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**Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations****Economic Commission for Europe****Food and Agriculture Organization****Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry****European Forestry Commission****Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics,  
Economics and Management****Forty-fourth session**

Geneva, 31 May - 2 June 2023

Item 5 (c) and (d) of the provisional agenda

**Guidance on Work Areas****Work Area 3: Communication and outreach and  
Work Area 4: Capacity-building****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

This document contains information about secretariat activities in the areas of “communication and outreach” as well as “capacity-building” since March 2022, drawing the Joint Working Party’s attention to specific issues where guidance is needed. The secretariat will provide additional information on planned activities for 2024 under each of the work area for feedback and guidance.

This document is submitted in accordance with ECE/TIM/2021/2–FO:EFC/2021/2, annex II, section I.



## **I. Communication and outreach**

### **A. Integrated Communications Strategy**

1. The Joint United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Forestry and Timber Section (Joint Section) operates under its secretariat-internal multi-channel, integrated communications strategy to advance the goals and maximize the impact of the Integrated Programme of Work 2022 – 2025. The communications strategy (available upon demand) supports effective and timely communication with stakeholder groups and leverages the opportunities of digital communications to grow new audiences and expand public engagement with the Joint Section's work.

2. Most of the communication work by the Joint Section to promote the work done under the Integrated Programme of Work depends on the availability of extra-budgetary funds. The Joint Section would like to thank Switzerland for generously having supported this work in 2022.

### **B. Major events organized and co-organized by the Joint Section**

3. Between March 2022 and March 2023, the Joint Section organized or co-organized **32 events** including meetings, workshops, seminars, capacity-building events and conferences. The full list can be found at: <https://unece.org/info/events/unece-meetings-and-events/forests>.

4. Between March 2022 and March 2023, these included:

- 16 capacity-building events, meetings and webinars;
- 13 Meetings of Teams of Specialists;
- 2 Intergovernmental meeting;
- 1 Publication launch event.

### **C. Other major meetings**

5. The Joint Section participated in numerous other meetings, workshops and conferences since the last Working Party session, including:

- Participation and presentation in the Forum International Bois Construction 2022 in Epinal/Nancy, France – 6-8 April 2022;
- Participation in the 31st Montréal Process Working Group Meeting, Republic of Korea (virtual), 3-4 May 2022;
- Contribution to the 2022 World Forestry Congress – 3-4 May 2022;
- Contribution to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) - 11 July 2022;
- Participation in the High-Level Policy Dialogue (virtual), 30 August 2022, Bonn, Germany;
- Participation in the Forest Europe Expert Level Meeting (virtual), Bonn, Germany - 31 August 2022;
- Contribution to the Expert Consultation on “Global Forest Resources Assessments: towards FRA 2025”- September 2022;
- Participation in the session "A forest-based Bioeconomy" at the International Union of Forest Research Organizations Annual Conference – 21-23 September 2022;
- Participation in the German Waste Wood Association Annual Conference – September 2022;

- Participation in the 26th Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry – October 2022;
- Participation in the Forest Europe Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Think Tank meeting (virtual) - 30 November 2022;
- Participation in the COP-15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, December 2022;
- Participation in the 2022 InterEnerStat Meeting (online) on identifying potential revisions to the “Standard International Energy Product Classification” (SIEC) system, 8 December 2022;
- Presentation to the Timber Exchange online webinar series on Forest Sector Analysis and Outlook, 9 December 2022;
- Participation in the meeting of the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment Advisory Group Meeting, 19 December 2022;
- Contribution to the European National Forest Inventories (ENFIN) Workshop - Strengthening the ENFIN network in providing forest information for international purposes, 25 January 2023;
- Online participation in the 36th Meeting of Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics, 6-10 February 2022;
- Online participation in the Eurostat Forestry Working Group, 1-2 March 2023;
- Participation in the Wood Procurement Task Force of the European Panel Federation “GESBOIS”, 23 March 2023, Brussels, Belgium.

## D. Publications and policy briefs

6. Publications and policy briefs published by the Joint Section provided tailored support to policymakers and technical experts in ECE member States and served as an excellent communication tool. In 2022, the following publications were released, in print and/or electronic copy (PDF):

- “Circularity concepts in forest-based industries” (hardcopy and electronic, English only);
- “Forest Products Annual Market Review 2021-2022” (electronic, English only);
- “Structural Changes in the Forest Sector and Their Long-Term Consequences for the Forest Sector – A Contribution to the Forest Sector Outlook Study 2020-2040” (electronic, English only);
- “The Outlook for the UNECE Forest Sector in a Changing Climate – A Contribution to the Forest Sector Outlook Study 2020-2040” (electronic and print, English, French and Russian);
- “Forecast of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry: Forest Products Production and Trade 2022-2023” (electronic, English only);
- “Catalogue of Wood Waste Classifications in the UNECE Region” (electronic, English only);
- “Circularity concepts in wood constructions” (electronic and printed, English and Russian);
- “Reporting on Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia – Focus on Criteria and Indicators” (English and Russian).

7. In addition, the following publications (tentative titles) will be available in 2023:

- Forest Products Annual Market Review

- ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) Forecast for Forest Products Markets;
  - Universal preconditions for circularity in forest-based industries;
  - Methodology report Forest Sector Outlook 2020-2040;
  - Boreal forests in the UNECE region;
  - Forest disturbance and damage in the UNECE region;
  - Circularity concepts in the pulp and paper industry.
8. In 2022 the Joint Section published the following policy briefs:
- “Sustainable Urban and Peri-urban Forestry – An Integrative and Inclusive Nature-Based Solution for Green Recovery and sustainable, Healthy and Resilient Cities” (French and Russian);
  - “National Policy Guiding Principles for Forest Landscape Restoration in the Caucasus and Central Asia” (English and Russian);
  - “National Policy Guiding Principles for Forest Landscape Restoration”;
  - “Boreal Forests and Climate Change – From Impacts to Adaptation” (English, French, and Russian);
  - “Forest Landscape Restoration in the Republic of Moldova – Feasibility study on the production of forest reproductive material”.
9. All publications and policy briefs are available at: <https://unece.org/publications/forests>; as well as <https://unece.org/forests/policy-briefs-forestry-and-timber-section>. Printed copies are available upon request.

## **E. Outreach material and visualizations**

10. Between April 2022 and March 2023, the Joint Section prepared the following visual communication materials to disseminate key messages:
- Video “Why trees?” on the value and importance of urban trees and forests;
  - Infographic on urban trees and global biodiversity ([https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/COP15\\_infographic\\_final.pdf](https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/COP15_infographic_final.pdf));
  - Four guides on how to make more circular choices as consumers on the themes of fashion, furniture, plastics, paper and paperboard;
  - Two short social media videos (“reels”) on urban forests and biodiversity;
  - One flyer on the importance of urban trees and forests;
  - Three infographics on Forests as Pharmacy to mark the International Day of Forests 2023;
  - Two roll-ups on the themes of urban forestry and the Trees in Cities Challenge.

## **F. Press and news releases by the Joint Section on the Economic Commission for Europe website**

11. The Joint Section issued fifteen news and press releases between March 2022 and March 2023. These are available at (<https://unece.org/media/forestry/press>; <https://unece.org/media/news?f%5B0%5D=program%3A342>):
- “Geneva, Lausanne, Nice and Bordeaux aim to bring the forest to the city”;
  - “UNECE to showcase “Forests for sustainable lifestyles and a circular economy” on International Day of Forests 2022”;

- "Redesigning the future of fashion and packaging through forest-based materials is possible";
- "Urban forests can help future-proof cities";
- "Forests can help cut plastic pollution and contribute to the circular economy, says UNECE/FAO";
- "UNECE and UNDP support Uzbekistan's Yashil Makon/Green Nation initiative to fight against climate change";
- "Supporting cooperation to address forest damage and disturbance in the UNECE region";
- "75-tree forest planted for UNECE in San Marino to promote sustainable cities for current and future generations";
- "Trees: nature's technology for climate-proof building";
- "From Woodland to Woodwork: a photo contest to mark 75 years of UNECE support to sustainable forest management";
- "The 80th Committee on Forests and the Forestry Industry opens with opportunities for bringing nature back into our cities";
- "Wood energy on the rise in Europe";
- "Urban trees support global biodiversity and sustainable societies";
- "Building urban and peri-urban tree and forest resilience in Central Asia";
- " Boreal forests at risk of losing their captured carbon, says new UNECE policy brief".

## G. Other media and communications outreach

12. In line with the Joint Section's internal communications strategy, the dedicated social media accounts established on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/UNECEForests>), LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/unece-forests>) and Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/unecefaforests/>) supported the Joint Sections' engagement. These accounts are supported by an ongoing weekly content plan of posts aligned with the objectives of educating and advocating for sustainable forest management, increasing awareness of ECE/FAO initiatives, supporting best practice work, sharing news, data, statistics and other relevant updates and seeking new fundraising opportunities. The Joint Section, in partnership with the Forest Stewardship Council, launched a photo competition entitled "From Woodland to Woodwork" to mark ECE's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary from October to December 2022 . During the contest, the ECE/FAO community grew by 150%.

13. The dedicated social media platforms currently have over 3500 followers between them and have reached an estimated 670 thousand users between March 2022 and March 2023. A dedicated forestry playlist is also available on the ECE YouTube account, with 76 videos and 3,077 views as of March 2023 (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC18B48BBE23D5313>).

14. The Joint Section's INForest data and knowledge platform for forests in the ECE region (<https://forest-data.unece.org/>) available in Czech, English, French, German, Polish and Russian accumulated 2,895 users and 12,684 views in 2022. In addition, the Forestry module of the ECE Statistical Database (<https://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/en/Pivot/>) recorded 25,316 downloads in that year.

15. The Joint Section also continued to promote the use of sustainable textile materials, launched several social media campaigns and information material.

16. The Trees in Cities Challenge, launched in 2019 as a global advocacy initiative to promote urban trees and forestry in cities, continued to grow rapidly in 2022/early 2023. The initiative invites mayors and local governments to make a tree-planting pledge to support

greener, more sustainable and climate resilient cities. As of 15 March 2023, 77 cities had made pledges to plant 12 million trees, and 10.6 million trees have been planted. The initiative is reinforced by a dedicated website (<https://treesincities.unece.org/>), many social media campaigns and the Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry. The latter was launched in 2021 as a forum for peer-to-peer learning and sharing best practices. Five meetings on sustainable urban forestry have supported outreach efforts since the last Joint Working Party, including three meetings of the Informal Network. Posts on the Section's social media accounts with a #treesincitieschallenge hashtag had a reach of over 30 thousand views in 2022.

## **H. Billboard**

17. The purpose of the Forest Information Billboard is to gather announcements from the forest sector in one place: from forest reporting and new publications to projects and upcoming events.

18. In 2022, four issues were published, following the quarterly schedule of previous years (March, June, September and December). They are available at <https://unece.org/forests/forest-information-billboard>.

## **I. Team of Specialists on Forest Communication (Forest Communicators' Network)**

19. The annual session of the ECE/FAO Teams of Specialist (ToS) on Forest Communication Networks for 2022 was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia in 6-9 June 2022. The session discussed and exchanged information on regional communication issues including the Forest Europe new communication strategy and social media, new EU Forestry Strategy and the relevance of the European Union Forest Communication Strategy 2011, FAO sustainable wood campaign and how to scale up innovative green value chains, achievements of the ToS team, and the current situation of forest pedagogy in Europe.

20. The ECE/FAO Forest Communicators' Network's annual meeting 2023 as well as a workshop will take place in person in Prague on 20–22 June 2023. This meeting will focus on the role of innovative technology in impactful communication as well as a unique focus on urban forestry. The meeting will also consider the latest best practices in forest communication and discuss trends in forestry in Europe.

## **J. Planned main events for Q2 and Q3 2023 and 2024 on Communication and outreach**

21. The Joint Section plans to organize the following events and campaigns in support of the Integrated Programme of work. This being a preliminary list, more will follow and can be consulted at <https://unece.org/info/events/unece-meetings-and-events/forests>:

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2023

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May 2023:

- Side event at the eighteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF18)
- Industry consultations- forest food supply chains project
- Seminar on Urban Forest Finance

14/15 June 2023:

- Urban Forest Event at the European Union Green City Conference, Malmö, Sweden.

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2023

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Summer 2023:

- Four episodes of The United Nations Forest Podcast: “Building with wood”, “Urban forests”, “Climate change and forests”, and “Wildfires and forests”

November 2023:

- EFC/COFFI joint session: Events organized with host country exhibitions and event on the occasion of the 7th European Forest Week

December 2023:

- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, COP 28 Dubai, Event on Forests, and climate change
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2024

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21 March 2024:

- Regional celebration of the International Day of Forests, Geneva, Switzerland

May 2024:

- Side event at the nineteenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF19)
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## **K. Key points on communication for guidance and discussion**

22. The Working Party is invited to discuss:

(a) The possible amplification of the Joint Section’s work by actively engaging on its social media channels, and continuing to send inputs to the Forest Information Billboard and other outlets;

(b) How the Joint Section could increase its outreach with the help of member States, and increase access to more sustainable funding;

(c) How the Team of Specialists on Forest Communication could be engaged regularly and effectively for communication on the implementation of the Integrated Programme of Work 2022-2025.

## **II. Capacity-building**

### **A. Forest Reporting**

23. In the area of forest reporting and to enhance the capacity in member States, the Joint Section worked in several areas:

- In March 2023 the Joint Section published the study, “Reporting on Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia”. Funded via the United Nations Development Account (UNDA-10<sup>th</sup> tranche) project, “Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia”. The publication presents a set of national criteria and indicators developed with and for the beneficiary countries, as well as provides knowledge on use of this tool. While some of the content is bespoke for the beneficiary countries, most of it is valid for all ECE member States.

- The Joint Section also continued its work on a project aiming at “Strengthening capacity of policy and decisions makers, and forest service specialists to develop national forest information systems in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia”. Via a dedicated survey, in consultation with national experts, an analysis of common challenges of forest information management in the beneficiary countries has been carried out and a guide on developing a Forest Information System (FIS) is being drafted. Pilot applications in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have been initiated.
- As a part of the 2025 cycle of the Global and Joint pan-European Data Collection on forests and sustainable forest management, it is foreseen that the work of national correspondents to these processes will be supported by international experts. Further support might be provided through the organization of two capacity-building workshops for countries of the region, in cooperation with FAO and Forest Europe. The implementation of the planned measures depends on the availability of funding.

## **B. Forest Products**

### **1. Forest products production and trade**

24. On 3 April 2023 the Joint Section organized a webinar on the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ) to present updates to the structure of the JFSQ for 2022 data that were agreed by the Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics that manages the JFSQ. The webinar also provided an introduction to the JFSQ for new correspondents.

### **2. Wood energy production and consumption**

25. The Joint Section organized three online capacity building modules to train national forestry and energy data experts on the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry. The training was held on 17, 20 and 27 April 2023. The first module provided an overview on the history, context and structure of the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) and invited major actors for the energy statistics to provide an overview on their work related to wood and solid biomass. The first and basic module was recorded and made available on the website of the Joint Section. Modules two and three offered opportunities for peer learning and interaction with the Joint Section in a question-and-answer format.

## **C. Forest Landscape Restoration**

26. The Joint Section in cooperation with individual experts finalized a study on the production of forest reproductive material for forest landscape restoration in the Republic of Moldova. The study was developed upon request of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova to the ECE.

27. The Joint Section completed a Forest Landscape Restoration Knowledge Platform. This Platform will support member States in strengthening their forest landscape restoration efforts and facilitate regional cooperation. The Platform is expected to serve as a sub-regional hub of information on forest landscape restoration relevant to the region, to:

- Provide a compendium of general information on ecosystem and forest landscape restoration;
- Disseminate information about forests and forest landscape restoration to international experts, stakeholders, and potential donors;
- Serve as a comprehensive compilation of resources, including methodologies, training materials, and best practices to facilitate forest landscape restoration.

28. The Platform will be made available in English and Russian and is expected to be open for expansion depending on the needs of users and the availability of funds.



## D. Urban Forestry

29. The Joint Section supported the government of Uzbekistan in the organization of a workshop on "Scaling up Urban Greening and forests in cities" in March 2022, in Tashkent, and held a National Forest Policy Dialogue in September 2022, in Tashkent.

30. The workshop "Future-proof green cities make future-proof countries - Building urban and peri-urban tree and forest resilience" was jointly organized by ECE, FAO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Uzbekistan, on 6-8 December 2022, in Budapest, Hungary.

31. The Joint Section organized five meetings of the Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry

- Urban Forests for Future-Proof Cities, a Regional Forum for Sustainable Development 2022 Round Table (7 April 2022);
- Collaboration on Benchmarking 2nd Meeting (5 Oct 2022);
- UNECE Urban Forest Policy Roundtable (16 September 2022);
- Are all urban trees created equal? Benchmarking for evidence-based urban forest policy and planning (12 Dec 2022);
- The city of the future is a green city: why we need trees in our cities for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a Regional Forum for Sustainable Development 2023 side event (30 March 2023).

## E. Planned main activities for 2023 and 2024 on Capacity-building

32. The Joint Section plans to organize the following activities in the work area on capacity building:

- Organization of national consultations on development of forest information systems in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan;
- Organization of a workshop on development of forest information systems in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;
- Publication of the Guide for development of forest information systems;
- Upon availability of funds, co-organization of two capacity building workshops in support to 2025 global and pan-European data collection;
- Organization of national workshops on development of circular value chains for forest products in the Caucasus and Central Asia;
- Organization of meetings of the Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry.

## F. Key points on capacity building for guidance and discussion

33. The Working Party is invited to:

- (a) Comment on the implemented and planned work on improving capacities in member States;
- (b) Indicate emerging needs and further strengthening of the Joint Section's capacity building for capacity building;
- (c) Advise on additional funding opportunities, including the involvement of member States in the work on capacity building.