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**Food and Agriculture  
Organization****Economic Commission for Europe**  
Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry**Food and Agriculture Organization**  
European Forestry Commission**Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Statistics,  
Economics and Management****Thirty-sixth session**  
Geneva, 17-18 June 2014**Report of the joint thirty-sixth session of the  
FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Statistics,  
Economics and Management****I. Attendance**

1. The Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management held its thirty-sixth session in Geneva from 17 to 18 June 2014. The session was attended by delegates from the following countries: Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America,
2. The following UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations attended the session: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF).
3. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations attended the session: Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF), COST Action on forest land ownership (FACESMAP), the European State Forest Association (EUSTAFOR) and the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC).

**II. Adoption of the agenda (item 1 of the agenda)**

4. The meeting was opened by Ms. Elina Mäki-Simola of Finland, Chair of the Working Party.
5. Mr. Andrey Vasilyev, Deputy Executive Secretary of UNECE, welcomed participants to the meeting on behalf of both ECE and FAO. He stressed that this was the first meeting of the Working Party after the new ECE-FAO Integrated Programme of Work (IPoW) was

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adopted in December 2013 by the Joint Session of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC), which took place in Rovaniemi, Finland. He underscored that the new IPoW provides the structure and vision to guide the work of COFFI and the EFC. He also stressed the key role of the Working Party in ensuring the quality of the work of the Secretariat and the Teams of Specialists.

6. Mr. Florian Steierer, Secretary to the Working Party, explained his role and responsibilities vis-à-vis the Working Party and reiterated the secretariat's commitment to the process. He invited feedback from participants, both during the meeting and during the intersessional period.

7. After opening remarks, the Chair introduced the meeting agenda (ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2014/1), which was adopted without amendments.

### **III. Outcome and recommendations of the Joint session of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission, Rovaniemi, December 2013 (item 2 of the agenda)**

8. The secretariat reported on the process that led to the adoption of the new ECE-FAO Integrated Programme of Work, outlining the four work areas and the shift from thematic work areas to functional work areas.

9. Changes to the Teams of Specialists were also presented. This included: two new teams (Forest Products Statistics and Wood Energy), the extended scope of the Policy Team (to cover the entire ECE region), the focus on green jobs for the ECE/FAO/ILO Joint Network and the discontinuation of the Team of Specialists on Forest Fires. Participants were also presented with the revised Terms of Reference of the Working Party (ECE/TIM/2013/2; FO: EFC/2013/2).

### **IV. Report of second expert workshop on “Forests and Sustainable Development Goals” (item 3 of the agenda)**

10. Mr. Christoph Duerr, Switzerland, introduced this agenda item and reported on the outcome of the Second ECE-FAO Workshop on Forests and Sustainable Development Goals, which had taken place in Geneva the day before. In particular, he presented the main recommendations of the workshop, which were endorsed by the Working Party. These are as follows:

- (a) It is essential that at least one target under the relevant sustainable development goal(s) focuses on Sustainable Forest Management, in order to reflect the fundamental role that it plays in sustainable development;
- (b) Forest-related indicators should be developed for all targets with a forest component. These include targets related to: biodiversity, ecosystem management, production and consumption patterns, energy, food security, water and sanitation, climate, poverty eradication, gender, health, and urban development.
- (c) Over the years the forest sector has produced detailed datasets and indicators on forests and sustainable forest management and this information should be properly utilized when developing target-specific forest related indicators

11. The Working Party acknowledged the important role played by UNECE/FAO in collecting datasets, reporting on indicators and in contributing to the global discussion on the development of forest related targets and indicators for SDGs. In this regard, the Working Party underscored that the availability of detailed indicators for the ECE region, based on the

existing well developed and advanced monitoring and assessment system, would allow for a better, more targeted and comprehensive monitoring of SFM. The use of the existing set of detailed indicators at the regional level (e.g. Criteria and Indicators processes) to support the monitoring and implementation of forest related SDG targets was recommended.

12. The Working Party also agreed to forward the recommendations above, as well as the report of the First and Second ECE-FAO Workshops on Forests and SDGs to the next meeting of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO), Rome, 23-27 June 2014, for its consideration.

## **V. Follow-up to the recommendations from the Working Party self-evaluation made at the thirty-fifth session (item 4 of the agenda)**

13. The Secretariat reported on action taken following the Working Party self-evaluation in 2013. Based on the recommendations from the meeting report of the 35<sup>th</sup> session (ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2013/2), the secretariat informed participants on action taken to address organizational matters for Working Party meetings, such as: preparation and structure; communication and sharing of relevant documents with delegates; expected participants and monitoring; and evaluation of the secretariat's work. The participants welcomed the action taken to implement its recommendations. They also stressed the importance of having this type of exercise on a regular basis and requested that the secretariat organize the next self-evaluation during the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the Working Party in 2015.

14. Countries expressed their appreciation of the roundtable discussion organized during the Working Party meeting. Germany stressed the usefulness of having Teams of Specialists suggest themes for discussion and recommended that the Rovaniemi Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy be the subject of a discussion next year. The Working Party welcomed the proposal.

15. The secretariat stated that the Rovaniemi Action Plan will also be the subject of discussion at the upcoming meeting of the Teams of Specialists on Forest Policy, to take place in Krakow from 16 to 17 September, and that good examples of implementation of the Plan will be presented at the next session of the COFFI (Kazan, 18 - 21 November 2014).

16. Switzerland asked for clarification from the Secretariat on the procedure for selecting ToS members. The Secretariat clarified that ToS are open to experts nominated by Governments as well as to other interested experts. It was agreed that relevant information on ToS work will be forwarded to Working Party focal points. Austria also highlighted the importance of the website for sharing information on ToS activities and encouraged the Secretariat to continue this practice.

## **VI. Guidance to Work Area 1: Data, monitoring and assessment (item 5(a) of the agenda)**

### **Global and regional reporting**

17. The Working Party was informed of progress made on the global (Forest Resource Assessment/Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire) and regional (pan-European Questionnaire) reporting on forests in the UNECE region. Delegates were updated on the status of submission of national reports. Furthermore, they were informed about the deadlines for the finalization of data collection and the release of the data collected.

18. The secretariat provided information about the preparation and work on the new questionnaire on forest ownership in the UNECE region. The reporting will be done jointly with the COST Action "*Forest Land Ownership Changes in Europe - Significance for Management and Policy*" (FACESMAP), in close collaboration with the forest owners'

organizations in the region. In addition, plans for the development of the new questionnaire and the national data collection process were presented.

19. The Working Party provided information on the planned outputs from the Global Forest Resources Assessment. The production will be led by the FAO FRA Team. Some regional studies will be coordinated by the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, including the report on pilot implementation of sustainability of forest management; and the study on the achievement of the global forest objectives in the UNECE region. Both studies will be prepared with the involvement of the ECE-FAO Team of Specialist on Monitoring SFM and in close cooperation with national experts.

20. Finally, the Working Party was updated by Mr. Stein M. Tomter, the Leader of the ToS on Monitoring SFM, on the activities implemented by the team during the reporting period. Mr. Tomter informed delegates about the composition of the Team, its recommendations on current work of the Secretariat and plans for future activities.

21. In general, the Working Party welcomed the harmonization of reporting at the global level and in the pan-European region, and encouraged the further synchronization of the processes. Finland raised concerns about the relatively high ratio of desk studies over the total number of reports. The Russian Federation underlined difficulties encountered in the on-line reporting process and suggested that the use of the traditional paper form should be continued.

22. Questions followed on the timing of the reporting and procedures, in particular vis-à-vis the preparation of the next State of Europe's Forests. The Secretariat clarified that its current role is that of depositary of data from countries, and that the compilation of data, coordination of reporting through International Data Providers and drafting of the report will be entirely undertaken by the Liaison Unit in Madrid. Switzerland and Russia reiterated their intention not to release their data beyond the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section until more clarity is provided as to the nature of the next State of Europe's Forests report. Austria recalled the importance of cooperation in order to issue a meaningful report.

23. Several countries welcomed both the reporting on forest ownership and the study on the implementation of the global objectives on forests. Participants stressed the importance of cooperation for optimal use of resources, cost savings and to avoid duplication. It was recommended that work on forest ownership be shared, as appropriate, between ECE-FAO correspondents and COST Action FACESMAP focal points. It was noted that the next meeting of COST ACTION, to take place in Freiburg i. Breisgau, Germany on 14-16 September, would benefit from a revised draft of the questionnaire. It was recommended that the questionnaire on forest ownership be kept simple and user friendly.

24. The report on the Global Objectives on Forests was also welcomed as a regional contribution to UNFF 11 and is seen as an additional opportunity to highlight the involvement of the region in SFM. The involvement of the Team of Specialist on SFM Monitoring was also welcomed as well as the fact that the report will rely on and make best use of existing data.

### **Forest Products Statistics**

25. The Secretariat informed the Working Party about its activities on Forest Products Statistics, in particular on data collection, data availability, and international cooperation through the Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics. In line with the request of countries, the secretariat held a capacity-building workshop in May 2014 for national statistical correspondents from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. This contributed to the improvement of the current Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ) response rate for from these areas.

26. The Team of Specialist on Forest Products Statistics held its first meeting on 16 June 2014. Mr Branko Glavonjic (Serbia) was elected Team Leader and Ms Sheila Ward (United Kingdom) was elected as the Deputy Team Leader. Eighteen countries expressed interest in the work of the Team.

27. FAO delivered a presentation on gathering non-wood forest products data (e.g. game meat and mushrooms). In this regard, participants noted that information on non-wood forest products differs from country to country. The Working Party emphasized the potential for cooperation between this activity and the Pan-European Reporting and invited the UNECE and FAO to enhance collection of data on non-wood forest products.

28. Mr Glavonjic presented to the Working Party the outcome of the first Team of Specialists' meeting. He stated that the main areas of work for the upcoming period would be the amendments to the JFSQ, the Round Wood Balance (excel-based tool), forest economic statistics, capacity-building (with special attention to South-Eastern Europe and CIS), and conversion factors.

29. Participants noted that completing table three of the Joint Questionnaire on forest products' trade (JQ3) in the JFSQ does not result in any additional reporting burden, however they called upon the secretariat to develop a tool to facilitate data extraction from UN Comtrade to complete the JQ3 Table.

30. Participants supported the planned activity on conversion factors to enlarge the country coverage and requested that the secretariat and the Team of Specialist consider repeating this activity every 5-6 years, while trying to simplify the conversion factor inquiry so that it would be easier to complete.

31. Some countries noted that JFSQ definitions were not always easy to follow and comply with. Thus, the collection and dissemination of more metadata by the secretariat could help correspondents, readers and users of the data to understand deviations from the definitions.

32. Participants emphasized that in order to find a balance between the need for accurate analytical work and the need to respect confidentiality, the Team of Specialist on Forest Products Statistics should consider this issue and develop recommendations in this regard.

### **Wood energy**

33. On data collection, the secretariat presented the timeline for data collection for the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE2013). Some countries requested the revision of the timeline to allow more time for the submission of data. On data assessment, the secretariat stated that the review of 2011 data was completed and provided updated information on the online database. All relevant information (manual enquiry, results and description) are available on the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section's website. Furthermore, at the beginning of 2014, the Secretariat undertook a short assessment of the wood energy data included in the energy scenario in the EFSOS II study.

34. The Secretariat also reported on the first meeting of the ToS on wood energy, which took place on 16 June 2014. Fifteen national experts participated. The meeting identified the following themes as possible priorities for the work of the ToS: work on conversion factors; addressing the issue of double counting (as current data about the amount of wood which is really in the market is confusing); raising awareness on the importance of wood energy in the overall renewable energy portfolio and the preparation of a report on wood energy in the UNECE region.

35. The ToS would like to address these priorities also by disseminating best practices on the website and by supporting member States in improving the quality of data submitted as well as in exchanging experiences on filling out the JWEE. Participants also discussed the possibility of organizing capacity building events and the publication of a thematic study paper.

36. The Working Party underscored the risks related to using different conversion factors and different sources of information when reporting on wood energy. It also supported the idea of the development of a more comprehensive report on wood energy in the region, given the existence of meaningful time series and relevant data.

### **Forest product markets**

37. The Working Party was informed about the successful publication of the Forest Products Annual Market Review 2012-2013. The secretariat highlighted the new design of the publication and outlined the major changes compared to the prior year's publication. The carbon chapter and the certification chapter have been integrated into the policy chapter and a chapter on innovation was introduced. The publication was put on the website in August 2013 and printed well in advance of the Committee session in Metsä2013. The secretariat thanked Sweden and Switzerland for their financial support as well as other countries for their in kind contributions.

38. The secretariat described the linkage of the data collection process in the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire, the Forest Products Annual Market Review (FPAMR), the country market statements, the country forecast tables, the market discussion; and how they lead to the publication of the UNECE/FAO Market Statement.

39. Upon request by Austria, the secretariat confirmed that it is not planning on reintroducing a chapter on forest certification. Austria, supported by Germany, confirmed, that presenting market developments by sub-regions at the annual market discussions is a step in the right direction. However, both, supported by Ireland, suggested, that the secretariat should additionally consider a focus on one specific topic or product group. Germany suggested wood raw material shortages and the resulting competition between different sectors for raw material supply (e.g. wood for energy vs. wood for panels or other products) could be an interesting subject for the upcoming Market Discussion. Another topic suggested for the Market Discussions was innovation as a market driver. The secretariat thanked delegates for their guidance and concluded that innovation is likely to become a driving theme for the Market Discussion at Kazan in 2014.

40. Mr Eoin O'Driscoll, the team leader of the ToS on Sustainable Forest Products presented the achievements and activities from 2013. Team members reviewed the FPAMR and ran a workshop at the COFFI meeting on green building. The Team met twice during the last year (November 2013 in Rovaniemi and June 2014 in Geneva) and organized one side-event during Metsä2013. The team leader presented the results of the last Team meeting and discussed the future scope of the group. The team discussed moving from looking exclusively at the current status of forest products markets to solutions. Instead of reporting on the past, the next FPAMR will also look ahead regarding upcoming societal changes and technological developments including a stronger focus on building with wood. Further, the team suggested identifying relevant actions from the Rovaniemi Action Plan as they relate to forest products, so that the Team could contribute towards achieving the aims contained in the plan. The team leader finished by highlighting the intention of the team to organize a capacity building workshop on forest products markets and marketing on 8-9 October 2014 in Podgorica, Montenegro.

## **VII. Guidance to Work Area 2: Policy dialogue and advice (item 5(b) of the agenda)**

41. The secretariat presented activities and accomplishments in Work Area 2 ( Policy Dialogue and Advice), which covered three main topics: Green Economy, including the Rovaniemi Action Plan on the Forest Sector in a Green Economy, Forest Sector Outlook and Forest Fire Management.

42. The sub-regional office for Central Asia of FAO informed participants on its activities to support forest policy in Kazakstan and Tajikistan. This work is a UNECE/FAO project financed by the UN development account on sustainable forest management for greener economies in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The FAO representative briefed the Working Party on an on-going project in Kosovo, which focuses on economic efficiency, forest ownership and forest-related cross-cutting issues. FAO also announced that there

could be two sub-regional workshops to review developments in the forests sector over the last 15 years and perspectives for the future of policies for sustainable forest management.

43. On the implementation of the Rovaniemi Action Plan, participants were not in a position to report, at this stage, if and how their governments would make use of the Plan. Switzerland stated that national stakeholders were exploring alternative ways to develop the use of hardwoods, which are currently in low demand and do not generate much value added.

44. The secretariat informed the Working Party about the preparatory work for a study on policies and incentives to promote wood in construction, which could serve as a background paper for an ECE/FAO workshop on wood building (planned in 2015 in Canada). Germany underlined that there was no policy in place in its country encouraging the use of wood in construction, as this would favour one building material more than others. However, it was mentioned that regulations applicable to energy efficient building were a way to promote the use of wood in building.

45. On the Forest Sector Outlook, the Working Party was informed about the completion of a national outlook study in 2013 for the Czech Republic (its results are summarized in an article and are available in English). Germany recalled that its last round of National Forest Inventory was completed in 2012 and that its outcomes should be published shortly. Germany also described recent work on the evolution of its national wood supply, use and the assessment of their sustainability (*vis-à-vis* the indicators of sustainable forest management). The United Kingdom recently issued a 50-year forecast on national growing stocks measuring the available biomass and sequestered carbon. Switzerland will review the scenarios on wood use and update the results of its 2010 study on the potential wood supply. Countries are encouraged to provide the secretariat with such information, or they can forward it to the Team of Specialists on Forest Sector Outlook.

46. Mr Jeffrey Prestemon, Deputy Leader of the Team of Specialists on the Forest Sector Outlook, presented the report of the Team, including the results of its latest meeting. He informed the Working Party on the issues that were discussed, such as the harmonization of the three main outlook studies in the ECE region, the feasibility of including the Russian Federation in the European Study and on the time horizon (20 years being considered as too long by some Team Members and industry representatives). The Team also decided not to further develop the draft concept note but to conduct a consultation process with stakeholders on policy issues instead, the results of which could be presented at the next Committee session in Kazan.

47. The Leader of the Team of Specialists on Forest Fire, Mr. Johann Goldammer, presented the report of the Team, including its activities under the project "Safeguarding Sustainable Forest Management in the UNECE Region through International Cooperation in Fire Management" funded by the Government of Germany. As there are no new activities under the current integrated programme of work, the Team of Specialists will be discontinued, but its work will be carried on and further developed at the global level, as well as at the regional level through existing networks and with partners such as FAO and OSCE.

48. The chair of the meeting and the Secretariat thanked Mr. Johann Goldammer for his invaluable contribution to the work of ECE and FAO, his tireless commitment to the work of the ToS on Forest Fire and his leadership role.

## **VIII. Guidance to Work Area 3: Communication and outreach (item 5 (c) of the agenda)**

49. The Secretariat informed the Working Party about the activities and achievements on communication and outreach. In particular, the impact and outreach of the European Forest Week (EFW) of 2013 and the International Day of Forests 2014 were discussed. The Secretariat highlighted the cross-sectoral element of the celebration of IDF, which brought together fashion, forestry, business and the art world.

50. The Secretariat also reported on the results of the Team of Specialists Meeting on Forest Communication – Forest Communicators Network (FCN) held in Berlin on 23-25 April, 2014. The main results of this meeting are available on the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section website. The leadership of the Team of Specialists was reconfirmed both at the Chair and Co-Chairs level. The Team also suggested the establishment of a subgroup to serve as a think-tank and develop ideas for the 2015 EFW. Moreover, the establishment of a Google group was suggested, in order to enhance dialogue among FCN members. The next annual FCN meeting will be in Barcelona in April 2015.

51. FAO delivered a presentation on FAOSTAT, including enhanced features and their online database. This included the usage of the website.

52. Several countries expressed their appreciation for the enhanced communication work of the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section. Austria stressed the importance of maintaining a well-functioning website with updated information. Switzerland reiterated the user-friendly and informative nature of the site. Overall, the meeting stressed the importance of an active approach to communication, involving a diversified spectrum of media and tools, including events, press releases, and use of the website. Participants also underscored the importance for the Secretariat to work closely with the FCN and the importance of using the FCN to support the work of the other Teams of Specialists.

53. On the possible theme for the 2015 International Day of Forests (IDF), the Secretariat suggested the possibility of linking it to the EXPO 2015 theme, with a focus on ‘forests and food’. The suggestion was supported by the Working Party, which recommended that the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section use the theme ‘Forests and Food’ for the 2015 IDF celebration.

54. The ensuing discussion highlighted that focusing on food would emphasize the contributions of non-wood forest products (such as mushrooms, game and berries) to livelihoods and the economy, but also address issues related to unsustainable consumption patterns in the ECE region, which have an impact on agricultural and land use practices in other areas of the world. The need to pay particular attention to the messages given to the media is important in order to make sure that they provide a balanced view of challenges and potentials of non-wood forest products.

55. As far as the theme of the next European Forest Week (EFW) is concerned, Switzerland proposed the protective function of forests. The EFW will be celebrated in Engelberg, Switzerland, from 2 to 6 November 2015. The focus on the protective role of forest would also allow addressing issues, such as: the role of forest in protecting the population and land from erosion, avalanches and landslides; and forests’ contribution to clean water sources to be recognised. A number of countries supported the Swiss proposal.

## **IX. Guidance to Work Area 4: Capacity-building (item 5(d) of the agenda)**

56. The Working Party was briefed on capacity building activities (work area 4).

57. National action plans were being developed in three pilot countries in central Asia and the Caucasus, namely: Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. The action plans would support an enhanced role for the forest sector in a green economy. In particular, they would guide the actions of national authorities and other stakeholders, through a detailed set of targets and activities enabling the forest sector to transition towards a green economy. This includes activities to support outcomes such as improved human well-being, social equity, reduced environmental risks and ecological scarcities. This project is a joint project of UNECE and FAO funded through the UNDA (United Nations Development Account).

58. Russia acknowledged the need for capacity building in Central Asia and the Caucasus and stressed their common background in forestry, due to their common history, specialized education and exchange of experience. Similar environment conditions,



challenges and trends make it logical and efficient for Russia to participate in capacity building in this subregion.

59. The action plans will address five main themes: sustainable production and consumption of forest products; a low carbon forest sector; decent green jobs; ecosystem services; monitoring and governance of the forest sector

60. Action plans will be modelled after the Rovaniemi Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy. National workshops will be organized by December 2014 in seven countries committed to the project: Armenia (September), Azerbaijan (tbc), Georgia (June), Kazakhstan (April), Kyrgyzstan (September), Tajikistan (June) and Uzbekistan (July).

61. The Working Party emphasized the importance of capacity building in the region of Central Asia and the Caucasus, and listed the crucial role of language, education, public awareness and the lessons learned from past projects in the region.

62. The Working Party received a short report from the joint ILO/ECE/FAO Team of Specialists (ToS) on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector. The team has 28 members from 21 countries (Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, Uzbekistan) at the moment.

63. The first team meeting, under the new terms of reference, was held in Geneva on 16 June 2014. Mr Christian Salvignol (France) was elected as a team leader, and Mr Diarmuid McAree (Ireland) and Mr Andreas Bernasconi (Switzerland) were elected as deputies. During the first team meeting the ToS identified communication worker training and education as key challenges to work on in order to attract people (particularly young people) into considering careers in the forest sector. Close cooperation with the Forest Communicators Network was recommended. The ToS also suggested forests and human health as one of the possible topics for the team (e.g. a workshop). In this regard, Switzerland suggested to tie the theme with the next International Day of Forests. The team will prepare a work plan based on the first meeting discussions by the end of August 2014.

64. The Working Party discussed cooperation between the ToS and the FOREST EUROPE working group on green economy. The secretariat noted that this cooperation has existed and will continue in the future. The Working Party noted that youth is a key stakeholder group for improving the image and attractiveness of the sector. Austria provided an example of a communication campaign targeted at youth (more information is available at: <http://www.proholz.at/genialeholzjobs/>)

65. The Russian Federation informed the Working Party of the International Junior Forest Contest<sup>1</sup>, which involves schools and institutes from different countries. The next competition will take place in Saint Petersburg 8-12 September 2014. The Russian Federation hopes to continue the tradition started at “Metsä2013”, to invite the winners of the international forestry competition to participate in the meeting. This offers an excellent opportunity to raise the awareness and profile of the forest sector among youth.

## **X. Roundtable discussion (item 6 of the agenda)**

66. The 36th session of the UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management offered an opportunity to gather forest stakeholders in the same place and to discuss issues of common interest. In this context, a roundtable

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.rosleshoz.gov.ru/english/media/actions/13>.

discussion was dedicated to hearing from the region's representatives of private and state forests in order to learn about their concerns, as well as their proposals for policymakers.

67. Mr. Christoph Dürr (Switzerland) moderated the panel, which consisted of six panellists<sup>2</sup> representing the country representatives and forest owners from various geographical areas in the ECE region. They discussed changes in forest ownership and their effects on forest management and policy implementation. The discussion was structured under two questions:

- (a) How is forest ownership changing and how does it affect forest management and policy implementation in public/private forests?
- (b) How would you evaluate current knowledge on forest ownership? (Including available data and all other aspects you wish to engage to this topic).

68. A summary of the roundtable is contained in the Annex.

## **XI. Other business (item 7 of the agenda)**

69. There was no other business.

## **XII. Date and place of next meeting (item 8 of the agenda)**

70. The Working Party agreed to hold its next meeting from 18 to 20 March 2015. Countries requested that the secretariat organize the core part of the meeting during the first two days. The first half of the third day shall be dedicated to the self-assessment of the WP, whereas the second part shall be dedicated to the celebration of the International Day of Forests 2015. It was recommended that the topic of the afternoon event be in-line with the theme of EXPO2015 in Milan "*Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life*". In line with the past year's title, it was suggested that the title of the event would be "*Forests for Food –Food for Forests*".

71. Delegates provided some suggestions on how to organize the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the Working Party. The secretariat indicated that they would provide the core questions to delegates and the Teams of Specialists well in advance of the meeting (shortly after issuing the annotated agenda). In addition to a roundtable, the meeting could include group work and questions, which should enable contributions from all participants. Delegates agreed to accept some meeting documents as unofficial documents two to three weeks ahead of the meeting. This will enable the secretariat to include current information, e.g. on the outcome of the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry.

72. Austria expressed its concern about organizing too many ToS meetings in parallel prior to the WP meeting, as some specialists participate in more than one team. Additionally, it was suggested that ToS meetings last at least one full day.

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<sup>2</sup> Mr. Piotr Borkowski, European State Forest Association, Ms. Diana Feliciano, COST Action on forest land ownership (FACESMAP), Mr. Andrey Filipchuk, Russian Federation, Mr. Jeff Prestemon, United States, Mr. Aljoscha Requardt, Confederation of European Private Forest Owners, Mr. Mati Valgepea, Estonia, Ms. Cristina Viejo Tellez, Spain.

### **XIII. Election of officers (item 9 of the agenda)**

73. At the end of the 36th session, Ms Elina Maki-Simola, Finland, the chair of the 35<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> sessions, was confirmed as vice-chair. Mr Johannes Hangler, Austria, vice-chair of the 35<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> sessions, was elected as the new chair. Mr Jeff Prestemon, United States of America, was elected as vice-chair. They will hold office until the end of the thirty-eighth session.

### **XIV. Adoption of the report (item 10 of the agenda)**

74. The Working Party adopted the report at the end of the session, based on a draft by the Secretariat.

## ANNEX<sup>3</sup>

### Round Table Discussion on Forest Ownership

1. The 36<sup>th</sup> session of the ECE-FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management offered a very good opportunity to bring together ECE delegates and other stakeholders with an interest in forest ownership issues. The discussion was organized so as to contribute to the reporting on forest ownership in the ECE region.

2. Mr Christoph Dürr (Switzerland) moderated the panel, which consisted of seven panellists<sup>3</sup> representing countries, forest owners and researchers from various parts of the ECE region. They discussed the status of and changes in the forest ownership structure and their effects on forest management and policy implementation. The discussion was guided by two questions:

- (a) How is forest ownership/tenure changing and how does this affect forest management and policy implementation in public/private forests?
- (b) How would you evaluate the current knowledge on forest ownership/tenure?

3. Mr Dürr began by defining forest ownership, public and private, as well as tenure, and highlighting the importance of reaching a common understanding of terminologies in order to support harmonized reporting. He then discussed the diverse situation of forest ownership, management and tenure within the ECE region and the contribution of forests to wood production under different ownership and tenure arrangements. Finally, Mr Dürr provided an overview of information currently available on forest ownership and hinted at the potential contribution that the planned questionnaire for the ECE region on forest ownership could make to data availability.

## I. Contributions and recommendations by the panellists for the development of the forest ownership questionnaire and study – different perspectives

### Russian Federation

4. Mr Andrey Filipchuk (Russian Federation) presented the situation of forest ownership in the Russian Federation. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, properties were mostly publicly owned and managed. After the collapse, fast changes in most types of ownership in the country occurred. However, this did not affect forests significantly, which have remained under the public domain as per a legal act issued in 2013. Russian legislation allows for forest land leases, which currently cover 30% of the forest area (235 million ha). Public or private entities that enter a lease arrangement agree to protect the forests and enter into a number of obligations with the government. Leases range from 1 to 49 years. He described a system very similar to that of Canada. According to Mr Filipchuk a mixture of public and private ownership is advisable in order to provide a good balance of goods and services; however he recognized that no solution fits all situations.

*Recommendations:*

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<sup>3</sup> The panellists were: Mr Piotr Borkowski of the European State Forest Association, Ms Diana Feliciano of the COST Action on forest land ownership (FACESMAP), Mr Andrey Filipchuk (Russian Federation), Mr Jeff Prestemon (United States of America), Mr Aljoscha Requardt of the Confederation of European Private Forest Owners, Mr Mati Valgepea (Estonia) and Ms Cristina Viejo Tellez (Spain).

- Monitor *how duties and responsibilities of public and private forest owners are defined and distributed in the countries of the region.*

### **United States of America**

5. Mr Jeff Prestemon (United States of America) presented the situation of forest ownerships in the United States of America. He mentioned that the US has a broad dataset on forest ownership available through the National Forest Inventory, providing general forest data (including on ownership), and the National Woodland Owner Survey that provides data every 5 to 10 years. According to the information provided by these sources, the area of forests in the US seems to be stable. However important changes are occurring within forest ownership categories. Previously integrated forest industries (i.e., companies that once had forest product manufacturing and forestlands in one company) have been selling off their forestland to Timber Management Investment Organizations and/or Real Estate Investment Trusts. These changes appear to have modified forest management practices and strategies, although the kind and significance of such modifications have yet to be tested scientifically. The number of publicly owned forests is increasing mainly due to donations, particularly in the state and local government category of public forests. This category has grown by 25% in the last 10 years. Mr Prestemon mentioned that in public forests, forest management is more oriented toward restoration and risk mitigation than in privately owned forests. At the moment, it is difficult to predict whether this trend will continue or if the rate of wood utilization from public forests will change.

#### *Recommendations:*

- *Include questions on owners/managers motivations and what consequences their motivations might have on the management and state of forests.*

### **Estonia**

6. Mr Mati Valgepea (Estonia) recalled that the forest ownership structure in Estonia is still undergoing the restitution process started in 1993 whereby forests are returned to their original owners or their heirs. This restitution process was about to end and it was expected that part of the forest area with undefined ownership status (around 10% of total forest area) would be privatised. It was observed that, after the restitution process was initiated, the intensity of utilization of the new private forests increased dramatically. Later, silvicultural and environmental protection requirements, together with other needs to invest in keeping a forest productive, made forest owners less interested in the use and maintenance of forests. The panellist noted that, in this context, subsidies may help to support sound management; however, at this stage, no direct link had been established between the availability of incentives and the quality of management.

7. The law classifies corporate owners as 'juridical' forest owners and also recognizes private forest owners (individuals), who own roughly 1/3 of the forests. The corporate owned forests (13% of total forests) seemed to be managed more intensively. In general, data on ownership is satisfactory; however the information is scattered and agencies need to integrate their databases. A recent survey showed that there were over 100,000 forest owners in Estonia, against the total population of 1.3 million. Forest associations have been growing in number and have tried to address the needs of private ownership. It was pointed out that bigger forest owners, who often manage their property more actively, have better capacity to absorb subsidies than small, unorganised forest owners. Public forests cover more than 40% of the total forest area and they are managed by a state owned company. Public forests play a very important role, also as a stabilizer of the wood market. Mr Valgepea noted that the image of public forestry among the public is much better than the image of privately owned forests. According to the panellist, this may or may not necessarily reflect the reality, and requires further assessment.

*Recommendations:*

- Collected information should allow a comprehensive review of forest ownership including the state of forest resources, owners' objectives and performance as well as the financing of forest management under different forms of forest ownership.

**Spain**

8. Ms Cristina Viejo Tellez (Spain) noted that in Spain the ownership structure has not changed significantly in the last ten years. Public forests occupy 30% of forest area. They are managed by public bodies and information about forest management and production are available. Most forests are privately owned (70 per cent) and could be divided into productive and non-productive. The availability of information on these two groups differs significantly. Forests are considered as productive, not only if they provide timber but also other profitable goods like non-timber products such as: cork, nuts or hunting. The productive forests are managed and, therefore, more information about their ownership and production are available. Protected private forests, although commonly not productive, are recorded and obtaining information about them is possible. The rest of the privately owned forests are mainly non-productive and there is a lack of information about this type of ownership, practices, etc. These forests are not managed because their owners are not aware of their property, or they do not consider their forest to be profitable. Fragmentation of privately owned forests is another challenge, as privately owned forest properties are often smaller than 1 ha. There are some attempts from the National Administration to increase the economic attractiveness of private forest management (active management is seen as favourable in lowering the high fire risk in Spain and there is also an interest to encourage rural development). However, the implementation of relevant measures is not easy. On the one hand the national administration has limited responsibility in forestry related issues, as autonomous regions have the competency in this area (management, implementation of measures, application of the law, data compilation, etc.) and, on the other hand, there is a lack of data on private forests and their owners, which is linked mainly to the outdated ownership register and cadastre. Improving data and further supporting private forest owners requires further coordination amongst the national (central) administration and autonomous regions.

*Recommendations:*

- *In addition to data related to forest, data on Other Wooded Land needs to be included in the questionnaire (even if not all countries are able to provide the same robust data on OWL).*
- *In the questionnaire Non Timber Products should be better reflected.*
- *Fragmentation of forest ownership needs to be better defined and reflected in the questionnaire.*
- *The panellist reiterated the lack of national data on forest ownership/tenure and highlighted the need for additional support to facilitate the gathering of information (i.e. learning about policy instruments that are used for supporting the sustainable management of private forests, and particularly those belonging to small landholders).*

**European State Forest Association**

9. Mr Piotr Borkowski introduced the European State Forest Association (EUSTAFOR). EUSTAFOR represents 28 state forest organizations managing an area of 46 million hectares (harvesting approx. 123 million cubic meters annually and employing more than 115,000 people). The status of basic data regarding state forests was, in general, assessed as satisfactory at the national level, whereas the understanding of how state

forestry is organised and the availability of relevant information at the international/pan-European level is rather weak. The panellist observed that often incorrect terminology is applied in global and pan-European reporting, e.g. public forests managers are sometimes classified as “state administration” while, in fact, they may represent various forms of state owned entities which function in the open market with non-administrative authority. Mr Borkowski mentioned that in recent years restitution and privatization have affected the ownership structure in many countries of Central and Eastern Europe differently, with some countries privatizing forest lands and others where government ownership of forestlands is dominant.

*Recommendations:*

- *In the new questionnaire apply terminology and classifications consistent with those used in the global and the pan-European systems.*
- *All three pillars of sustainable forest management need to be covered.*
- *The flow of resources (expenditures and revenues) between state budgets and forest owners and managers has to be included.*
- *In addition to reporting on forest ownership, the questionnaire should offer countries the possibility to describe the overall context of national forestry, the way the current ownership structure developed and how forest ownership affects their forest management.*

#### **Confederation of European Private Forest Owners**

10. Mr Aljoscha Requardt, the representative of the Confederation of European Private Forest Owners (CEPF), noted that the situation in private forest ownership is complex and there is still room for improving data availability. In particular, he referred to the lack of detailed information on how forest ownership and land tenure rights are regulated. Regarding changes in forest ownership, the restitution process is still on-going in some countries; however the overall ownership patterns have not changed much in Europe in recent years. Mr Requardt mentioned the variety of private forest owners, which includes individuals, families, companies, religious institutions, and cooperatives. He highlighted the variety of old and new types of forest owners with different ambitions and level of interest in managing forestlands. In particular, he cited the decreasing involvement of small forest owners in the active management of their properties. There is an increasing share of owners who are over 60 years old and whose knowledge and legacy might not be passed onto new generations. In this regard, it is essential to increase the attractiveness of forest business and management and strengthen the competitiveness of the forest sector, even though most forest owners do not depend economically on their properties. Finally, the panellist mentioned new trends like the increasing establishment of forest investment funds, the resettlement of rural areas by urban dwellers affected by the economic crisis; and the promising role forest management may play in this regard.

*Recommendations:*

- *Try to determine how forest ownership and land tenure rights are regulated, implemented and acknowledged. Who is responsible for forest management within the different forest ownership categories? Learn if forest owners/managers are organized in associations/producer groups and if yes, how associations/producer groups are structured.*
- *Gather information on the interests of forest owners (e.g. round wood production, hunting, leisure).*
- *Assess availability and need of policy instruments for helping private forest owners to implement active forest management.*

### **COST Action on forest land ownership changes across Europe and its significance for management and policy (FACESMAP)**

11. Ms Diana Feliciano from the “COST Action on forest land ownership changes across Europe and its significance for management and policy” (FACESMAP) provided information on the main objectives of the Action. Ms Feliciano underlined that recent changes in forest ownership structure had resulted in an increased number of private forest owners. In some countries new forest owners lack the knowledge, experience and interest to manage their property. Ms Feliciano noted that these changes could also present an opportunity, as new owners may bring fresh views and new ideas and objectives to the forest related community. She underlined the need for flexible policies and instruments that take into account local contexts to help the new (and old) owners in managing their properties. These policies and instruments would certainly be more effective if aligned with the motivations and interests of forest owners. There is the need to fill data gaps in relation to this question, in particular for some parts of Europe. In this regard, she underlined the importance of collaboration between countries, international organizations (e.g. UNECE) and researchers, in gathering information.

#### *Recommendations:*

- *All terms and indicators for the questionnaire have to be carefully defined and described in order to obtain comparable data. One example is the definition of “managed forest”.*
- *Guidance for countries to improve data collection should be developed.*

## **II. Conclusions**

12. Forest ownership may have a significant impact on forest management and the intensity of the use of forests. In some countries, the species composition of the forest has shifted since the beginning of the restitution process. Harvesting rules may have a crucial function in ensuring the sustainable use of forests. Knowing who owns a forest is often a challenge and it is of utmost importance to develop an up-to-date cadastre system that is accessible to the public. Implementing forest management, investing in and maintaining infrastructures is often a challenge in private forests. This may result in partial overuse or underuse of forestlands.

13. Two different phenomena in forest ownership could be observed in the ECE region during the past two decades. On the one hand, forest owners living in urban areas are often disconnected from their property, thus management of their forestland is passive and information is often unavailable. On the other hand, there is a trend whereby urban dwellers are moving to rural areas (e.g. to start a new activity or for a secondary place of residence). This might bring different interests and opportunities and lead to different uses of the forests (e.g. recreation/conservation vs. production). The panel revealed the great variety of forest information sources, and highlighted the need for filling gaps in data on the state of forests, their management systems, forest owner profiles, forest owner organizations and the motivation of owners.

14. The round table discussion, the input from the panellists and the interventions from the audience provided a wealth of information on forest ownership, at both the national and international levels. The recommendations and advice from participants will feed into the new questionnaire on forest ownership in the ECE region. Moreover, countries and other stakeholders will be consulted over the course of the development of the forest ownership questionnaire and study.