
UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Boreal Forests

Fifth meeting (online), 2 March 2022, 15:00-17:00 CET

MEETING REPORT

OFFICIAL OPENING

The meeting took place on 2 March 2022 at 15:00 CET (online) with Russian and English interpretation. The Secretariat took notes of the main points and decisions taken. The list of participants is attached in Annex II. 20 experts from 5 countries took part in the meeting. Countries represented included: Canada, Finland, Sweden, Russian Federation, and the United States of America. Representatives from the International Boreal Forest Research Association (IBFRA), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) attended, as well as researchers from other institutions (for a comprehensive list of all organizations, please see Annex II).

The meeting was opened by the Secretary of the Team of Specialists (ToS), Ms. Leonie Meier, followed by opening remarks from the Chief of the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, Ms. Liliana Annovazzi-Jakab.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (ITEM 1)

The leader of the ToS, Mr. Darren Sleep chaired the meeting and welcomed new members to the team. He tabled the proposed agenda, which was adopted by the team. The final version of the agenda of the meeting is included in Annex I.

WORK PLAN (ITEM 2)

The Chair presented the work plan and outlined key achievement and progress in 2021, along with proposals for outputs in 2022.

The ToS noted that the work plan was ambitious, and certain objectives should be prioritized. The workload could also be shared with other organizations such as IBFRA and IUFRO. Various relevant events were mentioned, including a side event on the Montreal Process and two side events organized by IBFRA during the upcoming World Forestry Congress.

The ToS is invited to share all relevant 2022 events with the Secretary via email.

MINISTERIAL MEETING AND ACTION PLAN (ITEM 3)

The Secretariat explained that a draft declaration had been prepared by the Secretariat and distributed shortly prior to the meeting. The ToS welcomed the proposed document and asked for more time to review. The creation of an editorial team composed of ToS members could be considered going forward.

The secretariat also noted that the meeting status will be determined in late spring 2022 with updates communicated in due course.

In the meantime, and to advance the work on the Declaration, the ToS is invited to provide further comments in writing on the draft distributed.

WEBINAR SERIES 2022 (ITEM 4)

The Chair, referring to the concept note prepared by colleagues from Canada, invited ToS members to discuss and decide on a timeline, topics and hosting modalities for the next two webinars.

A range of topics were proposed, including ESG reporting, wildfires, Insight Process. The ToS agreed that in order not to compete for audiences and save resources, the webinars should be organized in close collaboration with relevant organizations such as IBFRA and IUFRO.

Canada offered to host the first webinar.

The Chair invited ToS members to submit a list of up to five topics to the Secretariat, which would then be reviewed together to prioritize topics for the first two webinars.

DISCUSSION ON THE FINALIZATION OF THE COMMUNICATIONS NOTES PREPARED BY RUSSIAN FEDERATION (ITEM 5)

The chair briefly reviewed the development process noting the draft text of the two communications notes had been reviewed at the last meeting in October 2021. Subsequently, the October 2021 draft had been reviewed by IBFRA scientists whose comments were addressed and included in the current drafts.

The authors of the initial drafts, Mr. Aleksey Ilintsev and Mr. Ivan Nedbaev, thanked colleagues at IBFRA for their scientific review.

ToS members underlined the importance of clarifying the target audience, namely policymakers, and, therefore, the need to adapt the language and layout. Two ways forward were suggested: the current drafts could be turned into scientific briefs, and would serve as a background to communications notes targeted at policy-makers and the general public. ToS members also noted that the documents could be presented at the Ministerial meeting, and could serve as useful background to further develop the ministerial outcome document.

The Secretariat offered to assist with professional writing, editing, and the layout of the notes, but asked the **ToS to propose concrete policy questions and case-study examples that could be included in the communications notes.**

REVIEW OF THE IBFRA INSIGHT REPORT (ITEM 6)

The Secretary of IBFRA, Ms. Maureen Whelan, thanked ToS members for their comments on the IBFRA Insight Report, which, owing to time constraints couldn't be incorporated into the final paper. Nevertheless, the input was highly relevant and will be useful for informing the next Insight Process. The results of the recently launched Insight Report were well received in Europe, less so in North America. The notion of intensive vs non-intensive management is important in dialogue going forward. Some of the gaps identified by the ToS included the lack of economic analysis and some scientific uncertainty that was not fully acknowledged in the paper.

Next steps: the ToS could consolidate key policy questions from the IBFRA Insight report into a policy brief, identifying 3-5 issues of interest to policymakers. This could be informed by a webinar on the topic (see Item 4). Gaps could be listed to inspire future insight processes.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (ITEM 7)

The mandate of the Team was renewed last November at the Joint Session of COFFI and EFC in November 2021 for another two years. The current team leaders Darren Sleep and Vladimir Dmitriev agreed to continue as leader and deputy leader respectively for another term to ensure continuity within the team.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING (ITEM 8)

ToS members indicated that the next meeting could be held in June 2022, close to the date of the Joint UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management. The Secretariat took note of this proposal and will develop the agenda together with the co-chairs. The meeting format (virtual, in-person) will be established closer to the date.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (ITEM 9)

The UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry was invited to contribute to the theme of the 70th session of UNECE in 2023. As part of this exercise, the Secretariat informed the team that all ToS leaders were invited to provide their input.

ANNEX I

Meeting agenda:

15:00 – 15:05	Welcome by Ms. Liliana Annovazi-Jakab, Chief of the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, and Ms. Leonie Meier, Secretary of the Team of Specialists
15:05 – 15:10	Item 1: Adoption of the agenda <i>Document: provisional agenda</i>
15:10 – 15:30	Item 2: Work Plan Discussion about status and progress of the workplan 2022 <i>Document: Work Plan 2021-2022</i>
15:30 – 15:40	Item 3: Ministerial Meeting and Action Plan Discussion on the November 2022 ministerial meeting, next steps and outcome document <i>Documents: Concept note and draft outcome document prepared by the Secretariat</i>
15:40 – 16:05	Item 4: Webinar series 2022 Discussion on timeline, topics and host of the first two webinars 2022 <i>Documents: Concept note prepared by Canada</i>
16:05-16:25	Item 5: Communications notes prepared by Russian Federation Discussion on finalizing the notes on the definition of boreal forests and interlinkages of boreal forests and climate change prepared by the Russian Federation. <i>Documents: Final drafts of communications notes</i>
16:25 – 16:45	Item 6: Review of the IBFRA Insight Report Discussion on feedback provided and how to use the IBFRA Insight Report as a basis for future work
16:45 – 16:50	Item 7: Election of officers
16:50 – 16:55	Item 8: Date and place of the next meeting
16:55 – 17:00	Item 9: AOB
17:00	Closure

ANNEX II

List of Participants

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Liliana	Annovazzi-Jakab	UNECE/FAO Secretariat
Peter	Blombäck	Swedish Forest Agency
Sean	Cahoon	US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
Vladimir	Dmitriev	Federal Forestry Agency of Russia
Andrey	Eritsov	Aerial Forest Protection Service, Russian Federation
Andrey	Filipchuk	All-Russian Research Institute of Silviculture & Forest Mechanization
Aleksey	Ilintsev	Northern Research Institute of Forestry
Kalle	Eerikäinen	Metsähallitus Forestry Ltd.
Roman	Kotelnikov	Centre for Forest Pyrology, All-Russian Research Institute
Florian	Kraxner	IIASA
Markus	Lier	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland
Leonie	Meier	UNECE/FAO Secretariat
Ivan	Nedbaev	Saint Petersburg Forestry Research Institute
Pasi	Rautio	Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke)
Guy	Robertson	US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
Kenichi	Shono	FAO
Andrey	Shirin	Russian Academy of Sciences
Darren	Sleep	The Sustainable Forestry Initiative
Maria	Sokolenko	Federal Forestry Agency of Russia
Tatu	Torniainen	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland
Maureen	Whelan	Canadian Forest Service
Christopher	Woodall	US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service