

**Statement by the FOREST EUROPE - Liaison Unit Bratislava on the
Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting
at the thirteenth session of the UNFF,
7-11 May 2018, UNHQ New York**

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The Liaison Unit Bratislava on behalf of FOREST EUROPE highly appreciates the progress made by the Forum and its ongoing work related to the reporting format for voluntary national reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030, including the United Nations Forest Instrument and voluntary national contributions. The development of a global set of forest-related indicators is much welcomed and acknowledged by the FOREST EUROPE secretariat.

Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, known as FOREST EUROPE and its activities play an important role in the mobilization of European countries to contribute actively to the implementation of the Global Forests Goals and Targets, as adopted in the UN Strategic Plan for Forests, and to collect and provide relevant data for the related reporting.

Monitoring and reporting on forests and Sustainable Forest Management represent the regular activities of FOREST EUROPE. At the Madrid ministerial conference in 2015, the ministers responsible for forests expressed their commitment to continue and enhance the monitoring and reporting on the state of forests and its trends, as well as the progress towards Sustainable Forest Management. Moreover, usage of the updated pan-European set of indicators for SFM, now composed of 34 quantitative and 11 qualitative indicators, was highlighted in this regard. We are pleased that the global set of 21 forest-related indicators developed by Collaborative Partnership on Forests largely overlaps with the information collected within FOREST EUROPE set of indicators.

Ongoing reporting on FOREST EUROPE indicators for SFM is conducted collaboratively by FOREST EUROPE, UNECE and FAO in the period March – October 2018. Besides pan-European assessment of SFM based on the quantitative indicators on forest resources, FOREST EUROPE extended the reporting on qualitative indicators on forest policies also to monitor the progress towards the Goals for European Forests and the European 2020 Targets for Forests as agreed by the European ministers responsible for forests in 2011 at the 6th Ministerial Conference in Oslo. Reporting on these pan-European goals and targets is now integrated into the ongoing pan-European reporting.

Considering the fact that the pan-European reporting content covers similar issues as the proposed voluntary national reporting to the Forum, the countries in the pan-

European region may largely satisfy reporting to the Forum by information collected for this scheme.

Pan-European reporting on qualitative indicators for SFM, including reporting on “Goals and 2020 Targets for European Forests,” will focus on **SFM measures and actions at the national level, thus providing a broad range of good practices examples for peer learning related to the voluntary national contributions towards achieving the Global Forest Goals and Targets of the UN Strategic Plan.**

The regular report on the State of Europe’s Forests, based on the pan-European criteria and indicators for SFM will be prepared for the eighth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, to be held in Bratislava in 2020. The study will serve as background information to shape political and technical discussions on future opportunities and challenges, and political responses to these developments.

All these activities are harmonized in order to reduce the reporting burden put on countries in the pan-European region and to their readiness jointly with the FOREST EUROPE process to provide relevant inputs to the “flagship study” to be produced by the Forum secretariat with its partners in 2021.

FOREST EUROPE – Liaison Unit Bratislava cooperated jointly with UNECE and FAO on organization of the regional workshop, held in April 2018, for national correspondents of the countries in the region to improve their knowledge and readiness for both the global Forest Resources Assessment and the pan-European reporting. The team of FOREST EUROPE – Liaison Unit Bratislava participated on elaboration of the guidance documents for the reporting and will also participate in the review process of national reports and provide additional consultancy for the national correspondents during reporting and review.

FOREST EUROPE – Liaison Unit Bratislava fully supports further harmonization and synchronization of reporting on forests, which contribute to reduction of reporting burden. In this regard, the proposed time period in 2019 closely follows the regional pan-European data collection, as well as the “flagship study” to be produced in 2021, will closely follow study on the State of Europe’s Forests to be issued in 2020.

FOREST EUROPE – Liaison Unit Bratislava reaffirms its commitment to contribute to the improvement of quality and harmonization in data collection and reporting on SFM through collaboration with all partners. We also express the commitment to support joint work towards the promotion of sustainable forest management and to ensure that a full range of benefits from forests is taken into account in its assessment.

Liaison Unit Bratislava on behalf of the FOREST EUROPE process looks forward to the further cooperation with the UN Forum on Forests and its Secretariat as partner organizations in all matters related to sustainable management of forests at the global level.