

European Minor Uses Coordination Facility

hosted by

European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization



Rules of participation of experts in Commodity Expert Groups (CEGs) and the Horizontal Expert Group (HEG)

Rev. 3 (update 2023)

The Minor Uses Coordination Facility has developed clear rules on the composition of and the number of attendees in the respective Expert Groups.

The Commodity Expert Group

The term “Commodity Expert Group” refers to a platform that addresses and facilitates closing minor use gaps at a European 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. In addition, individual crop protection companies may attend upon invitation.

Regarding the expertise of the participants, information can be taken from the Terms of Reference which states: “Participants should have expertise in one or more of the following areas: plant production and protection, pests and minor uses needs, regulatory aspects, including basic knowledge of the requirements for minor uses application, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), conducting efficacy and residue trials etc.”

The Terms of Reference also contain a paragraph about the responsibilities for the members of the Commodity Expert Groups, which are:

- Active and constructive participation in the meetings.
- Help to achieve the duties of the Commodity Expert Group.
- Commit to adding relevant information to EUMUDA with the assistance of the Coordination Facility.
- European/international perspective.
- Willingness to work on projects with other Member Countries and taking part of the responsibility for the outcome.
- Willingness to exchange information and results of trials (e.g. efficacy or residue trials).
- Respect and agree on the Minor Use Coordination Facility CEG terms of reference.
- Assure confidentiality (do not exchange information with non-MUCF members containing sensitive data about CEG projects, ongoing registration procedures, or plans of individual crop protection companies concerning strategic business decisions).

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The following aspects, which can be assessed relatively easily, will be considered when appointing and reviewing the membership status of stakeholders as experts in Commodity Expert Groups:

- Expertise (according to Terms of Reference).
- Active and constructive participation in the meetings.
- Adding relevant information to EUMUDA.
- Acting as a project leader.
- Participating in projects with other Member Countries (e.g., generating trial data).
- Assure confidentiality (does not exchange information with non-MUCF members containing sensitive data about CEG projects, ongoing registration procedures, or plans of individual crop protection companies concerning strategic business decisions).
- Respect and agree on the Minor Use Coordination Facility CEG Terms of Reference.

Horizontal Expert Group

The term “Horizontal Expert Group” refers to a platform that discusses general issues related to minor uses, as identified by the Commodity Expert Groups, the Steering Group or its members, aiming at harmonised procedures and creating a level playing field among MUCF Member and Partner Countries. The Horizontal Expert Group consists of national minor use experts (related to regulatory procedures) from all Member and Partner Countries, high-level representatives of the respective growers’ associations or grower groups, representatives of the European crop protection industry associations, representatives of the European Commission and representatives of international organisations such as the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO).

Regarding the expertise of participants, information can be taken from the Terms of Reference in which it is stated that “Participants should have expertise in the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009¹ related to minor uses and processes related to mutual recognition, comparative assessment, the renewal of the approval of active substances and the authorisation of minor uses. In addition, participants should be familiar with the key principles of Directive 2009/128/EC² and Regulation (EC) No 396/2005³”.

¹REGULATION (EC) No 1107/2009 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC; OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 71.

² Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides.

³ Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 February 2005 on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin and amending Council Directive 91/414/EEC Text with EEA relevance.

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The Terms of Reference also contain a paragraph about the obligations for the members of the Horizontal Expert Group, which are:

- Active and constructive participation in the meetings.
- Provide agenda items, including supporting documents.
- Help to achieve the duties of the Horizontal Expert Group.
- European/international perspective.
- Create an atmosphere to stimulate harmonisation of procedures related to minor uses (mutual recognition, zonal evaluation, etc.).
- Commit to adding relevant information to EUMUDA with the assistance of the Coordination Facility.
- Disseminate the information and conclusions within their respective organisations.
- The member has to ensure confidentiality about sensitive data or information discussed at the HEG meeting.
- Respect and agree on the Minor Use Coordination Facility HEG terms of reference.

The following aspects, which can relatively easily be assessed, will be considered in appointing and reviewing the membership status of stakeholders as experts in the Horizontal Expert Group:

- Expertise (according to Terms of Reference).
- Active and constructive participation in the meetings.
- Providing agenda items, including supporting documents.
- Adding relevant information to EUMUDA.
- Responding to requests from the MUCF (e.g. surveys).
- Respect and agree on the Minor Use Coordination Facility HEG Terms of Reference.

Selection of participants to CEG and HEG expert meetings. Participants will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

1. Affiliation (company, organisation, etc.)
2. Expertise (according to Terms of Reference)
3. Involvement in projects (CEGs)
4. Providing and adding relevant information to EUMUDA
5. Willingness to actively participate in the Expert Groups (e.g., chairing a working group)

The national minor uses technical and administrative contact points-in collaboration with the Chair(s) and co-Chair(s) of the CEGs, respectively, and the HEG Chair- will be responsible for appointing new members to CEG and HEG. The affiliation and area of expertise will be the main criteria. There should be at least two minor use contact points per European Member Country. A clear overview of minor uses projects is available in EUMUDA, and the willingness of participants to act as project leader can be evaluated. The Coordination Facility will review the involvement in projects (for CEG members) and the commitment to

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add relevant information to EUMUDA. In all cases, when organising Expert Group meetings, the need has been recognised to keep numbers within the budget's limits and work as efficiently as possible. This will be evaluated regularly. If necessary, Terms of Reference will be amended and/or the composition of Expert Groups will be adjusted based on the evaluation and review of the participants in each Expert Group.

Procedures for how to select and incorporate a new permanent member in a MUCF Expert Group (EG)

Standard SOP:

1. The MUCF receives a direct request for an EG membership, or a Chair or a co-Chair of an EG, a MUCF national contact point, or a retiring EG member informs the MUCF of a possible new EG candidate.
2. The MUCF contacts this person and asks for basic contact details and information on relevant expertise in the "MUCF contact background questionnaire".
In addition, the member candidate receives and gets access to the Expert Groups Terms of Reference, which must be agreed on by ticking the box in the contact background questionnaire.
3. Provided contact information and information on the candidate's relevant expertise is shared with the respective Expert Group Chair(s) and co-Chair(s) for membership approval.
 - If the Chair(s) and/or co-Chair(s) agree, the candidate will become a permanent member of the respective Expert Group(s), linked, among other things, with access being granted to the MUCF Extranet.
 - If the Chair(s) or a co-Chair(s) disagree with the membership of an expert in their group, the MUCF communicates the decision and reasons given by the Chair(s) or co-Chair(s) to the EG membership candidate.
 - If the Chair(s) or co-Chair(s) are unsure whether to accept a new expert in the EG, the MUCF national contact point should be consulted to obtain additional information about the EG member candidate. The feedback from the national contact point should guide the decision-making process.
4. The MUCF national contact points of the respective country are regularly informed about the members in the different EGs.