TEAM OF SPECIALISTS ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST PRODUCTS
11 December 2013, 14:30-16:00, Rovaniemi, Finland (Metsä2013)

Meeting report

Present for the meeting:

Eoin O’Driscoll (Chairperson), Jeremy Wall (Deputy Chairperson), Branko Glavonjic (Deputy Chairperson), Florian Steierer (Secretary), Douglas Clark, Isabelle Brose, Chris Gaston, Matt Fonseca, Csaba Mozes, Peter Moonen, Philip Buisseret, Anne Toppinen, Eya Essif.

Florian Steierer, Secretary to the Team of Specialists welcomed the participants and handed the floor over to Eoin O’Driscoll for his opening comments. Eoin O’Driscoll, Chairperson of the Team of Specialists, welcomed all those attending the meeting noting that it was very good to see new members in attendance. He stated that new Team members were most welcome. Before adopting the agenda, the Chair proposed adding a presentation by Jeremy Wall about the new study “Wood raw material supply and demand for the EU wood-processing industries”, carried out for DG Enterprise & Industry of the European Commission by Indufor Oy. With this amendment, the participants adopted the agenda.

Before presenting the draft Terms of Reference for the Team of Specialists (ToS) on Sustainable Forest Products, the Secretariat distributed copies. The ToR of the Team have been discussed and approved during the Special Session of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry. However, the Terms of Reference are currently still pending approval by the Joint EFC-COFFI meeting. The Secretariat highlighted that no major changes are expected to the work of this ToS, but that it rather gives certainty since the Team now has a real mandate. The Secretariat further explained that the UNECE-FAO Forestry and Timber Section will ask member states to nominate their official representatives to the different proposed ToSs. This procedure will also be followed for this ToS. However, in contrast to all the other ToSs, existing members will be retained and the Chairperson and Deputy Chairpersons will also remain unchanged in the coming year. The presentation was followed by a short discussion about how experts can join the Team through invitation. The Secretariat explained, that the Chairperson and/or the Secretariat may grant membership to applicants at any time on consensus and referred to the discussion from the last meeting from 24 April 2013 (http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/mis/tos/2013/MkgTeamReport130424.pdf)
3. 2011-2012 Achievements and 2013-2014 Goals

The chair also thanked Florian for his work on the excellent update of this year’s Forest Products Annual Market Review (FPAMR). In both style and substance, this year’s FPAMR was a huge improvement on that published in 2011/2012. We need to maintain these standards in 2013/1014. Both the Chairperson and Co-Chairpersons reviewed the FPAMR before its publication. It is hoped that this will continue in 2014.

The Team has been in discussion with the Secretariat regarding a capacity-building workshop in South-East Europe. It is the view of the Chairperson that this workshop must be of value to the Member States within the region. Funding is required to facilitate the organisation of this meeting. Talks with potential funders of this workshop are ongoing. The workshop in Brussels, which was scheduled for the autumn of 2013 had to be postponed due to a lack of sufficient monetary support from potential sponsors (and organizational limitations to the use of meeting fees to make up the shortfall).

A side event regarding growing the markets for forest products was organised by the Team at Metsä 2013. This was held after our Team meeting and was well attended. Thanks to Eoin O’Driscoll, Chris Gaston and Peter Moonen for their initiative and efforts with this side event.

The Chairperson and Co-Chairpersons communicate by phone on a frequent basis. Communication with the Secretariat is good. We held a review meeting with the Secretariat on the margins of Metsä 2013. We are in ongoing contact with them regarding existing and new projects.

The Secretariat stated that the current list is posted on the website and it will be updated after the nomination of official representatives in 2014.

Jeremy Wall presented the recently completed study “Wood raw material supply and demand for the EU wood-processing industries”, carried out for DG Enterprise & Industry of the European Commission by Indufor Oy. In introducing the study, he briefly explained its context as being EU Industrial Policy and in particular the sectoral policy document “Blueprint for the EU Forest-based Industries” (F-BI), SWD (2013) 343. (See slides in annex to this report).

The Secretariat briefly presented the 2012-2013 Forest Products Annual Market Review (FPAMR) and personally thanked all the authors, co-authors, contributors and reviewers present in the room. The Chairperson of the ToS expressed his highest appreciation of the new design and layout and thanked the Secretariat for the successful implementation of the work. Regarding the content and the consistency, the Chairperson stated that all his recommendations from the last meeting had been duly taken into consideration and that he could not find any inconsistencies in data. However, Co-Chairperson Jeremy Wall, who had to leave the meeting for the concurrent plenary session, also added his appreciation of the new Review but later reported that there was still room for further improvement as regards the presentation and readability of the FPAMR, in particular as its use for rapid “data mining” by users. The Chairperson was invited by the Secretariat to contribute to the data checking process. He appreciated this opportunity and expressed his readiness to repeat the
exercise in 2014. The Co-Chairperson also added his willingness – contingent upon other commitments – to review the consistency and readability of the Review.

The Secretariat stated that they will prepare the meeting report and will circulate it to the members and post it on the website.

Regarding future Team meetings, no concrete dates have been fixed. However, the Secretariat highlighted that a meeting room has been reserved 16 June for meetings of the Team of Specialists on: Sustainable Forest Products; Wood Energy, and Forest Products’ Statistics [these dates are likely to change and the Secretariat will inform Team members asap about the new dates]. The next meeting of this ToS is likely to last for half a day, with approximately three hours for discussion. One agenda item to discuss at the team meeting should be the 2014 Capacity-building Workshop in the Western Balkans. Team members are invited to suggest additional topics for discussion and to identify potential sponsors.

No additional news was provided by the Team members and also no any other business was discussed. The chair closed the meeting at 16:00 hrs.

Peter Moonen, Chris Gaston and Eoin O’Driscoll invited the Team members to attend the Team of specialist Side Event on “Wood innovation”, which took place right after the ToS Meeting. This meeting was very successful with more than 45 participants in attendance and was thus one of the most successful side events during the European Forest Week 2013 in Rovaniemi. This Team of Specialists side event was organised as an open workshop with presentations and discussion on fostering innovation in forest products. Presentations focused on the Canadian experience, including the approach taken by the Canadian Forest Service, FPInnovations, the NSERC FIBRE Network, the Forest Products Association of Canada and the Canadian Wood Council. A short presentation summarised outcomes of the “UNECE-FAO-InnovaWood Seminar on Innovation in the Forest-based Sector—Prerequisites for the Green Economy”, held in Geneva on 22 April 2013. For more information, please contact: Chris Gaston from FPInnovations and the University of British Columbia (Chris.Gaston@fpinnovations.ca) or Peter Moonen, Canadian Wood Council (pmoonen@me.com).