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**PREPARATIONS FOR THE STRATEGIC REVIEW
OF THE INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE TIMBER COMMITTEE
AND THE EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

(Item 8 of the provisional agenda)

Note by the secretariat

This document presents proposals for the principles, timetable and process of the Strategic Review of the Integrated Programme of Work. The Committee is invited to review these, provide suggestions and to authorize the Secretariat to implement them.

BACKGROUND

1. In October 2000, at their joint session, the Committee and its sister body, the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC), decided to carry out a strategic review of the integrated programme of work (IPW) of the two bodies. The review covered objectives, programme elements, priorities, use of resources, methods of work, and was approved in October 2001 (Report of the Timber Committee on its Fifty-Ninth Session, ECE/TIM/97). It was agreed at that time that an in-depth strategic review should be carried out at four year intervals.

2. A number of important events and changes have happened since the first strategic review. These and other events have affected the substance and the means of implementation of the IPW. In view of the forthcoming joint session of the Committee and the EFC in October 2004, the bureaux of the two bodies agreed that the second strategic review should be carried out in 2003/4, so that the results could be endorsed at the joint session (i.e. the interval between reviews on this occasion should be slightly less than initially foreseen four years).

PRINCIPLES

3. The secretariat proposes that the second strategic review, should be:
- Comprehensive, covering all aspects of the work: strategic objectives, list of key work areas, outputs, resources, partnerships, priorities and methods of work.
 - Based on widespread consultation of all countries, partners and stakeholders, and thorough consideration of proposals and suggestions by the extended Bureaux, although the final decision will be with the Committee and the Commission.
 - Carried out in a transparent way, for example by posting stakeholder comments, suggestions and draft proposals on the website.
 - More concentrated in time than the first strategic review, which the bureaux felt had taken too much time.
 - The final draft of new ECE/FAO strategic work plan should be available for further comments well in advance of the joint session of UNECE Timber Committee and FAO European Forestry Commission.
4. *Delegations are invited to indicate whether they are in agreement with these principles and whether any further basic principles should be added.*

TIMETABLE AND PROCESS

5. On the basis of consultations with the Bureaux, and with the ECE and FAO managements, the secretariat proposes the following timetable:

- November 2003: circulation of invitation (possibly together with a enquiry form) to comment/make proposals to governments, partners/stakeholders/clients (invitation to comment will also be posted on website, as well as all responses and comments received).
- February/March 2004: Secretariat (Geneva), in consultation with the FAO Forestry Department (Rome) and the Subregional Office for Europe (Budapest), develop draft strategic plan for 2004 - 2008.
- April 2004: extended¹ bureaux meeting (2-3 days) to review draft strategic plan, and resolve questions of prioritisation of working projects and elements in light of the resources availability, etc.
- Summer 2004: finalisation of plan, in light of extended bureaux meeting results.
- October 2004: formal approval of new strategic plan at joint session of UNECE Timber Committee and FAO European Forestry Commission.
- Afterwards, there would be no in-depth review of the work plan for the next four years, only decision and discussion on issues of implementation.

6. The Strategic Review process will take place roughly simultaneously with the development of the MCPFE (Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe) programme of work, which will be discussed first at an Expert Level Meeting in Vienna in October 2003. It is suggested that the secretariat, with the MCPFE Liaison Units (Vienna and Warsaw), ensure that the two processes are each aware of developments in the other, so that all synergies are discovered and developed.

7. From the formal point of view, the mandates of all ECE/FAO teams of specialists end in 2004, so that there is no formal obligation to continue with any particular team. It is suggested that team leaders are specifically invited to contribute a self-evaluation of their team's achievements, and proposals, if appropriate, for future work in their field of interest. Likewise, the bureau of the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics and the Steering Committee of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training might also be requested to provide a self-evaluation of their role and achievements over the past four years.

8. *Delegations are invited to discuss these suggestions, modify them if necessary and authorise the secretariat to implement the process of Strategic Review as agreed.*

¹ With the participation of bureau members and any other representatives, of governments, partners or stakeholders, who wish to attend.