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Forest Statistics, Economics and Management  
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Item 5 (d) of the provisional agenda

**GUIDANCE OF WORK AREA 4: CAPACITY-BUILDING**

AGENDA ITEM 5 (d)

Note by the Secretariat

*Summary*

According to its mandate, the Working Party is expected to provide guidance to Work Area 4: Capacity-building. This document provides information about activities in this area since the last session, and plans for the future, drawing attention to any specific issues where guidance is needed.

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## **I. Capacity-building**

### **A. Market and statistics**

#### **Forest products markets and forest sector workforce workshop in the Balkans**

1. A workshop on “Forest Products Markets and Forest Sector Workforce in the Balkans” was held on 8-10 December 2015 in Podgorica, Montenegro. It was organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Montenegro. It brought together 20 experts from Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Finland, Ireland, Montenegro, Serbia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Ukraine to discuss, exchange experiences, map out the needs for capacity-building, and formulate recommendations for future work on forest product markets and the forest sector workforce.
2. Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Croatia and Serbia pleaded for a strengthening of the regional cooperation between neighbouring countries on roundwood trade. The forest sector has the potential to play a substantial role in the economies of the four countries if a regional forest strategy is developed and implemented. Actions are needed to attract investment, to develop brands and market placement, and to increase the proportion of finalized high quality products. Creating more added value in the forest sector is possible, without significantly increasing wood harvest, by using more efficient technologies and by more effective cascading use of wood processing co-products. The region of the Western Balkans may have a similar developmental potential to that seen in Romania or Turkey in the past 15 years. Locally-owned small and medium-sized sawmills in the Western Balkans have a huge potential in developing the sector further. The Section, with the support of the Team of Specialists (ToS) on Sustainable Forest Products, is therefore considering further capacity-building events, targeting small capacities and the framework conditions of medium-sized enterprises, with a focus on developing business cases, investment planning, marketing of products, and widening of product portfolios.
3. Furthermore, the workshop gathered information on the status, challenges and opportunities of forest sector workforce in the Western Balkans, which will be used as background information for a study on Forest Sector Workforce. In addition to the development of regional cooperation, there is a need for action to improve the conditions for the workforce in the countries. Opportunities have been identified in the form of creating new jobs in the framework of the green economy, and raising awareness among the public of the importance of the forest sector. Further details, including presentations, a news release and the meeting report, are available at [www.unece.org/index.php?id=41338](http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41338).

### **B. Wood energy**

#### **“More heat with less wood” workshop**

4. The Section held a workshop entitled “More heat with less wood” in the Palais des Nations on 6-7 October 2015. It was attended by 43 participants from Albania, Georgia, Germany, Kyrgyzstan, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Switzerland, Tajikistan and Turkey. Academia, international and national organizations, technical cooperation agencies, and biomass and energy associations, reflecting the cross-sectoral approach of the event.
5. The event aimed at facilitating the exchange of experiences throughout the region on how to improve wood energy applications under given socioeconomic conditions. The Section coordinated with other relevant units of the UNECE, such as the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP), the Sustainable Energy Division and the Housing and Land Management Unit, regarding the different aspects of more efficient use of wood energy. There was also an exhibition on health effects and resource efficiency of

firewood use at household level. The Central Agricultural Raw Materials Marketing- and Energy-Network (C.A.R.M.E.N e.V.), the German Biomass Research Center (DBFZ), the German Agency for Renewable Resources (FNR – Fachagentur Nachwachsende Rohstoffe), and the Bern University of Applied Sciences provided technical input for the event. The outcomes of the event were also used for producing a meeting report (forthcoming) and a short film, which directly targets wood energy users. The film will be released during the Working Party session.

6. The Section is planning, as part of the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry 2015, to organize a capacity-building workshop to improve cross-sectoral communication and to enhance the ability of correspondents to find and provide data. The Section will reach out to other organizations interested in improving wood energy information. The workshop is planned to take place following the launch of the questionnaire in Autumn 2016. The ToS on Wood Energy made a number of suggestions for such a workshop including:
  - Increasing networking efforts to bring in non-responding countries and other organizations;
  - Reviewing conversion factors and improving consistency;
  - Sharing information and good practices among correspondents.

**C. United Nations Development Account (UNDA) capacity-building projects in the Caucasus and Central Asia**

7. The first joint UNECE/FAO-UNDA capacity-building project on “Sustainable Forest Management for Greener Economies in the Caucasus and Central Asia” was completed by the end of 2015. The final regional workshop was held in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 21-24 April 2015, and brought together all seven project countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The project included one national workshop and four local workshops in each country. In addition, the pilot countries organized coaching workshops to support the development of a green economy action plan for the forest sector (Georgia), forest programme (Kazakhstan) and forest strategy (Tajikistan).
8. The project, using participatory methods, developed training material on sustainable forest management (SFM) and the green economy, forest policy formulation, wood energy, and data collection and management. This material, including the full project documentation and the analytical report summarizing the project results which was presented at the final regional workshop, is available in English and in Russian at: [www.unece.org/forests/areas-of-work/forestpolicies/forestscapacitybuilding](http://www.unece.org/forests/areas-of-work/forestpolicies/forestscapacitybuilding).
9. The project outcomes and conclusions, a country-level analysis, and the report from the external evaluation of the project can be found at the same site. The evaluation found that most of the activities were implemented in accordance with the project logframe and timeline. This resulted in fully meeting the objective on capacity development and partly meeting those on a coaching programme for the development of national action plans. The evaluation report reveals that awareness raising and capacity activities, combined with active multi-stakeholder cooperation, are vital for introducing green economy and SFM principles in the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA) region.
10. Funding for a new UNECE/FAO-UNDA project “Accountability systems for sustainable forest management in Caucasus and Central Asian countries” has been accepted. The full project proposal is currently under development, and is foreseen to be finalized during Spring 2016. The timeline for the new project is 2016-2019, and it is planned to start during the second half of 2016. The first regional workshop is expected to take place in November 2016 (to be confirmed).

**D. Team of Specialists on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector and activities related to the forest sector workforce**

11. The ToS on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector (ILO/UNECE/FAO Joint Expert Network) worked on increasing the visibility of green forestry jobs. The ToS held its meetings on 24-25 March 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland, and on 8-9 September 2015 in La Bastide des Jourdans, France. The meeting in March focused on planning the next steps (refining an action plan for the team), discussing the landscape of future green jobs in the forest sector, and briefing on and discussing recent important developments related to policy and research in which the team members are involved. The September meeting was dedicated to planning a side event on green jobs during Silva2015 and the European Forest Week in Engelberg, Switzerland, in November 2015. The side event gathered experience and feedback from the conference participants, including company and union representatives, on the landscape of future green jobs, a paper which the ToS is working on.
12. The Section organized a workshop “Threats to Sustainability of the Forest Sector Workforce” back-to-back with the Working Party meeting in March 2015 in Geneva. The results of this workshop were presented at a side event during the FAO World Forestry Congress, in Durban, South Africa, on 9 September 2015. The side event was organized in cooperation with PEFC International and Building and Wood Worker’s International. Experiences on social approaches and policies were exchanged with company representatives such as UPM and Mondi, and the challenges of the forest sector workforce were shared with a global audience. It was noted that mechanization reduces the number of workers needed in the forest industry globally. However, while North America and Europe are struggling with an ageing workforce, Africa’s major challenges originate from the informal nature of employment.
13. The workshop on “Forest Products Markets and Forest Sector Workforce”, mentioned under heading B, gathered information on the status, challenges and opportunities of the forest sector workforce in the Western Balkans. This will be used as background information for a study on the Forest Sector Workforce. The study is funded by Finland, and will cover the UNECE region, with a special focus on Eastern Europe and the Balkans. The study paper will be presented at the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry in October 2016 in Geneva. The ToS on Green Jobs will support the preparation of the study paper with an expert review.

**E. Key questions for guidance and discussion**

14. The Working Party is invited to:
  - a. *Comment and give proposals for future capacity-building work on wood energy. The next wood energy workshop is planned to take place during Autumn 2016;*
  - b. *Comment on and give proposals for future capacity-building work on forest products markets. The Western Balkan region has expressed interest in a new workshop during 2016 or 2017, focusing on market and product concept development for small and medium-sized companies;*
  - c. *Comment and give advice on UNECE/FAO-UNDA capacity-building projects focusing on the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the possible improvement of the impact of the project work.*