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**Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations****Economic Commission for Europe  
Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry****Seventy-ninth session**

Rome, 22-25 November 2021

Item 5(a) of the provisional agenda

**Food and Agriculture Organization European Forestry****Commission matters: Follow-up to the decisions of the fortieth  
session of the European Forestry Commission****Food and Agriculture Organization  
European Forestry Commission****Forty-first session**

Rome, 22-25 November 2021

**Follow-up on the decisions of the fortieth session of the  
European Forestry Commission\*****Note by the Secretariat***Summary*

The 40th Session of the Commission made several requests and recommendations to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This document presents the actions undertaken to implement these requests and recommendations. The implementation of recommendations on joint matters by the Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is not covered under in this document and will be reported in the relevant joint agenda items of the European Forestry Commission (EFC) and Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI).

\* Submitted late due to Secretariat procedural constraints including inputs from two parent organisations, UNECE and FAO.



## I. EFC recommendations for the Food and Agriculture Organization Programme of Work in Forestry

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*Area/action for FAO's  
programme of work*

*FAO Strategic Objective  
and Global Forest Goals*

*Follow-up activities by FAO*

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### 1. Follow-up on the decisions of the Fortieth session of the European Forestry Commission:

FAO is recommended to:

1.1 Provide more frequent updates on changes in forest area and land use as part of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) programme

SO2, SO5  
Goal 1,  
Goal 6

FAO developed a flexible FRA reporting process that allows for more frequent voluntary updates of key indicators, as requested during the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO). The initial results of this work will be presented in the 2025 edition of the FRA report. Expert Consultations will be held in Finland in 2022.

### 2. Presentation of forestry activities of the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia:

FAO is recommended to:

2.1 Continue to incorporate integrated landscape approaches in operational forestry work in the region, taking into account the multi-functional roles of forests;

SO2, SO4  
Goal 1

FAO is ensuring that integrated landscape approaches are fully incorporated in operational forestry work when designing and implementing Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) forest restoration projects in the region (Armenia, Serbia) and take into account the multi-functional roles of forests. More information on the above-mentioned projects can be found in document ECE/TIM/2021/11–FO:EFC/2021/11.

Two countries in Central Asia (Mongolia and Kazakhstan) are part of the GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes (DSL IP).

This Impact Program (IP) will take a catalytic, country-driven approach to accelerate transformational and durable changes at scale across dryland communities in 11 countries in three geographical clusters to avoid, reduce, and reverse further degradation, desertification, and deforestation of land and ecosystems in drylands.

The programmatic approach of the DSL IP will take into account the similar and transboundary nature of many of the challenges facing drylands.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.globallandscapesforum.org/publication/the->

Area/action for FAO's programme of work	FAO Strategic Objective and Global Forest Goals	Follow-up activities by FAO
		drylands-sustainable-landscapes-impact-program-local-action-for-impact-at-scale/
2.2 Continue to support natural resource management (including forests) through the strengthening of national policies, financing, provisioning of incentives, establishing taxation and governance frameworks and measures, including regulations, standards and monitoring of forest management interventions and practices, and support capacity development in this regard;	SO2, SO4 Goal 1 Goal 4 Goal 5	All forestry-related projects - independent of the type of funding (TCP, GCP, GEF, GCF) - are addressing the issue of creating an enabling environment (national policies and legal frameworks) and developing national capacities to support the sustainable management of natural resources in the region. More information on the above-mentioned projects can be found in document ECE/TIM/2021/11-FO:EFC/2021/11.
2.3 Continue to support the Forest Invasive Species Network for Europe and Central Asia (REUFIS) and its activities, in particular in organizing topical trainings on emerging invasive species and seeking synergies with other relevant organizations such as Forest Europe;	SO2 - SO5 Goal 1 Goal 5	<p>REU supported the organization of the 3rd annual network meeting of REUFIS in 2019, which was followed by a technical training on "Sustainable management of invasive species of nut trees and their management" and also supported the organization of the 4<sup>th</sup> annual network meeting, held in 2021.</p> <p>One global webinar called "Forest Invasive Species - the next global pandemic?" was jointly organized with REUFIS and other regional forest invasive species networks on 29 July 2020.</p> <p><a href="https://www.reufis.org/">https://www.reufis.org/</a></p> <p>A webinar called "Protecting oak trees for future generations in Europe and Central Asia" was held on 26 November 2020.</p>
2.4 Strengthen regional cooperation on forest fires	SO2 - SO5 Goal 1 Goal 6	There was some project level work relevant to this topic in REU during the reporting period. Recently, several countries in the region have requested technical support and assistance from FAO for regional-level coordination..
<u>3. Progress of Silva Mediterranea:</u>		
FAO is recommended to:		
3.1 Explore ways and means to develop and implement the project 'MedForYouth-Empowering Young Entrepreneurs around the Mediterranean'	SO2, SO4 Goal 5, Goal 6	<p>FAO supported the process of defining and identifying strategic goals and key actions related to priority area "Youth and the Environment" of the Union for the Mediterranean's (UfM) 2020-2030 Youth Strategy.</p> <p>The Youth Strategy includes eight key actions that aim to ensure that young people are informed and aware of environmental challenges; that their views, concerns and proposals are taken into account when formulating policies and actions, and that opportunities for strengthening green and blue skills, careers and jobs are</p>

<i>Area/action for FAO's programme of work</i>	<i>FAO Strategic Objective and Global Forest Goals</i>	<i>Follow-up activities by FAO</i>
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the basis for the transformative changes that occur leading up to 2030.

The final scope is to define a common and shared Mediterranean vision on this topic that can act as leverage for the development of the project "MedForYouth-Empowering Young Entrepreneurs around the Mediterranean".

4. Panel discussion: Emerging invasive species risk to European forests:

FAO is recommended to:

4.1 Continue to support the Forest Invasive Species Network for Europe and Central Asia and the implementation of its activities;	SO2, SO5 Goal 1 Goal 6	Information provided under para 2.3 above.  In addition, REU supports REUFIS with the organization of the network's regular annual meetings, related trainings, and webinars, and also participates in the Executive Committee, which guides the work of the network.
4.2 Support cross-sectoral forest protection measures to contribute to biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation and mitigation.	SO2, SO5 Goal 1 Goal 3 Goal 6	FAO is following cross-sectoral approach for conserving biodiversity and measures to address climate change adaptation and mitigation through two envisaged GEF and GCF projects (Armenia, Serbia). These two projects will focus on Forest and Landscape restoration, address drivers of forest degradation, sustainable management of forests, and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks. More information on the above-mentioned projects can be found in document ECE/TIM/2021/11-FO:EFC/2021/11.

5. FAO's work on biodiversity:

FAO is recommended to:

<u>5.1</u> Initiate, upon the adoption of the FAO Strategy on Biodiversity Mainstreaming across Agricultural Sectors, appropriate follow-up actions, including a plan to mainstream biodiversity in the forest sector, and report on progress made at the next appropriate session;	SO2, SO4 Goal 3 Goal 5	FAO Council adopted the Action Plan to guide the implementation of FAO's Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors in April 2021.  From 6 to 7 July 2021, FAO and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) convened a Global Dialogue on the role of food and agriculture in the Global Biodiversity Framework.
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The event included the participation of the Vice-Chair of FAO's Committee on Forestry (COFO) in a high-level roundtable dialogue to convey views and perspectives from the forest sector. A summary document will be shared with the SCBD to inform about the final round of deliberations of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

FAO's Forestry Division partnered with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) to prepare a joint study on "biodiversity mainstreaming in forestry". The study is planned as a Forestry Paper to be published ahead of the World Forestry Congress in 2021.

FAO partnered with EcoHealth Alliance to prepare a joint study on "Reducing Emerging Infectious Disease Risk in Forest Ecosystems", expected for publication by the end of 2021.

FAO's Forestry Division and the Animal Production and Health Division have jointly initiated a global study on the role of livestock in restoring the agrosilvopastoral lands and in preventing deforestation in dryland landscapes. The global study is part of the FAO biodiversity framework, and it will consider biodiversity conservation as one of the main indicators.

For action on forest genetic resources, see para 5.2 below.

The 2020 edition of the State of the World's Forests (SOFO) focused on Forests, Biodiversity, and People and aimed at informing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework with the latest data and information on (i) the extent to which relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets were met for forests, (ii) examples of how sustainable forest management can contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and (iii) the fact that transformation of food systems is needed to reduce pressure on forests and their biodiversity.

The XV World Forestry Congress, now scheduled for 2022, foresees one session - co-organized by FAO, CIFOR, International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and SCBD - dedicated to discussing concrete examples of how sustainable forest management can contribute to the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

<i>Area/action for FAO's programme of work</i>	<i>FAO Strategic Objective and Global Forest Goals</i>	<i>Follow-up activities by FAO</i>
<p><u>5.2</u> Continue to report on forest-relevant work of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources and the preparation of the second report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources, to the Regional Forestry Commissions.</p>	<p>SO2, SO4 Goal 3 Goal 5 Goal 6</p>	<p>In October 2020, FAO briefed the 25th session of COFO (COFO-25) on the forest-relevant work of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA), including the implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Forest Genetic Resources (FGR) and the preparation of the second global assessment on FGR.</p> <p>COFO-25 invited Members to finalize their country reports on FGR and submit them to FAO as soon as possible.</p> <p>In 2020, FAO launched two global projects with financial support from the Government of Germany to support the preparation of the second global assessment and the development of a new global information system on FGR. The global assessment and the new information system are planned to be released in 2023.</p> <p>At its Sixth Session held in April 2021, the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on FGR (ITWG-FRG) reviewed the progress made in the FGR work and also discussed several cross-cutting topics as requested by the CGRFA (the ITWG-FGR-6 documents are available at: <a href="http://www.fao.org/forest-genetic-resources/working-group/intergovernmental-technical-working-group-on-forest-genetic-resources/detail/en/c/1256834/">http://www.fao.org/forest-genetic-resources/working-group/intergovernmental-technical-working-group-on-forest-genetic-resources/detail/en/c/1256834/</a>). The ITWG-FGR-6 recommendations will be discussed by the CGRFA during its 18<sup>th</sup> Regular Session in September 2021 (<a href="http://www.fao.org/cgrfa/meetings/detail/en/c/1414719/">http://www.fao.org/cgrfa/meetings/detail/en/c/1414719/</a>).</p>

6. The role of sustainable wood value chains in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

FAO is recommended to:

<p>6.1 Support country efforts in the region to assess and harness the main contributions of sustainable wood value chains to the SDGs and climate change, as well as engendering and strengthening wood-based bio-economy at national level;</p>	<p>SO2, SO4, SO5 Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 6</p>	<p>The next edition of The State of the World's Forests (SOFO 2022) will focus on forest pathways to a green recovery, presenting the contributions from sustainable wood value chains to the bioeconomy, including generation of income and employment.</p> <p>The XV World Forestry Congress in 2022 will hold dedicated sessions on contributions from wood value-chains to the SDGs, including with the launch of a new</p>
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<i>Area/action for FAO's programme of work</i>	<i>FAO Strategic Objective and Global Forest Goals</i>	<i>Follow-up activities by FAO</i>
6.2 Seek further cooperation with regional partners to build capacities to strengthen sustainable wood value chains and their contributions to the advance sustainable forest management, achieve sustainable landscapes and climate change objectives, including in relation to the Decade of Family Farming and the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration; and	SO2, SO4, SO5 Goal 5 Goal 6	report on total contributions from the wood industry to the economy.  FAO's Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries (ACSFI) carried out an assessment of "Forest Products in the Global Economy: Enabling substitution by wood-based products and contributing to the SDGs". The report aims to improve the understanding of how to best increase the contribution of forest products to the transition towards a forest-based bioeconomy.
6.3 Engage with the public and private sectors to improve the public perception of sustainable wood products, emphasizing the benefits of sustainable wood value chains and pointing out the differences between sustainable and unsustainable wood products	SO2, SO4, SO5 Goal 4 Goal 5 Goal 6	FAO joined forces with the European Forest Institute (EFI) to identify recommendations for policy priorities in Europe for non-wood forest products for people, nature and the green economy in a white paper based on "lessons learned from around the Mediterranean" (forthcoming).  A series of videos focusing on the concept of #replacedwithwood will be launched ahead of the International Day of Forests 2022, which will be celebrated under the theme of "Forests and Sustainable Production and Consumption".  The XV World Forestry Congress will be used as a platform to present the idea of an extended #replacedwithwood campaign to attract donors, under the aegis of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests' (CPF) Joint Initiative, Sustainable Wood for a Sustainable World (SW4SW).

## 7. Global processes:

FAO is recommended to:

7.1 Continue to contribute to the Global Climate Action Agenda and to promote forest-related initiatives, projects and programmes as well as to provide support to countries in the development of their forest and other land use related proposals for the Green Climate Fund (GCF);	SO2, SO5 Goal 1 - Goal 6	FAO is following cross-sectoral approach for conserving biodiversity and measures to address climate change adaptation and mitigation through two envisaged GEF and GCF projects (Armenia, Serbia). These two projects will focus on Forest and Landscape restoration, address drivers of forest degradation, sustainable management of forests, and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks. More information on the above-mentioned projects can be found in document ECE/TIM/2021/11-FO:EFC/2021/11.
7.2 Explore ways and means to help further enhance the forest	SO2, SO5	FAO has actively promoted the sustainable use of biodiversity and mainstreaming biodiversity across

<i>Area/action for FAO's programme of work</i>	<i>FAO Strategic Objective and Global Forest Goals</i>	<i>Follow-up activities by FAO</i>
sector's contribution to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and to highlight the importance of the local context;	Goal 1 - Goal 6	<p>agricultural sectors, including forestry.</p> <p>FAO has initiated work on improved reporting on forest characteristics - including extent and trends in the area of primary forests - in close consultation with Member nations and other stakeholders.</p> <p>In addition, FAO continues to promote open and transparent digital access to FRA data and products to support monitoring progress towards national and international goals and targets.</p> <p>SOFO 2020 highlighted progress towards forest-related biodiversity targets and the importance of forests for biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>FAO has also offered to support country reporting specifically on progress on ecosystem restoration within the context of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and its work on the Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring (FERM).</p>
7.3 Further promote urban forestry activities;	SO2, SO5 Goal 1 - Goal 6	<p>FAO continued to promote urban forestry as a key tool for sustainable urban development. Urban forestry was promoted in different ways, including through the organization of regional meetings.</p> <p>The 12th and 13th meetings of the Silva Mediterranea Working Group on Urban and Peri-urban Forestry (WG7) were held in November 2020 and April 2021, respectively. The WG7 is currently working on a number of products, including the development of thematic briefs and of tools for species selection. The WG7 also organized a number of webinars on selected technical themes.</p> <p>In September 2020, FAO's Director-General launched the FAO Green Cities initiative – a programme aimed at improving the urban environment, strengthening urban-rural linkages, and the resilience of urban systems, services and populations to external shocks. Urban forestry is one of three pillars of the programme.</p> <p>The Tree Cities of the World programme - a joint initiative between FAO and the Arbor Day Foundation aimed at recognizing cities that are particularly committed to urban forestry - has continued to grow. A total of 120 cities from 23 countries (including 36 from Europe) were recognized as Tree Cities for 2020.</p>



Area/action for FAO's programme of work	FAO Strategic Objective and Global Forest Goals	Follow-up activities by FAO
7.4 Play an active role in the UN Decade on Family Farming and scale up support to forest and farm producer organizations through the Forest and Farm Facility;	SO2, SO5 Goal 1 - Goal 6	<p>Applications for 2021 opened at the end of July. (<a href="http://www.treecitiesoftheworld.org">www.treecitiesoftheworld.org</a>)</p> <p>The Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) has been actively involved in the UN Decade for Family Farming (UNDF) at the global, regional, and national levels, albeit not covering the REU region.</p> <p>Globally, the FFF has provided funding to the World Rural Forum (WRF), which is a network of farmer organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) whose principal activities are to promote the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (UNDF) and the preparation of national family farming plans.</p> <p>The FFF collaborates closely with the FAO Communications for Development unit on communications to promote the UNDF, including work with several regional communications platforms (Onda Rural, Yenka Africa, and ComDev Asia).</p> <p>The FFF supported the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) with the organization of regional events aimed at promoting sustainable, resilient, gender- and youth-sensitive agro/forestry-based livelihoods within the framework of the UNDF.</p> <p>At the national level, forest and farm organizations funded by FFF have been actively involved in the preparation of national family farming plans in Bolivia, Madagascar, The Gambia, and other countries.</p> <p>A study on non-wood forest products (NWFPs) in Turkey and a regional study on NWFPs in the Western Balkans have been implemented to identify new opportunities and good practices for income generation in rural areas under "Regional Initiative 1 - Empowering smallholders, family farms and youth, facilitating rural livelihoods and poverty reduction".</p>
7.5 Inform COFO on plans for the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration	SO2, SO5 Goal 1 - Goal 6	<p>COFO-25 was informed about potential activities for the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (COFO/2020/7.2), including an event during World Forest Week on "Catalysing a science-based restoration movement in the context of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration: monitoring and action on the ground".</p>

Area/action for FAO's programme of work	FAO Strategic Objective and Global Forest Goals	Follow-up activities by FAO
7.6 Support the implementation of the priorities listed in the EU communication 'Stepping up EU Action to Protect and Restore the World's Forests'.	SO2, SO5 Goal 1 - Goal 6	<p>As part of FAO's role as a co-leading organization for the implementation of the Decade, the Forestry Division co-leads two task forces on Best Practices and on Restoration Monitoring, involving experts from more than 100 different organizations.</p> <p>The Action Against Desertification (AAD), Forest Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM) and the GEF-7 Dryland Sustainable Landscapes IP-DSL initiatives are already putting the goals of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration into practice on the ground.</p> <p>FAO has engaged in technical exchanges with the European Commission in the framework of the consultations on the future legislative proposal to minimize the risk of products associated with deforestation or forest degradation to be placed on the EU market.</p> <p>In particular, contributions on forest-related definitions, forest monitoring, due diligence processes and lessons learnt from the implementation of the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan.</p> <p>Information was provided to FAO Regional Offices on the proposed future EU Forest Partnerships.</p> <p>FAO and the United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD) organized a high-level event during the 14<sup>th</sup> European Development Days, called "Forests are too precious to lose: halting deforestation and enhancing biodiversity" (16/06/2021).</p>
<p>8. <u>Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests and collaboration with United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), beyond the Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work (WIPoW):</u></p>		
<p>FAO is recommended to:</p>		
8.1 Continue to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF);	SO2, SO4, SO5 Goal 1 - Goal 6	FAO continues to support the implementation of the UNSPF and all its Global Forest Goals (GFGs) through the work of the Forestry Division and decentralized offices working on forest issues.

<i>Area/action for FAO's programme of work</i>	<i>FAO Strategic Objective and Global Forest Goals</i>	<i>Follow-up activities by FAO</i>
8.2 Work with UNFF secretariat to explore opportunities for organizing regional events during technical sessions of the Forum that aim to enhance global-regional interactions and highlight the contributions of regional forestry commissions and other UNFF regional and sub-regional partners to the implementation of the UNSPF and the achievement of the Global Forest Goals.	SO2, SO4, SO5 Goal 5 Goal 6	<p>FAO led the organization of side events for the XV World Forestry Congress, the CPF event on Turning the Tide on Deforestation and the Restoration Factory event during the technical 16th session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF 16).</p> <p>Furthermore, FAO supported the side events of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) and the National Institute of Forest Science of Korea, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland, and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO).</p> <p>FAO also supported the development of the Global Forest Goal Report showcasing countries' achievements towards the GFGs.</p>
8.3 Continue its leadership role in the CPF	SO2, SO4, SO5 Goal 6	<p>The Director of FAO Forestry Division was appointed as the CPF Chair in January 2020 continuing FAO's leadership role within the CPF.</p> <p>The CPF organized a side event at the 16<sup>th</sup> UN Forum on Forests (UNFF16), the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and will be contributing to 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26).</p> <p>The joint CPF statement "Challenges and Opportunities in Turning the Tide on Deforestation" was launched at the margins of UNFF16. In 2020, the CPF issued a joint statement "Towards sustainability: forest solutions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic".</p> <p>The CPF Work Plan for 2021- 24 was presented at the event and welcomed by UNFF16.</p> <p>FAO is spearheading several joint initiatives as part of this work plan and in support of the UNSPF.</p>

10. Preparations for the 32nd  
FAO Regional Conference for  
Europe (ERC) and COFO 25 and  
for the XV World Forestry  
Congress (FAO governance):

FAO is recommended to:

<i>Area/action for FAO's programme of work</i>	<i>FAO Strategic Objective and Global Forest Goals</i>	<i>Follow-up activities by FAO</i>
10.1. EFC developed its recommendations for the Regional Conference for Europe, COFO and programme priorities, and requested the Secretariat to translate these into the template (Annex VII) and share them with other Commissions as well as the Secretariats of the Regional Conference and COFO;	SO1 - SO5 Goal 5 Goal 6	The EFC Secretary prepared the summary reports of the session and shared it with ERC and COFO Secretariats.
10.2 Invited the Chairperson of the Regional Conference for Europe to provide adequate attention to the recommendations of the Commission in the agenda of the Conference.	SO1 - SO5 Goal 5 Goal 6	EFC Chair and EFC Secretariats provided regular information and updates to the Chairperson of the Regional Conference for Europe about EFC recommendations to the attention of ERC during the REU informal consultations and ERC session.

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1. The Commission is invited to provide further guidance on the follow-up carried out by FAO.
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