



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
30 July 2021

Original: English only



## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

### Economic Commission for Europe

### Food and Agriculture Organization

#### Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry

#### European Forestry Commission

##### Seventy-ninth session

Rome, 22-25 November 2021

Item 3(e) of the provisional agenda

**Joint Committee/Commission matters: Integrated**

**Programme of Work 2022-2025**

##### Forty-first session

Rome, 22-25 November 2021

## Background document for the new Integrated Programme of Work 2022-2025

### I. Introduction

1. The four-year Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work (WIPoW) of the Joint ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section (Joint Section) expires at the end of 2021.
2. The secretariat has engaged with member States to prepare the next Integrated Programme of Work (IPoW) for the period 2022-2025 during a Strategic Review process, which started in 2019 (ECE/TIM/2019/2) (timeline illustrated in the Annex of this document). This included the gathering of feedback on the WIPoW 2018-2021 through a survey that was distributed online to all relevant stakeholders involved in its implementation.
3. The analysis of the survey was presented at the seventy-eight session of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) (ECE/TIM/2020/Inf.4). In addition, discussions were held on how to enhance synergies between the Team of Specialists (ToS) during the forty-second session of the Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management, summarized in background document ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/Inf.1 and in the meeting report (ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/2).
4. This background document aims to summarize key outcomes of the Strategic Review process and the discussions which accompanied it, in order to provide member States with sufficient information to adopt the new Integrated Programme of Work 2022-2025 at the Joint Session of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC) (22-25 November 2021) in Rome, Italy, as outlined in the annotated agenda of the meeting (ECE/TIM/2021/1-FO:EFC/2021/1).

### II. The review process

#### A. Survey and informal discussion

5. The Strategic Review was launched during Forêt 2019 - the joint 77th session of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the 40th session of the FAO European Forestry Commission, held from 4 to 7 November 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland ([ECE/TIM/2019/2-FO:EFC/2019/2](#)). A detailed timeline of the Strategic Review process can be found in the Annex of this document.

6. The secretariat circulated a survey to gather views from all stakeholders who had participated in the implementation of the current WIPoW and shown interest in the development of the new IPoW. The secretariat prepared an [initial review of the results](#) from this survey for the Informal discussion on key findings of a survey for the Strategic Review of the Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work (WIPoW) 2018-2021, which took place on 18 June 2020.

7. While the assessment revealed that the work areas set out in the IPoW continued to be relevant, two Teams of Specialists (ToSs) (the ToS on Green Jobs and the ToS on Forest Communication) were considered no longer as impactful by some respondents. This also echoes some of the responses to previous questions regarding the alignment of ToSs to the relevance of themes and objectives of the IPoW.

8. The [moderators' report from the Informal discussion on key findings of a survey for the Strategic Review of the Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work \(WIPoW\) 2018-2021](#), on 18 June 2020 indicated that the possible discontinuation of the ToS on Green Jobs and Forest Communicating were again mentioned by meeting participants and the moderator concluded that:

- It was important to involve more experts with field experience in the ToS, as well as to promote greater cooperation between the different ToS.
- Strategies to increase the visibility and outreach of the work of the ToS should be pursued, and the engagement of Russian-, Spanish-, and French-speaking experts, audiences, activities and outputs strengthened, subject to interest and available resources.
- The possible nonrenewal of the ToS on Forest Communicators and the ToS on Green Jobs could be considered. These ToS had done excellent work and seemed to have fulfilled their role.

9. The survey and the outcome of the informal discussion suggested that the ToSs on Green Jobs and Forest Communication received the least support for continuation. Several comments highlighted that the ToS on Forest Sector Outlook would not need to be extended in the next IPoW.

## **B. Seventy-eighth session of COFFI**

10. The above information was conveyed to the seventy-eighth session of the COFFI, which took place from 4 to 6 November 2020, and the secretariat provided various options in a background document on the continuation of the ToSs during the period of the next IPoW 2022-2025 ([ECE/TIM/2020/7](#)). COFFI expressed general support for the draft IPoW and its division in the current four work areas, including the work on forest sector outlook studies and forest disturbances.

11. The Committee requested the secretariat to prepare a background document on how to enhance synergies between the ToSs and present it at the next session of the Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management (JWP). It also requested the secretariat to consult with the JWP on the merger of two ToSs - the ToS on Wood Energy and the ToS on Forest Products Statistics, and to consider an alternative format to continue the work on green jobs should the work of the ToS on Green Jobs be discontinued.

## **C. Joint Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management**

12. At its forty-second session, which took place from 22 to 24 March 2021, the JWP reviewed the second draft of the IPoW ([ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/7](#)).

13. The JWP agreed with the rationale of the merger of the ToS on Wood Energy and the ToS on Forest Products Statistics, however, cautioned that the focus of the merged team should not become too broad. The JWP suggested the creation of specific sub/thematic groups within the merged team in order to guarantee that both aspects are allocated the

necessary time and attention. It was also noted that different experts should be appointed by member States for each of the sub-teams.

14. The JWP recommended to increase cooperation on the topic of Green Jobs and find suitable modalities to facilitate joint work of Forest Europe and ECE/FAO. The EFC/COFFI Secretariat and Forest Europe Secretariat had an informal talk in February 2021 to discuss the possible cooperation and coordination between the respective work programmes. Forest Europe confirmed their interest in leading the work on green jobs in the forest sector, to which the Joint Section could actively contribute to in cooperation with relevant actors and within the scope of the Integrated Programme of Work.

15. The JWP also discussed the discontinuation of the ToS on Forest Sector Outlook. There was an overall consensus that the team could be adjourned for now (given the completion of the Forest Sector Outlook Study 2021), provided that the secretariat would continue working on its dissemination and capacity building activities. Therefore, the proposed IPoW 2022-2025 clearly states that the Outlook ToS is not discontinued, but simply adjourned for the 2022-2025 period. It is expected to be reactivated for the subsequent period.

#### **D. Joint Bureaux**

16. The Joint Bureaux provided guidance and recommendations throughout the Strategic Review process, and reviewed all drafts of the IPoW.

17. Following the recommendation from the Joint Bureaux, the leaders of all ToS reviewed the terms of references before the draft IPoW 2022-2025 was finalized.

18. On 3 June 2021, the Joint Bureaux members reviewed and approved the final draft of the IPoW 2022-2025, requesting that the reference to Forest Europe's work on green jobs will be mentioned in a footnote in para 39 and explained in a background document.

### **III. Resources available by the secretariat in 2022-2025**

19. The secretariat acknowledges the contribution of all Teams of Specialists and believes that the focus of each ToS is a worthwhile topic. However, the work of the ToS varies in relevance and because of the shifting priorities within the IPoW and the forest sector itself. In accordance with ECE guidelines on the time bound nature of Teams of Specialists, the relevance of Teams of Specialists is therefore reviewed on a regular basis and possible adjournments or discontinuations of teams that have either fulfilled their tasks or are addressing a topic of lower priority within the IPoW is considered. Currently, it appears that some ToS have indeed accomplished their specifically assigned tasks under the IPoW. Given the very restricted staff resources available in the ECE/FAO Joint Section, the current regular budget and temporary extra-budgetary resources available allow the Joint Section to effectively support up to four ToS.

20. Following the consultations with the JWP and the JB and considering the work area priorities of the new IPoW 2022-2025, the current draft of the IPoW 2022-2025 includes five Teams of Specialists with revised terms of references.

### **VI. Conclusion**

As a result of the Strategic Review, the draft IPoW 2022-2025 was finalized in June 2021 and submitted to the final review and approval of the Joint Session of COFFI/EFC in November 2021 (ECE/TIM/2021/6-FO:EFC/2021/6; ECE/TIM/2021/7-FO:EFC/2021/7). The Committee and Commission is invited to review and adopt the programme, including the relevant Terms of Reference of the subsidiary bodies.

## Annex

### Timeline of the Strategic Review process

