

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE  
PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE



PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND  
LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY

Joint position of the MCPFE  
and the EfE/PEBLDS on  
**THE PAN-EUROPEAN  
UNDERSTANDING  
OF THE LINKAGE BETWEEN  
THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH  
AND SUSTAINABLE FOREST  
MANAGEMENT**



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## Preface

The conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity requires joint involvement and efforts of a multitude of stakeholders. This recognition calls for new approaches and strong cooperation between sectors, such as biodiversity and forestry, particularly at the regional and national levels.

The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) and the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS), under the Ministerial Process Environment for Europe (Efe), have been implementing joint activities since 1997. In 2003, the respective Ministerial Conferences, held in Vienna (4<sup>th</sup> MCPFE) and in Kyiv (5<sup>th</sup> Efe), adopted a Framework for Cooperation to carry out a number of activities as regional contributions to both the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). The Framework follows up the decisions taken by the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the CBD (The Hague, 2002) and the Expanded Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity of the CBD, as well as Resolution 3/4 of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of UNFF (Geneva, 2003).

The facilitation of the application of the Ecosystem Approach (EA) principles adopted by the Parties to the CBD is a priority for the PEBLDS, as evident in the Kyiv Resolution on Biodiversity.

The Framework for Cooperation emphasised, inter alia, a need for clarifying the relationship between the EA and sustainable forest management (SFM), building on the MCPFE achievements on SFM at the pan-European level. Consequently, the MCPFE/PEBLDS Ad Hoc Working Group to elaborate on the relationship between SFM and the EA within the European context was held in 2004 (Krakow, Poland). This action followed the commitments embraced in the MCPFE Work Programme and the PEBLDS Forest Biodiversity Action Plan and contributed to the implementation of Vienna Resolution 4 and the Kyiv commitments.

The Joint Position on the Pan-European Understanding of the Linkage between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management, by the MCPFE and the Efe/PEBLDS presents the outcome of the Ad-Hoc Working Group followed by a series of consultations between the two Ministerial Processes. The joint efforts resulted in the agreement that Sustainable Forest Management in Europe, as developed by the MCPFE, is consistent with the application of the Ecosystem Approach to forest ecosystems.

With this publication we hope to demonstrate the efforts that the pan-European region made to develop a common understanding on the links between SFM and the EA. We believe that sharing this information can also benefit other regions.



Piotr Borkowski  
Head of the MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw



Sylvi Ofstad Samstag  
Chair of the PEBLDS Council

## Introduction

The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) is the high level forest policy process, addressing all dimensions of sustainable forest management (SFM), including forest biodiversity issues. Environment for Europe is the high-level process for environment related cooperation in Europe. Within the ministerial process Environment for Europe, the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) constitutes the coordinating framework for efforts to conserve biological and landscape diversity in Europe, including forest biodiversity.

Both the Ministers responsible for forests of 40 European countries and the European Community at the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (Vienna, April 2003), and the European Ministers responsible for the environment at the 5<sup>th</sup> “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference (Kiev, May 2003), endorsed a Framework for Cooperation between the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) and the Environment for Europe/Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (EfE/PEBLDS).

The clarification of the linkages between the Ecosystem Approach (EA) and sustainable forest management, building on the work done so far by the MCPFE on SFM, is one of the joint activities within the Framework for Cooperation. The Framework follows up, therefore, on the decisions taken by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the CBD, Expanded Work Programme on Forest Biological Diversity, 2002) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) (2003, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, Resolution 3/4, para 8) with respect to clarification of the two concepts at the regional pan-European level.

Following the MCPFE Work Programme and the PEBLDS Forest Biodiversity Action Plan, the session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on “Development of Pan-European Understanding of the Linkage between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management” took place on 19-21 April 2004 in Krakow, Poland. The outcome of the Ad Hoc Working Group is presented in the Annex to the Joint Position of the MCPFE and the PEBLDS/EfE on the Pan-European Understanding of the Linkage Between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management.

This statement, building on the outcomes of the above Ad Hoc Working Group and approved by both the MCPFE

Expert Level Meeting on 5-6 September, 2005 in Warsaw, Poland, as well as the PEBLDS Council on 22 February 2006 in Plitvitce Lakes, Croatia, at the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, aims at contributing to implementation of the MCPFE Work Programme, the PEBLDS Forest Biodiversity Action Plan, and the Expanded Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity of the CBD, as referred in the CBD COP Decision VI/22, paragraphs 15 and 18, as well as to the CBD COP Decision VII/11 and the UNFF Resolution 3/4 adopted at its 3<sup>rd</sup> session. It is a concrete effort to make the EA operational through application of SFM at the implementation level.

## Pan-European Understanding of the Linkage between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management

At the pan-European level the concept of SFM is defined in Resolution H1: General Guidelines for Sustainable Management of Forests in Europe of the Helsinki Conference (1993) and developed through all other commitments, resolutions and declarations of the Ministerial Conferences held in Strasburg – 1990, Helsinki – 1993, Lisbon – 1998 and Vienna – 2003. Taking them all into account it is understood by the MCPFE and the PEBLDS processes that SFM, as defined and further developed by the MCPFE, is consistent with the application of the Ecosystem Approach to forest ecosystems in the pan-European region.

The conceptual linkages between SFM, as defined by the MCPFE, and the EA are described in details in Table 1 of the Annex. The existing tools and processes, the MCPFE and the PEBLDS consider as appropriate for implementing the Ecosystem Approach through SFM in Europe’s forests are also listed in the Annex which is an integral part of this document.

The MCPFE and the PEBLDS note, following the FAO Forest Management Working Paper entitled “Sustainable forest management and the ecosystem approach: Two concepts, one goal” that the two concepts aim at promoting conservation and management practices which are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, and which generate and maintain benefits for both present and future generations.



The MCPFE and the PEBLDS welcome the recognition by the CBD (Decision VII/11) that SFM can be considered as a means of applying the Ecosystem Approach to forests. On the issue of cross-sectoral integration and inter-sectoral collaboration (COP 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Kuala Lumpur, 2004: Decision VII/11) to further integrate the concepts of the Ecosystem Approach and SFM, the MCPFE and the PEBLDS consider that the principles of national forest programmes, following the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, adopt a holistic and inter-sectoral approach, the integration with national sustainable development strategies as well as consistency with international commitments. This approach was adopted as Resolution VI: Strengthening synergies for sustainable forest management in Europe through cross-sectoral cooperation and national forest programmes at the Vienna Ministerial Conference in 2003.

The issues of interactions between forests and other biome/habitat types within a landscape are considered by the MCPFE and the PEBLDS mainly as the issues to be taken at the implementation level, although already recognized at the ministerial conferences. In the European context the MCPFE addressed the concern about the effects on other ecosystems in Resolution H1: “Sustainable Forest Management is the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems.”

Conservation of forest biodiversity is considered by the MCPFE and the PEBLDS as an integral part of SFM. Forest biodiversity was a concern at the Helsinki Conference (1993) where the Ministers adopted general guidelines for the conservation of biodiversity of European forests (Resolution H 2). At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Conference (Lisbon, 1998) the Ministers adopted a set of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, subsequently revised and endorsed at the Ministerial Conference in Vienna (2003), which includes Criterion 4: Maintenance, Conservation and Appropriate Enhancement of Biological Diversity in Forest Ecosystems. Furthermore, the area of forests and other wooded land protected to conserve biodiversity, landscapes and specific natural elements are pan-European indicators for SFM.



Plitvice Lakes, Croatia. Photo: T.J.



The Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*); Photo: G.O.



The Tatra Mountains. Photo: S.M.



*Boloria* sp. Photo: Ag.DT

## ANNEX

### **to the Joint Position of the MCPFE and the PEBLDS/ Efe on the Pan-European Understanding of the Linkage between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management**

Outcome of the session of the MCPFE and Efe/PEBLDS Ad Hoc Working Group on “Development of the Pan-European Understanding of the linkage between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management”, (19-21 April, 2004, Krakow, Poland)

### **1. Introduction**

The Ad Hoc Working Group on “*Development of the Pan-European Understanding of the Linkage between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management*” took place on 19-21 April in Krakow, Poland. The meeting was organised by the MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw in cooperation with the PEBLDS Secretariat. The Government of Poland contributed to the organisation of the meeting by funding a field trip to the Tuszyna Forest District (Regional Directorate of the State Forests, Krosno).

Fifty one participants from 23 countries, the European Commission and eight international organisations took part in the debates.

Mr. Piotr Borkowski, Head of the MCPFE Liaison Unit Warsaw, opened the session and welcomed the participants. Dr. Edward Lenart, Deputy Director of the Forestry Department, Polish Ministry of the Environment, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Polish Minister of the Environment. Ms. Ivonne Higuero addressed words of welcome on behalf of UNEP/PEBLDS.

Mr. Ingwald Gschwandtl (Austria) was elected by the participants as the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group, and presided the plenary sessions. The two discussion groups were chaired by Ms. Conceicao Ferreira (Portugal) and Ms. Ivonne Higuero (UNEP/PEBLDS). Practical examples of application of the EA through SFM in forest ecosystems were demonstrated and discussed during the field trip.

### **2. Mandate of the Working Group**

Both the European Ministers responsible for forests at the Vienna Conference (April 2003) the European Ministers responsible for the environment at the 5<sup>th</sup> Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Kiev, May 2003) endorsed the Framework for Cooperation between the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) and the Environment for Europe/ Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (Efe/PEBLDS).

The Framework for Cooperation proposed, as one of the joint activities, the clarification between the Ecosystem Approach (EA) and sustainable forest management (SFM), building on the work done so far by the MCPFE on SFM. The Framework thus follows up on the decisions taken by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the CBD, Expanded Work Programme on Forest Biological Diversity, 2002) and the United Nations Forum on Forest (UNFF) (2003, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session, Resolution 3/4, para 8) with respect to the clarification of the two concepts at the regional pan-European level.

To follow up on the decisions it was decided at the MCPFE Expert Level Meeting, October 2003 in Vienna, to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group to elaborate on the relationship between SFM and the EA within the European context and, in particular, to elaborate on the clarification between the two concepts based on the MCPFE experience and achievements with regards to SFM. The PEBLDS Council at the Madrid Conference (January, 2004) agreed to support the Ad Hoc Working Group under proposal of the Forest Biodiversity Action Plan.

This action aimed at contributing to the implementation of the MCPFE Work Programme, the PEBLDS Forest Biodiversity Action Plan and the Expanded Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity of the CBD, as referred in the CBD COP Decision VI/22, paragraphs 15 and 18.

### 3. Background

The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe is a high level political initiative for cooperation on the most important concerns and challenges regarding forests and forestry in Europe. This process is based on a series of conferences at the ministerial level and specific follow-up procedures. The aspects of the highest political interest and concerns are dealt with by the ministers responsible for forests at the Ministerial Conferences. The decisions and commitments are expressed in the MCPFE General Declarations and Resolutions and further specified in the Work Programme that integrates actions to be taken at the pan-European level. In addition, it is the Member States' responsibility to implement the commitments at a national level.

Launched in 1990, this political platform for dialogue on European forest issues involves around 40 European countries and the European Community. Furthermore, non-European countries and international organizations participate as observers allowing non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations to contribute with their knowledge and ideas.

Since 1990, four Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe have taken place. These are regarded as milestones in the development of international forest policy: in Strasbourg (1990), Helsinki (1993), Lisbon (1998), and Vienna (2003). The 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe will take place in Warsaw. The MCPFE also recognizes the significance of these commitments at the regional and global levels. It contributes to implementation of the forest related decisions of the UNCED and their follow-up processes within the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). The MCPFE obtained observer status to the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and participates in its work. Furthermore, the MCPFE contributes to the provisions of the United Nations Conventions, particularly the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Expanded Work Programme on Forest Biological Diversity.

With regard to biological diversity, and in addition to the two specific resolutions (H2: General Guidelines for the

Conservation of the Biodiversity of European Forests and V4: Conserving and Enhancing Forest Biological Diversity in Europe) the MCPFE has implemented the "Work Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems 1997-2000" (Biodiversity Work Programme) in co-operation with the European Ministers responsible for the environment (Ministerial Process Environment for Europe/PEBLDS).

The Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy, endorsed in 1995 at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Conference „Environment for Europe”, held in Sofia, Bulgaria, is a European response to support implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Strategy introduces a coordinating and unifying framework for strengthening of and building on existing initiatives. It does not aim to introduce new legislation or programmes, but to fill the gaps where initiatives are not implemented to their full potential or fail to achieve the objectives as desired. Furthermore, the Strategy seeks for more effective integration of the ecological considerations into all relevant socio-economic sectors, and will increase public participation in, and awareness and acceptance of, the conservation interests.

At the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference Environment for Europe in Kyiv, Ukraine, the Ministers of Environment and Heads of Delegations of the States participating in the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity process endorsed the Resolution on Biodiversity, and agreed to halt the loss of biological diversity at all levels by 2010. The Ministers committed to achieving nine sub-targets through national efforts and regional cooperation in the key areas of forests and biodiversity, agriculture and biodiversity, the Pan-European Ecological Network, invasive alien species, financing of biodiversity, biodiversity monitoring and indicators, and public participation and awareness. The PEBLDS has adopted 7 action plans for implementation of activities to achieve the sub-targets in the pan-European region with special focus on Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia, including an action plan on forests and biodiversity to be carried out jointly with the MCPFE.

## 4. The Outcomes

### 4.1. General Conclusions

The participants of the working group welcomed the recognition by the CBD (Decision VII/11) that SFM can be considered as a means of applying the Ecosystem Approach to forests. They also noted that the FAO Forest Management Working Paper titled “*Sustainable Forest Management and the Ecosystem Approach: Two concepts, one goal*”<sup>1</sup> states that the two concepts aim at promoting conservation and management practices which are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, and which generate and maintain benefits for both present and future generations.

The participants stated that at the pan-European level the concept of SFM is defined in Resolution H1: General Guidelines for Sustainable Management of Forests in Europe of the Helsinki Conference (1993), and developed through all other commitments, resolutions and declarations of the Ministerial Conferences held in Strasbourg – 1990, Helsinki – 1993, Lisbon – 1998 and Vienna – 2003. Taking them all into account the analysis made in the meeting showed SFM to be the concrete means of applying the Ecosystem Approach to forest ecosystems in the European region. (see Section 4.2 below)

Concerning the request of the Conference of the Parties to CBD (COP 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Kuala Lumpur, 2004: Decision VII/11) to further integrate the concepts of the Ecosystem Approach and SFM, with special emphasis on three critical issues, the participants expressed the following view:

- **Better cross-sectoral integration and inter-sectoral collaboration:** At the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (Vienna - 2003), the Ministers signed Resolution V1 on strengthening synergies for sustainable forest management in Europe through cross-sectoral cooperation and national forest programmes. The principles of national forest programmes, following the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, adopt a holistic and inter-sectoral approach, the integration with national sustainable development strategies as well as consistency with international commitments recognising synergies between international forest-related initiatives and conventions.

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<sup>1</sup>FAO (2003), Sustainable forest management and the ecosystem approach: two concepts, one goal. Wilkie M.L., Holmgren P. and Castaneda F., FAO Working Paper FM 25

- Interactions between forests and other biome/habitat types within a landscape:** The participants of the meeting considered that this is mainly an issue to be taken at the implementation level, although already recognised at the ministerial conferences. The definition of SFM in the European context addressed the concern about the effects on other ecosystems in Resolution H1: Sustainable Forest Management is the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, the relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems.”<sup>2</sup>
- Biodiversity conservation issues, in particular through continued development of criteria, indicators and forest management certification programmes and including protected areas:** Biodiversity was a concern at the Helsinki Conference (1993) where the Ministers adopted general guidelines for the conservation of biodiversity of European forests (Resolution H2). At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Conference (Lisbon, 1998) the Ministers adopted a set of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, which includes Criterion 4: Maintenance, Conservation and Appropriate Enhancement of Biological Diversity in Forest Ecosystems. The pan-European indicators were further developed and endorsed at the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (Vienna, 2003) as “Improved Pan-European Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management”. Under Criterion 4 the list of indicators includes among others, Indicator 4.9 (Protected forests): area of forest and other wooded land protected to conserve biodiversity, landscapes and specific natural elements, according to the MCPFE Assessment Guidelines. In this regard, protected areas are seen as an integral part of SFM.
- Conservation of forest biological diversity** was again addressed in Vienna by adoption of Resolution V4: Conserving and Enhancing Forest Biological Diversity in Europe, which includes Annex 1: Framework for Cooperation between the MCPFE and the Environment for Europe/Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (EfE/PEBLDS), and Annex 2: MCPFE Assessment Guidelines for Protected and Protective Forest and Other Wooded Land in Europe.



The participants of AHWG visiting the beavers' habitat, Tuszyna, Poland. Photo: M.G.



Selective cutting is a part of forest sustainable management. Photo: E.M.



Weeding in forest nursery gives employment to local people. Photo: E.M.



Christmas trees are one of the range of benefits of forests. Photo: E.M.

<sup>2</sup> MCPFE (1993), Resolution H1 Preamble, Para D.

## 4.2. Conceptual linkages between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management

EA Principle	MCPFE References
<p><b>Principle 1:</b> The objectives of management of land, water and living resources are a matter of societal choice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Participation (<b>Resolution V1:</b> Strengthen synergies for sustainable forest management in Europe through cross-sectoral co-operation and National Forest Programmes; <b>Annex to V1:</b> MCPFE Approach to National Forest Programmes in Europe)</li> <li>■ Partnership for implementation (<b>Resolution L1:</b> People, Forests and Forestry – Enhancement of Socio-Economic Aspects of Sustainable Forest Management; <b>Annex to V1</b>)</li> <li>■ Good governance (<b>Vienna Living Forest Summit Declaration:</b> European Forests – Common Benefits, Shared Responsibilities, para 20)</li> <li>■ Partnership and co-operation (<b>Resolution V4:</b> Conserving and Enhancing Forest Biological Diversity in Europe; <b>Annex 1 to V4:</b> Framework for Co-operation Between MCPFE and Environment for Europe/PEBLDS)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 2:</b> Management should be decentralized to the lowest appropriate level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Decentralization (<b>Resolution H1:</b> General Guidelines for Sustainable Management of Forests in Europe, para D; <b>V1; Annex to V1</b>)</li> <li>■ Good governance and forest law enforcement (<b>Vienna Declaration, para 20</b>)</li> <li>■ Institutional and policy reform (<b>Resolution V1</b>)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 3:</b> Ecosystem managers should consider the effects (actual or potential) of their activities on adjacent and other ecosystems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Impacts on other ecosystems (duty of care) (<b>Resolution H1, para D:</b> “The concern about the effects on other ecosystems was taken into account in the definition of SFM in the European context”; <b>Resolution V1</b>)</li> <li>■ Holistic and inter-sectoral approach (<b>Resolution V1</b>)</li> <li>■ Integration with national sustainable development strategies (<b>Resolution V1</b>)</li> <li>■ Recommendations for site selection for afforestation (<b>Resolution V4; Annex to Framework of Co-operation:</b> Priority Themes for Co-operation Between MCPFE and Efe/PEBLDS for the period 2003-2005)</li> <li>■ Precautionary principle (<b>Resolution H2:</b> General Guidelines for the Conservation of the Biodiversity of European Forests)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 4:</b> Recognizing potential gains from management, there is usually a need to understand and manage the ecosystem in an economic context. Any such ecosystem-management programme should: (a) reduce those market distortions that adversely affect biological diversity; (b) align incentives to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use; (c) internalise costs and benefits in the given ecosystem to the extent feasible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Economic function is one of the pillars of SFM (<b>Resolution H1; Resolution L1; Resolution V2:</b> Enhancing Economic Viability of Sustainable Forest Management in Europe, <b>Annex to Resolution L2:</b> Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management)</li> <li>■ Identifying and removing unintended impediments (<b>Resolution V 2, para 9</b>)</li> <li>■ Removing distortions and failures of policies resulting in loss of forest biodiversity (<b>Resolution V4, para 6</b>)</li> <li>■ Promoting the incorporation of the results of assessment and valuation of wood and non-wood goods and services into national economic and natural-resources accounting systems (<b>Resolution L1, para 10</b>)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 5:</b> Conservation of ecosystem structure and functioning, in order to maintain ecosystem services, should be a priority target of the EA.</p> <p><b>Principle 6:</b> Ecosystems must be managed within the limits of their functioning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conserving functional forest ecosystems (<b>Resolution H1 para 3</b>)</li> <li>■ The precautionary principle (<b>Resolution H2</b>)</li> <li>■ Health and vitality and biodiversity (<b>Resolution H2 and Resolution V4 especially para 15</b>)</li> <li>■ Protective forests (<b>Annex 2 to Resolution V4:</b> MCPFE Assessment Guidelines for Protected and Protective Forest and Other Wooded Land in Europe).</li> <li>■ Coherent approach to obtaining sufficient knowledge about the ecosystem functions and services (<b>Resolution H2</b>)</li> </ul>



<p><b>Principle 7:</b> The EA should be at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Appropriate scale (<b>Resolution H1 para 4</b>)</li> <li>■ Permanent sample plots for monitoring forest ecosystems conditions (<b>Resolution S1: European Network of Permanent Sample Plots for Monitoring of Forest Ecosystems</b>)</li> <li>■ Network for Research into Forest Ecosystems (<b>Resolution S6: European Network for Research into Forest Ecosystems</b>)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 8:</b> Recognizing the varying temporal scales and lag-effects that characterize ecosystemic processes, objectives for ecosystem management should be set for the long term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Future generations (<b>Resolution H1</b>)</li> <li>■ Long-term commitments in nfps (<b>Resolution V1</b>)</li> <li>■ Long-term commitment for protected and protective forest areas (<b>Annex 2 of Resolution V4</b>)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 9:</b> Management must recognize that change is inevitable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Periodically updated forest management plans (<b>Resolution H1, para 4</b>)</li> <li>■ Iterative process of nfps (<b>Resolution V1</b>)</li> <li>■ Adaptive management (e.g. to climate change) (<b>Resolution S4: Adapting the Management of Mountain Forests to new Environmental Conditions; Resolution H4 para 9; Resolution V5: Climate Change and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe, para 7,8, 9,10</b>)</li> <li>■ Forest management and landscape planning (<b>Resolution V4, para 15</b>)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 10:</b> The EA should seek the appropriate balance between, and integration of, conservation and use of biological diversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Balance between use and conservation (<b>Resolution H2</b>)</li> <li>■ Forest biodiversity (<b>Resolution V4</b>)</li> <li>■ Economic viability (<b>Resolution L1, Resolution V2</b>)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 11:</b> The EA should consider all forms of relevant information, including scientific and indigenous and local knowledge, innovations and practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Cultural and social dimensions of SFM, traditional knowledge (<b>Resolution V3: Preserving and Enhancing the Social and Cultural Dimensions of Sustainable Forest Management in Europe</b>)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principle 12:</b> The EA should involve all relevant sectors of society and scientific disciplines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Innovations (<b>Resolution H1, para12; Vienna Declaration, para 17; Resolution V2, para 11</b>)</li> <li>■ Science, research (<b>Resolution S1; Resolution S2: Conservation of Forest Genetic Resources; Resolution S3: Decentralized European Data Bank on Forest Fires, Resolution S4; Resolution S5: Expansion of the EUROSILVA Network of Research on Tree Physiology; Resolution S6; Vienna Declaration, para 17; Resolution V3, Resolution V4, Resolution V5</b>)</li> <li>■ Raising awareness (principles of nfps, <b>Annex to Resolution V1</b>)</li> <li>■ Strengthening the link between the forest sector and society by increasing dialogue and mutual understanding (<b>Lisbon Declaration</b>)</li> <li>■ Promoting partnerships, public awareness, public relations and transparency in forestry (<b>Resolution L1, para1</b>)</li> <li>■ Promoting training, education, capacity building (<b>Resolution L1; Resolution V1</b>)</li> <li>■ Research, training (<b>Resolution H1, para 12</b>)</li> </ul>

### 4.3. Existing MCPFE tools and processes for implementing SFM and the EA

The MCPFE approach to the relationships and linkages between SFM and the EA is a concrete effort to bring the EA to the implementation level.

The participants agreed that, at the implementation level, continued efforts need to be made if the common goals of SFM and the EA are to be achieved.

There are several SFM tools developed at the pan-European level, but also others in other sectors that may contribute to and complement the implementation of SFM. At the practical level, the implementation varies among countries. In many cases a combination of various tools is used to achieve various objectives.

#### Tools as developed and adopted by the MCPFE:

##### ■ MCPFE Work Programme

The MCPFE Work Programme is structured according to the three pillars of SFM and aims at contributing to the sustainable development of society as a whole. The Work Programme guides the MCPFE process between the Ministerial Conferences by specifying actions which have as their aim the implementation of the MCPFE Resolutions and Declarations. The current MCPFE Work Programme comprises thirty pan-European actions, and its implementation involves relevant organisations, institutions and processes. The Programme is a dynamic concept which allows for incorporation of emerging initiatives and activities addressing relevant issues. A report indicating status as regards the implementation of the MCPFE Work Programme is presented at each Ministerial Conference.

##### ■ Framework for Cooperation between the MCPFE and the Environment for Europe/PEBLDS

The joint “Work Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems 1997-2000” was endorsed as a recognition of the fact that the conservation and enhancement of forest biological diversity is a common goal of both the MCPFE and the Environment for Europe/PEBLDS. This Work Programme has proved to be a useful tool for collaboration on forest biodiversity issues between the pan-European forest and environment processes. On the basis of these experiences, the

decision-making bodies of the MCPFE and Environment for Europe/PEBLDS have underlined the benefits of continued cooperation. At the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (Vienna, 2003), a Framework for Cooperation between the MCPFE and the Environment for Europe/PEBLDS was endorsed. The priority themes identified there as regards cooperation in the period of 2003-2005 are: the ecosystem approach, protected forest areas, forest law enforcement with regard to biodiversity conservation, and recommendations for sites selection for afforestation.

##### ■ National Forest Programmes

The MCPFE has worked on the National Forest Programmes in Europe since the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Conference (Lisbon, 1998), building on the outcomes of the IPF, IFF and UNFF. Consequently, the MCPFE has tackled this issue in order to develop a common understanding on the NFPS in the pan-European context, which was adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (Vienna, 2003) in Resolution V1: Strengthen synergies for sustainable forest management in Europe through cross-sectoral cooperation and National Forest Programmes. The Annex of Resolution V1 describes the MCPFE Common Approach to the NFPs. The National Forest Programmes constitute a participatory, holistic, inter-sectoral and iterative process of policy planning, implementation monitoring and evaluation at the national and/or sub-national levels.

The principles of NFPs in Europe comprise:

- participation
- holistic and inter-sectoral approach
- iterative process with long-term commitment
- capacity-building
- consistency with national legislation and policies integration with national strategies for sustainable development
- consistency with international commitments recognizing synergies between international forest-related initiatives and conventions
- institutional and policy reform

The NFP is the framework for all development of forest policy at the national level. Its principles are linked with the principles of the EA. It has to take into account the international commitments. The NFP aims at strengthening the consistency with the synergies

between relevant initiatives and conventions in each country (including CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC).

### ■ Criteria & Indicators

Criteria and Indicators are policy instruments by which progress towards implementing SFM may be evaluated and reported on. Criteria define and characterise the essential elements, as well as a set of conditions or processes, by which SFM may be assessed. Periodically measured indicators reveal the direction of change with respect to each criterion. The MCPFE countries report periodically on this basis. The TBFRA (Temperate and Boreal Forest Resources Assessment) is committed to structure data on forest resources in accordance with the Criteria and Indicators.

### ■ Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines

Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines identify complementary actions at the operational level, which will further contribute to SFM. They are designed in line with the six Criteria of SFM and are intended to translate international commitments at the level of forest management planning and practices.

### ■ Assessment Guidelines for Protected and Protective Forest and other Wooded Land in Europe

The Assessment Guidelines for Protected and Protective Forest and other Wooded Land in Europe, as adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (Vienna, 2003) aim at giving a comprehensive picture of protected and protective forest and other wooded land in Europe by providing data based on comparable terms and definitions. The Assessment Guidelines for Protected and Protective Forest and other Wooded Land in Europe are relevant to Criterion 4 on Biodiversity, and Criterion 5 on Protective functions.

### ■ Assessment and Reporting

The political commitments taken on by both the European Ministers responsible for forests and the European Community over the last 15 years have influenced forest management in many countries. The assessment of the progress with implementing these commitments is based on national reports submitted at every Ministerial Conference.



One of the world's largest owls, the Great Grey Owl (*Strix nebulosa*), inhabits coniferous forests in Northern Europe. Photo: G.O.



The European Bison (*Bison bonasus*), the endangered species still inhabits a few sites in European large deciduous forests. Photo: G.O.



The Wild Polish Konik Horses (Tarpans) had been common in Europe before farming was developed. Nowadays, Koniks graze in some European forests and wetlands. Photo: E.M.



The Lynx (*Lynx lynx*). Photo: P.B.



Beech forest, the Carpathian Mountains, Ukraine; Photo: G.O.



Boreal forest, Sweden; Photo: G.O.



Woodland interior is an alluvial *Alnus*/*Fraxinus* woodland, Loch Ness, Scotland; Photo: J.L.



Mediterranean forest, Lugar Nuevo, Spain; Photo: T.J.

#### 4.4. Other tools relevant to SFM and the EA

In addition to the tools developed at the pan-European level by the MCPFE, there are examples of other tools used in implementing SFM:

- Forest Management Plans
- Monitoring Systems
- Forest Certification
- Model and Demonstration Forests
- Assessment and Reporting
- The Forest Communicators Network
- Forest Focus
- Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiatives
- Regional conventions, such as the Carpathian Convention and the Alpine Convention
- The European Forest Genetic Resources Programme (EUFORGEN)
- Ecological Networks, such as Natura 2000 or EMERALD
- Forest landscape restoration initiatives.

The AHWG participants recognized the importance of coordination and synergies with other relevant tools to the implementation of both SFM and the EA:

- Rural development planning
- Watershed management
- Land-use planning
- National Biodiversity, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Strategies and Action Plans
- Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment.

#### 5. Possible areas for future efforts

Some AHWG participants recommended compiling existing case studies on application of the EA through SFM in Europe, as a contribution to the discussion on the EA within the CBD framework. Some AHWG participants also mentioned the following areas of concern in which further elaboration may be considered:

- Connectivity between forest areas
- Trans-boundary cooperation
- Clarification/harmonization of terms (e.g. landscape restoration, decentralization) and methods
- Guidelines for adaptive forest management
- Data collection.

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