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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
Timber Committee

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
European Forestry Commission

JOINT FAO/ECE WORKING PARTY ON FOREST ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS

Twenty-fourth session

to be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva
8-10 April 2002, starting at 10.00 hrs on 8 April

Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda

Interorganization cooperation on forest and forest products statistics
(activities of Intersecretariat Working Group on forest sector statistics) (for information)

The Inter-secretariat Working Group on Forest Statistics (IWG) brings together the FAO, International Tropical Timber Organization, Eurostat and the ECE in collecting forest statistics. The European Environment Agency, European Union Directorates General Agriculture and Environment, and the OECD are also members. The role of the IWG is to coordinate activities between the organizations involved in forestry statistics with the aim of reducing duplication and improving data quality. The primary tool to implement this is the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ), which is used by all organizations as the basic data format and collection tool.

During the past year the IWG met twice, in Rome in February and in Luxembourg in October. The main results of the work in 2001 were

- ?? JQ2001 prepared and issued
- ?? Improved synchronization of data handling and transfer
- ?? Eurostat data checking of EU/EFTA countries
- ?? Initial work on data validation principles
- ?? Release of EFI study

The IWG will meet immediately after the Working Party meeting. The initial agenda includes: a review of the JFSQ 2001; plans for JFSQ 2002 including data validation and exchange; improving validation rules; principles for extending JFSQ; the SP1 questionnaire items and usefulness; the status and implementation of the EFI study. The Working Party is invited to suggest other items for the agenda for this meeting or subsequent IWG meetings.

Future directions of the IWG work include automating data checking, aligning terminology and improving data exchanges.

The cooperation with the IWG is both fundamental and vital for the statistical activities of ECE and FAO. It has been instrumental in relieving the burden on correspondents and in improving the quality of statistics. Eurostat and the ITTO are essential partners for our work on the JFSQ.

The Working Party is invited to review and endorse the activities of the IWG. Detailed results of the IWG activities are included in TIM/EFC/WP.2/2002/2.