

Replies to the questions to Integrated programme of work on forests and timber

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 region, inputs from other actors in the area, and the comparative advantages of the two partners?

Strategic objective of the integrated programme expresses sufficiently and correctly all the intentions consequential from the mandate of both UNECE and FAO. It could be considered to extend present definition about these issues:

- Reinforce position of forestry and forest products sector in relation to related sectors and their policies on EU and national level.
- Contribute to improvement political, legal and economic framework of forestry sector with the target to strengthen its sustainable development.
- Provide INTERFACE for the most important political processes (e.g. MCPFE, Montreal Process, UN IPFF, FCC, CBD), sub-regions of the ECE (EU-non-EU-CEE, North America, other CEE states), intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and programmes. It would mean to (i) utilise better traditional mandates, competence and skills, (ii) bridge currently fragmented and not quite transparent situation, overlaps and inconsistencies among political processes, intergovernmental and non-governmental programmes, (iii) to be involved in preparation of concerted activities and their coordination in cost-efficient ways, eliminating duplicities and existing/potential incompatibility.

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

Present working areas, their objectives and programme elements cover all significant tools of sustainable development such as: forestry policy, legislation, management of forest resources, their assessment, outlook studies, market and statistics. In the scope of listed working areas should be observed for example also these issues:

- Certification of forests and forest products
- Assessment of public beneficial forest functions and trade with them; relations between productive and public beneficial functions, mainly biodiversity conservation,
- Biomass as an alternative energy
- Public relations

The traditional work areas could be complemented also by (i) an Integrated Information Platform and (ii) Interface for the most important forest-, timber- and trade- related intergovernmental political processes, sub-regions, the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and programmes.

3) What should be the main activities and outputs, taking account of the strategic objectives and availability of resources?

The main activities and outputs can remain as they are now however with proposed extension by those items which are listed under previous item (2), especially information and consultation platform for the related inter-governmental political processes, sub-regions intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and programmes in the CEE region.

4) What methods of work should be employed?

- New key-players could be considered for closer cooperation (UNFF as another UN structure dealing with forestry matters, EFI in its new position as an international

organization, MCPFE 5th conference being prepared for the first time in country in transition); sometimes it is not easy for countries to participate in overlapping activities.

- Closer cooperation between international organizations should follow the system of work of Inter-secretariat Working Group on Forest sector Statistics as an excellent example of productive cooperation between different international agencies.
- More activity in the promotion of its subsidiary bodies at the government and intergovernmental level, political processes and programmes.
- Assistance to national representatives to improve recognition and support to the national representatives in individual subsidiary bodies. It could be useful to communicate all matters related with the UN-ECE TC and FAO EFC also with officially appointed contact persons at the level of the ministries, forest divisions or central forest authorities.
- Improvement of the role of UNECE TC and FAO EFC as an interface, information and consultation platform between intergovernmental political processes, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and programmes.
- Maybe it would be useful to consider about forming of ToS for 4th and 5th work areas.

5) What resources should it aim to mobilize and how?

- New economic situation in Europe (EU enlargement) could be taken into account with possibility to mobilize missing resources.
- UN/ECE TC and FAO EFC could take up coordination of activities providing interface, information and consultation platform between inter-governmental political processes, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and programmes in the CEE region. This would allow to mobilize combined resources by the governments, organisations, agencies and programmes for concerted activities launched to achieve the goals of related UN and inter-governmental political processes.

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