

**COST Action FP1201**  
**(15/11/2012 – 14/11/2016)**

**Title: Forest Land Ownership Changes in Europe: Significance for Management and Policy (FACESMAP)**

**PROGRESS REVIEW 2/2**  
**(15/11/2012 – 31/07/2015)**

**This report assessing the period stated above is submitted by the Rapporteur and is validated by the Scientific Committee of the COST Association**

**Confidentiality:** the Progress Review will be made available to the COST Association (Committee of Senior Officials, Scientific Committee, and Administration) and Action Management Committee only. The Summary assessment below will be included in the Progress Report which will be made publicly available on the Action page on the COST website.

**Summary assessment of progress (for publication):**

Privately owned forestland constitutes a significant share of European forests, while scientific insights into pertinent topics so far have been rather sporadic. FACESMAP demonstrates as a major scientific breakthrough, thanks to exemplary design and implementation of the Action that links researchers from multiple disciplines in 30 European countries.

The Progress Report clearly shows that Action advances according to the plans. Convincing evidence of the progress is available on the website, where all deliverables are presented in a well-structured and accessible manner. The Action is set up functionally, the diverse activities constituting a coherent whole. Background papers of each of three Working Groups provide valuable methodological and thematic overviews, setting a well-founded agenda for the key research questions to be addressed. Country reports and mid-term proceedings yield cumulative stock of information about forestland ownership, unprecedented by the scope and degree of detail. Workshops with local and European stakeholders serve as effective dissemination channels. The so-called Travellab workshops transform the traditional passive participation in conference excursions into enquiring format that activates scientists and effectively links science and practice. Training schools on stakeholder interactions and qualitative/mixed methods form a valuable tool for capacity building in important subjects, where research training is traditionally weak in many forest academic environments across Europe. Another tool for capacity building is constituted by the short-term scientific missions that are well-organised and documented. Both tools have been fruitfully targeting early career investigators in *Inclusiveness Target Countries*. A number of task groups are working on around 20 scientific peer review publications. Collaboration with UNENE/FAO is another exemplary achievement, going beyond the original plans of the Action. Generating information of improved quality, this is a win-win activity for both involved parties and will prospectively serve the European community of forest researchers and practitioners.

Overall, FACESMAP demonstrates an impressive progress, following the ambitious plans outlined in the Action's Memorandum of Understanding. This Review also provides a few recommendations pertaining to some conceptual developments, the quality of the European maps, and intended impacts on national level.

**Validation by Scientific Committee**

This report was validated by the Scientific Committee on: <COST Association inserts SC validation date>



## I. Review of Progress

### MoU objectives

Assess the extent to which the Action is making progress with the objectives stated in the MoU, in the case of any seem to be in danger or not being achieved please assess the validity of the justification given by the Action in this regard and/or specify remedial measures that should be implemented to secure achievement.

The Action is very well progressing with the MoU objectives, none of objectives can be regarded to be in danger. The Action's Progress Report 2 lucidly documents the progress made so far. All the relevant documents are also available on the website of FACESMAP. Objective (4) is too early to assess in line to its contents and the Action's schedule.

### MoU deliverables

Assess the extent to which the Action is making progress with delivering the deliverables stated in the MoU. In the case of any that seem to be in danger or not being delivered please assess the validity of the justification given by the Action in this regard and/or specify remedial measures that should be implemented to secure achievement.

The Progress Report clearly shows that Action advances according to the plans. Convincing evidence of the progress is available on the website, where all deliverables are presented in very well structured and accessible manner. Action is set up excellently in order to progress with the planned deliverables, the diverse activities constituting a coherent whole. The background papers of each of three Working Groups provided valuable methodological and thematic overviews, setting an agenda with key research questions to be addressed. Country reports and mid-term proceedings provide cumulative stock of information about the situation with forest land ownership in Europe that is novel by its scope and the degree of detail. Workshops with local and European stakeholders served as effective dissemination channels and have provided insights into "local realities" in a novel manner. Training schools on stakeholder interactions and qualitative/mixed methods form an important instrument for capacity building in highly important subjects, where research training is traditionally week in many forest research environments across Europe. Another tool for capacity building is constituted by the short term scientific missions that are well-organised and documented. Both tools have been successfully targeting early career investigators in *Inclusiveness Target Countries*. A number of task groups are working on around 20 scientific peer review publications. Overall, FACESMAP demonstrates an impressive progress, following the ambitious plans outlined in the MoU.

Here I would like to provide a few comments of recommendatory character (not implying underachievements of significance).

On the conceptual level, the researchers within the Action appear to somewhat struggle with the proposed concept of "new forest owner types". Firstly, what is a "new" type, is highly context-specific. In most CEE countries that experienced the long periods of absence of private ownership, any owner type can be considered new, in contrast to the old democracies. Within the latter, it could be indeed questioned how new are the "new" types. We can probably go back several generations and still find various types of owners, e.g. not only the somewhat narrowly typified traditional profit maximisers. It is not surprising that analysis of Travellab exercises (Matilainen et al.) found great difficulties to differentiate between the traditional and non-traditional (cf. "new") forest owner types. There are indications of a risk that Action researchers will question the existing owner typologies (that provide sound attempts to better understand the multi-faceted sets of forest owners in various countries), based on own unsuccessful attempt to devise a highly trivialised dichotomy of "new" versus "old" owners. Much of the confusion could probably be avoided by replacing the concept of "new forest owners" with a more accurate term such as "changed ownership patterns". It could be advisable to explicitly take up this issue at the final conference and/or relevant forthcoming publications.

Regarding the tangible outputs, the maps of forest ownership (change) could be powerful means of communication, especially for the policy makers at national and European levels. However, the already available maps of trends make me doubt about the quality of analysis underlying the maps. Taking a specific example from the region that I know best, Lithuania and Latvia have different scoring for New Forest Ownership through Privatisation or Restitution, although the importance of this driver was very similar in both countries. Even more surprisingly New Forest Ownership through New Private Forest Owners who have bought Forests is given a zero score (not relevant) in case of Lithuania, even though

there is a very significant trend of forest investors (lately including foreigners) buying up forestland from small-scale forest owners, leading to significant changes in ownership structure and approaches to forest management (in my opinion, deserving at least score 2, “rather important”). Such shaky scoring is not attributable to low competence of the researchers – on the contrary, FACESMAP’s experts from e.g. Lithuania are definitely most competent researchers on the Action’s topics. Dubious scoring most likely is an outcome of a high subjectivity of scoring by single or few experts without clearly agreed and standardised criteria. I could see several possible remedies:

- as a minimum, maps could include legends or annexed text, explaining the current procedure and the inherent limitations
- a somewhat more elaborate text could explain the criteria applied in a greater detail and provide an overview description (e.g. by regions) of the obtained scores
- most demanding but also most preferable option would be to arrange an electronic or physical workshop (e.g. at the final conference) where the scoring would be explicitly discussing and calibrated, leading to improved versions of maps.

Of course, similar considerations apply to the planned maps of ownership distribution, in cases they will rely on expert judgements of the kind.

### Co-authored publications and FP7/ H2020 proposals/ projects

**Assess the quality, quantity, significance and inclusiveness<sup>1</sup> of the Action’s co-publications.**

The available country reports and mid-term proceedings provide cumulative stock of information about the situation with forest land ownership in Europe that is unprecedented by its scope and the degree of detail. It would not be reasonable to expect high number of already published scientific peer review publications given the project schedule and the turnover time for scientific publishing. The number of planned scientific publications is remarkable and many of them expectedly will be co-authored by international research teams. Judging from the quality of deliverables up to date, the reported publications plans appear to be realistic.

**Assess the quality, quantity, relevance and inclusiveness of the Action’s FP7/ H2020 proposals and projects.**

There is no evidence of FP7/H2020 proposals under the FACESMAP framework. One explanation could be a rather modest number of forest-related calls in H2020 under the reported period.

### Additional Outputs and achievements

**Assess the relevance and significance of any additional outputs and/ or achievements generated by the Action.**

The Action generated significant additional outputs and achievements. The additionally organised Training School was a valuable complement to the planned activities of the action. Both training schools (on stakeholder interactions and qualitative/mixed methods) form an important instrument for capacity building in highly important methods, where research training is traditionally weak in many forest academic environments across Europe.

Collaboration with UNECE/FAO is a commendable add-on to FACESMAP, expectedly leading to higher quality of European data on private forest owners.

The Travellab approach is highly innovative, boosting the research insights compared to the traditional research conference format.

### General assessment of progress

To make the overall assessment of progress:

1. Select the overall level of risk that best corresponds to that of the MoU objectives and deliverables<sup>2</sup> (high/ moderate/ low) at the time the Action was approved and
2. Select the statement that corresponds to the level of progress with achievement of these objectives, delivery of deliverables and any additional outputs. Policy as well as scientific/ technological outputs and impacts must be addressed.

Correlate the selected options in order to arrive at the overall assessment (which is a result of the combination of achievement level and risk/ ambition level).

	Level of MoU objective achievement, MoU deliverable delivery and additional outputs	General risk/ ambition level of Action MoU objectives and/ or deliverables (at the time of submission)
--	---	--

<sup>1</sup> The Action participants involved in the publication are listed in column 4 of the Co-authored publications table in section I.B. In particular the presence of Action participants from Inclusiveness Target Countries (see Annex) must be assessed.

<sup>2</sup> When assessing achievement of MoU objectives and delivery of MoU deliverables any changes approved by the (Scientific Committee/ CSO) must be considered the base against which the assessment is made.

		<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Scientific/ technological and policy outcomes and impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	<b>Excellent</b>	Very Good
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	Excellent	Very Good
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent	Very Good	Good
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good	Good	Fair
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	Fair	Poor
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	Poor	Fail
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	Fail	Fail

<b>II. Review of the Networking</b>	
<b>Added value of the networking</b>	
1. Comment on the Action's description of the added value of the networking	
Privately owner forestland constitutes a very significant share of European forests, while insights into complex topics pertaining to private forestry so far have been rather sporadic and spread out among various research groups in an ad hoc manner. FACESMAP demonstrates a major scientific breakthrough, thanks to exemplary design and implementation of the Action, linking researchers in 30 European countries. Furthermore, the Action has been very successful in also linking research and practice on different scales.	
2. Assess the validity of the Action's statement regarding the necessity of the added value of the Action networking for the Action co-authored publications:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action statement is valid
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action statement is not valid for the following publications for the following reasons



(specify which publications and justify/ explain)

### III. Review of Impacts<sup>3</sup>

1. With reference to the definition of impacts in Annex 1 comment on the validity, relevance and significance (in particular importance and timeliness) of the impacts (Scientific/ technological, Economic, Societal) claimed by the Action (in Section I.D of the Achievement Report).
2. Indicate any additional possible impacts not considered by the Action.

The description in Section I.D of the Progress Report provides an honest self-assessment of selected achieved or planned activities within the project. However, in my understanding this description is at the level of outputs rather than at the level of impacts (cf. Annex 1). Shifting the view to the short- to long-term scientific, technological and societal applications, FACESMAP is very likely to have significant impacts. Most importantly, the Action sets the pending issues of private forestry high on an European research agenda, that could prospectively lead to higher attention to the relevant research areas by donors at EU (e.g. H2020 programme) and national levels. By linking different research groups for numerous concrete tasks (such as investigations with ambition to produce scientific publications of high quality) FACESMAP pulls the available capacity together, which will generate momentum in terms of research collaboration for years to come.

The biggest challenge in terms of impact probably lies in the complex but crucial task to affect the national policy makers. Despite the increasing importance of EU policies, the weightiest forest policy decisions are taken at national level (or at relevant sub-national level in the case of countries of federal character). The Action so far has been successfully targeting local (through Travellabs and local studies) and European (through workshops and cooperation with UNECE/FAO), but the link to the national level appears to have been limited. Such linking is highly challenging, here come some suggestions for potential measures:

- Short communications in national press presenting project results are planned under dissemination activities, which is good. It could be advisable to set examples of such communications and additionally encourage the Action partners to publish communications before the end of the Action.
- Publications in professional and mass media. Such publications can potentially have significant impacts for national discourses. However forest scientists often lack skills and motivation to elaborate such contributions, in part due to poor academic merit for “non-academic” publications. Compilation of available examples produced under the Action could be welcome input for the final conference and Action report.
- Impacts could be potentially raised by a conscious effort to consider the possibilities to insert the findings of FACESMAP to relevant national processes. For example, on its last meeting in February 2016, the Forestry Consultation Board (the consultative body gathering the most influential stakeholders in Lithuanian forestry) defined the need to radically change the regulation of private forestry as the top priority of Lithuanian forest policy (<http://www.forest.lt/go.php/lit/N.Kupstaitis-Diskusija-esminiais-miskupolitikos-klausimais/5409/2>). This exemplifies an excellent window of opportunity for contributing to a fundamental and lasting changes through timely input from science (in case scientists have willingness and capacity to act as “knowledge brokers”). Ways to maximise impacts on national policy could be a highly relevant topic for a session during the final conference of FACESMAP.

#### Overall assessment of impacts

Select the statement that best describes the Action’s impacts:

- Multiple highly significant impacts are reasonably foreseen, at least one of which is already observed [Excellent]
- Multiple highly significant impacts are reasonably foreseen for the future OR one highly or moderately significant impact is already observed [Very Good]**
- One highly significant or multiple moderately significant impacts are reasonably foreseen for the future [Good]
- One moderately significant impact or multiple impacts of low significance is/ are reasonably foreseen for the future OR one impact of low significance is already observed [Fair]
- At least one impact of low significance may occur in the future [Poor]

<sup>3</sup> Scientific/ technological, Economic, Societal

No impacts have occurred or can be foreseen to occur in the future [Fail]

#### IV. Review of Dissemination and exploitation of Action results

1. Assess the effectiveness of the Action's dissemination and exploitation approach.  
 Progress Report describes the dissemination and exploitation results in a meaningful and fair way. Most of the outlined outreach and dissemination activities are planned at the end of the Action and thus are not yet possible to assess. The website of FACESMAP deserves a special notice, as it splendidly documents the proceeds of the Action in a well-structured and accessible manner. I consider the design and management of FACESMAP's website to be exemplary.

As outlined under Impacts Section, FACESMAP has already employed a thoughtful mix of dissemination and outreach at local and European level, the main challenge being to effectively reach the stakeholders also at national level.

2. Indicate whether each initiative implemented by the Action was effective and added value or not.

Item/ activity	Target audience	Result	Hyperlink	Effective and added value Y/N
<b>OUTREACH ACTIVITIES</b> - outreach activities are targeted at practise which means that the target groups are policy makers at different levels (EU, national, regional level), public administration, stakeholders, public, NGOs, consultants, etc.				
RESEARCH BRIEFS - Two possible research briefs max. 2 pages long will be issued - one about the MAP with method and results and one on main results from the Action.	policy makers, stakeholders, research	Time: end of action Media: internet, EFI news, IUFRO news	to come	Expectedly Y
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS/ IMPLICATIONS - synthesis results from the Action (draft before the second EU level SH workshop for comments).	policy makers	Time: end of action Media: internet, printed	to come	Expectedly Y
SHORT COMMUNICATIONS IN NATIONAL PRESS - Presenting project results in home countries	practise, public	Time: during the action Media: internet, local media, newspaper, TV	to come	Expectedly Y
THINK FOREST EVENT - Presenting the main results from the action, the MAP Target group:	EU policy makers and stakeholders	Time: tbd Media: EU Parliament	to come	Expectedly Y
JOINT UNECE/FAO/ FACESMAP SURVEY Joint survey on forest ownership in Europe	Research, Practise	Time: Media: internet	to come	Expectedly Y
WEBSITE	public	Time: throughout the action and after	<a href="http://facesmap.boku.ac.at/">http://facesmap.boku.ac.at/</a>	Y
<b>SCIENTIFIC DISSEMINATION</b>				

<p>COUNTRY REPORTS - Zivojinovic, I., Weiss, G., Lidestav, G., Feliciano, D., Hujala, T., Dobsinska, Z., Lawrence, A. Nybakk, E., Quiroga, S., Schraml, U. (2015). Forest Land Ownership Change in Europe. COST Action FP1201 FACESMAP Country Reports, Joint Volume. EFICEEC-EFISEE Research Report. University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), Vienna, Austria. ISBN 978-3-900932-26-8 [Online publication]</p>	<p>scientific community, policy makers, stakeholders, public</p>	<p>Published online</p>	<p><a href="http://facesmap.boku.ac.at/index.php/library2/doc_download/465-fp1201-country-reports-joint-volume">http://facesmap.boku.ac.at/index.php/library2/doc_download/465-fp1201-country-reports-joint-volume</a></p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>MID-TERM PROCEEDINGS</p>	<p>scientific community</p>	<p>Will be published online, with an ISBN number</p>	<p>to come</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>SCI PAPERS - from sub-groups and task-groups - from UNECE/FAO/ FACESMAP report data</p>	<p>scientific community</p>	<p>Will be published in various journals (including Action Special Issue)</p>	<p>to come</p>	<p>Expedtedly Y</p>
<p>MAP ON CHANGING FOREST OWNERSHIP</p>	<p>scientific community, policy makers, stakeholders, public</p>	<p>Online/and book</p>	<p>to come</p>	<p>Expedtedly Y</p>
<p>SPECIAL ISSUE „FOREST LAND OWNERSHIP CHANGES IN EUROPE“</p>	<p>scientific community</p>	<p>Time: December 2017 Media: Forest Policy and Economics</p>	<p>to come</p>	<p>Expedtedly Y</p>
<p>PROCEEDING FROM THE FINAL CONFERENCE</p>	<p>scientific community</p>	<p>Will be published online, with an ISBN number</p>	<p>to come</p>	<p>Expedtedly Y</p>

3. Select which of the following statements best describes the Action

- There were many highly effective Action activities focusing on dissemination<sup>4</sup> and exploitation of Action results [Excellent]
- All Action activities focusing on dissemination and exploitation of Action results were effective [Very Good]**
- Most Action activities focusing on dissemination and exploitation of Action results were effective [Good]
- A few Action activities focusing on dissemination and exploitation of Action results were effective [Fair]
- The activities undertaken focusing on dissemination and exploitation were ineffective [Poor]
- The Action did not undertake any valid activities focusing on dissemination and exploitation of Action results [Fail]

<sup>4</sup> Dissemination activities could include: Action website, co-authored publications listed at Section I.B of Action's Progress Report, other Action publications, attendance at Dissemination Meetings listed at Section II.B.2 of Action's Progress Report.

**V. Review of Action Success(s)**

COST regularly communicates the successes of Actions. Please comment on the validity of the aspect(s) identified by this Action as its greatest successes (see Final Achievement Report Section I.G). The described successes are doubtlessly valid. Travellab is an innovative approach highly fitting the thematic focus of the Action. The Travellab workshops transform the traditional passive participation in conference excursions into enquiring format that activates the scientists and effectively links science and practice. Being research coordinator of the recently started H2020 project ALTERFOR, I will seriously consider the experience of Travellab, prospectively leading to adoption of relevant facets of this approach in connection to our cross-project meetings.

Collaboration with UNENE/FAO is another exemplary achievement, going beyond the original plans of the Action. Generating information of improved quality, this is a win-win activity for both involved parties and will prospectively serve the European community of forest researchers and practitioners.

If you believe that another aspect(s) (outcomes and/ or impacts, rather than activities) of the Action should be considered its greatest success(es) please define these below (maximum two).

Description of the success story	Dimension of the success Breakthrough: scientific, technological or socioeconomic Policy implementation (specify which policy) Capacity building

**VI. Review of the management of the Action budget**

**Funds spent outside of the COST countries**

1. If the Action spent funds on STSMs to approved institutions in International Partner Countries (IPC) or Near Neighbour Countries (NNC) and/ or STSMs from an approved institution in a NNC please assess the value of these activities to the Action.

Thanks to well organised Training Schools and STSM, the Action valuably contributed to capacity building in IPC.

2. If the Action spent funds on any "Invited Speakers" for meetings and/ or Training Schools or on Dissemination meetings please assess the value these added to the Action

The contributions by invited speakers appear to be valuable and fully in line with Action's objectives.

**General comments on Action management**

Overall, MACESMAP is progressing very successfully. This is to a great degree due to highly effective and committed management of the action. The available documentation, such as the roadmap for action activities, the background reviews and protocols of various events, demonstrate an exemplary quality of managerial and scientific coordination.

**Action Rapporteur details and procedures**

Vilis Brukas  
 Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Southern Swedish Forest Research Centre  
 Sweden  
 +46 70 545 34 99  
 vilis.brukas@slu.se

In completing the Assessment Report the Action Rapporteur

- reviewed the following documents:
  - Action MoU: [http://w3.cost.eu/fileadmin/domain\\_files/FPS/Action\\_FP1201/mou/FP1201-e.pdf](http://w3.cost.eu/fileadmin/domain_files/FPS/Action_FP1201/mou/FP1201-e.pdf)
  - Draft Action Achievement Report
  - Numerous materials available on the Action website: <http://facesmap.boku.ac.at/>
- used the following methodology: Desktop review of available materials and assessment following the Progress Review form



## Annex 1

### Definitions:

<b>COST Action Challenge (main aim)</b>	“The research question addressed by the COST Action targeting scientific, technological, and / or socioeconomic problems”
<b>COST Action Innovation</b>	“The creation and / or development of new or improved concepts, products, processes, services, and / or technologies that are made available to markets, governments and society”
<b>COST Action objectives</b>	“COST Action objectives are the results that an Action needs to achieve in order to respond to meet its challenge. These are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely) and twofold: research coordination objectives and capacity building objectives.”
<b>COST Action research coordination objectives</b>	“Achieving these objectives turns COST Actions from initially scattered teams into one transnational team and leverages the existing funded research. These objectives entail the distribution of tasks, sharing of knowledge and know-how, and the creation of synergies among Action participants to achieve specific outputs.”
<b>COST Action capacity building objectives</b>	“Achieving these objectives entail building critical mass to drive scientific progress, thereby strengthening the European Research Area. They can be achieved by the delivery of specific outputs and / or through network features or types and levels of participation.”
<b>COST Action networking activities</b>	“any activities organised by the COST Action (whether or not directly funded by COST) in order to achieve research coordination and capacity building objectives.”
<b>COST Action networking tools</b>	“instruments through which eligible activities can be funded”
<b>COST Action outputs</b>	“direct results from the COST Action activities. These can be codified knowledge, tacit knowledge, technology, and societal applications.”
<b>COST Action impact</b>	“the short- to long-term scientific, technological, and / or socioeconomic changes produced by a COST Action, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.”
<b>COST Action deliverable</b>	“a distinct, expected and tangible output of the Action, meaningful in terms of the Action’s overall objectives such as a report, a document, a technical diagram, a software etc. Action deliverables are used to measure its progress and success.”
<b>COST Action milestones</b>	“Control points in the Action that help to chart progress. They are also needed at intermediary points so that, if problems have arisen, corrective measures can be taken. A milestone may be a critical decision point in the Action where, for example, the MC must decide which of several technologies to adopt for further development (e.g. core group and MC meetings, mid-term reviews)”
<b>Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC):</b>	Current COST Member Countries targeted by the COST inclusiveness Policy (“Inclusiveness Target Countries” (ITC)): EU 13 (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia), EU candidate countries (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Republic of Serbia, Turkey) and potential EU candidate countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina). In addition, to comply with the EC criteria for ‘Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation’, Portugal and Luxemburg are included.