

UNECE/FAO Timber Section

United Nations
Economic Commission for Europe



Food and Agriculture
Organization

In this issue...

- FAO's European Forestry Commission, 33rd Session, Zvolen, Slovakia
- Europe's expanding forest - a growing asset
- Balkan Training Workshop: "Forest Products Marketing - from Principles to Practice"
- Key findings from FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005
- 28th session of the Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, May 2006
- Officers of TC, EFC and Working Party of Forest Economics & Statistics
- Upcoming events

Comments and suggestions from the timber and forestry community are most welcome, please write to us at:
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United Nations

FAO's European Forestry Commission, 33rd Session, Zvolen, Slovakia, 23-26 May 2006

SPECIAL SESSION:

IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN EUROPE

- ◆ **15 years of economies in transition: lessons learned and challenges ahead for the forestry sector (policy forum)**
- ◆ **Progress towards sustainable forest management in Europe: trends, strategies and better coordination of reporting**
- ◆ **Forest law compliance: from commitments to practice**
- ◆ **Forest-related voluntary codes of practice**

Other items

- Vulnerability of forests: are we prepared to handle natural catastrophes?
- Cross-sectoral approaches: wood energy; implications of the Kyoto Protocol; cooperation on forest fires especially in the Balkan and the Mediterranean areas
- Regional cooperation, especially among Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), UNECE Committee on Timber and the FAO European Forestry Commission; international initiatives
- Regional issues for the attention of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO)

Other events

- Optional study visit to Tatras Mountains: consequences of storm, options for regeneration (Monday, 22 May)

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Europe's expanding forest - a growing asset

FAO, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, has presented the first results of the latest Global Forest Resource Assessment (FRA), a cooperative effort by hundreds of the world's specialists to provide decision makers, scientists and public opinion with comparable information on all aspects of forests (see page 3 for some key findings of the report). This work also helps to monitor one of the Millennium Development Goals, reversing deforestation. UNECE has played a leading role in the work for Europe, which in the global FRA 2005 definition covers 47 countries and territories, including Russia.

Main results for Europe are:

- The area of Europe's forest continues to expand, by about 660,000 ha/year in 2000-2005, as does growing stock, which increases by nearly 340 million m³/year.
- Total forest area is just over 1 billion hectares, which is 24% of global forest area, and 44% of total land area in Europe.
- Forest cover ranges from 1.1% in Malta to 74% in Finland.
- Russia accounts for about 80% of Europe's forests, and 20% of the world total.
- The largest forest areas (outside Russia) are in Sweden, Finland, Spain, and France.
- Primary forests, mostly in Russia, account for about 25% of the region's forests, plantations for less than 3%.
- Europe's forests serve many purposes: wood production is still an important factor but, more and more, people are appreciating the other values of the forest, such as recreation, tourism, education or conservation of cultural and spiritual sites. The area designated for protection of soil and water and for conservation of biodiversity is increasing, while that designated for wood production is decreasing.
- There is a high proportion of private ownership in many countries of Europe e.g. about 80 % in Austria and Sweden, 72 % in Denmark and Slovenia, 68 % in Finland, and more than 90 % in Portugal.
- Employment in forest management and conservation in Europe is decreasing, and now stands at 761,000 people, compared to just under a million in 1990.

Country details as well as the global picture are available from Kit Prins/Alex Korotkov, and the Global FRA team:

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Balkan Training Workshop: "Forest Products Marketing - from Principles to Practice", Serbia & Montenegro, 3-6 April 2006

A partnership, consisting of UNECE/FAO Timber Section; FAO; the FOPER Project (www.foper.fi); the University of Belgrade, Serbia and Louisiana State University (USA), with generous support from the Swiss government and the Norwegian Forestry Group, is organizing an important workshop designed to benefit countries in the Balkans. The four-day programme, based in the city of Novi Sad, will introduce participants, drawn from among private forest owners, state forestry staff, the wood processing sector and higher education, to the principles of effective marketing of forest products. Featuring prominent speakers from around the world, it will showcase examples of good practice to help reinforce the principles and to demonstrate how both the overall market and market share may be grown.

The workshop arises from recommendations produced by the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Products Markets and Marketing. These highlight the importance of building capacity in forest products marketing, especially for countries in eastern and south eastern Europe and central Asia. While countries throughout these regions have made great strides in adapting to the demands of market-based economies, ongoing support will equip them better to respond to the challenges that lie ahead. A workshop in the Czech Republic in October 2005 (see newsletter, October-Dec 2005) focused on the countries of the Caucasus and central Asia. (*continued on page 3*)

Did you know...



One hectare (2.47 acres) of trees removes roughly 2,500 kg of carbon dioxide each year.

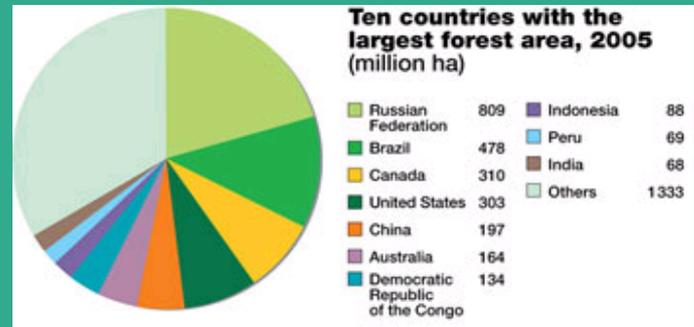
A car driving 10,000km per year will produce about 1,500 kg of carbon dioxide. One return flight from Switzerland to the United Kingdom will produce about 330kg of carbon dioxide per passenger. An aircraft with a capacity to carry 100 passengers, therefore, will produce 33,000kg of carbon dioxide during the return journey (based on figures from Defra UK, 2001).

See www.carbonneutral.com for more information.

KEY FINDINGS FROM FAO'S GLOBAL FOREST RESOURCES ASSESSMENT 2005

Forests cover 30% of the total land area

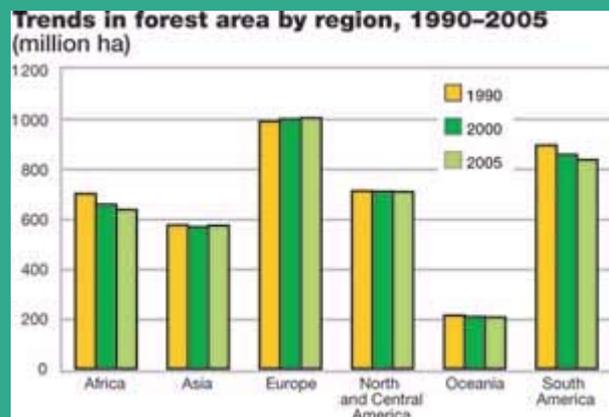
The total forest area in 2005 is just under 4 billion hectares, corresponding to an average of 0.62 ha per capita. But the area of forest is unevenly distributed. For example, 64 countries with a combined population of 2 billion have less than 0.1 ha of forest per capita. The ten most forest-rich countries account for two-thirds of the total forest area. Seven countries or territories have no forest at all, and an additional 57 have forest on less than 10 percent of their total land area.



Total forest area continues to decrease - but the rate of net loss is slowing

Deforestation, mainly conversion of forests to agricultural land, continues at an alarmingly high rate - about 13 million hectares per year. At the same time, forest planting, landscape restoration and natural expansion of forests have significantly reduced the net loss of forest area. The net change in forest area in the period 2000-2005 is estimated at -7.3 million hectares per year (an area about the size of Sierra Leone or Panama), down from -8.9 million hectares per year in the period 1990-2000.

Africa and South America continued to have the largest net loss of forests. Oceania and North and Central America also had a net loss of forests. The forest area in Europe continued to expand, although at a slower rate. Asia, which had a net loss in the 1990s, reported a net gain of forests in the period 2000-2005, primarily due to large-scale afforestation reported by China.



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(Training workshop, Serbia... continued from page 2)

Now, following an initiative from the Faculty of Forestry at the State University of Belgrade to host a workshop in Serbia, catering for the Balkans and south-east Europe, UNECE/FAO Timber Section has succeeded in finding partners to help with both organization and funding. Key to this venture has been support from the FOPER project. FOPER, based at EFI in Finland and funded by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, undertook a major study to identify training needs of the forest sector in the Balkan region: this study helped to inform the content of the workshop. It was the commitment of FOPER to provide matched funding, however, that was the factor leading to the decision to push ahead with the workshop.

Invitations to the workshop will be issued shortly. A detailed programme along with a list of participants and speakers will appear on the website within the next few weeks. In the meantime, for more information, please contact Douglas Clark, Forest Products Marketing Consultant, Timber Section, Douglas.Clark@unece.org and telephone +41 22 917 2870.

28th Session of the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics

The 28th meeting will take place in Geneva from 2-4 May 2006. Delegates will be informed of and requested to provide guidance on the work areas of markets, forest resources and outlook studies. There will be three special topics with information and suggestions being exchanged on:

- wood energy - monitoring and analysis of developments
- certified forest products - discussion of what information is needed and how to gather it
- illegal logging and related trade - how to measure it and review of available estimates

The complete agenda and meeting documents are available at <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/docs/stats-sessions/stats-28/stats-28.htm>

Officers of the UNECE Committee on Timber, FAO European Forestry Commission and the Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics

UNECE Committee on Timber

Mr. Heikki Pajuojja, (Finland)
Chairman



Vice-Chairmen:

G. Florian Borlea (Romania)



Johann Dengg (Germany)



FAO European Forestry Commission

Chairman: Mr. Jan Ilavsky, (Slovakia)



Vice-Chairmen:

Mr. Arvids Ozols, (Latvia)



Ms. Conceição Ferreira (Portugal)



and Mr. Alain Chaudron (France)



Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics

Chairman: Mr. M. Aarne (Finland)



Vice-Chairmen: Mr. M. Gecovic (Slovakia)



Ms. S. Phelps (Canada)

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Kit Prins contributed an overview of the main results of the European Forest Sector Outlook Study, Main Report (EFSOS) to "Agreste", a forthcoming French official publication, showing graphically the status and trends of the forest sector.

Current and upcoming events

- 3-6 April 2006 Workshop on Forest Products Marketing - from Principles to Practice, Serbia and Montenegro
- 5-6 April 2006, UNECE/FAO/EUROSTAT/ITTO Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics, Geneva, Switzerland
- 2-4 May 2006, Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, 28th Session, Geneva, Switzerland
- 23-26 May 2006, FAO European Forestry Commission, 33rd session, Zvolen, Slovakia
- 29-30 May, Meeting of the Team of Specialists on Monitoring Forest Resources for Sustainable Forest Management, Hamburg, Germany