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Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry

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Item 7 of the provisional agenda

Reform of the United Nations planning and budgeting process

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Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The Committee will be informed of recent developments regarding the preparation of the United Nations plan and budget, and implication for the work of the Committee.

In December 2017, the 72nd session of the General Assembly (GA) adopted resolution A/72/266 “Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations.” In this resolution, Member States approved the proposed change from a biennial to an annual budget period on a trial basis, beginning with the programme budget for 2020, and requested the Secretary-General to conduct a review of changes to the budgetary cycle in 2022, following the completion of the first full budgetary cycle. The General Assembly also decided to review at its seventy-seventh session, with a view to taking a final decision, the implementation of the annual budget.

The Proposed Programme Budget of the Organization will consist of the following three parts:

- a) Part I: the plan outline, which presents the long-term priorities and the objectives of the Organization;
- b) Part II: the programme plan for programmes and subprogrammes and programme performance information; and

- c) Part III: the post and non-post resource requirements for the programmes and subprogrammes.

Part I will be prepared by the secretariat at the UN Headquarters, and submitted to the General Assembly through the Committee for Programme and Coordination. Parts II and III will be prepared by Secretariat Departments, including ECE, on an annual basis. They will be submitted to the General Assembly through the Committee for Programme and Coordination (Part II) and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (Part III).

The first annual proposed programme budget will be prepared for 2020.

The instructions on the preparation of the programme budget are expected from the UN Controller at the end of October 2018. Based on the instructions, the ECE secretariat will prepare the proposed programme budget for 2020 of subprogramme 7 Forestry and Timber and share it for comments with the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry or its Bureau, as well as the EXCOM as part of the ECE budget proposal. The consolidated ECE proposed programme budget, modified as appropriate, will subsequently be submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions at their respective sessions in mid-2019. Their conclusions and recommendations therein will be transmitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session in 2019 when it considers the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for 2020.