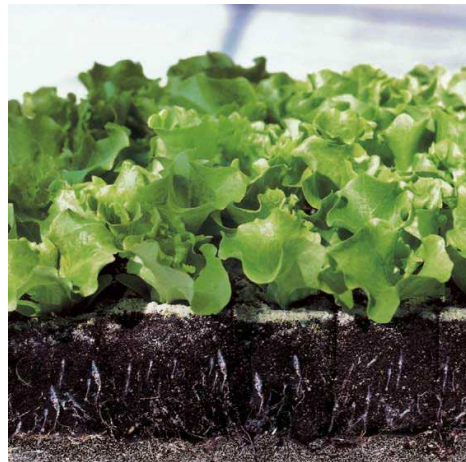


EU harmonization of marketing regulations for growing media

by Gerald Schmilewski
(Executive Board Member)

European Peat and Growing Media Association - EPAGMA



Paris International Seminar, 9 September 2009

- Who is EPAGMA?
- EU Growing Media Market
- EU Growing Media Trade
- Barriers to Growing Media Trade
- Harmonization of Growing Media Legislation
- EN Standards for Growing Media
- Conclusions

Who is EPAGMA?

- EPAGMA is the European Peat and Growing Media Association, representing the interests of peat and growing media producers at European level
- EPAGMA has 17 member companies with peat and growing media operations across the EU



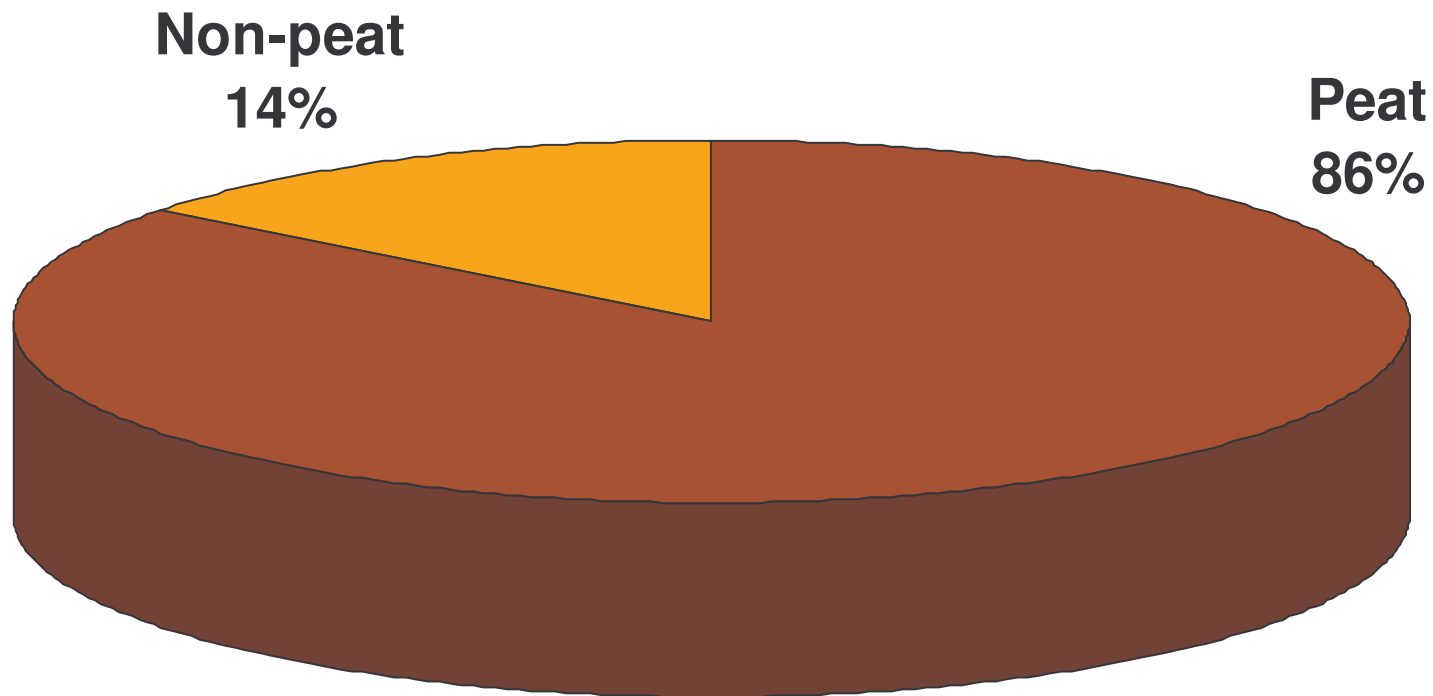
- GM are used to provide an optimum rooting environment
- The GM industry has a turnover of 1.3 billion € accounting for 11,000 jobs across the EU member states. Main markets are D, I, NL, F, E and UK. GM are used throughout the EU and worldwide.

- GM are an integral and crucial part of horticulture which counts:

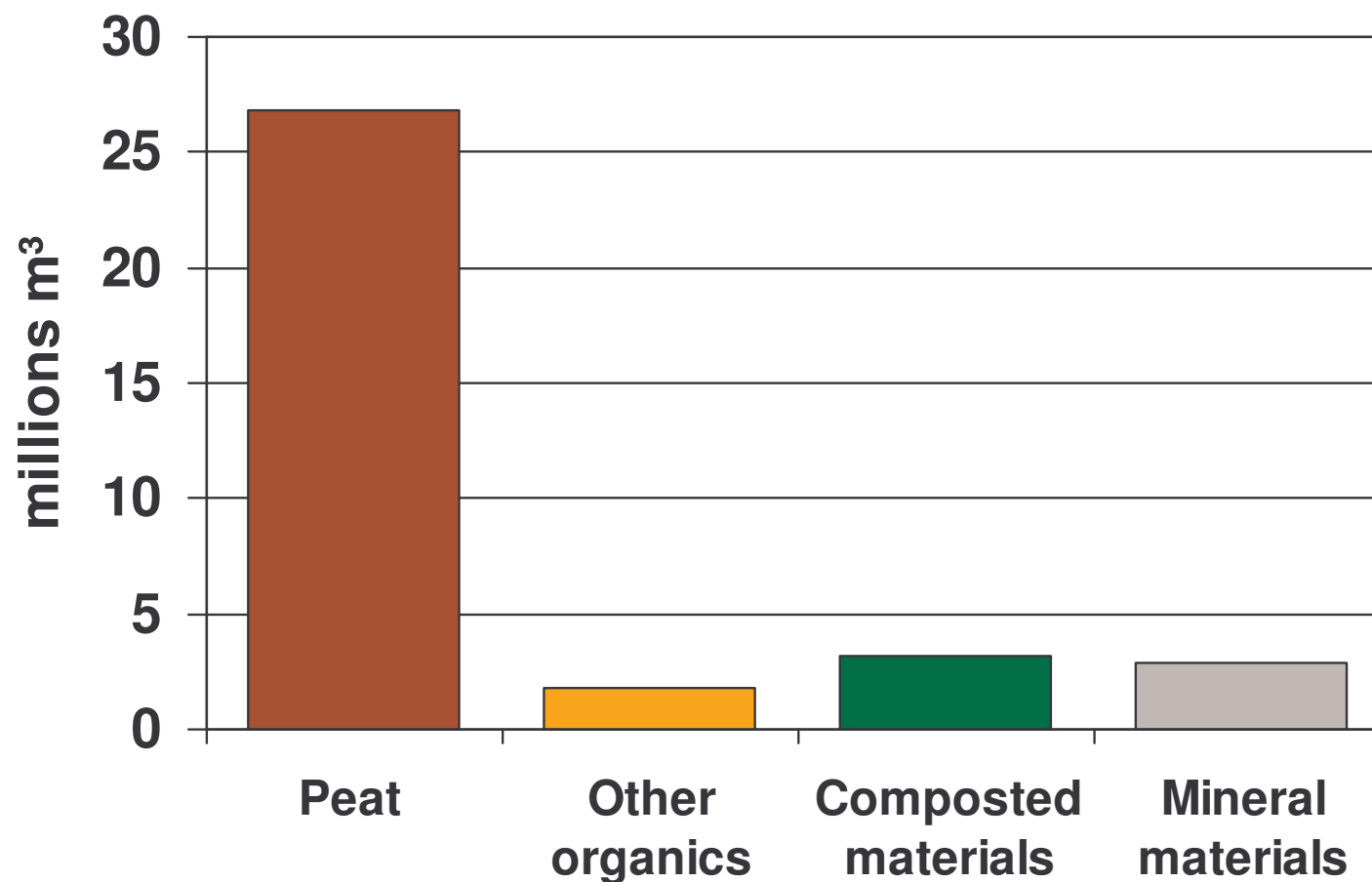


- Over 173,000 full time jobs in ornamental horticulture
- Over 600,000 full time jobs in vegetable growing

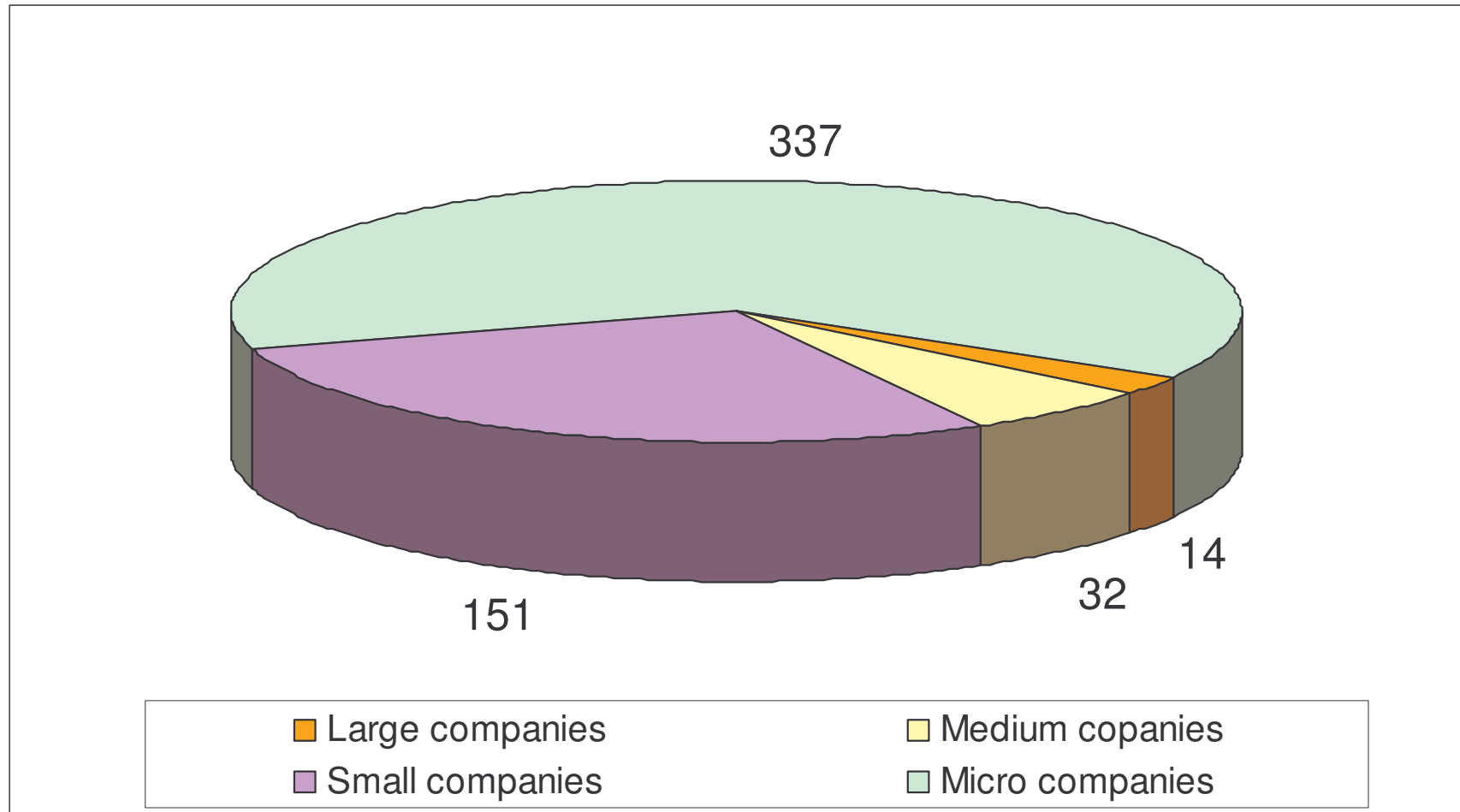
Peat versus non-peat constituents for the production of professional GM (Total >22 million m³)



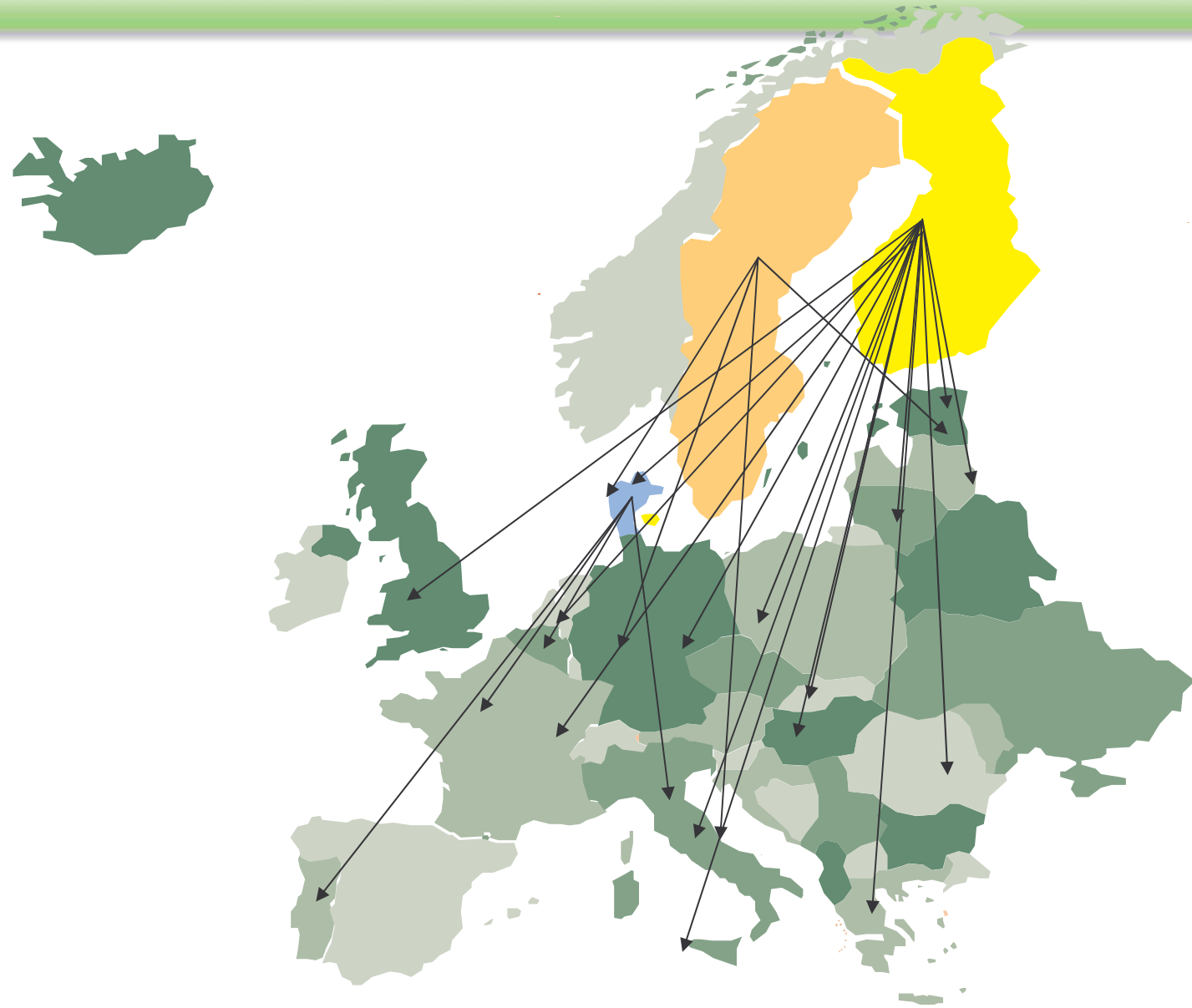
Amounts of constituents used in major producer countries for the production of GM for professional and hobby markets



Sizes of GM companies in the EU

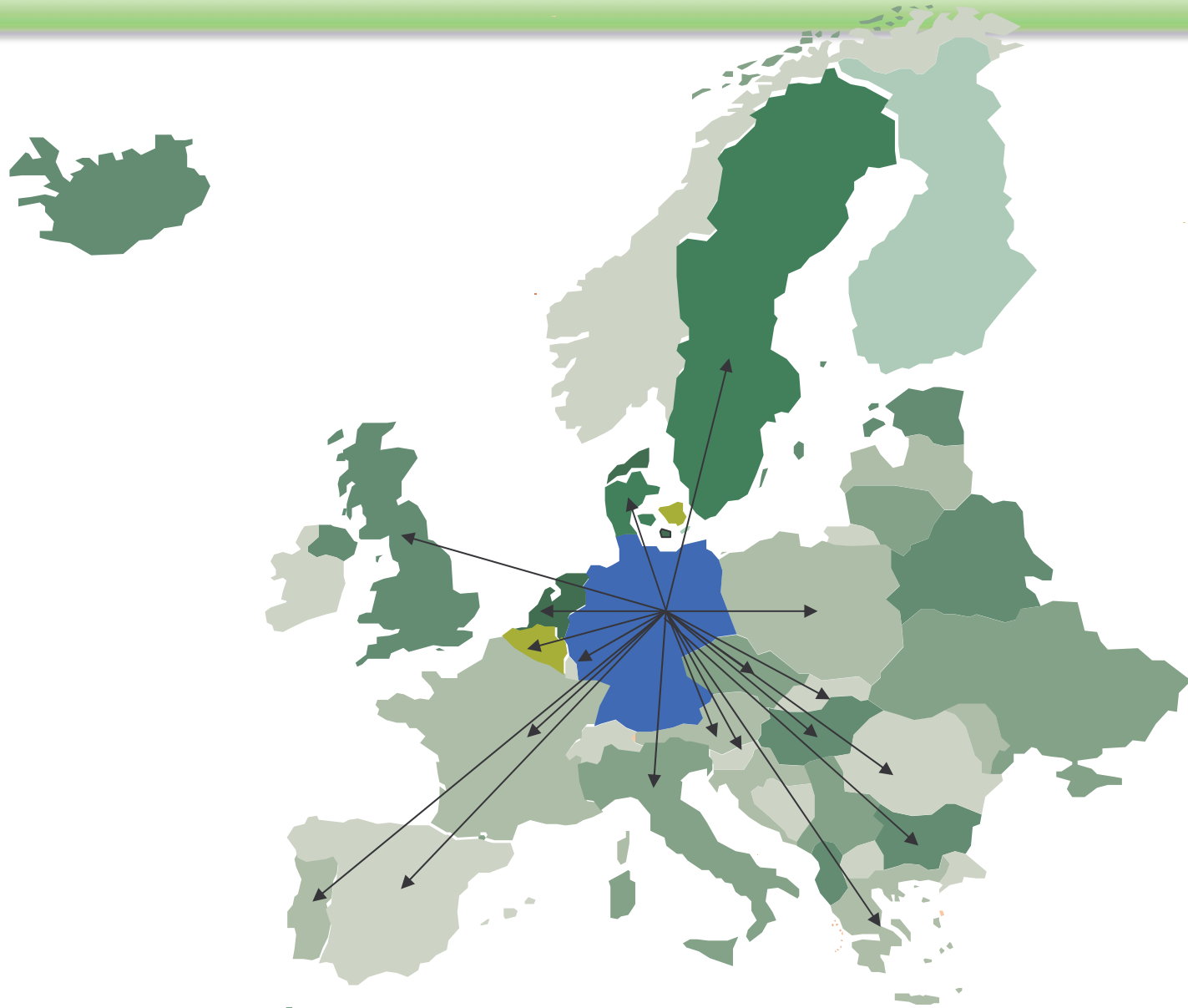


EU Growing Media Trade



Nordic Region exports: Denmark, Finland, Sweden

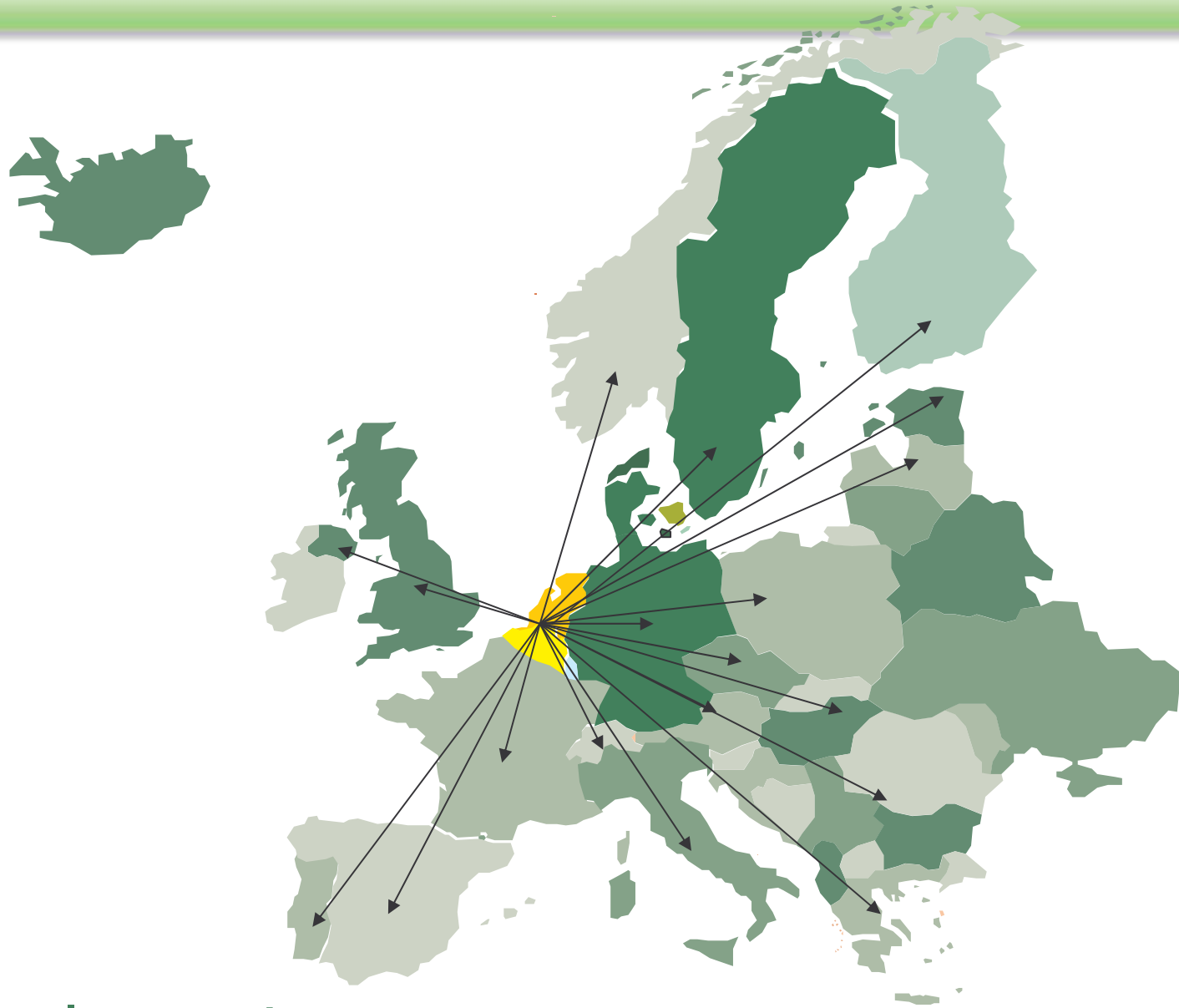
EU Growing Media Trade



Germany exports



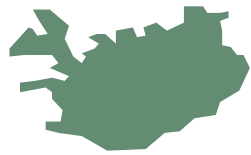
EU Growing Media Trade



Benelux exports

EU Growing Media Trade

All countries exports



Conclusion: Growing media trade is very intensive in the EU

- National legislation and labelling requirements are the biggest trade barriers for EU producers.
- The current situation is incoherent and leaves industry with no level playing field:





This means:

- non-transparency of products
- elaborate regulations in some countries
- high bureaucratic hurdles (e.g. registration process in I and PL)
- little or even no regulations in other countries
- different parameters to be labelled
- use of different analytical methods
- increase of analytical costs; increase in staff; disposal of packaging material

Harmonisation of Growing Media Legislation



The growing media industry is committed to:

- working on the removal of existent trade barriers
- solutions to the increasing diversity of regulations in EU member states
- striving for a common legislation framework for GM across the EU

Supportive parties:

- all members of EPAGMA
- European Farmers-European Agri Cooperatives (COPA-COGECA)
- French Ass. for Soil Improvers and Growing Media (CAS)
- French Union of Enterprises for the Protection of Gardens and Amenities (UPJ)
- Italian Growing Media Association (AIPSA)
- Swedish Peat Producers Association
- Lithuanian Peat Producers Association

- Continued...
- German Growing Media Association (GGS)
- Association of Finnish Peat Industries (AFPI)
- Belgian Potting Soil Federation (BPF)
- Dutch Association of Growing Media Producers (VPN)
- German Association of Garden Industries Dept. Substrates, Potting Soils/Constituents (IVG/SEA)
- Dutch Foundation RHP
- Others

CEN TC 223 Soil Improvers and Growing Media is in favour of EU harmonisation:

Resolution 144/2006 taken by CEN/TC 223 on 2006-06-01/02:

„Subject: CEN/TC 223.....would support the development of a European Directive on growing media, based on the Standards of CEN/TC 223 in order to facilitate the trade in these products. The decision was taken by simple majority with 6 votes in favour, 1 against and 0 abstentions“

Available EN standards and CEN Reports for Soil Improvers and Growing Media

- Sampling
 - Sample preparation
- Determination of...*
- ...quantity
 - ...pH
 - ...EC
 - ...ash/organic matter
 - ...physical properties
 - ...particle size distribution
 - ...moisture content
 - ...laboratory bulk density

Extraction of...

- ...calcium chloride/DTPA (CAT soluble nutrients)
 - ...water soluble nutrients
 - ...aqua regia soluble nutrients
-
- CR 13455: Guidelines for the safety of users, the environment and plants
 - CR 13456: Labelling, specifications and product schedules

EPAGMA voluntary labelling scheme for growing media based on EN methods

1. Major constituents: e.g. raised bog peat (H4-H5) and GWC
2. Electrical conductivity: e.g. 50 mS/m ($\pm 25\%$)
3. pH (H₂O): e.g. 5.5-6.5
4. Quantity by volume (atof) e.g. 70 litres
5. Recommended use: e.g. for pot plants
6. Amount of fertilizer added: e.g. 1.2 kg/m³ NPK-fertiliser
7. Producer: e.g. Growing Media Ltd.

- Major European standards for the sector have been introduced
- Industry sees EU-harmonization of growing media as an essential step towards a more transparent, consumer and producer friendly market
- Harmonizing the rules is an early opportunity for the new European Commission and the new European Parliament to reduce business costs and administrative burdens

Thank you for your attention !

