

**SEMINAR ON**  
**THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FORESTRY SECTOR IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA**  
**REPORT**

**Introduction**

1. The Seminar on “**Women in forestry**” was held in Viseu from 2 to 6 April 2001 at the invitation of the Government of Portugal and under the auspices of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training in cooperation with the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO). Participants from the following countries attended the seminar: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States. The following organization was represented: IUFRO.

**Opening of the seminar**

2. The objectives of the seminar were outlined by Mr. Poschen on behalf of the secretariat. He recalled that political will had been building to enhance the participation of women in the forestry sector. This was evident for example in Resolution L1 of the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe in which signatory states vowed to create equal opportunities for women in employment, income, training and careers. The seminar was expected to analyse the current status, the obstacles and opportunities for women in the forestry sector. It was hoped that the seminar would be able to point out what change was desirable and most importantly, to recommend strategies capable of bringing about that change.

3. On behalf of the Municipality of Viseu, Dr. J. Barreiros Morreira, Council member, welcomed the participants to the region which was the geographical heart and one of the most forested areas of Portugal. The region had taken an active interest in the role of women in forestry and was looking forward to the outcome of the seminar for additional ideas.

4. Ms. M. T. Alves da Silva, Deputy Director, welcomed the participants on behalf of the General Directorate of Forests. Portugal is today a country with a high forest cover and with a positive trade balance of forest products, mainly coming from private forests. The long history of mostly male emigration from Portugal has given women a particular role in the work place. In the Directorate for example, around 60 per cent of the forest engineers are women. They occupy 40 per cent of the managerial positions. Women are equally important in field forestry and they participate even in activities usually dominated by men such as fire guarding and fighting.

5. Dr. C. Cosgrove-Sacks, Director of the UN-ECE Trade Division in Geneva, thanked the host country and the organizers for bringing up a very important and ground-breaking theme. Women play a major role in the workforce today and they are represented in major economic sectors. She underlined that formal commitments with respect to equal opportunity and treatment of women needed to translate into practical action. The Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee played an important role in that respect for sustainable forest management in general and the social aspects of it in particular. The seminar would certainly contribute by establishing a network of contacts, by identifying areas for intergovernmental cooperation and by filling information gaps. The biggest challenge, however, was to reach men, who still dominate in positions where decisions are made.

6. Mr. H. Höfle (Germany), Chairman of the Joint Committee, placed the seminar within the context of the Committee's programme of work spanning the three subject areas of (i) forest management and silviculture, (ii) forest harvesting and operations, and (iii) training and work safety. The Committee has a long standing commitment to a holistic concept of sustainable forest management. Over the last five years it has emphasized the social aspects of sustainability. The Committee provides a platform and facilitates exchange and cooperation between forest policy makers, administrators, owners, forest managers, researchers and trainers in Europe and North America. Since 1990 particular attention has been paid to the needs of countries in transition. Mr. Höfle also seized the opportunity to thank the Portuguese organizers for hosting the seminar in Viseu and the Steering Committee meeting in Lisbon, 30-31 March.

7. Ms. M. Furuberg Gjedtjernet, member of the IUFRO board, welcomed the initiative of hosting a seminar on gender issues in forestry. IUFRO has included gender research as a new topic in August 2000 by creating a new research group. This group has the mandate to study how the use and management of forests affect and are affected by gender, to raise gender awareness in general forestry research, to arrange international seminars and to cooperate with other international organizations such as CIFOR, FAO and ILO.

#### **Election of officers (item 1 of the agenda)**

8. Ms. Conceição Ferreira was elected Chair of the meeting and the following discussion leaders were appointed:

Item 4	Ms. Bronwen Beedle (Canada)
Item 5	Ms. Astrid Bergquist (Sweden)

#### **Adoption of the agenda (Item 2)**

9. The provisional agenda, as set out in TIM/EFC/WP.1/SEM.50/1/Add.1 was adopted.

#### **General introduction (Item 3)**

10. By way of a general introduction Ms. Ana Maria de Sa Almeida and Ms. Branca Franqueira (Portugal) presented the results of a survey of "Women's attitudes towards forests in southern Portugal". In the discussion, the authors pointed out that the study was indeed a pioneering effort and further support was needed in order to fill the numerous knowledge gaps in this field. These include the share of female forest ownership. Since woodlots are often part of agricultural holdings, no data are available. Inheritance patterns vary and depend on the individual family. It was suggested that similar studies should also be carried out in other countries preferably using standardized methods and parameters.

#### **Exploring the situation of women in the forestry sector: status, obstacles and opportunities (Item 4)**

11. The following papers were presented under this item:

Ms. P. Tomlin and Ms. K. Burt (United Kingdom) on "Professional women foresters in the British forestry industry";

Ms. Vilija Augutaviciene (Lithuania) on "Women in Lithuanian forestry - present day and opportunities";

Ms. C.-L. Suter Thalmann (Switzerland) on "Where do women stand in Swiss forestry?"

Ms. D. Staal Wästerlund & Ms. G. Lidestav (Sweden) on "Women's professional development in the forestry sector in Sweden";

Ms. Damianova and Ms. Y. Takeva (Bulgaria) on "The conditions for women in Bulgarian forestry";

Ms. L.-M. Strupstad (Norway) on "Norwegian government policy is to encourage the active participation and employment of women";

Ms. R.M. Braga Neves (Portugal) on “Women and the forestry sector in the Setubal district”;  
Ms. J. Galvez-Diaz (Chile) on “Women’s participation in activities in the forestry sector”;  
Ms. M. Karmann (Germany) on “Employment structure and job satisfaction of female and male forest workers in East and West Germany”, paper co-authored with Mr. S. Lewark & Ms. V. Gröger-Hoffmann;  
Mr. Luloff (United States) on “Forest stewardship in Pennsylvania: Are environmental concerns gendered?”, a paper co-authored with Ms. J. Melbey, Ms. S.Vargas and Mr J.C. Finley.

12. In response to the question about how they make the ‘business case’ for women, Ms. Tomlins pointed to creativity, the ability to bring a different angle to problem solving and inter-personal skills. To convince managers, these needed to be translated into economic terms, demonstrating tangible benefits, but that required further research. Ms. Burt supplemented the presentation by saying that the Forestry Commission had rather favourable rates of female participation compared to other forestry employers, except for senior management positions. The Commission had launched leadership events targeted at women, but also at other groups such as ethnic minorities. Change was going to take time and there was much potential in long-term endeavours such as educational programmes for school children. Ms. Augutavičienė also noted that from an educational perspective, future prospects looked good in Lithuania as university intake of female forestry students had increased sharply in recent years.

13. Following the presentation of Ms. Suter-Thalmann, it was observed that women in the workplace had adopted a strategy of wearing gender neutral clothing in order to be perceived as professionals. Networks of women would be useful, also as a way of overcoming the sense of competition between them.

14. Ms. Staal Wästerlund could clearly see a significant rise in female participation in universities in Sweden but in vocational training and in industry there was no significant change. The problem many women face in the workplace is that their competence and skills are not recognized and utilized. A participant commented that in Finland professional female foresters on average earned 10 % less than their male counterparts. They did not complain, however, as they compared themselves with other female dominated profession rather than their male colleagues. According to Ms. Wästerlund, salaries were equal in Swedish universities and according to trade unions also in industry. Differences had, however, been found and corrected found in the Forest Service. A way of improving information to the public was to use women with forestry education and to let them visit schools, according to Ms. Strupstad. She also underlined the importance of parents informing their children.

15. Following a question about future opportunities for women in German forestry, Ms. M. Karmann mentioned both an interest and a possibility for women in the mechanized harvesting sector. The traditional jobs in silviculture were disappearing because of close-to-nature forestry. Ms. J. Galvez-Diaz observed that in Chilean forestry large-scale ownerships and mechanization provided few opportunities for women. A minimum wage existed, but enterprises could largely dictate wages.

16. Ms. R.M. Braga Neves underlined that many female forest owners in Portugal are confronted with having a main occupation besides the work that has to be carried out on the forest holdings and farm land. Salaried workers are often hired to take care of temporary peaks in workload. Literacy can be a problem that has to be tackled and the state, in cooperation with associations, is offering different kinds of schooling and other support to deal with this problem.

17. Mr. Luloff pointed out during the discussion that the findings for Pennsylvania could not be extrapolated across the United States due to major differences in ownership patterns. He did feel, however, that there were many preconceived ideas about private forest owners, including the notion that their interests were different from those of the local communities. He reiterated that private landowners in Pennsylvania were predominantly urban rather than rural, their forests were not typically part of a farm and they were more motivated by environmental concerns than by timber production. Extension services were available in every county in the United States, though not necessarily through a forester. Large

forest holdings tended to get most attention. Asked about the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Mr. Luloff felt that it was unlikely to have much of an impact on small private landowners. It was, however, too early for a definite answer. The biggest environmental concern among women was about toxic and hazardous waste, which was a major problem in Pennsylvania but also nationally.

### **Strategies to promote equality of opportunity in employment, income and careers (Item 5)**

18. The following papers were presented under this item:

Ms. C. Cosgrove-Sacks (UNECE) on “Women and enterprise development in transition economies”;  
Ms. M. Furuberg Gjedtjernet (Norway) on “Women and politics in Norway”;  
Ms. M.A. Lince (Portugal) on “Strategies to promote equality of opportunity in employment, income and careers”;  
Ms. S. Grilo (Portugal) on “Women’s role in the new forestry use”;  
Ms. E. Teske and B. Beedle (Canada) on “Journey to the top - Breaking the canopy Canadian experiences”;  
Ms. S. Greiner (Germany) on “Forestry needs women - Ensuring the ability to communicate”;  
Ms. S. Frohm (Sweden) on “How do we meet women in forestry? Experiences of the Swedish forest administration on extension services to female forest owners”, a paper co-authored with Ms. L. Holmgren & Mr. R. Andersson;  
Mr. D.P. Richards (United States) presenting a paper authored by Ms. S. Smith on “Women in the forestry industry - US perspective”;  
Ms. G. Lidestav (Sweden) on “Developing a female forest owner tradition with a ‘Dutch party approach’”, a paper co-authored with Mr. S. Lundell (Sweden);  
Ms. G. Törnquist Hedström, Ms. L. Uggle & Ms. B. Björke (Sweden) on “Black Woodpecker - The Swedish Women Forest Owner Association”.

19. With regard to Ms. Cosgrove-Sacks’ paper, participants observed in the discussion, that structural change towards bigger enterprises meant that it was getting more difficult to start new businesses in the forest industries. The speaker agreed that this raised a problem, but pointed out that it was often associated with outsourcing of certain functions which created new opportunities. Experience in Canada showed that small forest-based businesses were often started including by women, but that only one in ten businesses proved economically viable after two years of operation. Participants from Norway observed that firms owned by women are usually smaller than those belonging to men. They needed the same entitlement to risk taking including bankruptcy as men. In response to a comment from a Swedish participant about the importance of forest ownership as a base for business start ups for women, Ms. Cosgrove-Sacks expressed concern about the viability of the small size of woodlots being restituted in many countries in transition. There was probably a need for consolidation.

20. Asked about the position of trade unions regarding the inequalities in remuneration observed in Portugal, Ms. Lince responded that there were legal guarantees of equal pay for equal work and that trade unions were active to see these enforced. Questioned about possible ways to address the persistent under-representation of women in the private sector, Mr. Furuberg explained that a law was under discussion in Norway and that role models were important. Quotas for women meet with scepticism in some countries. It was suggested that in politics women tended to be coopted by political parties and where they succeeded in attaining positions they were subjected to far more scrutiny than men. In Norway some groups of women want to be appointed to boards based on their merits and refuse to join because of a quota for women. Ms. Furuberg stated she had shared these reservations initially, but was now convinced that quotas helped to break the ice. They encouraged women to become active and provided the opportunity to prove themselves. Representatives of the Swedish forest owners commented that they had begun to use the economic clout of women who owned one third of the private forests in Sweden as a lever in discussions with the forest industry.

21. Mentorship was the most appreciated factor for women in their career planning and the Canadian example with mentorship was based on a purely voluntary initiative. Despite the progress in the forestry sector the recent 15 years, Canadian women in science and engineering tend to be more organized in different mentorship programmes according to Ms. Beedle. On the question if women adopted a typical male behaviour by more risk-taking, Ms. Teske replied that, based on the results in their study, they could not consider risk-taking as a specific male character.

### **Working group discussions**

22. Four parallel working groups were established to discuss item 4 “Exploring the situation of women in the forestry sector: status, obstacles and opportunities”, and item 5 “Strategies to promote equality of opportunity in employment, income and careers”.

23. The findings of the groups were presented and discussed in two plenary sessions. The findings have been incorporated into the conclusions and recommendations of this report.

### **Strategies to promote adequate participation of women in decision making (Item 6)**

24. The following papers were presented under this item:

Ms. M. Pereira (Portugal) presented the highlights of the report on “Public participation in forestry” prepared by the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee Team of specialists on Participation; and Ms. H. Yaffe (Israel) on “Women in Israelian forestation - Past, present and future”.

25. In the discussion of her paper, Ms. Pereira underlined that the team of specialists had considered public participation a good opportunity for active involvement of women in forestry, but did not consider them a separate group.

### **Poster session and other contributions**

26. The seminar programme included a poster session. Summaries of the posters presented and other documents contributed to the seminar are included in the proceedings.

### **Conclusions and recommendations (Item 7) (as approved by the seminar)**

#### ***Conclusions***

27. A detailed analysis of the status of women in forestry is difficult because of the paucity of data on the subject. Statistics about the forestry workforce are hard to obtain in many countries and tend to be incomplete and unreliable. When it comes to the participation of women in the forestry sector and the roles they play, information is virtually non-existent, except in Northern Europe.

28. Even though women are invisible in most forestry statistics, some general trends can be identified: forestry continues to be a ‘men’s world’, in spite of the progress towards more participation of women that has been made over the last ten to fifteen years, major gender imbalances persist. The nature of these imbalances varies between countries. Portugal, for example, has a high share of women in professional and managerial positions in the forest service, but there is little recognition of female forest owners. In Sweden by contrast, the proportion of female forest owners has risen rapidly over the last 20 years and

now exceeds one third of the privately owned forest, while the share of women in the workforce is rather low.

29. The only group in the forestry sector in which the share of women has probably stagnated or even declined are forest workers. This is partly a result of changes in silviculture towards close-to-nature forestry. The biggest fall has, however, been caused by the transition to market economies in central and eastern Europe where women previously accounted for a substantial share of the workforce. Women are still strongly under-represented in management and decision-making.

30. Legislation usually requires equality of opportunity and of treatment in employment. Even so, women tend to earn less than men of similar qualification because they tend to be in lower wage and salary categories. There are also cases of inequality between men and women doing comparable work. The latter is an infringement on legislation requiring equality of treatment.

31. The status of women in forestry in the various member countries is closely correlated to that of women in the irrespective societies at large. It is influenced to a large extent by the same cultural, social and historical factors that act as barriers or favour the participation of women in politics and in the labour market in general. Such generic factors include value systems and perceptions of male and female roles, legislation and traditions concerning inheritance, as well as legislation and infrastructure that help to reconcile work with maternity and family responsibilities.

32. It has increasingly been recognized that forestry is not about trees and forests but also about people. Forestry therefore needs both men and women. Awareness of this fact and of the contributions women could and should make to forestry is still very low among male foresters and decision makers, as illustrated by the disappointingly poor representation of men at the seminar. The almost total disregard for women is a serious handicap for the forestry sector. Women will be needed in the workforce, for forestry to contribute to rural development and in order to retain the industry's license to operate.

33. The forest sector is encountering growing recruitment problems already in a number of countries where it is regarded as a stagnating sector with a declining workforce that holds little promise for young job seekers. Shortages of skilled labour are likely to become more acute in the future because of demographic trends throughout Europe and North America. This may be buffered to some extent by a growing labour market participation of women. Moreover, there is reason to believe that women do more than just fill vacant positions. They bring a set of skills and attitudes to the sector that is different from those of men, such as a good ability to communicate, to work in teams, to resolve conflicts and to tackle problems in unconventional ways. While research is needed to quantify such benefits, there is clearly a business case for women.

34. In Europe and North America where political decisions about forestry are increasingly determined by urban populations with little factual knowledge of forestry, the sector is still beset by a negative image as an extractive industry. Women as members of the public could be strong allies for the forestry sector, if it effectively communicated its role as a steward of forests managed for a wide range of values, including, but not limited to, timber. Public participation is a promising tool for two-way communication which women should be encouraged to use.

35. There is scope for increasing the share of women in forestry, but it varies between countries as a function of the participation rates already achieved, of the degree to which the general social and

economic environment is favourable towards equal opportunity and of the size and development of the forestry sector. New or hitherto underutilised opportunities exist in the areas of small business development and self-employment in professional services.

36. Past experience strongly suggests that a fuller integration of women into forestry will not happen spontaneously. It will require changes in the general conditions affecting women's ability and willingness to work or become active in forestry in other ways as well as positive and deliberate steps and efforts by the forestry sector to attract women. Even if pursued actively, these changes will take time.

37. Programmes specifically designed to promote equal opportunity and to increase the participation of women have been working in a number of countries and organizations. They can only be effective, however, if there is a sufficient number of women with relevant qualifications. There has been little effort to increase the share of women in areas of education related to forestry and the proportion of female graduates continues to be low in many countries.

38. The motivation of women for entering the forestry sector varies between countries and also between occupations. For female workers, particularly in rural areas of southern and eastern Europe, the need to contribute to the income of the household is of paramount importance. For professionals, there is a strong expectation of self-fulfilment in addition to the income motive. This will become even more pronounced as living standards continue to rise. The prospects of contributing to environmental stewardship and of a career in forestry will be important to meet these expectations. For the individual woman, her case rests on her credentials. Motivation, along with qualification, continuous education and a willingness to meet challenges, is the key to success in her career.

39. Procedures for selection and promotion are often seen as not transparent and controlled by men with a negative predisposition towards women, particularly for senior positions. In forestry, like in other sectors, networks among women have proven extremely valuable in some countries in overcoming barriers to entry. In some countries, mentoring has greatly facilitated the 'ascend into the canopy'. Mentoring provides guidance and advice via coaching, counselling or tutoring for a specific individual towards the attainment of a goal, usually career progression. Mentoring is widely used in other sectors and extensive information on the subject is available on the Internet.

40. Informal and formal networks of women in forestry have been in existence for 15-20 years in a number of countries and have provided invaluable support through the possibility to exchange experiences with women facing similar problems, through providing information and through advocacy. Female forest owners have responded enthusiastically to extension programmes specifically targeted at them and tailored to their needs.

41. Where women have been able to overcome the numerous hurdles to entry and ascend, they have proven that the widely held views about their ability to perform certain jobs are preconceived ideas. This is true for field level jobs including forest harvesting and even more so for technical and managerial functions. Promising strategies to promote the participation of women can be derived from the experience gained. At the minimum, they should involve:

- \$ improved information, visibility, awareness and opportunities for interaction;
- \$ access to education and training; and
- \$ an enabling environment in society and at the workplace.

### ***Recommendations addressed to the Joint Committee***

42. The Joint Committee should play an active role in advocacy and remind countries of their obligation to promote equality of opportunity between men and women among others under the ILO Declaration adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1998 and under Resolution L1 on social aspects of sustainable forest management adopted by the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe in the same year.

43. The Committee should promote national networks of women in forestry and support the World Wide Women in Forestry Network which has been established within IUFRO for all female foresters.

44. The Committee should:

- § collect data and launch case studies into specific aspects of women's involvement in forestry;
- § disseminate information about national experiences, in particular successful measures and good practices;
- § develop criteria and indicators to reflect gender aspects in sustainable forest management in connection with the Pan-European and Montreal processes;
- § incorporate gender aspects as a cross-cutting theme in its other items of its work programme; and
- § help to raise funds for gender related research and development work.

The Forestry Workforce Network under ILO and the Joint Committee is one of the suitable channels for collecting and disseminating such information as it reaches a cross-section of both men and women in public and private forestry. In order to adequately support this work, the Committee should explore the possibility of creating a position for a female forester in the secretariat.

45. A follow up meeting to the seminar in Viseu should be organized in coordination with the series of events on gender research planned by IUFRO. The next seminar should have a gender rather than a women in forestry perspective. It should be used as an opportunity to monitor change in the gender balance and focus on the private sector, including family-owned forests.

### ***Recommendations addressed to member countries***

46. Some member countries have started to collect information about women in forestry or more broadly about gender aspects. This is commendable, but much more is needed for an adequate understanding of the current and potential roles and participation of men and women in forestry. More and better information is not only essential to guide policies and strategies promoting greater equality and participation of women, but also to raise the visibility of women in the sector. This is particularly important in the countries in transition as the ongoing restitution of forest land or compensation to private owners as well as the changes in the forestry labour market have significant impacts on women.

47. A better understanding of the situation and of trends will also be instrumental in raising awareness about opportunities and barriers and in changing attitudes based on stereotypes and preconceived ideas. Awareness of gender aspects is particularly lacking in the forest industry. Efforts to redress this should not be limited to their activities in Europe and North America, but also extend to their operations in the Southern hemisphere.



48. Access for women to forest-related information, training and education is fundamental. Efforts should be made early to reach both male and female school children with the message that forestry has a stewardship function and that it welcomes women as employees, owners and users of the forest and generates a positive attitude. Women need to receive information about training and education, dispelling the misconception that forestry, like other branches of science and engineering, is not suitable for women. Emphasis on stewardship and sustainability and the relevance of forestry to society will contribute to a more positive image. The content as well as the delivery of training and extension need to be adapted to the needs and expectations of women, which in many cases are different from those of men. In addition to education and basic training, women, like men, need further training in subjects like communication, leadership, and information technology in order to advance in their careers.

49. One of the most important measures in order to enable women to enter the forestry workforce or to start forest-based businesses is to create a conducive environment in the communities where they live and at their workplaces. This should include measures aiming to help make work and family responsibilities compatible, such as childcare facilities and opportunities for job sharing and part-time work for both men and women.

50. Legislation and programmes to implement positive and deliberate steps towards equality should be put in place and adherence to them monitored. The measures should provide for transparent selection and promotion procedures. In field work, adaptations of working conditions and work methods should be made to reduce the physical workload and to make the jobs more attractive to women.

51. Mentoring at the workplace has proven to be very effective and should be available to provide guidance on career, useful courses and experience to acquire when appropriate. Mentoring can be a formalized process, but it should be voluntary by both participants. To be effective it needs to be specific to each individual's case and should involve regular one-on-one meetings. It should be set up so people identify whether they want to be a mentor or mentoree and be matched where appropriate. A specific time frame should be set, for example one year. Some basic training should be provided, so individuals understand their roles of what mentoring can achieve and what not.

52. The forestry sector should explicitly include a gender dimension in policies and strategies such as the national forestry programmes and encourage the participation of women in all areas. Gender aspects and equality of opportunity should be considered in the certification of forest management.

53. Rural development and small enterprise promotion programmes should target women and contribute to building the capacity to start and successfully run businesses, including access to venture capital. The possibility should be explored to set up an international fund to provide such capital for forest-based business startups by women in countries in transition.

#### ***Recommendations to research institutions and IUFRO***

54. Research is urgently needed to fill the knowledge gaps about gender aspects of sustainable forest management and in forest industries. While most research will have to be undertaken at national level, it should follow comparable protocols to facilitate comparisons between countries and regions, including between those in the Northern and the Southern hemisphere. Research should be interdisciplinary and involve social scientists.

55. Topics to be addressed include:

- \$ the roles of women in forestry, including as forest owners;
- \$ the forms and causes of discrimination at various levels and possible corrective measures;
- \$ a quantification of the 'business case for women';
- \$ ways a gender perspective could be incorporated into forestry statistics and workforce data;
- \$ living and working conditions of women in the forest sector; and
- \$ ergonomic research with a view to reducing the physical effort for men and women and adapting work methods, tools and equipment to female workers.

**Other business (Item 8)**

56. Ms. R. Späth (Germany) informed the meeting of the activities of the IUFRO Research Group "Gender and Forestry". The group had decided to pursue the establishment of a 'World Wide Women in Forestry Network' for which she would serve as coordinator. At this point, they were still collecting contact addresses. Messages concerning the Network may be addressed to: [renate.spaeth@munlv.nrw.de](mailto:renate.spaeth@munlv.nrw.de). Forthcoming events organized by the Group are: a meeting on 'Nordic Women in Forest Research' in Denmark in 2002 and a seminar in Chile in the spring of 2003.

57. As Chairman of the Joint Committee, Mr. Höfle invited participants to contribute to current and forthcoming activities. They include three active teams of specialists and seminars on "Forestry meets the public" in Switzerland in October 2001 and on "Partnerships in Forestry" in Belgium in the spring of 2002. Full information on activities is available on the Joint Committee homepage: [www.unece.org/trade/timber/joint-committee](http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/joint-committee).

58. Study visits took place on Thursday, 5 April. The main observations are summarized in Annex I to this report.

59. The Vice-chairman of the Committee, Mr. V. Korobov (Russian Federation), warmly thanked the organizers on behalf of the Committee and of participants for the generous hospitality and excellent organization. The seminar had fully met everybody's expectations and he was sure the conclusions and recommendations it had just adopted were going to be instrumental in advancing the participation of women in forestry.

## ANNEX I

### Study visits - Thursday, 5 April 2001

The study tour was organized around the theme of women in forestry and in rural development. The morning was dedicated to rural development initiatives run by women around Ventosa, a small village up in the hills west of Viseu.

The first project was “Ventosa Artesanal e Serviços” which is a public interest co-operative supported by the local administration. Its objective is to preserve and revive traditional crafts based on the use of linen as income generating activities for women. The co-operative consists of a group of women producing a variety of textiles through artisanal spinning, weaving and embroidering of linen. The establishment of the co-operative was made possible through financial support provided by the municipality and the European Union (LEADER II). The project is still in its early stages. Training of the members has been completed and a small stock of produce was on display. Marketing was to be launched the following week through participation in a local fair.

An example of female participation in local decision-making is the ‘Assembly of Members of the Adsamó Communal Lands’ which is directed by four women. Most of the communal land is used for agriculture and grazing, but it also includes forests. Part of the forest area is intensively utilized for forestry and the other part for grazing.

A third initiative was the ‘Forest Club’ of the Elementary and Basic School of Vouzela. Started some years ago by one of the teachers, it is mainly attended by young female students learning about forests with a focus on environmental topics. The programme is a mix of classroom teaching, excursions and practical work in a local forest area. One positive effect of the education is that the children also take their knowledge back home to their parents.

The study group was also able to enjoy locally produced jam from wild berries and other fruits. The production of jam is a result of a training workshop promoted by a local development association and financed by the Portuguese Institute for Employment and Training. Following the training a group of women formed a small enterprise to produce and market jam made according to traditional recipes. The main challenge in marketing is to convince people about the advantages of natural products. Lunch was served at the Luciana restaurant specialising in local cuisine and produce. It is managed by a woman and has been financially supported by the LEADER II programme through the local development association (ADDLAP).

In the afternoon the ‘Assembly of Members of the Sejaes Communal Lands’ gave a generous reception in their forest and informed about their activities. Managed by a woman, the association is very active in forestry, particularly in silviculture and fire fighting. The dominant species in the area are pines (*P. palustris*) and eucalyptus and the income derived from forestry plays an important role in the community. The Assembly’s target groups are mainly small farmers and it is therefore also supported by the European Union. Fire prevention and fire fighting activities were demonstrated in practice. Forest fire prevention includes surveillance, clearing of undergrowth and maintenance of the forests. Undergrowth is removed with brush cutters, chainsaws and knives. For firefighting, a fire-extinguisher mounted on a four-wheel drive car was also demonstrated. Even though fire fighting is normally a male-dominated area, the fire prevention and fighting squads at Sejaes Communal Land had a relatively high proportion of women and could serve as an encouraging example.

## ANNEX II

### Evaluation of the seminar

*Based on 15 questionnaires (figures in brackets indicate no of people expressing the same opinion)*

**1) Average from 0 to 5**

Format & Organization of the seminar	3.9
Did the seminar meet your objectives	3.8
Quality of presentations	3.7
Quality of discussions	3.5
Working group	3.4
Field excursions	3.6

**Overall quality 4.1**

**2) What aspects of the seminar did you like the best?**

The working groups and “action-oriented” discussions, e.g. concerning “how to change and improve the conditions for women in forestry”(5). The exchange of information, problems and ideas from a number of countries in Europe and North America(3). To discover that I’m not alone in the male forest world. Putting our problems in an international context. Canadian presentation and the fire control demonstration and meeting with the local community members. Working group efficiency. Conclusions and recommendations. The low number of men, because this was a new experience in international forestry circles, at least as a first meeting it was ok. The qualitative research and the sociological side of the studies/presentations.

**3) What improvements would you suggest?**

I missed further information about the forestry-programme, planted species, technologies etc during the field excursions. Information about practical forestry, species etc, and strategies should also have been included, e.g. during the field trip. Better defined topics for the group work. More stop-overs and more discussions during the field trip. Shorter presentations and more time for discussions and group work. Working groups after profession. Emphasize on scientific research on gender and improve the sociological research on women in forestry.

**4) What percentage of the information presented was new to you?**

Range between 30-80%. Average 47%.

**5) What percentage of the information will you be able to use?**

Range 25-90%. Average 42%.

**6) What follow-up do you suggest should be given to this seminar ?**

A network should finally be established, preferable on internet (4). A follow-up seminar to find out if recommendations have been implemented and if these efforts already have had any consequences (3). A seminar with less presentations and more working groups on focused issues (2). Every country should make a list of what to do until the next seminar (a homework). Exchange of bilateral and multilateral studies.

## **7) Additional comments**

Focus on problems in forestry for countries in transition and stimulate their liaison with developed countries. Presentation of ToS (participation) should have been at the beginning of the seminar together with a few presentations, e.g. one for each European region and North America and a follow-up discussion in working groups. It could have been a more specific topic, e.g. “how can gender mainstreaming be implemented in forestry”. Very good report. Good choice of the conference town, very good location.

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