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Integrated programme of work on forests and timber of the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission

Strategic review of the programme

1. What should be the strategic objective of the integrated programme of the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission, taking account of the needs of the region, inputs from other actors in the area, and the comparative advantages of the two partners?

Germany presumes that both formal mandates and mission as described in Annex 1 of the secretariats letter will remain as they stand.

However more emphasis should lie on economic issues where FAO/ECE secretariat – especially with its Timber Committee – has its comparative advantages.

The knowledge on and the awareness of the roles that forest and forest industry sectors play in overall sustainable development should be raised.

2. What major work areas should be covered by the integrated programme of work?

Working area 1: Markets and Statistics

General remark: In the light of the recent developments inter alia the political resolutions of the MCPFE in Vienna 2003 the aspect of economic issues both in forestry and in forest industries should be emphasised.

Details concerning the respective program elements (amendments are underlined):

- 1.2 Analysis of markets for forests products and forest services; plantation as possible supplementary raw material sources for products and energy purposes and its impact on the markets
- 1.4 Monitoring of markets for certified products, analysis of procurement policies, analysis of trade related private sector activities
- 1.6 Information network, activities of team of specialists, description of the use of wood for energy purposes and activities (e.g. subsidies) to support energy generation of wood.

Working area 2: Forest Resources Assessment

This area should take into account recent decisions to focus on global FRA. The TBFRA expert group, explicitly should be maintained.

Working area 3: European Forest Sector Outlook Studies

With the experience of rapid political and economic changes in the recent past the forecast periods should be shortened (preferably short- and medium term outlook studies).

The system should become more dynamic and flexible and thus allowing easily modification of the results in case of necessary changes of basic assumptions.

Working area 4: Technology, Management and Training

Given the increasing importance of privatisation and increased entrepreneurship in forestry a new programme element "forest extension" is proposed. In balance, the existing programme element 4.1 and 4.2 on forest technology and forest management could be merged.

Working area 5: Policy and cross-sectoral issues

The economic importance of the entire cluster forest and forest industries should be highlighted.

3. What should be its main activities and outputs, taking account of the strategic objective and availability of resources?

Continue as before and as described in the formal mandate but more emphasis on the kind of outputs (dissemination and PR on results).

4. What methods of work should it employ

No change.

5. What resources should it aim to mobilise, and how?

Continue as before.

6. Is its formal structure (mandates, permanent bodies etc.) adapted to the needs?

The agendas of the two parent bodies should be clearly split according to their mandate to avoid a great deal of duplication. Timber Committee should focus on markets and economic issues.

7. How should its success be measured and monitoring and self-evaluation be implemented?

There are different ways conceivable: number of webclicks, questionnaires, preparedness of users to pay for publication....