Promoting Green Jobs in the Forest Sector

Social equity and gender issues

Thematic session III
Challenges

“enhance the social aspects of sustainable forest management, including promoting green jobs in forests and to promote social inclusion and efforts towards gender equality along the whole forest value chain”
Conclusions from the discussion
Gender in the forest sector
Conclusions from the discussion

• The forest sector is traditionally a male domain characterized by gender-stereotyped norms

• The ownership structure in forestry is still asymmetric. Men still own more forest real estate than women

• The women feel invisible and not taken seriously or that they have been given too much attention because of their gender

• Values and attitudes: e.g. female forest owners in Sweden focus more on environmental and recreational values than men; With more female forest owners the forest management will change...
Gender in the forest sector
Conclusions from the discussion

"...I’m always very nervous of organisations where people are just clones of each other: eventually the ship runs aground because nobody realised the current had changed direction“...

• Encourage forest sector to understand employment diversity (incl. its gender aspects) in management and decision making as an asset, not an obligation

• Empower and encourage women and girls to take forestry education and training e.g. through promotion of role models by female foresters

• Promote forestry as an attractive profession and university qualification to attract ambitious and creative young women as well as men
Social aspects
Conclusions from the discussion

• Adopt strategic documents, action plans and/or National Forest Programmes for the development of the sector including strengthening the social aspects of the workforce (understanding forestry, wood processing, pulp and paper industry as one single forest sector);

• Ensure policy coherence in this respect

• Enhance technological modernisation of the sector focused on increasing the productivity of work and improving the working conditions, especially in Eastern Europe and Western Balkans
Social aspects
Conclusions from the discussion

• To increase the public perception and social recognition of the forest sector in order to attract a new workforce and gain acceptance of the important role of foresters and wood processors

• Promote the sector and intensify educational campaigns about its significance for the wider community, e.g. through the involvement of pupils, students, non-governmental organizations and other interested parties in afforestation activities
Social aspects
Conclusions from the discussion

• Intensify the promotion of the green jobs concept in the sector in order to improve the social image of the sector and its working conditions. This should attract young people (incl. more women) with a good level of qualification to education and employment opportunities in the forest sector and to reduce the “brain drain” from the region;

• Use platforms such as FOREST EUROPE, UNECE and FAO to raise the importance of social issues of the workforce at national level (e.g. low salaries/income in the sector) including application of instruments, such as green procurement, as well as encourage social dialogue and activities of trade unions (however, it was pointed out that social dialogue might be difficult to achieve due to several factors e.g. fragmentation of contractors, free movement of goods, services and the workforce)
Social aspects – migrant workers
Conclusions from the discussion

„Qualified workers are needed to continue multi-functional forest management. The cornerstones of the single market enabling the mobility of business and professionals throughout the EU constitute a good framework for this purpose“

• Existing instruments to ensure good working conditions such as
  • validation of non-formal and informal education and training,
  • recognition of national certification ensuring sufficient skills levels
  • compulsory and voluntary certification systems at different levels
must be used properly and in a coordinated way to achieve the social goals of green economy by providing decent jobs as well as avoid illegal employment and subcontracting, wage and price dumping, tax evasion and informal economy.
Social aspects – public procurement of forestry operations
Conclusions from the discussion

„fragmentation of the forest sector labour force is a barrier to decency – small contractors often struggle working for very cheap prices - market competition often does not develop decency of jobs“

• Make efforts to adapt public procurements at national levels to involve social aspects and quality of work (however, certain risks of setting too high standards were discussed)

• Public tenders should include other requirements or regulations in health and safety and quality of work, however, economic conditions have to be taken into account