



Annual meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations Team of Specialists

Forest Communicators Network (FCN)

“Cutting edge in forestry communication”

21-23 May 2013 – Tallinn, Estonia

Meeting report

Item 1: Opening remarks and welcome

1. Mr. Markku LAMP, Director of the Forestry Department in the Ministry of the Environment of Estonia opened the meeting, welcomed participants and thanked them for coming to Estonia. The highest ranking forester of the host country then briefly presented Estonian forests and forestry management. Forests have always been very important to Estonia and now cover about half of the land surface, or 2.2 million hectares. About 51% of forests are coniferous (mainly pine and spruce), while 49% are deciduous (mainly birch, grey and black alder and aspen). The majority of Estonia's forests are now privately owned. Less than 900'000 hectares of forests are still owned and managed by the state. The State Forest Management Centre RMK manages around 806'000 hectares of forests.
2. Mr. Ingwald GSCHWANDTL, FCN Team Leader, opened the meeting officially and thanked the Estonian hosts for providing excellent working conditions. He took the chance to congratulate the gallant hosts for their exceptional organizational skills and for their engagement.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

3. The agenda of the meeting was adopted (see **Annex 1**). The list of participants is enclosed in **Annex 2**. The report and further information on this meeting and the FCN are available at <http://www.unece.org/forests/information/fcn.html>. All presentations are posted on www.metsaselts.ee.
4. In the absence of Eve Charles from the Secretariat Mr. Alan KOCHER (Switzerland) volunteered to take notes and to draft a meeting report.

Session 1: Global trends and initiatives

5. Mr. Florian KRAXNER from the International Institute for Applied System Analyses (IIASA) in Laxenburg near Vienna outlined the “Communication of future trends on global bioenergy”. He presented several scenarios and their results and concluded that the demand for bioenergy will be high and will increase competition for land use. Bioenergy production is a significant but not the major driver of forest loss, on the other hand avoiding large-scale deforestation is possible, even under expanded bioenergy production. Unmanaged forest will be lost under all scenarios but under the RED scenarios the loss is only half of the loss under the BAU (business as usual) scenario. Emissions of greenhouse gases may be substantially reduced by minimizing deforestation. This may have negative impacts on other natural ecosystems.
The more forest and biodiversity one would like to be conserved, the less land will be available for food production.
The more conservation and protection, the higher the need will be for optimization and intensification.
Various policy areas must be coordinated to ensure sustainable use of resources.
6. Mr. Kai LINTUNEN of the Finnish Forestry Association talked about “Challenges for the forest communicator posed by globalisation”. Communications is about increasing legitimacy, is about trustworthiness and credibility. The use of forests requires acceptability in society, and “if we do not define ourselves, somebody else will define us”. The rise of social media does not reduce the importance of face-to-face conversation”, Kai concluded.
7. Ms. Maria DE CRISTOFARO from the FAO and Mr. Colin MORTON of the U.K. Forestry Commission in Edinburgh briefed the participants on the newest developments of their initiative to “Enhancing international co-operation and networking in forest communication”. After the great impact of the International Years of Forests (2011) the importance of effective professional communication on forests and forestry issues is widely acknowledged. In 2012 the presenters chaperoned 3 regional workshops in Peru, Tanzania and Costa Rica. The Latin American Network has already grown from 22 to 50 active people. For September 2013 a first communications workshop is planned for the Asia-Pacific region in Vietnam and in October 2013 another one in Namibia for West Africa. The two very active team members asked their colleagues to express themselves about what should happen in respect of a potential “Global Forest Communicators Network”.

Discussion and recommendations:

8. *The participants welcomed the activities of FAO in encouraging the establishment of regional forest communicator’s networks and decided that FCN should continue supporting this work.*
9. *Several participants emphasised that the forest and forest industries sector operates more and more globally, and that the public recognition of forest issues is not limited to regional issues only, but increasingly impacted by global developments. The participants therefore suggested searching for ways and means for interaction between regional networks. A global platform on forest communication, potentially formed by regional focal points, could exchange information and experiences and develop common concepts and approaches.*
10. *Participants suggested to consider holding a meeting of a global forest communicators platform in the context of the next World Forestry Congress scheduled for 2015 in South Africa.*

Session 2: Innovative approaches and ideas in forest communication

In this session several team members presented different examples of innovative communication techniques. These were received with great interest by the participants and – time permitting – were also discussed.

11. Ms. Mari-Liis KITTER, Head of Communications of RMK (State Forest Enterprise), talked about her experience in mobile and social media marketing. Estonians love mobile communication and even use it for elections. Already 5% of all households use tablets. RMK started in 2009 to communicate events by Facebook. 70% of “friends” are women, primarily younger city people between ages 20 to 40. Now all recreation info is available for free in a mobile application, also in Russian and soon in English. RMK has registered more than 10'000 downloads in 10 months. A huge success is letting people find and buy their Christmas tree via mobile communication: Apparently already 2/3 of all Christmas trees are bought this way! Very popular are news and information on the weather.
12. Ms. Jolanta STANKIEWICZ is Head of Communications of the State Forest Enterprise in Poland. She introduced the new and extremely successful “Bisons online” Facebook and internet campaign. The main communications goal was the dissemination of knowledge about bisons, its protection in Poland and the role of the State Forests in this activity. Foresters should be perceived as the experts of natural science. The long term aim was to create a nature lover community which in crisis would act as ambassadors of the foresters “Zubry online” has had 1.5 million visitors in three and a half months! The Facebook site has more than 65'000 fans. School students spontaneously created a fanpage with the slogan: „**Have a look on bisons before start learning**”. The responses from foresters to students were wishes for a successful exam period from bison and foresters. Total advertising value of the campaign was estimated at € 130'000.
13. Mr. Juha HAUTAKANGAS from Metla, the Finnish Forest Research Institute presented GFIS.net, a Global Forest Information Service platform collecting different forest information). It is an initiative of CPF and lead by IUFRO. GFIS.net holds information from over 410 organizations and has an average of 4'500 unique visitors per week from over 175 countries. Juha Hautakangas reported about the challenges of maintaining such a website. GFIS still looks for more partners and better standards in partner data. Information seekers usually form their opinion immediately upon entering and avoid outdated websites. By the way: the sponsor for 2013 is the U.S. Forest Service which has not been with the FCN for a long time!
14. Mr. Colin MORTON from the Royal Forestry Commission of the U. K. displayed new channels, successfully used for the outbreak management of tree diseases. The *Chalara fraxinea* disease of ash trees (“Ashes to ashes?”) had spread from Denmark to the U.K. Out of fear that this disease might “change the face of Britain” the Forestry Commission created a “Tree Alert App” for an interested public who can scan a QR code for this App in their smart to go directly to the mobile webpages. This has been done about 700 times in the last 6 months.
“Britain's trees are under unprecedented threat from new pests and diseases. We are particularly interested in identifying problems with Ash, Oak, and Horse Chestnut trees. You can help by being aware of the symptoms of serious threats and reporting them for further investigation using this form or our Tree Alert App if reporting Chalara ash disease. An App for other pests and diseases will be available shortly. In addition Colin also explained how social media (Flickr and a website) helped to support this successful campaign.

15. Mr. Marcus KÜHLING, managing director of the German Forestry Society was aired in via Skype and demonstrated the activities his organization has planned under the auspices of "300 years sustainability as declared by forestry pioneer Hans Carl von Carlowitz. Even Chancellor Ms. Angela Merkel has been actively involved in the communication activities. The PR campaigns slogan is "You think sustainability is modern? We too – since 300 years!"
16. Mr. Ingwald GSCHWANDTL, Austria, presented the idea for a give away produced for the Austrian Forest Week, which in June 2013 will focus on the theme "Our Forest – the recipe of sustainability". A piece of good smelling pine wood (*Pinus cembra*) will come in a package resembling the package of a medication. The attached information and direction for use gives information on the how forests contribute to our well being.

Session 3: Latest public opinion research

17. Mr. Tomass KOTOVICS is Head of Communications for the Latvian State Forests. He presented results of a representative survey about public support for the Latvian government's initiative to cut more wood in the economic crisis. About one third of the poll supported the idea, one third opposed it (Latvians still think that more trees are cut than planted), and one third didn't know. The survey also showed that 75% of the Latvian people got to the woods to pick mushrooms and berries, a percentage that is certainly very high in comparison to other European countries.
18. In Finland public surveys on the perception of forests and forest management are done by the biggest marketing company every 18 months since 1993. Mr. Kai LINTUNEN showed that in 2012 Finnish forest professionals were still considered #1 in trustworthiness. But there is a gap between perception and reality: In Finland 60% of the forests are private owned, but the public thinks they belong to the state. More to be seen on www.smy.fi
19. Ms. Kamuran ÖZBAY from the General Directorate of Forestry in Ankara presented results of a public perception study on forests and forestry in Turkey. 150 people from Ankara were asked by questionnaire; people from the city of Ankara were asked what would come to their mind first, when they hear about forests. Apparently deforestation seems to be the most important topic: 78.5% think forest areas are "decreasing" or "decreasing a lot"; in fact they are slightly increasing nationwide!
According to the public the greatest threat to forests are forest fires and illegal logging. 75% find biodiversity very important. Recreation in forests is considered more important than the source of renewable material. 74% are interested in learning more about forest protection and 81% are interested in learning about climate change. 63% think that publicity activities of the forest sector are (rather) weak.
Turkish authorities have decided to speed up communication focusing on the youngest generation: Every year 150'000 children see a Squirrel-Forest-Child-Theatre about forests and GDF publishes a magazine for children every 3 months with an edition of 15'000. For it is most important to instil the love of nature and forests. GDF in 2012 has been present at 20 different PR events and three forest museums in the country can be visited free of charge. Furthermore GDF has educated over 200'000 forest villagers and almost 18'000 hunters, farmers and shepherds on how to protect forests, e. g. from forest fires and about other forest issues.

20. Mr. Marcel RIEDL of the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences in Prague showed new results of a representative and sophisticated public perception study on forests and forestry in the Czech Republic that has been done every year since 1994. 1001 persons above age 18 were questioned. Almost 17 % say, they do not visit forests at all with this portion increasing. Almost 50% visit forests "very rarely or not at all". Picking berries is the most mentioned priority activity. Clean air and oxygen production is the number one topic related to forests.

When asked which of five issues caused the most damage to forests, 76.5% of the people surveyed stated harvesting and management damages (i.e. probably the work of the foresters in the forest) as one of the two most harmful causes most threatening to the Czech forests (EU: 25.9%).

These alarming results have raised a great deal of attention among Czech foresters because while the forest conditions are improving and the forest area is slightly increasing, the image of Czech foresters may be one of the worst in Europe.

Most people like forests, but do not like foresters

Marcel stated that open questions bring much different results; e.g. only 14.5% said harvesting and damages caused by forest management as most dangerous issue for forest, when asked, specifically.

21. Thierry DE SMEDT and Pierre FASTREZ from the Université catholique de Louvain (Belgium) presented results of their study "Trees and forest policies and communication" study and their "Vision of forest communication". A total of 200 high school students were shown 3 posters, one by Greenpeace, one by WWF and one by 3 French forestry organizations. The study tried to find answers on how these different poster were comprehended. The authors looked into:

1. Comprehension of messages
2. Contextualization of messages
3. Comparison of the poster's messages
4. Position towards the messages

The findings in shortcut were

- Identification of intentions - **OK**
- Comprehension of posters - **partly OK**
- Identification of forest functions – **partly OK, dependent on forestry education**
- Comparison of posters messages - **difficult**
- Identification of authors - **difficult**
- Position towards different messages - **incoherent**
- Identification of audience limits - **very difficult**
- Correlation with *Forest Experience Score* or forestry education - **anecdotal**

In the eyes of the two communications specialists forest communicators believe that:

- forest experts have a bad image due to the actions of "environmentalists"
- they must produce a simple, common, universal, concrete, efficient message
- to be credible, you should say what you think everybody loves to say
- communication is more efficient than information
- people need to be impacted rather than autonomous and informed

The two scientists suggested forest communicators to position themselves with a special ethical and strategic approach:

1. Make the institutional quality of the message's author **more explicit**
2. Avoid over-simplistic messages and **promote complex representations** of forests **articulating multiple points of view**
3. Expose the specific **competences and expertise of forest management professionals**
4. Foster the practice of **comparative analysis of media messages** (in schools, associations)

Such an ethical approach should “foster the autonomy of the people” and would “favor democracy”. Ideas are better than slogans, there are no simple messages and communicators should provide more useful information and explain more in detail and about what the added values of forest administrations are.

Recommendations:

22. *The participants welcomed this “look into the mirror”, but largely expressed a different view. Yes, communication about forests and forestry issues takes time. But yes, short and simple messages are still important for successful communication. And communication about forests and forestry is also about emotions.*

Session 4: International processes, campaigns and events

23. Mr. Ingwald GSCHWANDTL and Ms. Luisa CABELLO, Head of communications and public affairs of the Forest Europe Liaison Unit in Madrid briefly informed about the “best kept secret in forestry”, the negotiations for a possible Pan-European Legally Binding Agreement on Forests (LBA). For Luisa Cabello this would be the greatest achievement in decades to support sustainable forest management. Luisa talked about the developments within the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) which started its work on the 27th of February 2012 after the Ministerial decision in Oslo (2011) to negotiate for a LBA. She outlines the communication plan to support the Madrid Extraordinary Ministerial Conference in November 2013. There the ministers will consider the results of the two-year long negotiations process which could mean a historical landmark in forest policy. Luisa also outlined the communications strategy of Forest Europe to communicate such a LBA and asked the FCN members for support on this. Ingwald informed participants that upon invitation by the INC-Bureau FCN-experts (namely Ingwald Gschwandtl, Kai Lintunen, Colin Morton, Maria DeCristofaro, Luisa Cabello, Kamuran Özbay and Tatyana Yakusheva) had provided advice to the INC Bureau on how to improve communication on the negotiation process. More on www.foresteurope.org and www.forestnegotiations.org
24. Thomas BASCHNY from Austria is the Leader of the FCN Sub Group on “Forest related environmental education”. He gave an update on the Sub Group’s activities, accomplishments and plans. The “Forest pedagogics network” had been founded in 2007 and now has members from 15 states. Thomas stressed the growing importance of Forest Pedagogy in Europe (FP). FP directly contributes to two major goals of the EU Forest Action Plan: “**Improving and protecting the environment**” and “**Contributing to the**

quality of life". Common goals and principles of FP shall be implemented in a new FP-strategy to ensure high quality output in this field. Thomas showed a video made at last year's annual congress in Scotland. The next annual congress will be held from October 23 to 25 in Bilbao, Spain and next year probably in Poland.

For more information please check www.forestpedagogics.eu

Recommendations:

- 25. The FCN-Team fully supported the Forest Pedagogics Sub group's activities and welcomed to have the group continue working on basis of the new FCN mandate.*
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Field trip to Lahemaa National Park, to the Nature Information Centre and to Sagadi Forest Centre on Wednesday, 22 May 2013

The Excursion day was conducted in Lahemaa National Park. Mr. Mati VALGEPA from the Estonian Environment Information Centre shared some interesting facts and figures about forests and forest management in Estonia. Then the group was invited to plant a 1.7 ha pine forest (*Pinus sylvestris*) in groups of two. The team enjoyed this practical “down to earth” exercise very much, and quite a few drops of honest sweat trickled from more than one forehead into the beautiful soft Estonian soil...

The group had an excellent meal of forester’s soup and after that an interesting and very rewarding guided tour of the Beaver Trail, and then was shown 4 interesting new mobile-phone Apps by Mr. Mikk LINK, head of the Läänemaa Forest Society. The group was most impressed by the BITTERLICH relascope and the tree-height-measuring device. Mikk noted, that these Apps were intended mainly for forest owners and the greater public and less for professionals. But these new technologies certainly facilitate communication on forests and forestry with a greater audience. A development to be followed closely.

In the afternoon the FCN team visited the Sagadi Forest Centre where director Ms. Krista KEEDUS proudly presented the newly renovated nature school (which is an active member of the FCN-Subgroup “Forest pedagogics Network”) and the wonderful forest museum that is being visited by 30’000 people every year. The group then enjoyed an excellent early dinner at the Sagadi Forest Centre restaurant which concluded a full and rich day in the field.



FCN Team after having planted a 1.7 ha area of pine forest in Northern Estonia, 23 May 2013.

Session 4 continued:

26. Ms. Maria GAFO GOMEZ-ZAMALLOA, from the DG “Agriculture and Rural Development” of the EU Commission in Brussels gave full support and acknowledgement to the FCN. She talked about the particular challenges of communications for the forest sector. The public is generally not aware of forests, of SFM and the sector’s contribution to the green economy. Communications should be part of the overall policy for the sector. Forest people display a great communication effort with limited resources but a lot of illusion and commitment. The EU supports communication activities and specially focuses on children. Maria explained details about the Europe wide drawing contest “What the forest means to me” and presented the young winner from Poland and his colorful work. The EU had received more than 9'000 drawings from children aged 6 to 10 from 23 countries. The EU plans to include a question about forests in the next “Eurobarometer” opinion poll.



EU Drawing contest “What the forest means to me” with winner Kuba Roszak (7) from Poland.

27. In the absence of Ms. Lauren FLEJZOR from CPF (Collaborative Partnership on Forests), Ms. Maria DE CRISTOFARO presented an update of the CPF’s Communicator’s Network. The CPF is an informal, voluntary arrangement among 14 international organizations and secretariats with substantial programmes on forests. These agencies share their experiences and build on them to produce new benefits for their respective constituencies. They collaborate to streamline and align their work and to find ways of improving forest management and conservation and the production and trade of forest products. The members are also forming strategic partnerships to promote sustainable management of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end. The CPF was established in 2001 and is chaired by FAO and serviced by the UNFF Secretariat. For further information see: www.cpfweb.org

Workshop on the European Forest Week 2013 (9 – 13 December); “Santa Claus as ambassador of the forest”

28. The heart of the EFW 2013 will be located in Rovaniemi, Finland, not only the business centre of Lapland, but also the hometown of Santa Claus. Dominique Reeb and Maria de Cristofaro as well as Kai Lintunen presented the goals of the EFW 2013 and gave an update on the planned activities.

The participants of this workshop displayed a lot of creativity and discussed and presented several new ideas to support and further enhance planned and possible activities for this upcoming action. Here are some examples:

- Show how forest owners work, visits to forests
- Pictures of forests, interactive website, as well as at on-site events, photo library
- Engage local authorities, associations etc.
- Wildlife tours to forest, "know the animal track":
- Take a picture of the track, identify it with help of existing free smartphone Apps
- Video competitions, topic/theme countrywise
- Utilize Christmas market tradition in (central) Europe: products from forests sold with the EFW sustainability messages
 - engage certification bodies?
 - forest industry sponsors at events and treasure hunts etc.
 - build on other events (marathon)
- Writing/essay competition for schools
- Webcast of key events (opening ceremony etc.) in Rovaniemi
- IFSA + IUFRO forestry education recommendations → event in Rovaniemi
- Event in Brussels: CEPF, CEPI, EUSTAFOR
 - Commission/DG Agri, Heikki
 - Think Forest – event (EFI)
 - Standing Forestry Committee (June – Ingwald/Heikki)
- Video message by Santa Claus: "Santa's cause", greatest Christmas gift for us all, as in "forests give to Mother Earth..."
- → use existing European networks: CEPF, Eustafor etc. Anne Rauhamäki/MTK
- Existing website, Susana
- Video message by Santa Clause, produced in UN languages
- Linking, exchange sharing, collaborations via the FAO platform
 - follow up from FCN members?
- Encourage existing UNECE groups of specialists/others to capitalize on the platform
 - platform to include a forum
- Use the existing forest related activities under the EFW umbrella
- Ensure that all forest related websites have a link to EFW
- Use the EFW Logo as much and visible as possible

Workshop on the International Day of Forests (21 March):

29. First Ms. Maria de Cristofaro presented the main goals as well as the suggestion of a new international logo which was widely welcomed and hailed by the participants. Then Ms. Kristi TEPO from the Estonian Forest Society in Tartu led the second workshop on activities and also presented the results of this group:

Since there is an inflation of different “international days of...” forest communicators could try to join forces, for instance with the international water day on March 22. The group was that one day (only) means one (simple) message. A common logo would probably facilitate communication and help in the battle for attention.

International Day of Forests



Main ideas would be to:

- Find and communicate the “tree of the year” (exists i. e. in Germany and Switzerland (2013: Apple-tree Malus sylvestris and Austria (Yew, Taxus baccata)
- Publish press releases or meeting and/or press kit
- Define specific topic of the year (i. e. in Switzerland since the early 1990's)
- Try linking with local events
- Offer competitions (i. e. drawings)

Target groups were:

- Schools, children, families
- Women
- “Everybody”
- Teachers (for background information)

Messages could be:

- Plant a tree
- Use (more) wood
- Harvesting = the beginning of something new

Methods discussed were:

- Longer engagement of “famous people” (ambassadors)
- Valid information, which should be available throughout the year
- Websites with clear messages
- Quizzes, pictures and so on

Session 5: 5.1 Other FCN Business

30. **Current FCN mandate (2008 – 2013):** Ingwald Gschwandtl presented the 9 essential points of the expected output. They are:
1. European **forest communication strategy**;
 2. Gap analyses of existing **opinion research** and proposal for improving monitoring and regular analyses on **public perception** concerning forests, their management and related products;
 3. European **Forest Pedagogics Concept** based on best practice examples, common principles and quality standards for forest related environmental education;
 4. Follow up to the **Pan-European Forest Week 2008** (follow up media work; evaluation of achievements and lessons learned; improved concept for future activities);
 5. Preparations for the **International Year of Forests 2011** (raising awareness in the region; developing a strategic outline for concerted activities of local, regional and global relevance);
 6. Contributions to the **EU Forest Action Plan**, in particular on forest related environmental education and on a European forest communication strategy;
 7. **PR advice to TC/EFC bureaus** and joint secretariat, to the Team of Specialists on Forest Products Markets and Marketing as well as to other Teams of Specialists on request;
 8. PR advice to the **Forest Europe** Liaison Unit Oslo upon request;
 9. **Building PR capacity** in TC/EFC member countries through conducting workshops, sharing examples of best practice and holding topical meetings.

Citing some concrete examples they Team Leader concluded: "Mission accomplished!"

5.2 Proposed new mandate beyond 2013 and organizational matters

31. **Draft FCN Terms of Reference for 2014 to 2017:** Ingwald presented the draft Terms of Reference for the FCN, which were prepared by the Secretariat on basis of a proposal by the FCN Leaders.

Discussions:

32. *Participants sought clarification why the mandate duration was now reduced to 2 years. Over the past two decades the FCN had been given mandates for 4 years, with respect to the long term nature of systematic communication and in order to link the FCN work better to the joint program of work of the TC and the EFC. Mr. Dominique REEB, representing the joint Secretariat, and UNECE Committee on Forest and Forest Industry chairman Mr. Heikki GRANHOLM both explained that the prolongation of the mandate would only be an act of formality and 2 year mandates would be standard modality for ToS. Participants took this as a guarantee for prolongation to the full four years period, which they consider needed for engaging in long term FCN activities and for some members also to support their mandate within the ToS.*

Recommendations:

33. The meeting endorsed the draft Terms of Reference with the amendment, that ‘networking’ would be added to ‘Methods of Work’, which should read ‘Meetings, workshops, networking, advice on forest communication related issues, including for awareness campaigns.’

5.3 Guidelines for UNECE-FAO Teams of specialists (ToS):

34. Dominique REEB, Deputy Chief of the UNECE-Secretariat in Geneva briefly outlined the Subprogram on Forestry and Timber of the **ECE/FAO Integrated programme of work on Forestry and Timber**. It is structured around four main functions, or work areas (WA), as follows:

- WA 1: Data, monitoring and assessment
- WA 2: Policy dialogue and advice
- WA 3: Communication and outreach**
- WA 4: Capacity - building

Regarding WA 3 the objectives are to:

- Strengthen the ability of the Committee, the Commission and the Working Party to reach out to relevant constituencies, within and outside the forest sector;
- Promote SFM and increasing the dissemination of the information and tools produced, at the national, regional and global levels.

Within the framework of the UNECE-FAO Strategic Review the Joint Bureaux of TC and EFC had requested:

- To reinforce the links between the ToS activities and the Integrated Programme of Work
- To clarify roles and responsibilities of Team Leaders, Team Members, and secretariat
- To apply and further develop for ECE/FAO ToS the ECE guidelines for the establishment and functioning of Teams of Specialists within UNECE (ECE/EX/2/Rev.1)

Dominique REEB presented these guidelines for ToS and clarified, that they are not ‘rules’ but ‘guidelines’, and should be applied as far as appropriate and meaningful in the context of the teams work. The secretariat fully acknowledges the expert work of the ToS but wishes to further improve their output by applying some guidelines that are the same for all groups.

Recommendations:

35. Members emphasised, that not all guidelines would be relevant for the FCN. Some made clear that the work of the FCN has always been based on the commitment of passionate “forest communicators” and their willingness to share professional experience with each other far beyond the annual meetings. Others stated that the network is often used in the “Day-to-day-context” and is therefore of a very high value. Some noted that while the expectations put towards ToS were high the guidelines were less clear on how the Secretariat would support the ToS.

5.4 FCN officers:

36. According to the draft mandate for 2014 to 2017 the FCN officers (leader and deputy leaders) have to be elected at the first meeting. The participants of the Tallinn meeting decided, that the current officers (leader: Ingwald Gschwandtl, deputy leaders: Colin Morton, Kai Lintunen, Tomass Kotovics and Pille Röivas) should stay in charge until the first meeting under the new mandate (Germany 2014, t. b. c.), in order to secure team operations until this meeting.

37. Bob Burt agreed to help the leaders in setting up the agenda for next year's meeting.

5.5 FCN meeting 2014:

38. Germany made a tentative offer to host the FCN meeting in 2014, which was welcomed by the participants. Location and timing to be specified after confirmation.

6. Appreciation to the hosts of the FCN-Team meeting 2013

39. The Team leader expressed the gratefulness of the whole FCN Team for providing the excellent working conditions of this year's annual FCN-Team meeting. He pointed out that the gracious hosts had done everything to make this meeting highly productive and successful. He further said that the FCN could also enjoy Estonian forests and got an impression of the professionalism and dedication they are cared for. It was particularly rewarding to see how the Estonian forest sector uses newest communication technologies to reach out to people in order to make them better understand forest issues.

Report by Alan E. Kocher, delegate and FCN team member from Switzerland, with the support of the Federal Office for the Environment (Federal Ministry of Environment, Traffic, Energy and Communications) and the Lyss Forestry Training Centre.

All presentations available are posted on www.metsaselts.ee.