



European Commission
DG Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



International Tropical
Timber Organization

UNECE

United Nations
Economic Commission
for Europe

Notes of 26th Meeting of Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics

FAO Headquarters, Rome, India Room (A-327), 14-15 February 2013

Participants: FAO – Arvydas Lebedys, Yanshu Li, Mauro Paolozzi; ECE – Alex McCusker; Eurostat – Marilise Wolf-Crowther; ITTO – Jean-Christophe Claudon, Steve Johnson

Opening welcome by Eva Müller, Director, FAO Forest Economics, Policy and Products Division

1) Adoption of agenda

- The meeting was chaired by Arvydas Lebedys.
- Notes were taken by Alex McCusker during the meeting and jointly revised afterwards.
- We agreed to discuss HS2017 Friday first thing.

2) Review of issues from last year's meeting

- We reviewed the “to do” checklist from the minutes of 25th IWG meeting. Most items had been addressed in one way or another.
- No ITTO study yet on mixed plywood but it would be useful to get better information on this to understand role of tropical species in plywood. ITTO will investigate possibility of funding a study, perhaps jointly with FAO, as part of ITTO's activities.
- Conversion factors for chips – reported in bone dry tons and converted to m3 by organizations. FAO revised series for several top exporters (Australia, Vietnam, New Zealand), more work needs to be done on this.
- ITTO suggested providing a disclaimer that data from other sites may not be the same. Links to other partners continue to be encouraged with common text explaining reasons behind discrepancies.
- The minutes of the 25th meeting were confirmed.

3) Review of the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ) activities in 2012

a) Number and quality of replies, successes and problems

- EU/EFTA – quality good, number decreased. 30% of the overall production volume covered by JQ1 had to be estimated by Eurostat. 24 replies for JQ1 and 26 for JQ2. Germany improved. Denmark, Belgium, Luxembourg need to reply. Greece and Liechtenstein trying.
- ECE – 11 JQ1, 10 JQ2, 10 JQ3 and 7 Species Trade. Russia currently no correspondent [FAO proposed writing a joint letter with ECE to Forest Agency], US continues to have data quality problems, Canada issues have been raised and discussed but are not getting resolved, Balkans mostly good, Turkey has paper problems.
- ITTO – provided excellent summary, 19 producer replies plus Japan. No change in quality. Correspondents and contacts weaker at start of new ITTA 2006.
- FAO – JQ 20 replies. Replies improved slightly over last year. Korea received during IWG meeting. Indonesia improved in pulp and paper. South Africa after 4 years provided data, Vietnam after 3 years, Paraguay after 10 years. Belize and Dominican Republic did not provide reply despite Panama workshop. Overall slight improvement in number of replies, quality remains an issue. Increased use of alternative sources (“data harvest”) to supplement the data provided through JQ.

b) Data dissemination

- Eurostat – website updated frequently, Eurostat Yearbook and Forest Pocketbooks (agriculture and energy)
- ECE – FPAMR, data available on time and linked. On-line unit value seems of interest. No update of main FPS data this year.

- ITTO – Annual Review, online statistical database and various ad hoc outputs.
 - FAO – Yearbook on line and printed and CD. On-line FAOSTAT new version, data.fao.org is more socially aware (beta version released in December), includes metadata (adapted from Eurostat). Launched <http://www.fao.org/forestry/statistics/en/> that brings together all work (publications, databases) of FAO's statistical program for forest products. Still no OSB, veneer and plywood by species or secondary products (plans are to "open" to public series for C/NC veneer and plywood and publish paper on secondary products)
- c) Data validation - discrepancies identified:
- Negative apparent consumption data has improved - FAOSTAT has seen a major decline.
 - Unit price. ECE commented that unit price data for a number of EU/EFTA countries had very obvious errors that were not caught in the data validation process (e.g. Iceland, Lithuania, Switzerland, Norway). After the meeting, Eurostat reminded ECE that IS trade data for recovered paper was corrected on 8/01/13. CH data were corrected with ECE's help. Data for LT, NO, DE, SI, HU, NL, IT and other countries were corrected in Eurostat's databases.
 - No changes (repeated data). FAO provided a list of trade data that were not available from ECE but were available in COMTRADE (overall for these countries COMTRADE reports \$5 billion imports, repeated numbers are only \$2 billion). FAO urged ECE to update series using COMTRADE, at least for biggest importers/exporters. ECE agreed to collect and feed these data to FAO.
 - ECE is continuing its wood raw material balance work. It will try to improve consideration of the amount of round wood equivalent that is going into other processes after primary use (e.g. sawnwood 1.89 factor, part of .89 winds up getting into panels and paper).
 - Woodfuel data is consistently underreported. Improvement is occurring with household surveys. Eurostat wants to extrapolate results to other EU countries (some concerns about this raised by FAO and ECE), ECE will reference JWEE 2011 results. FAO mentioned increasing availability of data for non-EU countries and underlined the need for consistency in long-term series. Any major data revision should go back to 1990. Eurostat noted that the increases in the prices of other fuels were the drivers of increases in wood fuel consumption. ITTO is moving to Access 2010 and using Excel 2010 software to download large amounts of COMTRADE data to analyse. ITTO offered to provide copies of its programme to other organizations.
 - ITTO provided a list of data problems to review before end-March 2013.
 - FAO distributed information on estimates in FAOSTAT which generally show low percentage of estimates as share of total quantity at the global level (except for woodfuel and wood charcoal).
 - Eurostat presented slides showing the increases in the share of the JQ1 volumes that had to be estimated in recent years. Compared with the situation in the countries handled by the FAO, it is remarkable that it is the opposite of that in the EU / EFTA countries: whereas FAO must mainly estimate the removals of wood, Eurostat must estimate mainly the production of primary wood products.
- d) Data exchanges among partner organizations:
- In general went much better and faster than in previous years. Organizations kept to deadlines and seemed more efficient in processing.
 - ECE changes to Eurostat data were reviewed several times bilaterally.
 - ITTO/Eurostat/ECE exchanged data and it is still not clear what the final resolution is. ECE/ITTO will exchange information by end-March. In some cases differences between databases remain.
 - Following some problems with downloading from FAOSTAT, FAO will provide product code definitions over the years. ECE will doublecheck its extraction procedure to make sure the data are being passed through to FAO correctly (particularly fuelwood trade).
 - Species codes still need to be clarified between Eurostat and ECE.
- e) Ancillary statistical activities by individual organizations
- Eurostat published figures on tropical wood imports from outside the EU under FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements.
 - ECE is carrying out JWEE for 2011.
 - Pulp and paper capacity survey continues at FAO.

4) The JFSQ cycle in 2013

- a) 2012 JFSQ revision/improvements:
- i) Alignment of JFSQ with pellets – we were joined by Florian Steierer of FAO for this part of meeting
 - Agreed option
 - (a) Reorganize items 3 and 4 to put coproducts together, 3 (coproducts), 3.1 chips and particles, 3.2 wood residues, including wood for agglomerates, 4 pellets and other agglomerates (not energy because of cat litter) with two subitems for pellets and “other agglomerates”. +fits structure of wood industry processing, minimal change in series, plan to include briquettes in future, easier to organize in databases, -needs ex code, uncertain reporting. We accept that not all countries can break this out now but we set basis for future, including change for HS2017 that we are currently requesting.
 - Rejected options:
 - (a) New category processed wood fuels to include charcoal, i.e. 2/2.1/2.2. +puts all non-direct wood energy into one place, -should 2 be an aggregate of these?
 - (i) Renumber 3 and 4 back to 2 and 3 and call this category 4
 - (b) Subitem of residues, i.e. 4.1. +Follows HS structure, no change in item 4 definition, easy to implement. -4.1 in tonnes, 4 in m3 (change 4 into tonnes?), misleading to combine with residues
 - (c) Separate item –residues going to pellets should be counted?
 - (i) following residues, i.e. 5. +no break, follows wood flow, –renumber everything that follows, problem for ITTO/Eurostat databases.
 - (ii) Separate item as processed product, i.e. 11 or 13+ no break/code change, follows questionnaire structure of moving towards more processed products, - moves it far down the wood chain.
 - ii) Adoption of revised Spanish version of definitions – adopted Eurostat’s translation with slight modifications (terminology more common in Latin America).
 - iii) Other changes:
 - *Change Eurostat logo. OK.*
 - *Adding IRW-NC-Tropical to JQ1? (proposal by ITTO in 2012).* Needed to cover countries that straddle tropics and non-tropics. Proposal to use ITTO1 to get this but issue of countries that are not ITTO members not getting the questionnaire. Brazil is key problem. Conclusion is to have ITTO1 expanded as ITTO desires and not include on JQ1.
 - *DOT to include tropical plywood, 6.2.NC.T.* We agree. FAO will implement in this year’s round. Will drop newsprint from DOT.
 - Term for recovered paper in French (Papier de récupération). We agree.
 - Definition of exports/imports - how to treat sales to/from free economic zones? (e.g. *pulpwood, woodpulp in Uruguay*). JFSQ definition already identifies that all trade from a country should be included. FAO will work on this in the future, consulting merchandise trade nomenclature.
 - Drop JQ3 item 12.7 and subitems (printed articles) due to remoteness from wood products.
 - Should we add any items to JQ3, e.g. biocellulose or rayon? No, felt that this was too far away from wood sector.
 - *Other HS changes?* Item 12.4, HS 4818.40 moved to part of 9619 (sanitary towels of any material). We will not try to incorporate this in JQ3. No other HS2012 changes affecting JFSQ
 - Definition of chips, wood residues. Adapted definition to exclude production in forest of chips for wood fuel and residues into chips.
 - NC.T definition should refer to new ITTO agreement and mention coniferous not being used in JFSQ.
 - Some discussion about whether chemical pulp or paper subcategories should be suppressed – we decided not to pursue this at this time.
- b) Country handling (Croatia, new ITTO members, etc)
- ITTO signatories and former producer members continue to be handled by ITTO. New countries in 2013 are Benin, Paraguay, Madagascar and Mozambique.
 - Croatia will be handled by UNECE for this year
 - Albania is now consumer member of ITTO so ECE should send ITTO questionnaires to them.
 - FAO will contact South Sudan.

- ECE will write Israel Statistical Office.
- ECE will send raw data from COMTRADE for EFTA countries to Eurostat for prefilling and JQ deadline.
- Small countries (e.g. San Marino) OK to not contact
- FAO presented list of all countries and handling responsibilities. Some corrections made, list of JFSQ2012 distribution is shown in annex.

c) Deadlines and data exchanges

2013 agreed data exchange plan and implementation

Agency	Eurostat	UNECE	ITTO	FAO
Dispatch deadline	April 2	April 2	June 15	May 31
External deadline	May 15 / Oct 8	May 15	September 30	August 31
Internal deadline (last day for new data additions)	June 11 / Oct 8	June 21	Draft AR Oct 31 (TCQ forecasts in December) Final AR Jan 30	Preliminary July / Final Nov 30
Basic validation	June 15 / Oct 21	June 24	March 1	To Sep 30 (as received)
Analytical validation (last day for data corrections)	June 21 / Oct 21	July 5	March 1	July 15 / Nov 30
Dispatch to ECE	June 24 / Oct 23			
Dispatch to FAO		July 12 / Oct 31	weekly JQ, final 2011 dataset in May	
Dispatch to ITTO	JQ originals for ITTO countries as received, eliminating any confidential elements	JQs originals as received. July and Oct 26 (forecast). Advise them when final data in December are available.		
Database upload	July / November	July / December	June 1	July 31 / December 15

- FAO will prepare master copies of JFSQ by March 20
- Include ECE conversion factors sheet for everybody? No, other organizations don't feel this is needed.
- Confidential data. Six Eurostat data points from 2007-8 were confidential but not marked in the initial data submission (changed later) and are still available on ECE/FAO website. ECE and FAO agreed to replace with estimates. ECE expressed concern at loss of actual or estimated data to maintain single country confidentiality.
- Eurostat non-reported data
 - i. Eurostat said it was no longer able to send unreported data (only JFSQ and Comext), but to continue to send EU27 estimates (based on the time series of each country's trade balance for each product); the need to adapt the UNECE database (and FAOSTAT) to this new situation. FAO and ECE responded that the database structure would need to be maintained in current state to support analytical demands. All data in databases will be appropriately flagged.
 - ii. ITTO pointed out their mandate calls for "including country data" but not exclusively, so they have mandate to use all sources and provide complete information.
 - iii. The agencies agreed that each agency will pursue its mandate as best it can; each agency can approach the data and analysis as it needs to, including making estimates as necessary, and we will continue to consult on this matter. Any issues raised by countries will be discussed in appropriate forums.
- d) Status codes (flags). ITTO uses ECE flags directly, FAO is limited to public flags but in internal database has more options. IWG agreed to (again) exchange status codes and flags before next meeting and discuss then in order to improve alignment. ECE raised possible desirability of developing 2 status elements, one to indicate quality and the other to indicate source. Status flag based on total country supplied data that has estimated sub-elements should be considered.
- e) Ancillary activities
 - ITTO EU FLEGT VPA project – how to track. Contract planned for September 2013 with work plan for report by end-2014. Involvement planned with IWG members. Possible kick-off meeting planned for early next year.

5) HS2017 round

- a) The group was updated on current status and future meetings by Ms. Valentina Ramaschiello from FAO Statistics Division.
- b) Support for HS revision
 - ITTO will ask Ministry of Forestry Japan for support
 - For committee meeting (2014?) we should try again to rally country support
- c) Pending issues:
 - i) Tropical species list
 - VR will prepare draft note for WCO asking if FAO can do anything further on this and that a revised list (without coniferous) will be prepared
 - FAO and ITTO will prepare the list jointly, perhaps with taxonomist consultant
 - (a) Pilot and scientific names should be unique and not repeated for each pilot names
 - (b) Spelling consistent
 - (c) No coniferous
 - ITTO will consider posting list on its website with council approval and maintaining in future
 - ii) Prefabricated wooden buildings
 - One country at HS meeting requested more information on scope of “of wood”. Structural component should be wood.
 - ECE and Eurostat will add pictures and refer to general rule and get better definition to resubmit for May meeting. Repeat that large amount of data is already available.

6) Other Business

- a) Organizational and staff changes
 - i) FAO has recruited ex-Lebedys (Ms. Yanshu Li), is currently fully staffed. Increasing recognition of forest products statistics in department and organization.
 - ii) Eurostat sees more interest in forest accounting and combining it better with JFSQ. No changes at current time.
 - iii) ITTO restructured and Stats and MIS coordinator were abolished. Jean Claudon will do more work on IWG and Statistical work. Staff levels have decreased from 40 to 30. Merged Division of Trade and Industry under Mr. Amha where statistics work is being carried out.
 - iv) ECE indicated that despite current organizational and budget changes at UN and ECE no apparent impact on Forestry and Timber programme. P-3 recruited, FAO P-2 being recruited.
- b) National correspondents – exchange contacts as needed.
- c) Rotation in hosting IWG meetings. Most meetings have been in Geneva or Rome. IWG agreed it would be desirable to rotate meeting hosting to each organization (also to raise profile within organization) insofar as practical.
- d) Place and date of 27th IWG meeting (2014). In principle we plan this for Eurostat to host (either Luxembourg or Brussels), perhaps in conjunction with Eurostat Forest Statistics Working Group or ITTO-led FLEGT timber tracking project meeting referred to above.
- e) Membership of IWG and role of observer organizations. IWG felt that its work was too specialized for useful contribution by non-JFSQ involved organization. People within each agency should be aware of our activities and communicate these externally as appropriate. However organizations with common objectives should be kept informed of activities.

7) Meetings of Interest to IWG

- a) Eurostat Working Group "Forestry Statistics", November 2012
- b) Workshop on Forest Products Statistics in Central America in Panama, Oct 2012 (ITTO/FAO)
- c) Future meetings:
 - i) FAO/ITTO National Workshop on Forest Products Statistics in China, April 2013
 - ii) 35th FAO/UNECE Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management, 23-25 April 2013
 - iii) Eurostat Working Group 22-23 January 2014.

Annex
JQ distribution in 2013

AFRICA:

FAO (40): Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

ITTO (14): Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Togo.

ASIA:

ECE (10): Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

Eurostat (1): Cyprus.

FAO(26): Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (Islamic Rep.), Iraq, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Timor-Leste, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, Yemen.

ITTO (8): Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand.

EUROPE:

ECE (10): Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine.

Eurostat (30): Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

NORTHERN AMERICA

ECE (2): Canada, United States of America.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

FAO(19): Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Uruguay.

ITTO (14): Bolivia (Plurinational state of), Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

OCEANIA

FAO(13): Australia, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federal States of), New Zealand, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu.

ITTO (3): Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu.

Total (190): ECE - 22, Eurostat - 31, FAO - 98, ITTO - 39.