



# EUPHRESCO

# Modus

# operandi

**Principles for a self-sustainable, long-term  
network of phytosanitary (statutory plant health)  
research programmes owners and managers**

### Document History

In October 2008 a questionnaire was sent to the EUPRHESCO partners, asking for views on the contents and structure of the planned long-term network. By means of discussions during project meetings in November 2008 and May 2009 the draft of the network structure was developed and sent out to partners for comments. During the project meeting in October 2009 necessary administrative structures and desired amendments were discussed and the first draft of a modus operandi produced. This first draft was presented to the Network Management Group of EUPHRESCO during a meeting in November 2009 and has been refined further in early 2010. The modus operandi will be presented to the Governing Board of EUPHRESCO for comment and approval and is part of Deliverable 5.2 of the work programme of EUPHRESCO.

2010 ERA-Net EUPHRESCO (European phytosanitary research coordination).

This document is part of the work programme of EUPHRESCO, Deliverable 5.2.

EC 6<sup>th</sup> Framework programme ERA-Net scheme

Authors: EUPHRESCO Partner 15: Katrin Kaminski, Silke Steinmöller, Jens-Georg Unger, Network Management Group of EUPHRESCO

Distribution: All partners of EUPHRESCO, Governing Board, European Commission, all Partners of the long-term network

<http://www.euphresco.org>

## Contents

Introduction .....	4
Scope of the document .....	5
Short definition of terms .....	6
Modus operandi .....	8
1. Network purpose.....	8
2. Principle functions of the network .....	8
3. Governance and accountability.....	8
4. Network Coordinator, Secretariat and Network Management Group.....	9
5. Network administration.....	11
6. Initiation and implementation of trans-national projects .....	13
7. Supplementing documents.....	15

## Introduction

The ERA-Net Project EUPHRESCO is a policy-led coordination action, initiated by the EU Council Working Party of Chief Officers of Plant Health Services (COPHS). The 4-year project started in May 2006, funded from the EU 6<sup>th</sup> framework programme. EUPHRESCO stands for **E**uropean **P**hytosanitary **R**esearch **C**ooperation and the project connects phytosanitary (statutory plant health) research funders (programme owners or managers) from 17 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK.

The aim of the initial EUPHRESCO project (2006-2010) was to coordinate phytosanitary research at the European level. This involved coordination and co-operation between nationally-based phytosanitary research programmes in Europe for the first time through networking of research activities and a potential mutual opening or collaboration between national programmes. This coordination of national research has not been done significantly before EUPHRESCO nor has there been any significant trans-national funding of research, nor any alignment with EU-funded plant health research. EUPHRESCO therefore combines three main goals:

- Develop phytosanitary research policy and coordination at the EU-wide level.
- Optimise the research provision that underpins EU quarantine plant health policy development and implementation by reducing duplication and pooling resources.
- Increase the capacity of European phytosanitary science and research, in order to prevent the disappearance of EU expertise and maintain Europe's competitiveness in the global market. This supports EPPO's declaration of a *State of Emergency in Plant Health* in Madeira in 2004.

The project was fully supported by the EU Council Working Party of Chief Officers for Plant Health Services (COPHS), The European Commission's Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection (DG SANCO), the European Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), all of which have European plant health responsibilities.

One component of the EUPHRESCO work plan is the establishment of a self-sustainable, long-term network in Europe to ensure a durable coordination of European phytosanitary research. The initial basis for such a network has already been established through EUPHRESCO's activities since 2006.

During an international EUPHRESCO workshop in Braunschweig on "Building and influencing trans-national research in Europe" participants from important plant health institutions and organisations expressed the wish for a flexible and light network structure that won't be an administrative burden. On the other hand it was clearly expected that the network should play an important role in plant health research. Trans-national projects should be primarily applied, of short duration, often pest specific and addressing regional issues, and responsive

to emerging and urgent policy needs. By comparison, EU-funded projects are more likely to be larger and/or more strategic projects, typically with a more EU-wide rationale. Furthermore it was intended that the network should incorporate additional partners and establish sound contacts with other countries, e.g. USA (and its wider QUAD involving Australia, New Zealand and Canada), Russia and various Mediterranean and African countries, especially International Cooperation Partner Countries. Similarly, collaboration with other organisations and other stakeholders is also important, as are linkages to different science areas that may have some influence on plant health issues, e.g., social sciences.

This modus operandi represents the proposed principles that will be necessary to initiate, operate and maintain a durable and self-sustainable network of phytosanitary research funders in Europe. It refers to the active participation of network partners in cooperation, joint activities and the development of future phytosanitary research strategies, as well as other potential forms of cooperation. It aims to establish a network with a light and flexible administrative structure and still be able to fulfil the envisaged aims. The modus operandi will be proposed to the EUPHRESCO Governing Board for approval. . It does not represent fixed regulations and can be amended and adjusted during the future years if desired.

## Scope of the document

This document describes the organisation and the main functions of the self-sustainable long-term network EUPHRESCO. This network is the continuance of the EUPHRESCO ERA-Net without EU funding as aspired in the EUPHRESCO working programme.

This modus operandi is designed as a guide on the principles under which the network will operate, without legal binding, and covers the issues of network administration and coordination as well as the implementation of trans-national projects. It will be complemented with Letters of Intent from the partners and a Collaboration Agreement through which Partners (Network members) commit to participate under the principles described.

## Short definition of terms

Applied research	Original investigation undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge. It is, however, directed primarily towards a specific practical aim or objective support system
Basic/fundamental research	Experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundation of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular application or use in view
ERA-Net	European Research Area – Networking, element of the FP6 specific programme aiming at integration and strengthening the European Research Area via coordination and mutual opening of national and regional research programmes
EUPHRES CO	EC sixth framework programme ERA-Net project entitled 'European Phytosanitary (statutory plant health) Research Coordination'
FP7	EU seventh framework programme for Research and Technological Development
Pest	<p>Any species, strain or biotype plant, animal or pathogenic agent injurious to plants or plant products [International Standard on Phytosanitary Measures No. 5, <a href="https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=13399&amp;tx_publication_pi1[showUid]=184195&amp;frompage=13399&amp;type=publication&amp;subtype=&amp;L=0#item">https://www.ippc.int/index.php?id=13399&amp;tx_publication_pi1[showUid]=184195&amp;frompage=13399&amp;type=publication&amp;subtype=&amp;L=0#item</a> ]</p> <p>Here: including invasive non-native plants</p>
Phytosanitary research	Research that deals with regulated quarantine pests, emerging pests with the potential to become quarantine pests (organisms new to countries, outbreaks in other countries, non-native invasive species relevant for or associated with, plants) and regulated non-quarantine pests (RNQP) in particular countries
Plant health	Regulated/statutory/quarantine plant health; all areas that come within the scope of the Community Plant Health Regime, e.g. pests (including pathogens and invasive weeds, GMO's are excluded. An equivalent term is 'phytosanitary'.
Regulated	A regulated quarantine pest or a regulated non-quarantine pest [ISPM No. 5]

---

---

pest

---

Research Includes basic and applied research and experimental development as defined by the OECD ([OECD Frascati manual, 2002](#)). Activities excluded from the definition of research are also defined by the Frascati manual (pages 30–46)

---

Trans-national phytosanitary projects Projects on phytosanitary (regulated plant health) topics involving participants (funders or researchers) from more than one country that are initiated and funded via the EUPHRESCO network.

---

## **Modus operandi**

### ***1. Network purpose***

- i. The EUPHRESCO network is a consortium of research funders (programme owners or managers) of phytosanitary research in Europe, including other third countries as appropriate.
- ii. The network aims to enhance coordination and co-operation on phytosanitary research funding in the partner countries, and more widely as appropriate, thereby increasing the benefits from phytosanitary research for all partners and relevant stakeholders. In particular, the outputs of this coordination and cooperation should contribute to: supporting EU plant health policy development and its implementation; supporting the maintenance and development of phytosanitary science capability; optimising and making best use of national funds for plant health research.
- iii. The overarching aim is to help protect Europe's agriculture, horticulture, and forestry from regulated plant pests, as well as plants in the environment, through effective trans-national research collaboration.
- iv. The network partners aim to increase communication on funding trans-national research between European and EPPO countries, both amongst themselves and also with other countries and with relevant phytosanitary institutions and stakeholders.

### ***2. Principle functions of the network***

- i. The network will mainly be based on communication, coordination and cooperation. These will include: sharing information on national research projects, priorities and planning; maintaining a developing common research agendas; identifying and prioritising research needs for existing, new or emerging pests and diseases of statutory concern that can be addressed through trans-national research (phytosanitary market place); implementing trans-national projects; advising on plant health research priorities suitable for EU funding and coordinating this with trans-national research; maintaining linkages with key stakeholders and networks; disseminating trans-national research outputs to key stakeholders and policy makers; publicising activities through a maintained website.

### ***3. Governance and accountability***

- i. The network will be governed by a network coordinator and the network management group (NMG). The establishment of the coordinator and the NMG will be carried out by all partners. Changes in the coordinator or the NMG will be decided by all partners.

- ii. All tasks and actions of the coordinator and the NMG will be executed in consultation with all partners as appropriate. The coordinator and the NMG are accountable to all partners and vice versa.
- iii. The network will be accountable to the COPHS.

#### **4. Network Coordinator, Secretariat and Network Management Group**

- i. The **network coordinator** will be responsible for the transmission of any documents and information connected with the activities of the network between the partners, the external presentation of the network and the initiation of any regular meetings of the all network partners or the NMG.
- ii. The **secretariat** will handle administrative work comprising the dissemination of important information, presentation tasks like newsletters etc., hosting of the networks website, financial management of the network itself and the assistance in network meeting organisation and documentation (e.g. minutes, reporting). The network secretariat is not responsible for individual calls or projects, which will have their own individual call secretariats.
- iii. The network coordinator and secretariat are linked together very closely and should therefore be located in the same organisation respectively country. Ideally both positions might be combined in a project office. A deputy coordinator might be chosen to support or deputise as necessary the coordinator.
- iv. Network partners actively involved in managing the network within the network will form the **network management group** (NMG). Roles and responsibilities of the NMG are laid out in the collaboration agreement. Each NMG member will be responsible for a specific portfolio, assisted by identified partners within the NMG and/or wider network partners. Portfolios might include: the database maintenance and updating of the common research agenda; specific network coordination processes as well as periodic evaluation of the networks activities; contact to advisors as EC; coordination of the topic identification and prioritisation process; contact with organisations or institutions outside the network.
- v. The specific management responsibilities and tasks of the coordinator / secretariat or member of NMG and its supporting 'portfolio' groups will be taken on a voluntary basis. Participation on such groups will be based on simple processes that will rely on people volunteering or, if appropriate, being nominated and elected or their membership of groups being endorsed/agreed by the wider network. The role of coordinator and secretariat, and wider NMG membership, involve increased amount of work. As there will be no financial grants partners volunteering for these positions should make sure that they are able to deliver this effectively within their own

resources for the given period of time. Membership in the NMG is not fixed but might rotate on a regular basis or change on demand, with agreement of the wider network partners. Those taking roles in specific groups would be expected to do this for a minimum of one year. Continuation thereafter should be subject to their own agreement and that of the wider network.

- vi. Fulfilling the role as coordinator and secretariat and as NMG applies for an agreed period of time, e.g. 3 years (see Collaboration Agreement). The acting periods can be extended with agreement of all partners.
- vii. The term "**partners**" refers to all full members of the network that are research funders (programme owners or managers) of phytosanitary research in Europe, including potentially other such bodies in third countries (as appropriate). This refers mainly to ministries, governmental bodies or research institutions with their own research budgets, but not organisations that are solely research providers. The network mainly aims to unite partners from Europe and the EPPO region. Network partners will have complete access to all information and might participate in all discussions on topics and topic descriptions. In return they should contribute to the network by ensuring contact with their own national stakeholders, e.g. via workshops, providing national research agendas, and providing funds for trans-national research as far as they able.
- viii. The network will not be financed by the European Commission. Partners have to finance their own participation, i.e. personnel and related costs, e.g. travel and subsistence costs. However, such costs are expected to be outweighed significantly by the benefits and added value of pooling resources within trans-national projects.
- ix. The network is expected to establish sufficient contact with organisations which influence plant health policy and with decision makers which need to have an input into the network's activities, i.e. to ensure that trans-national phytosanitary research best serves the needs of plant health policy and is policy led. Such organisations will be referred to as **advisors**. Contact with the **European Commission** (EC) is important for the network since plant health policy is primarily determined at the European level (via DG SANCO and its Standing Committee on Plant Health); also, alignment with EU-funded research is also important (e.g. in EU Framework Programmes). The EC and its appropriate bodies are therefore expected to act as an advisors for the network, e.g. via the DG SANCO and DG Research; the EUPHRESCO network will therefore both seek and provide advice to the Commission. Other important advisors will be the **European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation** (EPPO) and the **European Food Safety Association** (EFSA). Advisors might influence network activities and might participate in meetings and all communication flows. Advisors might have a voice on agreements if they wish. Other advisors can be added if necessary or beneficial, e.g. the **Chief Officers of Plant Health Services** (COPHS) or the **Standing Committee on Plant Health** (SCPH),



depending on the review of the Community Plant Health Regime and in the context of the Lisbon Treaty.

- x. Organisations, official bodies and institutions with an interest in plant health who are not full partners (principally, but not exclusively, research programme owners or managers) that may wish to join the network in the future, or be linked to its activities, might be considered as **observers**. They can be invited to meetings if beneficial and can generally participate in trans-national activities. Observers will not have a voice on agreements but can contribute to discussions. Observers are not restricted to the European region but might come from any country worldwide. If fulfilling the above mentioned criteria (under vii above) observers might become network partners.
- xi. The term **stakeholder** refers to anybody with an interest in plant health who is not a partner of the network. This might include governmental organisations as well as research institutes or commercial organisations, or specific individuals or scientists. Some stakeholders might become partners of the network, if fulfilling the above mentioned criteria (under vii above). Commercial organisations and firms can't become network partners but might participate in trans-national projects or other activities if appropriate (e.g. provision of funds or in-kind contributions).

## 5. Network administration

- i. The network requires certain administrative activities to achieve its aims, e.g. meetings, coordination of trans-national projects, communication on relevant topics etc.
- ii. Meetings offer the opportunity to communicate directly on important subjects, e.g. trans-national research or common agendas, and to come to common agreements. They might be held in partner countries on a rotating basis at least once a year. As all costs have to be paid by the partners themselves, such meetings that include travel might be restricted. In addition, communication should be possible via electronic means, e.g. email, interactive websites, Google spreadsheets etc.
- iii. Decisions on routine issues will be made by the NMG, with the agreement of the other partners if necessary. Agreements in important issues should be made by all the partners. Every NMG member should have one voice. Unanimity is favoured but not mandatory.
- iv. The contact to advisors will be task of the NMG. The task might be assumed by a single NMG member or can be subscribed to several NMG members. Advisors should be informed on important network activities and decisions.
- v. The network will maintain, develop and update a common strategic research agenda. This agenda should reflect national research agendas of the network partners and

support wider EU Community Plant Health Regime and wider EU-level plant health initiatives, e.g. from the COPHS. It will constitute the actual status quo in the network area concerning identified research needs and gaps. The research agenda relies on the active contribution of partners concerning their national situations and will be updated in a fixed period. The strategic agendas will provide a framework that informs the commissioning of trans-national research.

- vi. A database on national phytosanitary research has been developed during the ERA-NET EUPHRESCO. It lists projects on phytosanitary topics in the 17 partner countries of the former ERA-NET together with the annual budget. This database has to be maintained and should be updated every year as it supplies important information on conducted, and planned, research. The maintenance of the database will be executed by the NMG but support is necessary from all partners.
- vii. The network will maintain a website (internal and external web-pages). The website is currently hosted by the EUPHRESCO coordinator. The maintenance and updating of the website will be a portfolio assumed by a member of the NMG. The website shall offer possibilities for publication of research results from trans-national projects and information on all network activities including identified topics and topic descriptions. Hosting and maintenance of the website will need some financing. Different options are possible, e. g. to charge fees for network meetings or to deduct a percentage of each project budget. The options still have to be discussed in the network.
- viii. Within a meeting on 12 June 2007 the Chief Officers of Plant Health Services (COPHS) agreed on the importance of including plant health topics into the 7<sup>th</sup> framework program (FP 7) and has since mandated EUPHRESCO to advise the European Commission on plant health priorities in FP 7. The network should continue to advise on plant health priorities in FP7 and ensure effective coordination of transnational and EU-funded research. This will contain the responsibility for identifying research topics appropriate for EU funding in the EU framework programmes and advising on plant health topics suitable for EU funding within the EU Framework Programmes. Furthermore, this will include a good engagement with DG Research, DG SANCO and member states. EUPHRESCO will report regularly to the COPHS on identified topics and related activities. This task will be the responsibility of a specific NMG member, or several members if appropriate.
- ix. To ensure a high quality of network activities and the best value from cooperation, the network and its tasks and activities should be evaluated after fixed periods, e.g. every three years. This comprises not only activities of the NMG but trans-national cooperation as well. For the evaluation of the different funding mechanisms and tools, these have been developed within the EUPHRESCO ERA-Net already. For the



evaluation of the network itself, no tools have been developed so far. Ideas could be gathered from other networks or ERA-NETS<sup>1</sup> or from the recent evaluation of the community plant health regime (CPHR) by the Food Chain Evaluation consortium (FECE).

- x. To get the most benefit from cooperation, the network will try to establish linkages to other networks, ERA-NETs or different organisations e.g. USDA, CABI etc. These contacts are not restricted to plant health but might comprise a broad range of disciplines and research sectors. In addition the network should seek regular contact with observers or organisations who are not yet members of EUPRHESCO, e.g. to other countries such as the USA (and the wider QUAD of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA), Africa and Asia, to gain more knowledge about new pests and to align existing research with own projects.
- xi. This list is not exclusive and might be modified with different or additional activities as needed.

## ***6. Initiation and implementation of trans-national projects***

- i. The initiation, planning, funding and realisation of trans-national projects will be the main task of the network. The task comprises three different processes as described below which will be coordinated partly from the network coordinator respectively the NMG and are partly autonomous.
- ii. The process starts with the **identification of relevant topics** for trans-national phytosanitary research. The moderation of topic identification should be assigned to a NMG member, supported by the coordinator and the whole NMG and other partners as necessary. They assure that complementary with any plant health research funded from the EU framework programme is guaranteed. The topic identification will be influenced by actual problems, policy decisions and needs and in some case by cooperation with the EC and other important plant health bodies or organisations. Topic identification might start any time, as needed, but should aim to be done at least once year as part of a regular routine. Periods and frequency of topic identification processes should comply with needs in the plant health sector and accord to the situation.

---

<sup>1</sup> External Evaluation of the ERA-NET SUSPRISE; published by ERA-NET SUSPRISE September 2008  
 Coordinator: SenterNovem, P.O. Box 8242, 3503 RE Utrecht, The Netherlands  
[www.susprise.net](http://www.susprise.net)

- iii. Topics can be proposed by the NMG and by any of the network partners. Advisors can give advice on topics via the responsible contact in the NMG. Discussions on topics and topic selection will be conducted by network partners and NMG/coordinator and advisors as appropriate. If desired or beneficial, observers can be invited to join the process, e.g. special sectors like forestry, if not well represented in the network.
- iv. For each topic, a suitable topic coordinator will be appointed from within the EUPHRESCO Partners. Network partners are requested to develop an appropriate topic description using, or adapting, the tools available within the EUPHRESCO toolbox. This process will be guided by the topic coordinator and an assigned NMG member with support of the whole NMG and the network coordinator. The topic description should identify the problem and the outcomes required, but not the methods or approaches. The finalised topic description will be distributed internally to all EUPHRESCO partners to enable funders to decide on whether they want to enter the funding consortium and/or to comment on the text, e.g. via a restricted area on the website or via email.
- v. The following **initiation process** of trans-national projects will be open to all interested parties. Interested funders are requested to get in contact with the topic coordinator to form a funders' consortium. The number of funders involved will not be restricted by the network coordinator or the NMG. Interested funders do not have to be a partner of the network but might be observers or stakeholders.
- vi. The funding mechanism, e.g. real-common pot, virtual-common pot or non-competitive mechanism, and the project budget will be determined by the funders involved. The revised tool book developed by the EUPRHESCO ERA-NET will be accessible to funders via the website. It provides tested and refined tools and mechanisms for project management including a general roadmap for call management. Relevant tools can be used or adapted by the topic coordinator and the funders' consortium. Funding consortia are responsible for their own call management and/or project initiation.
- vii. For projects in the non-competitive mechanism, no call will be necessary. General conditions of the cooperation might be fixed via a letter of intent from the funders involved, if desired. The project might be initiated by involved partners with or without a formal proposal; in the case of the former, the research consortium will be required to produce a workplan against the topic description for approval by the funding consortium (following the model of the EUPHRESCO non-competitive pilot projects). This non-competitive funding mechanism is mostly suited for short-term projects where there is a limited and clearly identifiable pool of expertise or no specific benefit or requirement for competition, e.g. projects involving diagnostic method development and validation through ring tests, or projects in response to

emergency situations. The applicability of this kind of funding for long-term projects has still to be analysed.

- viii. For competitively-let projects funded via the real-common pot or virtual-common pot mechanism, a call will be necessary. In the *virtual-common pot (VP)*, funders only pay for the involvement of researchers from their own country. The research consortium therefore only includes researchers from those countries providing funds. In the *real-common pot (RP)*, the budget is pooled and there can be a transnational flow of funds. This means that applicants do not necessarily have to be a consortium of different nationalities but might consist of only one organisation or of different organisations from the same or different countries, including (potentially) research organisations outside of those countries providing the funding.
- ix. The **implementation** of the individual trans-national projects will not be steered by the network or network bodies. It will be solely the responsibility of interested funders (funding consortium).
- x. The funders' consortium will prepare the call and decide on the necessity of a call secretariat, and divide necessary tasks between the members of the funders' consortium. Call secretariats are not the responsibility of the network secretariat. Financing and managing of the call secretariat and its processes will be the responsibility of the funding consortium for that topic.
- xi. To ensure a high quality of the commissioned research, proposals may be evaluated by peer review. The decision on the need for peer review of proposals and the evaluation processes, e.g. the number and choice of peer reviewers, will be the responsibility of the involved funders. Settlements on legal arrangements, contract negotiations and forms are likewise the responsibility of the funders. To avoid ambiguity the legal settlements should contain arrangements about later publication of results and intellectual property.
- xii. Results from trans-national projects initiated in the frame of the network should be made accessible to all partners of the EUPHRESCO network. All conducted research should guarantee high quality and best value for the raised budget.

## **7. Supplementing documents**

- i. This modus operandi will be supplemented by several documents.
- ii. The EUPHRESCO **collaboration agreement** is a document that lays out the roles of responsibilities of partners in the network, including those involved as the coordinator and the NMG. It is not a legal document and partners simply indicate their intention to fulfil their roles and responsibilities via a signed Letter of Intent. It helps ensure the continuity of the network's tasks. Partners are asked to include a period of validity which seems appropriate. The validity of the collaboration agreement will be

extended automatically for another period if the corresponding partners do not cancel the collaboration agreement one month before end of validity. If needed, a revision period should be defined. **The letters of intent** contain an agreement of partners for participation on the network without any legal consequences. Both documents will be annexed to the modus operandi.

- iii. The EUPHRESCO **common strategic research agenda** reflects a survey on current phytosanitary problems for the mid-term and long-term research aims of the network. It should be revised every 3 to 5 years.
- iv. The EUPHRESCO **toolbook** is a collection of processes and tools that facilitate trans-national research. It will be revised and adapted as required and will be published on the website.