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Target the forests!

Forests in Sustainable Development Goals – a view from the UNECE region

3 February 2014, Geneva, New York

Forests play an essential role in sustainable development; the green economy and poverty eradication was the message of an expert workshop on Forests and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that was held on 22 and 23 January 2014, in Geneva.

Participants at the workshop were convinced that forests make big targets. Planting trees, or cutting down forests, has major consequences. If we manage forests well they will give us goods and services that we cannot live without. If forests disappear we lose any prospect of sustainable development. Forests and trees are rooted in life and livelihoods. They can be grown, improved and looked after – they are renewable. It would be hard to find a simpler and more universal way of changing the world for the better than by planting and managing trees.

The meeting stressed the importance to properly recognizing the role of forests in sustainable development. Moreover, participants from the UNECE region exchanged views and developed ideas on how to include strategically forests in the SDGs and to report accordingly to a side event in conjunction with the 8th session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals in New York City, 3 February 2014.

The message of the expert meeting is that there is a profound and mutually supportive relationship between forests and SDGs. Forests are essential to SDGs and SDGs are essential for forests. Well formulated forest targets will ensure that forests will enhance their role in sustaining people's livelihoods and the environment. As the process goes forward, forest experts are willing to provide further inputs; for example, on possible indicators.

For more general information about the workshop:

http://www.unece.org/sdg-workshop.html

Learn more about the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section:

www.unece.org/forests

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