

Madrid Ministerial Resolution 2

Protection of forests in a changing environment

Adopted by the Expert Level Meeting on 1 July 2015 for consideration by the ministers at the 7th FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference Madrid 20-21 October 2015

We, as representatives of the Signatories of FOREST EUROPE, at the 7th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, in Madrid on 20-21 October 2015,

- 1.** RECALLING and BUILDING ON numerous relevant FOREST EUROPE resolutions, declarations and decisions¹.
- 2.** RECALLING that sustainable forest management integrates the protection of the long-term capacity of forests and forest ecosystems to maintain and improve their stability, vitality, resistance, and regenerative, adaptive and mitigating capacity as well as their potential to provide multiple goods and services while fulfilling relevant ecological, economic and social functions.
- 3.** AWARE that sustainably managed forests are more resilient.
- 4.** AWARE of a changing climate and natural hazards such as erosion, forest fires, desertification, storms and damage caused by pests or pathogenic organisms, among others, that may represent transboundary threats to forest resources, as well as the pressure of a growing population and the challenges of land-use changes.
- 5.** REAFFIRMING the need to strengthen cooperation in the protection of European forests due to the transboundary nature of threats.
- 6.** RECOGNISING the need to secure the protective functions of forests.
- 7.** TAKING NOTE of the on-going work on forest protection and risk management carried out by international organisations and processes.
- 8.** TAKING NOTE that recent developments on international fora and the work by FOREST EUROPE throughout the last 25 years generate a need and provide the opportunity to reaffirm the meaning and significance of the protection of forests in sustainable forest management.

¹ Strasbourg Resolution 1, "European Network of Permanent Sample Plots for Monitoring of Forest Ecosystems", Strasbourg Resolution 2 "Conservation of Forest Genetic Resources", Strasbourg Resolution 3 "Decentralized European Data Bank on Forest Fires", Strasbourg Resolution 4 "Adapting the Management of Mountain Forests to New Environmental Conditions", Helsinki Resolution 1 "General Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Forests in Europe", Helsinki Resolution 4 "Strategies for a Process of Long Term Adaptation of Forests in Europe to Climate Change", Vienna Resolution 4 "Conserving and Enhancing Forest Biological Diversity in Europe", Vienna Resolution 5 "Climate Change and Sustainable Forest Management in Europe", Warsaw Declaration, Warsaw Resolution 2 "Forests and Water" and the Oslo Ministerial Decision "European Forests 2020".

As representatives of the Signatories of FOREST EUROPE, we commit ourselves to:

I. Enhancing the protection of forests

- 9.** Further develop pan-European approaches to forest protection as an integral part of sustainable forest management to address new, varied challenges and threats posed to European forests, including climate change, and to further strengthen the role of sustainable forest management to this end.
- 10.** Raise awareness on the vital role of sustainable forest management in protecting forests.
- 11.** Increase the work on adaptation of forests and forest management to climate change to prevent and mitigate damage caused by changing conditions at the local and regional scales in order to secure all functions of European forests, including their resilience to natural hazards and protection against human-induced threats, maintaining their productive and protective functions.
- 12.** Promote national implementation of strategies and guidelines for dynamic conservation and appropriate use of forest genetic resources under changing climate conditions.

II. Strengthening cooperation in the pan-European region

- 13.** Continue pan-European collaboration on forest genetic resources through the European Forest Genetic Resources Programme (EUFORGEN).
- 14.** Share expertise in the region and reinforce the collaboration between countries on the prevention and fight against forest fires, storms, floods, avalanches, the spread of pests and diseases, as well as handling invasive species and combating desertification, erosion, natural hazards and any other threat of transboundary character.

Pan-European and National Actions

- 15.** Exchange information on management experiences in maintaining the protective functions, taking stock of the particular experiences and solutions under different climatic conditions.
- 16.** Exchange experiences on restoration and rehabilitation of degraded forests.
- 17.** Promote interaction between research, policy and forest management about forest hazards.