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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE  
Timber Committee

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION  
European Forestry Commission

**JOINT FAO/UNECE WORKING PARTY ON FOREST ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS**  
Twenty-seventh session

to be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva  
22 – 24 March 2005, starting at 10.00 hrs on Tuesday, 22 March

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

This document presents two matters of relevance to the general activities of the Working Party referred to it by its parent bodies or through the UN system. These are:

- Results of the Strategic Review
- Improving outcomes for “Indicators of achievement” relevant to Working Party

The Working Party is invited to take note of the results of the Strategic Review and to provide guidance on how to achieve the outcomes for the defined indicators.

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\* This document was submitted late for documents processing as clearances from relevant parties were received late.

## Introduction

1. The Working Party is invited to comment on two matters referred to it by its parent bodies, or through the UN system as a whole:

- Results of the strategic review (as it affects the Working Party);
- Evaluation of "Indicators of achievement" relevant to Working Party.

## Results of the Strategic Review affecting the Working Party

2. The detailed results of the strategic review and the complete programme of work can be found in document TIM/2004/7, presented at the October 2004 Joint Session of the Timber Committee and European Forestry Commission. The function of the Working Party is summarised as "meets annually in Geneva to provide guidance to activities in work areas 1, 2 and 3, as well as any other linked activity", confirming its role of acting as an interface between the technical and policy level.

3. Work areas 1 and 2, Markets and Statistics and Forest Resources Assessment, have each been allotted 23% of available staff time (compared to 25% and 17% in previous plan).

4. The strategic review reduced the amount of resources allocated to the work area 3, Outlook Studies (from 11% to 6%) with the conclusion of the current round. The main efforts of the work in this area are now to be directed at distributing the study results, particularly those affecting other sectors, and implementing the recommendations of the study.

5. The former Team of Specialists (ToS) on Forest Resources Assessment has completed its work with a new ToS created to focus on "monitoring forest resources for sustainable forest management in Europe". This team is still in the process of being created but will report to the Working Party next year. The team on Markets and Marketing continues to report to the Working Party, but the EFSOS team was not continued.

6. *The Working Party is invited to take note of the decisions of the parent bodies through the Strategic Review.*

## Indicators of Achievement

7. Pages 4 and 5 of TIM/2004/7 listed the indicators of achievement. As mentioned at last year's Working Party meeting (document TIM/EFC/WP.2/2004/2), these indicators are the means by which the performance of the Timber Branch (the Secretariat) is monitored within the United Nations system. There are six indicators covering the various work areas of the Timber Branch. There are two that fall specifically within the purview of the Working Party:

- 1.2. Percentage of UNECE countries able to provide satisfactory data on indicators of sustainable forest management (SFM) to the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the protection of Forests in Europe. This is defined as the number of countries able to provide data on at least 20 of the 35 quantitative indicators of SFM approved at 2003 ministerial conference, as a percentage of the total number of countries (51).
- 2.2. Percentage of UNECE countries able to provide satisfactory responses to UNECE/FAO/ITTO/Eurostat joint forest sector questionnaire (JFSQ). This is defined as answering at least 80% of the subitem data points requested. Currently there are 209 such data points for each year - countries thus need to provide data for 168 points to reach the 80% level. There are 55 countries in the area for the purposes of this indicator.

8. Background information on how these indicators are calculated and results so far will be posted on the website. The baseline data (2005) and targets for 2007 are as follows:

Indicator	Unit	Baseline	Target
Satisfactory data on SFM	%	35	60
Satisfactory data for JFSQ	%	72	80

9. The secretariat considers these targets to be achievable, with the cooperation of member countries, which are increasingly aware of the importance of satisfactory information to guide policy in the field of sustainable forest management. The steep rise expected for the first indicator is partly artificial as there are many of the 2003 indicators for which data were not requested earlier, and therefore counted as “missing” but which it is likely that many countries will be able to supply.

10. The current strategy gives priority to the following approaches:

- Current respondents for both FRA and JFSQ must be maintained and the quality of their replies should not regress. To this end we maintain frequent communication and seek to fit our data requests to the data availability of the countries currently replying.
- We wish to reduce the number of countries which provide no useful information at all, chiefly by improving our communication with these countries, actively seeking data sources and helping these countries to provide information through capacity building exercises. By focusing our efforts on only one or two countries each year we can successfully identify potential contacts within the country. This approach has resulted, for instance, in improved JFSQ data from Ukraine (in 2003) and Kazakhstan (in 2004). We consider it critical that once such countries are brought into the reporting system they continue to provide at least a minimum level of information each year so we can maintain a dialogue. Such countries are not expected to provide as much data as those which have been supplying data for a number of years.
- We wish to exploit the contact work carried out for FRA 2005 and EFSOS as well as other efforts such as the outlook study for western and central Asia (FOWECA), and technical cooperation activities with countries in transition, to find correspondents and data providers where the forest information infrastructure is limited. We will present this effort not only as our attempt to gather information, but also as bringing these countries further into the international system and giving them a voice in discussions at the intergovernmental level.

***11. The Working Party is invited to comment on the approach outlined above, and to propose improvements.***