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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

TIMBER COMMITTEE  
Fifty-eighth session

EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION  
Thirtieth session

**JOINT SESSION**  
FAO Headquarters, Rome  
9-13 October 2000

**Special topics**

(Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda)

Secretariat Note

This document provides an overview of the themes of the special topics at the joint session:

- (a) Sustainable Forest Management Practices, the work of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training;
- (b) Consequences of storm damage by "Lothar".

Delegations will be invited to take an active part in the discussions which will follow the presentations

## **Introduction**

1. The bureaux of the Timber Committee and the European Forestry Commission at their joint meeting in May agreed that the special topics to be presented at the joint session be:

- (a) Sustainable Forest Management Practices, the work of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training;
- (b) Consequences of storm damage by "Lothar".

## **Sustainable Forest Management Practices, the work of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training**

2. The special topic was an opportunity to present, in more detail than was usually possible, the work of the Joint Committee to its parent bodies, and to hear their reactions and suggestions. Mr. H. Höfle (Germany), Chairman of the Joint Committee, will present the Joint Committee's activities and methods of work, stressing the Joint Committee's specific characteristics and comparative advantage, as well as its focus on the priorities and broad goals laid down by the parent bodies. At the same occasion, examples of particular Joint Committee activities, which were of topical interest, such as the work on public participation in forest decision making will be presented. Sufficient time will be allotted for an in-depth discussion by the parent bodies of the Joint Committee's work.

## **Consequences of storm damage by "Lothar"**

3. The secretariat has followed very closely the effects of the storm damage last December. A series of ECE press releases were issued, presenting the problems created with an international/regional perspective. The various implications of the storm damage were presented: impact to the forest environment; valuation and extent of damage; impact on timber markets; silvicultural measures to restore damaged forests; and the danger represented for the general public in recreation.

4. In close cooperation and coordination with the countries concerned, a website was established, where national information, particularly volumes of windthrown timber are compared to yearly removals. The website also provided large references to national sites and regional associations. References to Government measures intervened to stabilise markets, assist forest owners and provide necessary infrastructure.

5. Another aspect is the role of the Timber Committee in monitoring and analysing market developments. A special chapter of this year's *Forest Products Annual Market Review* (Timber Bulletin, Vol. LIII, ECE/TIM/BULL/53/3) analyses the storm damage. The purpose of this special chapter on the market effects of the storm is multi-fold. First, there has never been a storm measured which resulted in such damage, and the impacts on timber markets are both immediate and will continue to skew markets for

2 to 3 years. Second this storm will not be the last and lessons learned this year can help after future storms, both in the countries which sustained damage this time, and for those countries which incur storm damage the next time. And third, this chapter provides background information for the special topic and brings forth topics for discussion at the joint session.

6. The Joint Committee is also considering the feasibility of updating its Manual on Acute Forest Damage (ECE/TIM/DP/7). The manual brings together the experience throughout Europe in dealing with forest damage.