEG Hops meeting in Slovenia

Interview with Martin Ward, Director-General of EPPO prior to his retirement

You were Director-General of EPPO when the MUCF was established in April 2015. What is your opinion on the evolution and progress made by the MUCF?

“The creation of the MUCF was an important step in putting the search for minor uses solutions in Europe onto a more sustainable basis. Hosting the MUCF within EPPO was an obvious way of avoiding the cost and complexity of setting up a new international organisation or finding another home which might not have been so appropriate. I am pleased that we have been able to respect the needs of funders (both of EPPO and of MUCF) to keep the finances clearly separate, but we have also been able to realise many synergies between the MUCF and EPPO work programmes.

Solving minor use problems is a long-term process and the MUCF has been careful not to claim credit for projects which were already in the pipeline before it was created. But now after three years of MUCF support and co-ordination for the work of the Commodity Expert Groups, the fruits of the MUCF can be seen. The EUMUDA database of minor use needs and of projects to find solutions shows clearly the achievements of the Facility and the size of the task that remains.”

There are common topics of interest between EPPO and MUCF e.g. minor uses extrapolation tables and EPPO Codes. How do you see the future cooperation between EPPO and MUCF?

“EPPO has worked on minor uses problems for many years, for example through the development of extrapolation tables which enable data generated for one crop to be used to support an application for an authorisation on another crop.

A joint project to turn these tables into a searchable database has been agreed by EPPO and MUCF. Both will contribute expertise and resources. The database will make EPPO’s extrapolation tables easier to use, help to ensure that the different extrapolation possibilities are all clearly presented, and ultimately contribute to making it easier to secure authorisations for minor uses in a harmonised way across Europe.”

What are your recommendations for the MUCF, for the minor uses work in Europe and at global level, respectively?

“Finding a way of sustainably funding the Facility is a high priority. EPPO is happy to host the MUCF, but what can be done depends on the level of funding, and EPPO can only make long-term commitments to the work to the extent that countries make long-term commitments to the funding. There are promising signs, though, and the willingness of new countries, in addition to those who started the Facility, to step forward to pay their share of the cost and take part in the Steering Group is welcome. Meanwhile the Facility must continue to develop practical solutions to minor uses needs according to the priorities identified in the Expert Groups. Those practical solutions will ultimately be the best way of promoting to funders and stakeholders the work of the Facility. I have not been involved directly at global level but it is surely just as important as at European level to avoid duplication of effort and to collaborate on sharing data and finding solutions wherever possible.”



Martin WARD and Nico HORN

Do you have any advice for the new Director-General of EPPO, Nico Horn, regarding ‘minor uses’ and the MUCF?

“It’s a very specialised area, and one which I continue to learn more about even as I approach the end of my term of office. Hearing the concerns of experts, industries and stakeholders will be important, but knowing him as I do I am sure that Nico Horn will listen carefully without having to be advised to do so by me!”

ABIM

The Annual Biocontrol Industry Meeting (ABIM) in Basel was an exceptionally well attended event with more than 1150 participants from 52 countries. This clearly demonstrates the growth in interest and activity in the field of biocontrol and bioprotection. The MUCF presented at the ABIM meeting an update on its activities including the priority setting of the minor uses needs.



The ABIM Steering Committee:

Anne Merz , Willem Ravensberg, David Cary,
David Loughlin , Martin Andermatt and Lucius Tamm

Three products were finalists for the 2018 **Bernard Blum award** for Novel Biocontrol Solutions:



1. **COS-OGA**, a biofungicide for powdery and downy mildew control from Fyto Fend;
2. ***Burkholderia rinojensis* strain A396**, a new bacterial strain with uses as a bioinsecticide, bionematicide and bioherbicide from Marrone Bio Innovations;
3. **ECO-NOC**, a microbial bioinsecticide effective against lepidopteran species from Plant Health Products.

The award was won by Marrone Bio Innovations for *B. rinojensis* strain A396 which produces several natural compounds. The efficacy spectrum is very broad against pests, but it is non-toxic or low risk to non-target organisms. No other microorganism is known where multiple products have been developed across such a broad range of targets.

Copa-Cogeca and IBMA Roadmap

The newly penned Roadmap between Copa-Cogeca and IBMA for collaboration in 2018-2025 has been released. Copa-Cogeca is the organization of European farmers and European agri-cooperatives, whereas IBMA is the International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association. Both organisations are collaborating on strategic issues and they concluded that there are still many issues that need stewarding. The Roadmap covers four platforms: minor uses, low-risk, developing solutions for needs of farmers, and regulatory reform either within or outside the REFIT process.

Regarding the platform on ‘minor uses’ Copa-Cogeca and IBMA agree to cooperate to ensure that solutions are made available to growers for minor uses and specialty crops, and that the solutions should be ranked in order of priority, the first priority being non-chemical solutions including biocontrol. IBMA and Copa-Cogeca will work towards implementing a robust system with the MUCF and other possible stakeholders. To achieve this IBMA and Copa-Cogeca will take an active part in Horizontal and Commodity Expert Groups.



C-IPM

The ERA-Net Coordinated Research in Integrated Pest Management (C-IPM) initiated 16 research projects of which 4 are on 'IPM and Minor Uses'.

An overview of the status of these projects was presented at a workshop in Paris on 22-23 November 2018. C-IPM involved 21 countries and 32 organisations and focused on the challenge of responding to the mandatory implementation of the principles of integrated pest management (IPM) as called for by Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides.

Time to introduce the 4 projects on 'IPM and Minor Uses' in more detail.



FlyIPM

The aim of FlyIPM is to improve the management of root-feeding fly larvae infesting outdoor vegetable crops using an integrated approach. This is done by (i) synthesising information on life-cycles and on monitoring and forecasting approaches to improve integration of control methods;

(ii) developing methods to reduce the likelihood of adult insects finding and/or infesting susceptible crop plants;

(iii) developing and refining methods for biological control of larval and adult insects with entomopathogenic fungi and nematodes;

(iv) integrating current and new methods of control into IPM strategies and

(v) disseminating this information to stakeholders to improve pest management at field and farm level.



AAPM

Spotted wing drosophila (SWD) is a fruit fly attacking soft berry fruits. To measure the success of control measures against SWD, accurate and frequent monitoring of its presence is required. The AAPM project develops a system based on planar, photographable traps, such as sticky traps, monitored with high-resolution airborne imagery. The images are analyzed with deep learning methods and target insects are counted. Approximately hundred traps with SWD were used to train detection and counting algorithms. The next part of the project will focus on airborne image acquisition and integration of SWD counts into decision support systems (DSS) providing information for IPM strategies.

CRootControl

In the last decade, the European horticultural industry has seen an increasing prevalence of hairy root disease (HRD) in tomato, eggplant and cucumber cultivation. HRD results in excessive root formation, which ultimately leads to substantial economic losses for the growers. Until now, there have been no solutions available for the entire sector. The main aim of the project is to develop sustainable integrated pest management (IPM) solutions to reduce problems caused by HRD. For this, the scientists approached the problem from several angles, looking at plant cultivation, biofilm in irrigation systems, and biocontrol organisms, in order to make progress in developing IPM strategies to reduce HRD.

UNIFORCE

Blackberry, currant, raspberry, strawberry and azalea are attacked by mites of the families *Eriophyidae*, *Tarsonemidae* and *Tetranychidae*. These mites have similar life styles, are tiny, often hidden and difficult to monitor until damage is conspicuous. An efficient, sustainable and integrated way to control these mites in-field is required.

As the target crops are minor crops in most countries, cooperation between multiple European research organisations will boost each country's limited and separate capacities. UNIFORCE research structure will focus on the tritrophic interactions between plant, pest and beneficials.

Central European Regulation Forum

CEUREG is a technical conference for plant protection products regulation experts from Central and Eastern European Countries. The 22nd event took place in Vienna, Austria, from 29 to 30 October 2018 and was attended by more than 40 people.

This was an excellent opportunity for the MUCF to update the participants on the work of the Coordination Facility, including an update on the new features in EUMUDA.

The first day of the conference was dedicated to regulatory issues related to Regulation 1107/2009 and the Sustainable Use Directive.

The findings in the REFIT-report were presented, where we are with low-risk substances was discussed, and the problems of using guidance documents in the evaluation of plant protection products was highlighted.

Austria presented their 'ALERT-system' which is a forecasting service for plant protection (available in German on www.warndienst.at).

On the second day some enforcement issues were discussed. The Europol Operation 'Silver Axe III' focused on the sale and placing on the market (import) of counterfeit PPP and illegal trade PPPs. The operation ran over 20 days in spring 2018 and resulted in the confiscation of 360 tonnes of counterfeit pesticides.

More information on the event can be found here:

<http://www.ceureg.com/>



Announcement:



In January 2019 EPPO will publish a post for a Scientific Officer to lead the programme on Plant Protection Products.

More information will soon be available at

<https://www.eppo.int>