



Report of the 41st session of the Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management

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Economics and Management



Forêt2019 – Joint Session of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission

4-7 November 2019, Geneva, Switzerland



- The Joint ECE/ FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management held its 41st session in Geneva on 27-29 March 2019.
- 23 member States attended the meeting.
- The meeting had three main parts:
 - Interactive sessions:
 - Discussion on boreal forests
 - Green jobs in the forest sector
 - Discussion on Forest Sector Outlook
 - Discussion on electronic means for sharing forest relevant information.
 - Guidance on Work Areas & overview on forest related work by ECE and FAO
 - Operational topics
 - Other business
 - Date and place of next meeting
 - Election of officers



On boreal forests, the Joint Working Party was briefed on:

- recent discussions, led by circumboreal countries in cooperation with the secretariat, on creating a Team of Specialists (ToS) on Boreal Forests
- A contact group, chaired by Ukraine, was established and finalized the draft Terms of Reference



The Joint Working Party:

- Supported the efforts of circumboreal cooperation and recognized the insufficient attention paid to boreal forests globally;
- Noted concerns regarding the availability of secretariat's resources to service the proposed Team raised by several countries and the offer of the Russian Federation to assist in this regard;
- Recommended the establishment of a ToS on Boreal Forests, according to the draft Terms of Reference.

The secretariat highlighted the need for adequate funding in order to support the work of all Teams of Specialists (ToS).



The Joint Working Party discussed:

- The work on green jobs in the forest sector, as a contribution to the implementation of the “Rovaniemi Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy”, Pillar C – Decent Green Jobs in the Forest Sector.

The Joint Working Party:

- Approved the “Joint ECE/FAO/Forest Europe Guidelines on the Promotion of Green Jobs in Forestry” as an official publication;
- Recommended that a review of country best practices could be envisaged as an add-on to the Joint ECE/FAO/Forest Europe Guidelines.;
- Expressed its satisfaction and appreciation with the work of the Team of Specialists on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector. The meeting recommended the Joint Section and the Team of Specialists continue to address issues related to the development of green jobs and explore opportunities for increased coordination with Forest Europe;
- Recommended the extension of the ToS.



- The secretariat informed the Joint Working Party about the process for the preparation of the Forest Sector Outlook Study;
- Mr. Jeffrey Prestemon, Deputy Leader of the Team of Specialists on Forest Sector Outlook, presented the preliminary results of the scenario modelling for the Forest Sector Outlook Study.



The Joint Working Party:

- Recognized that focusing on major global trends and challenges will reduce emphasis on detailed projections of forest resources on a country level;
- Invited countries to send further information on research and projects at the national level which could feed into the Forest Sector Outlook Study;
- Expressed satisfaction with the work of the Team of Specialists;
- Agreed to organise workshops focussing on policy aspects;
- Noted that individual countries have an interest in capacity building in the area of forest sector outlook modelling;
- Suggested increasing the exchange among countries and experts on modelling that addresses risks stemming from climate change, in particular from natural disturbances;
- Delegates recommended extending of the mandate for the Team of Specialists on Forest Sector Outlook and agreed to integrate the ToS on Forest Policy into it.



The ECE has been tasked with transitioning to electronic media and away from printed publications.

The Joint Working Party discussed in small groups some examples of how the forest sector could better engage with the broader public. Examples have been provided by several country delegates.

The Joint Working Party took note of the information provided.



On Data, monitoring and assessment on forest resources, the Joint Working Party was briefed on:

- Global and regional work undertaken on reporting on forests and sustainable forest management;
- Activities of the ToS on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management

The Joint Working Party:

- (a) Welcomed the information provided and expressed satisfaction with the progress of work on the 2020 global and regional reporting;
- (b) Supported the proposed plan for future work on the forest resources assessment in the framework of global and regional reporting;
- (c) Invites FAO to pay special attention to the development of an interactive database on the FRA 2020 results;
- (d) Acknowledged and recognized the importance of the work on the studies on forest ownership and forests in the Caucasus and Central Asia;
- (e) Appreciated the update on the activities implemented by the Team of Specialists on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management, recommended the extension of its mandate. The Joint Working Party recommended extending this work beyond the Team membership and including the FAO FRA National Correspondents network in the region; also expressed concerns about possible additional work load and requested to pay due attention to this issue.



On Forest products statistics, the Joint Working Party was briefed on:

- Work on engineered wood products (EWP), the status of the Harmonised System nomenclature changes planned for 2022, the results of an analysis of forecasts, and a possible statistical capacity-building workshop as well as activities by the ToS on Forest Products Statistics;

The Joint Working Party:

- Agreed with the recommendation of the ToS to issue the Engineered Wood Products questionnaire again this year and highlighted the importance of having information on these products;
- Supported capacity-building workshops and suggested a joint workshop with the Team on Sustainable Forest Products;
- Recommended the extension of the ToS Forest Products Statistics.



On Forest product markets, the Joint Working Party was briefed on:

- The last edition of the Forest Products Annual Market Review and plans for 2018-2019 edition of the Review;

The Joint Working Party:

- Acknowledged the financial support provided by Finland for the 2018 and 2019 Forest Products Annual Market Review;
- Acknowledged the importance of the Forest Products Annual Market Review;
- Recognized the importance of the work on forest products markets and the contributions of the Team of Specialists on Sustainable Forest Products;
- Recommended the extension of the ToS



On Wood energy:

- The secretariat informed the Joint Working Party on the launch of the publication Wood Energy in the ECE Region;
- The secretariat informed the Joint Working Party that different stakeholders sought advice from the secretariat on the various sources of wood biomass used for energy generation;
- The Joint Working Party was briefed on results of the ongoing data collection for the reference year 2017;

The Joint Working Party:

- Welcomed the publication on wood energy in the ECE region;
- Congratulated the secretariat for the quality and importance of the process of collecting data on wood energy.
- Requested the secretariat, to further improve the JWEE.
- Advised the secretariat to further harmonize the information on wood energy in various databases and to closely work with relevant agencies, namely the International Energy Agency and the International Renewable Energy Agency;
- Recommended the extension of the ToS.



On Policy dialogue and advice, the Joint Working Party was briefed on:

- Activities in the work area Policy Dialogue and Advice for the relevant reporting period;
 - 2019 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development;
 - UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) ;
 - Past and future activities on Forest Landscape Restoration.

The Joint Working Party:

- Highlighted the need to further clarify the concept of ecosystem restoration, the importance of funding to support the work in the region, and encouraged organisations to join forces to this end;
- Recommended to use the implementation vehicle of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration for further joint activities on forest landscape restoration;
- Stressed the importance of contributing to the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and was satisfied with the input from the Joint Section to the 2019 Forum.
- Welcomed the proposal of integrating the ToS on Forest Policy into the ToS on Forest Outlook Studies and asked the secretariat to continue to support the ToS Forest Policy work until the final decision is taken at the Joint Session of COFFI/EFC in this matter.



On Communication and outreach, the Joint Working Party was briefed on:

- The two Youtube videos *“Made in Forests - Michelle Yeoh tells a short story on sustainable fashion”* and *“The Three Little Pigs and Climate Change - the benefits of wood as a low-emission construction material”*
- International Day of Forests (IDF) on 21 March 2019 as well as potential themes for the IDF 2020 and 2021;

The Joint Working Party:

- Emphasized that communication and outreach activities should go beyond IDF and continue throughout the year, in this regard the movies and innovative communication means were appreciated;
- Appreciated the web statistics and highlighted the interest of website visitors in price statistics;
- Stressed the importance of linking the activities of the ToS on Forest Communication – the Forest Communicators’ Network (FCN) to the Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work (WIPoW);
- Invites FAO to increase its support to the ToS by providing its secretary, thereby decreasing the burden on the Joint Section.



On Capacity-building, the Joint Working Party was briefed on:

- UNDA project “Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia”
- Publication “Guidelines for the Development of a Criteria and Indicator Set for Sustainable Forest Management”

The Joint Working Party:

- Underlined the importance and timeliness of this capacity-building project;
- Appreciated the participatory nature of the workshops and the toolbox of methods included in the Guidelines that ensure replicability;
- Suggested to explore the possibility of publishing the results of the UNDA project;
- Highlighted the importance of participation of delegations from the Caucasus and Central Asia, as well as other Eastern and Southeastern European countries, at intergovernmental meetings;
- Proposed a joint capacity-building workshop on sustainable forest products and products statistics and highlighted the need to involve the relevant ToSs.

Guidance on Work area:

Summary on ToS recommendations

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Team of Specialists ...	Recommendation to the 2019 Joint Session of ECE COFFI and FAO EFC
... on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management	Extension of existing mandate
... on Sustainable Forest Products	Extension of existing mandate
... on Forest Products Statistics	Extension of existing mandate
... on Wood Energy	Extension of existing mandate
... on Forest Sector Outlook	Extension of existing mandate
... on Forest Policy (Forest Policy Network)	Integration into ToS on FSO
... on Forest Communication (Forest Communicators' Network)	Merge with FAO global Forest Communicators' Network
... on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector (Joint ILO/ECE/FAO Expert Network)	Increased coordination with Forest Europe (to be further discussed)
... Boreal Forests	Establishment of new ToS

Overview on forest related work

By ECE and FAO

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ECE and FAO, in line with their governance structures, presented an overview of their forest-related work in the region in order to facilitate the review of the proposed list of activities for 2020.

The Joint Working Party took note of the information provided and approved the list of planned activities after amendments.



- The Joint Working Party did not adopt the Rules of Procedure of COFFI to govern its work, and thus the ECE Rules of Procedure continue to apply, the number of Bureau members of the Joint Working Party remains unchanged.
- The Joint Working Party re-elected Mr. Matthias Dieter (Germany) as Chair, and Mr. Jeffrey Prestemon (United States of America) and Ms. Magdalena Wolicka (Poland) as Vicechairs. They will hold office until the end of the forty-second session.
- The Joint Working Party agreed to hold its next session from 24 to 25 March 2020 in Geneva, Palais des Nations and requested the secretariat to organize the International Day of Forest on 23 March 2020 (given that 21 March, the official IDF date, falls on a Saturday).



Thank you!



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Thünen Institute – German Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry, and Fisheries

5 November 2019, Geneva, Switzerland