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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

TIMBER COMMITTEE

EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

**Meeting of the Bureaux
of the UNECE Timber Committee and FAO European Forestry Commission**

24 February 2010

Palais des Nations, Salle XV

Provisional Agenda item 3

Implementation of the UNEC/FAO Programme of Work on Timber and Forestry

The Bureaux are presented in the enclosed with the paper on the implementation of the Strategic Plan prepared for the EFC session, for their consideration in guiding the secretariat. More information on the implementation of the work programme will be provided orally during the meeting.

EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION
Lisbon, Portugal, 27-30 April 2010
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2013 OF THE INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF WORK ON TIMBER AND FORESTRY

1. The Strategic Plan for 2008-2013 for the Integrated Programme of Work of the UNECE Timber Committee (TC) and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC) (FO:EFC/08/7) was approved by the Commission at its thirty-fourth session on 24 October 2008. The Plan evolved from the Strategic Review and Planning Process, which took place in 2007 and 2008 with significant feedback from Governments and stakeholders. The plan is “strategic” because the degree to which it is carried out is dependent on the availability of regular budget and extrabudgetary resources.

2. The purpose of this note by the secretariat is to indicate the status of the Plan’s implementation since the Commission’s last session. The note is organized similar to the plan, i.e. by the five work areas of the UNECE/FAO Timber Section.

3. Governance of the Strategic Plan is entrusted to the Timber Committee and the European Forestry Commission as well as their Bureaux. At its annual meeting, the Bureaux oversees implementation of programme of work, provides guidance as needed, and can take decisions on operational matters between sessions of the parent bodies. All seven teams of specialists report annually to the Bureaux or the FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics on the implementation of their activities, developed on the basis of their terms of reference.

4. Between the current and past EFC sessions, the TC met and discussed the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Committee reviewed and approved the list of planned outputs for the period October 2009-December 2010 (ECE/TIM/2009/7). The Committee took note of the fact that, despite shortages of staff within the Timber Section, activities were carried out under all work areas and most programme elements. However, the Committee focussed on a two elements: country profiles and forest fire statistics. Concerning country profiles, the Committee approved the option to discontinue them. In its decision the TC considered 1. the lack of availability of resources, and 2. criticism related to their quality and consistency voiced through the Strategic Review Process. The Committee encouraged the secretariat to continue exploring alternative options, including the improvement of online data available at the FAO forest sector country profiles.

5. Regarding forest fire statistics the Committee approved the discontinuation of the separate collection and dissemination of annual forest fire statistics by the UNECE/FAO secretariat. In its decision it cited that periodic forest fire statistics are being collected and analysed for the Forest Resources Assessment and for the quantitative indicators of Sustainable Forest Management for the next *State of Europe's Forests* report.

6. The Committee reviewed and approved the lines of activities on forests and climate change under the joint UNECE/FAO Integrated Programme of Work on Timber and Forestry, based on a proposal by the secretariat, developed upon the Committee's request at its sixty-sixth session. The proposal has also been reviewed and approved by the Bureaux in April 2008. It welcomed the fact that these activities addressed crucial forest and climate change aspects for the European forest sector.

7. The programme elements of Work Area 1, Markets and Statistics, are listed in the annex, as are the elements of the other Work Areas. All programme elements were and are being implemented, with the exception of 1.5 on forest fire statistics. The latter has been stopped as authorized by the TC (see paragraph 5). Fire statistics are being collected and reported on a periodic basis through the Forest Resources Assessment, and annually by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre.

8. Elements of Work Area 2, Forest Resources Assessment (FRA), are also being carried out in a timely manner. Thanks to the close cooperation between the UNECE and FAO a new interactive database that contains all national data reported for the *State of Europe's Forests 2007* was built. The most recent work completed was the validation of the national reports from the eastern European, Caucasian and central Asian countries as an input to the global FRA which is to be published latter in 2010. Current work surrounds the production of the *State of Europe's Forests 2011* which is to be presented at the June 2011 Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe. As an improvement to the previous reporting cycle, the *State of Europe's Forests 2011* questionnaires use the maximum information reported for FRA 2010.

9. Programme elements of Work Area 3, Forest Sector Outlook, are being implemented in preparation of new subregional outlook studies for the Europe and North America. Another outlook study for Russia is in discussion. Sustainable wood energy and mobilisation of wood raw material has been an emphasis in the recent past, through studies and their publication, plus workshops. A new European Forest Sector Outlook Study will encompass several scenarios, focusing on carbon stock in forest ecosystems, wood energy, biodiversity and the competitiveness of the European forest sector.

10. Work Area 4, Social and Cultural Aspects, is mainly carried out by the Joint FAO/UNECE/ILO Expert Network on Sustainable Forest Management. Their work falls within the four programme elements. In June 2009 the element on gender in forestry was implemented by the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Gender in Forestry. The Team held its final workshop, completing its mandate.

11. Work Area 5, Policies and Institutions, has benefitted from the loan of two professionals from France who contributed to the implementation of many programme elements. Work has been carried out to improve the collection, understanding and validation of information on forest policies and institutions, jointly with FAO, culminating in an online information repository with global and regional information. As noted above, the production of country

profiles ceased, while looking for alternative means to electronically publish country-specific information and statistics.

12. In addition to the five work areas, the secretariat has as required, serviced the FAO and UNECE intergovernmental bodies, implemented an annual communications strategy and conducted the administration and management for all UNECE/FAO activities.

13. In summary, despite the shortage of two to three staff members in 2009 and 2010, the Timber Section has implemented the programme of work for its parent bodies. In 2009 the Section conducted more workshops than any previous year, and more publications and their press releases too. Recruitment is underway to fill the two vacant professional posts. A fundraising strategy aims to securing extrabudgetary resources to accomplish more of the programme elements.

14. Despite the accomplishments above, challenges remain for the Strategic Plan to achieve its full potential. A main outstanding need is in the field of capacity building to implement sustainable forest management and work with the countries in transition. Additional resources are required to further build on the pillars of expertise in the area of markets, resources, and policies.

Annex I

The main activities are laid out in below for the Strategic Plan 2008-2013 for the Integrated Programme of Work of the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission. An asterisk (*) implies that extra budgetary funding is required. Teams of Specialists which support and provide guidance to the different work areas are listed under II.D below.

Work area 1: Markets and Statistics	
	Programme elements
1.1	Collecting, validating and disseminating statistics on production, trade, consumption and prices of forest products
1.2	Analysis of markets for forest products, notably topical and policy relevant aspects, including Forest Products Annual Market Review and annual Timber Committee discussions
1.3	Implementing sustainable forest management through capacity building for forest products marketing*
1.4	Monitoring and analysis of markets and policies for certified wood products, including public procurement and green building
1.5	Collecting and disseminating forest fire statistics
Work area 2: Forest Resources Assessment	
	Programme elements
2.1	Collecting, validating and disseminating information according to criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management
2.2	Regional contribution to FAO Forest Resource Assessment 2010
2.3	Implementing sustainable forest management through support to developing national systems for forest monitoring*
2.4	Improving information on forest types
2.5	Reporting on and analysis of the state of forests in the UNECE region
2.6	Monitoring and analysing forest ownership and tenure
Work area 3: Forest Sector Outlook	
	Programme elements
3.1	Preparing European forest sector outlook studies
3.2	Contribution to FAO State of the World's Forests reports
3.3	Analysing climate change issues relevant to the forest sector
3.4	Analysing energy-related issues, including demand and supply for wood energy
3.5	Collecting, validating, and disseminating information and analysis of wood availability and potential wood supply
Work area 4: Social and Cultural Aspects	
	Programme elements

4.1	Implementing sustainable forest management through promoting occupational safety and health
4.2	Implementing sustainable forest management through promoting best practice in forestry education and training
4.3	Monitoring trends as regards gender and forestry
4.4	Implementing sustainable forest management through promoting best practice for forest contractors
Work area 5: Policy and Cross-sectoral Issues	
Programme elements	
5.1	Contribution to the global dialogue on forests
5.2	Monitoring recent developments in forest sector policies, legislation and institutions, including national forest programmes
5.3	Analysing developments in forest sector policies, legislation and institutions, including interactions with other sectors
5.4	Implementing sustainable forest management through capacity building for forest policies and institutions*
5.5	Organizing policy forums on major topical issues
5.6	Exchanging information on improving management of wildland fires
5.7	Improving sectoral and cross-sectoral exchange and communication
5.8	Producing forest and forest products country profiles*

UNECE/FAO Teams of Specialists

The following Teams of Specialists (ToS) are active during the period 2008-2010, renewable until 2013:

		Work area(s)	Programme element
1.	ToS on Forest Products Markets and Marketing	1	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
2.	ToS on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management	2, 5	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 5.2, 5.3
3.	ToS on Forest Policy in Eastern Europe and Central Asia	5	5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.7, 5.8
4.	ToS on Forest Fire	5	5.6
5.	Forest Communicators Network	5	5.7 (programme as a whole)
6.	Joint UNECE/FAO/ILO Expert Network to Implement Sustainable Forest Management	4	4.1, 4.2, 4.4
7.	ToS on Forest Sector Outlook	3	3.1, 3.4, 3.5

A. Intergovernmental processes, communication and administration

In addition to the activities listed above, the secretariat must provide the services below which are necessary for programme implementation but not linked to any specific work area or programme element.

Servicing UNECE and FAO intergovernmental bodies	Preparing and servicing sessions of UNECE Timber Committee, FAO European Forestry Commission, FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics and the Bureaux of the UNECE Timber Committee and FAO European Forestry Commission
Communication	Preparing and issuing publications, newsletters, press releases, as well as maintaining the website
Administration, management, contribution to UNECE and FAO general activities	Strategic thinking at programme levels for UNECE and FAO, programme budgeting and performance reporting to UN and FAO Headquarters, programme evaluations, staff development and fund raising as well as standard administration and management