



RESOLUTION H3

Forestry Cooperation with Countries with Economies in Transition

The Signatory States and the European Community,

- A. Recognising the importance of the forestry sector to Countries with Economies in Transition, in relation to the development of their political, economic and social conditions as they adjust their former centrally-planned economies to market economies,
- B. Being aware of the possible consequences of the economic transformation process in the Countries with Economies in Transition for the sustainable management of forests and for forest conservation,
- C. Emphasising the increasing need for broadly-based bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the forestry sector, and noting with appreciation the existing cooperation and the activities, at national, regional and interregional levels, of programmes and organisations¹, including the Commission of the European Community, which are involved in cooperation with Countries with Economies in Transition,
- D. Emphasising the need for initiative and priority-setting by the Countries with Economies in Transition to promote European cooperation which benefits the forestry sector in general,

¹ Reference list, not exclusive:

ICP Forests:	International Co-operative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests
ECE:	Economic Commission for Europe
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organization
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP:	United Nations Environment Programme
GEF:	Global Environment Facility
IUFRO:	International Union of Forestry Research Organizations
EBRD:	European Bank of Reconstruction and Development

- E. Recalling the results of the Dobris (Czechoslovakia, 1991) as well as of the Luzern (Switzerland, 1993) conferences of European environment ministers, and in particular the Environmental Action Programme for Central and Eastern Europe,
- F. Being aware of the generally adverse impact on the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests in Countries with Economies in Transition arising from air pollution, loss of biodiversity and genetic resources, fires and lowered ground water tables and, in certain areas, nuclear radiation,
- G. Noting that requests have been made for assistance in the monitoring of forest resources, especially in relation to their state of health over large areas,
- H. Recognising the particular importance of programmes to support Countries with Economies in Transition in their endeavour to protect their forest resources and biodiversity and the need to enhance sustainable development of their forest and forest products sector,
- I. Recognising the human and natural potentials within the Countries with Economies in Transition and the importance of the existing cooperation between them;

commit themselves to promote and support cooperation for mutual benefits, within the framework of the following General Guidelines, in order to provide relevant expertise and advice, and to invite appropriate organisations and institutions to do likewise.

PART I: GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Countries with Economies in Transition should be encouraged to promote actions for the sustainable management of forest resources, in conformity with the General Guidelines developed in the resolutions of the Helsinki Ministerial Conference.
2. The Signatory States and the European Community should support and complement these actions, based on the principle of partnership and taking into account the needs, priorities and commitments of the Countries with Economies in Transition themselves.
3. Cooperation may take the form of transfer of knowledge, and of bilateral and multilateral projects, and should focus on technical, scientific, institutional and legal matters.
4. Within bilateral contacts, twinning arrangements should be promoted between institutions such as universities, vocational schools and research institutes as well as between individuals.
5. Cooperation should be further developed in particular in the following areas: strengthening of institutions, development of the legal and policy framework for the sustainable development of forestry and the forest products sector; and, in this context, activities to support the development of market oriented and ecologically sound enterprises.

6. Adequate assessments of forest resources and of environmental impacts should take place before initiating cooperation projects which are likely to have major consequences for the transboundary environment, in accordance with the ECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (1991).
7. Countries should develop, by mutual cooperation, information exchange and monitoring systems related to transboundary factors causing forest damage and forest decline, such as air pollution, fires, nuclear radiation, game and others; and should cooperate in preventing and combatting damage from such harmful agents.
8. Where coordination of multilateral cooperation initiatives is necessary, this should be done by existing institutions.

PART II: FUTURE ACTION

9. The member countries of the ECE, FAO, UNEP, UNDP, World Bank and EBRD, as well as the European Community, and the international Non-Governmental Organisations should consider activities aiming at promoting progress in the topics mentioned in the General Guidelines.
10. The Signatory States and the European Community will promote the transfer of knowledge, bilateral and/or multilateral contacts, mutually beneficial joint research projects and the preparation of national forest programmes.
11. The Signatory States and the European Community will promote professional contacts, the transfer and publication of information, documentation and professional literature, exchanges of experts and students, educational workshops, seminars, conferences, training courses and other forms of education, with the participation of groups of specialists from Countries with Economies in Transition and from European countries with market economies.
12. The Signatory States and the European Community agree to support existing efforts aimed at promoting the development of the national forestry databases of Countries with Economies in Transition and their linkage to existing European databases.