



FOREST EUROPE EXPERT LEVEL MEETING
28-29 November 2017, Bratislava, Slovakia

DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA

- 1. Opening of the meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the agenda**
- 3. Review of FOREST EUROPE: discussion and decision on Working Group recommendations for future direction of the FOREST EUROPE process**
- 4. Preparation of Roundtable Meeting on Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe**
- 5. Implementation of the FOREST EUROPE Work Programme – progress of the Work Programme activities**
- 6. Communication and outreach**
- 7. Any other business**
- 8. Closure of the meeting**

Meeting hours: Tuesday, 28 November 2017, 10.00 – 13.00 and 15.00 – 18.00
Wednesday, 29 November 2017, 09.00 – 12.00 and 14.00 – 17.00

Venue: Hotel Sheraton, Pribinova 12, Bratislava, Slovakia

Reception: Tuesday, 28 November 2017, at 19.00, Hotel Sheraton

ANNOTATIONS

1. Opening of the meeting

The Session will be opened by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic H.E. Gabriela Matečná.

2. Adoption of the agenda

In accordance with the established procedure, the Expert Level Meeting shall, at the beginning of the session, adopt the agenda. The chair will introduce the agenda and ask for its adoption. Preliminary time schedule is in Annex I to this document.

3. Review of FOREST EUROPE: discussion and decision on Working Group recommendations for future direction of the FOREST EUROPE process

The mandate to conduct the review of the FOREST EUROPE process was provided by the Seventh Ministerial Conference in Madrid in October 2015. The Madrid Ministerial Decision “Future Direction of FOREST EUROPE” affirmed the need for the process to be re-examined to respond to current and latest challenges and opportunities in order to maintain and enhance its contribution to sustainable forest management in Europe. The review was overseen by the Working Group on future direction of FOREST EUROPE established by the adoption of its Terms of Reference and Roadmap, and appointing the representatives of France and Ukraine as its co-chairs, at the Expert Level Meeting held in May 2016 in Bratislava. The Working Group elaborated the Final Report consisting of Recommendations for future direction of FOREST EUROPE (Part I.) and the Results of the Questionnaire Survey (Part II.). The Working Group recommendations have been built on the basis of online questionnaire survey as well as the discussions held at two meetings of the Working Group.

The co-chairs of the Working Group will introduce the Final Report with special focus on the proposed recommendations for future direction of FOREST EUROPE.

ELM is invited to:

- Take note of the Final Report of the Working Group. Revising the text of the Final Report itself is not expected.
- Consider and take decision on the implementation of recommendations on future direction of FOREST EUROPE containing actions to be taken.

Documentation:

ELM/2017/1/Final Report of the Working Group on future direction of FOREST EUROPE

4. Preparation of Roundtable Meeting on Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe

Following the Madrid Ministerial Decision adopted at the Extraordinary Ministerial Conference held in October 2015 in Madrid, FOREST EUROPE at an appropriate time and at latest by 2020, will explore possible ways to find common ground on the Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe. In accordance with the FOREST EUROPE Work Programme 2016-2020, a roundtable meeting shall be called in early 2018 concerning all options for the procedural follow-up of the Madrid Extraordinary Ministerial Decision.

As the ELM is expected to take decision on the preparation of Roundtable Meeting on LBA, the final date, venue and participation will be under discussion and for adoption.

5. Implementation of the FOREST EUROPE Work Programme – progress of Work Programme activities

The Expert Level Meeting held in May 2016 in Bratislava adopted the FOREST EUROPE Work Programme 2016-2020 addressing Madrid Ministerial Commitments. Implementation of the Work Programme and its activities seeks to promote sustainable forest management in signatory countries and to enhance cooperation on forest policies in the pan-European region with special focus on 6 thematic areas. Signatories and observers will be provided with an overview of the progress made in the implementation of activities of the FOREST EUROPE Work Programme 2016-2020.

a) Further development and updating of policies and tools for SFM

The Expert Group on the Implementation of the Updated pan-European Indicators has been established. At its first meeting (<http://foresteurope.org/event/11455/>) the Expert Group dealt with SFM assessment, implementation of updated SFM indicators and preparation of indicators subsets. The Expert Group continued in discussion on SFM indicators subsets at its second meeting (<http://foresteurope.org/event/12682/>). In cooperation with EFI (EFICEEC), the survey on the national sets of SFM indicators has been conducted within this activity. Members of the Expert Group have been invited to comment on the proposed reporting format and give inputs into the questionnaires on the Updated Pan-European Indicators for SFM for the updated SFM indicators.

Future work includes:

- Development of indicators subsets for assessing and communicating the achievements of SFM and addressing other policy areas.
- Considerations on tools to promote and assess SFM.

ELM is invited to take note of the information provided.

b) Monitoring and reporting of the progress towards SFM

Monitoring and reporting on forests and SFM are regular and ongoing activities within FOREST EUROPE. In this regard, since 2003 FOREST EUROPE has periodically presented the State of Europe's Forests Report (SoEF) that provides a comprehensive, up-to-date description of the status and trends of forests and forest management in Europe. To monitor progress towards sustainable forest management at regional and national levels, State of Europe's Forests reports follow the pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management developed and regularly updated by the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe - FOREST EUROPE.

Since its inception, the reports (2003, 2007, 2011, 2015) have provided ministers responsible for forests, other policy makers and experts from the sector and beyond with the recent, comprehensive information in a transparent way concerning all major aspects of SFM in the region and relevant trends, and thus facilitate evidence-based decision-making in forest policy and management and communication with broad public. SoEF reports are prepared for the Ministerial Conferences providing evidence for decisions and framework for commitments made by ministers.

Based on the results of the questionnaire survey on future direction of FOREST EUROPE, the State of Europe's Forests report together with the definition of SFM and C&I set proved to be one of the most recognised achievements of the process.

State of Europe's Forests reports are prepared in a collaborative manner, in which many international organisations, especially UNECE, FAO, EFI, etc., as well as large number of individual experts contributed significantly. National correspondents play a crucial role, providing national data through the Joint FOREST EUROPE/UNECE/FAO questionnaires on both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

The current FOREST EUROPE Work Programme covers these activities accordingly, reflecting that at the Madrid Conference, the ministers responsible for forests expressed their commitment to continue and enhance monitoring and reporting on the state and trends of European forests and progress towards SFM.

ELM will be updated on the progress of preparation of the State of Europe's Forests 2020 report, which has been carried out by Liaison Unit Bratislava, with assistance of regional partners (UNECE, FAO, EFI) as well as experts nominated by countries and independent experts assembled in the Advisory Group for the preparation of State of Europe's Forests 2020 and the Expert Group on the Implementation of the Updated pan-European Indicators for SFM. Liaison Unit Bratislava launched preparation of next edition of the report since the very beginning of its appointment, conducted all necessary tasks arising from the road map (see the background document ELM/2017/2) and searched for possibilities of cooperation with regional partners to this end. Liaison Unit Bratislava implements this action in a cost-effective manner, fully in accordance with the mandate adopted by the ELM in May 2016 (Work Programme - Action 4.2.) with allocated human capacities and financial resources provided by GCC countries in order to advance its implementation.

Simultaneously, the collaborative data collection system is being explored to continue the improvement of quality and harmonisation in data collection and reporting, both through further collaboration with FAO, regional bodies and partners for the further improvement of the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire (CFRQ). To this end, new ways of integrated data collection with FAO's Global Forest Resource Assessment are being prepared jointly by three secretariats (FRA Team, the Joint ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, LUB) with the aim to reduce national reporting burden for countries in the pan-European region. The integrated data collection is planned to be done jointly by ECE, FAO and FOREST EUROPE.

Achievement of this ambitious target in the stipulated time schedule (January 2018) requires a lot of efforts and mobilization of additional financial sources. Full technical integration of the pan-European questionnaires into FRA platform in order to secure full functionality and added value of this advanced system is related to further financial implications and at the time of preparation of the annotated agenda has not been resolved.

ELM is invited to:

- Exchange views on pan-European reporting and elaboration of the "State of Europe's Forests 2020";
- Provide recommendations on the FAO/ECE/FOREST EUROPE integrated data collection including the financial aspects.

Documentation:

ELM/2017/2/Current Status of preparation of the State of Europe's Forests 2020

c) Enhancing the role of SFM in a Green Economy

The Expert group on Green Jobs, Education and Training system was established to follow-up the efforts of FOREST EUROPE in the area of green jobs and to implement respective activities of the current FOREST EUROPE Work Programme.

The first meeting of the Expert Group held in January 2017 discussed the current situation regarding employment and possible green jobs in signatory countries as well as preparation of a workshop focusing on promoting green jobs in the forest sector. In accordance with the Work Programme, the Liaison Unit with assistance of the Expert Group organized the workshop on promoting green jobs held on June 27-28 in Bratislava. The workshop was prepared jointly by FOREST EUROPE, FAO and UNECE. The outcomes of the workshop as well as other workshop materials are available at the FOREST EUROPE website <http://foresteurope.org/event/11934/>.

The same topic was also addressed at the joint side event on green jobs at UNFF 12 session in New York held in May 2017, which was organized by the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section together with the Liaison Unit Bratislava.

Future work includes:

- Development of the guidelines on promotion of green jobs in the forest sector in the pan-European region based on previous and current work of FOREST EUROPE in

this field. The guidelines will be built on existing recommendations resulting from work done by the Liaison Unit Madrid in 2014, outcomes of ongoing activities, as well as other experience gathered by the Expert Group and experts from other sectors (mainly labor and education sectors) to implement necessary cross-sectoral approach to this activity. In this regard, cooperation with IUFRO and IFSA has been launched to map new skills requirements in private and public sectors as well as exploring possible cooperation with education sector and academia for more permanent input on skills requirements from the sector.

- Workshop on the competitiveness of the forest sector in a Green Economy (activity 4.3.3), which is currently under preparation in cooperation with Norway, EUSTAFOR and USSE.

ELM is invited to take note of the information provided.

d) Incorporating the value of forest ecosystem services in a Green Economy

Expert Group on Forest Ecosystem Services (FES) has been established with the aim to continue exploring different approaches to valuation of and payments for FES existing within the pan-European region. The first part of Analysis on Different Approaches and Methodologies on Valuation of FES was prepared by experts from the Slovak Republic and further discussed by the Expert Group at its first meeting held in September 2017 (<http://foresteurope.org/event/12060/>). Liaison Unit Bratislava has also launched preparatory work on a web-based portal on FES, which will serve as a platform for knowledge exchange and sharing best practices on valuation of and payments for FES implemented by signatories.

Future work includes:

- Elaboration of the second part of the analysis focused on payment mechanisms for FES;
- Collecting of case examples of payment mechanisms successfully implemented in signatory countries;
- Formulation of recommendations for implementation of valuation of and payments for FES;
- Finalizing the web-based portal on FES.

ELM is invited to take note of the information provided.

e) Protection of forests in a changing environment including their adaptation to climate change

The Expert Group on Adaptation of Forests to Climate Change has been established with the aim to exchange experience, share examples and assess the current state of implementation of adaptation measures in the pan-European region. The outcomes will be published in a publication covering the existing knowledge base and work done up to this date in signatory countries and by international observer organizations, and identifying relevant policy recommendations. The core actions discussed at the first meeting of the Expert Group held in September 2017 were the survey on the implementation of adaptation measures in signatory countries as well as preparation of the conceptual notes for upcoming workshops to be scheduled for 2018 (<http://foresteurope.org/event/12057/>).

Future work includes:

- Online survey on the current state of implementation of adaptation measures in the pan-European region;
- Workshop on agroforestry strategies for promoting adaptation to climate change and combating desertification, land degradation and drought;
- Workshop on Protection of forests against natural hazards and human induced threats.

ELM is invited to take note of the information provided.

f) Enhancing the social dimension of SFM in the context of the benefits of forests to human health and well-being

With the purpose of advancing the implementation of the Work Programme - Action 4.6 “Enhancing the social dimension of SFM in the context of the benefits of forests on human health and well-being” the Expert Group on Human Health and Well-being was established.

Future work includes:

- Review of research resources/scientific evidence published in recent twenty years in Europe, such as research papers, project outcomes, best practices, surveys pertinent to social and cultural aspects of SFM in the context of human health and well-being;
- Guide and prepare an international workshop on social and cultural benefits of forests, such as forest healing, eco-therapy, forest recreation, eco-tourism and Forest Pedagogics contributing to human health and well-being;
- Identify the recommendations for the integration of social and cultural aspects into Sustainable Forest Management increasing diversity of employment and entrepreneurship in the forest sector;
- Prepare a publication containing the best practices and policy recommendations.

ELM is invited to take note of the information provided.

6. Communication and outreach

Delegates will be updated on examples of communication activities related to the implementation of FOREST EUROPE commitments in chosen signatory countries (e.g. Austrian national set of indicators for SFM assessment, European INTEGRATE Network, etc.) .

ELM will be briefed on communication activities undertaken and planned by the Liaison Unit.

Review of 2017 activities:

- Campaign “International Day of Forests” <http://foresteurope.org/international-day-forests-2017-campaign>;
- Brochure about FOREST EUROPE http://foresteurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/booklet_EN.pdf
- Short animated video about FOREST EUROPE <http://foresteurope.org/new-forest-europe-whiteboard-video/>;
- Newsletter August/2017 <http://mailchi.mp/63409c6a0205/forest-europe-newsletter-august2017>;
- Development of the FOREST EUROPE Communication Forum <http://foresteurope.org/forestforum/communication-platform/?wpforo=signin>;
- Promotion of workshop and expert group meetings through social media;
- Info-letter for Universities in Europe, distributed together with IFSA supporting letter and a short animated video about FOREST EUROPE;
- Distribution of promo materials – to promote FOREST EUROPE brand;
- Campaign for European Forest Week 2017 (October 2017): Bioeconomy and Forests http://foresteurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Activity_booklet.pdf;
- Translation of the campaign material into German http://foresteurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Forest-Europe-Week_German.pdf and Russian http://foresteurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/European-Forest-Week_Russian.pdf;
- Pool “TOP forest product in my life” <http://foresteurope.org/top-forest-product-life/>
- Video teaser supporting the 4th European Forest Week <http://foresteurope.org/bioeconomy-european-forest-week-2017/>;
- Movie about the adaptation of forests to climate change and about green jobs.

7. Any other business

ELM is invited to decide on two requests for observer status made by the Association Green Turkey and the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS).

ELM may wish to exchange information on upcoming international events.

8. Closure of the meeting

LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

ELM/2017/1/Final Report of the Working Group on future direction of FOREST EUROPE

ELM/2017/2/Current Status of preparation of the State of Europe's Forests 2020

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online agenda

INDICATIVE TIME SCHEDULE

28 November 2017	
10.00–10.10	Opening of the meeting (Agenda Item 1)
10.10–10.15	Adoption of the agenda (Agenda Item 2)
10.15–11.15	Review of FOREST EUROPE: discussion and decision on Working Group recommendations for future direction of the FOREST EUROPE process (Agenda Item 3)
11.15–11.45	Coffee break
11.45–13.00	Review of FOREST EUROPE: discussion and decision on Working Group recommendations for future direction of the FOREST EUROPE process (Agenda Item 3 cont.)
13.00–15.00	Lunch break
15.00–16.30	Review of FOREST EUROPE: discussion and decision on Working Group recommendations for future direction of the FOREST EUROPE process (Agenda Item 3 cont.)
16.30– 17.00	Coffee break
17.00 – 18.00	Preparation of Roundtable Meeting on Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe (Agenda Item 4)
19.00	Reception
29 November 2017	
9.00–10.30	Implementation of the FOREST EUROPE Work Programme - progress of the Work Programme activities (Agenda Item 5)
10.30–11.00	Coffee break
11.00–12.00	Implementation of the FOREST EUROPE Work Programme - progress of the Work Programme activities (Agenda Item 5 cont.)
12.00–14.00	Lunch break
14.00–15.00	Communication and outreach (Agenda Item 6)
15.00–15.30	Coffee break
15.30–16.00	Communication and outreach (Agenda Item 6 cont.)
16.00–16.45	Any other business(Agenda Item 7)
16.45–17.00	Closure of the meeting (Agenda Item 8)