www.unece.org/forestinfobillboard2.html

Forest Information Billboard

Issue 2, June 2013

Forest Reporting

Joint Wood Energy Enquiry Results Published

Overall wood energy accounts for 3.3% of the total primary energy supply and 38.4% of the renewable energy supply in 28 UNECE member countries in 2011, confirming its role as the leading source of renewable energy. And around 40% of all mobilized woody biomass supply is used for energy purposes.

Looking at the data 2007-2011 it was possible to identify trends in the use of wood energy and to provide a comparison by selecting a subset of 13 countries that have responded to consecutive rounds of the enquiry (13 countries: Austria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom). Between 2007 and 2011, the volume of wood used for energy purposes within this group of countries grew from 207 to 242 million m^3, an annual growth of 4%. The role of wood in total primary energy supply increased slightly from 4.3% to 5.4% while the share of wood energy among renewable energy sources increased from 49.8% to 51.4%.

The main sources of wood energy were as follows:

Co-products and residues from forest-based industries, including processed wood fuels with improved energy content such as wood pellets, briquettes and charcoal (also called indirect sources) contributed 58.3%.
Woody biomass from forests and other wooded land (also known as direct sources) such as logging residues, thinnings and clearings, which represented 32.6% of consumption.
Recovered waste wood (mainly waste from construction, but also packaging and old furniture), which accounted for 3.7% of the supply.

Some 46.8% of the wood energy supply is consumed by the industrial sector. The forest products industry typically consumes energy generated from the solid and liquid co-products of its manufacturing processes. Countries with major forest industries, such as Finland, Sweden and the United States, have therefore a higher level of industrial consumption.

Residential use, mainly dependent on direct supplies of firewood, accounted for 32.6% of the wood energy supply. Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Ukraine report this category as their primary use.

But consumption of wood energy use by private households is often higher than official records indicate. The power and heat sector represents 18.3% of wood energy use. This sector is the largest consumer of wood energy in Denmark, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

For more information visit:
http://www.unece.org/forests/jwee.html

or contact: woodenergy.timber@unece.org

Reporting on Global and Pan-European Forest Resources

Global reporting

The global data collection process for the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire (CFRQ) and Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) was taken forward at the Global Meeting in Preparation for FRA/CFRQ 2015 held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, on 6-10 May 2013. This workshop, which gathered some 150 national and international experts on forest reporting, was vital for developing a shared understanding of the requirements for FRA 2015 and the CFRQ. The conference covered the whole scope of the process, which includes national reporting, remote sensing assessment and the Forest Futures study.

CFRQ/FRA national reporting is underway; the first deadline for submission of national reports is 15 July 2013. For the first time, the collection and review process will be carried out interactively, through the Forest Resources Information Management System (FRIMS). In this activity, countries of Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia are assisted by the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section and a team of 7 regional experts. A regional workshop for FRA national correspondents, which will be held in Geneva, Switzerland on 16-17 October 2013, will also facilitate this process.

Pan-European reporting

Technical preparations for the pan-European reporting are continuing through the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management. The draft pan-European questionnaire is at the final stage of preparation. It is expected that the pre-filled questionnaires will be sent to countries by the end of August 2013. In parallel to these preparations the Team of Specialists will start work on information to be provided by organizations/processes that specialize in the collection and analysis of information in specific areas of Sustainable Forest Management. The next meeting of the Team dedicated to this topic will be held on 18 October 2013 in Geneva, back to back with the regional workshop on FRA/CFRQ reporting. The meeting will be open to national correspondents from the region.

For more information visit:

www.fao.org/forestry/fra/76871/en/ or www.unece.org/forests/tos-sfm-2013.html

or contact: Kenneth.MacDicken@fao.org (global reporting)or roman.michalak@unece.org (pan-European reporting)

Roundwood Prices in the Baltic Sea Region

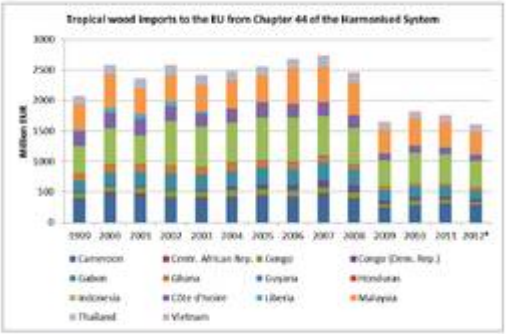
The Finnish Forest Research Institute (Metla) publishes an online database containing roundwood price data for most of the countries around the Baltic Sea. The objective of the database is to bring together the price data available in the countries, and make these data easily accessible to various user groups. Relevant and representative price series are reported for the following countries: Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden. Price data, starting mainly from 1996, are provided by the national contacts of the Baltic-Nordic Forest Statistics Group (BNFSG). The prices reported in the database originate from official forest statistics in each country.

Roundwood prices may be reported at three points: standing, at the roadside and in the mill yard. On this site, only roadside prices of roundwood are presented. Prices are reported by roundwood assortment reporting period being either a month or a quarter.

Price comparisons between countries should be treated with caution. This is due to the variation of measurement units, as well as quality and dimensional requirements of various assortments within the region (see countrywise Product Descriptions). Consequently, the statistics reflect more on the price developments within the countries than the price differences between the countries.

For more information visit:
http://www.metla.fi/metinfo/tilasto/roundwoodprices/index.html

or contact: martti.aarne@metla.fi and/or elina.maki-simola@metla.fi



EU Imports of Tropical Timber

Twice a year, Eurostat will publish data on EU imports of wood from countries negotiating or implementing a FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement. The source is monthly customs data collected at the EU's external borders, available from Eurostat's trade database COMEXT. Each month's data are final after approximately one year.

The EU's policy to fight illegal logging and associated trade was defined in 2003 with the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) action plan. A key element is a voluntary scheme to ensure that only legally harvested timber is imported to the EU: the bilateral FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA).

FLEGT-licensed timber does not yet exist. It will ship under licences issued by the producing country once a VPA agreement is concluded and legality assurance systems are in place. The statistics published therefore show the potential volume and value of verified legal timber entering the EU from partner countries involved in VPAs. Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Liberia and the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) have already signed or agreed VPAs, while Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Guyana, Honduras, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam are negotiating.

The classification system used is the Harmonised System 2012 – all of Chapter 44 in the international Harmonised System Nomenclature and Combined Nomenclature of the EU and, separately, the identified tropical items of the Chapter 44. The graph shows totals and shares of imports from partner countries involved in VPAs. It also illustrates how hard the ongoing recession hit these high-value imports.

For more information click here or contact Maria.Wolf-Crowther@ec.europa.eu

TransparentForests – Satellite Remote Sensing to Strengthen Quality Transparency

Over the last three years, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has participated in a series of trials, financed by the European Space Agency, to assess the potential value and utility of satellite remote sensing to strengthen and increase the quality and transparency of the forest certification process.

Having satisfied itself that this technology would be of significant value, FSC has now initiated TransparentForests©, a study to assess the viability of a web-based Forest Certification Information System (FCIS) in delivering an independent source of geo-spatial data to support better forest certification. The FCIS will integrate Earth Observation (EO) satellite mapping systems, global positioning systems (GPS) and global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) in a web-based geographic information system (GIS), specifically customized for the needs of FSC and its stakeholders.

For Certification Bodies, TransparentForests will introduce a source of independent, up-to-date and spatially accurate data as a basis to plan and undertake audits. It will also offer a platform for stakeholder consultations, especially for forest communities. Environmentally-important features and assets in forests will be identifiable, and stakeholders will be able to monitor their status. As a result, TransparentForests should increase the robustness of the forest management certificates FSC issues. It should also result in greater stakeholder engagement and process efficiency for both Certification Bodies and forest operations in preparing for and undertaking audits.

For background on the project, visit http://iap.esa.int/projects/transparentforests

Download a project outline at https://ic.fsc.org/transparent-forests.552.htm

For more information contact: a.perezoropeza@fsc.org

Publications

Widening the Scope of Forest-based Mitigation Options in the Tropics - The Roles of Forests in Substituting for Fossil Energy Sources and Moving Towards a Greener Economy

The scope of tropical forest policies has expanded since Kyoto in 1995, from an initial focus on afforestation to the much broader concept of REDD+, which applies to a larger set of territories, services and products – locally and globally. Yet the great emphasis assigned to sequestering carbon and avoiding the destorage of carbon in a given place remains the overwhelming priority presented to decision and policy makers.

A more thorough and balanced approach is needed in which carbon sequestration and storage is combined with other, complementary purposes such as assigning monetary values to sustainable forest production that capture the benefits from forests for both local populations and the global climate. One of the most important benefits for the climate is the direct and indirect substitution effects that renewable forest products have when they are used instead of fossil fuel alternatives – a major element in the role of forests as a basis for greener economies.

Yet the production of biomass and roundwood in the tropics requires substantial improvements through practices such as reduced impact logging, restoration of degraded lands, certification, mixed plantations, and agro-forestry. These measures will enable us to use forests more effectively as a vital source of food security and energy while at the same time greatly reducing the need to harvest untouched primary forests – making it possible to halt deforestation altogether.

The global climatic effect of ambitious policies balancing sequestration, avoided deforestation, and forest production that substitutes for fossil fuels would represent an annual saving of 8 billion tons of carbon in 2050 – a volume that is the double the present accumulation of GHG in the atmosphere.

The publication is available in English here and will be available in French in October 2013 at:

http://agriculture.gouv.fr/

For more information contact: michel.de-galbert@agriculture.gouv.fr

New Report Assesses Approaches to Expand Community-Scale Clusters of Wood-to-Energy Facilities in the U.S.

The production of energy using a renewable material such as wood can have positive impacts on all three legs of the sustainability stool - society, the economy, and the environment -- so finds a report prepared by Dovetail Partners and released by the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities (Endowment). The report, “Financing Woody Biomass Clusters: Barriers,

Opportunities, and Potential Models for the Western U.S."

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The report is part of a series of works produced by the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities in a collaborative effort with the USDA Forest Service to assess the potential of markets for low-value wood to enhance forest health while advancing energy security.

The full report can be downloaded from:

dovetailinc.org/files/DovetailBiomassReport0513.pdf

Report on Private and Public Forest Ownership in Europe Published

Information on the spatial distribution of forest ownership is needed not only in the forestry sector but in general for activities related to forest ownership. A newly published report "Mapping the distribution of forest ownership in Europe" by Pamela Pulla, Andreas Schuck, Pieter Johannes Verkerk, Bruno Lasserre, Marco Marchetti and Tim Green contributes to a better knowledge of forest ownership distribution in the 47 European countries through a thorough data collection, analysis and visual presentation.

Public forests, but also forests in private ownership increasingly, play a key role in sustaining forest ecosystems, ensuring biodiversity protection, mitigating climate change, enhancing rural development and supplying timber and non-wood goods and services.

The study quantifies the spatial distribution of forest ownership at the sub-national level (regional, counties, departments, districts, etc.), and collects information on the existence and the availability of geo-referenced maps showing the spatial distribution of private and public forests in Europe. In addition to the report, two maps were produced, illustrating private and public European forest ownership.

The European Forest Institute's (EFI) Regional Office EFICENT-OEF coordinated and implemented the study jointly with the University of Molise, Italy. The EFI Technical Report, the forest ownership maps and a set of annexes can be downloaded from the EFI website.

For more information visit:
http://www.efi.int/portal/virtual_library/publications/technical_reports/88/
http://www.eficent.efi.int/portal/news/?bid=1122
or contact: andreas.schuck@efi.int

FSC Global Market Survey Report 2012 Published

Each year, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) conducts a market survey to examine market trends and gain insights into how FSC certification benefits customers and different industries and regions. In 2012, more than 4,000 FSC certificate holders participated in the survey.

The FSC Global Market Survey Report 2012 shows that the distribution of FSC certified products has grown significantly in recent years and continues to grow every day as consumers choose products from well-managed forests. Having this information on the impacts of growth in the global FSC market is important for FSC and stakeholders. The insights about market developments and future trends also show where FSC certification makes a difference for certified businesses and forests and where FSC can improve its efforts.

The 2012 FSC Global Market Survey (PDF) is available at:
https://ic.fsc.org/fsc-global-market-survey-report.585.htm

For more information contact: a.perezoropeza@fsc.org

Our Future from Forests

The WBCSD Forest Solutions Group recently released the Facts & Trends: Forests, Forest Products, Carbon and Energy emphasizing the key drivers facing the forest-based industry today and in the near future, underlining the importance of sustainable forest management and the role of the forest industry to provide solutions in a resource constrained world. This is complemented by the Issue Brief on Biomass Carbon Neutrality, which distills and synthesizes the complexity around the concept of and debate on carbon neutrality and highlights the carbon benefits of using forest biomass for our economy, environment and society.

To assist companies in making informed choices about the forest products that they purchase and use, the Forest Solutions Group and the World Resources Institute developed the Sustainable Procurement Guide for wood and paper-based products. Now in its 3rd edition, the guide and resource kit provide an overview of the context of forests and their management and explain the 10 most critical issues underpinning the procurement of forest products, including sourcing, legality, and environmental and social aspects. It also introduces existing tools, resources and initiatives, and outlines their relevance and utility in addressing each of the 10 issues. Seeking out sustainably produced forest products is imperative for business to building and retaining consumer confidence in their product offerings. This includes all forest based components and incentives for responsible forest management, retaining growth and vitality, ecological functions, biodiversity and social values of the world's forests, while meeting society's needs today and in the future.

For more information contact jungermann@wbcsd.org

Events

EFI 20 Years Science and Policy Forum 23-27 September 2013, Nancy, France

European Forest Institute (EFI) celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2013. This commemoration of its major achievements is also an opportunity to analyze the future of our forests and how EFI and its partners can contribute to meet the challenges related to the various changes, risks and uncertainties to which our forests will be exposed.

The Forum will stimulate balanced discussion between policy/decision makers, stakeholders and scientists on concrete issues related to the future of our forests, and the risks and opportunities they face. On 25 September, a high-level conference: “Our forests in the 21st century – ready for risks and opportunities?” gathers both scientists and decision-makers.

Keynote Speakers Include:

Prof. Dr. Eduardo Rojas-Briales, Assistant Director, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Forestry Department.
Dr. Janez Potočnik, European Commission, Commissioner for Environment
Mr. Kriton Arsenis, Member of the European Parliament
Mr. Jan Heino, Chairman, Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe, FOREST EUROPE

The morning of 26 September continues with a session: “Risks to European Forests - What added value can a European Forest Risk Facility provide?” followed in the afternoon with a FLEGT-REDD session “Shaping forest policy: Global initiatives and the European arena”, and an annual meeting of EFI’s Central European Regional Office and the Observatory for European Forests – EFICENT-OEF.

Registration for the anniversary events is open. Information and registration for the events is available at: www.efi20.efi.int

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How to contribute? Deadline for the next issue is **15 September 2013.** More information is available here.

We work in cooperation with the Global Forest Information Service.