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**Food and Agriculture Organization
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Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry

European Forestry Commission

**Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics,
Economics and Management**

Forty-second session

Geneva, 22-24 March 2021

Item 5 (d) of the Provisional Agenda

Guidance on Work Areas

Work Area 4: Capacity Building

Note by the secretariat

Summary

In accordance with its mandate, the Working Party is expected to provide guidance on Work Area 4: Capacity-building. This document provides information about activities in this Work Area since the Working Party's last scheduled session in March 2020, as well as plans for 2021, drawing the Working Party's attention to any specific issues where guidance is needed. The 2020 meeting of the Working Party was postponed for one year, as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions on meetings in place at that time. For specific information on activities and topics covered between the March 2019 Working Party meeting and the scheduled but postponed meeting of March 2020, please refer to ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2020/6.

An initial list of activities in Work Area 4 for the year 2022 will be made available in document ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/inf.2 and discussed under Agenda Item 7.

I. Forest Resources

1. On 9 December 2020 the Joint Section organized the workshop on forest monitoring and restoration in the Caucasus and Central Asia. During the workshop, countries of the region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) presented their progress in the implementation of pledges under the ECCA30/Bonn Challenge and outlined needs for further support. Turkmenistan presented national priorities in FLR and ongoing reforestation efforts in the country. Participants also informed on opportunities for financing Forest landscape restoration in the region.
2. Jointly with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Joint Section organized a webinar on financing Forest Landscape Restoration on 16 July 2020. Representatives from governments, global funds and private sector spoke on the opportunities to finance implementation of pledges made under the ECCA30/Bonn Challenge.
3. The Joint Section organized the virtual meeting to support the preparation of the Ministerial Roundtable on Forest Landscape Restoration and the ECCA30/Bonn Challenge on 7 May 2020. The objective of the event was to disseminate information on the Bonn Challenge and provide updates on the upcoming Ministerial Roundtable on Forest Landscape Restoration and the ECCA30/Bonn Challenge in Eastern and South-East Europe. The

II. Forest Products

4. A capacity-building workshop on the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ) was carried out in February 2021 with FAO Rome. This first virtual workshop had 32 participants from 10 countries of the Western Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The workshop highlighted the importance of the cooperation between and within countries. The workshop was held with simultaneous interpretation into Russian and English. The workshop urged follow up sessions at the national level and involving more institutions in the JFSQ process. Similar workshops were previously held in 2001 (Geneva), 2009 (Moscow) and 2014 (Ankara).
5. Upon request by Kazakhstan, the secretariat conducted a study on “Forest-based industries attracting private investment in afforestation and forest landscape restoration in Kazakhstan”. The study is a priority activity foreseen under the National Forest Strategy Action Plan and reviews the state of forest-based industries in Kazakhstan and suggests methods to attract private investment in afforestation and forest landscape restoration. The activity was funded through the Regional Program on Technical Cooperation of the ECE secretariat.
6. The secretariat commissioned two studies on the impact of COVID-19 on the forest sector. The regional scopes of the studies were Western Balkans and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. The activity was funded by the Regional Program on Technical Cooperation funds of the ECE secretariat. More details can be found in the secretariat report for Work Area 1 (paragraphs 51 and 52 ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/3).
7. The secretariat launched the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry (JWEE) for the reference year 2019. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions no in-person capacity building workshop was prepared. The secretariat is currently considering organizing a series of short online webinars about the JWEE. The dates and platforms for the capacity building exercise still need to be determined.

III. Forest Policy

8. The secretariat facilitated a National Forest Policy Dialogue in Kazakhstan on 4 March 2020. The activity was funded through the Regional Program on Technical Cooperation of the ECE secretariat. More details can be found in the secretariat report for Work Area 2 (paragraph 22 ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/4).
9. On 17 and 18 November 2020, together with the Federal Forestry Agency of the Russian Federation, the Joint Section organized a virtual capacity building workshop on forest sector outlook modelling for Russian participants. More details can be found in the secretariat report for Work Area 2 (paragraph 33 ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/4).

IV. United Nations Development Account

10. The capacity-building project “Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia” (2016-2021) was funded by the United Nations Development Account (UNDA), under the 10th tranche. The objective of this project was to strengthen the national capacities of Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to develop national sets of criteria and indicators (C&I) and reporting/accountability systems for sustainable forest management (SFM). The project was concluded in December 2020.
11. Within the scope of the project, five countries (Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan) developed national criteria and indicator sets for sustainable forest management. All countries submitted criteria to their national systems for implementation.
12. Throughout 2020, project countries advanced their sets of C&I for SFM and developed tailored methodologies for data collection for all indicators (fact sheets).
13. Due to COVID-19 outbreak, it was not feasible to organize a live regional workshop to strengthen capacity on methodologies for data collection for indicators, therefore funds were used to organize an online meeting (“Workshop on forest monitoring and restoration in the Caucasus and Central Asia”) and to develop five policy briefs on the application of the C&I for SFM.
14. Policy briefs developed within the project cover the following topics: Criteria and Indicators: Policy Tools for Sustainable Forest Management, National Forest Inventory – Tool for Decision Making, Criteria and Indicators and Decision making (Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting), Information Systems: Important Tool for Better Forest Policy and Management, Criteria and Indicators and Forest-related Communication.
15. The publication on the National Monitoring of Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia was prepared in 2020 and is expected to be published in 2021.

V. Team of Specialists on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector

16. The Joint Section organised two informal calls on 14 May 2020 and 15 September 2020 and a meeting online on 16 November 2020. The Team continued working on the visualisation of the ECE/FAO/Forest Europe Guidelines for the Promotion on Green Jobs in Forestry. The report by the ToS can be found in the Annex.

VI.Key questions for guidance and discussion

17. The Working Party is invited to:
 - (a) Comment on the work and make suggestions for future capacity-building work on forest landscape restoration and the Bonn Challenge/ECCA30;
 - (b) Make suggestions for future capacity-building work on forest product statistics and wood energy;
 - (c) Discuss capacity building needs related to forest sector outlook studies.

Annex:**ECE/FAO Teams of Specialists on Green Jobs report 2020-2021**

1. Name:		
Team of Specialists on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector Team website: https://unece.org/forests/team-specialists-green-jobs-forest-sector		
2. Period covered:		
April 2020 – March 2021		
3. Leader/Deputies and Secretary:		
Leader:	Ms. Carmen Aviles	
Deputies:	Mr. Andreas Bernasconi, Mr. Fredrik Silfwerbrand	
Secretary:	Ms. Alicja Kacprzak	
4. Members:		
23 (as of January 2021)		
5. Countries:		
14 countries: (as of January 2021) Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czechia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine		
6. Meetings held:		
14	May	2020 (informal call ToS online)
2	September	2020 (meeting task force “visualization Green Forest Jobs” online)
15	September	2020 (informal call ToS online)
22	October	2020 (meeting task force “visualization Green Forest Jobs” online)
16	November	2020 (meeting ToS online)
25	January	2021 (meeting task force “visualization Green Forest Jobs” online)
7. Outputs and impacts achieved during last year:		
The Team is currently (June 2020 – March 2021) collecting best practices from countries in all ECE sub-regions on how the principles presented in the ECE/FAO/Forest Europe Guidelines on the Promotion of Green Jobs in Forestry are implemented in practice. So far, an inventory of about 30 case studies has been prepared by the Team. These are currently being assessed based on the Guidelines.		
8. Outputs and impacts expected for coming year:		
The focus of the work will be on the assessment and the review of the best practice examples (visualisation project). The results will be presented to a broad interested audience in a workshop and the key findings will be summarised in a policy brief.		

9. Issues for the attention of the Working Party:

There is a variety of new areas of work. For example, the team has been exploring the potential of topics such as agroforestry, bioeconomy, forest & health, rural development and the related implications for the forestry professions.

Question to the UNECE/FAO member States:

- Any specific examples of good forest practice, which could be added to the ongoing collection of good practice (visualisation project)?

10. Other comments:

The year 2020 was a very challenging year. The team met online informally, and for an annual meeting online in November 2020 (see point 6).

The challenges for traditional forestry are increasing. These include climate change and a whole range of other challenges. At the same time, there are also opportunities, especially in connection with the tasks and activities of the forest workforce. Under the umbrella term of Forest Green Jobs, ways and potentials can be shown here.

The exchange of experience with other teams is very important and should be intensified. Cooperation with the Forest Europe network is supposed to further continue.

Date: 19 February 2021
