



EUROPEAN UNION MINOR USES COORDINATION FACILITY

ANNUAL REPORT (15 APRIL 2018 - 31 DECEMBER 2018)

and

FINANCIAL REPORT (15 APRIL 2018 - 31 DECEMBER 2018)

Introduction

The first public annual report of the EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility is now in front of you. Exceptionally, this report does not cover a full year but only the period from 15 April 2018, which is the expiry of the EU grant agreement, until 31 December 2018. Future annual reports will cover a full year. In the annual report you can read about our achievements over the past year. It also includes a financial overview.

The governing body, comprising all funding countries, will meet once a year for the ‘Annual General Meeting’ (AGM). The main tasks of the AGM are to approve the annual report and plans and budget for the next year for the Coordination Facility. The Steering Group will supervise and support the work of the Coordination Facility.

Since the creation of the Coordination Facility a lot has been achieved. A consolidated list with the minor use needs has been published, a revised version of the European Minor Use Database EUMUDA has been launched and many projects have been included in EUMUDA. The Coordination Facility started to issue newsletters quarterly. We have reached out to stakeholders and cooperated with existing international networks on Minor Uses. At global level the Coordination Facility is considered as *the* contact point for minor uses issues in the EU.

In the reporting period we have made progress on all the issues mentioned above and the funding for the reporting period, based on voluntary assessed contributions, has been guaranteed.

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

Jeroen Meeussen
Coordinator of the MUCF
26 February 2019

Background

1. Minor uses of plant protection products are uses on minor crops or against pest problems which are not routinely encountered but may on occasion be very damaging in major crops. These minor crops have a high economic value for farmers but may be of low economic interest for the crop protection industry. This leads to a lack of authorised products on the market for farmers to use on these crops which in turn can lead to loss of crop production with severe economic impact on the farmers. These minor crops include for example most vegetables, fruits, hops, mushrooms, nursery and ornamental crops, and some arable crops. It is estimated that overall, they represent more than EUR 70 billion per year, which equates to 22% of the total European Union plant production value. For that reason, the term ‘speciality crops’ should be used rather than ‘minor crops’ as this better reflects the status and the value of these crops. Applicants may face difficulties in gaining authorisation for ‘minor uses’ due to the extensive data packages required for authorisation to market plant protection products.
2. To address this problem in a more coherent way the European Commission has established the EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility.
3. The mission of the Facility is ‘to support Members in closing minor uses gaps through efficient collaboration to improve availability of chemical and non-chemical tools and solutions within an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) framework in order to enable European farmers to produce high quality crops’.
4. The Coordination Facility is hosted by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) in Paris.
5. The Minor Uses Coordination Facility comprises a technical secretariat, information systems and Expert Groups to coordinate the program of work carried out across the EU by Member States in support of Minor Uses.
6. As of 1 November 2016 the Coordination Facility is fully staffed. Mr Jeroen Meeussen started work as coordinator for the EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility on 1 September 2015. Within the administrative team in EPPO Ms Cintia Mauchien has been assigned as Administrator to the Coordination Facility from 1 January 2016. On 1 April 2016 Ms Nathalie Boutron started work as IT-officer for the EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility. On 1 November 2016 Ms Flora Limache joined the Coordination Facility as Technical Expert.
7. For the first three years the Coordination Facility was 50% funded by the EU and as a condition of that funding, acted for the benefit of all EU Member States. As the grant agreement with the EU expired mid-April 2018 the Coordination Facility now fully relies on voluntary assessed contributions from member countries.

Achievements in the period 15 April 2018 - 31 December 2018

Solving Minor Uses Needs

8. In early 2018, the MUCF asked EU Member States, plus Norway and Switzerland to amend or provide their needs and priorities on minor uses. A similar exercise had taken place in 2017 in preparation for the Third Global Minor Use Summit (Montreal, October 2017). The survey was reconducted in order to obtain responses from more Member States, harmonize the priority setting and list crops and pests preferably at species level. Data is now available from a total of 26 Member States including Norway and Switzerland.
9. The number of needs recorded – 5440 needs listed by individual Member States and 2630 grouped needs- is impressive. This also shows the importance of the coordination of the work on minor uses in Europe. For all minor uses needs a priority score has been attributed. The main priorities are identified based on the total of priority points and frequency of grouped needs. It should be noted that as projects can cover several needs, it can be expected that the total number of projects is lower than the number of needs. Currently, 87 projects are registered in EUMUDA.
10. The Coordination Facility has started to approach industry (conventional and biological) to discuss possible solutions for the minor uses needs, especially for the needs with the highest priorities. Priority should be given to find solutions within an IPM framework.

Governance and funding of the Co-ordination Facility

11. Now that the grant agreement with the European Commission has expired and more countries contribute to the funding of the Coordination Facility the governance structure with only a Steering Group will no longer suffice. Therefore, the governance of the Coordination Facility had to be changed and a draft constitution document was prepared with the aim to establish a governing body.
12. A governing body has been created, comprising all funding countries, that will meet once a year for the ‘Annual General Meeting’ (AGM). The role of the AGM will be to approve the annual report and plans and budget for the next year for the Coordination Facility.
13. The Minor Uses Steering Group comprises representatives from Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland and will supervise and support the work of the Coordination Facility. The European Commission attends meetings of the Steering Group as permanent observer. The Director-General EPPO and the coordinator of the MUCF also attend these meetings. The first meeting of the new Steering Group was held on 12 November 2018 in Brussels.
14. For the period covered by this annual report the Coordination Facility relies fully on voluntary assessed contributions from Member States. All Member States were approached for funding and the Coordination Facility received contribution/commitment from 15 Member States including the original funders France, Germany and Netherlands (see also point 28).

Communication and stakeholders

15. The Coordination Facility has continued to reach out to relevant stakeholders and participated in several (international) events to provide updates on the work and activities of the Coordination Facility.
16. The Coordination Facility has communicated relevant news to stakeholders via their website and newsletter. The newsletter was issued quarterly and has at the end of 2018 more than 550 subscribers.

Improving the EU Minor Uses Database - EUMUDA

17. The European Minor Use Database EUMUDA is an important tool to support the activities of the Commodity Expert Groups and to manage all projects. The Coordination Facility has supported the activities of the Commodity Expert Groups by providing, maintaining and filling in information in EUMUDA.
18. The structure in EUMUDA for the table of needs was improved and rules for access rights and confidentiality were fully implemented.
19. The Minor Uses Extranet has been maintained.

Co-ordinating expert groups

20. Commodity Expert Groups (CEGs) work to close minor use gaps at EU level by finding chemical or non-chemical solutions within an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) framework. The Commodity Expert Group consists of national minor use experts and representatives of the respective growers' associations or grower groups.
21. The Horizontal Expert Group (HEG) discusses general issues related to minor uses, as identified by the Commodity Expert Groups, the Steering Group or its members, aiming for the establishment of harmonized procedures and at creating a level playing field among Member States.
22. There is one Horizontal Expert Group, and a number of Commodity Expert Groups. Currently there are seven CEGs covering the following commodities: Fruit and Vegetables, Hops, Mushrooms, Ornamentals, Rice, Seeds and Tobacco.
23. The Coordination Facility has continued to provide administrative and technical support to the CEGs and the HEG in organizing meetings and managing ongoing projects. The Coordination Facility has organized several series of expert group meetings (back-to-back) in 2018 with participation of in total more than 200 participants from more than 20 different countries.
24. The Coordination Facility is developing a 'Guidance Document on Minor Uses' on the implementation of Article 51 and other provisions related to minor uses in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009. This guidance document should encourage Member States to take a consistent approach in the evaluation of dossiers, and to reduce the obstacles for mutual recognition of

minor uses between Member States. A draft Guidance Document on Minor Uses was prepared and circulated for commenting to the minor uses experts.

Linking with minor uses activities internationally

25. The Coordination Facility cooperated with existing networks on Minor Uses, such as IR-4 (USA), and the Canadian Minor Use Pesticides Program. The Coordination Facility was involved in the follow-up of the actions and priority projects resulting from the Global Minor Use Summit and Global Minor Use Priority Setting Workshops, respectively.
26. The Coordination Facility worked together with EPPO on further harmonization especially in relation to crop group and pest group definitions, as well as extrapolation tables.
27. The Coordination Facility participated in the OECD Expert Group on Minor Uses (EGMU) and took the lead in further developing a '*Guidance Document on the exchange and use of international efficacy & crop safety data for minor uses*'.

Financial overview for the period 15 April 2018 – 31 December 2018 of the EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility

28. For the period 15 April 2018 – 31 December 2018 the Coordination Facility fully relied on voluntary assessed contributions from Member States. The following Member States contributed for 2018 in 2018: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland (up to an amount of EUR 309 500). Italy did commit for 2018 but has not yet paid (total EUR 50 000).
29. For the period 15 April 2018 – 31 December 2018, the total costs of the EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility are EUR 368 181.
30. When the remaining contribution will be paid, the balance for the period 15 April 2018 – 31 December 2018 is slightly negative (EUR 8 681). Without the remaining contribution there is a deficit of EUR 58 681.