



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

ECE/TIM/2007/5
31 July 2007

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

TIMBER COMMITTEE

Sixty-fifth session
8-11 October 2007
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**PLANNING FOR THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE
2008-2009 PROGRAMME OF WORK**

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This document gives an overview of the planned performance evaluations of the subprogramme on timber and forestry. It sets out the performance evaluation framework for each cluster of activities for the purpose of UNECE biennial evaluations in the 2008-2009 biennium. The Committee is invited to review and agree on the proposed expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement.

In addition, the Committee is presented with a proposal of the strategic framework for 2010-2011 for the subprogramme prepared in the context of the United Nations programme performance cycle. The Committee is invited to review the proposal before its submission to the Executive Committee.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Like any large organisation, the United Nations, including UNECE, is expected to plan its activities in advance and with the participation of stakeholders, enabling the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly to make the necessary funding decisions. Likewise after a defined period – in the case of the United Nations two years – those responsible for a programme should report on their achievements, and be answerable for the results.

2. In recent years, the United Nations, like many other public organizations, has moved to a results-based management system, where programmes and performance assessments are analysed in terms of results achieved, not just the outputs produced by the programme. This necessitates putting in place mechanisms to monitor and report on achievements (e.g. user surveys, measurement of website downloads, implementation of recommendations etc.). Finally, the whole process should be used to improve performance by learning from experience.

3. In the case of the timber and forestry subprogramme, the question is complicated by the institutional environment. There are at least three formal United Nations frameworks¹ for programme planning, performance assessment and reporting:

- (a) The United Nations-wide mandatory assessment system, in compliance with the instructions provided by the General Assembly and Headquarters;
- (b) The UNECE biennial evaluations to be implemented by each Sectoral Committee at the request of the Commission;
- (c) The timber and forestry subprogramme's own system of planning and delivery, through four-yearly strategic reviews, annual sessions, oversight by the bureaux, as well as close consultation and participation with the expert community through teams of specialists and workshops.

4. Each of the three systems has its own legitimate requirements, and cannot be ignored or short-circuited. The challenge for all concerned, but especially for the UNECE/FAO Timber Section, is to align all the processes and to streamline the use of resources, for instance by harmonizing planning periods, and using the same methods to assess performance.

II. UNITED NATIONS-WIDE MANDATORY ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

5. In order to achieve the best possible results and as mandated by the United Nations, two key tools are employed to ensure that the work carried out corresponds adequately to objectives set and the needs of users and stakeholders:

- (a) The United Nations results-based management and results-based budgeting framework
- (b) Self-evaluations.

¹ As a joint UNECE/FAO subprogramme, the programme is also affected by the FAO system, culminating in the FAO Conference and Council.

6. According to the United Nations results-based management and results-based budgeting system, all subprogrammes, before each biennium, set up a strategic framework which determines their objectives in terms of “expected accomplishments” and, for each of them, indicators of achievement. The strategic framework of the UNECE subprogramme on timber and forestry for the programme budget 2008-2009, was approved by the General Assembly (A/61/6 (Prog. 16)).

7. Apart from the above assessments, subprogrammes are also requested to undertake selected in-depth self-evaluations on particular areas of work projects or activities. The main aim of these self-evaluations is to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the work undertaken and to optimize its impact. For example, in the 2008-2009 biennium, the secretariat chose the following two issues to be the subject of a self-evaluation:

- (a) The strategic review; an in-depth external review of the whole programme (see ECE/TIM/2007/4)
- (b) The subprogramme’s main outputs (website, publications, press releases, newsletter, meetings/seminars/workshops) through a user survey.

II. UNECE BIENNIAL EVALUATIONS 2008-2009

8. The UNECE member countries, being committed to the transparency and effectiveness of programme management, agreed, at the Commission session in 2004, to place more emphasis on evaluation as a tool in managing the Commission’s work. The Sectoral Committees were therefore requested by the Commission to conduct biennial evaluations of their respective subprogrammes and to take into account the results of these evaluations in determining their work programmes. The 2005 UNECE reform further strengthened this approach.

9. The biennial evaluations should give an opportunity for the members of each Sectoral Committee to review and reaffirm, on a continuous basis, the relevance of the activities and their clusters in view of the subprogrammes’ objectives. The results of these evaluations should contribute to defining subprogramme priorities and the related redistribution of resources.

10. In the context of the UNECE biennial evaluations, each Sectoral Committee has been mandated to identify clusters of activity and agree on expected accomplishments for 2008-09 for each of them, together with the related indicators of achievement and measurement methodologies. This approach is at a level of detail which corresponds more closely to reality in the UNECE context than the necessarily more aggregated United Nations-wide approach (see para 6 above), while following the same results-based methodology.

11. These biennial evaluations should comprise two phases: a) a planning phase, prior to each biennium as mentioned above; and b) an evaluation phase, towards the end of any biennium, drawing up an accomplishment account for each expected accomplishment, including lessons learned and recommendations for possible programmatic adjustments.

12. A proposal for the accomplishments and indicators for each cluster of its activities has been prepared by the Secretariat for review and agreement by the Committee. In 2009, at its annual session, the Committee will be requested to address some key evaluation elements (relevance,

effectiveness, impact and efficiency) in reviewing the accomplishments of the subprogramme in each of its clusters of activities. Some guidelines for these evaluations have been prepared by the UNECE Programme Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and are available in the "Guide for biennial evaluations of subprogramme performance by UNECE sectoral Committees" available at <http://www.unece.org>.

13. The clusters of activities of the timber and forestry subprogramme are naturally its five areas of work: Markets and Statistics (1), Forest resource assessment and indicators of SFM (2), Sector Outlook Studies (3), Social and cultural aspects (4) and Policy and Cross-sectoral issues (5). The expected accomplishments per cluster have been identified on this basis, taking into account also the 2008-2009 programme performance budget for the subprogramme, approved by the General Assembly. However, no expected accomplishment has been included for work area 4 (social and cultural aspects), as this work is mainly conducted by partner organizations and all identified activities have already been satisfactorily completed by end 2007. Capacity building activities under all work areas are grouped in a separate "cluster".

14. The proposed 2008-2009 expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement for the timber and forestry subprogramme are presented in Annex 1.

15. *The Committee is invited to discuss and agree on the expected accomplishments for the biennial evaluations. These subjects will also be reviewed in greater detail in the context of the strategic review (see ECE/TIM/2007/4).*

IV. UNITED NATIONS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2010-2011

16. In accordance with the UNECE programme planning process, the draft strategic framework has to be reviewed by the Sectoral Committees before submission to the Executive Committee in November/December 2007 and to United Nations Headquarters in early 2008. However, it will be possible to revise this proposal in the light of the results of the Strategic review.

17. As outlined in Annex 2, the strategic framework 2010-2011 for the subprogramme contains the following elements:

- (a) Subprogramme objective
- (b) Expected accomplishments, with their indicators of achievement
- (c) A strategy to achieve the subprogramme's expected accomplishments and objective
- (d) A list of legislative mandates.

18. *The Committee is invited to review and modify if necessary the draft Strategic Framework 2010-2011 for transmission to the Executive Committee in autumn 2007.*

Annex 1

**Expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement for the
subprogramme on timber and forestry 2008-2009, per cluster of activities,
for the UNECE biennial evaluations**

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
<p>(a) Increased ability to measure and report on forest resources as the underlying basis for SFM (Relevant cluster: Work Area 2 (forest resources))</p>	<p>(i) Increased percentage of ECE countries able to provide satisfactory data on quantitative indicators of sustainable forest management</p>
<p>(b) Increased ability to monitor forest policies and institutions, in view of strengthening the institutional and legal framework (Relevant cluster: Work Area 5 (forest policies and institutions))</p>	<p>(i) Increased percentage of ECE countries able to provide satisfactory data on qualitative indicators of sustainable forest management (policies, institutions, instruments) (ii) Increased percentage of ECE countries with national forest programmes or similar holistic forest sector policy frameworks</p>
<p>(c) Increased understanding of the sound use of wood, leading to policies to promote it and increased ability to monitor it (Relevant cluster: Work Area 1 (markets and statistics))</p>	<p>(i) Increased percentage of ECE countries with policies in place on sound use of wood, whether as part of national forest programmes or not (ii) Percentage of ECE countries able to provide satisfactory responses to the ECE/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/International Tropical Timber Organization/Eurostat joint forest sector questionnaire</p>
<p>(d) Increased capacity of countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States and South-East Europe to achieve sustainable forest management at the national level, notably through developing appropriate policy measures (this "cluster" comprises the capacity building activities carried out under all work areas)</p>	<p>(i) Increased number of the Commonwealth of Independent States and South-East European countries adopting national forest programmes (ii) Degree of usefulness perceived of relevant capacity building activities</p>
<p>(e) Increased understanding of policy issues and outlook, comprising the interaction of the forest sector with other sectors, leading to enhanced policy formulation (Relevant clusters: Work Areas 3 (outlook studies) and 5 (cross-sectoral component))</p>	<p>(i) Degree of usefulness perceived by policy makers and other stakeholders of relevant studies/publications, policy forums, and workshops</p>

Baselines and proposed targets will be submitted to the special session in April 2008.

Annex 2

Proposed Strategic Framework for the period 2010-2011

Subprogramme 7
Timber and forestry

Objective of the Organization: To improve sustainable forest management, including the sound and legal use of wood, other forest products and services, based on appropriate policies and institutions, throughout the UNECE region.

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Increased understanding, based on better monitoring of sustainable forest management, encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Policies and institutions, (ii) Forest resources (iii) Sound use of wood in domestic and export markets, (iv) The outlook for the sector in a broader, cross-sectoral context 	(i) Degree of usefulness perceived by policy makers and other stakeholders of relevant studies/publications, policy forums and workshops (ii) Increased percentage of ECE countries able to provide satisfactory data on quantitative indicators of sustainable forest management (iii) Increased percentage of ECE countries able to provide satisfactory responses to the ECE/FAO/International Tropical Timber Organization/Eurostat joint forest sector questionnaire (which monitors the sound use of wood) (iv) Increased percentage of ECE countries able to provide satisfactory data on qualitative indicators of sustainable forest management
(b) Increased capacity of countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South- East Europe to achieve sustainable forest management at the national level	(i) Degree of usefulness perceived by policy makers and other stakeholders of relevant studies/publications, workshops and meetings

Strategy

The responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the Trade and Timber Division, Timber Section. The subprogramme will aim at developing and applying analytical and monitoring tools, both on policy and on developments on the ground, collecting, validating and disseminating information and analysis, as well as stimulating the exchange of experience, best practice and joint efforts to measure progress. Priorities for 2010-2011 will be guided by the Strategic Review of the UNECE/FAO integrated programme and other relevant forums, notably the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

While all countries benefit from international cooperation through the subprogramme, the subprogramme will pay special attention to the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Mediterranean region. As part of the strategy to implement the subprogramme, ECE will carry out its work in cooperation with FAO and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe and provide regional input to the United Nations Forum on Forests. To support forest management, including the use of wood and forest products, that is sustainable from the ecological, economic and social point of view, it is necessary to maintain a good balance between those three aspects, based on a strong consensus about goals and methods among all stakeholders, as well as to ensure that the strategy is well integrated into the policy framework of other sectors (the cross-sectoral approach). Achieving sustainable forest management is primarily a sovereign national responsibility. However, regional international cooperation, through the timber and forestry subprogramme and its partners, will contribute by developing and disseminating concepts and information, sharing experience and defining standard measurement tools (indicators) for sustainable forest management.

Legislative mandates**Subprogramme 7 Timber and forestry***General Assembly resolutions*

54/218 Implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly

ECOSOC resolutions

2006/38 Workplan on reform of the Economic Commission for Europe and revised terms of reference of the Commission