TEAM OF SPECIALISTS ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST PRODUCTS
24 April 2013, 13:30-15:00

Meeting report

Present for the meeting:
Eoin O’Driscoll (Chair), Jeremy Wall (Deputy Chair), Branko Glavonjic (Deputy Chair), Florian Steierer (Secretary), Douglas Clark, Isabelle Brose, Chris Gaston, Matt Fonseca, Csaba Moses.

1. Adoption of the Agenda and welcome

2. Introduction and a few words from the new Marketing Officer

3. Market Review planning, funding and team involvement

- Eoin raised the issue that sometimes there was a lack of agreement between data in different parts of the publication. The team discussed how this challenge could be overcome.

- Jeremy raised the issue that, for users of the publication, the presentation of quantitative information throughout the text in different formats (total values vs. percentages, differing groups of countries, differing grouping of commodities, different years for different regions) made it difficult to:
  - make mental comparisons whilst reading;
  - rapidly extract key comparative date without having to re-calculate/deduce some figures.

- He suggested that as far as possible a standard format be used for presentation. Whilst realising not all data series may be complete, every effort should be made to quote in a standardised comparable format, thus allowing easy reference and comparisons. Far from trying to crowd or expand the chapters with tables or too many figures overall, only small tables of key data should appear within chapter texts and some others could be placed in a (not-too-big) annex.

- To assist readability, Jeremy suggested that a few volunteers could be “guinea-pig/dummy” readers of the chapters as they emerged from the authors and before publication. This could contribute to editing by checking readability and consistency of format rather than the data per se, although any obvious errors or inconsistencies in the latter could also be spotted. He volunteered to help with this process.
• Eoin suggested that proof-reading could also be used to check and cross-check for errors and inconsistencies in data. He volunteered to help cross-reference data in the final document before its publication.

• Eoin stated that data quality is very important and needs to be balanced with timeliness and that it might be a good idea to further research the benefits of allowing more time to process and error check JFSQ data and cross reference data in the various chapters vs. what the readership expects in regard to having an early Review. One option that was mentioned is to publish the online version first as an “advanced copy” which could in principle allow for another four weeks of checking to occur. Chris indicated that the recent user survey of the ToS shows that still about half of the users seem to use a paper version.

• Matt suggested, that the Committee on Forests and Forest Industries could be used as launching event for the printed version and that (due to UN procedures for printing, the final version of the document will be required at least eight weeks before the release) – Florian proposed to ask delegates prior to the meeting in Finland about the importance of the paper version prior to the meeting.

• The information could be used to decide in the future whether delegates would accept that no paper version would be sent to them in the future before the meeting. Florian also proposed to provide readers with an opportunity to report mistakes and inconsistencies to the secretariat. From this future pool of critical readers, the team could select a very few of additional cross-checking readers.


• Eoin suggested that the Market Discussions of the Committee on Forests and Forest Industries 2013 should consider including the outcomes of the Wood construction meeting held in Sweden earlier this year as well as include some information on the Nordic Ministerial conference on Housing. The secretariat will touch base with Peter Blomback on this issue and report back to the ToS leader.

• Regarding the Brussels Workshop to be held on 22-23 October, Eoin mentioned that a solution to the funding challenge was found and asked that we include a brief announcement in our forthcoming newsletter.

5. Workshops

• Florian proposed to conduct a very short “inventory” on which expertise is available among the members of the team, to i) understand the capacities and expertise of team member ii) be able to come forward with concrete ideas for capacity building events to countries. This may also enable fundraising for future events.

• Branko will provide the team with a summary on his assessment on forest products markets and marketing needs in the S.E. Europe. This will enable the team to tailor a capacity building workshop. Such a precise proposal could then be used for raising funds and asking for contribution in-kind by donor countries.

• Regarding the real needs for capacity building, Matt proposed to thoroughly assess the regional recommendations from the Lviv forum, which have valuable information from the participating countries on what they feel are the needs.
6. Network of forest products markets and marketing

- Regarding the future procedure of acquiring new member to in the team Eoin proposed allowing an easy access. Jeremy suggested that, as far as possible the principle of “non objection” should be applied to prospective members. This would mean that a candidate’s name and affiliation would be circulated to existing ToS members and only rejected if written, reasoned, substantiated and convincing objections were presented to the ToS members and UNECE Secretariat. (Three months should be a suitable time for this due process). [written amendment by the secretariat: The background document 6.10 http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/meetings/20130422/WP2013-6-10.pdf of the Working Party explains in detail the procedure for new members to join the team. “Member States and Stakeholders are expected to nominate their representative to a Team based on their interest on the issues covered by this Team and their capacity to support the participation of their representative in the Team work. On the basis of the answers received, the secretariat prepares a list of Team Members and establishes the Team. The request for nomination might be repeated at the end of the first two-year duration or at the beginning of the next joint Programme of Work, as appropriate. When Member States and stakeholders wish to nominate another or additional representative to a Team, they notify this proposal to the secretariat which informs the Team at its next meeting. Experts without official affiliation can also contribute to the Team work at the invitation of the secretariat, in close consultation with the Team Leader”. To the extent possible, due consideration should be given to ensuring geographical and gender balance].

- Jeremy also suggested using the ToS web-site and e-mail for a brief quarterly newsletter to post forthcoming events which individual ToS members could attend and even meet at, as well as updates on membership, news and other relevant items.

7. Future Team Meetings

- No decision taken