



**European Cooperation
in the field of Scientific
and Technical Research
- COST -**

Secretariat

Brussels, 27 September 2006

COST 286/06

NOTE

To : COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)

Subject : Terms of Reference for a mandate of a COST Domain Committee in the field of
Forests, their Products and Services ¹

Delegations will find attached the "Terms of Reference for a mandate of a COST Domain Committee in the field of Forests, their Products and Services" as approved by the CSO at its 164th meeting on 29/30 March 2006, and the domain descriptor, as approved by the CSO at its 165th meeting on 27/28 June 2006 (in Annex 1).

¹ This document replaces previous version as set out in doc. COST 241/06.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE MANDATE
OF THE COST DOMAIN COMMITTEE
IN THE FIELD OF FORESTS, THEIR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**

1. The COST Domain Committee in the field of Forests, their Products and Services, hereinafter referred to as "the DC"¹, is established by the COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) for a period of four years as of 1 June 2006.
2. At the end of this period, and on receipt of a report by the DC, the CSO shall decide whether to extend the mandate of the DC for an additional period of time and, in that case, review these Terms of Reference.
3. The CSO may at any time amend these Terms of Reference or terminate the mandate of this DC.
4. The DC will adopt its Rules of Procedure on the basis of the model set out in doc. COST 236/06 or in any new document amending or replacing it.
5. The DC is responsible for general oversight of COST activities within its domain, including the development of strategic initiatives, and, in particular, for the quality assurance of new Action proposals, for monitoring progress of ongoing Actions and for evaluating completed Actions.
6. Within the framework of the COST Continuous Open Call and the two stage submission process, the DC will assess proposals for new COST Actions assigned to its domain. This assessment will be in accordance with the "Guidelines for Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation of COST Actions" in the Vademecum (<http://www.cost.esf.org/index.php?id=38>). The DC will be responsible for the assessment and selection of preliminary proposals and for implementing quality control, through external peer review, of full proposals and for making recommendations for new Actions to the CSO.

¹ The detailed descriptor of the domain is set out in Annex to this document.

7. COST Actions should:
 - a. have an innovative character and a high scientific/technological standard and contribute substantially to the coordination of research efforts;
 - b. give a strong and visible contribution to the European Society; through being of potential interest across Europe to scientific communities and research organisations; public environmental authorities; policy institutions; and to private companies and industry;
 - c. be based on careful considerations of interests, resources and budgetary consequences in the interested countries, as well as on assessments of the added value expected to be achieved through the coordination;
 - d. be broad and flexible enough to permit an interdisciplinary approach and later inclusion of activities not foreseen during the preparation, taking due consideration of point 10 below;
 - e. identify and take into account R&D efforts in other fora;
 - f. assist in the mobility of European young researchers.

8. When submitting a new Action to the CSO for approval:
 - a. the COST Office should ensure that the Technical Annex to the Memorandum of Understanding is structured as set out in the "Guide for Proposers of new COST Actions" in the Vademecum (<http://www.cost.esf.org/index.php?id=38>).
 - b. the DC should provide the CSO with an Assessment Report and any additional information that the CSO may need for making a decision on the Action.

9. The DC will:
 - a. monitor the implementation of its COST Actions to ensure that the objectives as set out in their Memoranda of Understanding are met;
 - b. ensure coordination and exchange of information, as required, as well as complementarity and synergy between its Actions as well as with relevant activities in other Domain Committees in COST, the Community R&D programmes, EUREKA, the European Science Foundation, other European cooperative research frameworks and standardisation bodies and will appoint members of the DC as liaisons with these bodies, as appropriate;
 - c. take account of interdisciplinarity within its domain and with other domains and of new developments in its domain.

10. The DC should give an opinion to the CSO on any proposal pertaining to one of its COST Actions and concerning:
 - a. an extension or prolongation of an Action,
 - b. a change of the title or a modification of the objectives of an Action, or
 - c. participation of an international organisation or an institute from a non-COST country in an Action.

Such an opinion shall be given with full knowledge of the views of the Management Committee of the Action concerned; a decision on the proposal will then be taken by the CSO.

11. The DC advises the Actions assigned to its domain with regard to the scientific aspects within the objectives as laid down in the respective MoU.

12. The DC is responsible for the evaluation of its COST Actions on completion of each Action, according to the "Guidelines for Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation of COST Actions" in the Vademecum (<http://www.cost.esf.org/index.php?id=38>).

13. The DC should take all the measures it considers necessary to ensure efficient dissemination and/or exploitation of the results of its COST Actions, in close cooperation with the relevant Management Committees and taking account of the COST Policy on Dissemination and Monitoring the Impact of COST Results as set out in doc. COST 327/05 or in any new document amending or replacing it.
 14. The DC will be represented by its Chair or by an appointed substitute at all meetings convened between the CSO President, the CSO or the JAF Group and the Chairs of the DCs.
 15. The DC will report on its activities, as requested, to the CSO and will provide an overview report to the CSO at the end of each mandate period.
-

FORESTS, THEIR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES (FPS)

Domain descriptor

The Domain FORESTS, THEIR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES is concerned with complex and unique processes which form the basis for present and potential capacity to provide resources to satisfy human needs as well as environmental values. The FPS Domain has the mission to promote research along the whole forest-wood-chain by providing a platform for the effective coordination of nationally funded research activities in the areas of forestry, wood technology and pulp & paper.

The following examples illustrate aspects of actual research in this Domain. The scope of the Domain is not, however, restricted only to these activities.

Forestry Research supports activities aiming at meeting the social, economic, ecological, cultural, health-bringing and spiritual needs of present and future generations. In the light of the current international forest dialogue the DC FPS offers a forum for encouraging a scientific debate on ensuring a sustainable provision of forest products and services, such as wood and wood products, water, bio-energy, rural development, recreation and public health, habitats for wildlife, landscape diversity, carbon sinks and reservoirs.

Forests and Environment research activities are fostered focusing on the protection of forests against harmful effects of pollution, including air-borne pollution, fires, pests and diseases, in order to maintain their full multiple values. In this context adequate importance is attached to the provision of timely, reliable and accurate information on forests and forest ecosystems as they are essential for public understanding and knowledge-based decision-making.

Wood Technology sector aims at an increase of knowledge necessary for a broader use of timber, a sustainable, energy efficient and renewable resource. With the objective to enhance the competitiveness of timber, DC FPS supports research activities focusing on the improvement of wood properties, the performance of timber and its indoor and outdoor usability.

Pulp and Paper sector promotes research contributing to an increase in knowledge of the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of the pulps and the resulting products. High priority is placed on optimising the level of utilization of the resources and to improve both the sustainability of pulp and paper making and the competitiveness of paper products.

At a cross-sector level the DC FPS addresses issues as life-cycle analysis, tourism, energy production and recycling being of great importance for the achievement of a sustainable development. Therefore, new ideas and initiatives are welcome as well as those with high interdisciplinary elements and close links and overlaps with other domains.