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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
Timber Committee

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
European Forestry Commission

JOINT FAO/ECE WORKING PARTY ON FOREST ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS
Twenty-fifth session

to be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva
24 – 26 February 2003, starting at 10.00 hrs on Monday, 24 February

Item 2 of the Provisional Agenda
Matters referred to the Working Party by its parent bodies

Introduction

1. The Working Party is expected to provide guidance for activities under work areas 1,2 and 3 of the ECE/FAO programme, and these form the major part of its discussions. However some items are also referred to the Working Party explicitly by its parent bodies. In addition some items of more general interest, not explicitly referred to the Working Party would appear to be relevant to the Working Party's expertise
2. This paper briefly draws to the Working Party's attention three items. The action required in each case is indicated in ***bold italic*** font.

Publications

3. In the UN system as a whole there is concern to ensure that all publications are necessary and relevant and published in the most appropriate and economic way possible. In general, during the preparation of the Programme Budget for 2004-2005, HQ has asked ECE, like other departments, to reduce the number of publications.
4. The publications of the ECE/FAO integrated programme come under four headings, each with a different identity:
 - The *Timber Bulletin*, with a regular format (6 issues a year), essentially in the field of markets and statistics;
 - *Geneva Timber and Forest Study Papers*, intended to be the major output of activities, and to be translated in three languages (although in recent years, resource problems in the translation service have meant that most Study Papers are not in fact translated¹)
 - *Geneva Timber and Forest Discussion Papers*, intended to be more detailed and technical input to other work, and usually signed by their authors (often experts or consultants, not the secretariat itself), and not translated.

¹ Priority for translation is given to "parliamentary documentation", for meetings.

- *International Forest Fire News*, prepared under the auspices of the team of specialists on forest fires and widely distributed to forest fire experts world wide (2 issues/year, received camera ready by the secretariat)
5. The exact contents of the different series vary quite widely from year to year, according to the activities undertaken. In the programme budget four Study papers and 6 Discussion Papers are forecast for each year. The publications in 2002 and those expected for 2003 are listed in annex 1
6. ECE is also developing a system of series, similar to that in effect for forest/timber publications. The idea at present is that forest/timber series would retain their identity but be placed in a wider ECE context.
7. Study Papers and the *Timber Bulletin* are put on sale, in addition to the numbers distributed free of charge (the majority). All publications are also posted on the website and are in fact frequently downloaded: the TBFRA main report has been downloaded over 10,000 times.
8. Questions for the Working Party concerning the forest/timber publication programme could include:
- In general are the publications of a sufficient standard (analytical quality, relevance, accuracy, language and editing) to be issued as UN publications?
 - Should a greater distinction be made between publications for a wider, more policy-oriented audience and those of a more technical or methodological nature?
 - Is the system of series still appropriate and helpful? Given the problems with translation, is the distinction between Study Papers and Discussion Papers still valid?
 - Should some papers be issued in a more informal way (for instance, as internal papers, posted on the net only), rather than as official publications? In this case, the savings on the secretariat analytical side would be negligible (possibly less investment in page layout), although the pressure on the UN publications services would be somewhat reduced.
9. ***The Working Party is invited to review the principles and structure of the ECE/FAO forest and timber publications programme, in the light of the questions above and make recommendations for improvements.***

Indicators of achievement

10. The UN Programme Budget for 2004-2005, at present being prepared, lays great stress on including not only, as in the past, resources needed and outputs, but also “achievements expected”, and “indicators of achievement”, whereby, it should be possible to measure objectively, and, if possible, in a quantified fashion, whether the objectives have been attained. This is clearly challenging when the objectives, as in the case of the ECE/FAO programme essentially concern monitoring, analysis and the provision of a forum for discussion
11. The expected achievements and indicators of achievements proposed by ECE to UN HQ in December 2002 for subprogramme 7: Timber are reproduced in annex 2. They may be modified at subsequent stages of the process.

12. An important indicator of user satisfaction (and a tool to improve the quality of the output by generating feedback) is the proposed user survey, building on the experience of the survey carried out by a Finnish expert for the Working Party in the late 1990s. The secretariat would welcome the opportunity to carry out a second professional quality user survey, but at present, no resources have been made available. Ideally, the survey would be carried out in 2003, so that its results could be taken into account in the strategic review of the whole programme which will be carried out in 2003/2004.

13. *The Working Party is invited to advise the secretariat on how to measure the indicators of achievement. In particular, countries (or a small group of countries) are invited to consider contributing expertise and resources to carrying out the second survey of users of ECE/FAO publications*

Coordination of regional activities on monitoring and analysis of the sector

14. There is increasing concern about the quality and availability of the information and analysis to support the international policy debate, notably at the regional level, and whether enough information, or the right information, is being collected, whether costs are fairly distributed, whether duplication exists etc. This was the theme of a mini-seminar, at the policy level, at the EFC session in Barcelona in November 2003. The background paper (FO:EFC/2002/3) is available on the website and is being distributed to Working Party delegates directly. The relevant section of the EFC report is presented in annex 3.

15. In the report, the Commission “requested that the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics consider at its next session in 2003 whether more action is needed to improve cooperation among agencies at the regional level in information collection.”

16. There are two examples of successful international coordination of activities in areas under the Working Party’s guidance: the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire and the TBFRA (notably as regards its contribution on indicators of sustainable forest management).

17. Some questions are proposed for the Working Party:

- Is there scope for widening this approach to other areas, and if so, which?
- Is there a need for some more permanent partnership of key information providers at the regional level?
- Should the Working Party take the lead in these matters?

18. *The Working Party is invited to respond to the request of the EFC and make proposals in this area.*

List of 2002 and 2003 publications

Symbol	2002	Actual/Forecasted	
		Date Submitted	Date out
IFFN, No. 26	International Forest Fire News for the year 2002	May	July
ECE/TIM/DP/24	Forecasts of GDP in European Countries for the Period 2000-2040	June	July
ECE/TIM/DP/25	Status of Forest Certification 2002	July	September
ECE/TIM/INF/2000/9	Timber Committee Yearbook 2002	July	September
ECE/TIM/BULL/2002/3	Forest Products Annual Market Review	August	October
ECE/TIM/BULL/2002/5	Forest Products Trade Flow Data	September	November
ECE/TIM/BULL/2000/6	Forest Products Markets and Prospects for 2003	November	January, 2003
Passed in electronic format to MCPFE	Temperate and Boreal Forest Resources Assessment – update for the 4th Ministerial Conference 2003	November	November
ECE/TIM/BULL/2002/2	Forest Products Statistics	December	February, 2003
ECE/TIM/DP/28	Report on Forestry Assistance to Countries in Transition	December	February, 2003
IFFN, No. 27	International Forest Fire News for the year 2002	December	February, 2003
ECE/TIM/DP/...	Forestry Country profile on Georgia	December	February, 2003
ECE/TIM/DP/26	Russian Forest Sector Outlook Studies	December	February, 2003
ECE/TIM/DP/31	Analysis of Scenarios with Major Impacts on the European Forest Sector	December	February, 2003
Symbol	2003	Actual/Forecasted	
		Date Submitted	Date out
ECE/TIM/BULL/2002/1	Forest Products Prices	January	March
ECE/TIM/INF/10	Timber Committee Yearbook 2003	January	March
ECE/TIM/BULL/2002/4	Forest Fire Statistics	January	March
ECE/TIM/DP/...	Historical Analysis of Driving Forces for the Development of Forest Resources	February	April
ECE/TIM/DP/...	Historical Analysis of Driving Forces for the Development of Forest Products Markets	February	April
ECE/TIM/BULL/2003/1	Forest Products Prices	March	May
ECE/TIM/SP/...	European Forest Sector Outlook Study	March	May
ECE/TIM/BULL/2003/4	Forest Fire Statistics	April	June
ECE/TIM/DP/...	Species Composition and Biodiversity Elements in the Regional FRA-2000	April	June
ECE/TIM/DP/...	Trade flow analysis	April	June
ECE/TIM/BULL/2003/5	Forest Products Trade Flow Data	June	August
ECE/TIM/SP/...	Trade and Environment Issues in the Forest Sector	June	August
ECE/TIM/DP/...	Forestry and Forest Sector Country Profile for Ukraine	June	August
IFFN, No. 28	International Forest Fire News for the year 2003	June	August
ECE/TIM/DP/...	Forest Products Marketing in Central East European Countries	June	August
ECE/TIM/DP/...	Synopsis of Europe and forest related legislation	June	August
ECE/TIM/DP/...	Status of Forest Certification 2003	July	September
ECE/TIM/BULL/2003/3	Forest Products Annual Market Review	August	October
ECE/TIM/SP/...	Forest Resources Assessment – Outline for the next round (2005)	September	November
ECE/TIM/BULL/2003/6	Forest Products Markets and Prospects for 2003	October	December
ECE/TIM/SP/...	Promoting the Sustainable Use of Wood as An Environmentally Friendly Raw Material	October	November
ECE/TIM/BULL/2003/2	Forest Products Statistics	November	January, 2004
IFFN, No. 29	International Forest Fire News for the year 2003	December	March, 2004

Annex 2

Indicators of achievement from UN Programme and Budget.

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement	Data for 2000-2001	Baseline data 2003	Target data 2005	Remarks
a. analysis delivered of the situation, outlook and of policy issues for the forest and timber sector, based on reliable and comprehensive information.	a. the satisfaction of users of information and analyses as measured by user surveys, and number of website visits per year accessing substantive documents/studies/data and series/indicators produced for the relevant users.	User surveys: Positive evaluation by team of specialists formed to act as semi-permanent feedback body Website use: In September 2001, there were 684 downloads of Timber studies statistics and documents. (whole year data available soon)	User surveys: Continued positive feedback from team of specialists Website use: in September 2002, the number of downloads of timber documents increased to 3837 (docs with over 200 downloads only: the total is probably over 4500)	User surveys: Positive evaluation from formal survey to be carried out of users Website use: downloads around 5500/month (65,000/year)	
b. exchange of policy relevant experience on topical issues, including a gender perspective	b. a positive evaluation by participants in sessions, seminars and workshops in terms of policy dialogue and exchange of experience, ascertained by systematic surveys of participants.	Evaluation by participants: forms distributed at meetings of Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee, but not formally assessed.	Standard forms will be distributed at all meetings (7 scheduled). Objective: 80% of meetings with average satisfaction over 4, on 5 point scale	Same system: target: 90% of meetings with average satisfaction over 4	
c. availability of data on indicators of	c. Use of data on indicators, as measured by website	TBFRA (publication containing	Revised data set (narrower	Target 4,000 downloads/year. (The 2003 data	

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement	Data for 2000-2001	Baseline data 2003	Target data 2005	Remarks
sustainable forest management in the region	hits and citations	data on indicators), distributed on paper 2500 times, downloaded at least 10,500 times, frequently cited.	scope than TBFRA): expected downloads around 10,000 (UN website and that of Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe).	set will still be valid, and distributed. Given the wide distribution in 2003, the numbers in 2005 will probably decline somewhat, compared to the previous biennium.)	
a, b and c above.	d. a positive evaluation by governments and other stakeholders in the strategic reviews of the sub-programme held at 4-yearly intervals (next in 2004). (This indicator applies to all three expected accomplishments.)	The strategic review carried out in 2000/2001 proposed substantial improvements to the work programme and endorsed the general methods and organisation	The 2000/2001 results are being implemented	A new review will be implemented in 2003/2004, and conclusions implemented from 2005	

*Annex 3**Extract from report of European Forestry Commission session 2003***IN-SESSION SEMINAR: MONITORING AND ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN EUROPE: DOES THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE SATISFY THE NEEDS? (Item 3)**

1. The Commission conducted an in-session seminar based on a secretariat document (FO:EFC/2002/3). It concluded that there is a strong need for high quality and comprehensive information and analysis of the forest sector at the regional and global level as the essential foundation of a well informed policy debate. The importance of cooperative analysis carried out at the regional level, such as outlook studies and market analysis, were recognized and the work supported.
2. Furthermore, there should be coordination between national data providers and their respective delegates to international bodies. Countries should take into consideration their capacity to provide information when requesting international bodies to collect such information.
3. The list of indicators prepared by the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) (to be revised in 2003) provides the priorities at the pan-European level as regards information collection. FAO and its partners should give priority to satisfying the information needs articulated in the MCPFE list.
4. The Commission noted that after the considerable expansion of scope of information collection in the 1990s, emphasis should be given, in Europe at least, to improving data quality and consistency including comparability, filling data gaps and widening scope within the limits of resources.
5. Furthermore, stability and continuity in terms and definitions are essential to developing credible information about evolutions in forest resources and the forest sector. Harmonization of forest-related terms and definitions is vital to improving the utility of data collected for different international processes. Excellent progress is being made to this end by the ongoing effort in this regard by FAO and partners under the aegis of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). The Commission recommended that the work on harmonizing definitions should continue and be brought to the attention of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF).
6. The Commission commended the efforts of countries to collaborate on collecting basic data. Some countries indicated a continuing need for support and exchange of ideas on information collection and analysis.
7. The Commission acknowledged the good cooperation between FAO and the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in finalizing the Forest Resource Assessment 2000. It was recognized that data collection and analysis is costly and time-consuming. The Commission requested that the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics consider at its next session in 2003 whether more action is needed to improve cooperation among agencies at the regional level in information collection.

8. The Commission recommended that the forestry sector be pro-active and assertive in communicating its accomplishments to other sectors and instruments, notably in the field of indicators for sustainable forest management. This was seen as the best means to avoid unnecessary duplication by other sectors.