

REPORT OF ONLINE WORKSHOP ON FOREST MONITORING AND RESTORATION IN THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

9 DECEMBER 2020



Opening remarks

Mr. Gianluca Sambucini, Acting Chief of the joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, welcomed everyone to this virtual workshop. He thanked all the countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA) for their work in developing criteria and indicators C&I for sustainable forest management (SFM) and for the commitments they had given to forest landscape restoration (FLR). He acknowledged the considerable support from the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany. He also thanked IUCN, as a secretariat of Bonn Challenge, for their help in supporting the organization of the FLR module for this webinar. There had been many positive developments and excellent cooperation in recent years in the region on forest monitoring and forest restoration, and he thanked all those who had been involved in work on strengthening both. He gave a brief overview of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) plans, on behalf of Mr. Ulrich Apel, GEF Senior Environmental Specialist, who could not attend the meeting. He pointed out that GEF had invested \$350 million in FLR through GEF 7 (2018-2022) and almost all the funding in that cycle had been taken up. The GEF 8 funding cycle would begin in July 2022 and would offer another opportunity to support commitments under the Bonn Challenge.

FOREST MONITORING IN THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA (9:00-12:00 AM)

Presentations from the meeting are available here: <https://unece.org/forests/events/workshop-forest-monitoring-and-restoration-caucasus-and-central-asia>

Overview of the UNDA project "Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia"

Mr. Roman Michalak added his welcome and reviewed the development of this successful project. The project (2016-2020) had received funding under the United Nations Development Account (UNDA). Its inception was at a workshop in Yerevan, Armenia in November 2016. Though C&I have been in operation for 30 years, there was a need to support CCA countries to develop tailored national C&I sets that were applicable to their situation. The first task had been to develop guidelines for the C&I development, in parallel to the production of first drafts of national C&I sets, during five national workshops and these were then shared at an intermediate review at workshop in Tbilisi, Georgia in February 2018 at which initial sets of C&I had been jointly reviewed for later testing. During the regional intermediate workshop, held in parallel with the meeting of the Team of Specialists on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management, country experts exchanged experience with members of the Team of Specialists and strengthened their knowledge on development of criteria and indicators. There followed a second series of national workshops to finalize the C&I sets. During the third regional meeting in Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan, all project countries presented their sets of criteria and indicators and plans for their implementation. Additional funding had been received, allowing the project to be extended for one more year. This funding was used to support the development of methodologies for collection of data for all indicators and development of the policy briefs on use of C&I in various areas in forestry. The final publication on National Reporting on Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia is in preparation. Overall, more than 500 people had contributed to the project and this had strengthened regional cooperation. It had also resulted in some excellent contributions to the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA 2020). Once the project is finished, there is a lot of work ahead and one of the first steps would be the development of monitoring the ongoing development of SFM in the countries.

Forest monitoring in Armenia

Ms. Yeva Danielyan, Senior Specialist, "Hydrometeorology and monitoring center" SNCO, Forest monitoring service, offered special thanks to a project team. The former "Forest monitoring Center" SNCO

had become part of larger monitoring organization, which had responsibility for assessing the state of forests in Armenia, preventing illegal logging as well as other negative actions, to contribute to the work for increasing forest cover (to be doubled by 2050). Sites have been identified to support a programme to plant 10 million trees by end of 2021, with the aim of improving biodiversity and ecology.

In its C&I set, Armenia had identified seven criteria. There were some criteria that were not included due to lack of information, but research was being undertaken that would improve the feasibility of reporting on indicators that is not currently feasible, especially biodiversity. Monitoring forest carbon stock was also a priority. Work on identifying methods of assessing carbon stocks had been undertaken in the north of the country but had still to be extended to cover central and southern Armenia. Armenia looked forward to finding international partners who could help to progress such work.

Forest monitoring in Georgia

Mr. Carl Amirgulashvili, Head of Biodiversity and Forestry Department, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, reported that a National Forest Inventory (NFI) project had started in 2019, with the support of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ). Georgia had developed four main criteria as part of its C&I set. The NFI had been completed in seven regions, covering 1.8 million hectares and another three regions were due to be completed in summer 2021.

Georgia had set up a forest monitoring and information system (FIMS), with three modules to collect, process/store and communicate. All the IT equipment needed for FIMS was in place. There would be a centralized system for monitoring illegal logging. Data would be available online to all who are interested, via a Forest and Land-use Atlas of Georgia. The Atlas would be a comprehensive source of data on protected areas, fires and much more. Georgia had adopted a new Forest Code in 2020 and had begun to implement SFM.

Forest monitoring in Kazakhstan

Mr. Kairat Ustemirov, Advisor to the Vice-Minister of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, reported that a specialized body had been set up, with responsibility for forest intervention, which would try to control all activities in the 12.5 million hectares of forests in Kazakhstan (4.7% forest cover). New C&I have been prepared but there had been a delay in approving the indicators: this was under consideration by the new Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan. There had initially been a lack of interest among stakeholders. The first criterion covered forest area, based on the NFI and classified by species. The second criterion was the productive capacity of forest – the availability of forest resources. The third covered forest conditions, including fire damage and deforestation. The former forest selection and seed centres had now been combined into one centre that would assess and monitor all types of damage. The fourth criterion was designed to foster the social and economic benefits. There was a specific State budget for forest research on the topic. The Forest Code and legislation had been amended to recognize the important contribution of forest ecosystem services. Further they want to assess spending on maintaining biodiversity. A methodology for assessing the carbon capture and storage function of forests would need to be developed. Overall, implementation of C&I would include introducing the reporting for akimats (regions) of all levels, developing mechanisms of monitoring C&I and streamlining statistical reporting, as well as establishing reporting lines for akimats.

Forest monitoring in Kyrgyzstan

Ms. Suzanna Seideeva, Chief Specialist, Department for the Development of Forest Ecosystems of the full name (SAEPF) of the Kyrgyz Republic, explained that the Kyrgyz set of C&I included six criteria and 58 indicators. They had aimed for a smaller number but opted for the higher number. There was now a

detailed definition of the methodology for collecting data. It was expected that the government would soon approve the final set of C&I.

A network of pilot trials and a database had been set up for conducting the NFI, following a systematic approach. Access to better and more reliable data would improve the accountability of the regional forest management centres. There would be a need to train those working in the forestry centre on the methods for assessing indicators. There would be regular updating of the indicators. All international donors who had supported the vital work on developing C&I were warmly thanked.

Forest monitoring in Uzbekistan

Mr. Abduvokhid Zakhadullaev, Head of Department, State Forestry Committee on Forestry of the Republic of Uzbekistan, described the existing system for monitoring forest resources and gave an overview of the seven criteria and 29 indicators that had been developed. Fact sheets had been prepared, covering all 29 indicators. The next step was to draft a resolution for the formal approval of the C&I. Meetings had taken place with 11 different ministries and formal adoption was expected in March 2021.

An NFI had been initiated and a data centre had been established. Steps had been taken to develop the capacity along with improved methods for collecting information to support the C&I. It was planned to hold a final workshop to finalize the C&I and to share findings with neighbouring countries and the project partner countries.

Overview of national reporting on sustainable forest management in the Caucasus and Central Asia

Mr. Tamer Otrakcier, international expert, commented on the difficulties that countries had faced at the start of the project because of outdated data and poor statistical information. Countries in CCA had experienced significant changes in forest structure following the breaking up of the Soviet Union and this had been a major setback. The main discussion focused on how best countries could develop C&I. Cooperation with all the partners and between the CCA countries had been excellent throughout the project. He summarized the recommendations that had emerged as a result of the invaluable experience gained from the project. He closed by comparing this with the experience that had been gained in Turkey.

Policy brief on C&I for sustainable forest management and guidelines for its development on the national level

Ms. Stefanie Linser, international expert, began by defining SFM and C&I, followed by a brief history of their evolution. The first indicator sets had been developed in 1990s. There were 170 countries taking part in their development. The need for C&I was explained, together with the benefits that attach to developing national C&I. C&I provide a basis for developing policy and reporting on the state of forests. Beginning in 2017, together with Mr. Peter O'Hara and the secretariat, she had developed guidelines for developing national C&I that included concepts, definitions, tools, methods and reference materials to guide the development process of national C&I for SFM. The forest sector has been a global leader in developing and using C&I; however, there was no standard objective method of assessing progress towards SFM. She ended the presentation with a list of eight recommendations of what are needed for the successful development of C&I.

Policy brief on C&I and decision making (Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting)

Ms. Annemarie Bastrup-Birk, international expert, reviewed the steps that had been taken in developing Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting (MAR), which followed the preparation of global forest goals and targets. A major consideration had been to try to reduce the reporting burden. There were 21 indicators related to seven thematic elements of SFM at the global level. C&I were now used to describe, monitor assess and report progress to SFM and operate at global, regional and national levels. The reporting

format is structured around the six Global Forest Goals. The successful adoption and implementation of MAR provides many benefits including attracting international funding.

Policy brief on C&I and Forest Policy and Management Support Information Systems (FPMSIS)

Mr. Andrzej Talarczyk, international expert, commented on how forest policy development relies on a complex mix of data and other factors. He highlighted that the recent advances in information processing technologies as well as unprecedented ease of information exchange provided users with new abilities for better management of forest ecosystems and services they provide. Forest Policy and Management Support Information Systems (FPMSIS) aim at facilitating this issue, by providing tools to assist gathering information on forests, making it accessible, making informed decisions, monitoring their results and making corrections to current policies. In his presentation, Mr. Talarczyk introduced the main characteristics of FPMSIS, and outlined how they could be used to improve forest policy making and management.

Policy brief on C&I and National Forest Inventory

Mr. Kari T. Korhonen, international expert, stressed that making informed decisions on how best to maintain the multiple benefits of forests requires accurate and reliable information. He pointed the role of NFI in this regards and introduced the core elements of NFI - sampling; the definition of concepts, variables and classifications; good measurement protocols that avoid bias in results; and fourthly, modelling to make the step from measurable variables to those that are important for deciding policy. There needed to be a legal basis for undertaking NFI, that provides for access to land, and a stable budget for future data collection. Institutions need skilled, specialized staff, including statisticians, field staff, along with modern tools and equipment for making the measurements and tools for data management and information sharing. NFIs were essential to contribute towards international activities, such as the Global FRA.

Policy brief on C&I and forest-related communication

Ms. Marta Gaworska, international expert, began by emphasizing why communication is vitally important. It informs policy makers and also helps in closing the gap between perceptions of forestry and the facts. She went on to describe the objectives of effective communication. Reliable information was essential to explain the value and importance of forests. An essential first stage was to identify the target audiences and to understand how best to engage with those audiences. An important step would be to draw up a communication strategy, providing a flexible framework guiding who, what and how to involve them. She presented a summary of the different tools that are available and a six-step process to develop a strategy, before reviewing tools that are available to support a communication strategy. Increasingly, social media had become an important channel for communication. She spoke of the value of the International Day of Forests as a example of effective communication tool. National C&I provide a solid basis for evidence-based communication.

Closing remarks on the first part of the workshop

In closing remarks for the first module of the workshop, Mr. Michalak mentioned that, though this was the last meeting funded by the project, the closing work would continue over next months, including on the final publication, and there had been an approval for a side event on the project outcomes at the XV World Forestry Congress, due to be held in Seoul, South Korea in 2021.

Mr. Michalak thanked all the national institutions and experts for their contribution and involvement throughout the project, recognizing the role of Mr. Vardan Melikyan and Ms. Nato Kirvalidze, as regional coordinators. Further, he acknowledged the input provided by international experts, including members of the Team of Specialists on Monitoring SFM, especially thanking Mr. Peter O'Hara and Ms. Stefanie

Linser for development of guidelines and participatory methodologies. Finally, he highlighted work of the staff of the Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section in managing the project, notably the input from Ms. Theresa Loeffler and Ms. Roksolana Shelest.

FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION IN THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA (12:30-15:30 PM)

Presentations from the meeting are available here: <https://unece.org/forests/events/workshop-forest-monitoring-and-restoration-caucasus-and-central-asia>

Forest landscape restoration and the Bonn Challenge in the Caucasus and Central Asia

Mr Ekrem Yazici, Deputy Chief of joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, extended the welcome to all speakers and participants, on behalf of the UNECE/FAO joint section in Geneva.

Opening remarks

Ms. Elke Steinmetz, Senior Officer, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany, welcomed all participants to this virtual workshop on behalf the ministry. This time of year provided an opportunity to reflect on what has taken place but also to look forward. The Astana Resolution was a landmark event in the process of implementing FLR in the CCA. Germany had supported the process since the beginning, working with UNECE/FAO and intended to continue to offer support financially and politically. She congratulated the organizers on this important regional cooperation and wished everyone success. On behalf of UNECE/FAO Ms. Steinmetz was thanked for the continuing strong support from her and Germany.

FLR and the Bonn Challenge in the Caucasus and Central Asia

Mr Ekrem Yazici, Deputy Chief of joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, explained that FLR fell within the policy dialogue and communication work activity of the UNECE/FAO Joint Section. Work had first started in 2017, with the publication of a document about the main causes of forest degradation, which was presented at the June 2018 Ministerial Roundtable in Astana. Work was also helping to develop a regional strategy on greening the landscape and improving infrastructure within the CCA countries, with the aim of helping countries to secure funding for FLR. The Forest Congress in Kyrgyzstan in May 2019 had focused on national-level forest monitoring, the state of forests in the region, and FLR. Within the Bonn Challenge, the ECCA 30 project sought to bring 30 million hectares of deforested and degraded land in Europe and the CCA region into restoration by 2030. The Joint Section was committed to continuing to support countries in their efforts to secure forest landscape restoration. A new Joint Section integrated programme of work would be introduced in 2021 and countries would be welcomed to seek further assistance with their efforts in FLR.

Forest landscape restoration efforts in Armenia

Mr. Taron Manukyan, Head of the Division of Reforestation, Afforestation and Protection, "Hayantar" SNCO of the Forest Committee, gave a brief description of Armenia and its forests, which are mostly in mountainous regions, where they served an important protective function and many of these forests had protected status. The forests are highly diverse. About 64% are located in the north and the rest lie in the south of the country. In 2018, a programme to extend forest cover began but the economic crisis and other factors delayed reforestation and FLR. Restoration in 2017 began with the afforestation of 170 ha bare land and has continued on a similar scale. In the 1930s, forest cover in Armenia was 35% but has fallen to only 8% currently. Armenia had committed to expand its forest cover under the Bonn Challenge by 50,000 ha, to be brought under restoration by 2030. He acknowledged the considerable contribution that international organizations had supplied in finance and expertise. In support of planned afforestation and reforestation, three greenhouses would be built in 2021 (one already existed) to grow conifer and deciduous planting stock. The aim was to produce seven million seedlings in 2021 that could be supplied to households to plant.

Forest landscape restoration efforts in Georgia

Mr. Carl Amirgulashvili, Head of Biodiversity and Forestry Department, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia, expressed his appreciation of the support the project team had given. There were several aims for FLR. All forests in Georgia were of natural origin – there were no plantations. The main effort to support forest expansion was the encouragement of natural regeneration. Georgia had adopted a new Forest Code in 2020 and this included a chapter on reforestation and afforestation. New regulation require regeneration to be undertaken within three years of degradation occurring. From 2013 – 2019, Georgia actively restored 266 ha fire-damaged forest(caused by wildfires). Areas of degraded land, totalling 1,500 ha have been identified for restoration by 2030. There is also the aim to regenerate 7,000 ha of land by natural means, under the Bonn Challenge, starting with 150 ha in 2021. All targets for restoration have been included in forest management plans.

Forest landscape restoration efforts in Azerbaijan

Mr. Sadig Salmanov, Senior advisor of the Forests Development Service, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan, stated that there were 1.8 million hectares of forest in Azerbaijan. Historically, forest cover been as high as 35%, but was now only 13%. All forests were state-owned and 85% of forests were located in mountainous regions. There was a great diversity of forest types, falling into six main types, though 85% were primarily composed of broadleaved species. In 2001, the Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources created several protected areas, which today cover 10% of the country: forests account for 10% of this area. New programmes, focused on FLR, had begun in partnership with several international organizations. Between 2001 and 2017 56,000ha of degraded forest had been restored. Azerbaijan announced in June 2019 that, under the Bonn Challenge, it would restore 170,000 ha of degraded lands by 2030, and an additional 100,000 ha, conditional upon receiving funding. A law adopted several years earlier would help to develop forests around the country's main highways and there were plans to plant 24,000ha of orchards in 2021. The public were now able to take on long leases, up to 49 years, and this should encourage forest restoration.

Forest landscape restoration efforts in Kazakhstan

Mr. Kairat Yegezhanov, Chief expert, Forestry and Wildlife Committee of the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, summarized the main causes of forest degradation, which were fires, illegal logging and desertification. Almost half of all forest was saxaul. The priority for the future was to increase forest cover to 5% from 4.7% currently. It was intended to plant two billion trees in mountains and in urban areas and to plant saxaul on the dry bed of the Aral Sea. International collaboration and sharing best practice would be essential to reach the goals that had been agreed under the Bonn Challenge. Kazakhstan expected to restore 1.5 million hectares under the Bonn Challenge and had an ambition to restore an additional 300,000 ha.

Forest landscape restoration efforts in Kyrgyzstan

Ms. Suzanna Seideeva, Chief Specialist, Department for the Development of Forest Ecosystems of the SAEPP of the Kyrgyz Republic, stated that forest cover was about 5%, or 1.2 million hectares, of which 891,000 ha were in protected, mostly mountainous, areas. All forests are owned and managed by the state. Deforestation had occurred throughout the period from 1930 until 1966. Since 1966, the forest area had increased by 1.57%. Overgrazing continued to be a major issue, affecting pastureland and forest. A 5-year Action Plan had been approved in 2018 and would operate until 2023. A Presidential order of 31 Oct 2018 approved a National Strategy for 2019 – 2040. The goal would be to increase the forest area, planting 100ha on average, annually.

Forest landscape restoration efforts in Tajikistan

Mr. Aziz Nazarov, Head of the Sector for International Relations and Information, Forestry Agency under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, stated that forest cover was 3% of the total land (427,000 ha), while overall forests and other wooded land is cover 1,336,000 ha. Over the past six years, from 2014, the quality of reforestation had been poor, and this had contributed to deforestation. Insect damage was a major issue and there was also a lack of fire extinguishing capacity. Under the Bonn Challenge the country had pledged to restore 66,000 ha of degraded land by 2030. Afforestation rates decreased since 1991 from 4,400 ha per year in 1992 to 1,700 ha per year in 2020. There is afforestation work supported by the German Development Bank (8 mln EURO , afforested 4 pilot zones on over 6,000 ha), Korean Forest Service (1 mln 640 thousand USD initiated work to restore 300 ha and plant pistachio on 20 ha). Seven new projects were developed in the framework of collaboration with FAO and FTFP (Turkey). The new Strategy for the forest sector development in Tajikistan until 2030 and action plan for its implementation 2021-2025 identified the annual increase in forest plantations by minimum 4,000 ha. Major issues that Tajikistan needs support from international community: strengthening systems for sustainable forest management, building capacity of staff, harmonizing policies, developing forest monitoring systems and databank, strengthening capacities to address forest fires and pests.

Forest landscape restoration efforts in Turkmenistan

Mr. Jumamyrat Saparmyradov, Head of the Sector for International Relations and Information, Forestry Agency under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, explained that 80 % of the country was desert. There were 150,000 ha of planted forests and extensive saxaul forests. During the 1990s forests had been heavily exploited for sawlogs and wood fuel. Since then, the introduction of natural gas had eased pressure on forests. Today's main threats were fire, insect damage and desertification. Forest protection agencies monitored the situation. Forest restoration aimed to expand the forest area and three million trees had been planted in the last 20 years, and 15,000 ha had been afforested, helping to support commitments under the Paris Agreement. In 2020, the country had celebrated 25 years of neutrality in support, would be planting 25 million trees, including 5.6 million trees in and around cities. From 2013 – 2020, 20,000 ha of the Aral seabed had been planted with trees. Future priorities would focus on continued international/regional cooperation, encouraging natural regeneration of forests and promoting sustainable forest management.

Forest landscape restoration efforts in Uzbekistan

Mr. Abduvokhid Zakhadullaev, Head of Department, State Forestry Committee on Forestry of the Republic of Uzbekistan, explained the main causes of degradation were overgrazing, climate change, desertification, sand and dust storms. There were 10 million hectares of land held in the forest fund, which included three million hectares of forest. Forest cover was 8%, with an aim to increase this to 15% by 2030. Under the Bonn Challenge, Uzbekistan had committed to plant 500,000 ha by 2030, and a further 500,000 ha, if international funding were made available. From 2011 to 2020, Uzbekistan has restored forest landscapes in the area of more than 1,560,000 ha, mostly on the dried Aral Sea bed. Aircraft have been used to spread seeds in Aral Sea region. The pledge under the Bonn Challenge is already fulfilled, and now Uzbekistan aims to restore almost 1 million hectares additionally. In 2020, 80 million seedlings of nut-bearing species were produced, and the target was to raise this to 100 million seedlings per year.

Scaling up forest landscape restoration through regional initiatives: Latin 20x20

Mr. Miguel Gallardo, General Director of the Ecosystems and Biodiversity Unit, The Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARN), gave an overview of El Salvador, country from Latin America. The country faced many challenges in managing natural resources, but has focused mainly on

mitigating the impacts of climate change, based on adaptation. Restoration had taken a landscape approach with three objectives:

1. To restore and conserve critical ecosystems through socially inclusive processes, with a major focus on mangrove forest.
2. To restore highly degraded lands (of which 75% are agricultural).
3. To establish synergistic and natural infrastructure that will be resilient to climate change.

National strategies were in place to meet its Paris Agreement Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). They had used roundtables with different stakeholders, citing sugar cane as an example - a major activity, close to mangrove forests. There had also been coffee roundtables. Links with indigenous people had been built up, to benefit from their knowledge and understanding of the natural environment. Together with IUCN, El Salvador had developed an Action Plan for ecosystem and landscape restoration (2018 – 2022), focused on water. Local restoration plans had also been developed and a monitoring system was in place. Agroforestry had resulted in significant restoration of 240,000 ha. The next challenge would require more intersectoral cooperation to achieve the goal of restoring one million hectares, effectively half the country's land area. This presented an economic and social challenge as much as an environmental challenge.

Scaling up forest landscape restoration through regional initiatives: AFR100

Ms. Tangu Tumeo, Principal Forestry Adviser, Department of Forestry, Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, Malawi, described work in Malawi, undertaken since 2015. Malawi had 7.5 million hectares of degraded land out of a surface area of just over 9 million hectares. The 30 member countries of the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) committed to restore 100 million hectares of degraded land to meet the Bonn Challenge. For its part, Malawi undertook a national landscape restoration assessment and committed to restore 4.5 million hectares. The partnership countries had recognized the need to engage with communities, to showcase successes and replicate what has been shown to work in practice. It encouraged countries to allocate domestic budgets for FLR implementation and seek private funding. There was a need for extension staff to engage with farmers in adopting new technology or undertaking forest management, and a means of monitoring progress of FLR and how this impacted people's wellbeing.

Looking to the future there was a need to build partnerships across borders, to develop a platform for sharing best practice, to identify funding sources and thereby drive restoration activities. Capacity building workshops had helped countries to submit applications for international support. To date, 1.8 million hectares had been restored in Malawi.

Scaling up forest landscape restoration through regional initiatives: ECCA30

Mr. Boris Erg, Director of the IUCN Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, commented that the Bonn Challenge was the biggest global initiative on forest restoration. The first target to restore 150 million hectares had been achieved. The next target was to restore 350 million hectares, of which 210 million ha had already been committed. There was a set of principles to guide FLR, which were that it must deliver multiple benefits, deliver long-term benefits, had to operate at the landscape level, and must involve stakeholders. Already, 74 countries had made commitments and 40 more were expected to join. FLR brings economic benefits, it was estimated that every \$1 invested in FLR yielded a further \$9 of economic benefits. An Assessment Methodology for identifying restoration opportunities had already been applied to more than 500,000 ha worldwide.

The ECCA30 was a new regional initiative that intended to restore 30 million hectares of degraded or deforested land in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Mr. Erg described a vision for the future - to

conserve what we already have, to manage more sustainably the resources we have, and to restore those that had been lost.

Mapping out financial opportunities for implementation of forest landscape restoration in the Caucasus and Central Asia

Mr. Peter Gondo, Inter-Regional Advisor on Sustainable Forest Management at the UNFF Secretariat, recognized that finding the funding to implement forest restoration was a major challenge for everyone. Funding could come from domestic budgets or international spending, and also from private sources. Multilateral funds would be an important source, which would require partnerships to be developed. Application processes were often highly complex. The CCA countries had access to a range of funding sources including the EIB, individual countries, such as France, Germany and the UK. There were also regional funding opportunities plus several philanthropic sources. The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) had been established in 2015. It offered support in mobilizing financial support, and guiding countries to potential sources. To date, it had supported 25 countries in securing finance for FLR, including one country in the CCA region.

Funding opportunities to support in implementation of forest landscape restoration in the Caucasus and Central Asia

Ms. Vlada Nemova, the World Bank, explained that degradation caused a reduction of 4% in regional GDP in Central Asia (ELD, 2016). More importantly, it represented a threat to people's health and livelihoods. A vital requirement was to see government commitment and there had been several significant developments in recent years. The World Bank had launched a regional Resilient Landscape Programme (RESILAND), with a focus on spreading sustainable, resilient, integrated restoration practices across Central Asia. A regional initiative ECCA30 would see countries in Central Asia and Europe lead the restoration of 30 million hectares of degraded and deforested lands by 2030. The initiative followed the adoption of the Astana Resolution at the 2018 ministerial roundtable, which had affirmed cooperation among CCA countries to address their similar landscape challenges and work together to restore ecosystems. Funding would require good transboundary cooperation, sharing knowledge and best practice, and developing cross-border ecological corridors. The World Bank hoped to see more countries benefit from RESILAND and encouraged countries in the Caucasus to become involved.

Closure of the workshop

Mr. Abduvokhid Zakhadullaev, Chair of the meeting, thanked everyone for their contributions. The morning session had provided much information about the countries in the CCA and their development of C&I. The afternoon had focused on FLR, including regional cooperation and funding opportunities. He looked forward to further opportunities to meet and cooperate.

ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

| N | Title | First-Name | Last-Name |
|----|-------|------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Mr. | Abduvokhid | Zakhadullaev |
| 2. | Ms. | Aidai | Zhumasheva |
| 3. | Mr. | Aleksandre | Rukhadze |
| 4. | Ms. | Alexandra | Ibragimova |
| 5. | Mr. | Andrzej | Talarczyk |
| 6. | Ms. | Annemarie | Bastrup-Birk |
| 7. | Mr. | Arman | Avagyan |
| 8. | Ms. | Aurora | Matteini |
| 9. | Mr. | Ayser | Ghazaryan |
| 10 | Mr. | Azamat | Abuov |
| 11 | Mr. | Aziz | Nazarov |
| 12 | Mr. | Azubike | Michael Nwachukwu |
| 13 | Mr. | Boris | Erg |
| 14 | Mr. | Carl | Amirgulshvili |
| 15 | Ms. | Cholpon | Alibakieva |
| 16 | Mr. | Daniel | Wiegant |
| 17 | Ms. | Dani | Sarsekova |
| 18 | Ms. | Dilfuza | Yuldasheva |
| 19 | Mr. | Douglas | Clark |
| 20 | Mr. | Ekrem | Yazici |
| 21 | Ms. | Eliza | Zhunusova |
| 22 | Ms. | Elke | Steinmetz |
| 23 | Mr. | Fahim | Rahman Rafi |
| 24 | Mr. | Ferenc | Lakatos |
| 25 | Mr. | Florian | Steierer |
| 26 | Mr. | Georg | Hohberg |
| 27 | Ms. | Gheorghe | Marin |
| 28 | Mr. | Gianluca | Sambucini |
| 29 | Mr. | Gigia | Aleksidze |
| 30 | Mr. | Guy | Robertson |
| 31 | Mr. | Hovik | Sayadyan |
| 32 | Mr. | Iakob | Kapanadze |
| 33 | Mr. | Igor | Novoselov |
| 34 | Ms. | Ines | Rosa |
| 35 | Mr. | Äsmaïl | Belen |
| 36 | Mr. | Ivan | Paligorov |
| 37 | Mr. | Jack | Beard |
| 38 | Mr. | Jan | Staubach |
| 39 | Mr. | Jens | Wunderlich |

| | | | |
|----|-----|-------------|------------------|
| 40 | Mr. | Jochen | Statz |
| 41 | Ms. | Jovana | Mihailovic |
| 42 | Mr. | Juergen | Blaser |
| 43 | Mr. | Kairat | Ustemirov |
| 44 | Mr. | Kairat | Yegezhanov |
| 45 | Ms. | Kamala | Huseynli |
| 46 | Mr. | Kari | T. Korhonen |
| 47 | Ms. | Kety | Tsereteli |
| 48 | Ms. | Khatuna | Tsiklauri |
| 49 | Mr. | Konstantine | Peradze |
| 50 | Ms. | Ljupcho | Nestorovski |
| 51 | Ms. | Ludmila | Schaffer-Griffel |
| 52 | Mr. | Marion | Karmann |
| 53 | Mr. | Markus | Engel |
| 54 | Ms. | Marta | Gaworska |
| 55 | Ms. | Martina | Djodan |
| 56 | Mr. | Matthew | Wojcik |
| 57 | Mr. | Matthias | Dees |
| 58 | Mr. | Mehmet | Ridvan Cortu |
| 59 | Ms. | Melanie | Feurer |
| 60 | Mr. | Merab | Machavariani |
| 61 | Mr. | Michael | Kahl |
| 62 | Mr. | Miguel | Gallardo |
| 63 | Mr. | Milan | Gazdic |
| 64 | Ms. | Mona | Kananian |
| 65 | Mr. | Myles | Mac Donncadha |
| 66 | Ms. | Natalia | Vysotska |
| 67 | Ms. | Natasa | Vojnovic |
| 68 | Ms. | Natia | Tskhovrebadze |
| 69 | Ms. | Nato | Kirvalidze |
| 70 | Ms. | Nika | Malazonia |
| 71 | Mr. | Oliver | Wolf |
| 72 | Ms. | Paata | Torchinava |
| 73 | Mr. | Paul | Borsy |
| 74 | Mr. | Peter | Gondo |
| 75 | Mr. | Rajesh | Koirala |
| 76 | Mr. | Roman | Michalak |
| 77 | Mr. | Roman | Volosyanchuk |
| 78 | Ms. | Roksolana | Shelest |
| 79 | Ms. | Ronja | Wollnik |
| 80 | Ms. | Sadiq | Salmanov |

| | | | |
|----|-----|-----------|--------------|
| 81 | Ms. | Seideeva | Siuzanna |
| 82 | Mr. | Simon | Charra |
| 83 | Ms. | Stefanie | Linser |
| 84 | Mr. | Tamer | Otrakcier |
| 85 | Ms. | Tangu | Tumeo |
| 86 | Mr. | Taron | Manukyan |
| 87 | Mr. | Cuma | Uykun |
| 88 | Mr. | Jumamyrat | Saparmyradov |
| 89 | Ms. | Andra | Laoger |
| 90 | Ms. | Vlada | Nemova |
| 91 | Ms. | Yeve | Danielyan |

* Participants who did not indicate name in full were not included in the list of participants.