

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Geneva, 16 March 2023

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Informal Document No. **2023/14**

Extrabudgetary project

Forests and Forest Knowledge for Resilient, Low-Carbon Urban and Rural Communities

(for approval)

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECT FORM**

Project title: Forests and Forest Knowledge for Resilient, Low-Carbon Urban and Rural Communities	
Expected timing/ duration: March 2023 – March 2024	
<p>Objective and brief summary of the project: The project will improve national forest knowledge for building resilient, low-carbon urban and rural communities in the UNECE region. This will be done by developing tools and guidance for local and national policy planning for rural and urban forests and low carbon forest product consumption. The Forestry and Timber Section has been gathering significant amounts of information on forests, forest management and products for decades, that are not always easily accessible through existing communication tools. This includes data on: forests, sustainable forest management; forest ownership; forest products and trade; wood energy, and; forest outlooks. While significant efforts have been made to collect, process, and disseminate these data sets, the potential of these large, long-term data series as extremely valuable policy and communication tools has not yet been fully realized. This phase of work on building a central repository will focus on reporting for the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire and may be extended to other datasets in the future based on resources and skills available. The central repository is the precondition for the further implementation of Information Technology in the Section’s practice that would enable the development of other tools to improve data collection, storage, analysis, and dissemination. It will also enhance the speed and communication reach of information on forests and forest products in the UNECE region. Moreover, the project will support building resilient, low-carbon urban and rural communities through urban forestry, based on work and results achieved as part of the “Trees in Cities Challenge” (TICC) under three previous projects funded by Switzerland. Trees and forests in urban and peri-urban areas are simple and cost-effective nature-based solutions that can deliver on many SDGs, the Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework, Convention on Biological Diversity, New Urban Agenda and other local, national and global goals. The urban consumption of forest products, including wooden building construction, can play a critical role to drive green growth while simultaneously reducing carbon intensity and sequestering carbon in wood products. Forests for resilient, low-carbon urban communities require exploring the wide potential to sustainably scale their use through appropriate policies at national level to promote and align action at the local level. The objective of the project will be achieved by the following activities:</p> <p>A1.1. Develop an extended, central data repository for the Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, with an upgraded database, to allow for partial automation of reporting via an application programming interface (API), and facilitated, accelerated data publishing.</p> <p>A1.2. Expand INForest, through updating the content of presented information.</p> <p>A1.3. Develop a comprehensive future-oriented forest information strategy to automate internal-external data processes.</p> <p>A2.1. Conduct consultations on the text of UNECE’s Draft Regional Urban Forestry Opportunities Plan and present to the November 2023 joint session of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC), under the integrated programme of work, for discussion and possible adoption.</p> <p>A2.2. Draft policy guidelines/ principles on advancing low carbon construction in cities, to be presented to the November 2023 joint session of COFFI and EFC under the integrated programme of work.</p> <p>A2.3. Develop urban forestry benchmarks to support policymakers to develop and implement urban forestry policies, plans & targets.</p> <p>A2.4. Organisation of at least one side event at a regional or international meeting in order to reach out to national and local authorities to promote the integration of urban forests and forest product consumption into policy and planning, including at least one side event at a regional or international meeting.</p> <p>A2.5. Hold an expert seminar (hybrid) on mobilizing urban forest finance</p>	
Link to the SDG targets: SDG 11 targets 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, A, and B; SDG 13 targets 1, 2, 3, and A, and SDG 15 targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, A, and B	
Expected results of the project: EA1. Improved capacity to collect, process and disseminate forest related data, including increased accessibility; EA2. Enhanced integration of rural & urban forests & forest product consumption into national & subnational policy & planning.	
Target group and beneficiaries of the project: National and local government officials in UNECE member States from ministries responsible for forestry, environment and urban development, and from local governments, including mayors.	
Justification of project and its relationship to the programme of work: The project contributes directly to the objective of the Subprogramme 7 “Forests and the forest industry” of the UNECE Program budget for 2023, to “to strengthen the sustainable management of forests and enhance the contribution of forests and forest products to sustainable development in the ECE region,” including to “promote cooperation among member States for...urban and peri-urban forestry” and to “collect, validate and disseminate information, research and analysis related to... the sustainable consumption and production of wood products.” Furthermore, in accordance with the integrated programme of work 2022-2025 of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC) (ECE/TIM/2021/2, FO:EFC/2021/2), adopted on 25 November 2021, this project supports efforts “to improve the quality of information, ensure international compatibility, provide data storage, dissemination, and analysis of the information” and to promote sustainable forest management and urban forestry. The project also supports the recommendation by COFFI to present the Draft Regional Urban Forestry Action Plan to the 2023 joint session of COFFI and EFC (ECE/TIM/2022/2).	
Estimated UN regular budget resources (work months of RB staff/level of staff): 0.25 month of P5, 0.5 month of P3, 0.5 month of P2	
Estimated extra budgetary resources:	
Donor Switzerland	Amount (US\$) 95,500

Project Manager: Liliana Annovazzi-Jakab 14.02.2023	Section/Division: UNECE-FAO Forestry and Timber Section/ Forests, Land and Housing Division
Cleared by Programme Management Unit: Nicolas Dath-Baron 14.02.2023	Approved by EXCOM 16.03.2023

Annex
Results-based budget for the extra-budgetary project

Expected Accomplishments	Planned activities	Estimated costs (US\$)
EA1. Improved capacity to collect, process and disseminate forest related data, including increased accessibility	A1.1. Develop an extended, central data repository for the Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, with an upgraded database, to allow for partial automation of reporting via an application programming interface (API), and facilitated, accelerated data publishing. Contractual services (institutional) x \$36,000	36,000
	A1.2. Expand INForest, through updating the content of presented information. International consultant 1 month x \$5,000	5,000
	A1.3. Develop a comprehensive future-oriented forest information strategy to automate internal-external data processes International consultant 1 month x \$6,500	6,500
EA2. Enhanced integration of rural and urban forests and forest product consumption into national and subnational policy and planning	A2.1. Conduct consultations on the text of UNECE's Draft Regional Urban Forestry Opportunities Plan and present to the November 2023 joint session of COFFI and EFC, under the integrated programme of work, for discussion and possible adoption International consultant 1 month x \$7,750	7,750
	A2.2. Draft policy guidelines/ principles on advancing low carbon construction in cities, to be presented to the November 2023 joint session of COFFI and EFC under the integrated programme of work International consultant, 1 month x \$7,750	7,750
	A2.3. Develop urban forest benchmarks to support policymakers to develop and implement urban forestry policies, plans and targets. International consultant 1 month x \$7,750	7,750
	A2.4. Organisation of at least one side event at a regional or international meeting in order to reach out to national and local authorities to promote the integration of urban forests and forest product consumption into policy and planning. International consultant 1 month x \$7,750	7,750
	A2.5. Hold an expert seminar (hybrid) on mobilizing urban forest finance International consultant 1 month x \$6,000	6,000
Budget summary		84,500
13% of Programme Support Costs		10,985
Total (rounded)		95,500