Minutes of 57th Meeting of EFNA, at the Scottish Parliament Building Saturday 7th June 2014, 9.15 am, Committee Room

1.President's Welcome including those participating for the first time.

The president Léon Faassen (LF) welcomed all attending members and especially Nele Lauwers from AVBS Belgium and Dominique Raymackers from UAP Belgium, who were attending for the first time. LF thanked Harry Frew of Scotland for arranging to have the meeting in such a spectacular place and also for arranging the whole week-end so well. The others attending were Klaus Natlacen (A), Marc Van Hulle, Etienne Allaert, Bart van Hulle,(B), Premysl Nemec, Josef Cafourek (CZ), Torben Leissgard (DK), Vincent Naudet, Christine Robin (F), Josef Selders, Alain Paul (D), Béla Kárpáti (H), Jan Kloosterhuis, Bart Faassen (NL), Josep M Pages (ES), Lena Sammeli-Johansson, Max Jensen, Finnvid Prescher (S), Jamie Dewhurst, Harry Frew (UK) and Andy Gordon (Secretary). LF said that last year was a busy year with a lot of work about the new European Rules. He mentioned that through HF and JD, EFNA had invited John Spiers, Plants, Horticulture and Potatoes of the Scottish Government and John Morgan, head of Plant Health of the Forestry Commission, to talk about the UK plant health service and the EU plant health regime, PRM and FRM. LF also announced that chemical treatments was to be added as a new topic. A lot of treatments were forbidden last year. And while politicians often talk about level playing fields, what is happening is just the opposite. In the end the Netherlands are afraid of losing production in the field because of this. LF said EFNA has to find out what the differences are between the countries in the 3 climate zones and how we can work to better harmonization.

2 Apologies for Absence

Ireland, Bernd Schrader from Germany, Portugal and Jozef Hanssens from Belgium.

3 Adoption of Agenda. The Agenda was accepted.

4 Minutes of 56th meeting in Potsdam. The Minutes were accepted.

5 Matters arising from minutes not included on the agenda. There were none.

About potential new members to EFNA:

1) Romania

Béla Kárpáti (BK) had contact in Romania but at this point there is not yet an organization for private nurseries. They are still moving to a proper nursery structure. The meeting agreed that Romania can participate to EFNA as an observer without fees provided they pay their own meeting costs.

2) Poland

LF had contact with Polish nursery men and got the information that there is a forest nursery meeting at the end of the year where they will propose 1 person to participate next year to EFNA.

3) Baltic states

LF asked Sweden to contact some nurseries in the Baltic.

4) Croatia

Andy Gordon (AG) had contacted Croatia twice but until now they hadn't replied to the emails.

The list of current members will be added to the minutes.

6 President's report.

First LF thanked AG for all the work he did, and also thanks to former President Vincent and treasurer Marc Van Hulle for attending meetings for us in Paris and Brussels.

It was again an exciting year with a lot of sometimes unexpected turns from our European parliament and or commission.

This is a chronological overview 2013-2014:

8 June: Annual meeting EFNA in historic setting at Potsdam Germany
13 June: Marc Van Hulle (MVH) and LF attended a meeting in Brussels for the official presentation of the PRM Proposal by DC Sanco. They got in contact with Mrs Diana Charels from European commission who is the successor of Mr Foletto and all the other members. The presentation was sent to the EFNA members.
24 and 25 September: AG attended the working Group OECD annual meeting for Forest Scheme in Paris/ AG and Vincent Naudet (VN) review a draft letter to send to members of EP
14 October: MVH attended a meeting in Brussels of the enlarged Advisory Group of the EC. AG send all the information on the 21 Oct.
13 November: LF had a meeting in The Hague with ministry of Economic affairs which is in charge of agriculture to be informed about the progress of PRM and Dutch point of view. AG sent out a small report of this meeting on 19 Nov.
19 November: AG sent out the letter which was made by VN to send out to your members of EP
25 November: We all received the letter from Alain Paul (AP) through Vdf with the point of view of Germany and on the 27 Nov. we received the point of view of France
28 November: LF had a Meeting in Brussels with members of EP to discuss the PRM proposal (organised by our Dutch Nursery Organisation and Copa-Cogeca)
16 December: MVH attended a meeting in Brussels organised by the Forestry and Cork advisory group to explain the implications of the New Forestry Stategy
23 December: mail with best wishes and the invitation for this meeting in Edinburgh

6 January: Letter from AG.
10 January: AG meets his local MEP and starts exchange of emails which helped him to know what was going on in the EP
16 Januray: LF and AG had a meeting in Reuver about EFNA
17 January: AG had a meeting in Brussels with the Advisory Group Forestry and Cork; of which we received a report by mail on the 20 Jan.
30 January: Andy sent a mail with his comment on the Amendments with the remark that the PRM probably will be rejected, to go through all those amendments was a lot of work done by Andy followed by the mail of 4 Feb with the news that they rejected the proposal

30 April VN attended the OECD meeting in Paris.
26 May AG and LF had a meeting in Brussels to prepare this meeting in Scotland.
27 May Meeting in Brussels AG attend the Advisory Group Forestry and Cork in Brussels of which he sent us a report.
2 June LF had a meeting in The Hague with ministry to be informed about PRM
Today: Annual EFNA meeting in Edinburgh Scotland

Conclusion after this year:

Last year there was a lot of uncertainty about FRM. What we know now is that FRM is out of the PRM and it'll be a regulation out of PRM. The current directive will become a regulation. Still the new phytosanitary rules will cover forestry.

The question is when it'll be rewritten. Some say they'll leave it in the fridge for 3 years… Anyway, when they rewrite it, it has to change on 4 points:
- smaller and more clear, and only for professionals
- less commission, more national example controls and more customized to each country
- cost reduction: to look what is not necessary
- Less burdens: let the market do it's work

Next month's preview:
Because of the EU elections, we must wait until the end of the year to look what is possible with the new EU commission and parliament. All other parts of the 'Package' keep going on. Concerning the part of 'control': the southern countries were more in favor of a closed EU Market than the northern countries. Now there is a compromise: be careful what to import, without closing the markets.

Discussion/Questions:

MVH said that the work that is done is very good and EFNA is now respected in the EU. This is really what EFNA brought as positive. In the past we were discussing about the topics but now we manage to lobby and make things change.
Second, it is also important to encourage export, next to talk about import. Attention needs to be paid to this point. Finally the problem exist that non forestry plants are used in forestry.

LF confirmed that EFNA made a big contribution to make it happen about FRM. This is a good thing. He also said that export is a big concern and it was therefore necessary we didn't arrive at the closed system.

Jamie Dewhurst (JD) said that we cannot think that the job is done. We need to keep an eye on what's going on in the PRM. LF Agreed. JH also mentioned that most of discussion in Britain was on the variety issue and ornamentals are still in the PRM.

MVH said that the goal of EFNA should be that current directive stays as it is. Whatever they change (directive to regulation) it is important that the system in general stays the same over all countries.
AG replied that he has information that if a regulation comes it will not make very

much difference. Although it is impossible to say ‘when’ this will happen but it won’t be that soon and not as dramatically as we thought first.

BK asked to keep sending small reports of all meetings. So it is clear to all, with who we are speaking. LF agreed and also asked that members will reply if they have information also.

7 Treasurer’s report. Marc Van Hulle (MVH) reported on a very healthy financial position. The payment of all members are OK. There is only a little mistake in the report sent before the meeting: concerning the savings account ‘Balance on 01/06/2013’ has to be written instead of 2012.

The accounts were accepted.

8. Secretary’s report (including budget), changing secretary and president.

Secretary’s report
AG asked whether it is still important to stay in the Advisory Group (AG) Forest and Cork. He explained that at the last meeting he attended apart from five minutes when the position regarding FRM was mentioned, the whole meeting had been taken up with subjects of very little interest to EFNA. As it happened, he had not received an invitation to continue to participate in the AG and it was now too late to. It would be possible to ask belatedly to participate but he was fairly sure that it would be unsuccessful. Instead he proposed that he wrote to the organisers of the AG to say that we had decided not to apply for continued membership provided that we could still be on the mailing list for all communications.

AG had already sent some additional comments about the FRM after the meeting of 27th May in Brussels. The new Rural Development package contains funding for Agro-forestry for the first time. New funds for regeneration of degraded forests may mean an increase in demand for forest plants in some countries.

After some discussion EFNA decided that it is OK to step out of this Advisory Group but still ask for the minutes to be sent. Besides we should focus now on meeting European Commission staff at the OECD and maintaining the good contacts we have established with the commission.

Changing secretary and president
JD suggested to delay the change for 1 year because of all contacts that are set up. He also asked that LF and AG should not step down in the same year.

Conclusion: AG will do 2 extra years (together with the new possible secretary) and LF will stay for 1 more year.

Secretary’s note after the meeting. It had been my intention to propose no change in the delegate fee for the coming year in view of the healthy position of EFNA’s finances. I apologise for forgetting to mention this. Anyone who objects to keeping the fee at 500 Euros per delegate please reply by return.

9. EFNA’s website.

AG reported that the member pages had been used only twice (by AG himself). We have 140 000 visitors a year (many from USA and Israel) but most probably because of another reason.

AG asked the members to fulfill all information per country. Last year the webmaster asked for ancient trees per country but didn't get any answer.

The web master agreed to continue work for the website.

10. Report on the past seasons' activities and prospects for the future by country

Austria

This year the Austrian forest nurseries started the afforestation season without big illusions.
Although the new budget period with new subsidies for afforestations has already started the new national rules have neither been issued nor confirmed by the EC Commission so far.
This was the reason why only a small amount of subsidies were at disposal for afforestation purposes this spring.
Due to an unusually warm winter without snow plant deliveries started already in February and lasted till May. We noticed that the demand for forest plants rose from week to week. At the end nearly all Picea Abies, Abies, Larix, Quercus and Alnus plants were sold out in Austria. Only Fagus (low timber price) and large sizes of Acer remained unsold in the nurseries.
Becaus of the stable timber prices we were able to raise plant prices by 3% and we hope to do the same next year.
Fresh money from cofinanced public funds for the afforestation of mixed forests should help to sell broad leaf trees much better in the next season.
We hope that there will be no problem selling needle trees in satisfactory numbers in Austria like we did in the years before.

Belgium

Before the new season started there was a general optimism.
Season 2012-2013 had very hard weather conditions, long winter, strong frost, in March already +19°C and April/Mai was too cold and unpleasant for private people to work in their gardens.
Conclusion: Delayed plantings had to be recovered during the beginning of next season.

After this optimism came quickly the realism.
The season started very slowly and orders could be prepared without any delay's. Although November was an extremely wet month for lifting. So we were not completely satisfied about Autumns sales.
In Spring time came some busy weeks but that period was too short because mid January until mid February was +12°C-+14°C!!! Some plants had even not been in a winter dormancy.
Conclusion: Nursery business was not good – a lot of unsold plants (especially broadleaves).
The expectations for comings season: difficult to prognose but we have to stay positive.

Czech Republic

Weather in last autumn, the following winter a in this spring again proved a dependance of nursery activities on course of the weather. Relatively adequate precipitation and warmer autumn weather made nursery season longer up to the end of November. Of course it has influence on sales, because during all autumn were suitable conditions for reforestation and in the end there was a big demand especially for cell grown plants.

Average temperature of the following winter was higher by about 5°C in comparison with longterm standards and so the winter was the warmest in the last decade. Spring nursery activity could be launched very early (some of them in the middle of January) most forest nurseries started in the middle of Ferbruary. Therefore spring season was lenghtened and nurseries did not have a problem with accumulation of spring works. This advantageous situation had a good influence on demand for plants and we can state that practically almost all grown forest plants were used on the market. In the end of spring season there were local areas where was even shortage of forest plants of norwey spruce and scotch pine.On the other hand decraesed demand for broad leafes of low-hight class was noticed. In total the demand for forest plants was relatively significant and for forest nurseries favourable.

According to the growth of claim for cell-grown forest plants the share of this material is getting bigger in forest nursery enterprises. Some of them are starting to specialize in this growing techlonogy, because i tis apparent thet demand for cell-grown plants will be increasing.

Very interesting is disbalance in demand for bradleafes. Except of oaks and beeches the demand for other braodleafs is relatively differentiated and unstable. For example forest plants of ash have almost disappeared from forest nurseries.

In Czech Republic there is in motion a difficult process of restitutional return of forests to clerical organizations, according to the estimate the area of forests for returning is about 170 thousand hectares. It is a question how the new owners of forests will set their position of assuring enough forest reproductive materiál for reforestation. Will they grow them in their nurseries or will they buy them? In any case it is expected that the demand for forest plants will decrease from side of the state forests.

Forest nurseries do not need to have big worries about using their production on the market next year but they will be forced to monitor local needs and structure of the market..

Danmark

It is many year ago the winter have been that nice. The pickup season and delivery started in end August and has just stop now here end beginning June. Together with nice weather, the most of the winter the condition for planting has been very successful. Only a little frost problem in Maj 1 and 2, with a few damages

A Few species has not been sold out (Larix, Fraserii and Douglas).

The range of Nordmann plants has been one of the biggest long and only the best Origin are sold out, there are some local part very much plants with not are sold out. The range for next year will also be large and this year will be a large seed crop in most places as well.

The biggest problem is the profits of individual companies is becoming less and less, but why is the prices still so a big problem we do get same prices as we did for 25 years ago? All the rising costs will hit us from the outside, because we never applied to our products, why?

In 2013 has there been much attention to the fungus Neonectria, and it have been working very serious about this issue broadly from the entire industry, to learn better about the fungal lifecycles.

France

Autumn and winter 2013/2014 could have been quite a good season for both: bare roots and container Plants but chiefly for conifers. In fact broadleaves trees selling’s have decreased compare to Autumn 2012.

If we consider separatly young plants for Christmas trees market: this one wasn’t optimum, and there were some unsold plants at the end of season.

Landscape young plants market was very law also demands on hedges plants for instance specially decreased during this season.

And besides lack of acorns for 3rd following year didn’t alow to supply the demand on quercus

It’s worth specify that in some regions like south west France, which is actuality the main reforestation area in France, due to the Klaus storm, the heavy rainfalls during winter have delayted many labours.

For Populus: season was very bad!!! Also due to the bad climatical conditions in part

Spring was nearly on the same bases as Autumn.

Without big meteorological disturbance.

So planting labours could ended in good conditions so quite good sellings exept in south west France, where the big delay because of rainfalls, involved destruction of important quantities of plants.

Perspectives for next seasons 2014/2015.

It seems we’ll go on the same tendency:

The asking on conifers for next season seems to be on the same level as this year, with may be little increase. But for broadleave trees, we're afraid, the decrease will continue.
We hope nevertheless the weather during next season with be a little more favorable (less rainy) than during last autumn.

Germany

The nurseries start into the sales and planting springtime-period 2013 was bad and short: Long lasting frost periods before Easter and beyond. The time was too short for a normal business and the dispatching by "just in time modus" was again more stressfull as before. We had deep frozen forest stands until May. Summer and autumn were good in terms of weather conditions, but could not compensate the late orders of March.
In Spring 2014 the complete winter was perfect for planting, but apparently the foresters were not flexible enough and the season started as usually. A lost chance.
Generally speaking, the sales were doomed down - as we expected it - because the European end/new start of the EU-Forestry Program of re- and afforestation. National Forest programs ran out, as well as the local Land initiatives.
Especially the private Forest sector fell in this phlegmatism of no important/bigger forest action, even the wood harvest procured high income by lowest interests.
Especially the Beech suffers to be unsold, mainly in mid and high sizes.
In addition to the expected EU Budgets re-definition more and more state Forestry administration comes finally to the FSC certification scheme as expected for years. Additionally because of missing budget priorities the Länder are purchasing less and less plants by year. In the south Baden-Württemberg is purchasing less than 1 m. of plants, also Rheinland-Pfalz less than 1,6 m plants only annually.
Two phenomena rose also: Some Forest administrations of Länder only accept plants produced locally in the Land (E.g. max. 100 km above the Border of the Land) AND additionally, the species with tap roots are nevermore expected to be undercut. VDF is in multiple local talks against this management idea - promoting the professional way we have successfully improved for generations.
Finally the certification of genetical reliability as ZUEV and ISOGEN is gaining more and more importance, nevertheless the legal reliability of the systems is yet not convincing.

Hungary

Due to the extremely dry weather in 2013, the growing of the seedlings was low so there was a significant demand on the market for the larger size products. The Quercus yield was so low – in some parts of the country there was none at all – that the Hungarian FRM Authority eased its stringent rules on the exports from the Carpathian basin. We forecast a considerable demand in Quercus for the 2014/2015 season. Hungary's Pinus sylva and Pinus nigra seed yields are still very low, so seeds were imported mostly from Poland and Serbia.
In 2013 there was also a high demand on the market for large size walnut transplants (also for other vegetative grafting materials), for hedging materials (especially Ulmus spec.), and the Salix Caprea, Populus Tremola market was also significant.
The relatively warm winter helped the lifting and most of the produced nursery stocks were sold domestically. The weather was almost optimal for the seed yield of the Populus spec., Salix spec and Ulmus spec. However, due to the heavy rains and hails in late May, a significant percentage of the Salix and the Populus sowings were destroyed. Therefore this year, there might be/is a shortage of these species on the market.
The Poplar and Salix cutting fields recovered well and the weather did not cause any problem in these sectors.
The Robinia sowings were successful all over in Hungary. The Quercus, Fagus, Fraxinus, Acer, and the species (hedging materials and other board leaves) sowed during autumn came up very well, the frost damage was not significant.
Hungarian EU delegates informed the forest professional stakeholders about the forthcoming EU Regulation on "Invasive alien species". Since in some EU member countries Robinia is recognized as

an invasive species, Hungary feels that both professionally and economically its important species is endangered (altogether the 24% of the Hungarian forests – around 400 thousand hectares- are Robinia stands). Therefore, Hungary is trying to ensure that Robinia will not be included on the invasive species list of the new regulation (as far as we know this list will be completed during 2014). Doing so, Hungary has recognized the Robinia as a "Hungaricum product" of the country, which gives an extra protection for the species according the EU regulations. We would like to highlight this issue within the EFNA and to indicate that EFNA should be prepared for – and concerned about – this regulation, since other species could also be endangered economically, making financial damages for the FRM producers/traders.

Netherlands

After a late winter period in March 2013 the spring was cold and wet up to early July. July was the opposite hot and dry. So plants had a stressful Spring and Summer. Autumn sales started late course the leafs of the plants did not drop before mid of November.

The lifting season was without many frost days, only 7 frost days in whole lifting period, but we were troubled by a few heavy wet spells. Trade and deliveries where from October till end May without interruptions. Spring sales were disappointed.

The trade was not spectacular and the prices were not brilliant especially hardwoods. There are a lot plants left over. Although timber prices in Europe were good but demand of forest plants poor, special Fagus and Acer varieties, less demand for Quercus. There was hardly any demand for Fraxinus. The hedging market was very poor. There was a good demand for forest conifers.

There will be more plant request for special provenance and certification in future. We have to keep in mind to reduce production Europe wide and to improve quality. The biggest problem in future we get is the mountain of regulations from Brussels. The worst regulations are from our own Dutch government. Also the reductions of plant protection products will be a disaster in the future. There is not much left for us to use specially herbicides and our customers require good looking healthy quality plants. That will be impossible for the future. If the public opinion against the agricultural and horticultural world does more negative, there will be no food enough in the future. If the government take the tools away, there will be no production possible. Coming back on our subject.

The weather for transplanting and germination of seed was good this spring and growth is far ahead compare to last year. We think trade will be late starting this season and if there are any shortages is difficult to say. The production is known, but the demand of plants is unknown. This was much easier to know in the past. The whole trade is changing and more countries close the borders to protect their own production. Overall we will go on, after bad years there will be good years and we have to produce what the market demands.

Portugal

This report will be sent with the minutes as a pdf file.

Spain

While in the oceanic regions (from Galicia to Basque Country) the forest plant production and demand are steady, in the rest of Spain (90% of the area) forest plants' demand has continued shrinking and last season has even been worse than the previous one. It doesn't depend on weather, there are not good or bad weeks, forest plants' demand continues in free fall because reforestation is at one of the lowest historical levels and public works don't exist. The last year's already very low production has not been sold; therefore for next season forest nurseries have even sown less this year. Prices are, obviously, still very low and will remain low in the near future.

So there are no 100% forest nurseries; the few nurseries survive growing ornamental or fruit nursery stock and most of them because of a simple family structure with very low costs.

Sweden (Max@ramlosaplant.se)

(South)

Demand in the autumn of 2013 decreased compared to the last years and is now on very low levels. This could be predicted and was due to overall worse market, but probably also due to problems with frost-drought the previous year which especially hit conifers planted in the autumn.

Lifting for cold-storage started later than normal due to a mild autumn with no real frosts.

The spring came early and lifting and deliveries already started in March. Demand was lower than the last years which also lead to pressure on prices. The customers know that there are enough plants on the market and place their orders late hoping for discounts.

Last winter we saw a few storms in Sweden. In the south these mainly lead to single trees or minor holes in the forests and will probably not lead to more planting the coming years. It meant however that the foresters were busy cleaning up, and planting was probably not on top of the agenda as the spring proceeded. Also normal clear-felling was reduced and resources allocated to the storm-felled trees.

For the next season it is hard to say, the best prediction is perhaps more or less the same demand as this year and hopefully fewer plants on the market.

Re protection against hylobus there are now three non-chemical alternatives on the market which show good results in tests which is positive. The downside is that all of them are expensive and in current market conditions it is difficult for the nursery to get full cost-coverage from the customers.

(North)

Weather in northern Sweden has been favourable for planting as well as in the south, with a quite extended season. Deliveries will continue through June.

The northern parts of the country had a couple of severe storms last autumn with about 14 million m3 of stormfelled trees as an outcome. Both company and private forestland was affected, and it has had a holding back impact on the market this spring. More frequent storms is obviously something we will have to get used to in the future.United Kingdom (England and Wales)

Many growers wondered what they had done wrong in 2012; firstly Chalara reared its head in the UK, although authorities now believe it has been here since 2008! Then it started to rain and never stopped.

So the season arrived and most hopped that the sky was empty of rain, how wrong they were!! Harvesting conditions were almost impossible with widespread flooding in England. It was ironic that there was a drought on the west coast of Scotland, somewhere that it always rains.

Due to the movement restrictions placed on Ash and authorities delay in reapproving grant applications the forestry market was slow to start.

Ultimately most nurseries in England and Wales were happy with the outcome of the season, all stock was sold (except ash).

The hedging market decreased by around 15% for a number of reasons but it is felt the weather was the primary cause with farmers still looking for a window to complete their autumn sowings! The last thing they thought about was planting hedges.

Spring conditions have been poor with soil temperatures remaining low resulting in slow germination.

Most nurseries estimate to be between 2-3 weeks behind on growth.

As for the future, it is very uncertain.

Scotland (Harry)

The 13/14 Sales and Planting season went smoothly with no hold up due to bad weather , frost or a cold winter. Wet weather did make it difficult for nurseries to lift at times. The market for Broadleaves was strong, and plants were generally in good supply. The market for conifers was also once again very strong, and many species became very short in supply, with sitka, pine and many others running out. Hedging sales were reduced, and are likely to be reduced still further next year due to CAP reform and no grant applications.

The strong timber market is seeing a high level of harvesting in the UK , especially Scotland, which makes for a strong restocking market. This is expected to continue next year also. Considerable felling of phytophthora infected larch stands is also creating an abnormally large restock programme.

While this strong market is good for nurseries, care must still be taken not to over-sow and cause future surpluses. Planting trends are still very hard to predict.

Autumn 13 Seed production was much improved on the previous year, and considerably more UK seed was available to sow. There is now an increased customer awareness and demand for plants grown in the UK, and also from UK seed. This is creating a strong local market.
The 2014 spring sowing has progressed reasonably well, and the mild spring weather is helping good establishment. New sowings are looking good.

The UK market place is seeing a steady increase in demand for plants to be grown for productive timber , as opposed to ' landscape and native ' planting. This is a good sign and forest nurseries can move back strongly to production of mainstream commercial and 'productive timber' seed sources and species.

The CAP review is still a concern for forestry nurseries in Scotland, and the UK, and the lower level of planting activity in the Transition year is a great concern. Much effort has been made by Scotland (and other countries) to lobby the EU to change this 'stop / go' grant scheme, and to allow planting to be planned further ahead, and avoid these Transition / Gap years. This lobbying must continue from all countries.
In the meantime Scotland has found money to maintain planting levels at c 80% during this coming Transition year, which we must be thankful for.

Like other countries we have been watching carefully the EU revision of the Plant Health Regime. Our main concern is to see that any new scheme will be effective and reduce the risk to nurseries of new pests and diseases. The scheme must ensure that nursery businesses are not damaged by 'panic reactions' to new pests, diseases and threats. The new scheme must be practical and workable. We still watch this space with concern.

Conclusion:

- the weather was perfect for digging and delivering true out the season and true out Europe from Sweden to Hungary no frost in some regions like the south of England and in France a lot of water.

- Timber prices were good. All over Europe deals were better only some problem for BE and NL because the season was too short.
- broadleaf are going back, Oak was ok, Beech different, Asch is dead
- frost damage in DK and maybo also in North Germany
- Seeds situation better than last year
- Overall Hedging is down
- big uncertainty about budget, subsidies or funds

Discussion/questions:

JD said that the **transition period** is a problem in CAP that there is a need for a long term view. AG replied that some countries prepared for the transition period but some countries didn't, like UK.

BK announced that a new EU regulation is set up about **invasive species** and that Hungary is worried about it (eg discussion about Robinia that threatens more than 400 000 hectares!). BK asked to look at this list when this is coming (within a year) because this can cause an economic threat! A discussion started: JD thinks this topic must be discussed on the level of a country; in Germany Robinia is invasive and starts to be forbidden even for sale outside the forest; Spain has a regulation since 2 years; in Belgium a code of conduct exists, France has no regulation, …

LG proposes to first sort things out about the new regulation about invasive species and then later come back on it. AG will use contact with Diana Charels to get more information and will send a questionaire to the EFNA members.

Jan Kloosterhuis (JK) said the that amount of allowed **plant protection products** decreases because of 2 reasons: sometimes the producers are not willing, sometimes the countries decide different on recognition of the same product. Recently the story of the bees has been used against the sector while we are doing efforts for integrated pest management. And now Basamid is forbidden which makes it difficult to grow small seeds in the Netherlands.

11. Report on the situation regarding Regulation on Plant Reproductive Material

LF welcomed John Spiers, Plant health policy of the Scottish Government and John Morgan, head of Plant Health of the Forestry Commission.

See powerpoint presentation 'UK Plant Health Service, EU Plant Health Regime & Plant & Forest Reproductive Material'.

Discussion/Questions:

Question LF: it is said that if we are optimistic that the adoption of the new regulation is foreseen in 2015. But what would be a pessimistic timing?
Answer: a pessimistic timing would be end 2015/begin 2016.

Question LF: what is your impression of the discussion on the 'open' and 'closed' market?
Answer: At this moment the EU regime is too open and it is needs to be stronger. We need to search for something pragmatic.

Question JD: Will the new regulation fit to e-commerce?
Answer: It'll need to cover that but there is no need for extra bureaucracy.

Question LF: how far plant passports have to go?
Answer: There is no need that they'll go all the way to the consumers.

Question NL: In Belgium the people of the national plant protection organization said that compensation to producers already would be possible in 2015 (managed by the part 'regulation on expenditure'). What can we expect from this?
Answer: First a list of priority pests has to be drawn up and it is not sure this will be done before 2015. Besides, there is no idea of the amount of money available.

Question JD: was it a right decision to draw FRM from PRM?
Answer: From the beginning there was a big force against the incorporation of FRM into PRM. FRM could have been a part of PRM but then only under some conditions.

Question JD: should we keep an eye on PRM too?
Answer: indeed, you'll need to keep an eye to all proposals.

Question LF: who has the lead now on PRM?
Answer: PRM is back with the Council. They must take action.

Question LF: What about micro-enterprises?
Answer: UK's opinion is to let member states chose.

Question JK: Will UK move to import Fraxinus again?
Answer: It is likely that the UK will take a different approach for different parts of the UK.

Question AG: which possibilities exist to treat ash plants for Chalara as happens for some insects and weevils?
Answer: there have been studies but this just takes a lot of time. Strategy is first to look for genetic resistance.

Question JD: we need to look more to species/diseases to prevent from economical damage.
Answer: this is also the idea of the plant passport.

Discussion about 'do we want more inspection?'
Bart Faassen (BF) replied that protection zones (with more inspection) can be an answer although they are quite expensive. But JD answered that the 'unknown' is a threat and therefore all plants for planting must be inspected. An alternative is that producers inspect their nursery on their own. LF summarized that it'll be all our responsibility and each has to play a part in the story.

LF thanked John Spiers and John Morgan fort their presence.

After this discussion, the following two topics were discussed:

Plant protection products
LF repeated the question whether EFNA should take some action concerning the recognition of plant protection products, especially within the same climate zone. Alain Paul proposes to collect information and then look who knows people to decide on lobby work. Important to know for each product whether legislation is limiting the formal adoption by the chemical companies. AG proposes he will send out a questionnaire with the help of Marielle.

Prospect improved species
Vincent Naudet presented the 'prospect improved species'. This is set up together with forest and wood industry and is a product of promotion action that is good for business.

12. Date and place of the 58th meeting of EFNA.

Next meeting will take place in Portugal. Because EFNA proposed themselves to have the meeting in Portugal, EFNA will pay for both evening dinners.

Date and place have to be confirmed.

Secretary's note. As the Portuguese Secretary is on holiday until July no date and place can be confirmed until later.

Nele Lauwers (18/06/14) and edited by Andy Gordon (19/06/14)