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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
TIMBER COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
(7-10 October 2003)

Highlights of the Session

- The Committee held a policy forum on wood and energy, with the cooperation of the UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy;
- The Committee reviewed markets for forest products, including the consequences of illegal logging, and approved a statement;
- The Committee adopted its work programme and launched a process of strategic review of the integrated UNECE/FAO programme for 2003/2004;
- The Committee reviewed the policy conclusions and recommendations of the European Forest Sector Outlook Study (EFSOS);
- The Committee reviewed the UNECE/FAO contribution to the global and regional forest dialogues.

Introduction

1. The UNECE Timber Committee held its sixty-first session at Geneva from 7-10 October 2003. The session was attended by representatives of Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.
2. A representative of the European Commission attended the session. The Liaison Unit of the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) was also represented.
3. Representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) also attended the session.
4. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux (ATIBT), Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF), Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI), European Forest Institute (EFI); European Panel Federation (EPF); European Regional Federation of Energy and Environment Agencies (FEDARENE), Organization of European Sawmilling Industries (OES); Shake and Shingle Association; Silviculture Union of Southern Europe (USSE) and the World Wide Fund for Nature International (WWF).
5. Mr. G. F. Borlea (Romania), Chairman, opened the session. Mrs. Brigita Schmögnerová, Executive Secretary of UNECE, welcomed the delegations to the Committee.

Adoption of the agenda (Item 1)

6. The provisional agenda (ECE/TIM/2003/1) was adopted.

Policy forum: forest, wood and energy (Item 2) (TIM/2003/1)

7. The forum reviewed energy policies, especially those concerning renewable energies and the interactions between these policies and those for forests and timber, as well as sector market developments, on the basis of presentations by experts and information supplied in national market statements. The forum had been prepared in cooperation with the secretariat and bureau of the UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy: the Timber Committee welcomed this excellent example of cross-sectoral cooperation in the UNECE framework. It thanked the Committee on Sustainable Energy for its cooperation as well as the speakers: Messrs G. Kowalski, Director and S. Slavov, Special Advisor UNECE Division on Industrial Restructuring, Energy and Enterprise Development, M. Trossero FAO Forestry Department, C. Prins, Chief, Timber Branch, R. Abord de Chatillon President of the Burgundy Regional Association of Private Forest Owners, J. Wall EU DG Enterprise and Ms. C. Egger, Federation of Regional Associations for Energy Economy and Environment (FEDARENE).

8. The Committee noted the complexity of the interactions, the sometimes conflicting interests of the different stakeholders and the difficulty of establishing where the public interest lay, as well as of coordinating policy formulation between sectors.

9. The Committee welcomed the fact that an account of the presentations and discussions would be prepared and issued as a Discussion Paper. It noted the generally poor quality of the quantitative information on which the discussion had to be based, and asked the secretariat to consider whether measures should be undertaken to improve the situation and if so by whom.

Market developments in 2003 and prospects for 2004 (Item 3) (TIM/2003/2,
ECE/TIM/BULL/2003/3)

10. The Committee reviewed the markets on the basis of the draft *Forest Products Annual Market Analysis 2002-2004*, country statements and national forecasts for 2003 and 2004. It approved a statement for subsequent publication and wide distribution.

Policy implications of EFSOS, European Forest Sector Outlook Study (Item 4) (TIM/2003/3)

11. The secretariat presented the outcomes of the European Forest Sector Outlook Study, focussing on the scenario assumptions, outlook findings and policy relevant conclusions. The meeting expressed its strong support to the EFSOS activities and recognised that the outcomes represent a useful tool for formulation of national policies.

12. The meeting appreciated the work done, in particular the comprehensive structure of the outcomes, which took into account economic, environmental and social aspects. The country wide analytical information provides a good base for trans-boundary comparisons of historic and future developments. Some EFSOS outcomes were being applied, e.g. as an input to the Vienna Ministerial Conference. The Russian forest sector case study outcomes had also been reflected in a strategic decision making process on the medium-term development of the Russian forest sector.

13. There was a consensus that the draft conclusion on the "Promotion of wood energy" should be put into a broader context of "Promotion of the sound use of wood". The conclusion on "Europe in a global context" should be expanded.

14. The conclusions, to be addressed to the public, should focus on broad long-term strategic policy directions. These should be not more than 2-4, indicating the reference to a larger number of more concrete policy issues, currently being in policy discussion, notably in the framework of MCPFE. The policy relevant conclusions and recommendations need to be reviewed, addressing one issue per heading, clearly identifying the addressee, and avoid overlapping and duplication of the issues in the various conclusions.

15. With regard to outlook findings and/or policy conclusions the following items need to be strengthened: shift of capacities towards eastern Europe, focus on social and environmental benefits from forests, in particular in western Europe, secure investment climate in CIS, law enforcement and

governance (illegal activities), climate change, forest fires, education of labour in the forest sector, forest related legislation, certification.

16. The secretariat asked the meeting participants and other stakeholders to comment on the draft EFSOS report, focussing on the outlook findings and the policy relevant conclusions and on the country profile sheets, including the introductory notes. Written comments should be sent to the secretariat by **15 November 2003**. The meeting urged the secretariat to finish the main EFSOS report rapidly and to publish the various EFSOS discussion papers.

17. The meeting appreciated the planned organisation of a workshop under the auspice of UNECE/FAO, scheduled tentatively for January 2004, to review the policy dimension of the EFSOS results, and discuss options for concrete action. A second workshop, to be led by MCPFE, will have the goal to transmit these results to a wider circle of policy makers and discuss options for implementation. The Swiss government will support the workshops financially (50%). The Committee expressed the hope that other governments would be able to contribute to the financing of these workshops. It was suggested that NGOs and the private industry should be adequately involved in follow-up implementation activities.

18. The meeting appreciated the analytical activities on policy and market issues in eastern Europe, financed by a Swedish trust fund and expressed its expectation of reliable results.

19. With regard to future outlook study activities on Europe the meeting noted that this will be a subject of the strategic review (see item 8).

Matters arising from the fifty-eighth session of the Economic Commission for Europe of relevance to the Committee (Item 5) (TIM/2003/4)

20. The Committee took note of the results of the Commission session and of the decisions relevant to its work. The decisions included substantive issues, strengthening the Organisation – review of the intergovernmental structure and a review of technical assistance and operational activities. The Committee agreed to review them all and take them into account during the Strategic Review of its programme of work.

International dialogue on forests, support to the global and regional processes (Item 6) (TIM/2003/5)

21. The Committee took note of how UNECE/FAO had contributed to the forest dialogue at the global level, in particular to the efforts to implementation relevant decisions of WSSD at the regional level, and the presentation of the European regional dialogue to UNFF. At the regional level, it welcomed the strong partnership which had developed between UNECE/FAO and MCPFE, and urged the secretariat to seek actively with the MCPFE Liaison Units to develop this partnership, notably during the UNECE/FAO Strategic Review (see agenda item 8) and the drawing up of the MCPFE work programme.

Review of activities since the sixtieth session and programme of work for 2004 to 2007 (Item 7)
(TIM/2003/6)

22. The Committee was informed of the implementation of the UNECE/FAO integrated programme since its last session, according to the modalities agreed at the previous strategic review. The Committee adopted its programme of work as set out in TIM/2003/6 (annex II), noting however that all activities scheduled after 2004 were subject to modification by the Strategic Review.

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

- **Work area 2: Forest Resources Assessment**

24. The Committee was informed of the activities and accomplishments under this work area in the context of the preparation for the global FRA 2005 update, which have been prepared in consultation with a global FRA Advisory Group and communicated to FRA national correspondents, leading to a global meeting of national correspondents on 17-21 November 2003, where the content of FRA 2005 will be further elaborated. Some modifications have been introduced since FRA 2000, to contribute to an overall streamlining of forest-related reporting and to improve the relevance of the results. A number of countries expressed their concern about the suggested scope and timetable of the global update, as well as the draft modifications to the FRA 2000 set of terms and definitions. They considered that the approach so far might create an excessive burden to countries for reporting on global FRA, and might generate discrepancies between the global and regional FRA activities, including the reporting on MCPFE criteria and indicators.

25. The participants expressed their hope that scope, contents and background guidelines, including terms and definitions, in the final version of the Global FRA 2005 documentation would take account of the realities on the ground and countries' FRA reporting capacities, and retain comparability with the FRA 2000. The Committee was informed that the global FRA 2005 enquiry terms and definitions were prepared only as a draft, and the final version would take account of comments received.

26. The Committee took note of the preliminary information about the 5th Conference of European State Forest Organisations, which is expected to be held in Finland in June 2004, and to be organised by Finnish State Forest Enterprise (Metsähallitus). The participants appreciated the successful series of the international conferences previously held under the title "Changing Role of State Forests" in Estonia, Austria, Ireland and France, and supported the invitation to held the next one in Finland.

- **Work area 3: European Forest Sector Outlook Studies**

27. It was suggested that the Strategic Review consider whether this should continue as a separate work area after the completion of the present study.

- **Work area 4: Technology, Management and Training**

28. The delegation of Sweden expressed its support to the proposal of establishing a team of specialists on the role of women in forestry as an important follow-up to the seminar on the same topic held in Portugal in 2001. The proposal was also in accordance with the UNECE emphasis on gender issues.

29. The delegation of the United States welcomed the Joint Committee's activities in training of forest workers and suggested the Strategic Review consider whether this activity should be extended also to forest industry workers.

30. The Committee was informed of preparations for the seminar on close to nature forestry (Zvolen, Slovakia, 14-19 October 2003). The Committee thanked the Slovak Authorities for hosting this event as well as the sixteenth session of the Steering Committee to be held in conjunction with it.

31. It was suggested that a way be found of celebrating the Joint Committee's fiftieth anniversary during the joint session in 2004, possibly along the lines of the ceremony at the Timber Committee's sixtieth session.

Preparations for the Strategic Review of the integrated programme of work of the Timber Committee and the European Forestry Commission (Item 8) (TIM/2003/7)

32. The Committee agreed to carry out, with its sister body, the European Forestry Commission, as planned, the strategic review of the integrated UNECE/FAO programme of work. It endorsed the principles and timetable proposed by the secretariat in TIM/2003/7.

33. It urged governments, partners and stakeholders to participate actively, constructively and realistically in the consultation process and in the extended bureaux meeting scheduled for spring 2004. It also urged the bureaux of the subsidiary bodies and the leaders of teams of specialists to submit a self evaluation of their activities, as well as proposals, if appropriate, for future work in their area of interest.

34. It was agreed that responses to the consultation process should be requested for 10 January 2004. The representative of FAO reaffirmed her organisation's commitment to the Strategic Review process, and the importance it attached to continued good relations between UNECE and FAO. Among suggestions made were:

- In view of the increasing importance of topics which touched both forest and market issues, such as illegal logging, certification or wood energy, the Committee and the Commission should consider intensifying their activities in these areas, particularly through joint sessions;
- The extended bureaux meeting should not be so large as to hamper streamlined decision making;
- It should be made clear that the programme for four years emerging from the process should be subject to review and modification if necessary, because of changed circumstances;

- There was a special need to examine the numbers and outputs of teams of specialists: some had been more successful than others.

Election of officers (Item 9)

35. The Committee re-elected Mr. Gheorghe Florian Borlea (Romania), Chairman and Messrs. Jeff Serveau (Canada) and Heikki Pajuoja (Finland) Vice-Chairmen to hold office until the end of the sixty-second session.

Other business (Item 10)

36. A briefing to Permanent Missions was organised on the Committee's activities, on the support to the international dialogue on forests and on the next strategic review of the integrated programme of work of the Timber Committee and the European Forestry Commission.

Date and place of next session (Item 11)

37. Provided that conference services are available, the week of 27 September to 1 October 2004 has been provisionally reserved for the sixty-second session of the Committee to be held in Geneva, in joint session with the thirty-second session of the FAO European Forestry Commission.

Adoption of the report (Item 12)

38. The Committee adopted its report on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat.

ANNEX I

UNECE TIMBER COMMITTEE AND FAO EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF WORK, 2003-2007

Set out below is the integrated programme of work of the Committee and the Commission for the period 2003 to 2007. 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 (2004, 2006, etc.);
- The Joint FAO/UNECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training meets every two years (2004, 2006 etc.);
- The Joint UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics meets every year.

The bureaux of the Committee and the Commission meet jointly every year to oversee the implementation of the programme and prepare forthcoming sessions.

The integrated programme is implemented by the UNECE and FAO staff in Geneva led by the Chief of the Timber Branch of the UNECE Trade Development and Timber Division in close cooperation with the Forestry Department of FAO.

All activities are carried out in cooperation with partners in international organisations and countries.

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

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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 UNECE/FAO 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 teams of specialists

Work Area 2: FOREST RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Objective: Collect and make available the best possible data on the forests of the industrialised countries (UNECE 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 UNECE/FAO 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 UNECE/FAO 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/UNECE/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/UNECE/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 2004 AND 2005 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 UNECE as well as from other countries that are members of the United Nations and organizations accredited to UNECE (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. At the Committee's website (<http://unece.org/trade/timber>) an up-to-date calendar of meetings, can be consulted.

2004		
Date	Location	Title
January (to be decided)	Switzerland	Workshop on policy conclusions and options arising from European Forest Sector Outlook Study (EFSOS) (A)
24-26 February	Geneva	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, fifty-ninth session (A)
15-17 March	Geneva	Joint UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, 26th session (A)
29 March - 3 April (to be confirmed)	Antalya, Turkey	Conference on Forest Fire Management and International Cooperation in Fire Emergencies in the Eastern Mediterranean, Balkans and Adjoining Regions of the Near East and Central Asia (A)
March (to be decided)	Poland	Team of Specialists Meeting on Countries in Transition (CITs)
April (to be decided)	Geneva	Extended bureau meeting for the Strategic Review of the UNECE/FAO Integrated Programme (A)
April (to be decided)	Budapest	UNECE/FAO Meeting on Eastern European Policy Issues: Investments in the Forest Sector (A)
May (to be decided)	Bulgaria	UNECE/FAO Forest Communicators Network Meeting (B)
May (to be decided)	Geneva	UNECE Timber Committee and FAO European Forestry Commission joint bureaux meeting (B)
May (to be decided)	USA	UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Resources Assessment
September (to be decided)	Groningen, the Netherlands	Joint FAO/UNECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, 25th session (A)
September (to be decided)	Groningen, the Netherlands	Joint FAO/UNECE/ILO Seminar on building bridges between people and forests: changing roles of State Forest Services (A)
26 September (to be decided)	Geneva	Meeting of the UNECE/FAO team of specialists on forest products markets and marketing (B)
27 September - 1 October	Geneva	Joint session UNECE TIMBER COMMITTEE, 62nd session and FAO European Forestry Commission, thirty-second session (A)
11-15 October	Zidlochovice, South Moravia, Czech Republic	FAO/UNECE/ILO Workshop on the role of forests in torrent control and watershed management (A)
October (to be decided)	Sochi Russian Federation (to be confirmed)	FAO/UNECE/ILO Seminar on multi-functional forestry in protected and vulnerable areas (A)
6-8 November	Germany	FAO/UNECE/ILO Seminar on Disaster preparedness in forestry (tentative title) in cooperation with EU concerted action STODAFOR (A)

ANNEX II (Continued)

**PROVISIONAL LIST OF MEETINGS IN 2004 AND 2005 FALLING WITHIN THE PROGRAMME OF
WORK OF THE TIMBER COMMITTEE AND THE EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION**

2005		
Date	Location	Title
March (to be decided)	Geneva	Joint UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, 27th session (A)
March (to be decided)	Geneva	Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics, 18th meeting (B)
September (to be decided)	Geneva	UNECE TIMBER COMMITTEE, 63rd session (A)
(to be decided)	(to be decided)	Steering Committee on the Joint FAO/UNECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, 17th session (B)