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Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party
on Forest Economics and Statistics

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Agenda item 4 of the provisional agenda

**GUIDANCE OF WORK AREA 2: FOREST RESOURCES ASSESSMENT AND
INDICATORS OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE REGION**

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The document presents an overview of the activities in work area 2, and highlights the topics and issues to be addressed by Working Party session, as follows:

(a) Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) and Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) regional work in the global context; Team of Specialists (ToS) work in this area;

(b) Support of countries' reporting on C&I for SFM for the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE-2007): enquiries on quantitative and qualitative indicators, private forest ownership (PFO) data collection;

(c) UNECE/ FAO (Geneva) contribution to the elaboration of the Report on "*State of Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe 2007*";

(d) Regional contribution to the "*Kotka-V*" global FRA Expert Consultation, its follow-up, and the global FRA 2010 preparation;

(e) Future regional FRA- and C&I- related work: organization and direction.

The Working Party is invited to provide guidance for current and future activities in work area 2.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The activities in work area 2 during the reporting period (May 2006 – March 2007) were mainly focused on the regional contribution to the global Forest Resources Assessment, and data collection for the report to the Ministerial Conference in November 2007. The work in this area has been carried out according to the guidance provided by the Working Party in 2006.

II. REGIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE GLOBAL FRA: DEVELOPMENTS IN 2006-2007

A. *Global FRA 2005 follow-up*

2. The UNECE/ FAO contribution to the follow up of the Global FRA 2005 focused on analysis of the assessment's results and learning from FRA 2005 for regional work. The UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on "*Monitoring forest resources for sustainable forest management in the UNECE Region*" reviewed the FRA 2005 outcome, also from the methodological point of view, and confirmed the usefulness of the "mutual fertilization" of regional and global projects, and the importance of further strengthening the regional-global cooperation. The UNECE/ FAO secretariat also contributed by helping with translation and editing into Russian.

3. The FRA 2005 process has shown the crucial importance of the network of national correspondents and regional focal points, as well as of the regional and sub-regional workshops to support the FRA countries' reporting: it is recommended that these continue at both global and regional levels, with close communication between the two.

4. The UNECE/FAO regional work on Forest Resources Assessment has been adjusted in the light of the global FRA 2005 approaches. Likewise, regional experience and lessons learned have been transmitted to the global level.

B. *Global FRA Expert Consultation "KOTKA V"*

5. The FAO global FRA programme has traditionally received technical guidance and support from the high-level experts all over the world, through the expert consultations periodically organized by FAO and UNECE. The latest (fifth) global FRA Expert Consultation "Kotka-V" was held in Finland on 12-16 June 2006. The purpose of the Consultation was to provide guidance for FRA 2010 on the basis of the evaluation of the FRA 2005 results.

6. "Kotka-V" major outcomes included the identification of the key information needs, general agreement on core tables for FRA 2010 country reports, identification of priority of future thematic studies, overview of the FRA 2010 possible scope and approaches of the Remote Sensing (RS) component, identification of key partners and their role, and recommendations on the network of FRA national correspondents. The report of the FRA Expert Consultation "Kotka-V" is available on internet at <http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/35027/en/>.

7. The UNECE regional community contributed significantly to "Kotka-V". The Consultation proposed that global FRA 2010 should employ 1990, 2000 and 2005 as the reference reporting years,

and the Assessment results should be produced in 2010.

8. “Kotka-V” Consultation confirmed once again the importance of close coordination of the regional and global FRA- and C&I- related work.

C. Meeting of the global FRA Advisory Group, January 2007, Rome

9. The Advisory Group (AG) for the Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) has 15-20 participants and meets once or twice a year. The AG members contribute in their personal expertise and capacity, and an effort is being made to ensure representation of important forestry organizations / institutions and different regions.

10. The 6th meeting of the Advisory Group was held on 11-12 January 2007 at the FAO headquarters. The objectives of the meeting were “to review the outcome of the global FRA Expert Consultation (Kotka-V)” and to seek the AG guidance on “issues related to the design and implementation” of the next global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA-2010). The UNECE/FAO secretariat, participates actively in the AG, as well as several leading regional experts from the region. The UNECE (Geneva) representative was elected the AG Chairman, replacing Mr. Brad Smith (USA), who was elected in January 2006.

11. The Working Party is invited:

- (a) *to review the regional UNECE/FAO contribution to the global FRA 2005 follow-up process;*
- (b) *to comment/discuss on the conclusions and recommendations of the global FRA Expert Consultation “Kotka-V”, and methodological aspects of the preparation for the global FRA-2010.*

III. UNECE/FAO TEAM OF SPECIALISTS ON “MONITORING FOREST RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE UNECE REGION”

12. The second meeting of the Team was held in Hamburg from 29 to 30 May 2006. The elaborated plan of ToS actions for 2006-2007 is included in the Report of the meeting (<http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/fratos/meetings/HamburgMay2006/meetMay2006.htm>). The team provided guidance on all parts of work area 2, as reported in the present document.

13. The next meeting of the Team of Specialists on “Monitoring Forest Resources for Sustainable Forest Management in the UNECE region” will be held on 21-22 May 2007, in Edinburgh (Scotland, UK). The following issues are to be discussed:

- a. UNECE/FAO contribution to the elaboration of the MCPFE-2007 Report on “State of Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe 2007”;
- b. Regional contribution to the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010;
- c. Update on current developments in the C&I country reporting of Montreal Process;
- d. The new MCPFE Forest Types classification: feasibility and issues of country reporting;

- e. Potential indicators for analyses relating to forests and climate change (initial discussion);
- f. Future ToS activities and work planning for 2007-2008.

14. *The Working Party is invited to review and comment on the provisional agenda of the third meeting of the Team of Specialists (May 2007, Edinburgh, UK), presented in Annex I.*

IV. COOPERATION WITH OTHER EUROPEAN ACTIVITIES

A. EU Forest Focus follow up, "LIFE+" programme

15. The European Parliament and Council Regulation concerning monitoring of forests and environmental interactions in the Community (Forest Focus), which covered the period from 2003 to 2006, came to an end at the beginning of 2007. A new instrument being prepared "LIFE+" (*L'Instrument Financier pour l'Environnement*), which should provide specific support for developing and implementing the Community environmental policy and legislation, opens new opportunity for Forestry cooperation. The UNECE/FAO has been involved in informal discussions and has stated that whatever solution finally emerges UNECE/FAO will strive to find synergies and devise solutions which provide the best possible information and analysis at the EU, pan European and global levels.

B. COST Action E 43

16. UNECE/FAO actively participates in the work of the EU COST Action E 43 "Harmonisation of National Forest Inventories in Europe: Techniques for Common Reporting", and its working groups. The COST Action E43 collects the information from member countries through 3 Working Groups (WGs) analyses the current situation in National Forest Inventories (NFI), and explores ways of harmonization in the respective specific areas. It builds on work by the UNECE/FAO team of specialists in earlier years.

17. The COST Action E 43 latest meeting, which was held in Thessaloniki (Greece) focused on the "Identification of the core variables/ parameters", "precision of the assessment of the above ground biomass", "biomass expansion factors", "sensitivity analysis of the stock change estimates", "aspects of the quality assessment and error budget", "forest types classification issues", "improvement of uncertainty estimates", and other items. The level of details, which have been discussed by COST Action E 43, are more specific than those addressed at the FRA level. Its results provide a fundamental background for the future FRA- and C&I- related work, and specifically for the preparation of the next round of the global FRA (FRA-2010).

V. CONTRIBUTION TO THE MCPFE 2007 C&I FOR SFM REPORTING

18. The close working collaboration established between UNECE/FAO (Geneva), FAO (Rome) and MCPFE (Warsaw) was proved once again in the process of the collection and processing of the data/information for the Report on "State of Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe 2007", probably the most complex and ambitious regional forest resource assessment so far. UNECE/FAO is contributing in the following ways:

- a. Joint leadership of the study, with the Liaison Unit, Warsaw (LUW), including

- organization, financing, and political responsibility;
 - b. Data collection and validation of those quantitative indicators collected through the core enquiry;
 - c. Collection and information handling of information on qualitative indicators;
 - d. Enquiry on private forest owners.
19. The main features of the study may be summarised as follows:
- a. Structured around the criteria and indicators of MCPFE.
 - b. Maximum involvement of countries, notably national correspondents, international partners and the scientific community. All national data to be approved by national correspondents.
 - c. Final responsibility with the LUW and UNECE/FAO. The MCPFE General Coordinating Committee and the UNECE/FAO bureaux will be briefed on the study before it is issued.
 - d. Writing of the study to be led by two coordinating editors, Michael Köhl and Ewald Rametsteiner, supported by Coordinating lead authors (for each criterion), lead authors (for each indicator), a review team and an advisory group.
 - e. First draft mid April, final text mid June. Issue well before the November Conference.
20. As of mid February, the status is as follows:
- a. Data on quantitative indicators collected through the enquiry are collected, validated and stored in the FAO FRA database. Graphs and tables are being prepared for authors.
 - b. Data supplied by International Data Providers such as ICP Forest, EUFORGEN or Eurostat have been received and are being checked by national correspondents. They are being supplied to authors.
 - c. Enquiry on qualitative indicators has been circulated with a deadline of end February.
 - d. The report preparation structure is in place: editors, coordinating lead authors, reviewers and advisory group have been identified.
21. Set out below is more detailed information on those parts of this major project being carried out with significant input from UNECE/FAO.
- A. *MCPFE 2007 Enquiry on quantitative indicators (National Data Reporting Forms)*
22. The enquiry was elaborated by the UNECE/FAO and the MCPFE LUW through a consultative process within the Team of Specialists, and sent to countries in March 2006. By the end-2006, after thorough reviewing, checking and validation process with country correspondents and focal points, all the country reports were compiled. The UNECE/FAO (Geneva) and FAO (Rome) teams had to elaborate a number of “Desk Studies” for those countries, which were not able to report. All the country reports were formatted in a standard template, and prepared for loading into the specially designed database hosted by FAO Rome. The database design, structure and contents were elaborated in the close cooperation with the FAO global FRA team in Rome. The database is supposed to be fully compatible with the global FRA-2005 dataset.
23. The reporting on quantitative indicators has been a serious challenge for many MCPFE member countries, mainly due to lack of the requested data/information, and lack of capacity to prepare the requested information. Out of 45 country reports, 12 reports were compiled as secretariat

“Desk Studies”, presenting estimates calculated mainly on the TBFA-2000 basis, as well as other available information on the subject.

24. The compilation and review of the draft country reports, including desk studies as well the elaboration and design of the electronic database, has required significant resources, in addition to UNECE/FAO and LUW staff. In particular, in-kind contributions from Norway (Dr. Stein Tomter), and the Czech Republic (Mr. Richard Slabý), proved absolutely essential to carrying out the task. The FRA team in FAO Rome also made a vital contribution, especially in data handling, validation and analysis. Contributions have also been received from the European Commission and are expected from Switzerland and the UK to finance the report preparation.

25. More than 40 final country statistical tables will be a part of the final report.

26. The implementation of this MCPFE-2007 C&I project contributes also to the development of the global FRA methodology. The experience with the regional C&I reporting will help at the global level to increase the accuracy, reliability and comparability of data/information, which is being provided by countries in FRA processes. The project serves as a testing ground of feasibility of including new variables (parameters) into the future global FRA, as well as the transparency of the process.

B. MCPFE 2007 Enquiry on qualitative indicators

27. The information on MCPFE qualitative indicators is being collected through the specifically prepared detailed “*Enquiry on the Implementation of MCPFE commitments 2007 and Reporting on the MCPFE qualitative Indicators for SFM*”. It had been decided that the progress in the implementation of prior commitments arising from the Ministerial Conferences in Strasburg, Helsinki, Lisbon and Vienna Ministerial Conferences will be reviewed jointly with reporting on qualitative indicators for SFM endorsed at the last Expert Level Meeting (ELM) of the MCPFE Ministerial Conference in Vienna in October 2002.

28. The enquiry on the qualitative indicators for SFM was elaborated by the UNECE/FAO Geneva secretariat in close cooperation with the MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw and with the expertise of Dr. Ewald Rametsteiner, consultant for the development of both questionnaires, and the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Monitoring SFM. A draft of the questionnaire was shared with the MCPFE ELM in October 2006 and comments were subsequently incorporated. It was also discussed with the Inter-Secretariat Coordination Group on Monitoring Forest Resources and Institutions, set up in November 2006 to coordinate and harmonize the work conducted by UNECE/FAO, the FAO MAR (Monitoring, assessment and reporting) team and the policies and institutions unit, the FAO Sub-Regional Office in Budapest and MCPFE. Comments, in particular in view of avoiding a duplication of data reporting requests, were taken into consideration when producing the final draft.

29. As agreed by UNECE/FAO and MCPFE, the questionnaire was addressed to MCPFE focal points in December 2006, with a deadline for responses of 23 February 2007.

30. Information received through the enquiry shall be made publicly available on the web. Together with partners, guided by the Inter-Secretariat Coordination Group, a comprehensive, global repository of information on policies and institutions shall be devised, centralizing relevant

information on forest policies and institutions, in the context of the existing FAO Forestry Department country profiles and FRA 2010, possibly linking to regional information sites.

C. Pilot Enquiry and Study on Private Forest Ownership in Europe

31. The Vienna Ministerial Conference acknowledged the importance of private forest ownership for rural development and SFM, but noted that there is significant lack of information concerning the private forest sector. It had thus been decided to launch an enquiry and to elaborate a study on private forest ownership (PFO).

32. The Enquiry on Private Forest Ownership in Europe (PFO) was elaborated by UNECE/FAO, MCPFE and the Confederation of Private Forest Owners (CEPF), with participation from the European Landowners' Organization (ELO). It was addressed in May 2006 to MCPFE countries that have private forestry (through FRA National Correspondents, MCPFE and UNECE/FAO Focal Points, as well as other contacts).

33. The enquiry is intended to be compatible with the regional UNECE/FAO Forest Resources Assessment and the reported data on the quantitative indicators, addressing additionally in-depth socio-economic issues of private forest ownership. 25 out of 38 country reports have been received by January 2007, and not much additional data is expected. First results will be presented at the FAO meeting on Forest Tenure in Rome, mid-February 2007. Final results of the enquiry will be reflected in the report "*State of Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe 2007*", to be presented at the MCPFE Ministerial Conference in November 2007, and will be made available publicly on the web.

34. *The Working Party is invited:*

- a. to review the process of implementation of the MCPFE-2007 reporting on quantitative and qualitative indicators for SFM, and provide guidance for future work in this area;***
- b. to comment on the pilot enquiry on private forest ownership, and the expected study on the subject;***
- c. to appreciate the methodological and practical support provided by the FAO FRA programme to the regional MCPFE-2007 reporting on C&I for Sustainable Forest Management.***

D. Workshop on "Inter-C&I processes collaboration", 8-10 June 2006, Bialowieza (Poland)

35. The "Inter-C&I processes collaboration workshop" was organized jointly by the Montreal Process, MCPFE and ITTO, with support from UNECE/FAO. This meeting gave an opportunity to exchange views on the possibilities of "coordination/harmonization" between processes. A "strong" coordination appeared difficult at this stage, as processes had their own history, established their proper agendas and methods of work and had differing capacities. However, a regular mutual exchange of information between processes, as well as coordination, to some extent, of the countries' reporting work which was being done within processes, would be mutually beneficial, in particular to minimize the reporting burden on national correspondents. The outcome of the workshop was presented at Kotka V and the proceedings are being prepared. The conclusions are reproduced in the Annex II.

VI. GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR WORK AREA 2

36. *The Working Party is invited:*

- *to take note of general scope and direction of work in WA 2, and indicate whether it endorses the methods and modalities of the regional FRA- and C&I – related work;*
- *to welcome the well established coordination between regional and global FRA, and between UNECE/FAO and MCPFE programme activities;*
- *to endorse the UNECE/FAO contribution to reporting to the next Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (Warsaw, November 2007);*
- *to support the WA 2 activities aimed on the coordination of countries' reporting on C&I for SFM within the MCPFE and Montreal processes (e.g. via COST EU 43 workshop);*
- *to confirm the necessity to maintain strong regional activities in this area in order to satisfy specific regional needs (reporting on C&I for SFM, etc), and for mobilising regional expertise for the future global FRA rounds.*

Annex 1
Provisional Agenda
Third Meeting of the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on
“Monitoring forest resources for SFM in the UNECE Region”.
(Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom, 21-22 May 2007)

1. Opening and welcome, arrangements for conducting the meeting
2. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda
3. FRA - and C&I- related developments in 2006-2007 (*for information*):
 - a. UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Economics & Statistics 2007;
 - b. MCPFE Expert Level (ELM) & AG meetings: focus on MCPFE-2007 Conference;
 - c. FAO global FRA programme: general overview of developments;
 - d. Montreal process C&I- related developments (review process of MP indicators);
 - e. EU COST Action E 43 (NFI): status, developments and planning
 - f. SEBI-2010 (Streamlining European Biodiversity Indicators), pre-final set.
4. ToS contribution to the MCPFE Report “*State of Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe 2007*” elaboration:
 - a. Data/ information collection and analysis: results of the process;
 - b. MCPFE 2007 Enquiry – quantitative indicators: results and lessons learned;
 - c. MCPFE 2007 Enquiry – qualitative indicators for SFM reporting: issues;
 - d. Information from other International Data Providers;
 - e. “Private Forest Ownership” pilot study: database status, how to make the best use.
5. MCPFE-2007 Report preparation: state of the process, issues, possible solutions:
 - a. Contents (Thematic Chapters) and recommendations to authors on specific topics;
 - b. Resources and support for the Report elaboration and publication.
6. Regional contribution to the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment
 - a. “Kotka-V” Expert Consultation (Finland, 12-16 June 2006): outcome, follow up;
 - b. Global FRA Advisory Group (Rome, January 2007) recommendations and proposals;
 - c. Information and discussion of the FRA Remote Sensing component;
 - d. ToS contribution to the global FRA 2010 (timetable/ schedule, country reporting tables, thematic studies, RS survey, NC network, etc).
7. Current developments in the C&I country reporting of Montreal Process: update
 - a. Outcome of the International Workshop on C&I processes (Poland, June 2006).
8. The new MCPFE Forest Types classification: feasibility and issues of country reporting
9. Potential indicators for analyses relating to forests and climate change (initial discussion)
10. Future ToS activities and work planning for 2007-2008
11. Other matters

Annex II
Inter-C&I Process Collaboration Workshop
Bialowieza, Poland, October 12, 2006
Draft conclusions

The **Inter-Criteria and Indicator (C&I) Process Collaboration Workshop** was a collaborative effort by the Montreal Process, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the U.S. Forest Service. A special note of thanks goes to the MCPFE for hosting the workshop.

The Workshop was held in response to repeated calls, mainly by international expert conferences on criteria and indicators (C&I) for sustainable forest management (SFM), for more and improved collaboration among Criteria and Indicator processes.

To stimulate discussion, the following three papers were presented:

1. The need for collaboration among C&I process – Dr. Ewald Rametsteiner
2. The audiences for national sustainability reports – Dr. Jari Parviainen
3. General model for criteria and indicators – Drs. Richard Guldin and Ted Heintz

Workshop observations and recommendations

1. Workshop participants expressed support for FAO/ FRA's use of C&I as the vehicle for global forest data, summaries, assessments and reporting on forests. However, a desire for more collaboration among FAO, C&I processes and countries on the FRA was expressed.
2. Collaboration is welcome & useful when naturally driven, informally initiated and the mutual benefits are clear.
3. Harmonization, while commonly understood to be a desired goal of C&I, is often misunderstood especially regarding terms and definitions. However there is work to be done.
4. Useful C&I process collaborative efforts might work on:
 - a. Clarification of common global, regional, country data threads global, regional, country. Is there a "core" set common to them all?
 - b. How to market national forest reports. Understanding how special interest groups, users at lower levels of management, other sectors, decision makers etc. are audiences for which reports must be tailored.
 - c. Methods of analyzing indicator data.
 - d. Protocols for efficient data collection.
 - e. Messages to share to our colleagues, stakeholders and leadership
5. Criteria and indicators and their resulting reports will carry more weight if:
 - a. There is clearer relevance to country development agendas or programs.
 - b. Clear links to other economic sector development goals.
 - c. There is well supported and visible theory behind indicators.
 - d. There is innovative presentation of information. For our publics, we need to be able to tell a story with our data.
 - e. There was more synergy among the active C&I processes
6. Improved monitoring and reporting has actually improved the public dialogue

It is hoped the C&I process and countries will take the initiative to implement the above recommendations.