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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
TIMBER COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS FIFTY-SIXTH SESSION (28 September - 1 October 1998)

Highlights of the fifty-sixth session of the Timber Committee

- ◆ The Committee examined the implementation of the ECE Plan of Action, the four ECE "cross-sectoral issues" and discussed what new activities could be undertaken with more resources. It also agreed to strengthen its cooperation with other ECE PSBs (paras. 8-11, 20-22 and 27);
- ◆ The Committee reviewed its activities in support of sustainable forest management, to which it had attached highest priority and welcomed the ECE /FAO contribution to the Lisbon Ministerial Conference. The Committee agreed to participate actively in drawing up a pan European programme of action on forests, as agreed in the Lisbon General Declaration (paras. 17-22);
- ◆ The session's special topic was "Recycling, energy and market interactions". In the light of the discussion which followed the Committee agreed to address notably the consequences of energy and environment policies for the forest sector (paras. 12-14);
- ◆ The Committee reviewed the markets for forest products in 1998 and prospects for 1999 and approved a statement (paras. 15-16);.
- ◆ The Committee reviewed its activities (paras 23-33) and approved its programme of work for 1999-2003 (annex I), the rank ordering of programme elements (annex II) and a provisional calendar of meetings (annex III).

Introduction

1. The ECE Timber Committee held its fifty-sixth session at Geneva from 28 September to 1 October 1998. The session was attended by representatives from Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.
2. The session was attended by a representative of the European Commission.
3. The following United Nations and specialized agency was represented: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
4. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: International Technical Association for Tropical Timber (ATIBT); Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI); European Confederation of Agriculture (CEA); Euro MDF Board (EMB); European Federation of Fibreboard Industries (FEROPA); European Federation of Plywood Industries (FEIC); European Federation of Associations of Particle Board Manufacturers (FESYP); European Forest Institute (EFI); Malaysian Timber Council; the Engineered Wood Association (APA); and the Organization of European Sawmilling Industries (OES).
5. The Committee paid tribute to the memory of Messrs. Otto Eckmüller (Austria), past chairman of the ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics and Yves Cochelin (France), long time delegate to the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training.
6. The Committee was addressed by Mr. Y. Berthelot, Executive Secretary of ECE.

Adoption of the agenda (Item 1)

7. The provisional agenda (ECE/TIM/90) was adopted.

Implementation of ECE Plan of Action (Item 2) (TIM/1998/1)

8. Ms. C. Cosgrove-Sacks, Director of the ECE Trade Division informed the Committee of the implementation of the ECE reform and the provisions of the Plan of Action. The Committee noted that all four ECE "cross-sectoral issues" were addressed in its programme. Sustainable development is at the heart of all its activities, and there is a programme of activities on forestry assistance to countries in transition. The business community had been involved in the Committee's activities since the beginning, and gender issues had already been addressed once and would perhaps be included into the future programme.

9. The Committee discussed what activities could be undertaken with more resources, and agreed that any new activities should be concentrated in its highest priority area, contribution to sustainable forest management in the region. Its proposals on this topic are presented under agenda items 5 and 6 (see paras. 20-21, 27).

10. The Committee agreed on the rank ordering of its programme elements (see annex II).

11. The Committee noted that its current publication programme is kept under constant review by an intergovernmental body (the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party) and therefore it merited to be continued.

Special topic: Recycling, energy and market interactions (Item 3) (TIM/1998/2)

12. Presentations on recycling, energy and market interactions were given by a panel from the team of specialists on the question: Messrs: J. Dengg (Germany), B. Hillring (Sweden), J. Ilavsky (Slovakia), P. Ince (United States) and J. Stolp (Netherlands), plus Mr. J. Wall (European Commission), who presented a paper written by Ms. M. Perez Latorre (European Commission). The Committee thanked the authors for their interesting presentations.

13. The Committee agreed that the papers presented should be published in the ECE/FAO discussion paper series, along with a summary of the ensuing discussion.

14. The Committee discussed interactions between forest products markets, recycling of wood and wood fibre and generation of energy from wood. At present with relatively low fossil fuel prices, in most situations, without governments' incentives (e.g. a carbon tax) wood energy is not competitive. Recycling and energy generation of wood through environmentally and economically efficient methods could play a greater role in the total wood production and use system, as well as having benefits in rural development. The cross sectoral dimension of the issues led the Committee to encourage cooperation with the ECE Committee for Sustainable Energy and the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy, notably the consequences of energy and environment policies for the forest sector.

Market developments in 1998 and prospects for 1999 (Item 4) (TIM/1998/3 and ECE/TIM/BULL/51/3)

15. The Committee reviewed the markets on the basis of the *Annual Forest Products Market Review*, country statements and national forecasts for 1998 and 1999. It approved a statement for subsequent publication and wide distribution.

16. During the discussions, the Committee identified a number of issues related to information and analysis which it referred to the Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, which will meet in May 1999:

- information needs to monitor markets for certified forest products;
- information on trade and production of value added products;
- improvement of statistics on MDF and OSB;
- selected classification/definition questions.

Sustainable forest management in the region: follow-up to the Lisbon Ministerial Conference on the protection of forests in Europe; follow up to CSD/IPF and contribution to IFF (Item 5) (TIM/1998/4)

17. The Committee was informed of the contributions made by ECE/FAO to the pan European and global processes, and considered future contributions in this field. The delegations of Portugal and Austria, the co-chair countries of the pan European process, expressed their appreciation of the ECE/FAO contribution to the preparation of the Lisbon Conference. The Committee stressed that it continued to attach over-riding priority to this topic.

18. The Committee reaffirmed that its core activity, defined as monitoring and analysis of sustainable forest management in the region, was itself a significant contribution to sustainable forest management in the region. In particular, work on forest resource assessment, information and statistics, market reviews, timber trends studies and forestry assistance to countries in transition should be maintained as they were in full harmony with the objectives of both the global and pan European processes.

19. The Committee agreed to participate actively in drawing up a pan European programme of action on forests, as agreed in the Lisbon General Declaration. It welcomed the fact that there was no intention to create any new bodies, but to work through existing organisations whenever possible. It also stressed the importance of continuing close inter-organisation cooperation.

20. The Committee discussed possible new activities, on the basis of proposals prepared by the secretariat, in consultation with the bureau. It identified two areas where the Committee, with the EFC, could usefully undertake new activities, within its existing mandate and in accordance with its comparative advantage:

- **Trade and environment issues in the forest and forest products sector** could be addressed at a high level seminar, possibly in 2000. This seminar should be prepared in close cooperation with the ECE Committee on Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development and the Committee on Environmental Policy, with WTO, and a wide range of other bodies, including NGOs. Care should be taken, when deciding on the seminar's scope, to build on, and not duplicate, work undertaken elsewhere, notably under the auspices of IFF, such as the Brazil/UNCTAD seminar on trade related aspects of sustainable forest management of all types of forest, to be held in February 1999.

- **Strategies to stimulate and promote the sound use of wood and other forest based products as environmentally friendly and renewable materials** could also be discussed by a seminar, which could build on the work of the PR team (e.g. on competition and substitution) and on life cycle analysis.

21. With regard to the other possible activities identified by the secretariat, all of which appeared relevant and interesting, the Committee made the following remarks:

- The **role of women in European forestry** would be addressed at the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee seminar to be held in Portugal in 2001, which should take into account the themes identified in the annex to TIM/1998/4.
- A number of the topics identified under the theme **The forest sector and society: dialogue, communication, participation, confrontation and dispute settlement** were also being taken up in Joint Committee activities.
- **The role and responsibility of European private forest owners** was being addressed at a meeting being convened by the owners' associations themselves in late 1998.
- **The role of European forest ecosystems in mitigation of climate change** would be described, in part, in TBFRA 2000, which would quantify the forest-related carbon fluxes.

22. The Committee requested the secretariat to develop these ideas further and present proposals for implementation to the EFC session in October 1998.

Review of activities since the fifty-fifth session and programme of work for 1999 to 2003 (Item 6)

23. The Committee reviewed its activities, on the basis of an overview in TIM/1999/5, supported by more detailed information in TIM/1999/5/Add.1 to Add.3. It approved its programme of work (Annex I), the rank ordering of programme elements (Annex II), and the list of meetings (Annex III). The latter is updated regularly throughout the year and posted on the website.

24. The Committee urged the secretariat to resume the work on outlook studies as soon as the recruitment process for the vacant FAO post in the secretariat was completed. It also agreed to discuss at its next session the implementation of the project on structural trends in markets for forest products and in the structure and capacity of forest industries when the secretariat staff would be at full strength.

25. The Committee warmly thanked Austria, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland which had hosted sessions of its subsidiary body, seminars, workshops and meetings of teams

of specialists during the past year. It also thanked the countries which had made contributions to the trust fund, seconded experts to the Temperate and Boreal Forest Resource Assessment, or contributed the services of experts to teams of specialists.

(a) Activities of FAO and other Principal Subsidiary Bodies of ECE of relevance to the Timber Committee (TIM/1998/6)

26. The Committee was informed of FAO's regular and field forestry programmes in Europe on the basis of a document (FO:EFC/98/4) prepared for the twenty-ninth session of the European Forestry Commission.

27. The Committee was also informed of the activities of other Principal Subsidiary Bodies of ECE dealing with matters of concern to it. It took note of this information and agreed to take it into account when discussing its own programme of work. The Committee noted that its decisions under other agenda items would lead to close and functional cooperation with three other ECE Principal Subsidiary Bodies, on Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development, on Environmental Policy and on Sustainable Energy. The Division Director, Ms. C. Cosgrove-Sacks, assured the Committee of the support of the ECE Committee on Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development in the implementation of the new activity on trade and environment issues in the forest sector (see agenda item 5). The secretariat was asked to inform the ECE Committee on Sustainable Energy of the issues identified by the team of specialists on recycling, energy and market interactions in order to consider possible areas of cooperation.

(b) Activities on public relations (TIM/1998/5/Add.1)

28. Mr. I. Gschwandtl (Austria), leader of the FAO/ECE Team of Public Relations Specialists in the Forest and Forest Industries Sector, reviewed their accomplishments in strengthening international communications through building a network of forestry communicators in the ECE region. Ms. B. Sanness (Norway), deputy leader, presented the team's draft report on "The competitive climate for wood products and paper packaging: the factors causing substitution with emphasis on environmental promotions."

29. One recommendation of the report is to discuss its implications at an international forestry communicators forum. Following discussion which included support for the team and its timely report, and a request to produce a summary of their detailed report, the Committee agreed to extend their mandate until November 2000. The mandate is to be amended to include activities in conjunction with the new Timber Committee initiative on "Strategies to stimulate and promote the sound use of wood and other forest products as environmentally friendly and renewable resources."

(c) Recycling, energy and market interactions (TIM/1998/5/Add.2)

30. Mr. B. Hillring (Sweden), leader of the team of specialists on Recycling, Energy and Market Interactions, reviewed their activities which included preparation of the session's special topic on the same subject. Mr. R. Bali (Turkey) welcomed the Committee to the team's workshop in Istanbul on 3-6 November 1998. The team will meet during the workshop and report back to the Committee in 1999 when its mandate ends.

(d) Joint UN-ECE Timber Committee and FAO European Forestry Commission study tour in Ireland (TIM/1998/5/Add.3)

31. Mr. J. McLoughlin (Ireland) invited the Committee delegates to the study tour to Ireland to be held 5-11 September 1999. Initial information published in TIM/1998/5/Add.3 will be updated, distributed to heads of delegations and kept current on the Committee's website. The Committee thanked Ireland for the preparations and encouraged other countries to consider future tour possibilities.

(e) Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Statistics

32. The Committee welcomed the proposal that a joint FAO/ECE/ITTO/EUROSTAT questionnaire be circulated in 1999 (data for 1998), as suggested by an inter-secretariat meeting convened by ITTO. This cooperation in data gathering and sharing would use the resources of the secretariats more efficiently and reduce the reporting burden on countries. The Committee requested the Joint Working Party to review the new joint questionnaire at its meeting in May 1999, and make any necessary proposals for improvement.

(f) Mandates of teams of specialists

33. The Committee approved the proposed mandate for the public relations team (modified as mentioned in (b) above), extended until the year 2000 the mandate of the team of specialists on assistance to countries in transition and modified the mandate of the team on forest fire by removing the reference to hosting of a meeting by Finland.

Election of officers (Item 7)

34. The Committee elected Ms. A. Bergquist (Sweden), Chairman and Messrs. J. Serveau (Canada) and N.A. Burdin (Russian Federation) Vice Chairmen. It warmly thanked Mr. G. Siegel (Austria), outgoing Vice Chairman, for his services as Chairman and Vice Chairman over the past five years.

Any other business (Item 8)

35. The Committee noted that most of the Committee documents had only been issued very shortly before the session. This significantly reduced their utility, as wide circulation and discussion at the national level, also with the business community, is an important part of preparation for the session. As the documents had been prepared in good time, a large part of the delay was due to problems with translation and the fact that distribution is not permitted until all language versions are ready. The Committee hoped that in future sufficient resources would be made available for timely translation and distribution of these important documents and suggested that the secretariat facilitate the availability of documents by electronic means.

Adoption of the report (Item 9)

36. The Committee adopted its report, on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat.

Date of next session (Item 10)

37. The Committee agreed that its next session should take place from 27 to 30 September 1999, subject to the availability of conference services.

ANNEX I

PART I

**INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE ECE TIMBER COMMITTEE
AND THE FAO EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
FOR 1999-2003**

This programme is carried out by the ECE Timber Committee (TC) and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC), and their subsidiary bodies, which meet approximately in a two year cycle:

- The Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training (JC)(2000, 2002)
- The Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics (FES)(1999, 2001)
- The EFC Working Party on Management of Mountain Watersheds (2000, 2002)
- The EFC/AFWC/NEFC Working Party on Mediterranean Forestry Questions *Silva Mediterranea* (SM) (1999, 2001)

A. CORE PROGRAMME: MONITORING AND ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOREST AND FOREST PRODUCTS SECTOR IN THE REGION

1.1 Collection and dissemination of information on trends in the sector, including publication of the *Timber Bulletin* (priority ranking: 4)

Description: Information is regularly collected and disseminated on production, trade and prices of roundwood and forest products, and forest fires.

Method of work: Statistics are collected on an annual basis from countries and published in the *Timber Bulletin*. Data collection is coordinated with FAO Rome, EUROSTAT and ITTO and the results are shared between all four organisations. The whole system is reviewed by the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics at its biennial sessions.

Duration: Continuing; **Annual outputs:** publication of 6 issues of the *Timber Bulletin*: on forest products prices, statistics on production and trade, trade flow data, the annual market review, forest fire statistics and the Committee's market discussion at its annual session.

1.2 Forest Resource Assessment 2000 (temperate and boreal forests) (priority ranking: 5)

Description: Information on the forest resource of the temperate and boreal zones (including developed countries outside the ECE region), will be collected and published in the context of the FAO global forest resource assessment, under the guidance of the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics.

Method of work: An enquiry was prepared under the supervision of a team of specialists, taking into account the recommendations of the Experts Consultation at Kotka (Finland) in June 1996. At all stages, the work is being carried out in close cooperation with the FAO Forestry Department and other organisations active in this area.

Duration: Continuing, review in 2003. **Outputs in 1999:** publication, database and background documentation.

1.3 Sustainable forest management in the region: support to the follow-up to UNCED and the pan European process on the protection of forests (priority ranking: 1)

Description: The Committee and the Commission will provide support, as appropriate, to the follow-up to UNCED, including the work of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), and the pan European process of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests. In particular the Commission will review, on a regular basis, national forest policies and selected topical policy issues, such as certification of sustainable forest management, in order to review implementation at the national level of the provisions of UNCED and the pan European process, and as support for national policy makers. The Committee and the Commission will collect and analyse information relevant to Helsinki Conference resolutions H1 and H2, notably as regards quantitative indicators of sustainable forest management and support the reporting to the pan European on this subject.

Method of work: At each EFC session, delegates submit national progress reports, according to an outline drawn up by the Executive Committee. These reports are synthesized by the secretariat before the session, presented and discussed. At its session in 1998, the EFC will discuss those results of CSD relevant to Europe, topical issues relevant to Europe and formulate recommendations concerning FAO's strategy from a European viewpoint. In addition, the secretariat, in agreement with the General Coordinating Committee of the pan European process and in cooperation with other relevant international organisations, including FAO, EU, OECD and ICP Forest supplied data relevant to the list of quantitative indicators of sustainable forest management for the Lisbon Conference. Existing sources, notably the Forest Resource Assessment, were used and modified to the extent possible to improve their capacity to help the pan European process. The team of public relations specialists will continue

to work towards creating a positive image of the forest sector, according to the mandate in TIM/1998/5 and FO:EFC/98/7. The team of specialists on socio-economic aspects of forests, under the auspices of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee, provided input to resolution L1 of the Lisbon Conference and will transmit the Joint Committee's proposals on this topic to the pan European process. A seminar on trade and environment issues in the forest and forest industries sector will be organised, possibly in 2000, in close cooperation with the ECE Committees on Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development and on Environmental Policies, with WTO, and other bodies. Strategies to stimulate and promote the sound use of wood and other forest based products as environmentally friendly and renewable materials will also be discussed by a seminar. The secretariat will prepare outline plans for implementing these activities and present them to the bureaux meeting in April 1999.

Duration: to 1999

1.4 Activities for countries in transition, including coordination of implementation of resolution H3 of the Helsinki Ministerial Conference (priority ranking: 6)

Description: The Committee and Commission will provide assistance to the countries in transition, in order to promote the process of economic reform and transition to a market economy in their forest and forest products sector. The topics and themes to be included in this programme shall be in line with the priorities and needs identified by the countries concerned. In particular, the Committee and the Commission will contribute to implementing resolution H3 on forestry assistance to countries in transition, by monitoring and analysing this assistance, in particular to determine whether it corresponds to countries' real needs and priorities.

Method of work: The work is guided by a team of specialists, which meets regularly. The secretariat, as international coordinator for H3, collects, stores and analyses information and reports regularly to the parent bodies and, as appropriate, to meetings of the pan European process. A data base on forestry assistance to countries in transition is maintained and its contents made available. The Committee and Commission implement a wide range of activities, notably workshops, which are scheduled and organized in a flexible manner, under two broad headings:

- Institution building, including legal and policy infrastructure;
- Development of market oriented and ecologically sound enterprises.

Duration: to 2000; **Outputs in 1998/1999:** a workshop on certification of sustainable forest management and markets for certified products in countries in transition was held in the Czech Republic in autumn 1998; a workshop on development of marketing of sawnwood products in countries in transition is expected to be held in Belarus in 1999 or 2000, pending funding. The database

on forestry assistance to countries in transition, established under resolution H3 will be updated regularly and made widely available. The team will meet in 1999 in Austria.

1.5 Review of markets for forest products and short term forecasts (priority ranking: 2)

Description: The Committee analyses, on a continuous basis, short term trends in the production, trade, consumption and prices of forest products and forecasts short term prospects, with a view to providing Governments and the forest products sector with accurate and up-to-date information and assessments.

Method of work: The annual session of the Timber Committee reviews short term trends and prospects in the markets, on the basis of estimates provided by delegations and the *Forest Products Annual Market Review*, prepared by the secretariat, which reviews trends in the previous year. An analysis of trends and short-term outlook, approved by the Committee, is published. The Committee's market discussion also reviews trends in the markets for certified forest products on the basis of information provided by delegations on developments in their countries, and statements by experts.

Duration: Continuing. **Annual outputs:** *Annual Market Review* and the Committee's market statement at its annual session.

1.6 Outlook for the supply and demand for timber and for non-wood goods and services (priority ranking: 3)

Description: The Committee and Commission prepare, keep under review and regularly up-date projections and forecasts of long-term trends in production, trade, consumption and prices of forest products, and of the interaction of all of these, in order to assess the long term sustainability of the European timber supply. The Committee and the Commission will also carry out a study on the outlook for the supply and demand of the non-wood goods and services of the forest. The work is overseen and guided by the FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics.

Method of work: The fifth European timber trends study (ETTS V) was published and disseminated in 1996. The joint session in 1996 reviewed its results and discussed its implications for policy. An evaluation of the whole process was carried out by the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party. A core team on outlook studies and data, will be formed and hold its first meeting in 1998/1999. The secretariat, guided by the core team, will implement the Working Party's recommendations, as soon as the Geneva group is fully staffed.

A study, by a team of specialists, on the situation for non-wood goods and services, composed of national reports prepared according to a common format, was issued in 1998.

A team of specialists on recycling, energy and market interactions will analyse the influences and interactions of technological and legislative developments on recycling, energy and timber markets, according to the mandate in TIM/1998/5, annex 3. This analysis was the basis of the special topic at the Committee's fifty-sixth session.

Duration: Continuing. **Outputs 1998/1999:** outline for the next outlook study, workshop on recycling, energy and market interactions, Turkey, November 1998.

B. AREAS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE COMMISSION AND/OR THE COMMITTEE

2.1 Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics (priority ranking: 7)

Description: The Working Party keeps under review the needs for international statistics in the forest and forest products sector and develops programmes to meet those needs, notably with regard to improving comparability; develops methodologies for collection and analysis of information and statistics; and undertakes projects in the field of economics and statistics relating to forestry and forest products.

Method of work: The Working Party meets every two years and advises the parent bodies and the secretariat on the implementation of work in its field. In particular, it is responsible for guiding the implementation, in its area of competence, of programme elements 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5 and 1.6.

Duration: Continuing; **Outputs in 1999:** At its session in 1999 the Working Party will also review TBFRA, preparation plans for the next outlook study, consider intergovernmental cooperation and forest sector statistics.

2.2 Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training (priority ranking: 8)

Description: The Joint Committee assists countries, in particular those which its parent bodies may identify at any time as requiring priority attention, to develop their forestry activities in the context of sustainable development. This is achieved by fostering international cooperation on technical, economic and organizational aspects of forest management and forest working techniques and of the training of forest workers in logging and forest operations.

Method of work: The Joint Committee's activities are led by a Steering Committee, which meets annually. There are three subject areas: management (e.g. multiple use forestry, ecological and economical issues, marketing, information systems), technology (e.g. forest engineering, ecologically and economically sound operations in silviculture, wood harvesting and transport) and training (e.g. for workers, supervisors and managers, including applied ergonomics, occupational safety and health and social aspects of forestry). Much of the work is carried out by teams of specialists which report to the Joint Committee and Steering Committee sessions.

Duration: Continuing; **Outputs:** the Joint Committee's work programme for 1999-2003 is set out in the report of its twenty-second session (September 1998), TIM/EFC/WP.1/28).

2.3 EFC/AFWC/NEFC Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions, *Silva Mediterranea* (priority ranking: 9)

Description: *Silva Mediterranea* will advise FAO and member countries in the Mediterranean region on the implementation of the Mediterranean Forest Action Programme (MED-FAP). It will also encourage the exchange of information and the coordination of research in topics of interest to Mediterranean forestry, through research networks.

Method of work: *Silva Mediterranea* will act, at regular sessions (seventeenth in Turkey in 1997) and between them, as an inter-governmental forum for the coordination, monitoring and orientation of MED-FAP. It will contribute to identifying international regional priority activities, as well as designing and monitoring them. Six research networks are at present operational, focusing on forest fires, key species of the subregion (stone pine, cedar species, and the most recently created network, on cork oak), other multipurpose tree species, and on selection of stands of Mediterranean conifers for the production of seeds to be used in reforestation programmes.

Duration: Continuing

2.4 FAO Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds (priority ranking: 10)

Description: The Working Party collects information, documents technologies, monitors evolution, exchanges experience and discusses progress within mountain ecosystems in view of their sustainable management and conservation. Important areas of concentration will be sustainable management and security of mountain ecosystems, with special attention to torrent control, avalanches, risk zoning, and mapping and early warning systems.

Method of work: The Working Party has an important role in the follow-up of Agenda 21, and supports FAO's role as task manager for chapter 13 on mountain ecosystems. The twenty-first session was held in May/June 1998 in the Czech Republic. Key areas of concentration will be sustainable management of mountain ecosystems, improved mountain livelihood systems, in response to UNCED, activities related to international agreements on mountains, and risk and disaster control and monitoring.

Duration: Continuing

PART II

Projects for possible implementation at a future time

(See ECE decision O (45) and Supplementary report containing the views and proposals of ECE to the Special Commission of ECOSOC, E/ECE/1150/Rev.1, para. 131)

Structural trends in markets for forest products and in the structure and capacity of forest industries

Description: The Committee and the Commission review medium-term (3-5 years) trends in the production, consumption, trade and prices of major forest products and the structure and capacity of the sawmilling and wood-based panels industries, so that governments may be continuously informed of structural trends in the forest products sectors.

Work accomplished and to be undertaken: Medium-term surveys are carried out on a 3-year rotation of sectors. These surveys incorporate as appropriate the results of surveys of the structure and capacity of major sectors (every time for panels, every other time for sawmilling). The issue of the medium-term surveys has been suspended until the Geneva staff is at full strength.

ANNEX II

Rank ordering of programme elements in Timber Committee programme

- 1.3 Sustainable forest management in the region: support to the follow-up to UNCED and the pan European process on the protection of forests (priority ranking 1)
- 1.5 Review of markets for forest products and short term forecasts (priority ranking 2)
- 1.6 Outlook for the supply and demand for timber and for non-wood goods and services (priority ranking 3)
- 1.1 Collection and dissemination of information on trends in the sector, including publication of the *Timber Bulletin* (priority ranking 4)
- 1.2 Forest Resource Assessment 2000 (temperate and boreal forests) (priority ranking 5)
- 1.4 Activities for countries in transition, including coordination of implementation of resolution H3 of the Helsinki Ministerial Conference (priority ranking 6)
- 2.1 Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics (priority ranking 7)
- 2.2 Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training (priority ranking 8)
- 2.3 EFC/AFWC/NEFC Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions, *Silva Mediterranea* (priority ranking 9)
- 2.4 FAO Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds (priority ranking 10)

ANNEX III

**PROVISIONAL LIST OF MEETINGS IN 1999 AND 2000 FALLING WITHIN
THE TIMBER COMMITTEE'S PROGRAMME OF WORK**

Note: The meetings are sub-divided into two categories: meetings marked (A) are open to delegates or approved representatives from all member countries of ECE as well as from other countries that are members of the United Nations and organizations accredited to ECE (or to FAO and ILO, in the case of meetings co-sponsored by them). Meetings marked (B) are those restricted to the countries or individuals nominated by their countries to take part in the activity concerned, e.g. a team of specialists. At the Committee's website (<http://unece.org/trade/timber>) an up to date calendar of meetings, can be consulted.

1999

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Title</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 22-24 March (to be confirmed) | Geneva | Meeting of the team of specialists on Temperate and Boreal Forest Resource Assessment 2000 (B) |
| April (to be decided) | Geneva | Meeting of the Timber Committee office holders and the EFC Executive Committee (B) |
| 17-19 May | Estonia | Meeting of the team of public relations specialists in the forest and forest industries sector (B) |
| 26-28 May | Geneva | Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, twenty-second session (A) |
| 5-11 September | Ireland | Joint ECE Timber Committee / FAO European Forestry Commission study tour in Ireland (A) |
| 20-24 September | Pessac (France) | Seminar on forest operations of tomorrow (A) |
| 27-30 September | Geneva | ECE TIMBER COMMITTEE, fifty-seventh session (A) |
| September (to be decided) | Germany | Workshop on reducing the impact of forest operations on ecosystems (B) |

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------|---|
| (to be decided) | Austria | Meeting of the team of specialists to monitor the programme of assistance for countries of eastern and central Europe in transition (B) |
| 1999 or 2000 (to be decided) | Belarus | Workshop on development of marketing of sawnwood products in countries in transition (A) |

2000

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Title</u> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| April (to be decided) | Geneva | Meeting of the Timber Committee office holders and the EFC Executive Committee (B) |
| 11-17 June | Ossiach (Austria) | Workshop on new trends in wood harvesting with cable cranes (A) |
| September/October (to be decided) | Rome (Italy) | ECE TIMBER COMMITTEE, fifty-eighth session in Joint Session with the FAO European Forestry Commission, thirtieth session (A) |
| (to be decided) | (to be decided) | Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, 23rd session (A) |
| (to be decided) | Finland (to be confirmed) | Workshop on information systems in forestry (A) |
| (to be decided) | (to be decided) | Seminar on trade and environment issues in the forest and forest industries sector (A) |
| (to be decided) | (to be decided) | Seminar on strategies to stimulate and promote the sound use of wood and other forest based products as environmentally friendly and renewable materials (A) |