

UNECE/FAO Timber Section

United Nations
Economic Commission for Europe



Food and Agriculture
Organization

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

Workshop on Mobilizing Wood Resources - Can Europe's Forests Satisfy the Increasing Demand for Raw Material and Energy under Sustainable Forest Management? Palais des Nations, Geneva, 11 -12 January 2007

Forests have always played a major role in the supply of wood as a raw material for the traditional forest products industry and for energy. In the framework of climate change discussions and energy security, wood has gained greater attention as a carbon neutral energy to replace non-renewable energy sources. This trend, combined with rising energy prices, has led to increasing demand for wood. The traditional use of wood in Europe (sawmills, paper, panels) continues to expand as well. Thus, competition for wood for bio-energy versus wood for traditional industry is posing an increasing challenge in many European countries.

On the other hand, forest inventories have shown that in most European forests, annual growth exceeds the volume of wood harvested. This has raised questions about the impacts of increased wood mobilization, such as: How to handle emerging conflicts? How to elaborate 'win-win' solutions for all stakeholders without threatening sustainable forest management?

The UNECE/FAO Timber Section, FAO/Rome, CEPI, EFI, MCPFE and the joint FAO/ECE/ILO Experts' Network, with support from the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, are organizing a workshop on resource mobilization and comprehensive wood utilization strategies in support of sustainable forest management.

The workshop will be a two-day event. The first day will devoted to keynote speeches, presentations of results of studies/researches undertaken and stakeholders' statements; on the second day, working groups will focus on achieving consensus and/or delineating areas where there is no consensus.

The workshop aims to provide: (a) strategies for mobilizing wood resources given a constantly increasing demand; (b) better understanding of the impacts of increased wood mobilization on different sectors; (c) recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders; and (d) input to the MCPFE Ministerial Conference in Warsaw in November 2007.

Target participants include Governments and EU institutions, forest services and agencies, international organizations, forest owners, contractors, forest-based industries, pulp and paper industries and related associations, energy industry and related associations, environmental and other NGOs, research organizations and universities.

For further information, visit our website at: www.unece.org/trade/timber. Enquiries can also be sent to: sebastian.hetsch@unece.org.

Did you know...

the World has a new tallest tree

Researchers have recently found the tallest tree in the world in Redwood National Park in Northern California, which has reached 113 meters... The tree was named "Hyperion". It is 2.72 meters higher than the previous record attributed to the "Stratosphere Giant" tree, which is located only some 195 km from the new giant... Just to compare: a 20-storey building might have a height of about 70 meters... Both trees belong to the Sequoia family (*Sequoia Sempervirens*) known as the "coast redwood" also.

UNECE/FAO Timber Section - Getting by with a lot of help from friends

The UNECE/FAO Timber Section wishes to thank its friends for the invaluable assistance received in terms of additional human resources made available to the team. This help comes in two forms: interns and the loan of professionals.

Interns

A long-time source of assistance is the Finnish government, which for several years has provided two interns (from the University of Helsinki) each summer to assist in the preparation of the UNECE/FAO publication **Forest Products Annual Market Review**. This year we had Pauliina Leikoski and Matti Toivio; in 2005, Mikko Kiiskinen and Outi Marin joined our team.

In recent years, the Carlo Schmid Programme of the German Academic Exchange Service has also provided the section an intern to work for 6 months (September to February). This year we have Sebastian Hetsch, who assisted during the Timber Committee and is responsible for the planning and preparation of the Wood Resources Mobilization Workshop. The Carlo Schmid Programme provided us Florian Steierer in 2005 and Caroline Stein in 2004. Florian did extensive work on wood energy for the section. Caroline assisted in the preparation for the Workshop on Illegal Logging held in 2004 and worked on a number of background documents for Section's meetings. We were also grateful for the assistance provided by Fabian Schulmeyer, from the Albert Ludwigs University, Freiburg, Germany, who worked with us from September to November 2006. Fabian assisted during the Timber Committee and did statistics work on the forest outlook study and forest fires questionnaires.

In 2005, we also had Matthias Wilnhammer from Germany, who assisted in the private forest ownership enquiry.

Loan of professionals

The UK Forestry Commission has provided the services of Douglas Clark since July 2004. Douglas is playing a major role in developing our work for countries in transition, particularly in the area of capacity-building on forest products marketing.

The Government of Norway has provided us the expertise of Stein Tomter (June-Dec 2006). Stein works on the checking, validation and analysis of the country data on Criteria and Indicators for SFM (C&I) for the next MCPFE Report on "State of Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe 2007". We expect further contribution from Stein at the stage of the MCPFE-2007 C&I Database Building, and in the production of the Main Report.

We are also grateful to the Czech Republic for providing us Richard Slaby, from October 2006 until 2007, whose knowledge of the forestry and forest resources of the central and eastern European countries is an important asset in the current MCPFE reporting round. Richard works on the countries' replies to the UNECE / FAO / MCPFE Enquiry, preparing their data/information for loading into the database.

To all our interns and experts seconded to our team, and the generous donors - we owe you so much. Our work would not have been possible without the assistance you have provided. We sincerely hope that we will continue to receive similar assistance in the forthcoming years.

Capacity-Building in Forest Products Marketing in South-East Europe

Dubrovnik, Croatia, will be the setting for an international seminar, "Marketing in Forestry and Wood Processing", to be held on 7 and 8 December 2006. Organized by a partnership of the UNECE/FAO Timber Section, the Faculty of Forestry of the University of Zagreb and the Centre for Marketing and Development in the Wood Industry, Rijeka, the meeting is targeted at professionals who want to improve their understanding of forest products marketing and how it might help their business. The seminar picks up a recommendation from the successful workshop held in Novi Sad in April 2006 for a follow-up event targeted at the forestry and wood-processing sectors.

With an impressive list of expert speakers from the western Balkans region and beyond, including Austria, Italy, Finland, Sweden and the USA, this event should meet a clearly expressed need from industry professionals eager to expand and improve their marketing knowledge and skills.

The seminar, which will be conducted in English and Croatian, has been made possible by generous support from

the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management; the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports; the Croatian Chamber of Economy; and the Government of Austria.

For more information, please contact Douglas Clark. A report of the seminar will appear in a later issue of the UNECE/FAO Timber Section newsletter.

Statistics update

Trade flow data are available for 2003/2004 at http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/mis/fp-stats.htm#Trade_Flow. This publication includes data on the 15 largest exporters and 25 largest importers of over 20 timber products.

Forecasts of production and trade in 2006 and 2007 provided by UNECE countries for over 30 timber products are available at <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/mis/forecasts.htm>

Please note that the FAO website has been reorganized. Global forest products data (including 2005 figures) can be accessed at <http://faostat.fao.org/site/381/default.aspx>

Comments on our website are welcome. Please contact either stats.timber@unece.org or faostat@fao.org

UNECE/FAO publication, International Forest Sector Institutions and Policy Instruments for Europe: A source book

This UNECE/FAO publication gives a comprehensive overview of international institutions and policy instruments with relevance to the European forest sector. Some 43 major international, intergovernmental, private and non-governmental organizations, as well as research institutes, are included.

The publication seeks to contribute to the collection of available and useful references on forest and forest-related information. It is useful not only for the forest sector community, but also for stakeholders of other policy areas. The document emphasizes multiple linkages between forestry and other sectors, focusing on the economic, social and environmental benefits of forest land use.

Following a brief description of each institution, relevant information is provided on its policies, policy instruments, programmes and publications that could have an impact on the future development of the forest and forest industry sector. The geographic focus of this publication is on Europe, while global organizations with relevance to the European forest sector are also partly taken into account. The publication summarizes information available on the World Wide Web and in policy and scientific literature.

The publication describes the present state of international institutions and instruments in the form of an inventory with information available as of January 2006. The use of the outcomes for an analysis over time is therefore limited. For up-to-date and authoritative information, users should check the original sources. The UNECE/FAO Timber Section aims to update this publication regularly, in order to provide a basis for a more detailed analysis of developments of forest policy institutions and instruments.

Requests for copies of this publication can be sent to: info.timber@unece.org.

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UNECE/FAO (Geneva) Contribution to the data collection, analysis and processing for the MCPFE 2007 report on sustainable forest management

The pan-European regional forest policy process (MCPFE) has identified the UNECE/FAO as the key data provider for the majority of the indicators for Sustainable Forest Management. The MCPFE Report on the "State of Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe 2007" will be made available at the MCPFE Conference in Warsaw in November 2007. The report will be based on the information provided by countries to the enquiry on quantitative indicators. The enquiry was elaborated by the UNECE/FAO secretariat in Geneva in close cooperation with the MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw, through a thorough consultative process.

Launched: Wood Energy online

With the growing interest on wood energy, demand for better data and information is steadily increasing. The UNECE/FAO Timber Section has aimed to contribute to provide information on this subject and has recently developed a new section on wood energy on its website. Information is structured as follows:

- UNECE/FAO activities - current work
- UNECE/FAO outputs - current and past documents dating back to 1987
- A guide to wood energy
- Bibliography and useful links

The website also provides a link to the FAO Wood Energy webpage. The UNECE/FAO Timber Section will be pleased to welcome you to the new website. Your inputs/contributions for the improvement of the site will also be appreciated. Please visit our website at: <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/woodenergy.htm>



***In this most joyous season
of the year,
we offer our sincerest wishes
for a happy, healthy and peaceful
New Year.
- UNECE/FAO Timber Section***

The collection, processing and validation of data and information received from countries is a main focus of the UNECE/FAO secretariat. In particular, we coordinate and support European countries in providing their reports. The work is undertaken with valuable assistance from Norway and the Czech Republic. Significant and indispensable support is provided by the FAO global FRA team, especially with regard to the design and setting up of the electronic criteria and indicators (C&I) database, and the production of desktop studies for countries with insufficient capacity to provide data.

All the country reports are expected to be finalized by mid-December, and the MCPFE-2007 C&I data/information will be uploaded in the electronic database in January 2007. Some 44 statistical tables will be derived from the database, and used for analysis of the country data for further producing and writing the MCPFE-2007 Report. For more information, please contact info.timber@unece.org.

UNECE/FAO Policy Forum - Public Procurement Policies for Wood and Paper Products, 5 October 2006, Geneva

UNECE, together with FAO, held a policy forum on "Public procurement policies for wood and paper products and their impacts on sustainable forest management and timber markets" on 5 October 2006. Different stakeholders, including exporters, traders, industry and NGOs, presented their viewpoints and discussed the experience of countries with public procurement schemes in place.

Among the forum's conclusions were:

- There are many difficulties with implementation, including the complexity of assessing certification schemes.
- Market players expressed concerns about certain aspects of public procurement policies, including the procedures required, the diversity of approaches between countries, and the risk of creating unnecessary trade barriers.
- Public procurement policies cannot solve all problems immediately: expectations should not be too high.
- Public procurement can be a role model for private sector. "Legality" is increasingly accepted as a minimum standard.
- Unsustainably or illegally produced wood is reaching markets in the form of value-added products, thus circumventing public procurement policies which only cover primary products. Notwithstanding the technical difficulties, public procurement policies should also consider addressing value-added products. Some countries are already doing this.
- At present, only wood products are subjected to public procurement policy requirements on sustainability.
- The positive effects of public procurement policies on sustainable forest management are difficult to prove.
- Public procurement policies can discriminate against small-scale or community-run forest enterprises, as well as less developed countries.
- There is a lack of information and statistics, as well as a need for transparency and inclusiveness.
- Because of the complexity of the issues and the dynamic development, it is important for countries and stakeholders to exchange information, cooperate and coordinate actions.

The report of the policy forum will be made available in a UNECE/FAO Geneva Timber and Forest Discussion Paper. The presentations are available at <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/docs/tc-sessions/tc-64/2006PolicyForum.htm>

Forest Policies and Institutions – UNECE, FAO and MCPFE working together

As mandated by the UNECE reform and reaffirmed by the Timber Committee in October 2006, the UNECE/FAO Timber Section has initiated work on strengthening the monitoring of forest policy issues and institutions.

Significant changes in the policy and institutional framework have been undertaken, particularly in transition economies. New legislation was introduced and existing laws were revised in an attempt to strengthen institutions, to establish new laws to combat illegal logging, and to support the attainment of sustainable forest management.

A first step towards providing assistance to UNECE member States, with regard to strengthening their institutional framework, is to gather relevant information and thus receive better insight into the realities at the country level. Developments in forest policies and institutions should be monitored and correctly reported. Only then can needs be understood and best practices identified. The recognition and subsequent analysis of prevalent trends in policies is a prerequisite for providing relevant policy advice.

Recognizing this need, various organizations have been actively developing their work on the monitoring of and reporting on policies and institutions. The UNECE/FAO Timber Section, FAO/Rome, FAO/Budapest, and MCPFE held a meeting on 9 November to exchange information and coordinate relevant activities, with the aim of providing the best possible service to member States. It was agreed to continue and formalize the cooperation initiated by establishing a Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Monitoring Forest Policies and Institutions. This joint effort aims to develop a common repository of information on forest policies and institutions, in the context of the FAO country profiles, linking regional information sites.

FAO/Budapest has researched on available information sources and complemented those with a questionnaire targeted at the Central and Eastern European countries. MCPFE and UNECE are working jointly to gather information on improved indicators of sustainable forest management. FAO is collecting information through its National Forest Programme Facility and is developing its work to reflect information on the policy, legal and institutional framework in the FRA 2010. These initiatives reflect an interest in continuing to exchange information and in working together to provide the best possible information repository for up-to-date, relevant information on forest policies and institutions. For further information, please contact Franziska Hirsch at franziska.hirsch@unece.org.

Upcoming events

- Workshop on Mobilizing Wood Resources, Geneva, 10-11 January 2007
 - 4th Ministerial Meeting on Forests, Rome, 12 March 2007
 - FAO Committee on Forests (COFO), 18th Session, Rome, 13-16 March 2007
 - Meeting of the Joint FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, Geneva, 20-22 March 2007
 - International Workshop on National Forest Programmes - A tool for strengthening science-policy interface in practice, Zagreb, Croatia
- Comprehensive lists of forestry and forest-related meetings are available at: <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/> and <http://www.fao.org/forestry>