



ADVISORY GROUP ON THE PREPARATION OF THE REPORT “STATE OF EUROPE’S FORESTS”

27-28 September 2017, Bratislava, Slovakia

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The meeting of FOREST EUROPE Advisory Group on the preparation of the report “State of Europe’s Forests” (hereinafter also only AG) took place in Premium Business Hotel, Bratislava, Slovakia, on 27-28 September 2017.

1st day, 27 September 2017

1. Opening of the meeting

Rastislav Raši welcomed AG members on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic - the co-chairing country of FOREST EUROPE, and the Liaison Unit Bratislava (LUB), which is established at the National Forest Centre, the contributory organization of the Ministry. It was highlighted, that the report State of Europe’s Forests (hereinafter also only SoEF) provides a background information for political discussions on the future opportunities and challenges related to forestry sector and the associated political responses. According to the results of the survey conducted within the ongoing review of FOREST EUROPE process, signatory countries identified SoEF as one of the most important accomplishments of FOREST EUROPE. Since its first edition, the SoEF report has been a product of co-operation between FOREST EUROPE signatory countries, international organizations and experts. The opening was followed by a self-introduction of all participants, the list of AG members is provided in Annex I.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The members of AG accepted the proposed meeting agenda (Annex II).

3. Advisory Group Terms of reference

The members of AG suggested some amendments of the AG Terms of Reference, accordingly an updated document is available at the meeting website <http://foresteurope.org/event/12063/>.

4. Election of Chair and Co-Chair of the AG

The members of AG suggested to elect AG Chair and AG Vice-Chair instead of Co-Chair. Bernhard Wolfslehner and Stein Tomter have been elected as AG Chair and AG Vice-Chair, respectively. To support work of AG, Rastislav Raši will act as AG

Secretary and securing the mutual communication between GCC and AG as one of his tasks.

5. Review of the State of Europe's Forests 2015 – results of the survey and suggestions from respondents

Martin Moravčík gave a presentation on the survey related to the review of SoEF 2015. The respondents provided suggestions for improvement of the report preparation process, especially to secure better communication and coordination of the national correspondents, authors and reviewers within the whole preparatory process and sufficient time for report elaboration. Amongst other, e.g. the following recommendations were highlighted: to improve data completeness, handling of missing data, maintain continuity of time series, harmonize quantitative and qualitative data, integrated questionnaire on quantitative and qualitative data, and secure sound handling and processing of data. Details of the survey are available in the respective presentation at the meeting website. AG identified outcomes of the survey as highly relevant for the process of preparation of the next SoEF report. Eurostat advised that validation of the SoEF data was necessary. In the past, obvious mistakes, such as missing sums, were not corrected. This leads to problems when EU totals are calculated by Eurostat, a user of some of the data.

6. FE/FAO/UNECE Joint data collection

Roman Michalak presented a proposal for the integration of the Pan-European joint data collection to the FAO's global reporting for Forest Resources Assessment (FRA). The global FRA Platform should be coupled with a regional data collection component the implementation of which is subject to formal approval by respective bodies (COFFI, EFC, GCC) and mobilization of respective resources. The integrated data collection should reduce countries' reporting burden, avoid inconsistencies and increase visibility and credibility of data. The presentation is available at the meeting website. In discussion was proposed that the AG express its strong support to this initiative, endorse the proposal at the upcoming joint COFFI and EFC meeting in Warsaw and continue the cooperation in data collection.

Anssi Pekkarinen gave a presentation on the state of FRA Platform development, which already contains a module for data input in the national data structure and its conversion to FRA classes, logical data checks, data interpolation for selected variables and a review component. Further development of geospatial functionality (based on SEPAL), links to external databases (UNFCCC, FAOSTAT) is ongoing. The pre-filling of tables is not foreseen, however, old data are available in FRIMS and the copy/paste functionality can be used to transfer data to the Platform. The launch of data collection is planned for the beginning of March 2018.

7. SFM assessment component

Matej Schwarz presented the applied SFM assessment concepts, noting as the main problem of the assessment that no indicator threshold is universal. He suggested to simplify the complexity of SFM assessment by selection of a subset of indicators that would be assessed (some indicators are not assessable), to implement a narrative explanation how each indicator relates to the sustainability and what trends in it would be desirable generally and in specific cases. This approach can be implemented step by step. Some countries are sceptical about the assessment of particular countries (it would be politically sensitive), while others would welcome it.

In the discussion it was recommended to bring this theme to the Expert Group on Implementation of Updated Pan-European Indicators for SFM. The assessment method could be systematically developed, potentially leading to setting and justifying the targets individually for countries.

AG identified a narrative approach for assessment as an acceptable option for implementation in SoEF 2020, while the main source of information, as well as interpretation, should be national correspondents.

8. Structure and content of the next SoEF 2020 - Analysis of possible SoEF 2020 format, content and impact

Rastislav Raši presented the structure of former editions of SoEF as a starting point for discussion on the possible structure of the 2020 edition. AG stressed that the identification of expected impact of the report should be considered in the process of report preparation. AG recommended the elaboration of an executive summary / summary for policy makers and presentation of data in graphic form, while complete datasets should be available in the online database. The report should be published also in printed version and provide responses to the cross-cutting and emerging policy issues and evidence-based messages, e.g. in the structure based on setting the scene, trends and outlooks ahead. AG will be involved as advisors in the work on report structure preparation. The elaboration of the report should build on experience gathered in former editions. The report should have a narrative, instead of simply using the order of the criteria and indicators. The structure should be agreed well in advance of any writing and should be communicated to all authors.

2nd day, 27 September 2017

9. Discussion on the team of potential report authors

Rastislav Raši informed that LUB invited Michael Köhl to lead and coordinate preparation of report parts related to the quantitative indicators, Stefanie Linser to lead and coordinate preparation of parts related to the qualitative indicators and Christopher Prins to lead and coordinate parts related to the assessment and the cross-sectoral issues and in cooperation with other leading authors to contribute to the preparation of overall report conclusions and recommendations. The discussion on the formal arrangement of roles and contributions of partners to the report preparation is ongoing and LUB is seeking for an agreement on the joint FE/UNECE/FAO elaboration of report. The whole team of authors should be appointed by September 2018.

AG Chair will elaborate a document setting principles and elements for the next SoEF report to start with a first draft of the SoEF structure still in 2017.

10. Implementation of the updated pan-European indicators for SFM in the questionnaires

Rastislav Raši informed on the state of work on the Pan-European questionnaires. The set of Pan-European indicators has been updated in 2015 and the reporting 2020 should reflect respective updates. For this purpose, LUB proposed a reporting format for altered indicators which has been reviewed at the meeting of UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Monitoring SFM, as well as by experts through the FOREST EUROPE Communication Platform.

In the AG discussion the prefilling of data, as well as a reduction of complexity was recommended, where possible.

Martin Moravčík presented proposals of the reporting format for substantially altered indicators, including results of the survey on the alternatives for reporting on indicator 6.4, noted also that the discussion on this indicator is ongoing at FE Communication Platform. In the discussion, AG recommended to align reporting on indicator 6.4 with existing reporting to EUROSTAT and respective definitions. In discussion was also proposed that reporting of data for year 2005 might be excluded in the 2020 reporting, pertaining old data at 10 years intervals similarly as FRA is planning to do.

Matej Schwarz presented the progress in elaboration of pilot studies on new indicators. He said that pilot studies will be completed just after the first data collection, as in the questionnaires some additional information will be gathered. In the discussion of AG, it was noted that countries could define their national lists of common forest bird species. Regarding forest land degradation, it was mentioned that in the FRA questionnaire, the information on national definitions of forest degradation will be will collected, and SDG indicator 15.3.1 related to land degradation is also still under development. For forest fragmentation assessment CORINE and COPERNICUS data would be appropriate.

11. Tentative Roadmap for preparation of State of Europe's Forests 2020

Martin Moravčík presented the Roadmap for preparation of SoEF 2020 (Annex III), specifying implementation milestones and involved partners. The respective presentation is available at the meeting website.

12. Results and summary of the AG session

AG Secretary shall draft meeting minutes and share these with AG Chair and Vice-Chair and then also with all members of AG.

AG Chair highlighted the policy dimension for SoEF preparation. He stressed the need for a reliable commitment of the AG as a group to promote communication and to support of the preparation of the report. He requested the AG Secretary to implement relevant information transfer between FE elements – AG, EG, LUB, GCC, ELM.

Ludmila Marušáková highlighted that GCC is interested in outcomes of AG, and its representatives would participate in the next meetings of the AG.

ANNEX I

List of Advisory Group members and meeting attendees

Name	Country/Organisation	Contact	Meeting attendance
Ayanz Jesus San Miguel	Joint Research Centre, EC	jesus.san-miguel@jrc.ec.europa.eu	NO
Bastrup-Birk Annemarie	European Environmental Agency, EC	Annemarie.Bastrup-Birk@eea.europa.eu	YES
Belovarska Maryia	Executive Forest Agency, Bulgaria	belovarska@iag.bg	YES
Bozzano Michele	EUFORGEN	m.bozzano@cgiar.org	NO
Claesson Svante	Swedish Forest Agency, Sweden	svante.claesson@skogsstyrelsen.se	YES
Hangler Johannes	Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Austria	johannes.hangler@lebensministerium.at johannes.hangler@bmlfuw.gv.at	YES
Chapelant Etienne	Ministry of Agriculture, France	etienne.chapelant@agriculture.gouv.fr	NO
Korhonen Kari	LUKE, Finland	kari.t.korhonen@luke.fi	NO
Köhl Michael	University of Hamburg, Germany	Michael.Koehl@uni-hamburg.de	YES
Kubišta Jaroslav	Forest Management Institute, Czech Republic	Kubista.Jaroslav@uhul.cz	NO
Lier Markus	LUKE, Finland	markus.lier@luke.fi	YES
Linser Stefanie	European Forest Institute, EFICEEC	stefanie.linser@efi.int	YES
Michalak Roman	UNECE/FAO Joint FTS, Geneva	Roman.Michalak@unece.org	YES
Pekkarinen Anssi	FAO FRA	anssi.pekkarinen@fao.org	YES
Prins Christopher	Independent Consultant	kit.prins@gmail.com	YES
Sigurgeirsson Adalsteinn	Iceland Forest Service, Iceland	Adalsteinn@skogur.is	YES
Sokolenko Maria	Federal Forestry Agency, Russian Federation	mashchic@mail.ru	NO
Tomter Stein Michael	Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research, Norway; AG Vice-Chair	stein.tomter@nibio.no	YES
Torres-Quevedo María	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain	mtquevedo@mapama.es	YES
Valgepea Mati	Estonian Environment Agency, Estonia	Mati.Valgepea@envir.ee	NO
Vizlenskas Darius	State Forest Service, Lithuania	darius.vizlenskas@amvmt.lt	NO
Wolf-Crowther Marilise	Eurostat, EC	estat-forest@ec.europa.eu, maria.wolf-crowther@ec.europa.eu	YES
Wolfslehner Bernhard	European Forest Institute, EFICEEC; AG Chair	bernhard.wolfslehner@efi.int	YES
Zafran Janez	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Slovenia	janez.zafran@gov.si	NO
FE – LUB:			
Marušáková Eudmila	FOREST EUROPE - LUB	ludmila.marusakova@foresteurope.org	YES
Moravčík Martin	FOREST EUROPE - LUB	martin.moravcik@foresteurope.org	YES
Raši Rastislav	FOREST EUROPE – LUB; AG Secretary	rastislav.rasi@foresteurope.org	YES
Schwarz Matej	FOREST EUROPE - LUB	matej.schwarz@foresteurope.org	YES

ANNEX II

FOREST EUROPE Advisory Group on the preparation of the report „State of Europe´s Forests”

**Premium Business Hotel, Priekopy 20/A, Bratislava, Slovakia
27-28 September 2017**

Meeting Agenda

Day 1: 27 September 2017

10:00 – 10:15	Welcome (FE LUB)
10:15 – 10:45	Opening of the meeting (Mr Raši – FE LUB, AG Secretary); Introduction of the participants (AG, FE LUB); Advisory Group Terms of reference (Mr Raši, AG); Election of Chair and Co-Chair of the Advisory Group
10:45 – 11:30	Review of the State of Europe’s Forests 2015 – results of the survey and suggestions from respondents; Presentation (Mr Moravčík – FE LUB), Discussion (AG)
11:30 – 11:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:45 – 12:30	FE/FAO/UNECE Joint Data Collection Presentation (Mr Michalak UNECE/FAO, Mr Pekkarinen – FAO) Discussion (AG)
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 14:30	SFM Assessment component Presentation (Mr Schwarz – FE LUB), Discussion (AG)
14:30 – 15:30	Structure and content of the next SoEF 2020 - Analysis of possible SoEF 2020 format, content and impact Presentation (Mr Raši); Discussion (AG)
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Structure and content of the next SoEF 2020 - Analysis of possible SoEF 2020 format, content and impact (Cont.) Discussion (AG)
17:00 – 18:00	Discussion on the team of potential report authors
18:00	<i>Meeting adjourned</i>
18:30 – 19:30	<i>Dinner</i>

Day 2: 28 September 2017

9:00 – 10:30	Implementation of the updated pan-European indicators for SFM in the questionnaires; Presentation (Mr Raši, Mr Moravčík, Mr Schwarz), Discussion (AG)
10:30 – 11:00	Tentative Roadmap for preparation of State of Europe’s Forests 2020; Presentation (Mr Moravčík), Discussion (AG)
11:00 – 11:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Results and summary of the session (AG Chair)
12:00 – 12:15	Other business
12:15 – 12:30	Closing remarks

ANNEX III

“Road Map” for the preparation of the report on SoEF (2020)

Activity	Date	Involved partners
Analysis of the previous report on SoEF and suggestions how to improve of the next report	VIII – XII 2016	All interested groups, users
Setting up the FOREST EUROPE/UNECE Advisory Group for the preparation of the report	VII 2017	FE, UNECE/FAO
Setting up the team of Coordinating and Leading authors of the report (CLA)	VIII 2017	FE, UNECE/FAO, AG
Preparation of the indicative table of content of the report (expected content and structure of the report)	VIII – XII 2017	Team of CLA, AG
Development of Background Information for substantially altered UPEI for SFM and Relevant Definitions used for UPEI for SFM	I 2017 – X 2019	FE, UNECE/FAO, CLA, ToS MSFM, ToS FP, EG-IUPEI
Pilot studies on the new indicators; determination if data are available, reliable and if data are feasible for reporting	I 2017 - XII 2018	FE, EG-IUPEI, ToS MSFM, invited experts (EFI, JRC, EEA)
Preparation of reporting on national and pan-European achievements on the Goals and 2020 Targets	I – X 2017	FE, EG-IUPEI, EFI, invited experts
Preparation of the questionnaire for the reporting on the Updated pan-European Indicators (quantitative) coordinated with the CFRQ	I – XII 2017	FE, UNECE/FAO, CLA, ToS on MSFM, EG-IUPEI
Preparation of the enquiry for the reporting on the Updated pan-European Indicators (qualitative, descriptive) coordinated with the CFRQ	I – XII 2017	FE, UNECE/FAO, CLA, ToS FP, EG-UPEI
Dispatch of the final reporting questionnaires, Reporting tables, Guidelines to countries; both questionnaires quantitative and qualitative (descriptive)	I 2018	FE, UNECE/FAO
Regional workshop for national correspondents	IV 2018	UNECE/FAO, FE
National data collections, deadline for Countries replies	I – VI 2018	NC
International providers data collection and submission	IX 2018	EUROSTAT, ICP, JRC, EEA
Checking, processing, validation and compilation of data; on both quantitative and qualitative (descriptive) indicators	VI – XI 2018 (database complete XII 2018)	FE, UNECE/FAO, invited experts
Decision on and elaboration of SFM Assessment method	I – XII 2018	AG, CLA, EG-IUPEI, invited experts
Selection of and liaising with authors of chapters of the report	XI 2018 – I 2019	FE, CLA, AG
Analysis of data and preparation of the first draft of chapters of the SoEF 2020	I – IV 2019	FE, CLA, authors
Joint conference for the National Correspondent, ToS’s on SFM and FP and authors to discuss the 1st draft of the report on SoEF 2020	V 2019	FE, UNECE/FAO, NC, ToS on MSFM, ToS on FP, authors
Compilation and design of report	I – XII 2019	FE, CLA, authors
Language review and proofreading	V – IX 2019	UNECE/FAO
Printing of the report in English	IX – XII 2019	FE
Translation and printing in other languages (RU)	XII 2019	UNECE/FAO
Implementation of Dissemination plan	I – XII 2020	FE, UNECE/FAO