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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION
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Timber Committee

Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party
on Forest Economics and Statistics

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Agenda item 7 of the provisional agenda

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION**

European Forestry Commission

Guidance on Work Area 2: Forest Resources Assessment and
Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management

Annual report of Team of Specialists on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management to
FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics

AGENDA ITEM 7.2 – Report of Team of Specialists

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. This document is produced in accordance with the programme of work as approved by the Timber Committee in ECE/TIM/S/2008/6 and the requirement to report “Once a year to the Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics” as stated in the terms of reference of the Team of Specialists as approved by the Timber Committee in ECE/TIM/S/2008/6/Add 1. This report covers the activities for the period March 2009 to January 2010.

2. The Team officers are: Mr. Simon Gillam, Leader (United Kingdom), Mr. Andrius Kuliešis, Deputy Leader (Lithuania) and Mr. Brad Smith, Deputy Leader (USA). The secretary is Mr. Roman Michalak, UNECE/FAO Timber Section.

II. Team members

3. The team includes officially-nominated members from 31 countries. Representatives of 15 countries have participated in the both meetings, 8 in one meeting and 8 in one other meeting so far. In addition, more than 28 experts from various organizations such as the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, the European Forest Institute, the European Environment Agency, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC) have been invited to contribute to the team.

III. Meetings held

4. The second meeting of the Team was hosted by the EU Joint Research Centre (JRC) on 26-28 January 2010 in Ispra, Italy.

IV. Outputs during period by mandate item (quote mandate item and report accomplishments) and impact achieved:

5. Team members who are Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) national correspondents were involved with validation of their country reports in the summer of 2009, which ensured approval of the reports by their national administrations, in preparation for publication in 2010. The Team was expected to advise on measures to improve dissemination of European and national results, linked to the launches of the key findings and main reports in 2010; this was addressed as part of a wider discussion (see para 13 below) of links between national and international reporting (*Output 1 “Regional contribution to the FRA 2010”*).

6. Steps were taken to improve harmonisation of Forest Europe reporting of quantitative indicators with FRA, by aligning some definitions of indicators, which will allow these indicators to be pre-filled with FAO Global FRA (GFRA) data. Team members provided comments to assist development of the Forest Europe/UNECE/FAO questionnaire on quantitative indicators, to be used in the next reporting cycle in February-May 2010. International data providers (JRC and others) presented their data sources that will be used for 7 indicators (*Output 2 “Assistance in the preparation and review of the next report on the State of Forests in Europe, for the next Ministerial Conference”*).

7. European Forest Type (EFT) category 14 was clarified as introduced species only, after a limited test of feasibility. It was agreed that countries will report in 2010 using the new EFT, for area (1.1) and growing stock (1.2), and if possible also for 4 other indicators (*Output 4 “Guidance on the implementation of the forest type classification”*).

V. Expected outputs over next period by mandate item (cite mandate number and report accomplishments)

8. No further specific outputs for GFRA 2010 are expected from the Team. Team members will assist in establishing contacts for the GFRA Remote Sensing Survey. (*Output 1 “Regional contribution to the FRA 2010”*).

9. Team members who are national correspondents will be preparing their country reports in February-May 2010, followed by report validation. It is planned that team members will be invited to a meeting with the authors of the State of Europe’s Forests 2011 to discuss the draft report. (*Output 2 “Assistance in the preparation and review of the next report on the State of Forests in Europe, for the next Ministerial Conference”*).

10. The pilot reporting using the new EFT will accompany the other country reporting for the State of Europe’s Forests. A workshop has been organized in Bordeaux (France) in May 2010 to exchange experiences and address technical issues, which may lead to refinement of the current or future country reporting. National correspondents will be asked for feedback on their experiences with this pilot reporting, and any recommendation for endorsement of EFT should be given after this pilot implementation (*Output 4 “Guidance on the implementation of the forest type classification”*).

11. The next meeting of the Team could be linked to the State of Europe’s Forests reporting meeting mentioned above, possibly in January 2011.

VI. Comments, lessons learned and issues for attention of Bureaux/Working Party

12. A significant proportion of the second meeting of the Team was devoted to preparing for reporting on the State of Europe’s Forests, which was not relevant to some participants (USA and Canada). The meeting also featured a large number of presentations. It has been suggested that the next meeting should address a smaller range of topics, applicable across the UNECE region, and discuss them in more depth. One topic addressed in depth at the second meeting was monitoring of health conditions of forests, but with little time for discussion.

13. The second meeting of the Team started to address the subject of links between national and international reporting. The Team saw some good examples of how international indicators were publicized in national reports and discussed what countries could do to give the international indicators a higher profile. This could be a possible topic for a workshop involving The Montréal Process on criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests (MP) countries as well as the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe countries.

14. There has been little further progress in extending geographic representation of the team. Participation from eastern European countries increased in the first meeting, but dropped back for the second meeting. A continuing problem is how to involve countries that have limited resources for this work area (e.g. Caucasus and central Asian countries) and do not participate in Forest Europe or Montreal Process reporting.

15. *The Working Party is asked to please review the following issues:*

(a) As reported last year, current membership of the Team provides little expertise on social and economic indicators. There is little prospect of this changing much in the future, so it is recommended that other approaches be adopted for this area. This could include organising a separate workshop on social and economic indicators that could attract different participants.

(b) As reported last year, there has been no progress on Objective 3 (improve reporting capacity of countries weak in reporting) and it is unlikely to be achieved, because those who participate in regular meetings of the Team or email correspondence are unlikely to include many from the target group. Capacity building activities would require additional resources.

(c) The Team was informed about reporting on policies and institutions, both at global and regional levels, but few of the Team members will be directly involved in this area of reporting. Directly addressing experts on this area (UNECE/FAO ToS on Forest Policy in Eastern Europe and Central Asia or Forest Europe national correspondents) is likely to be a better source of advice than the Team for reporting on policies and institutions.