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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
TIMBER COMMITTEE**

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS FIFTY-NINTH SESSION
(2-5 October 2001)**

Highlights of the Session

- The Committee, with the participation of European Forestry Commission bureau members, approved the proposals emerging from the strategic review of the joint programme of the two bodies (paras. 11-18);
- Strengthening intersectoral cooperation in trade, timber, environment and energy was the session's special topic; the Committee further agreed on synergies to be implemented (paras. 21-25);
- The Timber Committee took note of ECE's opinion on increased policy coherence and follow-up of the United Nations' Millennium Declaration (paras. 9 and 10);
- The Committee endorsed the general direction of ECE/FAO's activities in support to the international dialogue on forests, global and regional processes (para. 20);
- The Committee reviewed the markets for forest products in 2001 and prospects for 2002 and approved a statement (para. 19);
- The Committee adopted its programme of work, the prioritisation of its work programme (para. 14), the allocation of secretariat resources, the mandates of teams of specialists and the tentative calendar of meetings (para. 27 and annexes).

Introduction

1. The ECE Timber Committee held its fifty-ninth session at Geneva from 2 to 5 October 2001. The session was attended by representatives of Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Yugoslavia.
2. A representative of the European Commission attended the session. The FAO European Forestry Commission and the Vienna Liaison Unit of the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe were also represented.
3. The following United Nations bodies and intergovernmental organization agencies were represented: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); International Labour Office (ILO); United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO.
4. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI); European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-BOIS); European Confederation of Agriculture (CEA); European Forest Institute (EFI); European Panel Federation (EPF); Organization of European Sawmilling Industries (OES); Shake and Shingle Association; Silviculture Union of Southern Europe (USSE); and Union of Processed Panels Industries (UIPP).
5. The Committee paid tribute to the memory of the victims of the terrorist attacks in the USA and the murders in Zug, Switzerland.
6. Ms. C. Cosgrove-Sacks, Director of the UNECE Trade Division, welcomed the delegations to the Committee on behalf of the Executive Secretary.
7. On the occasion of the launch of *State of the World's Forests 2001* (SOFO), Ms. D. Hübner, Executive Secretary of ECE addressed the Committee's session. Mr. H. El-Lakany, Assistant Director General of FAO, presented the main findings of the publication.

Adoption of the agenda (Item 1)

8. The provisional agenda (ECE/TIM/96) was adopted.

Matters arising from the fifty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Europe of relevance to the Committee (Item 2) (TIM/2001/1)

9. During the ECE session, decisions were taken in three areas that have a direct impact on the work of the Timber Committee. These three areas are: increased policy coherence, strengthening intersectoral links within the ECE, and the United Nations' Millennium Declaration.

10. With regard to increased policy coherence, the Timber Committee Chairman, or Vice-Chairman, will participate in the Steering Group, established by the Commission, and will inform the Committee and its bureau of results. Strengthening intersectoral links within the ECE, was the special topic at the Committee's session and discussions are reported under agenda item 6 (paras. 21-25). The Committee noted that with its partners, it was already addressing the Millennium Declaration topics (para. 11, TIM/2001/1) and gender-related issues. It agreed that no modifications or additions were necessary to its programme at present, and to review periodically progress in the implementation of the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

Strategic review of the ECE Timber Committee/FAO European Forestry Commission programme of work (Item 3) (TIM/2001/2)

11. The Committee, with the participation of European Forestry Commission (EFC) bureau members, was informed of the results of the strategic review process carried out since the joint session, which had considered all aspects of the integrated programme of work of the Timber Committee and the EFC. They welcomed the transparent and comprehensive nature of the process, and stressed the importance of partnerships, notably with the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), ILO and members of the Intersecretariat Working Group.

12. The Committee and the EFC bureau approved the proposals emerging from the strategic review, and summarised in TIM/2001/2, on the following points:

- Statements of mandate, missions and strategies;
- The structure of the new programme of work including the overview, the detailed description of activities and outputs, the guidance for the allocation of secretariat resources and mandates of the teams of specialists. The contents of the programme would be reviewed and endorsed under item 8 of the agenda;
- New methods of programme formulation, monitoring and review;
- Work methods of teams of specialists.

13. The effectiveness of the revised system should be monitored by the bureaux of the two bodies, who should propose further revisions if necessary. They should take into account experience, notably feedback from the present session. The next strategic review should take place in four years, on the occasion of the next joint session.

14. The Committee agreed that, in response to the request from ECE, “higher priority” should be assigned to work area 1: Markets and statistics and “lower priority” to work area 4: Technology, management and training.

15. The Committee and the EFC bureau agreed that the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics should meet annually, in order to be able to carry out satisfactorily the guidance functions assigned to it in the strategic review.

16. The Committee and the EFC bureau welcomed the attention paid to inputs by countries, and agreed that consideration must be given to using these resources in an efficient way.

17. The Committee and the EFC bureau agreed that it is possible to implement the described programme *ad minima* with the resources now available, but that more solid outputs would be possible with more resources. The main constraint appeared to be in the resources available to the secretariat: more attention should be paid to fund-raising. All countries were urged to examine what contribution they could make in this respect, whether in monetary terms or in kind.

18. The results of the exercise should be presented in a user-friendly form and made widely available, for instance, in a brochure and on the website.

Market developments in 2001 and prospects for 2002

(Item 4) (TIM/2001/3; ECE/TIM/BULL/54/3)

19. The Committee reviewed the markets on the basis of the *Forest Products Annual Market Review 2000-2001*, country statements and national forecasts for 2001 and 2002. It approved a statement for subsequent publication and wide distribution.

International dialogue on forests, support to the global and regional processes

(Item 5) (TIM/2001/4)

20. Mr. El-Hadji Sène, FAO, informed the Committee of his organization’s activities in support to the work of UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) and Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) chaired by FAO. The Committee noted that ECE/FAO contributed indirectly to this work, notably by addressing issues identified as important by IFF. Mr. P. Mayer, Vienna Liaison Unit of the MCPFE, welcomed the contribution of the UNECE/FAO secretariat to the regional process. The Committee endorsed the view of the extended bureau meetings on the strategic direction of ECE/FAO’s activities in support of the global and regional processes.

Special topic: ECE intersectoral cooperation, trade, timber, environment and energy

(Item 6) (TIM/2001/5)

21. As requested by the Economic Commission for Europe in May 2001, the Committee

discussed intersectoral cooperation in trade, timber, environment and energy, on the basis of presentations by representatives of the ECE Committees on Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development (in particular, its Working Party on Technical Harmonisation and Standardisation Policies), on Environmental Policies and on Sustainable Energy, as well as UNCTAD and UNEP. Information was received from FAO and WTO (Trade and Environment Committee). The Commission of the European Communities and WWF also expressed their interest in contributing to the work.

22. The Committee agreed on the necessity of thinking and of understanding in an intersectoral way and being receptive to developments in other sectors. The exchange of information was considered valuable in itself because of the insight it provided into other sectors, which were in fact the main determinants of broad forest sector trends. It expressed its interest in working with other ECE bodies in developing a cross sectoral approach. It mandated its bureau to make contact with the bureaux of other ECE Principal Subsidiary Bodies to develop this work, possibly on the occasion of the first session of the ECE Steering Group set up in May 2001.

23. There was a need to institutionalise mechanisms of consultation and exchange of information within and between international organisations and at the national level. This would generate a truly intersectoral approach to the many complex problems facing the people of the ECE region.

24. With regard to the immediate synergies, the Committee endorsed the proposal to strengthen the advisory group of the EFSOS metastudy by including experts from other sectors. It welcomed the offer of the Committee on Environmental Policies to nominate two experts to this group, and asked the secretariat to seek the participation of experts from other sectors to this important intersectoral work. It also considered that certification was an important area of interface between trade, environment and timber/forest issues. The Committee now possessed a large amount of useful knowledge and experience in this field, which it should share with other bodies including the CTIED Working Party on Technical Harmonisation and Standardisation Policies and the UNCTAD Trade and Environment Unit, profiting in turn from the experience of the partner bodies.

25. The secretariat should explore with partners the possibility of applying an intersectoral approach in more areas, provided that sufficient resources are likely to be available to produce outputs of sufficient quality and not at the expense of the Committee's core activities.

Activities of FAO and of Principal Subsidiary Bodies of ECE of interest to the Timber Committee (Item 7) (TIM/2001/6)

26. The Committee was informed of FAO's forestry programmes and of the activities of the ECE Committee on Human Settlements related to its work. It took note of this information and agreed to take it into account when discussing its own programme of work.

Review of activities since the fifty-eighth session and programme of work for 2001 to 2004
(Item 8) (TIM/2001/7, TIM/2001/8, and addenda)

27. As a result of the strategic review process, the Committee agreed on the mandate and vision of the integrated programme with the European Forestry Commission, the division into five work areas and its presentation as an overview and a detailed tabular presentation of the activities. The Committee adopted its programme of work as set out in TIM/2001/8, the prioritisation of its work programme (para. 14 above), the allocation of secretariat resources, the mandates of teams of specialists and the tentative list of meetings for 2002 and 2003 (annex II).

28. The inaugural meeting of the new **Team of Specialists on Forest Products Markets and Marketing** on 1-3 October 2001, overlapped intentionally with the Committee's market discussions in which the team members had participated. The Team broke into subgroups to initiate work on their mandate and elected its officers: Leader, Mr. C. Gaston (Canada) and Deputy Leaders, Mr. M. Buckley (United States) and Mr. H. Jordans (Latvia). The Committee thanked countries which had nominated members and encouraged remaining countries to consider participation on this Team which is composed of a rich diversity of experience in forest products marketing and market analysis. The Committee urged the Team to look for synergies with the Forest Communicators Network. The team will meet annually in conjunction with the Committee's market discussions.

29. The Committee was informed of progress in preparation of **the seminar on promoting sustainable use of wood and other forest products and services**, to be held in Romania in March 2003. It stressed the importance of this theme and hoped a first announcement would be issued as soon as possible. It agreed that an advisory group should be formed to advise the Romanian authorities and the secretariat in preparing the seminar.

30. The **Forest Communicators Network** met in Zvolen, Slovakia in May 2001 to elaborate its work according to the mandate items as cited in the annex of the secretariat note (TIM/2001/8/Add.1). The Committee noted the Team's upcoming participation in the Joint Committee seminar on "Forestry Meets the Public" in October 2001 in Switzerland and the next meeting in Latvia in May 2002 which will focus on training the trainers to develop public relations capacity, especially in central and eastern European countries. The Committee requested the Team to become part of the advisory group for the seminar on promoting sustainable uses of forest products and services in Romania in 2003. Furthermore, the Committee requested the leaders of the FCN and the Team of Specialists on Forest Resource Assessment to meet to discuss work of mutual interest.

31. Unfortunately, the Joint Timber Committee and European Forestry Commission **Study Tour**, scheduled to be held in Poland in September 2001 had been cancelled for lack of participants. The Committee welcomed the invitation from Germany to a study tour in Spring 2002. The themes could be on privatisation of forestland and building manufacturing capacity in the new federal states. Portugal stated its willingness to organize a tour in 2003, and other

countries were invited to consider hosting future tours. The Committee urged better publicity for future tours, consideration of durations of less than a week and entrusted the bureaux to suggest another term as a substitute to “study tours”.

32. The Timber Committee was informed about the activities on the **Forest Resources Assessment**, and endorsed the TBFRA follow-up work, including the report “*TBFRA-2000 Use and Policy Implications Survey*” and the outcome of the meeting of the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Resources Assessment held in Victoria (British Columbia, Canada) in June 2001. The representative of Poland offered to host the next meeting of the UNECE Team on FRA in Poland in May 2002.

33. The Committee commended (as an example of the excellent cooperation with the MCPFE) the **workshop on “Forests and Forestry in Central and Eastern European Countries – the Transition Process and Challenges Ahead”**, which was held in Poland in conjunction with the meeting of the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists to monitor and develop assistance to countries of central and eastern Europe in transition. The workshop had reviewed progress and identified major issues, which could be used in the preparation of the Vienna Ministerial Conference.

34. The Committee took note of the successful **international workshop on the “Changing Role of State Forests”** held in Salzburg (Austria) in July 2001, and hosted by the Austrian Federal Forest Corporation *Österreichische Bundesforste AG* (ÖBf AG). This event was the second in a series of workshops on the theme, and was very well received by participants many of whom were from the business sector. The representative of Ireland offered to host the next workshop, possibly with the title “*Future Development of the State Forest Sector*” to be organised by “*Coillte Teoranta*” in September 2002. The invitation was accepted with gratitude.

35. The Committee was informed that the secretariat would prepare a “self-evaluation “ of the subprogramme, providing objective evidence of the subprogramme’s impact and conformity with clients’ needs according to guidelines prepared by the UN Office of Internal Oversight services (OIOS). It agreed that the core of the self-evaluation should be a report on the strategic review process, along with the user surveys for the *Timber Bulletin* and the TBFRA. The bureaux should review the draft of the self-evaluation.

36. The Committee urged countries to consider whether they can contribute resources to the implementation of the integrated programme, either financial or in kind. Countries wishing to contribute to the implementation of the programme were invited to get in contact with the secretariat to discuss modalities: loan of experts or junior professionals, access to research or other funding, contribution to trust funds, payment of travel for participants to workshops, etc. It agreed that the secretariat should devote more time to fund-raising from a variety of sources.

37. The Committee thanked all those countries which had contributed to the work in the past year, through hosting meetings, seminars or workshops, or by providing support to the secretariat team through contributing funds, loan of experts, interns or in other ways.

Election of officers (Item 9)

38. The Committee re-elected Mr. Jeff Serveau (Canada), Chairman, and Mr. Gheorghe Florian Borlea (Romania) and Mrs. Astrid Bergquist (Sweden), Vice-Chairmen.

Any other business (Item 10)

39. The Committee expressed regret that as a consequence of the attacks of September 11, the full United States delegation was unable to participate at its session.

40. The Committee considered it unacceptable that the session documents, submitted before the agreed date at end July, had not been available in French and Russian until just before the session, seriously disadvantaging French and Russian speaking delegates. It regretted that there was a reluctance to translate publications into French and Russian, as it was essential to reach also French and Russian speaking user groups. Finally it noted that, for the first time, only the draft market statement (i.e. not incorporating the corrections of the Drafting Committee) had been translated for formal consideration of the Committee. All these developments reduced the effectiveness and usefulness of the Committee's work. It requested the secretariat to inform the documentation services of its concern and request them to ensure this situation is not repeated.

41. A technical briefing was organized for the intention of delegates, with the theme: European Forest Sector Outlook Studies (EFSOS), progress and methods.

Date and place of next session (Item 11)

42. Provided that conference services are available, the week of 24-27 September 2002 has been provisionally reserved for the sixtieth session of the Committee. The meeting of the bureaux, in May 2002, was invited to include in the provisional agenda of the Committee's sixtieth session special activities to mark this anniversary.

43. The Committee's sister body, the European Forestry Commission will hold its thirty-first session from 4 to 8 November 2002 in Barcelona, Spain.

Adoption of the report (Item 12)

44. The Committee adopted the present report of its fifty-ninth session.

ANNEX I

UNECE TIMBER COMMITTEE AND FAO EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF WORK, 2001-2004

Set out below is the integrated programme of work of the Committee and the Commission for the period 2001 to 2004. Its implementation is overseen by the two bodies and their subsidiary bodies at their regular meetings, which take place on the following schedule:

- The Timber Committee meets annually;
- The European Forestry Commission (EFC) meets every two years (2002, 2004, etc.);
- The Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training meets every two years (2002, 2004 etc.);
- The Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics meets every year.

The integrated programme contains five continuing work areas. In each of these, some programme elements are of a continuing nature, while others have a fixed duration and will be replaced periodically by work on other topics.

* * *

Work Area 1: MARKETS AND STATISTICS

Objective: Collect, analyse and disseminate information on forest products markets and forest fires in cooperation with partners in international organizations and countries. Provide fora for discussion of forest products marketing, especially in countries in transition, and on market developments and disseminate current, neutral information in order to support sustainable development in the forest products sector.

Guidance: Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics

Programme elements:

- 1.1 Statistics on production, trade and prices of forest products
- 1.2 Analysis of markets for forest products
- 1.3 Capacity building for forest products marketing in countries in transition
- 1.4 Monitoring of markets for certified forest products
- 1.5 Statistics on forest fires
- 1.6 Information network, activities of team of specialists

Work Area 2: FOREST RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Objective: Collect and make available the best possible data on the forests of the industrialised countries (ECE region, plus Australia, New Zealand and Japan). All activities will be carried out in close cooperation with the FAO global forest resource assessment programme (Global FRA).

Guidance: Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics

Programme elements:

- 2.1 Collection and validation of data on forest resources, including methodological development
- 2.2 Main regional reports
- 2.3 Indicators of sustainable forest management: improve concepts, supply data
- 2.4 Contribution to global FRA
- 2.5 Country profiles of countries in transition
- 2.6 Special studies (biodiversity, forest condition, carbon flows etc.)
- 2.7 Information network, work area administration

Work Area 3: EUROPEAN FOREST SECTOR OUTLOOK STUDIES

Objective: Analyse the developments and outlook for the forest and forest industry sector, considering challenges and uncertainties of varying policies, market developments and the influence of exogenous factors. This should encompass all main kinds of forestry land use and all stages of forest product use, from the forest to the final consumer. The aim is to assist policy formulation and investment decision-making. The main target groups of EFSOS are policy makers, entrepreneurs, the academic community of the forest and forest products sector and the public.

Guidance: Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics

Programme elements:

- 3.1 Outlook for European forest products markets
- 3.2 Outlook for European forest resources
- 3.3 Analysis of long-term historical driving forces
- 3.4 Case studies for countries in transition
- 3.5 Policy scenarios
- 3.6 Information network, public relations of EFSOS, fund raising

Work Area 4: TECHNOLOGY, MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING

Objective: The Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training assists countries, in particular those which its parent bodies may identify at any time as requiring priority attention, to develop their forestry activities in the context of sustainable development. This is achieved by fostering international cooperation on technical, economic and organizational

aspects of forest management and forest working techniques and of the training of forest workers in logging and forest operations.

Guidance: Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training

Programme elements:

Note: many activities of the Joint Committee are not restricted to one work element but cut across all three topics. Harvesting, for instance, takes also into account silvicultural and environmental considerations as well as aspects of occupational safety and health. The Joint Committee co-operates with other organisations, e.g. IUFRO, whenever possible.

- 4.1 Forest technology (forest roads, harvesting and transport of wood raw material)
- 4.2 Forest management (multiple use forestry, preparation and implementation of forest management plans, information systems, silvicultural operations, forest fire prevention and control)
- 4.3 Training of forest workers (vocational training in forestry, applied ergonomics, occupational safety and health)
- 4.4 Steering Committee, work area administration

Work Area 5: POLICY AND CROSS-SECTORAL ISSUES

Objective: Monitor developments in policies and forest sector institutions, and carry out policy analysis of topics identified as important. To contribute as appropriate to the regional and global dialogue on sustainable development of the sector. Particular attention will be paid to issues of importance to countries in transition.

Guidance: Timber Committee and European Forestry Commission

Programme elements:

- 5.1 Contribution to and co-ordination of activities with the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe
- 5.2 Contribution to global dialogue on forests through regional bodies such as the EFC and the MCPFE.
- 5.3 Monitoring changes in policies and institutions
- 5.4 Monitoring forestry assistance to countries in transition (monitoring of activities under resolution H3)
- 5.5 Trade and environment issues relevant to the forestry and forest products sector
- 5.6 Policy analysis
- 5.7 Forest Communicators Network
- 5.8 Promoting sustainable use of wood and other forest products and services
- 5.9 Policy issues in countries in transition, including capacity building

ANNEX II

**PROVISIONAL LIST OF MEETINGS IN 2002 AND 2003 FALLING WITHIN
THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE TIMBER COMMITTEE AND
THE EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Note: The meetings are sub-divided into two categories: meetings marked (A) are open to delegates or approved representatives from all member countries of ECE as well as from other countries that are members of the United Nations and organizations accredited to ECE (or to FAO and ILO, in the case of meetings co-sponsored by them). Meetings marked (B) are those restricted to the countries or individuals nominated by their countries to take part in the activity concerned, e.g. a team of specialists.

2002

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Title</u>
4-7 March	Geneva	Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, 24th session (A)
Spring (to be decided)	Germany	Joint ECE Timber Committee, FAO European Forestry Commission study tour (A)
6-10 May	Riga, Latvia	Meeting of the ECE/FAO Forest Communicators Network (B)
7-8 May	Geneva	Meeting of the Timber Committee office holders and the EFC Executive Committee (B)
May (to be decided)	Poland	Meeting of the team of specialists on forest resource assessment (B)
3-7 June	Brussels, Belgium	Seminar on partnerships in forestry (A)
11-13 September	Ireland	Workshop on future development of the state forest sector (A)
12-14 September	Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland	Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, 24th session (A)
15-19 September	Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland	Seminar on afforestation in the context of sustainable forest management (A)
23-25 September	Geneva	Meeting of the ECE/FAO team of specialists on forest products markets and marketing (B)
24-27 September	Geneva	ECE TIMBER COMMITTEE, sixtieth session (A)
21-25 October	Sochi, Russian Federation	Seminar on multi-functional forestry in protected and vulnerable areas (A)
4-8 November	Barcelona, Spain	FAO European Forestry Commission, thirty-first session (A)

At the Committee's website (<http://unece.org/trade/timber>) an up-to-date calendar of meetings, can be consulted.

2003

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Title</u>
March (to be decided)	Geneva	Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, 25th session (A)
March (to be decided)	Romania	Seminar on strategies to stimulate and promote the sound use of wood and other forest based products as environmentally friendly and renewable materials (A)
April (to be decided)	Antalya, Turkey	Seminar on forest fire (A)
May (to be decided)	Geneva	Meeting of the Timber Committee office holders and the EFC Executive Committee (B)
September (to be decided)	Geneva	ECE TIMBER COMMITTEE, 61st session (A)
(to be decided)	(to be decided)	Steering Committee of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, 16th session (B)
(to be decided)	Portugal	Joint ECE Timber Committee, FAO European Forestry Commission study tour (A)
(to be decided)	Slovakia	Seminar on close to nature forestry (A)
(to be decided)	Sweden (to be determined)	Seminar on biodiversity from concept to practice (A)
