

Notes for UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Products Statistics

As of April 19, 2016

Tuesday, 22 March 2016, Geneva

Leader: Branko Glavonjic

Vice-Leader: Sheila Ward

- 1) Welcome and agenda.** The Team was welcomed and introduced itself. The agenda was accepted (item numbers here refer to agenda).

Attendance at the meeting – 24 delegates from Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Moldova, Poland, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, United States and European Sawmilling Organization, UK Timber Trade Federation.

2) Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire

a) ECE and FAO presented a proposal, following presentation at last year's ToS meeting, to alter the fibreboard data structure. The discussion on the proposal indicated that the current wet and dry process should continue to be identified and density is important. Thickness of secondary importance. Should speak with analysts and industry on needs for separation into wet/dry and density and thickness. There was tacit approval for change of MDF to say MDF/HDF.

b) Agreed that post-consumer recovered wood is an important issue to single out in JFSQ under item 3. One delegate proposed that it did not need to be asked every year or could be collected from JWEE every two years.

The Team agreed we need to get a better definition of chips and particles. This could be based on size.

The Team discussed possible disaggregation of wood chips and particles from sawdust and shavings, given differences in values and end use.

Further work is needed to determine what would make sense in this area.

c) The Team discussed limiting categories in 7.3 and 10.1 and 10.3 due to weaker data availability in the region. Members favoured reducing these categories as part of the "big bang" in 2017. A member proposed discussing with pulp and paper industry.

d) Roundwood on JFSQ is not matching to JWEE (number larger on JWEE). A number of delegates pointed out that there were obstacles to providing the same data for both inquiries with the JFSQ having more of a legal and definitional standing and the JWEE seen as more informal and inclusive.

Some members pointed out they had not reported data due to dimension size and only reporting on stem wood for JFSQ. Green chips from the forest were also a problem for some countries and were not being recorded in JFSQ.

It was concluded that we have to accept differences in national procedures.

- 3) The secretariat indicated that, due to potential for confusion, it would be preferable to make it clear in the Timber Forecast Questionnaire that removals are underbark.

4) HS 2022

The secretariat presented the initial proposals to revise HS 2022 made at IWG meeting in February. The Team agreed these should be circulated to countries for their comments and further suggestions. Most members agreed with the items proposed, in particular engineered wood products (EWP) and briquettes. They encouraged participation from industry and requested support from countries and associations to the World Customs Organization once these proposals were submitted. The definition of the physical basis for these items should be sought out with technical bodies which had developed standards.

5) Statistical systems

a) & b) Following a discussion at last year's meeting, the Team revisited the issue of potential misreporting of official data. Holger Weimar presented examples where sawnwood and/or veneer production could be doublecounted. Some official surveys in countries avoided doublecounting by only requesting wood sawn from logs. From a brief survey by the secretariat and comments at the meeting it was apparent a number of countries added together rough and planed sawnwood. Germany will make a special survey of their sawmills to look into this problem. The Team agreed to keep this issue under review. The secretariat proposed a small query to Team members to encourage them to investigate the issue at the level of the collecting authority.

c) The secretariat updated the Team on the results of data exchange during 2015 and the change to processing all ECE member states data in Geneva. Differences between Eurostat and ECE/FAO/ITTO databases were not being reconciled. Plans for 2016 were for Eurostat to send out the questionnaires (possibly without prefilling) with initial returns being sent directly to ECE for processing and/or uploaded through E-Damis. The JFSQ 2015 would be finalized by mid-April.

6) Miscellaneous

a) The secretariat encouraged countries to provide JQ3 and ECE-EU questionnaires with the JQ1&2 if possible.

b) & c) The secretariat presented a basic pulp analysis. The Team discussed possible reasons for discrepancies, including minerals and fillers use, marketed and non-marketed pulp and needing to include other fibre pulp. This check would be included as part of the basic validation this year.

d) wood waste discussion covered above under item 2 b).

e) The secretariat presented the coefficients used to sum up use of wood as shown in Annual Market Review and State of Europe's Forest. One member asked why paper was used rather than pulp in these calculations. Paper was seen as more indicative of use of the final market. Pulp could be used to measure more the

impact on domestic forests. ECE & FAO agreed to look at this complex issue and continue discussion in future meetings.

f) UK Timber Trade Federation presented several issues concerning plywood classifications. Increasingly mixed species meant the coniferous/non-coniferous/tropical breakdown was less relevant and even misleading, particularly in China. Thinner veneers also meant cores could represent more of the wood and these cores could come from other species. The Team was supportive of recognizing this reality and simplifying the structure of plywood. This should be discussed at a future IWG with ITTO. The upcoming FAO plywood survey of 400 mills in China would be released later this year and should inform future debate.

Laminated veneer lumber (LVL), which is currently part of plywood, is more properly an engineered wood product. The Team agreed that this and other items in plywood such as blockboard and laminboard and battenboard should be reviewed. They could be moved into a separate category. Industry should be consulted.

7) Updates on projects

a) FAO, continuing discussion from last year, raised the idea of a possible workshop for forest products statistics users. It was agreed this was not necessary at the current time.

b) FAO presented work on forest products classification. FAO will continue to work on this and present an initial draft for comments later in the year with a view to approval by the Working Party in 2017.

c) ECE said that the round wood balance had not advanced and it remained pending.

d) ECE presented the latest version of the updated conversion factor questionnaire which was ready to be sent out. The Team agreed to this with a deadline of the end of the year.

e) The draft game meat survey was presented and discussed. It was agreed that we should maintain the current breakdown of large and small mammals by species rather than size. The three categories used were satisfactory. The term "poultry" should be replaced by "game birds". The Team clarified that the hunted animals should only be those used for meat and should be those from all land, not just forest land.

8) Priorities for new developments in statistics and improving synergies

The Team encouraged further collaboration with other teams. We should seek to keep the statistics policy-relevant. Important topics mentioned were the bio-economy, ecosystem services and non-wood goods and services. FAO highlighted the increasing global role of statistics, especially in climate change, harvested wood products and SDG reporting.

9) Next meeting, topics, timing and location

The Team discussed potential for working together with multi-lateral discussions between annual meetings. The secretary agreed to develop groups on the issue of

over/under –reporting and closer work on technical standards. A possible meeting around the EPF session in Hamburg in October was encouraged. The next full meeting would be at the Working Party in 2017.