

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

125th meeting

Geneva, 30 November 2022

Item 6(a) of the provisional agenda

Informal document No. 2022/33

**Meeting with the Chair of the Committee on Forests
and the Forest Industry**

Report by the Chair

Report by the Chair of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry

1. The Chair of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry, Mr. Peter Blombäck (Sweden) is pleased to submit his report to the 125th meeting of the Executive Committee (EXCOM) on 30 November 2022.

I. Introduction

2. This report describes the key achievements of the Integrated Programme of Work (IPoW) 2022-2025 (ECE/TIM/2021/2– FO:EFC/2021/2), which was adopted by the joint session of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC) in Rome, Italy, on 25 November 2021. More information is contained in the report of the eightieth session of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry which was held from 2 to 4 November 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland (see document ECE/TIM/2022/2). The Session's thematic parts focused on Urban forests, Forest economics and markets as well as the contribution of forests and forest products to a circular bioeconomy.

II. Achievements over the reporting period

3. Since reporting last at the 120th EXCOM meeting in January 2022, the Joint ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section (hereafter Joint Section) under its new Integrated Programme of Work for the period 2022 to 2025, coordinated, organized and supported data collection on forests, forest management and the forest industry, in support of evidence-based decision-making. It also provided assistance to member States for improving the forest sector in the region through coordinated communication and capacity-building activities.
4. A more detailed listing of key deliverables and events of COFFI and its secretariat (2022) is contained in the Annex of this document.
5. Key activities and related impact (reported according to the Work Areas (WA) of the Integrated Programme of Work include:

A. WA1: Data, monitoring and assessment:

6. The Joint Section coordinated, organized and supported data collection on forest resources, forest products markets and wood energy in the ECE region.

1. Highlighted outputs

- The “Forest Products Annual Market Review 2021-2022” was published in late autumn of 2022. The publication is a comprehensive analysis of market developments relevant to member States in 2021 and the first half of 2022. This year's assessment focused on the increased demand for wood and paper products in the post COVID-19 recovery in 2021 and the impact of the economic slowdown in mid-2022. Twenty countries provided a wealth of information in their market forecasts and country market statements discussing developments in 2021 and showing detailed forecasts for 2022 and 2023.

- In 2022 the Joint Section, in cooperation with FAO and Forest Europe, with the participation of other forest-related organizations, continued analysis and dissemination of the data collected. The key forest and forest sector-related data in the ECE regions was disseminated through INForest, the interactive data and knowledge platform on forests and sustainable forest management in the UNECE region (<https://forest-data.unece.org/>), which was updated and extended by French and German language versions in 2022. The source data have been made available and disseminated through several online platforms maintained by UNECE and FAO.
 - (a) The repository of FRA 2020 data for the Global Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) (<https://fra-data.fao.org/>);
 - (b) The interactive database for the Joint 2020 ECE/FAO/Forest Europe pan-European data collection on forests; and
 - (c) Forestry module at the UNECE Statistical Database INForest, the interactive data and knowledge platform on forests and sustainable forest management in the UNECE region (<https://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/en/Pivot/>).
- UNECE and FAO, in cooperation with Forest Europe, initiated the process of the 2025 data collection cycles of the Global Forest Resource Assessment and the Joint pan-European on forests and sustainable forest management.
- The Joint Section, supported by the Team of Specialists on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management, continued the project on forest damage/disturbance assessment, which aims at improving a harmonized forest damage and disturbance assessment in the UNECE region. In 2022, this included the organization of a survey on monitoring, assessing and reporting on forest damage/disturbance – with 40 responding countries. The thematic publication will be available by end of 2022.
- The preliminary results of the project were presented at a scientific-technical symposium on “Assessing Forest Damage and Disturbance in the ECE- Region”, co-organized by UNECE, FAO and the Federal Ministry of the Republic of Austria on Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management, in October 2022, Vienna, Austria.

2. Impact

- Improved information and understanding of key forest product commodities
- Improved knowledge and capacity of countries to assess sustainable production and consumption of wood products and market development of their domestic forest products markets in the global context
- Increased knowledge and understanding of the status of forests and their dynamics as well as on trends in their use and management
- Improved formats and methods for sharing forest-related information beyond traditional users in the forest sector, in particular among the public at large
- Improved information and understanding on forest damage and disturbance in the UNECE region; Increased national capacity to monitor forest disturbance/damage and to develop and implement related tools

B. WA2: Policy advice and dialogue:

1. Highlighted outputs

- The UNECE/FAO Forest Sector Outlook Study in the UNECE region was published and promoted throughout 2022. It provides a comprehensive policy outlook for the forest sector, including trends and challenges up to the year 2040.
- The organisation of an online meeting of the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Boreal Forests on 2 March 2022.
- The draft science-policy brief “Boreal forests and climate change – from impacts to adaptation” was prepared in English, French and Russian. Compiled by the secretariat, it outlines the main expected environmental and economic impacts of climate change on boreal forests, highlights ongoing research about the role of boreal forests in climate change mitigation and outlines possible adaptation pathways. It builds on research conducted by experts of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe/the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UNECE/FAO) Team of Specialists on Boreal Forests and the International Boreal Forest Research Association (IBFRA). It aims to provide policymakers, experts and the general public with information about boreal forests in the context of climate change.
- The Joint Section published a comprehensive study on circular bio-economy concepts and how they relate to forest-based industries. The study focuses on key forest-based value chains, namely: the woodworking industry, including sawn wood, bioenergy and construction, the furniture industry, the paper and pulp industry, cellulose-based fibres, and cellulose-based plastics. In addition, the section finalized the first sector study on Circularity concepts in wood construction. This is the first such study highlighting current practice and tangible opportunities for more circularity in this sector. It is also the first in a series of more sector-focused studies.
- The Joint Section organized two policy dialogues, June 2022 with Kyrgyzstan and September 2022 with Uzbekistan. The national forest policy dialogues were organized in workshop format and focused on the two countries’ forestry sectors and their contribution to resilient landscapes restoration. They were organized together with national forestry agencies and included stakeholders from the public sector, NGOs, academia and the private sector.

2. Impact

- Improved understanding among member States of how climate change and global megatrends may influence their domestic forests and wood products markets in the future
- Improved awareness of the importance of boreal forests for climate action and sustainable development
- Improved collaboration with all stakeholders including research organizations
- Strengthened science-policy cooperation with increased participation in discussions on boreal-related challenges and opportunities for collaboration
- Improved knowledge of member States of landscape restoration and circularity related concepts including sectoral concepts in forest-based industries

C. WA3: Communications and outreach:

1. Highlighted outputs

- The International Day of Forests (IDF) on 21 March 2022 was marked with an online event under the theme “Forests for sustainable lifestyles and a circular economy”. It showcased how leaders in the fashion, textile and packaging sectors are shaping sustainable relationships between forests and circular production models to reduce carbon emissions, waste and plastics pollution across the global economy.
- The Trees and Cities Challenge, a voluntary initiative aimed at mayors and corresponding urban authorities in cities across the world to locally take action to combat climate change and foster urban sustainable development and resilience, has grown to 59 participating cities from 29 countries. In 2022, the policy brief “Sustainable Urban and Peri-urban Forestry: An Integrative and Inclusive Nature-Based Solution for Green Recovery and Sustainable, Healthy and Resilient Cities” was published, and informed the elaboration of the “Draft Regional Urban Forestry Opportunities Plan” which identifies opportunities for action by policymakers at the local, national and UNECE regional levels. The Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry organized multiple events to facilitate peer exchange and developed a benchmarking collaboration to support comparison of urban forests and urban forestry across cities.
- The Joint Section organized a Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (RFSD) Round Table on “Urban Forests for Future Proof Cities” together with the FAO Forestry Division in Rome. During the session experts from national governments, city governments and civil society identified sustainable urban forestry as a cost-effective option to future-proof cities. Recommendations were included in the RFSD report submitted to the High-Level Political Forum.
- The Joint Section continued to provide improved access to relevant and reliable data on forest conditions and their use for their protection and sustainable management through its “INForest”¹ interactive online data and knowledge platform for forests in the UNECE region. The data presented is compiled from international, reliable sources including the Sustainable Development Goals indicators, FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment and thematic sets collected by UNECE and FAO.
- In 2022, the Joint Section strengthened its social media work significantly and established a dedicated account on Instagram in addition to its Twitter and LinkedIn ones.

2. Impact

- Under the Trees in Cities Challenge, cities have pledged to plant over 12 million trees to date
- Through its social media accounts, the Joint Section has reached an estimated audience of 250,000
- The International Day of Forests events organized by the Joint Section have become major events in the forest calendar attracting a large audience and highlighting thematic aspects of forest work also for the general public

¹ <https://forest-data.unece.org/>

- The INForest data and knowledge platform has been expanded and strengthened and translated into 6 languages. National versions have been designed mirroring INForest. The platform is today the go-to website for up-to-date information on forests and changes in forest area, structure, products and services, thereby ensuring the timely, reliable, and high-quality data availability for all.

D. WA4: Capacity-building:

7. The Joint Section's work on capacity-building aims to enhance the ability of specific countries and the UNECE region as a whole to implement sustainable forest management practices, collect relevant data, monitor and analyze forest conditions as well as promote the engagement of national experts from the region. The Joint Section's 2022 capacity-building work focused on two inter-related areas: forest landscape restoration and urban forests and trees.

1. Highlighted outputs

- In support of the increased demand for urban greening, trees and forests, the Joint section organized 2 dedicated workshops in Uzbekistan highlighting international best practice within local conditions. In cooperation with UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), the Joint Section supported local and national stakeholders and contributed to the development of a feasibility study for the country's urban and rural greening and afforestation plans.
- In continued support of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the Joint Section followed up with countries on the pledges made during the 2021 and 2018 Ministerial Meetings on Forest Landscape Restoration and the ECCA30/Bonn Challenge in Eastern and South-East Europe as well as in central Asia and the Caucasus, respectively. The joint Section organized two workshops, one in Kyrgyzstan and one in Uzbekistan, to improve capacity in landscape restoration. In Moldova, the Joint section assessed the potential for production of forest regeneration material in and its development in the context of national plans for afforestation and forest landscape restoration. The Joint Section also developed the National Guiding principles for Forest Landscape Restoration to help countries plan and monitor their restoration efforts.
- Several additional capacity building workshops were conducted with member States to inform on potential of forest landscape restoration, financing opportunities for FLR and forest policy development opportunities with the support of UNECE/FAO Joint Forestry and Timber Section in order to respond to current challenges in forestry.

2. Impact

- Improved knowledge as countries in the UNECE region avail of a comprehensive guide on forest landscape restoration with an online platform for the exchange of information and substantive materials.
- Improved understanding and knowledge exchange among countries, in particular cities, of the UNECE region on governance, planning, management and financing of urban trees and forests as a nature-based solution for sustainable development and climate action.
- Improved capacity in the Central Asian countries in particular with focused events and interventions.

- Improved inter-agency coordination with UNDP, particularly in Uzbekistan, resulting in the first ever comprehensive joint project of UNECE-UNDP-UNHCR- State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Ecology and Environment Protection, tackling not only environmental aspects but also humanitarian issues.

III. Major activities planned for 2023 and beyond

8. The following planned activities address some of the major challenges facing the forestry sector.
9. A more detailed listing of activities is provided in the Approved List of Activities for 2022 in Annex II of this document.

A. WA1: Data, monitoring and assessment:

10. Focused analysis will be devoted to the monitoring and assessment of forest conditions and the impact of biotic and abiotic disturbances. The Joint Section will publish a thematic study including the underlying concepts, an overview of the work, and knowledge as well as recommendations for improved reporting and understanding of forest disturbance and damage.
11. UNECE with FAO, in cooperation with Forest Europe, will start the global and regional data collection. To this end, UNECE and FAO will develop the interface for the 2025 cycle of Joint Pan-European Data Collection on forests and sustainable forest management, synchronized with the one developed for the Global Forest Resources Assessment.
12. The Joint Section will increase its efficiency and effectiveness in automatized data collection and dissemination of information on forest governance, management, and reporting. Activities will include the development of data collection interfaces for international reporting on forests and forest products, as well as guidance to member States to development of national forest information systems.
13. The Joint Section will conduct another round of data collection on wood energy. Detailed data on wood energy sources and users will be collected from member States based on the well-established Joint Wood Energy Enquiry. The data for the reference year 2021 will give policy makers important information about the role of wood energy in a circular economy. The outcome of the assessment will allow conclusions on how much wood is directly burnt after harvesting from forests and how much wood is only burnt once it contributed to various stages of production of sustainable forest products.

B. WA2: Policy advice and dialogue:

14. The Joint Section will continue to foster forest policy dialogues and disseminate the Forest Sector Outlook study to help forest managers and policy-makers consider the trade-offs involved in complex forest management decisions.
15. The Joint Section will continue working on studies further reviewing the application of circular models in specific forest-based industries, and how they apply to the goals of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs. The Joint Section will also initiate work on a definition of a circular bioeconomy in the forest sector, based on existing definitions.

16. The Joint Section will continue to work on boreal forests and their role in climate change mitigation.

C. WA3: Communications and outreach:

17. Communication activities will be focused on promoting forest and their potential as economic and environmental power-houses in the UNECE region. Particular focus will be given to potential of sustainable wood products in a circular bioeconomy across sectors through the organization of events and exhibitions.

18. If funds are available, the Trees in Cities Challenge will continue to showcase cities' progress on their tree-planting pledges on a dedicated website (<https://treesincities.unece.org/>) and through international fora, encouraging other urban leaders around the world to take concrete local action through the initiative.

19. In December 2022, the Joint Section will organize a urban biodiversity side event at the 15th Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity CBD in Montreal.

20. The International Day of Forests will be celebrated under the theme "Forests and Health" on 21 March 2023.

21. The Joint Section will organize a side event at the eighteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF18) in May 2023.

D. WA4: Capacity-building:

22. The Joint Section will continue to contribute to the 2021–2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, aiming to massively scale up the restoration of degraded and destroyed ecosystems as a proven measure to fight the climate crisis and enhance food security, water supply and biodiversity.

23. Further capacity building events will be focused on master-planning afforestation efforts, urban forest and greening, wood energy data collection as well as the Global and pan-European data collection on forests and SFM.

24. Particular attention will be given to the food-water-energy nexus and its implementation in the urban context as well as non-wood forest supply chains.

IV. Any proposed change to the subsidiary structure of the Committee

25. No changes to the subsidiary structure of the Committee were proposed.

26. During its eightieth session the Committee adopted the Programme of Work of the Forests and the Forest Industry Subprogramme for 2023, as contained in document ECE/TIM/2022/6 and decided to renew the mandate of the Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management as contained in document ECE/TIM/2022/2, for the period 2022–2026.

27. The Executive Committee is invited to approve the above-mentioned decisions.

V. Follow up to the 2021 session of the Economic Commission for Europe

28. During the 80th session of COFFI, delegates were informed about progress made in implementing decisions adopted by the UNECE at its sixty-ninth session held in Geneva, Switzerland from 20 to 21 April 2021 that are relevant to the new Integrated Program of Work. In particular, delegates were informed about progress in considering how to enhance the impact of relevant existing UNECE instruments, in order to foster circular and more resource efficient approaches, including by proposing ways to identify, assess and fill gaps in governance and good practice (High-level statement, requesting relevant Sectoral Committees).

29. Under the Committee on Forests and Forest Industry and within the existing mandates, the Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, in cooperation with other international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector, has worked on a number of products relevant to a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources. The work covers practically the whole material and production chains, and includes the:

- Collection of statistical data on status of forests, their sustainable management, and the use of forest based natural resources
- Analysis of the past and future trends, including forest sector outlook studies, of the use of natural resources
- Development of methods and tools and strengthening member States to foster circular and more resource-efficient approaches
- Development communication campaigns, promoting sustainable materials, products and their use

30. In addition to the work on sustainable management and use of natural resources, the Joint Section has also initiated work focused on a circularity forest sector. The recently issued study on “Circularity concepts in forest-based industries” provides an analysis of the existing and possible limitations to circular approaches in forest-based industries. The study is available at <https://unece.org/info/Forests/pub/367742>.

31. The work on circular economy and the sustainable use of forest resources under the Committee on Forests and Forest Industry has been further strengthened through a mandate in the new Integrated Programme of Work 2022-2025, where the Committee has asked the Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section to:

- Prepare a series of studies further reviewing the application of circular models in specific forest-based industries, and how they apply to Paris Agreement goals and SDGs, including through identification of case studies and best practice
- Take into consideration the whole forest-based value chain and bring attention to the circular nature of wood as a renewable resource and the role of sustainable forest management
- In light of the lack of an international definition of “circular economy”, continue its work on circularity in the forest sector, and work with other subprogrammes to address this definition gap
- Assess member States’ priorities and needs in application of circular models in the forest sector, as appropriate

- Provide opportunities for member States to exchange knowledge and best practice on the implementation of circularity principles in the forest sector
32. The work under the Committee on Forests and Forest Industry will be reinforced by the activities of its subsidiary bodies, the joint UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management and the Teams of Specialists, providing a platform for replicating and scaling up knowledge on a range of topics relevant to a circular economy and the sustainable use of forest resources.

VI. Inter-sectoral activities: new activities and/or progress in existing inter-sectoral activities

33. The Joint Section continued intersectoral cooperation with other UNECE and FAO units as well as external organizations and processes. For instance:
- The Joint Section continued to work on nexuses and in particular on the Food-water -energy nexus to strengthen synergies within the organization and thereby scale up efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
 - The Joint Section contributed to the work of the “UNECE Task Force on measuring the circular economy” - on the conceptual monitoring framework and development of a circular economy definition.
 - The Joint Section cooperates with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World Bank on the topic of forest landscape restoration and the Bonn Challenge and ECCA30.
 - The Joint Section advanced its cross-sectoral cooperation with the ECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management highlighting the role of wood as one of the most sustainable, low-carbon construction materials and organized a side event on “Trees – Nature’s technology for climate-proof building” during the 83rd session of its Committee, in San Marino in October 2022.

VII. Technical cooperation activities

34. A table of capacity-building activities undertaken by the secretariat under the Committee is presented in the secretariat’s report in Annex I of this document.

VIII. Cooperation with other organizations

35. The Joint Section has been effectively cooperating with a number of stakeholders in the implementation of the Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work. Some of the highlights include:
- The pan-European reporting on forests and sustainable forest management is done as a collective effort of UNECE, FAO and Forest Europe. This includes technical guidance and training to correspondents from Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and processing and disseminating collected data. At the global level UNECE cooperates with FAO through the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire (CFRQ) – an initiative of regional organizations (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Forest Europe, Montreal Process, Central African Forest Commission and the International Tropical Timber Organization) closely collaborating with FAO in collecting national data.

- The Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics coordinates the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire amongst the 4 participating organizations: ECE/FAO, Eurostat, International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and FAO. Each of the organizations is responsible for circulating the questionnaire to those countries for which it is responsible. Results of the questionnaire are provided to the partner organizations as needed. Each organization publishes these results according to its mandate and needs. We are grateful to our partners for their dedication and cooperation in producing the best forest products statistics possible.
- The Joint Section collaborates extensively with UNDP on capacity-building, particularly in Central Asia and the Caucasus regions.
- The Joint Section continues to cooperate with the Forest Europe Liaison Unit Bonn and contributes to many actions of the Forest Europe Work Programme, including the joint ECE/FAO/Forest Europe forest data collection and the support to the development of a report on the State of Europe's Forests, joint development of the interactive data platforms.
- The Joint Section, supported by the Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management, and in collaboration with the International Energy Agency (IEA), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the European Commission (EC) starts another round of the "Joint Wood Energy Enquiry", which aims at improving knowledge and understanding of wood energy production and consumption. Improving data reporting on wood energy has led to a better understanding of future prospects for wood energy in the region.
- The Joint Section cooperates with the International Energy Agency on wood energy data collection. This comprises amongst other, sharing the network of national statistical correspondents on renewable energy and forest products, exchange of data for the creation of wood energy indicators.
- The Joint Section is an active member of the Steering Committee of the UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion in order to continue to promote the use of sustainable forest fibers in the garment sector. Members of the Steering Committee include representatives from: the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank, International Trade Centre, FAO, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP), International Labour Organization (ILO) and Global Compact. In this context, the Joint Section has organized an informal policy dialogue on fashion in Moldova on 19 May 2021.
- The Joint Section worked with ILO and FAO on the delivery of the publication "Occupational Safety and Health and the Future of Work in Forestry" (expected late 2022).
- The Joint Section supports international work and cooperation on monitoring of forest resources and sustainable forest management, including Forest Europe, the European Union (i.e., Eurostat, the European Environment Agency, and the Joint Research Centre), and other organizations (i.e., the Confederation of European Forest Owners, the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, the European Forest Institute, and European State Forest Association) in this area.
- Finally, COFFI and the Joint Section provide important opportunities for collaboration between member States, international organizations, formal or informal working groups, private sector firms, academia, and scientists throughout

the UNECE region. The Teams of Specialists on Boreal Forests and Monitoring SFM and their ability to build an interface between the science and policy community are cases in point.

Annex I

Key deliverables and events of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and its secretariat (2022)

A. Work Area 1: Data, monitoring, reporting and assessment

1. Forest resources

(a) Collection, validation and dissemination of statistics on forest resources, functions and services, progress towards Sustainable Forest Management, and the contribution of the forest sector to a sustainable economy:

- (i) Reporting on the Global Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) and the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire (CFRQ): cooperation with the FAO and other CFRQ partners on the preparation of data collection for the 2025 reporting process;
- (ii) Joint pan-European reporting on forests: cooperation with Forest Europe and FAO FRA secretariat on the preparation of the next reporting cycle, including monthly coordination meetings of the partner secretariats;
- (iii) Cooperation with member States, and other national and international partners on the exchange of information and the development of forest information systems, including national forest databanks;
- (iv) Dissemination of the results of the 2020 global and the pan-European reporting on forests and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), including an update of the Forest Knowledge Platform INForest and the forestry-related component of the ECE Statistical Database.

(b) Analysis and assessment of the state of forests and the sustainability of forest management; and monitoring of the role of the forest sector in a sustainable economy:

- (i) Continuation of the implementation of the project “Assessment of forest conditions and the impact of biotic and abiotic disturbances”, including monthly coordination meetings of the project team;
- (ii) Development of the thematic study and review of formats for international reporting on forest disturbances;
- (iii) Organization of a scientific-technical symposium on forest disturbance and damage in the ECE region on 29-30 September 2022, in Vienna, Austria.

(c) Cooperation and support to international Sustainable Forest Management processes, including regional criteria and indicator processes:

- (i) Participation in the FAO FRA Advisory Group;
- (ii) Cooperation with, and support to countries, organizations and international processes (e.g. Forest Europe, Montreal Process) in the ECE region on monitoring SFM;
- (iii) Contribution to capacity-building on forest monitoring in countries of the Caucasus, Central Asia, Eastern and South-East Europe;

(iv) Support to the work of the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management, including monthly coordination meetings of the Team's core group; organization of the meeting of the Team on 28 September 2022 in Vienna, Austria.

2. Forest products and markets

(a) Collection, validation and dissemination of statistics on production, trade, consumption and prices of forest products:

- (i) Preparation of historical data on forest products, species trade and prices;
- (ii) Preparation of forecast data on forest products production and trade;
- (iii) Updates to the existing database and expansion of available information;
- (iv) Dissemination through the FAO statistical database (FAOSTAT) and ECE websites.

(b) Analysis of markets for forest products, notably relevant policy aspects, including the Forest Products Annual Market Review and annual Market Discussions:

- (i) Publication of the Forest Products Annual Market Review (FPAMR) 2021-2022;
- (ii) Preparation of data and the statistical annex for the FPAMR 2021-2022;
- (iii) Preparation of tables and graphs for the Market Forecasts 2022-2023;
- (iv) Preparation of the Market Discussion 2022 and the Market Statement 2022;
- (v) Dissemination of analysis at industry meetings.

(c) Support of international processes in forest products:

- (i) Participation in the Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics and attendance at other international meetings;
- (ii) Organization of meetings of the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Products and Wood Energy Statistics and the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Sustainable Forest Products.

3. Wood energy

(a) Collection, validation and dissemination of statistics on wood energy:

- (i) Issuance of a new database on wood energy with 2019 data from the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE2019);
- (ii) Preparation and issuance of the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry for collecting data for 2021 (JWEE2021);
- (iii) Dissemination of the JWEE2019 data at relevant international meetings;
- (iv) Increasing the visibility of ECE wood energy data.

B. Work Area 2: Policy dialogue and advice

(a) Contribution to the policy-related components of activities under Work Areas 1, 3 and 4:

- (i) Organization of a National Forest Policy Dialogue (NFPD) workshop in Kyrgyzstan (23-24 June 2022);
- (ii) Organization of a NFPD workshop in Uzbekistan (20-21 September 2022);
- (iii) Monitoring and developments in global and regional forest policy process (United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF); Forest Europe, Montreal Process, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)) and relevant contributions to these processes;
- (iv) Support to the continued implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests through policy dialogues at the regional and national levels (for 2022 – Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, see (i) and (ii)).

(b) The role of the forest sector in a circular bio-economy:

- (i) Analysis of how the circular bio-economy concepts are related to the forest-based sector;
- (ii) Exploration of wood-based value chains in a circular bio-economy;
- (iii) Promotion and dissemination of information about the circular bio-economy, including its social dimension e.g., a joint UNECE/FAO/ILO (International Labour Organization) session on “Advancing decent work, green jobs and sustainability in the forest sector” during the World Forestry Congress (3 May 2022), launching of the study “Circularity concepts in forest-based industries” during an online event (30 June 2022).

(c) Forest Sector Outlook:

Presentation of the results of the Forest Sector Outlook Study at relevant international meetings (e.g. 17th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF 17) side event 9 May 2022) and cooperation with relevant stakeholders at national, regional and international levels.

(d) Monitoring and support of international processes relevant to policymaking for the forest sector:

- (i) To support the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the forest landscape restoration pledges under the Bonn Challenge, organization of a meeting for the Caucasus and Central Asia on Forest Landscape Restoration and implementation of the Strategy for Landscape Restoration and Greening Infrastructure in the Caucasus and Central Asia (22 November 2021);
- (ii) Contribution to the World Forestry Congress session on “Partnerships and collaboration for sustainable forest management” (4 May 2022);
- (iii) Contribution to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) panel session “SDGs in Focus: SDG 15 and Interlinkages with Other SDGs – Life on Land” attended by the UNECE Executive Secretary (11 July 2022).

(e) Boreal Forests:

- (i) Organization of an online meeting of the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Boreal Forests (2 March 2022);
- (ii) Preparation of a policy brief and communication material to promote the importance of boreal forests for climate action and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (iii) Preparatory work including drafting of an overview and methodology for a possible future study on the state of boreal forests.

(f) Sustainable Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry:

- (i) Publication of a policy brief on Sustainable Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry (https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Urban%20forest%20policy%20brief_final_0.pdf);
- (ii) Elaboration of a Draft Regional Urban Forestry Opportunity Plan (https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/ECE_TIM_2022_3_0.pdf)

C. Work Area 3: Communication and outreach

(a) Organization of events and campaigns in support of Sustainable Forest Management and forest products and services:

- (i) International Day of Forests (IDF) celebrated with an online event on “Forests for sustainable lifestyles and a circular economy” (21 March 2022);
- (ii) Communicating the potential of forest landscape restoration in the ECE region through various events, including a virtual side event during the 6th European Forest Week on “Achievements – Challenges – Aspirations for Forest Landscape Restoration in the Caucasus and Central Asia” (22 November 2021);
- (iii) The 6th European Forest Week was held under the theme “Future of Forests”, including seven virtual side events (22-25 November 2021);
- (iv) Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (RFSD) 2022 Roundtable on Urban Forests for Future-Proof Cities (7 April 2022);
- (v) Organization of a virtual side event “Past, present and future of forests in the UNECE region and beyond” at UNFF17 (9 May 2022);
- (vi) Commemorative micro-forest planting event (4 October) on the occasion of the UNECE’s 75th anniversary during the 83rd session of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, San Marino (3-7 October 2022);
- (vii) Impulse Lab: “Trees – Nature’s technology for climate-proof building” (5 October) as part of the 83rd session of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (3-7 October 2022);
- (viii) Communication campaigns (e.g., ECCA30, Trees in Cities Challenge, Forests for Fashion initiative) including reels, posts and stories on social media.

(b) Dissemination of information via social media, policy briefs, press briefs and ad hoc studies:

- (i) Promotion and dissemination of studies and publications via press briefs and social media (Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UNECEForests>, LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/unece-forests> and Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/unecefaforests/>);

(ii) Promotion of the web site INForest on forest-statistics: <https://forest-data.unece.org/> in meetings and press releases, translation of available information into Czech, English, French, German, Polish and Russian;

(iii) Compilation and dissemination of the Forest Information Billboard (<https://unece.org/forests/forest-information-billboard>);

(iv) Production and launch of a podcast episode: “Forests - One World, Zero Waste? The Circular Economy Explained” as part of a UNECE-wide series (<https://unece.org/circular-economy/podcast-one-world-zero-waste-circular-economy-explained>);

(v) Production of podcast episodes on wood construction, forest fires, urban forests and climate change and forests;

(vi) Production of a video on the outcomes of the Ministerial Meeting on Forest Landscape Restoration and the ECCA30/Bonn Challenge in in Eastern and South East Europe (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=161G9mm5rpo>);

(vii) Production of a video on “Urban forests in context” to be published by December 2022.

(c) Press and news releases to present the outcomes of workshops, events and publications; and outreach activities beyond the forest sector, disseminating information that highlights the relevance of forests and forest products to other sectors (e.g. energy events, biodiversity and environment meetings, sustainable construction and building, etc.):

(i) Press releases published in 2022 (as of 20 July 2022 – all press releases can be found here: <https://unece.org/media/forestry/press>): “UNECE and UNDP support Uzbekistan’s Yashil Makon/Green Nation initiative to fight against climate change” (22 June 2022), “Geneva, Lausanne, Nice and Bordeaux aim to bring the forest to the city” (10 March 2022), “UNECE supports Sustainable Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry for public health, climate resilience and green recovery” (22 February 2022);

(ii) News releases published in 2022 (as of 20 July 2022 – all news releases can be found here: <https://unece.org/media/news?f%5B0%5D=program%3A342>): “Turning commitments into reality: restoring forests in Kyrgyzstan in support of the national ‘Zhashyl Muras - Green Heritage’ initiative” (27 June 2022), “Forests can help cut plastic pollution and contribute to the circular economy, say UNECE/FAO” (2 June 2022), “At 2022 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, UNECE calls to build coherent resilience policies and governance and enhance transboundary cooperation to accelerate Sendai Framework implementation” (31 May 2022), “Urban forests can help future-proof cities” (13 April 2022), “Redesigning the future of fashion and packaging through forest-based materials is possible” (29 March 2022), “UNECE to showcase “Forests for sustainable lifestyles and a circular economy” on International Day of Forests 2022” (14 March 2022), “UNECE and FAO support countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia to advance forest landscape restoration” (9 February 2022).

D. Work Area 4: Capacity-building

- (a) Improving national capacities of middle-income countries to implement Sustainable Forest Management:**
- (i) Communication with countries on their technical cooperation needs;
 - (ii) Organization and implementation of technical cooperation activities, raising of extrabudgetary funds as necessary;
 - (iii) Coordination of technical cooperation of the sub-programme within ECE and FAO, communication with other international entities (particularly United Nations) and national partners;
 - (iv) Organization of a capacity-building event on wood energy data collection for national correspondents (Joint Wood Energy Enquiry 2021).
- (b) Strengthening capacity of policy and decisions makers, and forest service specialists to develop national forest information systems in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia:**
- (i) Organization of the work and initiation of the project, advisory missions to selected countries of the project;
 - (ii) Drafting guidance for developing forest information systems (FIS);
 - (iii) Publication of study “Reporting on Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia” in English.
- (c) Forest landscape restoration:**
- (i) Technical meeting on the development of the Knowledge Exchange Platform on Forest Landscape Restoration in the Caucasus and Central Asia (3 December 2021);
 - (ii) Organization of a “Regional Policy Dialogue on Forest Landscape Restoration” (9 February 2022);
 - (iii) Organization of a workshop on “Validating a National Strategy Proposal for Forest Landscape Restoration in Kyrgyzstan” (Bishkek, 23-24 June 2022);
 - (iv) Publication of the “National Policy Guiding Principles on Forest Landscape Restoration” in English and Russian;
 - (v) Production of the knowledge-sharing platform on forest landscape restoration in the Caucasus and Central Asia, in English and Russian;
 - (vi) Preparation of a feasibility study on the production of forest regeneration material in the Republic of Moldova and its development.
- (d) Sustainable Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry:**
- (i) Second Meeting of the Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry (8 December 2021);
 - (ii) Organization of a workshop on “Scaling up Urban Greening and forests in Cities” (18-19 Mar 2022);
 - (iii) Informal meeting on benchmarking collaboration (Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry) (28 March 2022);

(iv) “Urban Forests for Future-Proof Cities” roundtable during the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (RFSD) 2022 and Third Meeting of the Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry (7 April 2022);

(v) “Opportunities for Advancing Urban Forestry in the UNECE Region: Policy Roundtable” and Fourth Meeting of the Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry (16 September 2022);

(vi) Informal meeting on benchmarking collaboration (Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry) (5 October 2022).

E. Secretariat services to its governing bodies and their subsidiary body

(a) Intergovernmental meetings:

(i) Organization of the 43rd session of the Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management (1-3 June 2022);

(ii) Organization of the 80th Session of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (2-4 November 2022).

(b) Bureaux meetings:

Organization of the Joint UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and FAO Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (EFC) Bureaux meetings upon request of the Chairs of COFFI and EFC.

Annex II

Approved list of activities for 2023

A. Work Area 1: Data, monitoring, reporting and assessment

1. Forest resources

(a) Collection, validation and dissemination of statistics on forest resources, functions and services, progress toward Sustainable Forest Management, and the contribution of the forest sector to a sustainable economy:

- (i) Reporting on the FRA and CFRQ: cooperation with the FAO and other CFRQ partners on the data collection for the 2025 reporting process;
- (ii) Joint pan-European data collection on forests: cooperation with Forest Europe and FAO FRA secretariat on the data collection for the 2025 reporting cycle, including development of the online data-collection system;
- (iii) Cooperation with member States, and other national and international partners on the exchange of information and the development of forest information systems, including national forest databanks;
- (iv) Dissemination of the results of the 2020 global and the pan-European reporting on forests and SFM.

(b) Analysis and assessment of the state of forests and the sustainability of forest management; and the monitoring of the role of the forest sector in a green economy:

Assessment of forest conditions and the impact of biotic and abiotic disturbances; publication of the thematic study.

(c) Cooperation and support to international Sustainable Forest Management processes, including regional criteria and indicator processes:

- (i) Participation in the FAO FRA Advisory Group; Support to the UNFF secretariat on reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (if requested);
- (ii) Cooperation with, and support to countries, organizations and international processes (e.g. Forest Europe, Montreal Process) in the ECE region on monitoring SFM;
- (iii) Contribution to capacity-building on forest monitoring in countries of the Caucasus, Central Asia, Eastern and South-East Europe;
- (iv) Organization of the meeting(s) of the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Monitoring SFM.

2. Forest products and markets

(a) Collection, validation and dissemination of statistics on production, trade, consumption and prices of forest products:

- (i) Preparation of historical data on forest products, species trade and prices;
- (ii) Preparation of forecast data on forest products production and trade;

(iii) Improvement of the existing database and expansion of available information;

(iv) Dissemination through FAO and ECE statistical databases and websites.

(b) Analysis of markets for forest products, notably relevant policy aspects, including the Forest Products Annual Market Review and annual market discussions:

(i) Preparation of the FPAMR 2022-2023;

(ii) Preparation of data and the statistical annex for the FPAMR 2022–2023;

(iii) Preparation of tables and graphs for the market forecasts 2022–2023;

(iv) Publication of the FPAMR 2022–2023;

(v) Preparation of the market discussion 2023 and the Market Statement 2023;

(vi) Dissemination of analysis at industry meetings.

(c) Support of international processes in forest products:

(i) Participation in the Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics and attendance at other international meetings;

(ii) Organization of meetings of the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Products and Wood Energy Statistics and the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Sustainable Forest Products.

3. Wood energy

(a) Collection, validation and dissemination of statistics on wood energy:

(i) Validation of wood energy data for the reference year 2021 collected via the JWEE;

(ii) Analysis of results of the JWEE2021;

(iii) Issuance of a new database on wood energy with 2021 data (JWEE2021);

(iv) Dissemination of the 2021 JWEE data at relevant international meetings.

(b) Analysis of energy-related issues, including demand for, and supply of, wood energy:

(i) Preparation of new information material on wood energy, e.g. policy brief, short studies on various topics such as wood energy and the SDGs, wood energy and climate change, wood energy and air quality or another demand-driven topic;

(ii) Upon request, provide input on forests to the ECE Environmental Performance Reviews.

(c) Support of international processes in wood energy:

Presentation of the wood energy work at relevant international meetings and cooperation with relevant processes (e.g. International Energy Agency, International Renewable Energy Agency, World Sustainable Energy Days).

B. Work Area 2: Policy dialogue and advice

(a) Contribution to the policy-related components of activities under Work Areas 1, 3 and 4:

- (i) Organization of national forest policy dialogues workshops in interested countries, possibly Tajikistan and Georgia;
- (ii) Monitoring and developments in global and regional forest policy processes (UNFF, Forest Europe, Montreal Process, SDGs) and contributions, as relevant, to those processes;
- (iii) Support to the continued implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests by providing policy dialogues at the regional and national levels.

(b) The role of the forest sector in a circular economy:

- (i) Analysing how the circular economy concepts are related to the forest-based sector – continue the work on a definition of a circular economy in the forest sector;
- (ii) Exploration of wood-based value chains in a circular economy – work on a series of three studies;
- (iii) Promotion and dissemination of information on the circular economy, including its social dimensions.

(c) Forest Sector Outlook:

- (i) Dissemination of the Forest Sector Outlook Study in the ECE region;
- (ii) Presentation of the results of the Forest Sector Outlook Study at relevant international meetings and cooperation with relevant stakeholders at national, regional and international levels.

(d) Monitoring and support of international processes relevant to policymaking for the forest sector:

Organization of follow-up meetings for the Caucasus and Central Asia on Forest Landscape Restoration and the implementation of the Strategy for Landscape Restoration and Greening Infrastructure in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

(e) Boreal Forests:

- (i) Organization of meeting(s) of the ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Boreal Forests;
- (ii) Preparation of policy briefs and communication material about boreal forest policy and science;
- (iii) Organization of webinar(s) on sustainable management of boreal forests;
- (iv) Data collection on and analysis of common challenges, gaps, and best practices on boreal forest management.

(f) Urban Forestry:

- (i) Promote sustainable urban forestry through outreach to engage cities to make a pledge to the Trees in Cities Challenge to expand urban forest cover and strengthen management and policy;

- (ii) Organization of meeting(s) and activities of the Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry;
- (iii) Preparation of a draft Sustainable Urban Forestry Action Plan for the UNECE Region.

C. Work Area 3: Communication and outreach

(a) Organization of events and campaigns in support of Sustainable Forest Management and forest products and services:

- (i) Regional celebration of the IDF on 21 March 2023, Geneva, Switzerland;
- (ii) Side event at the eighteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF18), 2023;
- (iii) Communication on forest landscape restoration in the ECE region through various events;
- (iv) Communication on sustainable wood products in contributing to SDG 12 through various events and exhibitions;
- (v) Various communication campaigns (e.g. ECCA30, Trees in Cities Challenge, Forests for Fashion initiative);
- (vi) Organization of the 7th European Forest Week in parallel with the EFC/COFFI joint session.

(b) Dissemination of information via policy briefs, press briefs and ad hoc studies, whenever results are available and new information is released:

- (i) Promotion and dissemination of studies and publications;
- (ii) Promotion of the INForest platform on forest statistics: <https://forest-data.unece.org/> in meetings and press releases;
- (iii) Compilation and dissemination of the Forest Information Billboard.

(c) Press and news releases and targeted social media articles to present the outcomes of workshops, events and publications; Outreach activities beyond the forest sector, disseminating information that highlights the relevance of forests and forest products to other sectors (e.g. energy events, biodiversity and environment meetings, sustainable construction and building):

Events organized on the margins of main forest-related and cross-sectoral meetings.

D. Work Area 4: Capacity-building

(a) Improving national capacities of middle-income countries to implement Sustainable Forest Management:

- (i) Review of countries' technical cooperation and capacity-building needs;
- (ii) Organization and implementation of technical cooperation activities;
- (iii) Raising of extrabudgetary funds as necessary;

(iv) Coordination of technical cooperation of the sub-programme within ECE and FAO, collaboration with international entities (particularly other United Nations agencies/programmes), United Nations country offices as well as national partners.

(b) Strengthening capacity of policy and decisions makers, and forest service specialists to develop national forest information systems in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia:

(i) Analysis of the current situations, needs, requirements and opportunities for building forest information systems in pilot countries on e.g. forest policy and management support;

(ii) Drafting guidelines for developing national information systems.

(c) Organization of capacity-building workshops on:

(i) Forest policy and management support information systems (one sub-regional and two national workshops);

(ii) Global and pan-European data collection on forests and SFM;

(iii) Forest products statistics for national correspondents to the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire;

(iv) SFM focused on non-wood forest products and services, if requested;

(v) Urban and peri-urban trees and forests;

(vi) Forest landscape restoration in the ECE region in support of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

E. Secretariat services to its governing bodies and their subsidiary body

(a) Intergovernmental meetings:

(i) Forty-fourth session of the Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management (31 May to 2 June 2023);

(ii) Joint session of the eighty-first session of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the forty-second session of the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC) (21 (pm) to 24 November 2023).

(b) Bureaux meetings:

Joint COFFI and EFC Bureaux meetings upon request.

(c) Teams of Specialists:

Servicing of Teams of Specialists at regular intervals throughout the year.

F. Informal meetings of the secretariat

At least 2 informal meetings (dates to be determined): Informal meetings with secretariats of other forest-related organizations in Europe (secretariats of UNECE, FAO, EFI Integrate Network, EEA and Forest Europe - European Forest Alliance)