

Background information on “Survey on the reporting for State of Europe’s Forests 2015”

The FOREST EUROPE report on State of Europe's Forests 2015 (SoEF 2015), prepared by FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit Madrid, provided high level European policy makers as well as related experts and wide public with the recent, comprehensive information about all major aspects of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in the region and relevant trends in the 1990-2015 period.

The SoEF 2015 Report’s arrangement followed the structure of improved Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for SFM endorsed in 2003 by the Ministerial Conference in Vienna, which included 35 quantitative and 17 qualitative indicators. The report was based on forest resources data collected from FOREST EUROPE and UNECE/FAO national correspondents and international data providers (IDPs), such as ICP Forests, Joint Research Centre (JRC), Eurostat and others.

Through the description of the status and trends for the quantitative and qualitative indicators, the State of Europe’s Forests 2015 assesses progress towards SFM in Europe. The SoEF 2015 continues the series of European forest resources assessments which is expected to be maintained. In the frame of preparations for the next assessment cycle it was of utmost importance to collect experiences and views from both report’s users and producers. For this purpose there was realized the survey on the reporting for State of Europe’s Forests 2015 with the objective to collect the experiences and views related to the production and use of the SoEF 2015 report as well as ideas for the future development.

The results of this survey will be used also as an input to the discussion at respective fora, such as the meetings of the team of specialists, FOREST EUROPE General Coordinating Committee, Advisory Group on the preparation of the report “State of Europe’s Forests” and others. Moreover, the survey’s results will furthermore provide invaluable input to the preparation of the process of reporting for the next Ministerial Conference, and it could also be a contribution to the improvement of the European component to the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts:

- Part I (14 questions) was intended for individuals or organizations that have been involved in the development and production of the State of Europe’s Forests 2015 report, such as authors, Advisory Group, Team of Specialists, National Correspondents, Editors, Reviewers, Graphic Designers, Independent Data Providers and others. Respondents’ feedback was extremely important as it will help us evaluate the efficiency of the preparatory process while providing guidance on possible improvements.
- Part II (11 questions) was addressed users of the State of Europe’s Forests 2015 report. This ranges from anyone who has read the report to those who have been using it as part of their work or other intents and purposes.

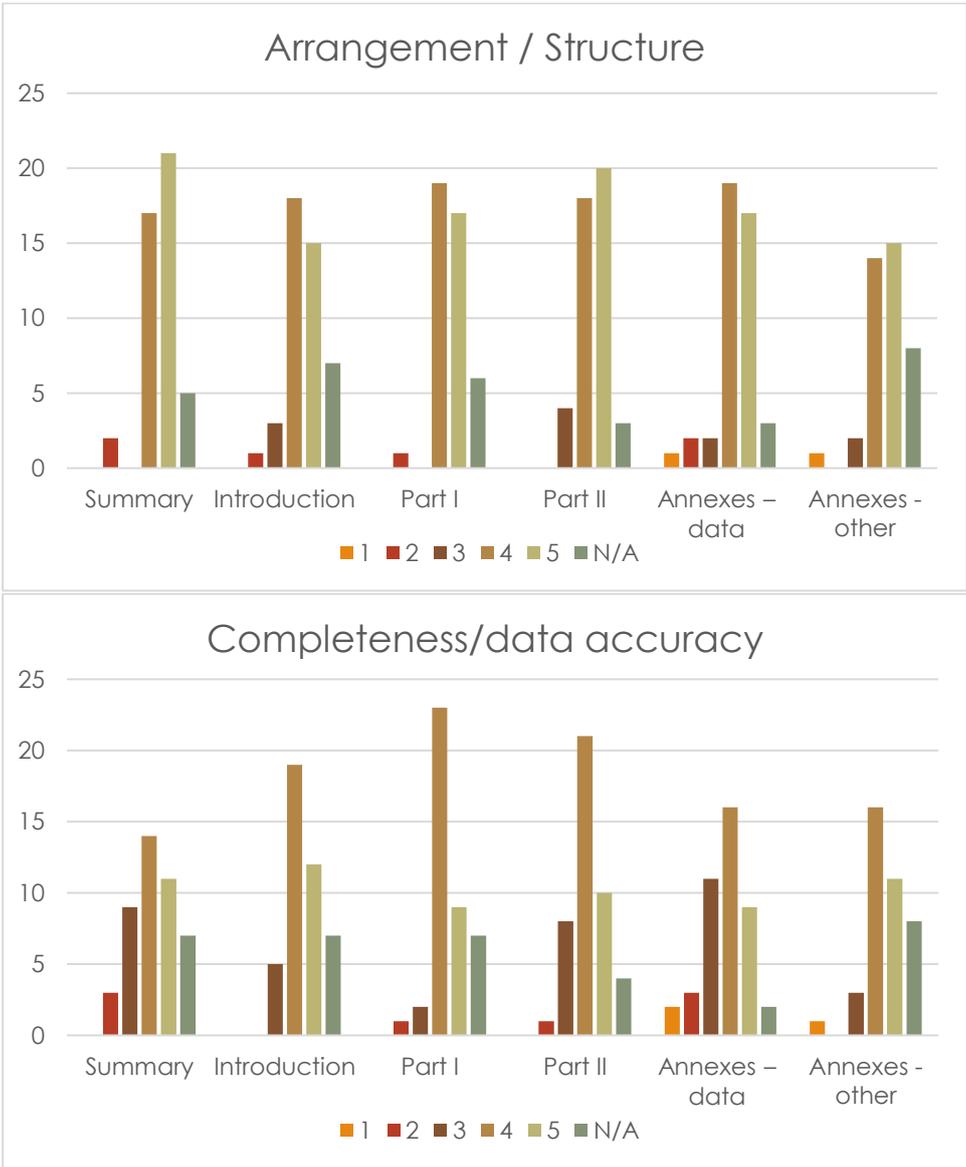
In survey participated 73 respondents, of that most represented were:

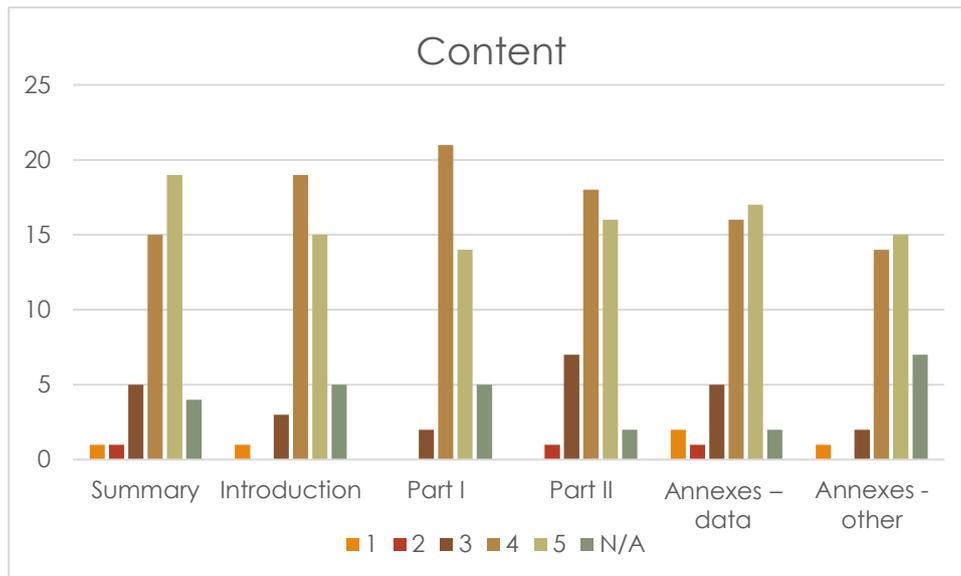
- National correspondents on Quantitative indicators (22),
- Authors or reviewers of chapters (19),
- Members of the Team of Specialists on monitoring SFM (13),
- National correspondents on Qualitative indicators (11),
- Both Advisory Group and International Data Providers with 4 respondents.

Representation of the respondents by affiliation was following: Most respondents (42.3%) were from Government and Public bodies, followed by Universities and Research centres (38.5%), both Non-governmental organizations and Consultants with 5.8% and both Intergovernmental organizations and Private companies with 3.8%.

FOREST EUROPE LUB has analysed all questions of the survey. A graphical display was elaborated for all questions showing the distribution of frequency of respondents according to their opinions on the quality individual activities or outcomes of the SoEF 2015. In the next step of the result processing there was carried out a synthesis of replies/explanations of those respondents who have not responded positively on asked questions, but expressed some rate of dissatisfaction for example: Average, Poor, Partly, No, Partly satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, etc. Despite the fact that in all questions „satisfied“ respondents prevail, the explanations or comments of those „less satisfied“ were very interesting and suggestive and have the potential to contribute to improvement of the whole process and results of the SoEF 2020.

Valuation of particular parts of the report on SoEF 2015 from the viewpoint of their structure, content, completeness and data accuracy is depicted on the following figures. As you can see the Rating 4, followed by 5 prevail in all particular parts (value 5 means excellent).





So we can state that most respondents are satisfied with the quality of the report. However the explanation and comments of the respondents whose rating was worse (3, 2 or 1) are summarized in the following text.

Some suggestions for improvement and/or consideration in the preparatory process for the next SoEF 2020:

- Better communication and coordination of the whole preparatory process.
- Coordination and harmonization of both FOREST EUROPE and Forest Resources Assessment reporting processes; the one web-based data reporting system could be considered.
- Meeting of Advisory Group and the writing team before the data collection and decision what should be changed in the new report is needed; to formulate the new content and structure.
- Better coordination and interaction between authors/LA/CLA and the data providers during the chapter drafting phase.
- More revision/proof reading; to start earlier the review process; involve more people in the reviewing process.
- Increase the staff working on the preparation of the report at the FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit; make full use of national correspondents and members of Team of Specialists also in the review and data checking phase.

Some suggestion for improvement and/or consideration on the structure, contents, format, etc. of the next SoEF report:

- To improve data reporting from all countries.
- The quality and completeness of all collected data should be improved; to improve consistency of data in relation to given definitions.
- Handling missing data is very important but partly unsolved issue – this should be improved to avoid misleading picture in some cases.
- Maintaining the continuity of data collection and the assessment of the developments over time is needed (time series of data).
- Harmonised collection of data from both quantitative and qualitative indicators should be secured; only one web-based questionnaire could be considered.

- Assessment of sustainability of forest management should be included within the SoEF report, though some countries do not like this (it could be an area of possible political influence).
- The report should be shortened in general; to prefer the main results, trends, comments, measures.
- More and better dissemination of report and data.