

INTERNATIONAL YEAR
OF FORESTS • 2011



Regional Forest Information Week

State of forests and forest management in the UNECE region in the context of current needs and challenges

United Nations, Geneva – 21 March 2011



Assessment of sustainable forest management

By Kit Prins



Overview

- Necessity of assessment
- An experimental approach in SOEF 2011
- Methods
- Preliminary results
- Next steps



By Kit Prins



Why is it necessary to assess SFM?

- Promote SFM by moving beyond description
- Balance between criteria
- Time dimension
- Political impact
- Communication
- International comparison is a strong stimulus to action



By Kit Prins



An experimental approach in SOEF 2011: the assessment should be:

- Based on pan-European criteria and indicators
- Comprehensive, balanced (all criteria, all indicators, equal weighting to each criterion)
- Cover all FOREST EUROPE countries
- Based exclusively on officially supplied data
- Rigorous and transparent



By Kit Prins



The assessment should be presented:

- Clearly
- In a non-judgemental way
- With accompanying commentary explaining results, pointing to special circumstances, data/methodological weaknesses

If this is achieved, the assessment should have political impact



By Kit Prins



The method

- Choose one key parameter by indicator (meaningful, size-independent – ratio or % change): qualitative and quantitative
- Divide into classes from  to , or “No Data” (ND), using frequency distribution, targets, common sense etc.
- Combine the assessments, by criterion and country group (weighted by land area, all indicators inside each criterion equal)
- ND = 
- Assessments by country will not be published (this time)



Methodological challenges

- Choice of key parameters: which way is “good”? (e.g. holdings, labour force, plantations)
- Setting of thresholds, without being subjective or favouring certain choices. (will they remain the same in the future?)
- Weak comparability for a few indicators



PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Total Europe and three examples of country groups



By Kit Prins



Overview of preliminary results for Europe

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	Part A	Part B
	Forest resources and global carbon stock	Health and vitality	Productive functions	Biodiversity	Protective functions	Socio-economic functions	Overall policies, institutions and instruments for sustainable forest management	Policies, institutions and instruments by policy area
Russian Federation	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑↑
North Europe	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑↑
Central-West Europe	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑↑
Central-East Europe	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑
South-West Europe	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑
South-East Europe	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑



By Kit Prins



Country group X

		Assessment	Areas of concern
C1	Forest resources and global carbon stock	↑↑↑	All indicators positive at country group level
C2	Health and vitality	↑↑↑	Large area at risk from eutrophication, C/N ratio approaching warning level in two countries
C3	Productive functions	↑↑↑	Weak data on marketed non-wood goods, and marketed services
C4	Biodiversity	↑↑↑	Information gaps on threatened forest species, low percentage of forest protected for biodiversity in some countries
C5	Protective functions	↑↑↑	Inability to separate protective functions (soil and water) from those for infrastructure.
C6	Socio-economic functions	↑↑↑	Only partial information on government expenditure for forest services and on sites with cultural and spiritual value
Part A	Overall policies, institutions and instruments for sustainable forest management	↑↑↑	All indicators positive at country group level
Part B	Policies, institutions and instruments by policy area	↑↑↑↑	All indicators positive at country group level



Country group Y

		Assessment	Areas of concern
C1	Forest resources and global carbon stock	↑↑↑	All indicators positive at country group level
C2	Health and vitality	↑↑↑	High percentage of land area at risk of eutrophication from nitrogen deposits. Near warning level for soil imbalances in some countries
C3	Productive functions	↑↑↑	All indicators positive at country group level
C4	Biodiversity	↑↑↑	Landscape pattern (low connectivity and fall in share of core natural forest). Weak data on threatened forest species.
C5	Protective functions	↑↑	Inability to separate protective functions (soil and water) from those for infrastructure.
C6	Socio-economic functions	↑↑↑	Negative net entrepreneurial revenues in a few countries. Negligible share of wood energy in a few countries. Small share of total workforce in forest sector.
Part A	Overall policies, institutions and instruments for sustainable forest management	↑↑↑	All indicators positive at country group level
Part B	Policies, institutions and instruments by policy area	↑↑↑↑	All indicators positive at country group level



Country group Z

		Assessment	Areas of concern
C1	Forest resources and global carbon stock	↑↑↑	One country with steeply falling forest cover and growing stock. Data mostly missing on age class structure.
C2	Health and vitality	↑↑	Nearly all land area at risk of eutrophication due to nitrogen deposition. Data mostly missing on soil condition. Significant fire damage
C3	Productive functions	↑↑	In one country fellings much over net annual increment. Rather low per hectare values for marketed non-wood goods and data missing on marketed forest services
C4	Biodiversity	↑↑	Several countries with a high share of single species stands. Data mostly missing for levels of deadwood and on threatened forest species. In many countries, low share of forest protected for conservation of biodiversity
C5	Protective functions	↑↑↑	All indicators positive at country group level
C6	Socio-economic functions	↑↑	Data missing for several countries on many key parameters, including forest holdings, contribution of forest sector to GDP, net revenue, government expenditure for services, forest sector workforce, occupational safety and health, number of visits and of sites with cultural and spiritual values. Low levels of wood consumption.
Part A	Overall policies, institutions and instruments for sustainable forest management	↑↑↑	Only a few countries able to provide quantitative data on economic support for the forest sector
Part B	Policies, institutions and instruments by policy area	↑↑	Several large countries did not reply to Part B or were unable to formulate objectives and link them to specific instruments



By Kit Prins



Issues for further discussion and review

- Broad concept of the assessment method
- Choice and meaning of key parameters
- How to set thresholds (official targets, frequency distribution, negotiated?)
- Qualitative indicators: how to assess effectiveness and efficiency of policy instruments?
- How to improve data (and how to treat ND)



The Working Party is invited to:

- ... comment on the approach on SFM assessment applied in SOEF 2011, and advise on the direction of future work on this concept.



By Kit Prins

