

Inaugural network meeting of the Forest Invasive Species Network for Europe and Central Asia (REUFIS)

Budapest, Hungary, 17-19 October 2017

Background

During the Forest Health Regional Workshop for European and Central Asian countries which was held in Hungary in June 2015, workshop participants identified the need for a network or “platform” where scientists and policy-makers can share information and experience on forest invasive species, and coordinate related activities and programmes within the region and beyond.

To initiate the establishment of such platform, the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia organized a “Forest Invasive Species in Europe and Central Asia” meeting in Minsk, Belarus on 6-7 September 2016. Representatives from 23 countries of Europe and Central Asia came together to share information and problems related to forest invasive species. From this meeting the REUFIS network was formed, with the vision to foster integrated and dynamic forest pest management in the region, and provide baseline data for informed decision-making. It was also agreed that the inaugural network meeting will be held in October 2017.

Topics of the Inaugural network meeting

In the Inaugural network meeting the Mandate of the network will be discussed and the election of the Secretary and the Executive Committee will take place together with the discussion of the Workplan for 2018.

The technical part of the Network meeting will focus on the relation between Climate Change and Invasive Species, as well as the topic of invasive insects in Europe and Central Asia (REU region) with a specific training on Bark and Ambrosia Beetles.

Mission and Objectives of the REUFIS Network

The mission of the Forest Invasive Species Network for Europe and Central Asia (REUFIS) is to highlight the importance of using existing tools and structures and to exchange and share knowledge and information related to forest invasive species.

The Network aims to:

- Enable sharing of information and experiences, coordinate activities on forest invasive species, raise awareness in eradication, control and management of forest invasive species, encourage publication and sharing of research results, early detection and monitoring strategies, and taxonomic support, and provide a communication link for all levels within and between member countries.
- Collaborate and cooperate with existing international and regional organizations, such as the FAO International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO), strengthen national capacities to manage forest pests, and provide decision-makers with baseline data for making informed decisions.
- Advocate compliance with phytosanitary regulations and provide policy advice on movement of forest invasive species.