

**Item 6 (a)
Report of the Joint Working Party on
Forest Statistics, Economics and
Management**

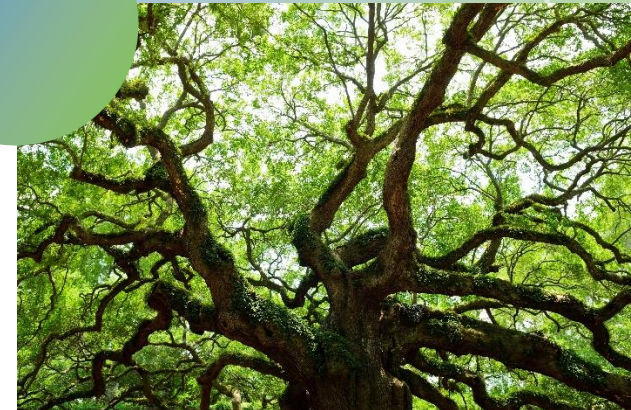
ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2022/2

Magdalena Wolicka-Posiadała (Chair)

**UNECE Committee on Forests and the
Forest Industry**

80th session

Geneva, 2-4 November 2022



Background

- **43rd session Joint ECE/ FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management ,1-3 June 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland**
- **31 member States attended**
- **Hybrid meeting with in-person and online participants**

Matters arising since the last session

UNECE and FAO provided information on various events which were relevant for the work of the Joint Working Party.

The Joint Working Party

- highlighted the Joint Section's contribution to the implementation of the SDGs.
- stressed the importance of international cooperation and coordination for work in this area.
- requested secretariat to add item on fostering exchanges and cooperation among regional and international organizations to the agenda of the November 2022 session of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI).

Revision of the Rules of Procedure

- **Joint Working Party currently operates under the ECE Rules of Procedure.**
- At last JWP session, request made to develop its own Rules of Procedure secretariat
- **JWP took note of the draft text** presented in E/ECE/778/Rev.5 , proposed several amendments to the text and **requested the secretariat to upload the revised version to the meeting website as a post-session document.**
- Decision on the revision of the Rules of Procedure for the Joint Working Party was deferred to next session with a **background document for discussion in E, F, R.**

Forests and the circular economy

Secretariat informed about work on forests in a circular economy since last session.

- Poland, Türkiye and Czech Republic presented their experiences and best practice in the implementation of a circular economy in the forest.
- In-session group work identified opportunities for the forest sector resulting from the transition to a circular economy, barriers in achieving these opportunities and policy options to overcome these barriers.
- Delegations proposed activities by the Joint Section to facilitate the further development of the circularity concept within the forest sector in the ECE region.

Forests and the circular economy (cont.)

The Joint Working Party requested the secretariat to:

- (a) prepare series of studies, create a platform for knowledge exchange and advancing the study planned (this year);
- (b) Consider the renewable nature of wood as a raw material and the holistic approach of the sustainable carbon cycle, including carbon removal and carbon farming initiatives;
- (c) work on a definition of a circular economy in the forest sector and to create a platform for collaborative participation of member States.;
- (d) transmit comments on generic definition of a circular economy to the ECE “Task Force on measuring the circular economy” and to the “Expert group on a new generation of information for a resource-efficient and circular economy” of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

NOTE: Item 7 of the COFFI session will discuss in more detail.

Guidance on Work Areas

The JWP provided guidance on the 4 work areas:

Work Area 1: Data, monitoring, reporting and assessment;

Work Area 2: Policy dialogue and advice;

Work Area 3: Communication and outreach;

Work Area 4: Capacity-building

Work Area 1: Data, monitoring, reporting and assessment

Forest Resources

The secretariat presented activities on data, monitoring, reporting and assessment related to forest resources and the plans for work until 2023; the preparation of the 2025 cycle of the Global and Pan-European data collection on forests and sustainable forest management; the development of foundations and methodological approaches for forest disturbance/damage assessment; and the development of tools to improve the data's availability and use, especially, for external audiences.

The Joint Working Party:

- Recommended the further strengthening of work on the application of information technology in managing and sharing information on forests and sustainable management in the ECE region;
- Took note of the ongoing project on reporting and assessment of forest damage and disturbance in the ECE region and underlined the existing state of affairs and current significance of the topic.

Work Area 1: Data, monitoring, reporting and assessment

Forest products and wood energy statistics

The secretariat presented the results of work on forest products and wood energy statistics since April 2021, as well as plans for work under the new mandate until 2023.

The Joint Working Party

- Supported the recommendation that trade data supplied through the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ) by national correspondents was important to collect and should be preferred over COMTRADE data, which may be used as a second resort;
- Welcomed and supported the secretariat's work to assess the potential to automate, JFSQ data collection, processing, checking, and verification, in consultation with relevant Teams of Specialists;
- Supported the secretariat to continue work to submit proposed revisions for the HS 2027 update of Trade Classification to the World Customs Organization in coordination with the Intersecretariat Working Group of ECE; Eurostat, FAO and ITTO.

Work Area 1: Data, monitoring, reporting and assessment

Forest products markets (key recommendation)

- Expressed preference for an exclusively online, machine readable version.
- No print or PDF version of the Annual Market Review were required as of 2022. (with a redirection of resources for layout and print to the development of an electronic publication similar – see 2020 FPMR version.

Wood Energy (key recommendation)

- Stressed need for capacity-building events to improve response rate and quality of the JWEE.
- Secretariat informed that capacity-building event on wood energy data collection would be held in late 2022 and invited countries to consider hosting the event for experts from forestry and energy sectors.

Work Area 2 Policy dialogue and advice

Forest policy (key recommendation)

- The Joint Working Party requested the secretariat to continue supporting the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the accelerated action and delivery of the scope of the Integrated Programme of Work 2022-2025 and the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan on Forests.

Forest Sector Outlook (key recommendation)

- The Joint Working Party advised the secretariat to further integrate the outcomes of the Outlook Study in the communication programme of the Joint ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section and to further promote the outcome of the study.

Boreal Forests

- The secretariat provided update and informed about decision by COFFI bureau to postpone the Ministerial Meeting on Boreal Forests 2022.

Work Area 3 - Communication and outreach

Communication and outreach

The Joint Section updated the Joint Working Party on the Joint Section's ongoing and future communication and outreach work and planned activities for 2023, highlighting the "Trees in Cities Challenge" and the topic's upscaling into a regular work item.

The Joint Working Party

- Agreed to amplify the outreach of the Joint Section's work by actively engaging on social media channels and continuing the Forest Information Billboard, including, if possible, in other languages leveraging on national and possibly also academic distribution points;
- Highlighted the importance of shifting the image of forests and raising awareness also among the non-forest sector audience as well as end-users leveraging on a wide range of communication tools;

Work Area 4 - Capacity-building

Capacity-building

The secretariat informed the Joint Working Party about capacity-building activities undertaken as part of Work Area 4. These activities focused on urban forestry and forest landscape restoration, forest products and forest monitoring. The secretariat also highlighted the main outcomes of the project “Strengthening policy framework on forest landscape restoration in selected UNECE countries to achieve SDG 15”.

The Joint Working Party

Took note of the report, emphasized the importance of activities within this work area and expressed support for the continuation of capacity-building efforts;

ECE and FAO forest and forest sector related activities 2023

ECE and FAO, in line with their governance structures, presented an overview of their forest-related work in the region in order to facilitate the review of the proposed list of activities for 2023. For the ECE, the following presentations were delivered.

Joint Working Party took note of:

- a tentative list of 2023 activities covered by the Integrated Programme of Work presented by the secretariat
- ECE and FAO activities beyond the Integrated Programme of Work.

Note: The list of tentative list of activities adopted by the JWP will be replaced by the List of planned activities adopted by COFFI.

Feedback on Nexus work

The Joint Working Party took note of the information and recommendations provided and encouraged its members to review and possibly apply the recommendations of the report nationally.

Election of officers

The 43rd session elected until the end of the 44th session:

Ms. Magdalena Wolicka Posiadała (Poland) as Chair.

Mr. Matthias Dieter (Germany) as Vice-Chair.

Mr. Michal Synek (Czech Republic) as Vice-Chair.

Date and place of next meeting

Geneva, Switzerland on 31 May - 2 June 2023 as an in-person meeting.

Mandate and Terms of Reference of the JWPFSEM

UNECE procedures require the regular extension/renewal of Working Party mandates. The request will be submitted to the UNECE Executive Committee (ExCom) at its next session (end of November 2022)

Point for decision:

COFFI is invited to request the extension/renewal of the JWP for the next three years and its submission to ExCom.



Thank you!

UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry

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