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Dear Mr. Prins,

First of all warm wishes from China for the started New 2004 Year!

Enclosed please find INBAR's response to your invitation to participate in the Strategic Review of the Programme, which we readily accept.

We will be looking forward to continue our cooperation with the ECE/FAO Secretariat and will be grateful for keeping us informed.

Warm regards,

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

Invitation to member countries and stakeholders to participate in the  
Strategic Review of the programme

**Name:** Maxim Lobovikov, Program Manager, Director of ICB, Common Fund for Commodities

**Organisation:** International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR)

**Country:** China

**General comments**

Since 2002 INBAR cooperated with the ECE/FAO Joint Secretariat on issues of forest statistics and was quite impressed and satisfied with its level of professionalism, volume and quality of work done by the Secretariat. INBAR also noted that in the recent years ECE/FAO Secretariat provided remarkable output with disproportionably small resources. INBAR positively evaluates results of the work and is willing to continue to participate in and contribute to the ECE/FAO work and events in the coming years.

No format for reviewing comments and suggestions is imposed, but it would help analysis of the responses if they would follow the sequence suggested below.

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?

Strategic objectives should concentrate on the areas of member countries preferences and comparative advantages of the ECE/FAO Joint Team, where it could provide unique quality services leaving other areas to partners and subcontractors. Areas of comparative advantages include wide recognition of the Team, its interdisciplinary character, impartiality, holistic approach and flexible working methods.

Unfortunately ECE/FAO agenda does not mention two major processes started in the forestry since mid 1990s: globalization and ecosystem management paradigm shift. This problem should be fixed and the issues should be properly addressed. The processes are to be measured, monitored and consequences should be carefully studied. It is recommended to work on the issues together with the IUFRO WFSE (World Forest, Society and Environment) team and the other interested organizations.

Strategic objectives should also include better reflection and recognition of the increasing role of NTFP in ecosystem management practices.

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

Joint Questionnaire should be amended to include certain NTFP

FRA should remain as a priority area in the view of FRA2005

Total work area seems to be too large for the ECE/FAO small Joint Secretariat. A solution would likely include staff increasing, concentrating limited resources on key issues, outsourcing and combination of the above methods.

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

With the currently limited resources problems of overstretching are likely to aggravate. Preference should be given to increase resources and budget to accommodate new topics instead of reducing resources and dropping current topics, in which Secretariat has gained unique experience.

4. What **methods of work** should it employ?

In particular joint projects and activities with the other international organizations and partners including EFI, INBAR, IUFRO, ITTO, etc.

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

Extra budgetary resources are likely needed to incorporate new pending issues and gain maximum quality of work.

Outsourcing of staff from the other international organizations with common interests. For instance INBAR and FAO were working with the World Customs Organization (WCO) and have introduced a significant number of new custom codes to the Harmonized System. The new codes would greatly improve data collection of certain forest commodities. INBAR is ready to share the successful experience with the Secretariat.

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

In general current structure is satisfactory.

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

Outputs should be quantified wherever it is possible

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