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**Food and Agriculture Organization
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Engelberg, 2-6 November 2015

Food and Agriculture Organization**European Forestry Commission****Thirty-eight session**

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Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Global and regional context*Summary*

This document includes complementary information to the document ECE/TIM/2015/3–FO:EFC/2015/3 *Global and regional context* which could not be included there at the time of writing. It summarizes the outcomes of the UN Sustainable Development Summit, which adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on 27 September 2015 and the outcomes of the 14th World Forestry Congress which took place in Durban, South Africa on 7-11 September 2015.

Delegates will be invited to take note of the information provided and to consider it when deciding on the future work of the Committee and the Commission.

I. Outcomes of the UN Sustainable Development Summit

1. The UN General Assembly (UNGA) formally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN Sustainable Development Summit, which took place on 25-27 September 2015 at UN Headquarters in New York.
2. “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” is composed of a preamble, a declaration, 17 SDGs and 169 supporting targets, means of implementation (MOI) and the Global Partnership, and a framework for follow-up and review of implementation. UN member States developed this package during negotiations that lasted from March 2013 to August 2015.

3. This agenda builds on the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were adopted in 2000 and guided development action for the last 15 years, however its scope is broader. The MDGs targeted primarily developing countries, while SDGs will apply to the developed and developing countries. The MDGs focused primarily on the social agenda. The new goals will focus on three elements of sustainable development: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection.
4. The Sustainable Development Goals and targets are global in nature and universally applicable. They are result of negotiation process that involved UN member States, civil society and other stakeholders. One of their core features have been the means of implementation outlined in SDG 17 and throughout 16 other SDGs and 169 targets. They are supported and complemented by a set of concrete actions outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) adopted during the third International Conference Finance for Development on 13 – 16 July 2015 and by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015-2030 adopted at the Third. UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, on 18 March 2015. The two latter constitute the integrated part of the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.
5. The implementation of SDGs and targets will be monitored and reviewed using a set of global indicators. The global indicator framework, being developed by the Inter Agency and Expert Group on SDGs Indicators, will be agreed on by the UN Statistical Commission (IAEG-SDGs) in March 2016 and adopted by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. Statisticians from member States have been working on the identification of indicators for each target, however as some targets cover cross-cutting issues, the number of indicators may be lower than the number of targets.
6. At the moment of writing of this document, the IAEG-SDGs has just published the submissions received during the open consultation on a global indicator framework for the SDGs. The submissions by IAEG members, observers and civil society are expected to inform discussion at the second meeting of the IAEG-SDGs which will convene in Bangkok, Thailand, from 26-28 October 2015. There, participants will review the list of possible global indicators, discuss the global indicator framework, including comments received, and discuss the plan of work and next steps. In addition to this globally coordinated process, member States will also have a possibility to develop their own national indicators which can support the monitoring of progress made on the goals and targets at the national level.
7. The follow up and review process will be undertaken on an annual basis by the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and through a SDGs Progress Report to be prepared by the Secretary General. The means of implementation of the SDGs will be monitored and reviewed as outlined in the AAAA. The implementation process of SDGs is expected to start on 1 January 2016 and be achieved until 31 December 2030; however some targets that are built on existing international commitments are expected to be achieved earlier.

Points for consideration:

8. Delegates are invited to refer to the document ECE/TIM/2015/3–FO:EFC/2015/3 Global and regional context for the list of points of consideration under paragraph 34.

II. XIV World Forestry Congress

9. Nearly 4,000 participants from 142 countries met at the XIV World Forestry Congress on 7–11 September 2015 in Durban, South Africa – for the first time on the African continent – in a

- spirit of inclusiveness and with a willingness to learn from each other, share diverse points of view and gain new perspectives.
10. The Congress produced three outcome documents, available at the Congress website [and contained in Annex x-y / Inf/Misc. document xxx]:
 - a) Durban Declaration - 2050 vision for forests and forestry;
 - b) Message from XIV World Forestry Congress to the United Nations General Assembly Summit for the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and
 - c) Message on from the XIV World Forestry Congress on Climate Change to the 21st Conference of parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
 11. The Durban Declaration calls for new partnerships among the forest, agriculture, finance, energy, water and other sectors, and engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities. It calls for further investment in forest education; communication; capacity building; research, and the creation of jobs, especially for young people. It also points out that gender equality is fundamental, with women participating fully in decision making on forestry.
 12. In summary, the new vision for forests and forestry sets a way of contributing to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and a sustainable future to 2050 and beyond. The vision emphasises that:
 13. Forests are fundamental for food security and improved livelihoods. They will increase the resilience of communities by providing food, wood energy, shelter, fodder and fibre; generating income and employment to allow communities and societies to prosper; harbouring biodiversity; and supporting sustainable agriculture and human wellbeing by stabilizing soils and climate and regulating water flows.
 14. Integrated approaches to land use provide a way forward for improving policies and practices to: address the drivers of deforestation; address conflicts over land use; capitalize on the full range of economic, social and environmental benefits from integrating forests with agriculture; and maintain multiple forest services in the landscape context.
 15. Forests are an essential solution to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Sustainably managed forests will increase the resilience of ecosystems and societies and optimize the role of forests and trees in absorbing and storing carbon while also providing other environmental services.
 16. The message on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recaps that the need to sustainably manage forests is clearly stated in SDG 15, and in the SDG 6 target on protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems. Moreover, due to their multi-functionality, forests have a role to play in achieving several of the other SDGs, including those related to ending poverty, achieving food security, promoting sustainable agriculture, ensuring access to sustainable energy for all, and combating climate change. To successfully implement the SDGs, forests and forestry need to be mainstreamed into strategies for sustainable development at both the international and national levels.
 17. FAO and other relevant international organizations stand ready to support strengthening the contributions of forests to the SDGs by making available data and information, providing technical support and promoting best practices and dialogue.

18. The message on climate change emphasises that policies and responses to climate change present opportunities for forests, such as new and additional sources of financing and increased political support for forest governance and stakeholder engagement; and that forests can significantly contribute to climate change mitigation through Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).
19. Acknowledging the urgency of addressing climate change threats, the XIV World Forestry Congress recommends to: increase understanding among governments and other stakeholders of climate change, with particular attention to forest-dependent communities and indigenous peoples, and to address climate change in the wider context of sustainable development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; promote partnerships and south-south exchanges; continue increasing the availability and quality of information in order to meet multiple objectives of climate change adaptation and mitigation; encourage the assessment and communication of progress in climate change mitigation and adaption, including by the more coordinated and effective mobilization of diverse financial resources.
20. The 14th World Forestry Congress marked the launch of The Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015. The findings of FRA are brought to the attention of the Commission under a separate agenda item.
21. The week of rich technical discussions among various stakeholders in Durban has inspired a reflection on the forest definition. FAO will be setting up a process to determine how “forest” could be described better including its various functions.
22. World Forestry Congresses serve as fora for the exchange of views and experiences and for robust debate on key aspects of forests and forestry, leading to recommendations applicable at all levels, from local to global, as appropriate. Given the technical nature of the Congress, the outcome documents reflect a diverse set of viewpoints of the participants in the XIV World Forestry Congress.
23. Yet the Congress outcomes could serve as a useful input to orient the future work by FAO on forestry, prioritising work on food security and livelihoods, better integrating forests with other land uses; and ensuring forests continue to provide a range of products and services, including climate change mitigation.
24. The next World Forestry Congress is expected to be held in 2021. The official process to bid for hosting the next Congress will be launched by the end of 2015 and decision on the host country is expected to be made by the Council at its 155th session on 5-9 December 2016.
25. More information on the 14th World Forestry Congress and its rich and inclusive programme with various sessions, events, media coverage as well as more detailed outcomes can be found at www.fao.org/forestry/wfc and www.wfc2015.org.za

Points for consideration

26. The Commission and the Committee are invited to:
 - a) welcome the outcome documents of the 14th World Forestry Congress and reflect on how the outcomes may influence the orientation of the future work by FAO and UNECE in the region;

- b) provide guidance, as necessary, for the further dissemination of the outcomes of the congress and for the effective implementation of the recommendations included in the outcome documents by FAO, UNECE and other relevant parties

27. The Commission is invited to:

- a) recommend the 23rd session of the Committee on Forestry to build on and incorporate the outcome of the congress in its guidance for FAO and member countries;
