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Seventy-first session

Rovaniemi, 9-13 December 2013

Thirty-seventh session

Rovaniemi, 9-13 December 2013

Item 3(a) of the provisional agenda

FAO European Forestry Commission matters**FAO's report on follow-up activities to the
recommendations and requests of the 36th session of
the Commission****Note by the secretariat**

1. The Thirty Sixth Session of the Commission made several requests and recommendations to FAO. This document presents the actions that FAO has taken to implement these requests and recommendations. These actions complement the ones presented in agenda item 6 (d) "Review of 2013 activities, list of activities for 2014 and publications for 2014-2017" of the ECE/FAO Integrated Programme of Work and implemented in 2012-2013 (document: ECE/TIM/2013/15 FO:EFC/2013/15).

2. The Commission proposed the establishment of a global platform on forests and climate change to facilitate exchange of experience, science and policy effectiveness. At the European level FAO and ECE were requested to integrate and coordinate their efforts with existing initiatives for maximum impact and synergy. It urged FAO and ECE to highlight the positive attributes of wood products in their action plans for greening European economies.

- (a) FAO cooperates with countries to strengthen sustainable forest management in the context of climate change and increase the extension of forests as carbon stocks, while considering the multiple forest functions and dimensions. In addition, FAO works in promoting good management practices with a view to climate change and adaptation.
- (b) In this context, in 2011 FAO developed the document "Climate change for forest policy makers", which is an approach to the integration of climate change into national forest programs in support of sustainable forest management. A workshop for the implementation of this approach in Europe and Central Asia "Integrating

climate change issues into national forest programmes for SFM” has been conducted in November 2014.

- (c) FAO released the document “Climate change guidelines for forest managers” in September 2013. It provides guidance to forest managers for assessing the challenges and opportunities posed by climate change and for taking practical actions in climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- (d) FAO is compiling and issuing a monthly electronic newsletter, CLIM-FO-L, on forests and climate change. It provides information on recent developments in climate change negotiations, scientific articles, publications, events and job opportunities.
- (e) ECE and FAO organized a workshop on “The Green Life of Wood. Assessing its Environmental Impacts from Cradle to Cradle” on 15 October 2012 to better understand how the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) can be applied to evaluate the overall environmental impacts of a material or a product throughout its life and to gather all the knowledge and evidence related to sustainability of wood.
- (f) ECE and FAO together with InnoVAWood on 22 April 2013 organized a seminar: “Innovation in the forest-based sector – a prerequisite for the Green Economy”. The seminar discussed policy and legal framework conditions for innovation in a broad perspective including innovation strategies and action plans.
- (g) ECE and FAO have formulated the project “Sustainable forest management for greener economies in the Caucasus and Central Asia” funded by 8th Tranche of the UN Development Account (UNDA). Project implementation started in July 2013 and its goal is to strengthen the national capacity of eight countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia to enhance the contribution of their forest sector to greener economies through sustainable forest management.
- (h) The ECE/FAO/ILO Joint Expert Network to implement Sustainable Forest Management organized in November 2013 a workshop to identify climate change related impacts on forestry work. To address those challenges, the meeting reviewed existing solutions and possible innovations and formulate recommendations for forest entrepreneurs, forest machinery manufacturers, forest owners as well as policy makers and training centres.
- (i) The Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy was prepared under the auspices of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the European Forestry Commission (EFC) as presented in agenda item 6 (b) “Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy”, document ECE/TIM/2013/12 FO:EFC/2013/12. The Action Plan was at the core of the Lviv Forum on Forests in a Green Economy “Actions and challenges for the countries in Eastern Europe and North and Central Asia” held in Ukraine in September 2012 as a Country Lead Initiative. The results of the Forum were presented at the 10th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

3. The Commission requested to include the mandate and modus operandi of the Working Party on management of Mountain Watersheds in the overall review process of the joint ECE/FAO Integrated Programme of Work on Forestry and Timber, including resources implications and that the secretariat update the review questionnaire accordingly.

- (a) Joint meetings of the bureaux between EFC and COFFI completed the review process in February 2010, May 2011 and June 2013.

- (b) In order to give the Working Party a new profile and to address strategic issues, participants at the 29th Session of the Working Party which took place in France, September 2013, decided to implement the recommendations from the review process as described in document: ECE/TIM/2013/5 FO:EFC/2013/5.

4. The Commission formulated recommendations to be drawn to the attention of the twenty-eight session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe and the twenty-first session of the FAO Committee on Forestry and requested the Bureau to complete the template by providing further details regarding possible activities and indicators.

- (a) During the twenty-eighth session of the FAO Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) which took place in Baku, Azerbaijan, 18-19 April 2012, the following documents were introduced: ERC/12/INF/6 "Summary Report of the Joint Sixty-ninth Session of the UNECE Timber Committee and the Thirty-sixth Session of the FAO European Forestry Commission" and ERC/12/INF/7 rev1 "The Role of Forestry in a changing world - A regional perspective".
- (b) The report of the 28th session of the ERC (document ERC/12/REP38) provided a summary report of the recommendations of the European Forestry Commission (EFC) and Importance of Forestry for the Region. In paragraph 38 of the report the Conference appreciated the information on the activities of the regional technical commission and welcomed the successful cooperation between the European Forestry Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Timber Committee, resulting in provision of unique statistics and resource assessments. In paragraph 39 the Conference further recognized the importance of FAO to continue working on sustainable forest management as a component of a green economy, including green jobs, as well as FAO inputs to the Rio + 20 process. The Conference recommended FAO servicing negotiations on the legally binding agreement on sustainable forest management in Europe. The importance of forest management and good practice in adaptation to and mitigation of climate change impacts and sustainable water resources management was underlined. The significance of the multiple benefits of forests, the role of forests in food security and sustainable livelihoods, and addressing forestry issues at regional and international levels with focus on involving the Central Asia countries were recommended for FAO attention. The Conference expects FAO to continue working on forestry issues within its mandate and recommended that forestry be integrated in a visible way into the new Strategic Framework.
- (c) The Bureau together with the COFFI (formerly Timber Committee) Bureau in a follow-up meeting in Antalya, Turkey, October 15th, 2012, completed the list of actions requested with indicative deadlines and responsibilities including a list of priority issues for COFO to consider.
- (d) The report of the 21st session of COFO (document COFO/2012/REP) refers to the recommendations arising from the six Regional Forestry Commissions (RFCs) and the on-going initiatives presented in the annexes that provide guidance on areas of priority in the context of the new Strategic Framework to allow FAO Forestry work to contribute most effectively to the three global goals of FAO. The Committee further endorsed the RFC recommendations and recognized FAO's efforts to strengthen the connection of the RFCs' input into the work of the Forestry Programme. Noting these regional inputs as very important, the Committee recommended further collating and making full use of inputs from the regions to identify synergies and ensure a strategic approach to forestry work.
- (e) The report of the 21st session of COFO also indicates that the Committee was informed of the successful cooperation between the European Forestry Commission

and the UNECE Timber Committee (now the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry).

5. The Commission requested that UNECE and FAO contribute to the servicing of the negotiation of the Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe, as appropriate.

- (a) Based on the above mandate, the invitation from the European ministers in 2011 as well as the 28th FAO Regional Conference for Europe (April 2012), FAO has been providing services to the negotiations of the Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.
- (b) Four sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) were serviced by FAO in accordance with the Annex to the Rules of Procedure (contained in the Oslo Mandate). The implementation of these activities has been based overwhelmingly on extra-budgetary resources. A multi-donor trust fund was set up to finance related activities. Norway seconded a senior expert to FAO HQ in support of the servicing the INC.

6. The Commission requested that ECE/FAO continue to contribute to the development and implementation of the Forest Europe Work Programme in concordance with the ECE/FAO Integrated Programme of Work.

- (a) The UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section supports the preparations and organisation of the next cycle of the global and the regional reporting on forest resources. Global information on forests and forest management is collected through the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) process led by FAO. The Section has been actively involved in the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire (CFRQ) process through participation in meetings and workshops of the CFRQ consortium and the FRA Advisory Group that resulted in new versions of questionnaires, definitions and reporting guidelines. The Section provides support and coordinates work of regional reviewers assisting the reporting process from 55 countries of Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.
- (b) The Forest Europe/ECE/FAO Questionnaire on quantitative indicators was prepared in cooperation with organisations, processes and countries under the leadership of the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, advised by the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Monitoring SFM. The Section prepared and organized the pan-European data collection process, which is coordinated with the global reporting.
- (c) The ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section continued the dissemination of the results of the State of Europe's Forests 2011 report. This work included production of a dedicated website with detailed outputs and an interactive database. The Section presented results of the pan-European reporting at numerous global, regional and national events. The Section supported by the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists "Forest Communicators Network" prepared an education portal for 12-14 years old students, based on SoEF 2011 results.
- (d) The ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section also cooperate with FOREST EUROPE on policy-related matters such as payment for ecosystem services or green jobs in the forest sector.

7. The following projects and workshops were implemented by FAO following the 36th session of the Commission:

- (a) A capacity building workshop “Preparing the forest sector in Eastern Europe and Central Asia to meet global challenges” took place on 29 October - 2 November 2012, in Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan. The regional forestry workshop was convened in cooperation with the FAO Regional Office in Budapest, the FAO Subregional Office (SEC) in Ankara and the UNECE FAO Forestry and Timber Section in Geneva.
- (b) A regional workshop on “Supporting non-state forestry in South East Europe”, took place in Skopje, TFYR Macedonia, 12 - 14 November 2012. The workshop was being organised by FAO in close collaboration with the Regional Centre for Forestry and Rural Development (REFORD) with support from Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF). The workshop offered the opportunity to exchange experiences and share information on the status of non-state forestry in South East Europe, but also other Eastern European countries. The overall objective of the workshop was to identify the main factors and challenges for further development of forest owner organizations and non-state forestry related initiatives or policies.
- (c) A workshop for the review and validation of the draft study on forestry legislation of countries of the FAO SEC was organized in Istanbul, Turkey, 16-18 July 2012. As a result, a publication on forestry legislation outlook and guidelines for reform was published.
- (d) A workshop for South-East European countries on “Implementation of Phytosanitary Standards in Forestry - A regional capacity development” took place in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 15-18 April, 2013. The overall objective of the workshop was to offer the opportunity to exchange experiences and share information on the status of the forest pest situation in the region, and to establish and improve the cooperation between national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) and forestry agencies responsible for forest protection.
- (e) Two regional workshops organized jointly with the European Forest Institute and FOREST EUROPE on “Implementing criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management” took place in Zagreb, Croatia, 26-27 March, 2013 and in Budapest, Hungary, 23-24 April, 2013. The FOREST EUROPE process has adopted a pan-European C&I set which is already in place since 10 years and provided structure for the State of Europe’s Forest Reports from 2003, 2007 and 2011. The workshops helped to identify challenges in implementing C&I and to formulate recommendations in support of regional and national policy formulation, analysis and monitoring.
- (f) In coordination with FAO Forest Assessment, Management and Conservation Division, an international workshop on the restoration of degraded forest lands, was held in Konya, Turkey, 28-31 May 2013. The objectives of the workshop were: (i) setting the scene – sharing know-how from different countries/regions on forest restoration in drylands, (ii) identifying key elements of success and failure to improve effectiveness in forest restoration of drylands, (iii) contributing to the development of a comprehensive monitoring tool to guide implementers in the planning and implementation of field projects/programmes, assess success and facilitate the sharing of know-how, (iv) contributing to the development of operational guidelines, and (v) proposing recommendations on the next steps/process for the formulation of project ideas within the framework of existing cooperation initiatives.
- (g) A subregional workshop on Forest Genetic Resources (FGR) was organized in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 26-31 August 2013. The objectives of the workshop were (i)

contribute to the preparation of regional synthesis on the state of FGR in Central Asia including draft regional plan of action, (ii) assist SEC countries to prepare their country reports on FGR, and (iii) to identify regional priorities on FGR. The outcomes of the workshop resulted in 6 country reports and a regional synthesis reports prepared and published.

- (h) A workshop on “Forestry Legislation Development and Harmonization in Central Asia” took place in Astana, Kazakhstan, 15-23 October 2013. The workshop aimed at developing a common understanding of complex issues related to forestry legislation experiences, as identified by a FAO project for the revision of legislation of Kazakhstan finalized in 2010, critically reviewing processes for revision and harmonization of forestry legislation in participating countries and identifying their needs and priorities.
- (i) GCP (Government Cooperative Programme) projects in 2012/2013:
- GCP/KOS/005/FIN - Support to Implementation of the Forest Policy and Strategy in Kosovo
The Government of Kosovo has adopted the Policy and Strategy Paper on Forest Sector Development 2010–2020 (PSP) which stresses the economic aspects but also takes into consideration the multi-functional role of forestry. In this context, the current project that has three main components is supporting the implementation of the PSP.
 - i. Institutional support for the implementation of forest policies and strategies.
 - ii. Integrated forest management and practices.
 - iii. Forest sector and climate change, finding ways for forest sector to enhance its role in climate change mitigation and adaptation.
 - GCP/MNE/001/LUX - : Woodfuel Integrated Supply and Demand Overview Mapping for Montenegro (WISDOM - Montenegro)
The main objective of this support is to help to Government institutions in Montenegro for overcoming the existing gaps referring to the lack of relevant data and information on potentials, consumption and contribution of woody biomass to reaching national targets.
 - GCP/SEC/002/TUR - Capacity Building for Sustainable Management of Mountain Watersheds in Central Asia and the Caucasus (Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan)
FAO is providing capacity building support for increasing public awareness and interest of policy and decision makers; enhancing knowledge and experiences of forestry and other related agencies about integrated (multidisciplinary) and collaborative approaches to the implementation, rehabilitation and sustainable management of mountain watersheds.
- (j) TCP (Technical Cooperation Programme) projects in 2012/2013
- TCP/ARM/3303 - Afforestation and Reforestation in the Republic of Armenia - Phase II of TCP/ARM/3203
In this two-phase project, FAO helped intensify afforestation and reforestation in Armenia by creating the preconditions for the implementation of a national reforestation programme. FAO’s intervention built national capacity in afforestation, reforestation and forest restoration by helping to restore rundown forest nursery facilities and providing training in seed collection, seed and plant production, nursery and plantation management and natural forest regeneration.
 - TCP/YUG/3201 Wood energy for sustainable rural development (Serbia)
FAO contributes to enhance the capabilities of the Directorate of Forests (DF), Ministry of Agricultural, Forestry and Water Management, for the formulation, evaluation and development of

sound bioenergy strategies, programmes and projects compatible with the sustainable management of the forestry, energy and agricultural sectors.

- TCP/UKR/3401 - Forest Policy Consolidation in Ukraine

FAO is supporting relevant stakeholders of the forestry sector of Ukraine to agree on necessary steps and measures to reach forest policy consolidation and delineation of duties and responsibilities of the major actors, thereby contributing to informed and evidence based decision making and implementation. As an outcome, a concise roadmap as a conceptual framework for the Ukrainian forest sector will be available.

- TCP/RUS/3402 - Strengthening the Capacities of the Regional Forest Administration Units in the Russian Federation

The FAO project is to strengthen the capacities and increase the effectiveness of the regional forest administration personnel for the implementation of sustainable forest management practices in the Russian Federation.

- TCP/SRB/3401 - Assistance for the development of forest infrastructure planning and construction in Serbia

FAO's expertise is contributing to establishing comprehensive but practical guidelines which will assist all forestry professionals in planning, constructing, operating and maintaining forest roads which are technically, socially, economically and ecologically sound and fulfil multi-purpose functions.

- TCP/AZE/3303 - Support to development of national forest program and forest legislation

FAO is providing technical support to Azerbaijan to develop a national forestry program that would enable the forestry sector of the country to develop innovative forest management approaches through the involvement of local communities as well as other key stakeholders.

- TCP/UZB/3301 - Developing and Implementing a National Strategy to Support the Non Wood Forest Products (NWFPs) Sector of Uzbekistan

FAO is providing technical support to the development of the NWFP sector through formulating a comprehensive National NWFP strategy and starting its implementation on 2 priority products (beekeeping and medicinal and aromatic plants) with the involvement of all stakeholders to provide a better use of these natural resources and to offer opportunities for improving livelihoods, forest conservation, and biodiversity protection.

- TCP/TUR/615676 -Management of chestnut blight and increased capacity for improving forest health and vitality

FAO is providing technical support to Turkey for the reduction of incidence and severity of chestnut blight in the chestnut forests in selected pilot areas with the support and involvement of local communities particularly women farmers. The project is also increasing national capacity to respond to new pest incursions like *Phytophthora* spp. Improved surveillance and actions will pave the way to control and prevent spread of diseases.

(k) Global Environmental Funds (GEF) Projects currently under preparation by FAO and expected to be operational in 2014

- Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Friendly Agriculture in Turkey (GEF contribution: USD 6.5 m)

- Sustainable management of mountainous forest and land resources under climate change conditions in Kyrgyzstan (GEF contribution: USD 6.1 m)
- Strengthening Steppe Protected Areas of Turkey in (PIF development is on-going , GEF contribution: USD 2.7 m)