

Strategic review of the Integrated programme of work of the UN/ECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission

(For background, see documents for the joint session, notably the draft programme of work TIM/2000/7:FO:EFC/00/9 and the session report)

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This is not the official answer of the EU Commission it is only a working document.

Country:

1. Core mandate

During the last strategic review of the programme, in the mid 1990s, it was agreed that the core mandate of ECE/FAO should be to “monitor and analyse sustainable forest management in the region”. In addition, a forum for intergovernmental co-operation should be provided. This mandate is reflected in the structure of the programme.

1A. Should this core mandate be maintained or modified?

maintained

1B. If the latter, in what way?

2. Priorities, notably support to the international forest dialogue at a global and regional level

“Highest priority” was attached to supporting the follow-up to UNCED (which has led to the foundation of UNFF), and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. The role played by ECE/FAO in this respect is described in document TIM/2000/3 FO:EFC:/00/4

2A. Should highest priority continue to be attached to supporting the international forest dialogue?

Yes

2B. Is ECE/FAO following the right strategy in this respect?

Yes, in broad lines

2C. In general, does the programme adequately reflect countries' priorities?

3. Outputs and resources

The outputs of the programme and the resources – in the secretariat and in member countries and partner organizations - allocated to producing each output are described on the attached table. Concern has been expressed, inside the secretariat team and at the joint session, about over-stretching of resources, with possible negative consequences on quality of outputs and co-ordination between different parts of the programme.

3A. Is the balance between resources and output appropriate?

As concern Eurostat participation to the program the present resources are very limited and the participation focus to data collection (joint questionnaire) and to works of MCPFE (SAG on indicators, defined by Lisbon conference)

3B. If not, should some outputs be abandoned, modified or delegated to other organisations?

3C. If so, which outputs?

3D. Is the allocation of resources between outputs consistent with the priorities of the programme?

4. Supplementary resources

The secretariat has frequently informed the Committee and the Commission that the quality of a specific output would be better if more resources than those available under the regular ECE and FAO budgets were made available. In many case, countries have in fact made available extra resources in the form of funds, loaned personnel etc, a generosity which has made possible some of the most important achievements under the programme. Nevertheless, resources (rather than access to skills, networks, problems with formal mandates, lack of consensus or other similar problems) are still usually the main constraint to achieving more ambitious goals

4A. How could extra resources be mobilised to achieve the objectives of the ECE/FAO programme?

4B. Is your country or organisation able to contribute extra resources?

At this time, no

5. Methods of work

The programme uses several methods of work, including regular meetings of statutory bodies, seminars and workshops, teams of specialists, special questionnaires, secretariat analysis etc. The whole programme is reviewed and formally agreed by the Committee and the Commission at each session.

5A. Are the right methods being used for each output?

Yes

5B. Could more innovative methods be found in certain areas?

5C. Are the Committee and the Commission able to carry out their programme review function in a satisfactory way?

5D. How much of the work programme should be devoted to: a. meetings and discussion; b. data collection and dissemination; c. production of technical advice for countries; and d. analysis of information?

- a) 30
- b) 40
- c) 30

6. Alliances and partnerships

In addition to the core relationship between ECE and FAO, many other continuing partnerships have been developed, including with ILO, for the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee, with Eurostat, ITTO and other agencies in the Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics, with MCPFE in a number of fields etc.

6A. Do you believe that all these partnerships have been mutually beneficial and brought significant advantages to all partners?

Yes

6B. Is there potential for building other strategic partnerships?

6C. If so, with whom, with what objectives?

7. Other

We would appreciate it if you would contribute any other comments or suggestions regarding the programme of work.

Continue to simplify the work of the countries to reach to better informations. That means also a better coordination between the different partners, one good example is the work in the ISWG Forest.

Please send your comments and suggestions to Kit Prins, by 30 December 2000:

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