

EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATION

Prospectus for a long-term EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility

Summary

1. Because of the extensive data packages required for authorization to market plant protection products, growers face increasing difficulties in gaining authorization for “minor uses”. These are uses on more specialist crops or against pest problems which are not routinely encountered but may on occasion be very damaging. The European Commission agreed in 2014 to fund an additional programme of action to address the problem in a more coherent way by establishing a Minor Uses Coordination Facility. EPPO is an inter-Governmental organization, recognized by the FAO as the Regional Plant Protection Organization for Europe, which has carried out work in support of minor uses since 1996. In 2015 EPPO secured financial commitments from three EU Member States (which are also EPPO member countries), France, Germany and the Netherlands, for funding to match the EU contribution. This enabled EPPO to establish the Minor Uses Coordination Facility, under the direction of a Steering Group representing the funding countries and the European Commission. This document summarises the progress achieved in the first three years and sets out a long-term vision of a sustainable future for the Facility and its work.

Background

EU Initiative on Minor Uses

2. The European Commission adopted a report¹ in February 2014 concluding that there is a need to create a European fund for minor uses of pesticides. Minor uses of pesticides (plant protection products) are uses on certain crops which may have a high economic value but which are not considered as having enough marketing potential to be worth investment by the plant protection industry to get specific uses authorized in EU Member States. This leads to a lack of authorized products on the market for farmers to use on these crops which in turn can lead to illegal uses or to loss of crop production. These crops include most vegetables, fruit, nurseries, flowers, forest trees and some arable crops. It is estimated that overall they represent more than € 70 billion per year, which equates to 22% of the total EU plant production value.
3. The proposal built on existing minor use activities carried out and financed by some Member States and on the EU Expert Group on Minor Uses established in 2002 but discontinued in 2009. The former EU Expert Group on Minor Uses consisted of a Steering Group led by the Commission and two Technical Groups, led by France and the Netherlands.

¹ REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL on the establishment of a European fund for minor uses in the field of plant protection products, Brussels, 18.2.2014 COM(2014) 82 final

4. The proposal focused on the establishment of a Coordination Facility (technical secretariat, information systems and expert groups) as per the Commission decision. The Facility was intended as a strong aid to deriving maximum benefit from the existing programme of work across the Member States aimed at closing minor use gaps. However, the proposal also reflected a clear wish from the Member States to continue and develop that wider programme of work on a more coherent, consistent and productive basis with a higher output of solutions for minor uses problems.
5. Three Member States initially, France, Germany and the Netherlands, agreed to provide into a separate account managed by EPPO, funds to match the € 350 000 committed by the Commission in order to create an EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility. The Coordination Facility has now operated for nearly three years under the supervision of a Steering Group (SG) comprising representatives of the Commission and countries funding the Facility. The three countries committed funds for three years in order to ensure rapid progress with establishment of the Facility. This was on the understanding that other Member States and stakeholders who benefit from the work of the Facility would contribute to a sustainable funding arrangement in the longer term.

EPPO involvement in minor uses

6. EPPO's Working Party on Plant Protection Products meets each year to consider draft regional Standards produced by its expert Panels (Fungicides & Insecticides, Herbicides & Plant Growth Regulators, Resistance) and address other issues in the development and implementation of regulations on plant protection products, particularly as regards their efficacy. All of EPPO's 51 member countries (which include all EU Member States) can participate in the Working Party and nominate experts for the Panels.
7. EPPO has been carrying out work in support of minor uses since 1996. In 2003 EPPO published a Standard PP 1/224 describing the principles for determining the requirements for efficacy evaluation for minor uses of plant protection products in order to simplify the registration process. Following the recommendations of the EPPO Workshop on Mutual Recognition of Minor Uses (Berlin, 2006-10-24/26) an EPPO Standard to support extrapolations of data from one crop to another in regard to efficacy and crop safety was developed (PP 1/257) and the work on accompanying extrapolation tables started. Since 2011 EPPO has provided short term funding from its Special Project Account to cover the costs of a Scientific Officer to work part time on extrapolation tables. On the EPPO website there is a dedicated webpage on minor uses and extrapolation tables, including many useful links to other global activities on minor uses. www.eppo.int/PPPRODUCTS/minor_uses/minor_uses.htm
8. The EPPO Secretariat actively participates in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Expert Group on Minor Uses (EGMU) and Global Minor Use Steering Committee. In 2014 the OECD-EGMU reviewed two EPPO Standards and recommended their use by OECD member countries. The recommendation is proposed to be adopted by the OECD Registration Steering Group and subsequently the OECD Working Group on Pesticides. The EPPO Ad Hoc Panel on Data Harmonization has recently developed a proposal to extend EPPO

(Computer) Codes in a way which would facilitate exchange of data to support minor uses. The European Commission has agreed to fund this project for the next two years.

9. EPPO has long-standing experience of working with networks of experts across the region to develop standards and information systems on plant protection. EPPO has the necessary IT, administration and financial capability to manage and deliver complex projects and long term programmes within this technical area, and hosts the Euphresco network of plant health research funders.
10. The EPPO Convention makes specific provision for groups of member countries to fund additional work. This additional work is subject to agreement from the EPPO Council that it falls within the remit of the Organization and will not adversely affect the programme of work funded from the main budget. Article XVIII (h) of the Convention states that “Supplementary contributions may be paid by an individual Government or group of Governments towards special schemes ... which the Organization may carry out in the interest of that Government or group of Governments.”

Establishment of the Facility

11. The Minor Uses Coordination Facility comprises a technical secretariat, information systems and expert groups to coordinate the programme of work carried out across the EU by Member States in support of Minor Uses.
 - i. The technical secretariat comprises a Minor Uses Coordinator to lead the Programme under the direction of the Minor Uses Steering Group, a Technical Expert, an IT Officer and an Administrative Assistant. The Coordinator is a full-time post, the other three are part time ranging from 50% to 80%.

The staff of the Facility are on short term contracts determined by the duration of commitments made by the current funders.

- ii. Accommodation, IT resources, financial systems and personnel systems to support the Coordination Facility are provided by EPPO and charged to the Facility account at a rate not more than actual costs, taking into account the proportion of EPPO resources used by the Facility.
 - iii. Support for the work of the Expert Groups
 - iv. Governance

Mission

12. The mission of the Coordination Facility is to enable farmers in the EU to produce high quality crops by filling minor uses gaps through efficient collaboration to improve availability of chemical and non-chemical tools within an IPM framework.

Way of working

13. The Coordination Facility operates in a transparent, collaborative and efficient way, cooperating to the fullest extent possible with all Member States and other organizations active internationally in the field of minor uses.

Tasks

14. The main task of the Coordination Facility is to coordinate and support minor use work among EU Member States and stakeholders. This entails the improvement of information exchange, sharing experience gained at the national levels and facilitating bilateral and multilateral projects between Member States. Furthermore, it will coordinate minor use activities between Member States and stakeholders. As a result of this coordination, the Facility will have oversight of the individual initiatives of the Commodity Expert Groups. Duplication of effort will be avoided and minor use gaps addressed in a coherent way.

15. The Coordination Facility provides administrative and technical support to the Commodity Expert Groups (CEG) and in close cooperation with the Chairs of the Commodity Expert Groups it develops guidance for those Groups, as well as for any new Commodity Expert Groups which may be established on the request of Member States or growers' associations.

16. The Coordination Facility analyzes information generated by the Commodity Expert Groups to identify issues of general interest aimed at solving multiple minor use gaps across the different sectors. It can address issues identified by the Commodity Expert Groups arising from Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 to the Horizontal Expert Group (HEG). The Horizontal Expert Group can identify with the help of the Coordination Facility issues for resolution by the Steering Group.

17. The Coordination Facility ensures that input from companies and other experts is used efficiently, for example by extending invitations to other relevant CEGs when a particular expert is due to be present at a CEG.

18. The Coordination Facility prepares and organizes approval by the Steering Group of the work plans and the annual reports of the Expert Groups.

19. The Coordination Facility technically supports the work of the Expert Groups. It is responsible for:

- organizing meetings
- creating and distributing invitations, agendas, minutes via the Minor Uses Extranet
- practical and administrative arrangements for meetings including re-imburement of expenses

20. The Coordination Facility supports the activities of the Commodity Expert Groups by providing, maintaining and filling the European Minor Uses Database EUMUDA. It encourages the Member States to provide important information such as national needs lists, available trials and studies, acreage of crops, national lists of minor/major crops/uses to be filled in EUMUDA as an essential basis for the cooperation of all parties. It promotes the use of such a database to stakeholders,

including the Agri-Food Chain partners. It stimulates all Member States and crop protection companies to appoint minor use contact points at EU level.

21. Homologa contains detailed information about authorised products and their uses. It also contains information regarding Maximum Residue levels (MRLs) of agrochemicals in food and statistics on, export and import of food and ornamentals. It covers more than 60 countries. As Homologa can provide important information about (minor uses) authorisations in EU Member States and non-EU countries, it can be an important tool to solve minor uses problems in the EU. Therefore, the Coordination Facility has renewed its subscription to the Homologa database for another year.
22. The Coordination Facility prepares an action plan and supervises the action plans of the CEGs and the Horizontal Expert Group. The Coordination Facility collates annual reports to the Steering Group of progress against these action plans.
23. The Coordination Facility drafts guidelines in relation to:
 - rules regarding access to data and data processing
 - sharing of trials and studies on minor uses;
 - confidentiality of generated data and Intellectual Property matters;
 - use of the minor uses database
 - how to start a new Commodity Expert Group;
 - regulatory issues for minor uses
 - other issues faced by the Expert Groups or Steering Group.
24. The Coordination Facility stimulates and supports further harmonization e.g. in relation to crop group and pest group definitions and develops guidance documents to be presented to the Steering Group for approval. In that respect it works closely with the EPPO Working Party on Plant Protection Products and its Expert Panels.
25. The Coordination Facility has regular contacts with the Steering Group, and prepares documents for consideration and decision-taking by the Steering Group.
26. The Coordination Facility contributes to the development of non-chemical and IPM routes to solve minor use problems. In that respect the Coordination Facility will establish a strong link with research networks on IPM aiming at finding sustainable methods to solve minor use gaps. It will see to it that the Commodity Expert Groups draw on the work of such networks to exploit IPM solutions to the fullest extent possible.
27. The Coordination Facility liaises with all relevant EU stakeholders and organizes stakeholder meetings regularly, including at least an annual meeting open to all Member States and stakeholders.
28. Internationally the Coordination Facility stimulates the cooperation between existing networks on Minor Uses, such as OECD, Global Minor Uses Summit (GMUS) and IR-4. The IR-4 Project (Interregional Research Project No.4) was formed to solve the 'Minor Use Problem' for US growers.

Deliverables

29. The Coordination Facility takes a stepwise approach in resolving minor use needs:

- Step 1: A minor use need has been identified and entered in EUMUDA. In entering a minor use need the minimum data that need to be provided are the name and EPPO Code of the crop and the pest. Every entered need ('case') will get a unique number in EUMUDA.
- Step 2: The Coordination Facility will check databases for possible solutions e.g. PPPAMS, Homologa, the IR-4 and C-IPM databases. The sustainability of possible solutions will be checked (e.g. renewal status of an active substance).
- Step 3: If the consulted databases provide solutions the MUCF will bring the declarant of the minor use need in contact with the relevant national contact point to advise on further actions to take (e.g. exchange of data, Mutual Recognition).
- Step 4: If the consulted databases do not provide for any solution a project needs to be identified together with one of the Commodity Expert Groups (CEG) and the Coordination Facility. Priorities will be set.
- Step 5: When a project has been identified the CEG determines the data that needs to be generated. This may be data from residue trials and/or efficacy-crop safety trials. A project plan needs to be completed. This project plan clearly describes the parties involved, their tasks and the agreed timelines.
- Step 6: When all parameters of a project have been set this information –including timelines- will be entered in EUMUDA by the project leader. The project leader will be responsible for delivering project details and results within the set timeframe. The Coordination Facility will assist whenever necessary and will follow the project to keep it on track.
- Step 7: When all relevant data are available an application for an authorisation or extension of use has to be submitted. An application needs to be compiled according to the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 and associated legislation. If the product is then authorised the minor use can be added to the label or will be identified as an off-label use.

The minor use need can also be resolved by an IPM-solution.

30. Deliverables can be measured both qualitatively and quantitatively.

31. The quantitative results of the Coordination Facility include:

- Number of needs ('cases') entered in EUMUDA
- Number of cases accepted by the Facility
- Number of projects registered in EUMUDA
- Support given to the Expert Groups

- Number of meetings organized
- Number of Member States actively contributing to solving minor use gaps
- Extent of usage of EUMUDA
- Number of minor uses problems for which solutions are developed

32. The qualitative results of the Coordination Facility include:

- Annual work plan and report of progress against that plan
- Interaction with relevant parties and stakeholders
- Successful proposals for mutual projects
- Contributions and cooperation by Member States
- General assessment of the success of the European Minor Use Work
- Proposals to improve harmonization addressed to the Steering Group
- Cooperation with and support of IPM research networks

33. Progress achieved in the first three years

Solving Minor Uses Problems

What we have done:

- 1300 minor uses problems provided by 18 countries and registered as cases on EUMUDA
- 34 projects registered on EUMUDA
- 28 searches of Homologa carried out, identifying possible chemical and non-chemical solutions for 28 needs
- Consulted Member States on additions and amendments to the case list

Building the Coordination Facility

What we have done:

- Established financial systems and opened a bank account
- Secured 50% EU co-funding to match contributions from France, Germany and the Netherlands
- Equipped offices within EPPO headquarters
- Recruited MUCF team of Coordinator, Technical Expert, IT Officer and Administrative Assistant
- Took part in 6 meetings of the funders' Steering Group

Communication

What we have done:

- Issued a press release
- Released and updated the minor uses website (www.minoruses.eu).
- Provided an update on the work of the MUCF at (international) events
- Issued minor uses Newsletters quarterly; current number of subscriptions is 286
- Organised the first Stakeholder Advisory Forum

Renewing the EU Minor Uses Database - EUMUDA

What we have done:

- Developed a new EUMUDA, using the same structure and the same information as before, but with a more detailed follow up of each project with more accurate and consistent information for each case/project
- Started to fill the new EUMUDA for the table of needs, crop acreages, and work programmes
- Launched the new EUMUDA

Coordinating expert groups

What we have done:

- Developed a Minor Uses Extranet to facilitate the organisation of meetings
- Organised four series of expert group meetings (back-to-back) with participation of 100-120 participants from more than 20 different countries
- Organised plenary sessions with topics of general interest (C-IPM, biocontrol, Refit)
- Developed Terms of Reference for the Expert Groups
- Set clear rules for membership of Expert Groups in line with the Terms of Reference
- Developed criteria for the establishment of a new Commodity Expert Group

Linking with problems and solutions internationally

What we have done:

- Cooperated with existing networks on Minor Uses, such as OECD, IR-4 (USA), the Canadian Minor Use Pesticides Programme and the minor use work in Brazil.

- Participated at the 1st and 2nd Global Minor Use Priority Setting Workshop, and contributed actively to the 3rd Global Minor Uses Summit
- Worked together with EPPO on further harmonization e.g. in relation to crop group and pest group definitions, as well as extrapolation tables and on the preparation of the EPPO Standard for Efficacy evaluation of low-risk Plant Protection Products

34. The MUCF has significant ambition to solve minor uses issues, such as aiming to support a ‘level playing field’ for growers, focusing on non-chemical solutions, addressing regulatory hurdles, and guaranteeing continuity of the MUCF through long-term funding.

35. Deliverables for the next 5 years:

What we plan to do for the next 5 years (ongoing activities for 2018-2022):

- Manage all ongoing and new projects and prepare uniform annual action plans for the individual Expert Groups (CEGs and HEG)
- Organise meetings with the Expert Groups (twice a year) and continue to provide administrative and technical support to the Expert Groups in organising meetings and managing ongoing projects
- Organise plenary sessions with topics of general interest
- Allocate priority cases between countries for data generation projects for authorisation
- Organise a meeting with the plant protection industry on a regular basis
- Organise annually a Stakeholder Advisory Forum with Member States and stakeholders
- Develop and maintain the Table of needs
- Improve, maintain and fill the EUMUDA database
- Promote priority cases to IPM (research) projects
- Strengthen the role of the MUCF in relation to the development of IPM solutions for minor use needs
- Update the minor uses website frequently
- Present the work and activities of the MUCF at (international) events
- Issue a newsletter every quarter and increase the number of subscriptions
- Continue to cooperate with global minor uses programmes to stimulate international harmonisation
- Continue to work together with EPPO on further harmonization
- Play an active role in the OECD Expert Group on Minor Uses (EGMU)
- Ensure that data are made available to all Member States

- Create a level playing field for EU growers of speciality crops
- Guarantee sustainable long-term funding of the Minor Uses Coordination Facility.

Deliverables for 2018-2019:

- Establish priorities and action plans for all accepted cases
- Evaluate the contribution of the Homologa database to solving minor uses gaps
- Publish and update the users' guide for EUMUDA
- Maintain and reinforce the link with the EU database PPPAMS
- Increase participation at meetings and in projects from more countries
- Review the participation of experts to Expert Groups
- Prepare a Guidance Document for applicants on registration issues for minor uses
- Review and publish a list of substances exempt from MRLs (such as most biopesticides and compounds of no toxicological concern)
- Explore mechanisms to have a Global MRL Database which is accessible and publicly available
- Develop an international crop grouping scheme for efficacy/target safety data for non-food crops together with EPPO
- Review various definitions of minor crops and identify commonalities and differences
- Encourage the removal of national specific requirements for minor use applications
- Promote the fact that residue data from outside the EU are considered acceptable (comparable GAP and GLP)
- Promote maximum extrapolation of MRL applications

Deliverables for 2020-2022:

- Explore the expansion of the EUMUDA database to maintain priority lists, data owners, country registers and explore whether the EUMUDA database could also eventually host the Global Minor Uses Database
- Introduce national projects from all Member States in EUMUDA
- Organise EU priority setting meetings at an annual basis
- Explore the possibility to create an EU fund for minor uses

36. All of the deliverables of the Coordination Facility are dependent on the continued active participation in the broader Minor Uses Programme by Member States, the Commission, growers' associations, the plant protection industry and researchers.

Governance and responsibilities

Commission and Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed

37. The EU Minor Uses Programme is responsible to the Member Countries who fund it. The Facility has links to the EU Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (DG-Sante) and to the EPPO Working Party on Plant Protection Products, which are informed of progress on a regular basis, receive the annual report of the Coordination Facility and include on their agenda specific issues raised by the Steering Group in order to resolve problems on Minor Uses.

Steering Group

38. The Steering Group supervises and supports the work of the Coordination Facility. Steering Group members will be nominated by the Commission and Member States that have contributed to the Coordination Facility. The Steering Group has initially comprised a representative and an alternate from each of the funding countries and the Commission (4 members and 4 alternates).
39. When the number of funding countries increases above 11 and EU funding ends, it is proposed to elect 5 - 7 members of a Steering Group, for a three-year term, from among funding countries, with each funding country having one vote. The vote will be carried out by correspondence and will be administered independently by the EPPO Secretariat. The Steering Group agrees to the participation in the Facility of the countries belonging to the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) who follow similar regulatory arrangements for the authorisation of plant protection products and are willing to contribute to the Facility with expertise, information relevant to minor uses and an appropriate level of funding.
40. The Steering Group may agree to the participation in the Facility of EPPO member countries who are not in the EU or belonging to EFTA, but who follow similar regulatory arrangements for the authorisation of plant protection products and are willing to contribute to the Facility expertise, information relevant to minor uses and an appropriate level of funding.
41. The Steering Group has met two or three times each year in the first three years, face to face in either Brussels or Paris, with teleconferencing for recruitment of the Coordinator. Costs of attendance at face to face meetings by a member or their alternate are chargeable to the budget of the Facility. Members and alternates receive all the relevant papers for meetings, and both may participate in teleconference meetings.
42. The Coordinator attends meetings of the Steering Group. Part of each Steering Group meeting should be held without the Coordinator present. The EPPO Director-General (or representative) attends Steering Group meetings as line manager of the Coordinator and co-signatory to the Facility account.

43. The Steering Group appoints a chair from among its members. During the period of EU co-funding this has been the Commission representative. A Secretary, initially from the Commission but more recently from the Facility, prepares a draft agenda and takes a record of the meeting, which should be circulated for commenting and adoption by e-mail within four weeks of the meeting.
44. The Steering Group oversees the activities of the Coordination Facility and therefore indirectly also the activities of the Expert Groups. The Steering Group agrees Terms of Reference for the Expert Groups.
45. The Steering Group and EPPO are jointly responsible for the appointment of the staff of the Coordination Facility.
46. The Steering Group, as a result of discussions in the Standing Committee or otherwise, may ask the Coordination Facility to address specific issues in the Expert Groups. In return the Steering Group addresses specific issues notified by the Coordination Facility (including issues arising from the Expert Groups) and may have them discussed if necessary with the Commission.
47. The Steering Group reports on a regular basis to the funding countries and to the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed, in which all 28 EU Member States are represented, on the performance of the Coordination Facility.
48. The Steering Group approves the annual work plan and the annual report prepared by the Coordination Facility.

Governing Board

49. In the first three years of the Facility all funding countries have been represented on the Steering Group. If the number of funding countries increases above [11] so that this is no longer the case, an occasional meeting of a “Governing Board” may be requested by funding countries. This may be convened as a separate meeting in Paris or Brussels or arranged for convenience at the same time and place as another meeting at which relevant country representatives would be present. No funding would be provided for participation in such a meeting. Each country contributing [at least its voluntary assessed contribution] would be entitled to one representative on the Governing Board. The agenda of the Governing Board could include:
 - Election of members of the Steering Group
 - Agreement of the strategy for the Facility
 - Agreement of the future work programme for the Facility
 - Receiving the financial report of the Facility
 - Receiving the report of activities of the Facility

Expert Groups

50. Support to Expert Groups is a key element of the Coordination Facility. There is one Horizontal Expert Group, and a number of Commodity Expert Groups covering different commodity sectors.
51. The Minor Uses Extranet will be maintained and further developed as a tool to facilitate the work of the Expert Groups.
52. Terms of Reference for Expert Groups have been drafted by the Coordinator in consultation with the Groups and approved by the Steering Group. These Terms of Reference took into account an assessment of how previous structures have operated and covered:
 - rules on the tasks of, composition of & number of attendees in the Expert Groups
 - procedures for the work of the Expert Groups
 - how to report on the work to the Coordination Facility
 - which information should be added to EUMUDA
 - the rules to ensure confidentiality
 - the rules for cooperation among the different Expert Groups.
53. Expert Groups, though they may be populated by a limited number of Member States, act for all Member States. The Expert Groups are responsible for their functioning and their results. As the Expert Groups are partly funded via the Coordination Facility they accept accountability for their functioning, and for delivering and reporting results.
54. The Coordination Facility has drafted clear rules on the composition of and the number of attendees in the Expert Groups. Expertise, active and constructive participation, providing information and agenda items for meetings, and having an EU-mind set are the key aspects of these rules. This policy was approved by the Steering Group in 2017-11
55. The Expert Groups prepare their own work plans and an annual report on progress against those plans, to be presented via the Coordinator to the Steering Group.

Commodity Expert Groups

56. The Commodity Expert Groups (CEGs) consist of national minor use experts and representatives of the respective growers associations or grower groups.
57. Their main tasks are to identify and compile the needs of the Member States concerning minor use gaps in their commodity sectors followed by a further determination what is needed to find solutions for those needs. This could be information which has to be delivered, existing residue data which needs to be shared between the Member States, data which has to be generated through joint projects, or zonal applications for registration. The CEGs identify barriers preventing this work and bring them to the attention of the Coordinator, who in return, after analysis, puts them forward to the Horizontal Expert Group for resolution or escalation to the Steering Group.

58. The work of the CEGs is project-based. Once projects are established the CEGs are responsible for successful delivery of the projects. Therefore, a project plan and success criteria for each project need to be established and oversight assured, with the help of the Facility.
59. CEGs take the initiative to invite individual companies to their meetings to discuss opportunities for joint projects or to receive an update of the company's portfolio. The Groups should be in close contact with the Facility to be able to establish a maximum window of opportunity for the other Groups to benefit from these discussions.
60. The costings in this proposal are based on two meetings per year of each CEG, but this may be adjusted with the agreement of the Steering Group and in the light of the budget situation at the time.
61. The Coordination Facility has drafted a procedure and criteria how to start a new Commodity Expert Group. In general, when a certain number of Member States and growers' associations representing a substantial percentage of the EU-production of that commodity are willing to comply with the Terms of Reference of a CEG it should be possible to start a new CEG. This policy was approved by the Steering Group in 2017-11

Horizontal Expert Group

62. The Horizontal Expert Group (HEG) took over from the former EU Expert Group on Minor Uses (active between 2002 and 2009); which was tasked to discuss issues with the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 related to minor uses. The HEG considers issues above the level of the individual Commodity Expert Groups.
63. The HEG discusses issues such as the acceptable definition of minor uses, how to create an atmosphere to encourage mutual recognition by creating a level playing field and to encourage zonal evaluation related to minor uses. Furthermore, it discusses the impact of residue requirements for minor crops and other issues arising from the Regulation, which impacts on minor uses.
64. Results from the discussions are relayed via the Coordinator and Technical Secretariat to the Commodity Expert Groups and the Steering Group. As for the Commodity Expert Groups, the Horizontal Expert Group reports to the Steering Group via the Coordinator.
65. The Horizontal Expert Group has so far met twice a year. Frequency may be adjusted later in the light of the needs and the budgetary situation.

Coordinator and Technical Secretariat

66. The Coordinator heads the Technical Secretariat which will coordinate, facilitate, support and share information between parties active in the minor use field on EU and Global level. The Coordinator will report to the Steering Group.

67. The Technical Secretariat maintains the European Minor Use Database (EUMUDA) as a key structure to identify minor uses gaps, share information on them and cooperate to find solutions. As some information mentioned in EUMUDA is considered confidential business information, access rights are governed by a policy on confidentiality and access rights in EUMUDA. This policy has been approved by the Steering Group in 2017-11.

EPPO Host for the Coordination Facility (Legal Entity)

68. EPPO as host to the Coordination Facility is responsible for the accountancy and employment and accommodation of staff, and for receiving financial contributions into a dedicated account. For the first three years of the Facility, EPPO entered into a financial agreement with the Commission in order to receive the EU financial support.

69. The Facility shares with other EPPO activities accommodation, financial, IT and personnel systems, and in principle contributes to payment for these at a rate which reflects their real costs and the proportion of the resources being used by the Facility. In the first three years of the programme because of the rules around EU funding charges against that have been limited to 7% of all other costs, plus 1000 € per month for IT infrastructure. For the longer term financial arrangements a fair and transparent way of allocating overheads will be implemented, drawing on good practice.

Stakeholder Advisory Forum

70. The first Stakeholder Advisory Forum of the MUCF took place in January 2017, in Brussels. The second Stakeholder Advisory Forum of the MUCF is planned for early February 2018. This Stakeholder Advisory Forum is the annual meeting of stakeholders (including representatives of all Member States) at which the work of the Coordination Facility and wider aspects of the Minor Uses Programme are reported, and advice offered on priorities for future work and ways of working.

Priorities, costs and budget

71. All the countries which benefit from the work of the Coordination Facility should have the opportunity to participate in the technical exchanges that are organized under the umbrella of the Coordination Facility and should participate in the funding of the Coordination Facility.

72. Preferably commitment for contributions should be provided for a longer period.

73. The Coordination Facility can continue its activities from the fourth year onwards if contributions are provided weighted according to the population in each individual Member State. For this purpose, the Member States have been divided into three different groups, each with a different voluntary assessed contribution, as shown in the table below.

Voluntary assessed contributions

Group	Member State	Annual contribution	Total (for the group)
Group 1	DE, FR, UK, IT, ES, PL	EUR 50 000	EUR 300 000
Group 2	RO, NL, BE, EL, CZ, PT, HU, SE, AT, BG, DK, FI, SK	EUR 25 000	EUR 325 000
Group 3	IE, HR, LT, SI, LV, EE, CY, LU, MT	EUR 10 000	EUR 90 000
Total for the 28 EU countries per annum			EUR 715 000

Different scenarios have been developed depending on the contributions received.

Scenario 1 (assume funding from DE, NL, FR and two Member States from Group 1 or four Member States from Group 2) = 225 000 €

Maintain EUMUDA (no further development), maintain basic staffing to participate in Expert Working Groups (EWGs), no expenses for EWGs

Salaries and related costs for MUCF staff: 191 000 € (Coordinator at 75% , Technical expert at 60%, Minimum IT officer and Minimum admin support)

IT infrastructure 12 000 €

Overheads 22 000 €

Scenario 2 (assume funding from 11 countries: four Member States from Group 1, four Member States from Group 2, and three Member States from Group 3)
= 330 000 €

Maintain and develop EUMUDA, maintain staffing at current levels, no expenses for EWGs,

Salaries and related costs for MUCF staff: 281 000 € (Coordinator at 100% , Technical expert at 80%, IT officer at 50% and Maximum admin support)

IT infrastructure 12 000 €

Travel and subsistence 5 000 €

Overheads 32 000 €

Scenario 3 (assume funding from all or most Member States) = 700 000 €

Maintain all current activities, develop EUMUDA, including funding for expenses of EWGs

Location and flexible working arrangements

74. The Technical Secretariat is located in EPPO's offices in Paris. The Coordinator and Technical Expert spend a minimum 25% of full time working hours at that location to allow for interaction between the staff and ensure continuity of the work on a day-to day basis.

Performance Management

75. Staff of the Technical Secretariat agree objectives and performance measures with the EPPO Director-General in consultation with the Steering Group. These will be linked closely to the annual work plan of the Coordination Facility. Progress against objectives is reviewed regularly with the EPPO Director-General (for the Coordinator) and with the Coordinator (for other staff), in line with EPPO procedure.