



EUFGIS

**Promoting dynamic gene
conservation of forest trees
in Europe**

The EUFGIS activities are carried out in collaboration with the European Forest Genetic Resources Programme (EUFORGEN), which promotes conservation and sustainable use of FGR in Europe. EUFORGEN was established in 1994 as an implementation mechanism of Strasbourg Resolution 2 made by the first MCPFE Conference in 1990.

More than 30 European countries are participating in EUFORGEN and continuing the regional collaboration on FGR as part of the MCPFE Work Programme. The EUFORGEN activities are funded by the member countries and coordinated by Bioversity International.

EUFORGEN operates through Networks in which scientists, managers and policy-makers work together to analyse needs, exchange experiences and develop gene conservation methods and strategies for forest trees. EUFORGEN has also facilitated the strengthening of national efforts on FGR and contributed to the development of new programmes and policies of the European Union in this area.

The compilation of FGR information and related documentation work is an important element of the EUFORGEN activities. The EUFORGEN Steering Committee, consisting of National Coordinators from all member countries, has agreed that the information system will be maintained and updated by EUFORGEN after the EUFGIS project has ended. The information system will be used by the EUFORGEN Networks as they continue their efforts in developing the pan-European gene conservation strategies and action plans for forest trees.

**For further information
on EUFGIS, please contact:**

Dr. Jarkko Koskela
Bioversity International
Regional Office for Europe
Via dei Tre Denari, 472/a
00057 Maccarese
Rome, Italy
E-mail: euf_secretariat@cgiar.org
Website: www.eufgis.org



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EUFGIS is coordinated by Bioversity International



Project partners

- Bioversity International
- Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests, Natural Hazards and Landscap, Austria
- State Forest Tree Improvement Station, Denmark
- Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, France
- National Forest Centre, Slovakia
- Slovenian Forestry Institute, Slovenia
- Forest Research, United Kingdom

About EUFGIS

The future of Europe's forests and forestry depends on the ability of the trees to adapt in the face of climate change. This, in turn, depends on maintaining evolutionary processes and genetic diversity within tree populations. This approach is called 'dynamic gene conservation' and it is based on managing tree populations at their natural sites within the environment to which they are adapted (*in situ*), or artificial, but dynamically evolving, tree populations elsewhere (*ex situ*).

Countries throughout Europe have conserved their forest genetic resources (FGR) by establishing gene reserve forests and other conservation units. However, there are differences between countries in how these units are established and managed, what data are collected and how they are reported. This makes it difficult to compare the gene conservation efforts between the countries and to develop gene conservation strategies for forest trees at pan-European level.

The EUFGIS project—Establishment of a European Information System on Forest Genetic Resources—will overcome these problems by developing pan-European minimum requirements for 'dynamic gene conservation units' of forest trees and setting standards for data collection

and reporting. It will also create a unique online database on dynamic gene conservation units of forest trees. By making available geo-referenced data on the existing gene conservation units across the entire distribution range of forest trees in Europe, EUFGIS will facilitate development of truly pan-European gene conservation strategies or action plans, and sharing of responsibilities in FGR conservation among European countries. It will also facilitate FGR conservation efforts at the national level, helping European countries use their human and financial resources more effectively.

EUFGIS is one of the 17 actions funded by the European Commission through the Council Regulation (EC) No 870/2004 on genetic resources in agriculture. The action was launched in April 2007 and it will last until September 2010.



Objectives

- To establish a network of national FGR inventories to provide data for the information system
- To develop minimum requirements for dynamic gene conservation units of forest trees and common information standards for these units at pan-European level
- To create an online information system to serve as the European documentation platform for national FGR inventories
- To provide training on FGR documentation to national focal points in participating countries
- To make available, as a first step, harmonized data on the dynamic gene conservation units of 20 tree species from at least 80% of the countries within each species' distribution range in Europe.

Once established, the information system will support the work of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) and the SEBI2010 process (Streamlining European Biodiversity Indicators), as well as the implementation of sustainable forest management and the Community biodiversity strategy. It will also contribute to global reporting efforts, such as the development of the State of World's FGR report by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).