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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
European Forestry Commission

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION



JOINT FAO/ECE/ILO COMMITTEE ON FOREST TECHNOLOGY, MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING

REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION
Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland, 12-14 September 2002

Introduction

1. The twenty-fourth session of the Joint Committee was held at West County Hotel in Ennis (Ireland) from 12 to 14 September 2002, at the invitation of the Irish Forest Service. Participants attended from the following countries: Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.
2. The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) Liaison Unit in Vienna and the following non governmental organization also attended: the European Forest Institute (EFI) and the European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs (ENFE).
3. Mr. D. McAree, Chief Forestry Inspector, opened the session and welcomed the participants on behalf of the Irish Forest Service. Mr. D. McAree underlined the importance of the Joint Committee work in addressing the challenges facing the forestry sector today.
4. Mr. H. Hoefle (Germany), the Chairman of the Joint Committee, also welcomed the participants and outlined the objectives and the session. The Committee was addressed by Mr. J.M. Solano Lopez (Spain), Chair of the FAO European Forestry Commission, by Mrs. A. Bergquist (Sweden), Vice-Chair of the UNECE Timber Committee, and by Ms. C. Cosgrove-Sacks, Director of the UNECE Trade Development and Timber Division.

Adoption of the agenda (item 1)

5. The provisional agenda (TIM/EFC/WP.1/2002/1) prepared by the secretariat was adopted.

Special topics (item 2)

(i) Forestry in Ireland

6. Mr. D. McAree, Chief Forestry Inspector, Forest Service, Ireland presented the theme.

Overview

7. Forests comprise 9.7% of the land area of Ireland. This area will increase to 17% by the year 2030 if the objectives of the Forest Service Strategic Plan for the Development of the Forestry Sector, described in 'Growing for the Future', are achieved. The plan sets out 'to develop forestry in a scale and in a manner which maximises its contribution to national economic and social well-being on a sustainable basis and which is compatible with the protection of the environment'. Current total allowable cut is 2.8 million m³ of timber, which is projected to increase to a critical mass of 10.0 million m³ by year 2030. Sitka spruce currently represents 60% of the species composition of Irish forests. The balance is a mixture of 20% diverse conifers and 20% broadleaves. New targets have been set to achieve 30% broadleaves, 50% Sitka spruce and 20% diverse conifers by the year 2006.

8. Ireland's forests are a multi-functional resource benefiting all sectors of society. They provide sustainable employment and a renewable raw material for downstream industry. These forests enhance the Irish landscape and provide many opportunities for recreation for rural and urban communities. They also play a vital role in the enhancement of biodiversity and the protection of water resources. By sequestering carbon, Irish forests contribute significantly to the realisation of Ireland's Kyoto targets.

9. The Forest Service – Ireland's national forest authority – is committed to working with the forestry sector to implement Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). The Forest Service considers SFM as being essential in realising the widest range of benefits from Ireland's forest estate, while also providing for the needs of future generations.

SFM in Practice

10. SFM in Ireland is implemented by the Forest Service through five interrelated measures: Irish National Forest Standard; Code of Best Forest Practice – Ireland; Suite of Environmental Guidelines; Expanded Forestry Inspectorate; and Review of Legislation.

Irish National Forest Standard

11. The Irish National Forest Standard outlines the basic criteria and indicators relating to the national implementation of SFM. It lists a series of qualitative and quantitative measures by which progress towards the practice of SFM can be monitored under Irish forest conditions.

Code of Best Forest Practice – Ireland

12. The Code of Best Forest Practice sets out for each stage of the forest cycle – from seed to sawlog – those operations and procedures that are in keeping with SFM and the enhancement of the environmental, economic and social benefits of Irish forestry. Each section of the Code describes a particular forest

operation and is divided into objectives, key factors, operation description, potential adverse impacts, best practice and other relevant information.

Environmental Guidelines

13. A suite of environmental guidelines is the mechanism by which the Forest Service ensures that all environmental aspects of SFM are implemented. Adherence to the guidelines is a condition of grant aid and the issuing of a felling licence. The suite of environmental guidelines covers water quality, landscape, archaeology, biodiversity, harvesting and aerial fertilisation. Further guidelines on forest protection and recreation are being developed.

Forestry Inspectorate

14. The Forest Service Inspectorate has also been expanded significantly to oversee the implementation of SFM, ensuring that all forest operations at a local level are carried out in accordance with best practice. This Inspectorate is currently being expanded to include a professional ecologist, a landscape architect and an archaeologist, reflecting the evolving nature and role of forestry in Ireland. The Inspectorate is also actively involved in implementing an integrated forest protection strategy to ensure the maintenance of Irish forests' disease-free status. A contingency plan has been drawn up to counteract any major disease or insect threat to the forest estate.

Legislative Review

15. The Forestry Act 1946 is the primary legislative tool by which forestry is controlled. While this Act has served the sector well for over 50 years, a legislative review is now underway to provide a new legal framework based on the core principles of SFM.

Forestry in Ireland – SFM in Action

16. The above measures, implemented in full consultation with the relevant statutory bodies, environmental groups and local communities, should ensure that all timber produced in Ireland's forests is derived from sustainably managed forests.

17. Further information on Irish forestry may be found at the website:

<http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/forests-service>.

(ii) Successful safety and health campaigns - the examples of SUVA in Switzerland and of the extension for private forest owners in Slovenia

Successful safety and health campaigns – the example of SUVA in Switzerland

18. Mr. O. Wettmann, Chief Forestry Branch (SUVA) gave a presentation on the campaign “safety and health in forestry are feasible”. The campaign was launched in 1991 to reverse the negative trend of safety and health in forestry work in Switzerland. Thanks to the package of measures in the campaign the incidence of among forest professionals was reduced by 30% in the period between 1991 and 1999. However, the majority of the managers of farm and private forests were not covered by these measures. The “Profi (professional) in your own forest” campaign, which was initiated in the year 2000 by the

Swiss Forest Agency and SUVA, was an initial step towards improving the situation with respects to accidents in farm and private forests. Following the hurricane Lothar it was revealed that an alarmingly high number of fatal accidents have occurred in private forest. As a result the information made available to managers of farms and private forest about the dangers in logging and harvesting is now being improved following the same example as in the public forest.

19. The Chairman congratulated the successful work carried out by SUVA and its partners in Switzerland. He pointed out that the campaign “safety and health in forestry are feasible” is a showcase on how to improve the safety and health situation among forestry workers. He further recommended the use of the brochures that has been developed by SUVA, especially the brochure “Appréciation des phénomènes dangereux liés aux travaux forestiers” elaborated by specialists from organizations in Switzerland, Germany and Austria.

20. Several delegates emphasized that safety starts at the top in an organization and should not only focus on technical measures at the worksite. On a question of who pays for the personal protected equipment Mr. Wettman answered that these costs are borne by the private forest owners, but manufacturers have proved to be quite generous in giving special discounts. There is, however, no grants provided by the government.

Extension for private forest owners in Slovenia Forest Service Slovenia

21. The delegate from Slovenia Mr. J Begus gave a presentation on extension efforts in Slovenia to improve the safety and health situation in forestry. Slovenia is in the European top in fatal accidents in forestry. The frequency of fatal accidents is several time worse then the average in Europe and ten times worse than in Sweden. To change this situation the Slovenian forest service has launched a number of extension activities targeting private forest owners. These include field courses, demonstrations, lectures, publications, media campaigns etc. Due to lack of reliable accident statistics it has been difficult to measure progress. However, the number of fatalities has gone down slightly which indicates that the extension efforts already have started to take effect. Further expansions of activities are constrained by lack of financial resources as well as lack of instructors.

22. The Chairman of the Committee congratulated to the work and hoped that the Forestry Service soon would see some positive results. In view of the Swiss experience the prospects for this were good. On a question if there is any training and qualification standards that needs to be met by forest workers Mr. Begus answered that these requirements existed for employed workers but not for forest owners.

(iii) Best practices in forestry contracting - European Network of Forestry Contractors

23. The delegate from the European Network of Forestry Contractors (ENFE), Mr. E. Kastenholz, gave a presentation on promotion of “best practices” in forestry contracting.

24. Over the last decades contract labour has been developing as the standard mode of forest operations in many countries. The shift into contract labour has been very fast in some Eastern European countries as a result of the transition to market economies; e.g. in Poland the share of contract labour went from zero to around 75% during the last decade. The swift change to outsourcing has in many cases lead to

measures ensuring acceptable working conditions, but safety standards often lag behind. Contractors and their employees often suffer from short term contracts, discontinuous employment, safety and health hazards, low profitability, long working hours, low income and lack of qualification (both in terms of management and technical skills). This shows that improvement of the situation in forestry contracting is very much the order of the day. There are some examples of initiatives that have proved to be successful in improving the situation among forestry contractors. These can serve as examples of “Best Practices” in forestry contracting in a manual that has been prepared for the ILO. The examples include development of training concept for machine operators, introduction of skills certification, establishment of safety and health management systems, development of tools to recognize good contractors and quality management systems.

25. The increased cross-boarder competition of contractors calls for standards aiming at level playing field in Europe. This requires the exchange of knowledge and experience and consultation between contractors about the need for common standards, followed by the development of strategies on how to disseminate best practices to other users and how to adapt measures to specific national and regional conditions. ENFE’s wide infrastructure can be used for this dissemination. ENFE is getting more and more involved in various networks and projects both at national and regional level. However, due to the limited resources available it is difficult to respond to the needs of the sector.

26. In the discussion which followed, the Chairman noted that the presence of ENFE at the session was a testimony of the importance the Committee gives to this subject. The important aspects of forestry contracting had been well covered in several seminars and projects such as the preparation of the forest damage manual which provided model contracts for forest contracting.

27. In Sweden, while the shift into contracting offers opportunities for forest companies it also adds to the cost of contractors. Many contractors find it hard to bear the high investment costs. There is a need to improve attractiveness for new entrants by improving working conditions. Further training to improve safety and health is also needed. The problems could not be let entirely to the contractors to be solved. Forest companies and the forest administration also have an important role to play.

28. The delegate from Spain, Mr. Solano informed that the difficulties in recruitment of forest workers had increased the share of migrant workers in the sector. Contractor firms are playing a crucial role as a social link between the migrant workers and society.

Achievements, problems and priorities in the Joint Committee's field of interest (summaries of national reports) (item 3)

29. Eight countries submitted a written statement and one country gave an oral presentation during the meeting, reporting on achievements and on important innovations made over the past two years. The Committee highlighted the importance of such statements, as they are determinant factors in priority setting for future Joint Committee activities. The written statements are posted at the website: <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/docs/jc-sessions/jc-24/jc-24.htm>.

30. Messrs. J. Najera of the UNECE and J. Lorbach of the FAO secretariats summarized the country statements for work area 1 and 2, respectively. The coordinator of subject area 3, Mr. M. Buechel (Switzerland), presented a summary of the statements for area 3.

(i) Subject area 1: forest management (multiple use forestry, ecological and economic issues, marketing, information systems)

31. Countries had continued to reform and to implement their national forestry legislation in the context of sustainable forest management, enhancing biodiversity. The new policy requires considerable efforts of information, education and in providing extension services to forest professionals and forest workers. However, much still needs to be done in order to reach the general public in the form of public relations and awareness campaigns demonstrating the role of forestry in conservation and in providing the timber resource.

32. The forest certification schemes give a large focus to forest management requirements. The requirements for forest technology have not yet been fully defined as well as the criteria for occupational safety and health.

33. The question of optimization continues to give an important place to information technologies and to information and communication processes. There is a need to develop new software and training facilities.

34. The consequences of the storms of December 1999 continue to be felt in the forest and in timber markets. Poland was also hit by a storm in July this year and now has to face problems arising from a volume of windthrown timber of 3.5 million m³. Some of the economic consequences of the storms being felt are: depressed timber markets; high stocks of timber and forest products; and more recently, reduced activity of harvesting enterprises which had invested heavily in mechanized equipment since December 1999. France, Germany and Switzerland continue to divert large efforts to cope with the consequences of the storms.

35. Small private forests are seen as a high resource potential. Nevertheless, in order to mobilize small forest owners, mobilization campaigns need to be designed. Forest enterprises providing the full range of services from silvicultural planning to marketing can be a key contributor. The low average of the area of holdings of privatized forests in certain countries of central and eastern Europe, emphasize the need for simplified forest management plans, owners associations and consulting and training services.

36. There is a need to develop technical standards for sustainable forestry and forest industries. These standards or codes of practice should also cover criteria for ecologically sound forest technology. Criteria in the social field are also needed, covering labour use of sub-contractors and comparable data on industrial accidents.

(ii) Subject area 2: technology (wood harvesting and transport, forest engineering, ecologically and environmentally sound operations in silviculture)

37. Forestry is facing heavy price pressure due to strong world market competition related to forest products. Consequently costs have to be reduced in order to remain competitive. Some countries have chosen to build up a logistic chain for wood harvested from the forest to the buyer. Electronic means like GPS are increasingly used by the forest service, transportation and wood processing companies to save transportation costs. Transportation is also made more cost saving by applying Central Tyre Inflation (CTI) systems to extend the life span of truck tyres, brakes or shock absorbers. In addition to that, some countries try to reduce costs related to forest road construction by either constructing less forest roads, by trying to lower the road standards or road maintenance. They also are looking for technical solutions to combine harvesters and forwarders in order to reduce forwarding costs. In several mountain forest countries harvesters mounted on crawler tractors are now in operation, making steep terrain accessible for mechanized solutions.

38. Many countries are still carrying out their harvesting activities in a traditional way by cutting the wood by chain saws and skidding by tractors. Specific conditions are found in certain countries of eastern and central Europe where harvesting is partly carried out by obsolete equipment of former state forest enterprises. There is a need for modernization, which is however requesting large capital inputs not always available. In addition, there is a need for large investments for the rehabilitation and construction of new forest roads.

(iii) Subject area 3: vocational training and applied ergonomics (wood harvesting and transport, forest engineering, ecologically and environmentally sound operations in silviculture)

39. Safety and health in forest work continues to raise concern in many countries. The high unemployment rate in some eastern European countries does not contribute to the observance of safety standards. To improve this situation considerable emphasis is placed on the provision of continuous training at all levels. The presentation pointed out several emerging priorities for the Joint Committee: 1) Measures to meet new demands on higher level education; 2) Quality assurance and controlling of training and further training for forest workers; and 3) The new role of the forest worker as guardian, environmental educator and provider of non-wood services.

40. The Joint Committee seminar "safety and health in forestry are feasible" had provided important input leading to the immediate adoption by the Swiss Government of measures in farm and private forests, thus demonstrating the significance and potential impact of the recommendations made at such seminars.

International dialogue on forests, notably the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe and activities of other international organizations of relevance to the Committee (item 4)

(i) Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

41. Mr. A. Buck, Forest Policy Officer of the MCPFE Liaison Unit in Vienna, addressed the session and pointed out the important role of the Joint Committee in the cooperation between the MCPFE and

UNECE, FAO and ILO. He stressed that the Joint Committee had not only provided essential input to the preparation of Lisbon Resolution L1, but also contributed significantly to the implementation of the MCPFE Work Programme. He welcomed the work of the FAO/ECE/ILO team of specialists on participation in forestry and the outcome of the seminar on partnerships in the area of communication and building partnerships within the forest sector and also with groups outside the traditional forest sphere.

42. Mr. Buck also provided information on the preparation of the Fourth Ministerial Conference to be held on 28-30 April 2003 in Vienna. He presented the topics expected to be addressed by the Vienna Conference, which are the subject of the Joint Committee programme of work, and therefore suitable for the future cooperation between both bodies – economic viability of forest management, biodiversity conservation and cultural dimension of sustainable forest management.

43. In the ensuing discussion, Mr. H. Hoefle highlighted the fruitful cooperation between the Joint Committee and the MCPFE which contributed to identify joint areas of interest and invited its representatives to participate also at Steering Committee sessions and seminars held under the auspices of the Joint Committee, a proposal which was welcomed by the MCPFE representative as an important step to continue the existing fruitful cooperation.

(ii) European Forestry Institute

44. Mr. F. Mulloy, Chairman of the Board the European Forestry Institute (EFI) gave a comprehensive presentation on EFI, its background, organization and programme of work. The discussion, which followed, pointed out the benefits of close collaboration between the Joint Committee and EFI. The cooperation could be decided on a case-to-case basis without any formal agreement. The Joint Committee requested Mr. J. Ilavsky (Slovakia) to liaise with EFI and identify areas where the two organisations can work together.

(iii) IUFRO

45. The ILO secretariat member Mr. P. Blombäck informed about liaison with the IUFRO. So far cooperation had worked quite well with Division 3. The efforts to seek contacts with the other Division had been less successful. The Committee agreed to continue its fruitful cooperation with IUFRO and asked the FAO secretariat member Mr. J. Lorbach to act as new contact point for IUFRO, at least until the next Steering Committee session.

(iv) UNECE Project Capacity Building to Improve Trade Finance and Investment Prospects for the Russian Timber Sector

46. Ms. C. Cosgrove-Sacks presented the main elements of this project whose main objective was to develop the export potential of the forest sector and biomass utilization for energy generation in the Russian Federation within the context of sustainable development, with the financial assistance from the Government of the Netherlands and others. The implementation of the project had also contributed to raise the capacity building in related fields such as customs cooperation, timber port logistics, trade facilitation procedures, and biomass trade logistics.

(v) World Forestry Congress

47. The twelfth World Forestry Congress will take place in Quebec, Canada from 21-28 September 2003. The Congress has the motto "Forests, Source of Life, La Foret, Source de Vie" and will be prepared by FAO and the Government of Canada. FAO is inviting the colleagues of the Joint Committee and others to prepare papers to be presented at the Congress. The deadline for delivering papers has been extended to 15 November 2002. FAO is planning to hold some 15 different side events scheduled either one day before or after the main meetings of the Congress. The Forest Products Division will hold two meetings together with IUFRO on Forest Harvesting and on Non-Wood Forest Products as well as one side event dealing with Wood Fuel and Bio-Energy.

Review of the activities in silviculture and forest management (subject area 1) and programme for 2003-2005 (item 5)

48. Mr. J. Najera of the ECE secretariat reported on the activities under this work area.

1.1. Forest fire prevention and control

49. The Committee took note of the activities of the team of specialists as reported in document TIM/EFC/WP.1/2002/5. It agreed with the first announcement and programme of the seminar on forest fire to be held in Turkey in April 2003 and invited delegates to circulate it widely among interested experts. It suggested that the team should explore possibilities of holding the next seminar in the United States and to renew with the practice of five-year intervals between seminars.

50. The Committee suggested that the team should seek new official methods of cooperation with the Forest Fire Working Group of Silva Mediterranea.

51. The Committee agreed to co-sponsor, as requested, the third International Wildfire Conference which is scheduled to take place in Sydney, Australia from 4 to 8 October 2003. It further agreed to extend the mandate of the team until the next session in 2004. The Committee welcomed the support by the United States Ministry of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to the production of International Fire News (IFFN), the wide range of activities carried out by the team and thanked its leader, Mr. J. Goldammer, for the work accomplished.

1.2. New roles and modes of operation of State Forest Services

52. The delegate of the Netherlands Mr. J. Kalb confirmed his country's offer to host a seminar on the above theme in September 2004. He proposed a number of themes which could be taken up. The Committee thanked the Netherlands for its generous offer, it agreed that the seminar should build on the series of workshops on the changing role of national forest services and requested the Netherlands to present a detailed programme to the next Steering Committee session.

1.3. Afforestation

53. The Committee was informed of preparations for the seminar on Afforestation in the context of sustainable forest management in Ireland, which will immediately follow the Committee's session. It warmly thanked the Irish Forest Authority for their excellent work in organizing this event.

1.4. Disaster preparedness in forestry (contingency planning in forestry)

54. The Committee was informed of the difficulties encountered in establishing the team and of the suggestion of the French Forest Authorities that the team join forces with an existing team (STODAFOR) established by France with EU membership and led by the Centre Technique du Bois et de l'Ameublement (CTBA). The French Government will finance the participation costs from non EU countries team members. The JC team's mandate would be fully taken into account. France had announced that a formal offer would be made shortly. The Committee welcomed this offer and looked forward to a successful work of the team. The mandate was extended to 2004.

1.5. Information systems in forestry

55. The Committee indicated the importance of this theme, which was mentioned as a priority activity in the countries national reports. It agreed to seek the cooperation of IUFRO to implement this activity.

1.6. Close to nature forestry

56. Mr. J. Ilavsky confirmed the offer of Slovakia to host a seminar on this theme from 14 to 19 October 2003 in Zvolen in cooperation with EFI and IUFRO. The following topics will be considered: ecological, silvicultural, operational and socio-economic aspects as well as the implications on forest policy development.

1.7. Biodiversity: from concept to practice

57. Mr. Ackzell recalled that Sweden had suggested organizing a workshop under this theme. Since the time when the proposal was made several events on related subjects had taken place and the theme had lost its topicality. The Committee agreed to drop this activity from its programme.

Review of the activities in wood harvesting and transport (subject area 2) and programme for 2003-2005 (item 6)

2.1. Environmentally sound forest roads and wood transport

58. Mr. J. Lorbach (FAO) informed the Committee, that the proceedings of the seminar "Environmentally sound forest roads and wood transport" held in Sinaia, Romania in 1996 have been reprinted due to a strong request by experts and institutions. The full report is also available on the FAO Harvesting Homepage.

59. FAO reported on preparations for a seminar proposed to be held in Hungary in the year 2004. At present there was only an oral commitment made by the Hungarian representative at the twenty-third session of the Joint Committee. The next step should therefore be a formal commitment from the

Government of Hungary indicating the readiness to host the meeting. FAO proposed that the programme should focus mainly on the needs of countries of central and eastern Europe (CIT) and on approaches such as transport logistics. The Committee agreed that the Steering Committee session in 2003 should review and comment preparations for the seminar based on a draft programme.

2.2. New trends in wood harvesting with cable systems

60. The Joint Committee was pleased that the workshop on “New trends in wood harvesting with cable systems for sustainable forest management in the mountains” had attracted the participation of more than 100 colleagues from 24 different countries. The proceedings of this workshop are at present being edited and will be published before the end of the year 2002. It was proposed to extend future activities of this group to wood harvesting in mountainous areas.

2.3. Mobilization of additional wood supply, mainly from private forests

61. No new development could be reported, Germany could not confirm the hosting of a seminar on the above mentioned subject area and no other country had expressed the intention to take over the activities.

62. The past Chairman, Mr. P. Efthymiou (Greece) drew the Committee’s attention to the significant annual increase of unharvested forest volumes in the ECE region. The session agreed to consider this topic for a possible future activity.

2.4. Multi-functional forestry in protected and vulnerable areas

63. The meeting which was scheduled to take place in October 2002 had to be cancelled due to difficulties in communicating with the Research Institute and shortage of human resources and secretariat services. However, the Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry of National Resources of the Russian Federation has proposed to postpone the seminar until the year 2004. The Joint Committee decided to go on with the preparation of the seminar to be held now in 2004 in Sochi, Russian Federation. The delegate of Portugal offered to host the workshop in case it would not be possible to hold it in Sochi.

2.5. Other topics

64. The Slovenian Government Authorities agreed to host a workshop on “Forest operations improvements in farm forests” to be held in Logarska Salina, Slovenia from 9 to 14 September 2003. As another Joint Committee seminar was taking place at the same time, FAO and Slovenia were requested to either hold the workshop a few weeks earlier or later.

65. Considering that a rapid development was taking place in mechanization of wood harvesting operations in steep terrain, it was proposed that the Joint Committee consider the need of establishing a team of specialists in the near future to review the progress in this area and exchange experience and information. The Joint Committee asked FAO to ventilate the possibility to identify a group of 7 to 10 experts from mountainous countries willing to contribute to that topic and working group. However, there is awareness about risks of failure coming from time and budget constraints of the parties concerned. The Joint Committee will review the ventilation process and finally decide on the outcome again at the next Steering Committee session in 2003.

66. It was proposed to establish a new field of activities related to water issues in the forestry sector under item 2.1. The Joint Committee agreed to ask the Steering Committee to deal with this proposal at its next session being well aware of the fact that this initiative might clash with already existing activities of other bodies such as those of the FAO, EFC Working Party on Management of Mountain Watersheds.

Review of the activities in vocational training and applied ergonomics (subject area 3) and programme for 2003-2005 (item7)

3.1. Forestry workforce network (FORWORKNET)

67. The ILO secretariat member P. Blombäck informed about the status of the Forestry workforce network (FORWORKNET). The network was launched in 1993 and has at present more than 350 members in some 70 countries. The network publishes one issue of its newsletter "Forworknet Update" per year. The latest was published in January 2002. The layout and presentation have been substantially revised and improved following the acquisition of professional software. By the end of this year the ILO will update the membership register, which will be subsequently published and circulated.

3.2. EDUFOREST – the Forestry Education Network

68. The Delegate from France Mr. C. Salvignol presented the activities of the Forestry Education Network (EDUFOREST). At the Joint Committee seminar in Les Bastide des Jourdain in April 1998, it was agreed to create a network, which would provide updated information for anyone interested in forestry training and education and also facilitate exchange of information between training institutions. To set up the network, a Leonardo project supported by the European Union was implemented in partnership with 7 European countries, namely France, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Scotland and the Czech Republic. After two years the EDUFOREST website was operational. At present there are 52 members from 15 different countries registered to the network. It is hoped that the network will enhance the cooperation between training centres and capitalize on this cooperation to build synergies to improve efficiency and effectiveness and reduce training costs. This activity was a good example of a seminar recommendation that had led to a tangible result.

69. Mr. Salvignol suggested organizing a meeting among training centers on international cooperation in training. He indicated that France might be prepared to sponsor such activity. The Committee expressed its gratitude to Mr. Salvignol and his team for the successful work and agreed to continue to sponsor the network. In order to increase the number of training institutions, country contact points should be asked to spread the message in their respective countries.

3.3. Participation and partnerships in forestry (team of specialists)

70. The team leader Mr. M. Wenner (United Kingdom) informed the Committee of the work carried out by the team. The team's main mandate was to clarify the concept of participation, identifying opportunities and developing a framework for increased participatory forest management, awareness of the forest and use of forest products and services by the public. The team had completed work on the first part of its mandate, participation, and will finalise by early next year the second part on raising

awareness. Mr. Wenner requested an extension of the present mandate and stressed that any further extension of the team's mandate must take into consideration the need for funding a coordinator. The coordinator would play a crucial role to ensure that high quality work is completed in a reasonable timescale. Funding for future Joint Committee teams of specialists needed to be cleared in advance.

71. The Chairman congratulated and suggested that the Committee should extend the end date of the team until the next Steering Committee meeting to allow the finalization of work under the present mandate. Ms. Bergquist (Sweden) also congratulated to the outcome of the teams work. Sweden was hesitant to support a further expansion of the mandate without first clearing the funding issue, but was willing to extend the time frame of the current mandate. She questioned the need of a coordinator in addition to the team leader and stressed that the Committee should agree whether the employment of coordinators in team of specialists would be a new principle and also analyse the financial consequences. Mr. J. Kalb (the Netherlands) expressed his support for the team's work and emphasized the valuable input of the team to the upcoming seminar in the Netherlands.

72. The Committee thanked the team for its excellent work and agreed to extend its mandate until the next Steering Committee session, this would allow sufficient time for finalizing the work on raising awareness; it further agreed that funding needed to be cleared before the team's mandate on public products and services could be expanded. The Committee also asked the team to assist in the preparation of the seminar in the Netherlands in 2004.

3.4. Women in forestry (seminar in Viseu, Portugal, 2-6 April 2001)

73. Mr. J. Teixeira (Portugal) informed the Committee on the seminar on women in forestry that had taken place in Viseu, Portugal in April 2001. The seminar had agreed on conclusions and recommendations that constitute a useful contribution in reaching equality of opportunity in forestry. The seminar proceedings were published and could be obtained on request from the organizers.

74. Ms. C. Cosgrove-Sacks (UNECE) thanked the organisers for a well organised seminar. She stressed the importance to follow-up the recommendations made at the seminar. Ms A. Bergquist (Sweden) informed the meeting that one important recommendation to the Joint Committee had already been implemented: SIDA, the Swedish aid agency, had agreed to sponsor an associate expert who will be posted at ILO in Geneva. A major task of the expert will be to carry out case studies in specific aspects of women's involvement in forestry.

3.5. Forestry meets the public (seminar in Rüttihubelbad, Switzerland, 8-11 October 2001)

75. Mr. M. Buechel (Switzerland) presented the outcome of the seminar on "Forestry meets the public" held in Rüttihubelbad, Switzerland in October 2001. The seminar was a response to the call by the third Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe to improve communication and to build partnerships with groups outside the forestry sector. Some 120 forestry, education and communications experts from 21 countries attended the meeting. The seminar identified three complementary approaches to improved communication: public relations, forest-related environmental education and public participation. The Committee congratulated the organizers for a successful seminar and asked the country contact points to disseminate the results and propose suggestions for follow-up.

3.6. Partnerships in forestry (seminar in Flanders, Belgium 3-6 June 2002)

76. The seminar had been successful and produced a wide range of recommendations to promote partnership building. The delegate from the MCPFE Liaison Unit in Vienna informed that the recommendations of the seminar had been discussed at the last Expert Level Meeting in June and will also constitute an input for the preparation of the next meeting in October. The delegate from France Mr. C. Salvignol called for more flexibility as regards the length of a seminar. For example the seminar in Belgium was completed one day ahead of the schedule. He stressed that it should be possible to have shorter seminars depending on the number of participants.

3.7. Traditional forest knowledge

77. The delegate from Sweden reconfirmed his country's interest to maintain this item in the pipeline of possible future activities. The Committee agreed to reconsider this activity at the next Steering Committee session.

3.8. Other possible future work items

78. Mr. P. Blombäck (ILO) presented proposals for new items that could be considered for future work in subject area 3.

79. The meeting took note of the ever-increasing **role of contractors in forestry** and recognized the need for action within the Committee. Some good solutions such as the efforts to raise qualification among machine operators in Lower Saxony (Germany) and the FASTCo concept on skill tests and certificates (UK) already existed and deserved more widespread knowledge and application. The Committee should explore further possibilities for improving the situation of contractors in forestry, e.g. in the field of working conditions, training (also at a uniformed level in Europe), qualification etc.

80. The delegate from Switzerland supported the idea of holding a **seminar on safety and health**, but pointed out that it should also include workers in private forests. Switzerland, France and SUVA will discuss the item and provide a proposal. A seminar could possibly be organized in 2006 or 2007. The Committee agreed to review this item at the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

81. The Committee took note of the increasing problem with **labour shortage and problems in acquiring a competent workforce**, a concern that had been voiced several times during the meeting as well as at recent seminars. The delegate from ENFI pointed out that labour shortage was mostly a problem in western and northern European countries. In many eastern European countries the problem was rather unemployment. The focus should therefore be how to deal with imbalances of labour in forestry. The Committee took note of the intervention and decided to explore possible actions at the next Steering Committee session.

Adoption of programme of work (item 8)**Strategic Review of the integrated programme of work of the ECE Timber Committee and FAO European Forestry Commission**

82. Ms. A. Bergquist (Sweden), Vice-Chairman of the UNECE Timber Committee and Mr. J.M. Solano (Spain), Chairman of the FAO European Forestry Commission informed the Committee on the strategic review process which had taken place since the Committee's last session in 2000. They recalled the comments made by the joint bureaux meeting in May 2002, when discussing work area 4: Technology, Management and Training, which "welcomed the work carried out by the Joint Committee and its methods of work, which made efficient use of resources. The bureaux noted that Joint Committee activities were in line with the work programme and priorities of the parent bodies and valued the contributions made, notably to the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. The bureaux further noted that the low priority attached to work area 4 by the Strategic Review was due to the process of priority ranking and agreed to strongly support the work being carried out by the Joint Committee."

83. The bureaux had further requested the Joint Committee "to consider revising its title to include the increasing dimension of Joint Committee activities on social aspects of forestry; and to discuss procedures to monitor the implementation of seminar recommendations, it noted the danger of devaluation of such recommendations in the absence of follow-up or implementation. It further noted that future seminars should be more realistic in formulating recommendations in regard to what can be achieved and, also, in their number."

84. With regard to the Committee's title, the Committee agreed to propose to its parents bodies the following: Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Sustainable Forestry; the session agreed that the next Steering Committee session will implement an efficient method to monitor seminar recommendations on the basis of proposals to be submitted.

85. Ms. C. Cosgrove-Sacks reiterated UNECE commitment and support to the Joint Committee work. The Joint Committee had improved its visibility by taking up activities on social aspects of forestry. The Joint Committee should continue working in raising its visibility and in expanding the dissemination of its work.

86. The Joint Committee adopted its programme of work, on the basis of the draft programme, its review of activities under items 5 to 7 and a number of suggestions for new work made during the discussions. The programme is set out in annexes II and I.

Any other business (item 9)

87. The Committee warmly thanked Ireland for the excellent organization of the meeting and for the generous hospitality extended to delegates.

88. The Committee endorsed the Steering Committee decision to support the second Forest Engineering Conference to be organised by SkogForsk, the Swedish Forest Research Institute, in Växjö, Sweden in May 2003. The Conference will discuss future technologies and logistics in the forest industry.

89. The Committee was informed of the Meeting “Austro2003, High Tech Forest Operations for Mountainous Terrain” to be held in Schlaegl, Austria from 5 to 9 October 2003. The meeting will discuss state-of-the-art knowledge on steep slope harvesting operations.

Election of officers (item 10)

90. The Joint Committee elected its Steering Committee to hold office until the end of the twenty-fifth session. The composition and distribution of responsibilities of the Steering Committee is the following:

	Name	Responsibility
Chairman:	Mr. H. Höfle (Germany)	Overall coordination
Past Chairman:	Mr. P. Efthymiou (Greece)	Liaison southern Europe
Vice-Chairmen:	Mr. D. McAree (Ireland)	European Union & North America reporting to the SC on the international dialogue on forests
	Mr. M. Büchel (Switzerland)	Liaison central and western Europe, public relations and fund raising activities
Coordinators:	Mr. J. De Sousa Teixeira (Portugal)	Subject area 1, liaison with Forest Communicators Network (FCN)
	Mr. J. Begus (Slovenia)	Subject area 2
	Mr. C. Salvignol (France)	Subject area 3
Special Coordinators:	Ms. E. Horvathné Sandor (Hungary)	Women in forestry, Liaison central and eastern Europe
	Mr. J. Ilavský (Slovakia)	Liaison Timber Committee, European Forestry Commission, central and eastern Europe and EFI

Date and place of the next session (item 11)

91. The Joint Committee agreed to hold its twenty-fifth session in conjunction with the seminar on New roles and modes of operation of State Forest Services in September 2004, at the invitation of the Government of the Netherlands.

Adoption of the report (item 12)

92. The Committee adopted its report, on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat.

ANNEX I

PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE JOINT FAO/ECE/ILO COMMITTEE ON FOREST TECHNOLOGY, MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING FOR 2003-2006

Programme in subject area 1 Silviculture and forest management

(e.g. multiple-use forestry, ecological and economical issues, marketing, information systems)

1.1. Forest fire prevention and control

Activities of the team of specialists, including the publication, twice yearly, of International Forest Fire News; the team will organize a seminar in Turkey in 2003; the team will make recommendations on the harmonization of forest fire statistics and reporting requirements for ECE/FAO. The team will report to the twenty-fifth session of the Joint Committee in 2004.

Duration: to 2004

1.2 New roles and modes of operation of Forest Services

It is proposed that a seminar on the changed functions of more independent Forest Services and the closely linked topic of how to finance supply of non-market goods and services from public or private forest owners be held in the Netherlands, in 2004. The programme will be presented at the next session of the Steering Committee in 2003.

Duration: to 2004

1.3. Afforestation

A seminar was held in Ireland in September 2002. The proceedings will be published.

Duration: to 2002

1.4. Disaster preparedness in forestry

A team will be formed to consider how the existing *Damage Manual* should be altered to take account of the experience of the 1999 storms in cooperation with CTBA. A seminar to present, discuss and share the experience of the affected countries might be organised in 2004.

Duration: to 2004

1.5. Information systems in forestry

Future activities, possibly a third seminar on the topic to be organised in cooperation with IUFRO. To be decided by the sixteenth session of the Steering Committee in 2003.

Duration: to 2005

1.6 Close to nature forestry

A seminar on close to nature forestry in cooperation with IUFRO and EFI will be held in Slovakia in 2003.

Duration: to 2004

**Programme in subject area 2
technology, wood harvesting and transport**

(e.g. forest engineering, ecologically and economically sound operations in silviculture, wood harvesting and transport)

2.1. Environmentally sound forest roads and wood transport

A seminar will be held possibly in 2004 in Hungary. The programme will be presented to the sixteenth session of the Steering Committee in 2003.

Duration: **to 2004**

2.2. Wood harvesting in mountainous areas

The proceedings of the workshop on new trends in wood harvesting with cable systems, held in Ossiach, Austria in 2001 will be published. FAO will keep under review and compile information on developments in the sector. Future activities to be agreed by the twenty-fifth session of the Joint Committee in 2004.

Duration: **2006**

2.3. Mobilisation of additional wood supply mainly from private forests

It is proposed that a seminar on the above topic be held in 2004 or 2005.

Duration: **to 2005**

2.4. Multi-functional forestry in protected and vulnerable areas

The Mountain Forestry and Forest Ecology Research Institute in Sochi and the Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry of National Resources of the Russian Federation will organize a seminar on multi functional forestry in 2004. The programme will be presented to the sixteenth session of the Steering Committee in 2003.

Duration: **to 2004**

2.5. Forest operation improvements in farm forests

The Slovenian Government will host a seminar in this subject in Logarska Salina, Slovenia, in 2003. A draft programme was presented at the twenty-fourth session of the Joint Committee.

Duration: **to 2003**

2.6 Mechanization of forest operations in the mountains

Proposal to establish a team of specialists.

Duration: **to be decided by the Steering Committee's sixteenth session in 2003**

Programme in subject area 3
vocational training and applied ergonomics

(e.g. for workers, supervisors and managers, including applied ergonomics and occupational safety and health)

3.1. Forestry workforce network

Activities of the Forestry workforce network, publication of *FORWORKNET Update* by ILO, two or three times per year.

Duration: **continuing**

3.2. EDUFOREST– the Forestry Education Network

As a follow-up to the seminar in France in 1998, a network of European forestry training institutions was established in cooperation between the Committee and the training centre of La Bastide in France. The possibilities to hold a meeting on international cooperation among training centres will be explored.

Duration: **continuing**

3.3 Public participation and partnerships in forestry

A team of specialists, under the leadership of Mr. M. Wenner (UK), will clarify the concept of “participation” and develop the conceptual framework for participatory forest management (involvement of the public), awareness of the forest and use of forest products and services by the public. The team will assist in the preparation of the seminar in the Netherlands in 2004 (see 1.2, above).

Duration: **to 2003**

3.4 Traditional forest-related knowledge

A proposal for an activity to be presented to the sixteenth session of the Steering Committee in 2003.

Duration: **to 2005**

3.5 Role of contractors in forestry

A proposal for an activity to be presented to the sixteenth session of the Steering Committee in 2003.

Duration: **to 2006**

3.6 Safety and health in forest operations

A proposal for an activity in 2006 or 2007 to be presented to the sixteenth session of the Steering Committee in 2003.

Duration: **to 2007**

3.7 Forestry workforce

A proposal for an activity to be presented to the sixteenth session of the Steering Committee in 2003.

Duration: **to 2006**

ANNEX II

TABULAR PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Joint Committee (JC) Steering Committee (SC) Sessions	SC, 16th session, Slovakia	JC, 25th session, the Netherlands	SC, 17th session	JC, 26th session	SC, 18th session

Subject area 1: Silviculture and forest management

1.1	Forest fire prevention and control	Seminar in Turkey				
		Team of specialists				
		Continuing IFFN, Newsletter, twice a year				
1.2	New roles and modes of operation of forest services		Seminar in the Netherlands			
1.3	Afforestation	<i>(completed)</i> The proceedings of the seminar held in Ireland in 2002, will be published				
1.4	Disaster preparedness in forestry	Revision of <i>Manual</i>				Seminar <i>(to be determined)</i>
1.5	Information systems in forestry	To be determined				
1.6	Close to nature forestry	Seminar in Slovakia				

Subject area 2: Technology, wood harvesting and transport

		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
2.1	Environmentally sound forest roads and wood transport		Seminar in Hungary			
2.2	Wood harvesting in mountainous areas		Activity to be decided by Joint Committee			
2.3	Mobilisation of additional wood supply mainly from private forests		Seminar (to be determined)			
2.4	Multi-functional forestry in protected and vulnerable areas		Workshop in Sochi, Russian Federation			
2.5	Forest operation improvements in farm forests	Workshop in Slovenia				
2.6	Mechanization of forest operations in the mountains		Activity to be decided by Joint Committee			

Subject area 3: Vocational training and applied ergonomics

		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
3.1	Forestry workforce network	Continuing publication of <i>FORWORKNET</i>				
3.2	EDUFOREST	Continuing, Forestry Education Network				
3.3	Public participation and partnerships in forestry (team of specialists)	Activities of the team of specialists				
3.4	Traditional forest-related knowledge	Activity to be decided by Steering Committee		Seminar in Sweden		
3.5	Role of contractors in forestry	Activity to be decided by Steering Committee				
3.6	Safety and health in forest operations	Activity to be decided by Steering Committee			Seminar in France and/or Switzerland	
3.7	Forestry workforce	Activity to be decided by Steering Committee				