

External evaluation of the UNDA project

**“Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia” (March 2021)**

**Final progress report as at 30 June 2022**

#	Recommendation	Management response	Responsibility	Target date	Status of implementation
1	<p><b>It is recommended to continue Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) learning and capacity building assistance involving more countries from the ECE region, with the focus on the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA) region.</b></p>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>The scope of work in the joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section is mandated/determined by the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC) in their Integrated Programme of Work (IPoW).</p> <p>Within the context of its current IPoW (2017-2021), the joint Section will continue its work on supporting the countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia in strengthening their forest sectors. This includes a newly initiated project (2021) on Strengthening policy framework on forest landscape restoration in selected UNECE countries to achieve SDG 15" (in the Caucasus and Central Asia).</p> <p>The next cycle of the IPoW (2022-2025) to be reviewed and adopted in November 2021 also includes capacity-building. If adopted and upon request by member States, the joint Section will endeavour to develop a follow-up project proposal on strengthening the monitoring of sustainable forest management in the Caucasus and Central Asia.</p>	<p>Chief, Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section</p>		<p><b>Implemented as of December 2021.</b></p> <p>The UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission at their joint session held from 22 to 25 November 2021 in Rome, Italy, adopted the <a href="#">Integrated Programme of Work (IPoW) 2022–2025</a>.</p> <p>The new IPoW provides a strong mandate for capacity building work, which stands as one of the Programme’s four Areas of Work. Within this framework, the Section will continue supporting eligible countries, including the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA), through regular work and dedicated projects, with a focus on the monitoring component.</p> <p>Current work in this area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of Knowledge Exchange Platform on Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR);</li> <li>- Development of policy guiding principles on forest landscape restoration on FLR and national FLR strategies in CCA countries;</li> <li>- Support to countries in developing their Forest Policy and Management Support Information Systems;</li> <li>- Support to countries in their forest reporting to the international organizations and processes (including SDGs).</li> </ul> <p>This work will be continued throughout the IPoW implementation and further developed depending on availability of funding.</p>

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2	<b>As UNDA projects have 5% cap on staff resources, it will be desirable for UNECE to advocate for additional General Temporary Assistance (GTA) resources for the administrative, logistical and coordinating tasks for future capacity building activities funded under the Development Account.</b>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>By 31 December 2021, the Programme Management Unit (PMU) will share with DESA the recommendation to consider increasing staff resources above 5% in UNDA projects to ensure sufficient support for project management and increase the efficiency of implementation of UNDA projects.</p>	Chief, Programme Management Unit		<p><b>Implemented as of December 2021</b></p> <p>On 8 December 2021, the Programme Management Unit (PMU) shared the recommendation with DESA for their consideration when preparing the guidelines of the future UNDA projects tranches, stressing that a bigger flexibility in the percentage of GTA resources would be particularly useful for smaller divisions and would decrease reliance on consultancies.</p>
3	<b>It is important to ensure female involvement in decision-making process, inclusion in the forestry sector management and empowerment of local community females who depend on the forest economy. Therefore, UNECE/FAO FTS should continue to advocate for gender equality and equal representation of women in the future capacity building projects, activities and events.</b>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>The joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section will continue to advocate for gender equality and equal representation of women in the whole portfolio of its work. It will strive to ensure gender balance among trainers and trainees, speakers and nominated meeting participants. The empowerment of women in beneficiary local communities who depend on the forest economy will also be prioritized in future capacity-building projects.</p> <p>The joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section will continue to include gender analysis at the development, implementation, and monitoring stages of the capacity-building project “Strengthening policy framework on forest landscape restoration in selected UNECE countries to achieve SDG 15” and collect gender-disaggregated data and indicators on women representation at the major stages of the project implementation.</p>	Chief, Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section		<p><b>Implemented as of December 2021</b></p> <p>“Gender mainstreaming and respect of the rights of people with disabilities” is one of the Principles guiding implementation of the Integrated Programme of Work (IPoW) 2022-25. According to this principle “the IPoW gives due consideration to making the concerns and experiences of women, men and people with disabilities an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its activities, so that women and men and people with disabilities benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated (United Nations ECOSOC, 1997)” Gender mainstreaming and respecting the rights of disabled people is a central part of ECE and FAO’s strategic frameworks and their policies and programmes.”</p> <p>The capacity building project “Strengthening policy framework on forest landscape restoration in selected UNECE countries to achieve SDG 15” is implemented with due regard given to the considerations above.</p> <p>The observance and implementation of this principle will be monitored through a regular, annual planning and reporting of the IPoW implementation.</p>

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4	<b>UNECE/FAO FTS should proactively sensitize national counterparts on the role that forests can play in poverty alleviation and economic development of vulnerable communities, groups and individuals that depend on forests and forest products.</b>	<p>UNECE partially accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>The scope of work in the joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section is mandated by the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC) in their IPoW.</p> <p>The joint Section will sensitize national counterparts on the role that forests can play in poverty alleviation and economic development of vulnerable communities, groups and individuals that depend on forests and forest products, through its general communication work. Any further work on the topic would depend on the outcome of the discussions of the next IPoW 2022-2025 in November 2021.</p> <p>The joint Section will inform COFFI and EFC of this recommendation in view of their discussions of the IPoW for the cycle 2022-2025.</p>	Chief, Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section		<p><b>Implemented as of December 2021</b></p> <p>The recommendation was presented to the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission at their joint session held in November 2021 in Rome, Italy (see para 38 of the <a href="#">report</a> from the joint session).</p> <p>The joint Section will continue addressing the role played by forests in poverty alleviation and economic development of vulnerable communities, groups and individuals that depend on forests and forest products, in its general communication work addressed either to dedicated recipients' groups or general public.</p> <p>These aspects will receive high attention in developing and implementing activities under the new 2022-2025 IPoW, in particular those related to capacity building of member States.</p> <p>As with gender aspects, poverty related issues will be a constant theme in planning and monitoring the implementation of the IPoW.</p>
5	<b>In order to measure increased knowledge and developed capacity among the beneficiaries, it is recommended to introduce instruments for measuring success of training, knowledge and capacity building activity, like pre-post testing of participants on their knowledge around the activity or topic.</b>	<p>UNECE accepts the recommendation.</p> <p>The joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section conducts post-session evaluations on work impact of its national/regional workshops.</p> <p>The joint Section will extend the scope of the evaluation of impact and knowledge and capacity increase among the beneficiaries by adding an additional instrument (pre- testing questionnaire) to monitor the initial level of knowledge and its change over the period of an implementation of</p>	Chief, Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section		<p><b>Implemented as of June 2022</b></p> <p>A new instrument (based on pre-post-testing questionnaires) to monitor the initial level of knowledge and its change was developed as part of the implementation of the capacity building project "Strengthening policy framework on forest landscape restoration in selected UNECE countries to achieve SDG 15". The new instrument was successfully tested during the National Forest Policy Dialogue on "Validating a National Strategy Proposal for Forest Landscape Restoration in Kyrgyzstan" organized in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on 23-24 June 2022, UNECE, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the support of FAO.</p>

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		the capacity-building project “Strengthening policy framework on forest landscape restoration in selected UNECE countries to achieve SDG 15”.			The instrument will serve as a model that can be easily adapted to the needs of other activities or topics.