



UNECE-FAO
FORESTRY AND TIMBER SECTION

Team of Specialists on Boreal Forests

3 February 2021, 15:00-17:00 CET
Microsoft Teams

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance:

Mr. Florian Kraxner (IIASA)
Mr. Darren Sleep (SFI Canada)
Mr. Torniainen Tatu (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland)
Mr. Alexander Kryshen (SPSU Russia)
Ms. Polina Kinigopulo (VNIILM Russia)
Mr. Aleksey Ilintsev (NRI Russia)
Ms. Maureen Whelan (Canadian Forest Service)
Mr. Christopher Woodall (US Forest Service)
Mr. Peter Blomback (Swedish Forestry Agency)
Mr. James Brandt (Natural Resources Canada)
Mr. Anatoly Shvidenko (IIASA)
Mr. Povilas Žemaitis (LRCAF Lithuania)
Mr. Gerben Janse (Swedish Forestry Agency)
Mr. Zbignev Glazko (Ministry of the Environment of Lithuania)
Mr. Knut Øistad (NIBIO)
Ms. Elizaveta Kushnir
Mr. Shono Kenichi (FAO)
Mr. Taneli Kolström (NRI Finland)
Mr. Guy Robertson (US Forest Service)
Ms. Maria Sokolenko (Federal Forestry Agency of the Russian Federation)
Mr. Johan Svensson (Swedish Forestry Agency)
Mr. Andrey Sirin (IFS, Russia)

From the Secretariat:

Ms. Paola Deda, Director, Forests, Land and Housing Division
Ms. Milica Apostolovic, UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section

Item 1: Adoption of the agenda

Mr. Darren Sleep, ToS Chair welcomed the participants and introduced the agenda. Mr. Guy Robertson (USA) proposed to include an update on the upcoming IBFRA conference. The Chair accepted the suggestion and the agenda was adopted.

Item 2: Discussion of the Workplan

The Chair reminded the ToS members of the workplan developed by ToS leadership in collaboration with the Secretariat and invited them to provide their comments and suggestions.

Mr. Florian Kraxner (IIASA) updated ToS members on state of preparations of the report “Sustainable boreal forest management – challenges and opportunities for climate change mitigation” developed as part of the IBFRA Insight Process. The paper is almost completed and the ToS members will be invited to review it from a policy perspective. The plan is to launch it at the upcoming IBFRA conference in August.

The Chair called for a volunteer to lead the preparations of a policy brief on key outcomes of IBFRA insight process.

Ms. Maureen Whelan (Canada) suggested that the lead should come from a ToS member from the policy side.

Ms. Maria Sokolenko (Russian Federation) noted that, from the Russian side, colleagues who did not participate in the preparations of the original report might be interested in taking part in this work and asked for 2 or 3 weeks to discuss the issue internally.

The Chair noted that inputs from others are welcome, but coordination from Co-Chair would be desirable.

Mr. Guy Robertson (USA) noted that a closer insight into the content of the report would help identify the appropriate lead.

Mr. Johan Svensson (Sweden) asked to share some of the main messages and conclusions from the report.

Mr. Florian Kraxner (IIASA) provided a more detailed overview of the report, including its main conclusions.

Ms. Maureen Whelan (Canada) suggested to identify a smaller group within the ToS who would take the lead on the policy brief and who will have the full access to the report.

The Chair suggested to develop a timeline for the review process and policy paper development within a week. He also suggested a potential webinar with IUFRO to talk about boreal-related work and identify collaboration opportunities, and invited ToS members to comment on this proposal.

Mr. Peter Blomback (Sweden) supported the idea and suggested to have the webinar once the policy brief is finalized.

Mr. Gerben Janse (Sweden) noted that four background papers made for the boreal ministerial summit might be useful in preparing communications material and offered to share them with the ToS.

Mr. Anatoly Shvidenko (IIASA) suggesting paying particular attention to the glossary and definitions that will be used in both policy paper and communications materials.

Ms. Maria Sokolenko (Russian Federation) suggested to include the point about terms and definitions in the workplan. The ToS can address this item specifically, or make use of previous experience (say, IBFRA Insight) or choose to consider the issue anew for each new research/publication/etc.

Mr. Guy Robertson (USA) noted that key issues of relevance to boreal forest work include the indigenous people, subsistence matters, and biodiversity and that these need to be considered as well.

Mr. Johan Svensson (Sweden) suggested that after the report is done, adding more issues – such as those proposed previously as well as others – like wetland ecosystems – might also be included.

Item 3: Update on the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development 2021

The Secretariat briefed the ToS members on the preparations for the virtual Roundtable on boreal forests organized as part of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development on 15 March, 15:00 – 17:00 CET. The roundtable will feature 3 presentations on policy actions developed by governments, followed by interventions from other interested participants (these can be other ToS members, providing a research perspective on the issues raised).

Ms. Maria Sokolenko (Russian Federation) noted that she and her colleagues would be interested in contributing.

The Chair noted that he could present at the Regional Forum.

Mr. Guy Roberson (USA) suggested to consider looking at the contribution of boreal forests to SDGs pertinent to socio-economic subsistence, including of indigenous populations, as this would widen the discussion on the contribution of boreal forests to SDGs.

Item 4: Communication

The Secretariat briefed the ToS on the existing work to promote the ToS and their outputs and invited them to share potential distribution channels to advertise the roundtable and upcoming meetings.

The Chair asked if it would be possible to facilitate an exchange of information (e.g. minutes) or a discussion between other Teams of Specialists serviced by UNECE/FAO.

Ms. Maureen Whelan (Canada) suggested an exchange of minutes among relevant Teams of Specialists.

Mr. Florian Kraxner (IBFRA) briefed ToS members on [the upcoming IBFRA conference](#) (16-20 August 2021) and noted that there might be a possible session on policy.

The Chair asked if it would be appropriate for an abstract coming from ToS on coordination between research and policy to be presented at the conference, and asked ToS members for their feedback.

Ms. Maureen Whelan (Canada) noted that such input from ToS would be welcome.

Mr. Torniaainen Tatu (Finland) supported the proposal to have a session at the conference that will feature some of the ongoing work of the ToS.

Mr. Gerben Jense (Sweden) asked for a clarification on whether the session on policy would be more focused on science-policy dialogue or the session where countries would discuss the best practices.

Ms. Maria Sokolenko (Russian Federation) also supported a session on policy at the IBFRA conference focusing on the policy-science dialogue to which the ToS would contribute.

Item 5: Date and place of the next meeting

The ToS suggested to have the next meeting in late March/early April (exact date TBC).

Item 6: AOB

No other issues were raised.