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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-fifth session**

Geneva, 22–24 May 2024

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Update: Review of the Integrated Programme of Work**POST SESSION DOCUMENT 29.05.2024****OPEN FOR COMMENTS UNTIL 30 June 2024****Note: Text under consideration is placed in square brackets****Zero draft of the 2026-2029 Integrated Programme of Work
as discussed and agreed on 23 and 24 May 2024****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The following document was prepared by the secretariat in response to the request by the eighty-first session of the Economic Commission for Europe Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the forty-first session of the Food and Agriculture Organization European Forestry Commission (EFC) to initiate the mid-term review of the Integrated Programme of Work (IPoW).

The document includes input received during the informal online feedback session on 15 April 2024, written submissions received, as well as the secretariat's experience with implementing the current IPoW (open items are placed in square brackets). The Joint Bureau of COFFI and EFC had no factual objections to the current draft.

This document will serve as the basis for consultations with member States and stakeholders (English only in hybrid format) on 22 May 2024. The secretariat will present updates.



I. Integrated Programme of Work

1. The Integrated Programme of Work (IPoW) 2026-2029 is a non-binding compilation of activities to be carried out in coordination by ECE and FAO through the Joint ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section (“The Joint Section”) in the thematic areas defined below and under their respective mandates and work programmes. In the case of ECE, its annual programme plan, budget and the Programme of Work for ECE Subprogram 7, Forests and the Forest Industry (adopted by its Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry, COFFI, every year) outlines the mandates and determines the availability of regular budget funds exclusively. In the case of FAO, this includes staff and resources from the regional budget. The IPoW is not endowed with any specifically allocated budget and serves as a means of coordinating the regional activities under ECE’s Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and FAO’s European Forestry Commission (EFC). The present IPoW does not contain all the activities carried out by ECE and FAO. Therefore, certain organization-specific mandated activities will be implemented by each organization separately.

2. The IPoW contributes to the implementation of regional and global processes within the existing mandates of ECE and FAO including: the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 and declared Global Forest Goals, the Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification including the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement adopted at COP21, and the Glasgow Leaders’ Declaration on Forests and Land Use endorsed at UNFCCC COP26.

3. The IPoW is implemented jointly by the two organizations through the Joint Section, based on a partnership agreement signed in 2012 between ECE and FAO which outlines the working modalities of the cooperation.

4. The IPoW 2026-2029 goes beyond previous IPoWs in assigning the responsibilities of each organization to specific deliverables under the below thematic priorities. The oversight responsibility for the implementation of the IPoW remains with the members of COFFI and EFC.

5. The IPoW is implemented in cooperation with member States, regional economic integration organizations in close cooperation with relevant organizations and processes at all levels and other relevant stakeholders participating in the COFFI and EFC intergovernmental processes.

A. Objective of the Integrated Programme of Work

6. The IPoW aims to assist member States and regional economic integration organizations to strengthen sustainable management of forests and trees outside forests, taking into account public participation, to enhance the contribution of forests including their functions, ecosystem services and products to sustainable development, climate action and biodiversity conservation in the ECE region.

7. It is implemented by the Joint ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section in cooperation with other relevant partners and resources made available by both ECE and FAO, linking core related functions, namely: analytical and normative work; data collection, monitoring and assessment; international policy dialogue and advice; capacity-building; technical assistance; and communication. The implementation of the IPoW will be according to the guiding principles in Section E.

B. Scope

1. Geographical scope

8. The ECE region, i.e. all fifty-six member States of ECE – in line with the membership of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the members States

of the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC).¹ [The region covers about 1.7 billion hectares of boreal, temperate and subtropical forests, which [are the majority of][comprise] the “Northern Forests”][Forests of the Global North][Forests of the Northern Hemisphere][Forest Biomes of the Global North][Pan European Forests][UNECE Forests].

2. Substantive scope

9. Promote cooperation, collect, process and disseminate information and data, research, studies and analysis to implement the thematic priorities defined below in coordination with other international organizations whenever relevant and within the technical, administrative and budgetary frameworks of the hosting organizations;

10. Facilitate exchange of national and sub-national experiences and best practices and monitor progress on achieving sustainable forest management, help member States measure progress towards achieving the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests,

11. Build capacity, prepare dedicated guidance material and publications on forests and the forest sector including on the triple crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss upon availability of resources and in coordination with FAO activities beyond the IPoW and other relevant organizations.

12. Communicate, raise awareness and organize events on forests and the forest sector in the ECE region, and sharing information about the thematic priorities, including as relevant for the triple crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss and global processes.

C. Thematic priorities

13. The thematic priorities of the IPoW are listed in the following in no particular order of importance. A table listing the organization responsible for the delivery of the activities under the thematic priorities is contained in Annex 3:

1. List of thematic priorities

14. **Intergovernmental meeting** include formal and policy dialogues in online and hybrid mode where possible and financial resources available (policy dialogues should synergies among forest agencies and ongoing processes in the UNECE region (including the European Forest Alliance (EFA) or the Montreal Process).

- (a) Joint Session of COFFI and EFC
- (b) Joint Working Party [tbd.]
- (c) International Day of Forests
- (d) Policy dialogues
- (e) Meetings of the Teams of Specialists

15. **Sustainable management of temperate, boreal and subtropical forests**

- (a) Climate Change adaptation and mitigation

¹ ECE / COFFI member States are: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, North Macedonia, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, and Uzbekistan. FAO EFC members include : Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, European Union (Member Organization), Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uzbekistan.

- (b) Biodiversity conservation
- (c) Disturbance and damage
- (d) Assessment of forests and forest services
- (e) Boreal forests
- (f) [Sustainable production and consumption]
- (g) Urban and peri-urban trees and forests
- (h) [Forest landscape restoration]

16. **Data and Information**

- (a) Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire
- (b) Timber Forecast Questionnaire
- (c) INForest
- (d) Forest Ownership Reporting
- (e) Global Forest Resources Assessment
- (f) Joint Wood Energy Enquiry
- (g) Pan-European data collection

17. **Forest products and services**

- (a) Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- (b) Wood energy
- (c) Bioeconomy and circular economy
- (d) [Deforestation-free supply chains]
- (e) Market Assessments of production, trade and consumption of [wood][forest] products
 - (i) Forest Products Annual Market Review
 - (ii) Data Briefs
 - (iii) Country market statements
 - (iv) Market statement
 - (v) Other ad hoc mandated assessments

18. **Foresight**

- (a) Outlook study preparation start (second half of IPoW period)
- (b) Annual timber forecast questionnaire.

D. Implementation Modalities

19. The Committee and the Commission discuss and adopt the IPoW in a joint session. The IPoW is subsequently submitted to the Executive Committee of the ECE.

20. **Reporting and prioritization:** The IPoW implementation progress through the tasks assigned to the two organizations (see Annex 3) will be reported biannually by the Joint Section. A strategic review and prioritization will be undertaken every two years.

21. **Funding [and resources]:** Both organizations ensure that adequate and equitable resources are made available to implement the Integrated Programme of Work. For ECE, this includes a certain number of human and operational resources assigned through the ECE's annual programme plan and budget and the Programme of Work for ECE Subprogramme 7, Forests and the Forest Industry. For FAO, this includes staff and funding from the regional

budget. Annex 3 includes an indicative table of thematic priorities funded through the regular budget from ECE or FAO as well as required extrabudgetary resources.

22. **Extrabudgetary resources and voluntary contributions** are necessary to cover the full implementation of the IPoW. Member States, regional economic integration organizations and other donors will support the implementation of the IPoW through financial and/or in-kind contributions. Funding gaps will be presented to the joint bureau and delegates of the COFFI and EFC. Both organizations commit to undertake fundraising to raise equal shares (see indicative table in the Annex 3).

23. **Joint sessions** will be held every 2 years under the auspices of the ECE or FAO (alternating each time). Due regard shall be given to the Committee and Commission's official languages when organizing meetings and issuing publications and documents. The official languages of ECE / COFFI are English, French and Russian. The official languages of EFC are English, French and Spanish.

24. Official documents at Joint sessions of the Committee and Commission organized by ECE are submitted for processing and translation with costs covered by ECE. Translation of official documents and meeting interpretation into English, French and Russian will be covered by ECE regular budget resources. FAO will cover Spanish translation of documents and Spanish interpretation.

25. Official documents at Joint sessions of the Committee and Commission organized by FAO are submitted for processing and translation with costs covered by FAO. Translation of official documents and meeting interpretation into English, French and Spanish and will be covered by FAO regular budget resources. ECE will cover Russian translation of documents and Russian interpretation.

26. Online and hybrid meeting formats should be used as appropriate wherever authorized, convenient and feasible to allow for broader participation.

27. Member States are encouraged to consider hosting Joint sessions.

28. **Publications:** Publications should be published in digital format only whenever possible. Joint publications are strictly limited to jointly funded activities and implemented jointly by the two organizations.

29. **Broader Engagement:** A broader engagement by member States and regional economic integration organizations will require resources to finance the participation of delegates from eligible countries with economies in transition.

30. **[Teams of Specialists:** Teams of Specialists (ToS) provide advice and undertake activities that support the implementation of the IPoW. Their terms of reference are approved by COFFI and the Teams are subsequently established by the ECE Executive Committee every 2 years. Secretariat services are provided by ECE (and FAO in case ToS are serviced by FAO) through their separate budgetary processes. The work and expected outputs of the Teams of Specialists is aligned with the ECE programmatic budget, the IPoW and its objectives. The ToS support the Joint Section in the IPoW's implementation, recognizing the importance of the involvement of the scientific community and forest practitioners. The ToS report annually to the Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management (tbd.). The Annex 1 and Annex 2 of the IPoW contains (for information purposes) the terms of reference (TORs) and Guidelines of the Teams of Specialists (see website: <https://unece.org/forests/teams-specialists>).]

31. Teams of Specialists: [to be] approved by COFFI and the ECE Executive Committee in 2025:

- (a) Team of Specialists on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management (ECE serviced)
- (b) Team of Specialists on Sustainable Forest Products (ECE serviced)
- (c) Team of Specialists on Boreal Forests (ECE serviced)
- (d) Team of Specialists on Forest Products and Wood Energy Statistics (ECE serviced)

[(e) Teams of Specialist on Forest Communication (FAO serviced)] [proposal to move the Forest Communicators Network to FAO and discontinue as an ECE Team of Specialists]

(f) Team of Specialists on Forest Sector Outlook [to be relaunched in 2027 to prepare a forest sector outlook study 2030 upon availability of resources]

E. Principles guiding implementation of the Integrated Programme of Work

1. Implementation should be guided by the following principles:

32. **Partnership:** There will be a strong focus on working in partnership with international, regional and sub-regional actors in all thematic priorities of the IPoW as the most effective way of optimizing benefits, resources and avoiding potential duplication of activities. The Committee and the Commission will seek and welcome cooperation on any of the relevant thematic priorities.

33. **Coordination:** ECE and FAO will identify activities and opportunities funded from other ECE and FAO resources that are aligned with and support the implementation of the IPoW and support its implementation.

34. **Outreach to other constituencies:** In the implementation of the IPoW, the Committee and the Commission will include constituencies beyond the traditional forest community to ensure the relevance of the forest sector and its contribution to other sectors. They will coordinate relevant actions with, for example, the environment, biodiversity, climate, energy, water, agriculture, construction and textile sectors, using the potentials offered by ECE and FAO.

35. **Involvement of the private sector and civil society:** The private sector and civil society are key actors for sustainable forest management, sustainable forest products and services and the transition towards a circular economy and bioeconomy, and related global goals including those for climate, biodiversity and sustainable development. The participation of the private sector and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in the work of the Committee and the Commission will be actively sought, in line with the ECE and FAO organizational policies and rules of procedure. Increased participation from various relevant stakeholders should be encouraged.

36. **Human rights, youth inclusion, gender mainstreaming and respect of the rights of people with disabilities:** The IPoW gives due consideration to human rights, including indigenous and local community engagement and making the concerns and experiences of women, men, youth and people with disabilities an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its activities. This ensures that all people benefit equitably, and inequality is not perpetuated (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1997). Gender mainstreaming and respecting the rights of people with disabilities is a central part of ECE and FAO's strategic frameworks and their policies and programmes. Outreach to youth will be an integral part of the implementation of the IPoW.

Annex (to be added)

ANNEX 1: ToRs of the Teams of Specialists (to be discussed and confirmed at [COFFI] in 2025)

ANNEX 2: Guidelines for the establishments of expert groups (same as in IPoW 2021-2025)

ANNEX 3: Indicative table of thematic priorities with organizational responsibilities, priority ranking, fund allocations (RB) and XB requirements
