



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

Work Area 1: Data, monitoring, reporting and assessment

Work Area 2: Policy dialogue and advice

Work Area 3: Communication and outreach

# Boreal forests

Agenda Item 5. (b)

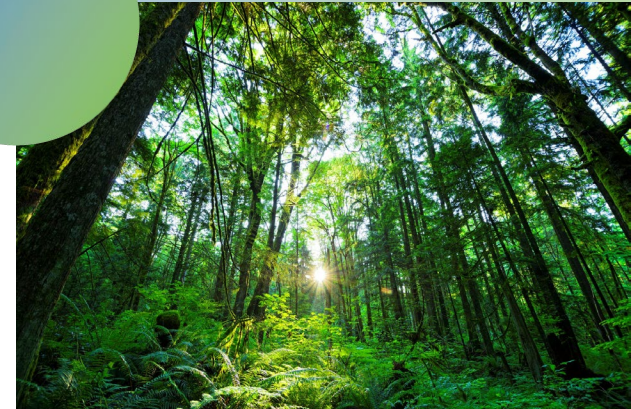
Documents:

[ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2023/5](#)

[ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2023/6](#)



Joint Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics  
and Management, 31 May - 2 June 2023



# Implemented activities and outputs in 2022-2023

**WA 3: Policy brief published** by the Joint Section to provide tailored support to policymakers and technical experts in ECE member States:

## “Boreal Forests and Climate Change – From Impacts to Adaptation”

English, Russian, French

ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2023/6



# Implemented activities and outputs in 2022-2023

Press and news releases:

## "Boreal forests at risk of losing their captured carbon, says new UNECE policy brief"

06 March 2023

ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2023/6



### Boreal forests at risk of losing their captured carbon, says new UNECE policy brief

[SDGs](#) [Climate Change](#) [Forestry](#) [Sustainable Development](#)

06 March 2023

Boreal forests are finally making the news. Also referred to as snow forests and taiga, they are the world's largest land ecozone, spanning over Canada, China, Finland, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States and constitute one of the planet's largest carbon sinks, holding 20% of the world's carbon emissions. According to the International Boreal Forest Research Association (IBFRA), they represent about 30% of the global forest area, with more surface freshwater than any other biome, and large tracts of unmanaged forests. But their essential role in regulating the global climate which has gone unnoticed for many years is under threat.

Therefore, it has never been more urgent to understand the boreal forest ecosystems in a changing climate, as well as their special place as a much-needed asset of our universal climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. UNECE's latest policy brief on "Boreal forests and climate change - from impacts to adaptation" underscores this urgent need for action to increase the resilience and adaptation of boreal forests to possible climate change scenarios.

Building on research by the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Boreal Forests and the International Boreal Forest Research Association (IBFRA), the policy brief outlines the main expected environmental and economic impacts of climate change on the forests. This includes the initially expected increased both, tree growth owing to the longer growing season, and tree loss resulting from drier weather and outbreaks of pests, diseases, and intense wildfires. The most devastating result could be the reverse of the boreal forests' current carbon sink to a carbon release effect. But climate change in boreal forests results also in an alteration of their biological diversity, a landscape transition with never-seen-before threats to trees, flora and fauna.

Recognizing that the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events are likely to have potentially profound climate-related effects on boreal forests, UNECE's policy brief stresses the need for policymakers, experts and the general public to recognize that these remote forests play a key role in our fight against climate change. As climate change shifts are not expected to reverse any time soon, now is the time to find effective ways to adapt policy and legislative frameworks, climate smart forestry practices, forest restoration activities, and research to help our boreal forests withstand the effects of climate change and become part of the solution.

Read the policy brief here



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UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Boreal Forests and Climate Change  
From Impacts to Adaptation  
Policy Brief



Joint Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management, 31 May - 2 June 2023

# Planned main activities for 2023/2024

## Scoping study on boreal forest

**Project:** “Strengthening cooperation and national capacities in selected UNECE countries for sustainable forest management”

**Goal:** to communicate the importance of boreal forest to high-level decision makers (beyond the forest sector) and a general audience.

**Structure:**

- 1) a general overview of boreal forest
- 2) country-specific national overviews of boreal forests for 6 countries in the UNECE region.

The Joint Section has initiated the development of the scoping study, including the preparation of the topical questionnaire for countries in the boreal zone.

# Planned main activities for 2023/2024

## Scope - DRAFT



1. **Getting to know boreal forests**
  - 1.1 What are they
  - 1.2 Where are they
  - 1.3 Trends
2. **The importance of boreal forests**
  - 2.1 Boreal forests and the environment
  - 2.2 Boreal forests and people
  - 2.3 Boreal forests and the economy
3. **Boreal forest ownership and management**
  - 3.1 Ownership of boreal forest
  - 2.3 Management of boreal forests
4. **Impact of climate change on boreal forests**
5. **Boreal forest contributions to global goals**
6. **Future for boreal forests**



# Thank you

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Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section

1 June 2023, Geneva

Joint Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management, 31 May - 2 June 2023

