



EU MINOR USES COORDINATION FACILITY

Newsletter

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Minor uses, major issue!



Editorial

These are strange times. These words capture very well the current situation with the covid-19 pandemic. People may be worried about the health condition of themselves and their relatives. Many people are working from home, having only remote contact with colleagues. Hopefully, there will be a change for the better very soon.

Time to leave. This is my last editorial for the minor uses newsletter as I will leave the Coordination Facility by the end of April. It has been a challenge to set up the Coordination Facility and I enjoyed very much working together with so many excellent minor uses' experts and stakeholders.

A big thank you to all of you.

However, I also want to express my concerns as regards the situation in which the Coordination Facility currently finds itself with a reduced staff. This as the Technical Expert, Flora Limache, has also left the Coordination Facility very recently. I also want to thank her for all her good work.

I think that for a complex and important issue as minor uses, continuity and working with knowledgeable and dedicated people is an absolute must.

I hope that the Coordination Facility will develop in a sustainable way. The outcome of the recently held Minor Uses Workshop is promising. During the workshop it was evident that all stakeholders value the work and expertise of the MUCF and even see a greater role for the Coordination Facility. This can only be achieved by having appropriate and dedicated staff.

You can read more about the Workshop and the Roadmap for the Future in this newsletter.

Minor uses is a topic of high importance for European agriculture and European farmers. Now it is up to EPPO, the Minor Uses Steering Group and member countries to take their responsibility and show their commitment to the work of the MUCF.

As EU Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides has pointed out very clearly: "We all agree the minor use facility is extremely important & needs to be supported".

What the future will bring? Time will tell.

Jeroen Meeussen,
Coordinator of the MUCF

As Director-General of EPPO, I would like to add a few words to the Newsletter produced and issued under the responsibility of the MUCF.

EPPO is strongly committed to ensure the continuity of the MUCF and its work. I am in close contact with the MUCF Steering Group and together we are working on the best way to fill the two vacancies in the MUCF. In the beginning of May, the recruitment of the MUCF Coordinator will start and this will be announced on the MUCF and on the EPPO website. Later this year this will be followed by the announcement of the recruitment for the position of a Technical Expert. In the meantime, the IT Officer and the Administrator are available for questions and EPPO will try to find, together with the member countries, an interim solution to have technical expertise available as soon as possible.

Nico Horn, Director-General of EPPO, 1 May 2020.

MUCF staffing

The Minor Uses Coordination Facility (MUCF) has two vacancies and will not be fully staffed in the coming months. This is as Flora Limache, the Technical Expert of the MUCF, has left the MUCF per 29 February 2020 and Jeroen Meeussen, the Coordinator of the MUCF has terminated his contract by 30 April 2020. EPPO will work with the member countries and the MUCF Steering Group on solutions to fill the vacancies as soon as possible and also look for interim solutions until these vacancies can be filled for a longer period.

Merci beaucoup Flora Limache - Technical Expert of the MUCF

Flora Limache had joined the Coordination Facility as Technical Expert in November 2016. Flora has done a great job and I just want to highlight a few of her main achievements: her contributions to the Minor Uses Database EUMUDA, her dedicated preparation of and participation to minor uses expert meetings, her efforts to improve harmonization at European and global level, her initiative to issue a newsletter, and last but not least she was the driving force behind the success of the Workshop on Minor Uses that was held from 18 to 20 February 2020 in Paris.

Her work for the MUCF was highly appreciated. Her expertise and knowledge were also recognized and acknowledged by the minor uses' experts and stakeholders: *"Flora Limache is a very good and helpful technical expert on minor uses, and more in particular on the needs and possibilities for our CEG"*, *"Flora understands the 'minor uses' problem very well, and she is motivated to find many solutions. Her contributions are well recognized and appreciated by the members of our CEG"*, and *"Flora Limache has an excellent knowledge in bio-control solutions, an essential part in achieving goals of substituting chemical PPPs with alternatives as required under the Green Deal and SUD"*, It has been a great adventure that unfortunately had to end. We wish her all the best for the future.



Workshop on Minor Uses in February 2020

The MUCF organized a Workshop on "Minor Uses and Speciality Crops: The way forward in Europe" on 18-20 February 2020 in Paris. We are grateful to the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food for hosting this workshop. The Workshop was attended by 65 participants from 17 countries. It was structured in plenary and break-out group sessions to allow good interactions between the participants.

The Workshop brought together key European stakeholders, minor use specialists from EU Member States and policymakers on minor uses and speciality crops. It allowed growers' organisations, the Member States and other stakeholders to exchange information on their experiences and expectations on minor uses work and the MUCF.

The Workshop aimed to enhance regulatory harmonisation, come to a sustainable European way forward for minor uses work and establish a roadmap containing a list of concrete actions regarding the future organisation for minor uses work, and the role therein of the MUCF, the European Commission, Member States and other stakeholders.

This Roadmap takes into account the outcome of the discussions at the Workshop resulting in the following four platforms of future work (i) Obstacles in minor uses work, (ii) IPM research and implementation, (iii) Communication and awareness-raising, and (iv) The future organisation of minor uses' work in Europe.

The Report of the Workshop as well as the Roadmap for the Future can be downloaded from the MUCF website <https://minoruses.eu/mucf/meetings>

Minor Uses Meetings

Due to the evolving Covid-19 situation the MUCF had to postpone the March meetings of the Commodity Expert Groups (CEGs). The CEG meetings as well as the meeting of the Horizontal Expert Group (HEG) will now be held from 03-05 November 2020 in Brussels.

Annual General Meeting

The second Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the countries that have committed to fund the Coordination Facility was held on 25 February 2020 in Brussels.

The AGM adopted the Annual Report 2019 and Financial Report 2019 of the MUCF. The MUCF ended 2019 with a positive balance.

The funding of the MUCF is fully reliant on the voluntary assessed contributions from member countries.

For 2020 the MUCF has received commitments from 16 member countries up to an amount of EUR 355 000 (EUR 245 000 received, and EUR 110 000 committed). In addition, there is a carry-over from 2019 which may result in a positive balance for 2020. If committed contributions will be received, the funding for 2020 will be secured.

The MUCF will update the Work Plan 2020 with a compilation of the multi-year work plans of the Commodity Expert Groups. Then the Work Plan 2020 can be adopted based on a total budget of EUR 360 000.

To have a more balanced Steering Group the AGM agreed to expand the Minor Uses Steering Group with a representative of the Central and Eastern European Countries. A representative from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic will from now on also attend Steering Group meetings. The Minor Uses Steering Group now consists of representatives from Germany, Italy, Netherlands, the Slovak Republic, Sweden and Switzerland.

The AGM also approved the revised policy on the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses. From January 2020 onwards there will be no reimbursement for experts attending meetings.