

## Can Europe's forests satisfy the increasing demand for raw material and energy under sustainable forest management?

Joint press release issued of the UNECE/FAO Timber Section, the Liaison Unit Warsaw of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) and the Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI)

Wood is gaining an increasing attention, in the framework of climate change discussions and energy security, as a carbon neutral energy to replace non-renewable energy sources. This, combined with rising energy prices, is leading to an increase in wood demand. "Since traditional use of wood in Europe, notably by the pulp and paper industry, continues to expand as well, the competition between wood for bio-energy and for traditional wood processing industry is an increasing challenge", emphasizes Bernard de Galembert, Forest Director at CEPI, the Confederation of European Paper Industries.

On the other hand, forest inventories have shown, that in most European forests, annual growth exceeds by far the volume of wood harvested. This has led to discussions on how best to mobilize additional wood resources, considering the impacts by and on other sectors and finding 'win-win' solutions.

During a two-days workshop (11-12 January 2007) on 'Mobilizing Wood Resources', over 100 different stakeholders and country delegates presented their positions and strategies towards increasing wood mobilization and then discussed and assessed their opportunities and risks. Piotr Borkowski, Head of the Liaison Unit Warsaw of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), stated that the results will be considered by the MCPFE as a contribution in the drafting process of the resolutions for the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe to be organized in Warsaw, Poland in November 2007.

Mr Kit Prins, Chief of the UNECE/FAO Timber Section, summarized the recommendations of workshop:

- Governments, with the participation of all stakeholders, should ensure comprehensive policies and strategies for the forest sector, rural development and energy. It is important to coordinate policies with other sectors to avoid perverse or contradictory effects.
- Improve the quality of information on wood resources (including forests, trees outside forests, wood industry residues and post consumer wood fibre), and then use this broader base for wood supply.
- Promote the sustainable utilization of forests by empowering forest owners to cooperate, improving infrastructure, and stimulating innovation and R&D along the wood supply chain.

The final conclusions and recommendations will be published on the website shortly at:

<http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/workshops/2007/wmw/mobilisingwood.htm>

The workshop was organized by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)/Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Timber Section, the Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI), the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe - Liaison Unit Warsaw

(MCPFE LUW), the Joint FAO/UNECE/ILO Experts Network for the Implementation of Sustainable Forest Management, the FAO Forestry Department and the European Forest Institute (EFI); with the support of the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN).

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