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**Executive Summary of the ECE/FAO/Forest Europe
Guidelines on the Promotion of Green Jobs in Forestry****Note by the Secretariat***Summary*

This document contains the Executive Summary of the “Guidelines on the Promotion of Green Jobs in Forestry”, a joint publication of ECE, FAO and Forest Europe.

The Committee and Commission is invited to approve the ECE/FAO/Forest Europe “Guidelines on the Promotion of Green Jobs in Forestry”

The Committee and the Commission is invited to encourage member States to implement the “Guidelines” at the national level.

The Committee and the Commission is invited to provide guidance to ECE and FAO on how to support the implementation of the “Guidelines” among forest stakeholders in the ECE and FAO member States and signatories of Forest Europe.



I. Executive Summary

A. Background

1. The role of forests and forestry is changing rapidly and profoundly. Societies, policy makers and markets are placing a renewed focus on an expanded and universal vision of sustainable development with prosperous and inclusive societies living within planetary boundaries. Forests are central to this vision. This opens major opportunities for forests and forestry but also poses significant challenges. The Guidelines are intended to assist stakeholders in the forestry sector to successfully navigate the transition.

2. New and increasing opportunities for providing forest-based services and products, growing business and revenue as well as creating jobs arise from this transition. The importance of ecosystem services is becoming increasingly evident to society, in particular carbon sequestration, biodiversity protection and water treatment and retention. Markets for products are growing including in bioenergy, modern wood-based mass construction and a range of non-wood forest products. Moreover, the demand for downstream services such as environmental education, health services, recreation and tourism based on forests is rising significantly in many parts of the ECE region.

3. Continued globalization of economies and advancing technology are two major challenges ahead for the forestry sector. In their wake, mechanization, reorganization of forestry supply chains, and increasing incorporation of information and communications technology, are reducing the number of workers needed in traditional forestry. Accelerating climate change and rising concern about biodiversity stress the importance of sustainable forest management. While employment in traditional forestry, focused on timber production, will most likely continue to decline, the remaining workforce will be critical for achieving effective and sustainable management of forests. At the same time, deficits in decency¹ of work in forestry, ageing workforces and populations combined with continued urbanization make it both more urgent and more difficult to attract the talent needed for the future.

4. A large and growing body of evidence shows that a skilled and enabled workforce is indispensable to meet the challenges and to seize the opportunities resulting from the transition to a green economy and sustainable development. Due attention has to be paid not only to the new and growing role of environmental goods and services, but also to greening production processes, the organization of work and the development of skills which would enable this transition. At present, there is a lack of competent and adaptable workforce in many forest enterprises, administrations and service providers. Following current trends, this workforce deficit may be even larger in the future.

B. Key areas for action presented in the Guidelines

5. Five key areas for action emerge from the analysis of the above drivers of change and their impact on forests and the forestry sector:

1. Understanding the current workforce in forestry and its future needs

6. Information on the workforce, including on occupational safety and health (OSH), is vital but often missing and increasingly difficult to obtain. Stakeholder cooperation can overcome these difficulties, through increasing efforts to collect data, also on aspects which were not monitored by forest sector before, and improving the availability, reliability and representativeness of the data. Use should be made of all appropriate sources where data are scarce, including dialogue with all relevant actors.

¹ According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), decent work involves opportunities for work that are productive and deliver a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

7. Both the use of modelling techniques, which ideally take into account productivity increases, age, gender and current and future skills profiles in workforce projections, and consultation and dialogue mechanisms with all relevant actors and stakeholders in the sector, will provide the mapping of labour market needs in forestry and enable their integration at national level. Combined efforts can develop and implement the human resources and green jobs development plans needed.

2. Upgrading the workforce to ensure traditional forestry is fit for purpose

8. The composition of the forestry workforce and the occupational profiles within it are changing constantly due to evolving technology and management requirements. Importantly, the decency of many current forestry jobs leaves to be desired. Gaps in competencies, often going beyond technical skills, should be assessed and filled.

9. Fora and mechanisms for consultation and dialogue on sectoral skills involving a broad spectrum of stakeholders from the forest sector and cross-sectoral cooperation with education and labour administration sectors are fundamental means to detect evolving needs in the labour market and identify responses in education and skills development. Similarly, efforts should be made to upgrade existing skills of workers and motivate them for continuous learning. Priority in skills development efforts should be given to contractors and workers performing tasks with major environmental or health and safety risks, migrant workers and forest smallholders. To enable timely mobility of workers, especially in cases of major forest disturbances, international harmonization and recognition of competencies should be promoted e.g. through establishing international sector-wide competency standards.

10. Any issues identified with fundamental rights at work, in particular discrimination, freedom of association and collective bargaining, as well as concerns about occupational safety and health (OSH), need to be addressed, starting with the wide dissemination of relevant national legislation and ILO standards among all stakeholders.

11. Highlighting the issue of non-discrimination, gender and other inequalities in the sector should be addressed. Recognizing that there are no quick fixes, member States should develop national gender and broader employment diversity strategies for the forestry sector. These strategies should include monitoring participation of women and other groups in the sector and of equal treatment to ensure equal pay for equal work for all.

12. Conditions for all workers in the sector, including those of service providers and contractors, should meet the requirements for decent work. Access to business management and technical training at a good quality level and low cost should be provided. Commissioning parties should support contractor development and upgrading by long-term engagement, active involvement and on-site presence. International recognition of registration and certification of contractors should be fostered to allow easy movement across borders in response to changes in demand.

13. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining in forestry should be supported by the establishment or strengthening of workers and contractors' associations and mechanisms for social dialogue and collective bargaining. Reporting of violations of national regulations, applicable international standards or internal enterprise directives, should be encouraged by providing protection for whistle-blowers.

14. All entities involved in forest operations should be responsible /share responsibility for occupational safety and health. Certification schemes for sustainable forest management can also be one of the ways to improve OSH standards by contractors and forest owners. Reporting on OSH status and areas of improvement should be strengthened by standardizing accident and occupational health reporting and expanding its application in line with the FAO Guide on Accident Reporting in Forestry, supported by self-inspection and audits.

3. The need for a just transition

15. Changing the forest management objectives can lead to significant disruption of forest operations thus causing severe impacts for local workforces and communities. Just transition towards an environmentally sustainable economy therefore needs to be well managed and contribute to the goals of decent work for all, social inclusion and the eradication of poverty.

To achieve this, dedicated strategies and plans should be developed through social dialogue and consensus to mitigate social impacts, and should include the establishment and strengthening of institutional and technical capacities of regional and local authorities to guide the transition; provision of opportunities for the participation of representatives of employers and workers at all possible levels and stages of the policy process; and, an aim at policy coherence of all key policy areas to address environmental, economic and social sustainability simultaneously.

4. Identifying and seizing new opportunities emerging from a shift to green economies

16. New, non-traditional job opportunities need to be mapped and their benefits evaluated, assessing the economic sustainability as well as decency of newly-emerging jobs. The identified opportunities can be seized by mobilizing partners and resources beyond the forestry, by creating dialogue fora and partnerships and promoting cooperation and networking vertically and horizontally. Innovation and entrepreneurship should be supported, and incentives, business models and frameworks for value capture developed, while at the same time using the opportunity of new lines of benefit and value creation to diversify the professional background, gender and ethnicity of the workforce.

5. Measures to attract the workforce of the future

17. Forestry will have to retain existing and attract new high potential workers in a more restricted and competitive labour market in the future. This requires long-term plans, based on a thorough assessment of current skills and age profiles and identification of current and future skills needs. These plans should include modern-day measures to make forestry work more relatable, attractive and accessible, involving recruitment professionals to effectively communicate the changing nature of forestry work in a green economy to youth and job seekers. In addition, the plans should include initiatives to extend and diversify the recruitment base and workforce with migrant, women and older workers.

C. The way forward

18. The guidelines are not prescriptive. They offer a menu of options from which national and local stakeholders can choose and which they can adapt in light of their respective needs and conditions. They aim to provide specific and operational guidance on how the challenges can be tackled and the opportunities seized. The focus of the guidelines is on jobs related to the production of goods and services in the forest. They will be complemented by a compilation of good practices from across the ECE and FAO member States and signatories of Forest Europe in order to speed up learning and assist the transformation of the sector.

19. Dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders in the forestry sector and with partners in other sectors are key. Their results should inform policy and strategy such as national forest programmes, bio-economy and other sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, international or national standards and certification schemes, vocational and university education as well as industry driven initiatives.

20. The application of the Guidelines at national and local levels, in enterprises and administrations, will make a major contribution to ensure that the forestry workforce is fit for purpose and forestry is able to attract workers in the 21st century's labour market in order to realize the full potential of forests in green economies.

II. Points for Consideration

21. The Committee and Commission is invited to approve the ECE/FAO/Forest Europe "Guidelines on the Promotion of Green Jobs in Forestry"

22. The Committee and the Commission is invited to encourage member States to implement the "Guidelines" at the national level.

23. The Committee and the Commission is invited to provide guidance to ECE and FAO on how to support the implementation of the “Guidelines” among forest stakeholders in the ECE and FAO member States and signatories of Forest Europe.
