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COST Action FA1203

SMARTER

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT (19-11-2012– 18-11-2017)

This report assessing the full lifetime of the Action is submitted by the Rapporteur.

Summary assessment of outcomes and impacts (for publication):

The objectives of the COST SMARTER action were to initiate and coordinate long-term management options to reduce ragweed in Europe by establishing an inter-disciplinary consortium that serves as a template for implementing integrated control measures against invasive alien species across Europe. The action brought together scientists in aerobiology, allergology, biological control, ecology, population biology and genetics and weed science in order to combine ideas and expertise to arrive at new ideas and solutions. The COST SMARTER action instigated control strategies, proposing weed management techniques and mowing strategies to control *Ambrosia* establishment, reproduction and spread. The action also contributed to testing some biological control agents, both for their efficacy in *Ambrosia* control and for their level of risk for non-target species. Members of the COST SMARTER action consortium proposed an integrated model to tie together aspects of air quality in relation to *Ambrosia* pollen and to predict risks associated with changes in land use and climate change. This scientific work forms the bases for management proposals and also generated significant new knowledge that has been published in leading scientific journals.

The COST SMARTER action carried out training actions for scientists, organising training workshops and summer schools, was very active in training early stage researchers through a large number of exchanges, and also organised and implemented training for teachers and school children and for the general public. These actions were important for raising consciousness about the *Ambrosia* problem in Europe and sensitising people to the role they can play in early detection and in control efforts.

Altogether this was a highly successful action that contributed new understanding to the general problem of aggressive invasive species and more particularly proposed management schemes to limit the damage and spread of a particularly aggressive European invader. This combination of basic scientific knowledge and applied management schemes is one of the great strengths of this action.



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COST Association
Avenue Louise 149 | 1050 Brussels, Belgium
t: +32 (0)2 533 3800 | f: +32 (0)2 533 3890
office@cost.eu | www.cost.eu