



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
General

TIM/2002/4
18 July 2002

Original: English

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

TIMBER COMMITTEE

Sixtieth session

24-27 September 2002

**INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON FORESTS, SUPPORT TO THE GLOBAL AND
REGIONAL PROCESSES**

(Item 5 of the provisional agenda)

Note by the secretariat

The present document reviews the activities undertaken by the Timber Committee and the European Forestry Commission in support to the global and regional forest dialogue. The Committee will be invited to agree in future support to be provided by ECE/FAO.

INTRODUCTION

1. In the mid 1990s, the Timber Committee and the European Forestry Commission decided to give over-riding priority to supporting the international dialogue on forests. This report is the most recent of the annual reports on this topic presented for the Timber Committee's attention and decision.

2. The Committee is invited to take note of the actions undertaken in support of the global and regional forest dialogue and agree on future support to be provided by ECE/FAO.

GLOBAL FOREST DIALOGUE

3. The UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) continues its work. A ministerial level segment at UNFF2 in spring 2002 agreed on a message to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to be held in Johannesburg in August/September 2002. UNFF3 will be held in Geneva in April 2003. UNFF is focussing on implementation, at the national and international levels, of the proposals for action agreed by the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). UNFF and IFF have at several times welcomed regional cooperation in furtherance of their aims, but have not made specific recommendations about regional activities: the link under UNFF between global and regional activities (such as those carried out by ECE/FAO) is not well defined at present.

4. The main approach adopted by ECE/FAO until now has been to try to implement at regional level activities which have the same objectives as those identified at global level by IFF or UNFF. In 1998, the secretariat carried out a systematic survey of the IFF proposals for action, and considered whether the ECE/FAO programme should be adjusted in the light of this review. A number of activities were introduced or strengthened in the light of this review, notably the seminar on strategies to stimulate and promote the sound use of wood as a renewable and environmentally friendly raw material (a direct quotation from the IFF proposals) and on trade and the environment (see TIM/1998/4)

5. A new, less detailed statement of global level political priorities is the paragraph on forests in the Plan of Implementation for the WSSD. Annex I presents this paragraph, with commentaries on how ECE/FAO is implementing these objectives at the regional level.

6. There is a more direct link between the regional and global level through the FAO structure. FAO not only provides a major global policy forum, the Committee on Forests (COFO), but also leads the work of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). The European Forestry Commission, the Timber Committee's sister body, is a subsidiary body of COFO, and ECE/FAO Geneva performs the functions of FAO regional forest officers in other regions. In general FAO's structure and organisation is becoming increasingly decentralised. The global-regional link within FAO essentially takes two forms:

- EFC recommendations and conclusions are put before COFO. In particular EFC, like the other regional forestry commissions is expected to articulate regional policy issues as input to the discussion at COFO. In recent years, the "regional dimension" at COFO has received increasing emphasis;

- Several ECE/FAO activities and outputs are closely integrated with global work and are indeed direct inputs to global totals. This applies in particular to the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire, to the forest resource assessment work and to the outlook studies.
7. In addition ECE/FAO staff maintain close contact with counterparts and are asked to participate on an individual basis to global efforts, such as the *State of the World's Forests* (SOFO), work on definitions etc.
8. Thus it appears that ECE/FAO makes a significant contribution to the global dialogue on forests by:
- Carrying out regional level work along the lines identified as important at the global level; and
 - Contributing to FAO global work, notably COFO, statistics, FRA and outlook studies.
9. However the interface between global and regional work at present is not very clear: in particular it is not clear to what extent UNFF really builds on, or benefits from, regional input.
10. *The Committee may wish to:*
- *Provide guidance to the secretariat on the activities described above to make them as relevant as possible from a global as well as regional perspective;*
 - *Draw the attention of UNFF to the regional level input from ECE/FAO and request it to indicate whether the present arrangements are satisfactory from the UNFF point of view or whether modifications would be desirable.*

FOLLOW-UP TO WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

11. It is, of course, not possible at present to predict the outcome of WSSD. Nevertheless, the “proposed elements for the political declaration of WSSD” at present (mid July) available contain a reference to the regional level. In the draft, the ministers “welcome the emergence of stronger regional groupings and alliances to promote sustainable development and encourage further regional cooperation to promote sustainable development, including through the UN regional commissions.” It is therefore possible that ECE may be called on to play a more pronounced role as regards the promotion of sustainable development in the region. Indeed it has already been decided that the theme of the Commission’s annual session in 2003 will be sustainable development. In view of the Timber Committee’s long experience in sustainable development of the forest/timber sector, as regards monitoring and analysis of the situation, trends and policies, and the holistic approach which characterises its work, it is possible that timber/forest issues would be treated as a case study of a holistic approach to sectoral problems in any work undertaken at the Commission level.

SUPPORT TO THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE (MCPFE)

12. ECE/FAO and MCPFE have been working together ever more closely since the mid 1990s, to mutual benefit. This is natural as both concern intergovernmental cooperation, with very similar geographic scope and the same major objective, the promotion of sustainable forest management in the region.

13. About a third of the items in the MCPFE work programme approved in October 1999 are to be implemented by ECE/FAO: the status of these items is summarised in the annex, which presents the MCPFE programme as agreed with an extra column indicating what actions have been carried out by ECE/FAO. The following remarks are relevant:

- ECE/FAO staff members participated very actively in the revision of the MCPFE indicators of sustainable forest management, both in the four workshops and as a member of the Advisory Group, transmitting the experience of TBFRA, and ensuring that the revised indicators took account of that experience. They will also transmit the ideas generated during the revision process to subsequent FRA work at the regional and global level;
- ECE/FAO staff also participated actively in the preparation of the MCPFE classification of protected and protective forest; the network of TBFRA correspondents is being used to collect and validate the data which will be presented to the Ministerial Conference;
- The Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee team of specialists on participation provided an opportunity to clarify the concepts and principles of participation in European circumstances, for the first time, and made possible a significant improvement in understanding of an area recognised as increasingly central to forest management;
- Several of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee's existing activities, notably but not exclusively in the social field, were recognised as significant inputs to the promotion of SFM at the regional level, as was the work of the Forest Communicators Network (FCN);
- The seminar on women in forestry, also under the auspices of the Joint Committee, was one of the very few examples of mainstreaming the gender issue in the forest sector, despite the priority accorded to these questions by the international community in general;
- The report of the FCN (then known as the PR team) on the competitive climate for wood, and the planned seminar on sound use of wood (Romania, March 2003), represent a contribution to understanding of the downstream part of the sector, which is sometimes lost to view in the discussions of SFM;
- The ECE/FAO team of specialists on countries in transition meets regularly to review developments and was a partner in the organisation of the workshop in Debe, Poland in September 2001, which not only provided an excellent opportunity for exchange of experience but also generated specific recommendations for the attention of MCPFE. The database on assistance to countries in transition has been maintained and developed;
- There has been regular coordination and exchange of information between ECE/FAO and the Vienna Liaison Unit, with mutual participation in meetings etc.

14. There are many ongoing cooperative activities, summarised below:

- **information on recent developments for Europe's forests:** Interim TBFRA data were provided for the Lisbon Conference in 1998. Now an enquiry to the TBFRA correspondents has been set in motion to collect updated information for the key parameters to provide similar information for the Vienna Conference. ECE/FAO is leading the effort with its partners, notably ICP Forest.
- **Policy dialogue at EFC sessions: need for country information:** A regular item on the agenda of the EFC (next meeting, Barcelona, 4-8 November 2002) is a review of recent developments in policy and institutions as well as a dialogue to articulate emerging issues at the regional level, for transmission to COFO. There is also an in-session seminar, this time on the theme of the information needs of the international forest policy dialogue. Normally this item is based on national reports submitted by countries, but it has been agreed, that, in order to minimise the reporting burden on countries, the synthesis prepared by the ECE/FAO secretariat for the EFC session be based on the reports submitted by countries for MCPFE on implementation of the various MCPFE resolutions.
- **Outlook study (EFSOS), policy scenarios and cross-sectoral approaches:** The European Forest Sector Outlook Study, at present being prepared, pays particular attention, in addition to the traditional analysis of the outlook for supply and demand and for the forest resource, to scenarios for policies, both "internal" to the forest sector and "external". It has identified 13 policy scenarios, their likelihood of occurring and their possible impact. It has been proposed that a workshop be organised to present the output of EFSOS to the MCPFE community, and to obtain their reaction to the ideas and conclusions. The Committee and Commission will be informed of the latest developments in this regard and asked to comment.
- **Forests and forestry in central and eastern European countries:** ECE/FAO will prepare a short report on the implementation of resolution H3, referring in particular to the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop in Debe, Poland. The conclusions of the Debe workshop addressed to MCPFE, as well as the EFSOS analysis, show that developments for these countries will be one of the most significant factors for the sector at the regional level over the next decade or so.

15. The Committee is invited to comment on past and proposed future cooperation between ECE/FAO and MCPFE, and provide guidance as necessary.

CONCLUSION

16. Almost all activities in the ECE/FAO integrated programme contribute, directly or indirectly, to supporting the global and regional forest dialogues, within the limits fixed by the mandates of the Committee and Commission and the resources available.

17. *The Committee is invited to take note of these activities and to make recommendations as to how this contribution could be increased.*

Annex 1

Forestry issues in the Draft Plan of Implementation for the WSSD

Set out below are the points concerning forestry in the draft plan and next to them, comments on how ECE/FAO is or could implement activities along the lines laid down in the WSSD preparatory process.

43. [Agreed] Forests and trees cover nearly one third of the Earth's surface. Sustainable forest management of both natural and planted forests and for timber and non-timber products is essential to achieving sustainable development and is a critical means to eradicate poverty, significantly reduce deforestation and halt the loss of forest biodiversity and land and resource degradation, and improve food security and access to safe drinking water and affordable energy, highlights the multiple benefits of both natural and planted forests and trees and contributes to the well-being of the planet and humanity. Achievement of sustainable forest management, nationally and globally, including through partnerships among interested governments and stakeholders, including the private sector, indigenous and local communities and non-governmental organizations, is an essential goal of sustainable development.

The statement in the first line is based on data collected and validated by a process in which ECE/FAO has played a leading part. Some of the aspects mentioned, including biodiversity, energy, multiple benefits, partnerships, and role of the private sector, are already covered in one way or another by ECE/FAO. Poverty and food security issues are covered by analysis of economic viability of forestry. Access to safe drinking water has not so far figured in the programme.

This would include actions at all levels to:

- (a) [Agreed] Enhance political commitment to achieve sustainable forest management by endorsing it as a priority on the international political agenda, taking full account of the linkages between the forest sector and other sectors through integrated approaches;

The integrated approach to cross sectoral issues is at the heart of the EFSOS policy study work, which should help governments understand this complex issue.

- (b) [Agreed] Support the United Nations Forum on Forests, with the assistance of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, as key intergovernmental mechanisms to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of sustainable forest management at the national, regional and global levels thus contributing, *inter alia*, to the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity;

This document sets out how ECE/FAO supports UNFF and CPF work

- (c) [Agreed] Take immediate action on domestic forest law enforcement and illegal international trade in forest products, including in forest biological resources, with the support of the international community, and provide human and institutional capacity-building related to the enforcement of national legislation in those areas;

ECE/FAO has not been active in the field of forest law enforcement

- (d) [Agreed] Take immediate action at national and international levels to promote and facilitate the means to achieve sustainable timber harvesting, and to facilitate the provision of financial resources and transfer and development of environmentally sound technologies, and thereby address unsustainable timber harvesting practices;

The Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee aims to transfer and develop environmentally sound technologies for sustainable timber harvesting through the exchange of information and experience.

- (e) [Agreed] Develop and implement initiatives to address the needs of those parts of the world that currently suffer from poverty and the highest rates of deforestation and where international cooperation would be welcomed by affected Governments;

A few parts of the ECE region, notably in central Asia, suffer from poverty and deforestation. However, ECE/FAO does not seem to have a comparative advantage in providing assistance to these countries' forest sector.

- (f) [Agreed] Create and strengthen partnerships and international cooperation to facilitate: the provision of increased financial resources, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, trade, capacity-building, forest law enforcement and governance at all levels, and integrated land and resource management to implement sustainable forest management, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) proposals for action;

ECE/FAO has many long standing partnership arrangements and organized a seminar on partnerships in Brussels in spring 2002. Trade and capacity building issues are covered by the work in many respects.

- (g) [Agreed] Accelerate implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action by countries and by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, and intensify efforts on reporting to the Forum to contribute to an assessment of progress in 2005;

This document details ECE/FAO cooperation with CPF. It is likely that any international reporting for an assessment of progress, once decided, would involve ECE/FAO in some way, probably through TBFR data

- (h) [Agreed] Recognize and support indigenous and community based forest management systems to ensure their full and effective participation in sustainable forest management;

Community based forest management systems were included in the Joint Committee work on public participation in forest decision making.

- (i) [Agreed] Implement the Convention on Biological Diversity's expanded action-oriented work programme on all types of forest biological diversity in close cooperation with the UNFF, the CPF members and other forest-related processes and conventions with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

Several of the parameters collected by TBFRA serve as indicators of forest biodiversity.

* * *

Annex 2

MCPFE work programme and ECE/FAO actions
(these tables follow the format of the programme, with an extra column for ECE/FAO actions)

Table E2: Work of the MCPFE on Dialogue with Society

	Actions	Actors	Time frame	Status by 10/99	Resolution	ECE/FAO action
<i>Public Relations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaboration of 10 year MCPFE Report 	Liaison Unit Vienna	08/99-04/00	On-going	L1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of strategies and tools to better communicate work of MCPFE 	Liaison Unit Vienna with professional consultancy	2000	Planned	L1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Forestry Communicators Forum 	FAO/ECE Team of Public Relations Specialists in the Forest and Forest Industries Sector	2000	Planned	L1	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> European Forum on Forest and Society 	FAO/ECE Team of Public Relations Specialists in the Forest and Forest Industries Sector	06/2000	Planned	L1	Postponed
<i>Public Participation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification of concept of "participation" and development of a conceptual framework 	FAO/ECE/ILO Team of Specialists on Participation and Partnerships in Forestry	1999 - 2000	In preparation	L1	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision on further work based on report of FAO/ECE/ILO Team of Specialists on Participation and Partnerships in Forestry 	MCPFE	2000	Planned	L1	
<i>Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar on "Public Relations and Environmental Education in Forestry" 	Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training	10/2001	Planned	L1	Implemented (as "Forestry meets the public")

Table E3: Work of the MCPFE on Socio-Economic Issues

	Actions	Actors	Time frame	Status by 10/99	Resolution	ECE/FAO Action
<i>Rural Development</i>						
<i>Rural Development Concept and Forest Policy in Europe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaire: Exploration of issues and approaches 	Liaison Unit Vienna (Elaboration and analysis)	04 – 09/99	Completed	L1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar on the Role of Forests and Forestry in Rural Development 	Universität für Bodenkultur Vienna in co-operation with Liaison Unit Vienna	07/00	In preparation	L1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of possible voluntary guidance tools 	To be determined at 3 rd ELM	2000	Planned	L1	
<i>Contribution of Forests and Forestry to Rural Development in Europe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploration of possible communication and information tools 	Scientific Advisory Group; Participants and Mandate to be determined	2001	Planned	L1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaboration of information tools on the contribution of forestry to rural development 	Scientific Advisory Group; Participants and Mandate to be determined	2001	Planned	L1	
<i>Renewable Resources – Goods & Services</i>						
<i>Valuation of Goods and Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Seminar on Valuation of Forest Goods and Services 	Czech Republic; Co-ordination: Liaison Unit Vienna	2000/2001	Planned	L1	
<i>Certification and Labelling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of Background Report on SFM-Certification Impact Assessment 	Liaison Unit Vienna jointly with European Commission	9/99-02/00	On-going	L1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of Discussion Paper on the Role of Governments in Certification 	Universität für Bodenkultur Vienna	10/99 – 03/00	In preparation	L1	Maintain certification updates (annual)

	Actions	Actors	Time frame	Status by 10/99	Resolution	ECE/FAO Action
<i>Wood and Substitutes in Relation to Other Sectors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication: The Competitive Climate for Wood Products and Paper Packaging 	FAO/ECE Team of Public Relations Specialists in the Forest and Forest Industries Sector	1999	Completed	L1	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar on strategies to stimulate and promote the sound use of wood and other forest based products as environmentally friendly and renewable materials 	Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training	2001	Planned	L1	Scheduled for March 2003, Romania (under parent bodies, not JC)
<i>Training, Education and Gender Aspects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop on "Reducing the impact of forest operations on ecosystems" 	Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, IUFRO	09/99	Completed	L1	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International seminar on "Forestry Education and Science in the Context of Environmental and Development Problems: Strategies for the XXI Century" 	IUFRO	1999	Completed	L1	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop on "New trends in wood harvesting with cable cranes" 	Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training	11-17/06/00	Planned	L1	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop on "Forestry Information Systems 2000" 	Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training	16-20/05/00	Planned	L1	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar on women in forestry 	Portugal; Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training;	03 or 04/01	Planned	L1	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of activities on forestry assistance to CITs, notably further development of H3 Access Database on Assistance Projects 	UN-ECE/FAO		Ongoing	H3	Ongoing (regular team meetings, database maintained)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Workshop to facilitate an exchange of information, experiences and major concerns among countries in transition to market economies	Poland in cooperation with UN-ECE/FAO and the Liaison Unit Vienna	2001	Planned	H3	Implemented with Poland and Liaison Unit
--	---	---	------	---------	----	--

Table E4: Work of the MCPFE on Biodiversity and Conservation

	Actions	Actors	Time frame	Status by 10/99	Resolutions	ECE/FAO action
<i>Biological and Landscape Diversity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad-hoc working group on Biodiversity, Protected Areas and Related Issues 1st session 2nd session 	MCPFE; Organisation and co-ordination Liaison Unit Vienna	11-12/02/99 22-23/06/99	Completed Completed	LGD ¹ , H2	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal on Protected Forest Areas Meeting of Preparatory Group 	Co-ordination Liaison Unit Vienna	20/05/99	Completed	LGD, H2	Participated
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enquiry on protected forest areas Questionnaire, analysis, meeting 	UN-ECE in co-operation with COST E4 and Liaison Unit Vienna	10/99 – 06/00	On-going	LGD, H2	Implemented
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on implementation of WP-CEBLDF Collection of information, compilation 	MCPFE; Co-ordination Liaison Unit Vienna	06/99 – Autumn 2000	On-going	LGD, H2	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of WP-CEBLDF Meeting 	MCPFE; Organisation and co-ordination Liaison Unit Vienna	Autumn 2000	Planned	LGD	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaboration of new Work Programme on Biodiversity 	MCPFE; Co-ordination Liaison Unit Vienna		Planned	LGD, H2	
<i>Climate Change</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaboration of expert review comments on draft IPCC Special Report on Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry 	Liaison Unit Vienna in co-operation with GCC	07/99	Completed	LGD, H4	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaboration of expert review comments on revised version of draft IPCC Special Report on Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry 	Liaison Unit Vienna in co-operation with GCC	11/99	Completed	LGD, H4	

¹ Note: The Lisbon General Declaration (LGD) is not a Resolution. Nevertheless, as the LGD explicitly refers to the Work-Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems 1997-2000 (WP-CEBLDF), it has been considered equally important in Table 4.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Exchange of information: FCCC, IPCC-Kyoto Protocol	MCPFE - Liaison Unit Vienna		On-going	LGD, H4	
--	--	--------------------------------	--	----------	------------	--

Table E5: Work of the MCPFE on Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

	Actions	Actors	<i>Time frame</i>	Status by 10/99	Resolution	ECE/FAO action
<i>National Forest Programmes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of common objectives and actions – Workshop on the role of National Forest Programmes in the Pan-European Context 	MCPFE; Liaison Unit Vienna (Organiser)	14-15 /09/99	Completed	L2, LGD (H1, H2)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaboration of a concept paper for discussion at 3rd ELM 	Liaison Unit Vienna in co-operation with scientific and technical bodies	10/99 – 09/00	Planned	L2, LGD (H1, H2)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further clarification of meanings and dimensions of principles and elements 	MCPFE; Liaison Unit Vienna, scientific and technical bodies	10/00 -	Planned	L2, LGD (H1, H2)	
<i>Criteria and Indicators for SFM</i>						
<i>Improvement of Pan-European Indicators for SFM</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of common objectives and actions - Comments through questionnaires 	MCPFE; Liaison Unit Vienna in consultation with GCC	04/99 – 09/99	Completed	L2 (H1, H2)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of existing indicators under all pan-European criteria 	Liaison Unit Vienna in co-operation with scientific and technical bodies, notably UN-ECE/FAO	11/99 –	Planned	L2 (H1, H2, S1, S2, S4)	Participated
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of improved indicators 	To be determined		Planned	L2 (H1, H2, S1, S2, S4)	Participated
<i>Towards Harmonising Data Collection and Reporting Systems</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploration of possibilities to harmonise forest related data collection and reporting systems in Europe through questionnaires and expert interviews 	Liaison Unit Vienna with consultation of and in collaboration with scientific and technical bodies	10/99 –	Planned	L2 (H1, H2)	
<i>Pan-European Reporting on SFM</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaboration of common reporting format for national reports 	MCPFE; Liaison Unit Vienna in consultation with GCC and ELM and in collaboration with scientific and technical bodies	10/00 –	Planned	L2 (H1, H2)	

