

## SUMMARY OF LAS2017 - JOINT SESSION OF THE UNECE COMMITTEE ON FORESTS AND THE FOREST INDUSTRY AND THE FAO EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION: 9-12 OCTOBER 2017

The joint 75th session of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the 39th session of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) European Forestry Commission (EFC) took place from 9-12 October 2017 in Warsaw, Poland. The event was called Las2017, with “las” meaning forest in Polish. Around 280 participants attended the meeting, including representatives from governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, business and academia.

The joint session addressed, among other things: global forest policy matters; regional cooperation; the 70th anniversary of the UNECE/FAO partnership; and an Integrated Programme of Work 2018-2021. A session titled “Market discussions” was also held, which addressed, among other things, the role of the forest sector in climate change mitigation and forest products trends in the different sub-regions. The meeting also addressed separate COFFI and EFC matters.

In conjunction with Las2017, the 4th European Forest Week was celebrated throughout Europe, under the theme of “Forests, our common good.” National and local activities, held simultaneously in participating countries, involved contests, exhibitions, talks and videos, and brought together a variety of stakeholders from the forest and non-forest sectors.

The main outcome of the meeting was the adoption of the Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work 2018-2021 for COFFI and EFC. The meeting also produced a Forest Products Market Statement 2016-2017, which summarizes market trends and developments in the UNECE region.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF COFFI AND EFC

The joint work of UNECE and FAO on forests dates back to the International Timber Conference, held in Mariánské Lázně, former Czechoslovakia, in 1947. This conference established both the FAO’s EFC and the UNECE Timber Committee, later renamed COFFI. These bodies worked together to produce wood for post-war reconstruction while regulating harvests and setting up market coordination mechanisms. UNECE was responsible for tackling timber shortage and FAO for long-term development



A horn music performance marks the opening of Las2017 in Warsaw

of European forests. The cooperation between UNECE and FAO continues to this day, with the 70th anniversary of “Mariánské Lázně” celebrated in 2017.

The joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section supports the activities on forests in the UNECE region, provides a joint COFFI/EFC Secretariat at UNECE Headquarters in Geneva, and works to implement the UNECE/FAO Integrated Programme of Work.

Both COFFI and EFC are comprised of government officials from forestry and other sectors, as well as representatives of international, regional and subregional organizations, including

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non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. They have several associated subsidiary bodies, including: the EFC Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds; the UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management; and seven UNECE/FAO Teams of Specialists, including on monitoring sustainable forest management, forest policy, green jobs, and wood energy.

**METSÄ2013:** The joint session of the 71st COFFI and the 37th EFC was held from 9-12 December 2013 in Rovaniemi, Finland. The event was organized in parallel with the 2nd European Forest Week. The joint session focused on market discussions, on engaging the private sector, and on measuring and communicating the contribution of the forest sector to a green economy. The highlight of the meeting was the adoption of the Rovaniemi Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy. The Action Plan lists principles and activities, grouped under five pillars: sustainable production and consumption of forest products; a low-carbon forest sector; decent green jobs in the forest sector; long-term provision of forest ecosystem services; and policy development and monitoring of the forest sector in relation to a green economy. The meeting also adopted an Integrated Programme of Work 2014-2017 for COFFI and EFC.

**SILVA2015:** The joint session of the 73rd COFFI and the 38th EFC took place from 2-6 November 2015 in Engelberg, Switzerland, along with the 3rd European Forest Week. The meeting agreed to continue efforts to integrate climate change into national forest programmes, strategies and plans, and to play an active part in the work of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF). Participants asked UNECE and FAO to work on developing global forest-related indicators related to Sustainable Development Goals, building on existing indicators. The meeting also addressed: regional reporting on forests and sustainable forest management; markets and investments in forest ecosystem services; planning for the 2016 Strategic Review of the Integrated Programme of Work 2014-2017; and implementation of the Rovaniemi Action Plan.

**COFFI-74:** The 74th session of the COFFI was held from 18-20 October 2016, in Geneva, Switzerland. The Committee reviewed activities in data collection and analysis, policy support, capacity building and communication. In addition, the meeting addressed the commercial aspects of forest-based industries, engaged in market discussions, and reviewed the results of the work on forest ownership and green jobs in the region. COFFI also discussed the Strategic Review of the Integrated Programme of Work 2014-2017 and provided recommendations for the future programme (2018-2021).

### LAS2017 REPORT

Las2017 started off with a High-Level Meeting on Monday morning, followed by an opening ceremony of the 4th European Forest Week and a joint opening session of COFFI and EFC. Following some joint agenda items, separate COFFI and EFC sessions were held on Tuesday and Wednesday. On Thursday, the joint session was resumed and concluded in a joint closure.



Jan Szyszko, Minister of the Environment of Poland

### HIGH-LEVEL MEETING

Jan Szyszko, Minister of the Environment of Poland, chaired the High-Level Meeting on Monday morning. He stressed the importance of Las2017 in the preparations for the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which will be hosted by Poland in 2018. He said solutions to achieve sustainability in the face of climate change should be multifaceted, noting that actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions should be accompanied by efforts to: combat the degradation of water quality, forests and biodiversity; regenerate forests; and improve the availability of water for people. He explained that the Polish forest and agriculture management model, developed over one hundred years ago, is a typical example of sustainable development, and has resulted in a growth in timber resources, tourism and job opportunities, at no loss to biodiversity.

Eva Müller, Director of Forestry Policy and Resources Division, FAO, noted that achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and mitigating and adapting to climate change “requires healthy and productive forests.” She stressed the importance of forests in achieving SDG15 (life on land) and SDG6 (water) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and highlighted the UN Strategic Plan on Forests, which was adopted in April 2017 and includes the “ambitious target” of increasing global forest cover by 3% by 2030.



Eva Müller, Director of Forestry Policy and Resources Division, FAO

Müller emphasized that agricultural productivity can be increased, and food security achieved, without decreasing forest cover, noting that this requires: improving cross-sectoral coordination;



promoting public investment in agriculture and forests; using the right policy instruments to promote sustainable agriculture and sustainable forest management (SFM); improving tenure rights and legal frameworks; strengthening institutions and stakeholder engagement; promoting integrated landscape management; and providing more comprehensive information for informed, evidence-based decision making.

Andrey Vasilyev, UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary, stressed that forests are high on the sustainable development agenda, but “much remains to be done in practical terms.” Expressing hope that Las2017 would provide a new impetus for sustainable development efforts in the forest sector, he underlined the importance of: fully realizing the potential of wood products and bioenergy; recognizing the role of biodiversity; strengthening the forest sector’s contribution to a green economy; and maintaining and enhancing forest-based industries by fostering a culture of innovation. Noting that the UNFCCC’s Paris Agreement provides opportunities for forests to contribute to climate change mitigation, he stressed that countries cannot face this challenge individually.

Bishop Tadeusz Lityński, Polish national priest of the foresters, presented some teachings of the church on caring for nature. He read writings from Pope Francis and his two predecessors, Benedict XVI and John Paul II. He asked participants to consider the question, “what world do we want to pass on to those who come after us?” and said the church supports every initiative that promotes nature, including forests.

Konrad Tomaszewski, Director General of the Polish State Forests, said factors that have always affected the forest economy are aggravated by pressures such as climate change, leading to catastrophic consequences. He spoke about the effects of the recent hurricane in Poland, which destroyed over 80,000 hectares of timber. He said that while the legal protection of the forests in Poland had helped address this problem, it raised concerns

on dealing with such wind-related disasters on a more frequent basis. He said the concept of energy from timber needs to be defined and included in Polish and European legal frameworks to help deal with future disasters. Tomaszewski also addressed the role of the forest in climate change mitigation, presenting some Polish development programmes in this area, including forest carbon farms and timber construction.

**HIGH-LEVEL ROUNDTABLES:** Two high-level roundtables were held, chaired by Polish Environment Minister Szyszko. The first roundtable addressed “Forests, our common good. Enhancing sustainable development in light of the Paris Agreement.” Speakers included:

- Mikhail Amelyanovich, Minister of Forestry, Belarus;
- Istrate Şteţco, Secretary of State for Water and Forests, Romania;
- Patrik Mlynar, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Czech Republic;
- Olga Trofimbseva, Deputy Minister of European Integration of Agricultural Policy and Food, Ukraine;
- Akros Ugron, Deputy Minister of Forestry, Hungary;
- Nizomiddin Bakirov, State Committee on Forestry, Uzbekistan;
- Sohrab Abbasov, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Azerbaijan;
- Juha Niemelä, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland;
- Konstantinos Domopoulos, Ministry of Environment and Energy, Greece;
- Nurlan Raimkulov, Ministry of Agriculture, Kazakhstan;
- Arvids Ozols, Ministry of Agriculture, Latvia;
- José Manuel Jaquotot, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and the Environment, Spain;
- Helene Holstein, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Sweden; and
- Rolf Manser, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment.

Speakers drew attention to national initiatives relating to SFM and increasing forest cover, noting linkages with: climate change mitigation and adaptation; water distribution and management; wildfires and pest infestations; biodiversity; increasing food demand; and development of megacities and other megatrends. Among factors contributing to success, they highlighted: sectoral integration; international cooperation; technological innovation; gender equality; and appropriate legal and institutional frameworks.

The second roundtable, which was also chaired by Minister Szyszko and included the same speakers, was titled “Functional model of forests – national perspective. Challenges and expectations.” Minister Szyszko outlined the Polish forestry model, noting its goal to increase forest cover in Poland. Speakers elaborated on challenges in their own countries, including: vulnerabilities and adaptation to increasing climate change, forest fires, drying of forests, desertification, soil erosion, drought, flooding, biodiversity loss, fragmentation of forest land, contribution of the forest sector to the bioeconomy, land-use competition, legal frameworks, state-owned versus



**Andrey Vasilyev**, UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary



**Bishop Tadeusz Lityński**, Polish national priest of the foresters

private forests, rural depopulation, public-body efficiency, financial resources, and cross-border and international cooperation.

Summing up the roundtable discussions, Minister Szyszko addressed the “essence” of the Paris Agreement, reiterating the importance of not only considering emission reductions, but also greenhouse gas capture through bioenergy and wood construction. He said that in order to achieve climate neutrality, there should be a balance between production and protection in forests, and forests must also provide jobs.

### **OPENING CEREMONY OF THE EUROPEAN FOREST WEEK**

This session on Monday afternoon was chaired by Andrzej Konieczny, Deputy Minister of the Environment of Poland. Short opening remarks were made by Konrad Tomaszewski, Director General of the Polish State Forests, and Michał Olszewski, Vice-President of the City of Warsaw. They described forest management strategies in Poland and the Warsaw metropolitan area, respectively, and highlighted activities in the context of the European Forest Week.

Participants witnessed an award ceremony for the European Forest Week Art Contest and the European Forest Week Photo Competition. Prizes were presented to several Polish high schools, artists and photographers.

### **JOINT COFFI/EFC MATTERS**

These agenda items were addressed throughout the week, in sessions co-chaired by COFFI Chair Marta Gaworska (Poland) and EFC Chair Kenan Kiliç (Turkey).

**OPENING SESSION:** Manoel Sobral Filho, Director of UNFF, highlighted the first ever UN Strategic Plan for Forests, which was adopted in April 2017 and approved by the UN Economic and Social Council and the UN General Assembly. He said the key challenge is to turn the visions contained in the Strategic Plan into concrete actions, along with those of the UN’s 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement. In this regard, he highlighted the potential contribution of the Rovaniemi Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy, adopted at the COFFI/EFC joint session in 2013.

Yuriko Shoji, FAO Subregional Coordinator for Central Asia, highlighted the added value of 70 years of UNECE/FAO cooperation on forests. She stressed FAO’s continued commitment to joint initiatives in this context and to a sustainable future with food for all and preservation of natural resources for future generations.

Andrey Vasilyev, UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary, stressed the importance of the UNECE region for implementation of the UN Strategic Plan, noting that the region hosts 43% of the world’s forests, including almost 100% of its boreal forests and 60% of its roundwood production. Acknowledging the “magnitude of this responsibility,” he said he was “glad that our partnership with FAO continues to be effective after 70 years of solid cooperation.”

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:** Delegates agreed to discuss the Market Discussions as a joint COFFI/EFC matter, rather than as a COFFI matter. The agenda (ECE/TIM/2017/1; FO:EFC/2017/1) was adopted with this amendment.



The dais during the opening ceremony of the European Forest Week (L-R) Moderator **Aleksander Brzózka**; **Konrad Tomaszewski**, Director General of the Polish State Forests; **Andrzej Konieczny**, Undersecretary of State in the Polish Ministry of the Environment; and **Michał Olszewski**, Vice-President of Warsaw City





View of the room during the joint session

**GLOBAL FOREST POLICY MATTERS:** UNFF Director Sobral Filho presented the latest global and regional forest policy developments (ECE/TIM/201/3-FO:EFC/2017/3). He called on countries to submit voluntary communications presenting their planned contributions toward the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan on Forests. He also said that the UN regional commissions such as UNECE have strong programmes on forests, and are critical to connect international policies and national actions on global forest issues. Delegates said UN committees have a key role in implementing decisions taken by countries. Others noted the importance of including indicators for implementing the programme, and that national reporting is essential to measure progress.

**REGIONAL COOPERATION:** Ľudmila Marušáková, Forest Europe Liaison Office in Bratislava, Slovakia, addressed the ongoing and future cooperation between Forest Europe and UNECE. She noted that the joint statement delivered at the 12th session of UNFF in May 2017 by UNECE, FAO and Forest Europe committed them to speed up their cooperation to serve member states better, explore synergies and use complementary strengths. She also stressed the importance of long-standing partnerships, noting they have showcased how the collaboration of stakeholders at the regional level can trigger solutions for the sustainability of forests.

Marušáková highlighted a two-day Forest Europe and UNECE/FAO workshop, held in June 2017, in Bratislava, Slovakia, which had concluded that the European Forest sector needs to adapt to new developments and trends, including promotion of employment to attract young, open-minded, multi-skilled staff, and stepping up efforts to improve quality and consistency of data collection and reporting. Participants supported the idea of using an online platform to collect data and make the system more efficient.

Antoine Nunes, UNECE, presented the collaboration between the joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section and the UNECE Environment Division, as well as the UNECE Environmental Performance Review programme, which includes forestry, and provides concrete recommendations to green economy sectors. Some participants mentioned that the main collaboration should be with Forest Europe.

**70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNECE/FAO PARTNERSHIP:** Natálie Benešová, Czech Ministry of Agriculture, presented on the 70th anniversary of the UNECE/FAO Partnership on Forests (ECE/TIM/2017/Inf.1; FO:EFC/2017/Inf.1). She summarized the history of the partnership and reported on the international conference “Mariánské Lázně +70,” which was held in September 2017 in Mariánské Lázně, Czech Republic, and included a roundtable on forest certification.

Tomáš Krejzar, Czech Ministry of Agriculture, presented the Anniversary Message that was adopted at the meeting, including its aim to provide an impetus for future international forest cooperation in light of emerging challenges.

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY:** Jeffrey Prestemon, Chair of the joint UNECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management, presented the outcomes of the 39th Session of the Working Party, held in



Tomáš Krejzar, Czech Ministry of Agriculture



COFFI Chair **Marta Gaworska**, Poland, and EFC Chair **Kenan Kiliç**, Turkey

Geneva, Switzerland, in March 2017. He presented conclusions and comments on: data monitoring and assessment; policy dialogue and advice; communications and outreach; and capacity building. Prestemon outlined progress on, *inter alia*, forest resources, forest product statistics, wood energy, forest product markets, forest policy, and the forest sector outlook. He highlighted the Working Party's strategic review of the COFFI/EFC draft Integrated Programme of Work and the terms of reference for the Teams of Specialists and the Working Party itself. He announced that the Working Party's next meeting will take place on 22-23 March 2018, in Geneva, Switzerland, preceded by the International Day of Forests.

**REVIEW OF 2017 ACTIVITIES, AND ACTIVITIES AND PUBLICATIONS PLANNED FOR 2018:** Co-Chair Gaworska presented this agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/4; FO:EFC/2017/4). Delegates endorsed the activities contained in the document.

**FOREST RESOURCES ASSESSMENT 2020 (FRA2020), ENHANCED AND STREAMLINED INTERNATIONAL REPORTING:** Anssi Pekkarinen, FAO, presented the agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/5; FO:EFC/2017/5), noting that FAO had been asked to improve and streamline global reporting on forests, to identify synergies and reduce countries' reporting burden. He said that as a response the FAO is implementing the FRA2020 with its partners, including the International Tropical Timber Organization, Forest Europe and UNECE.



**Anssi Pekkarinen**, FAO

Roman Michalak, FAO, presented the coordination and cooperation activities between the global and the pan-European data reporting sections. He proposed a new integrated process for reporting through a joint interactive platform with the involvement of the secretariats of Forest Europe, FAO and UNECE. He said this process would

require more resources but would integrate both qualitative and quantitative indicators, and reduce duplication of efforts. Participants supported the initiative, but raised questions on costs, differences in the collection of qualitative and quantitative indicators, and coordination between bodies.

**SYSTEM FOR THE EVALUATION OF MANAGEMENT OF FORESTS (SEMAFOR):** Kit Prins, international consultant, presented the relevant document (ECE/TIM/2017/6; FO:EFC/2017/6). He described the pilot study to develop SEMAFOR, noting the challenge to combine common standards with an understanding of diverse national circumstances. He explained how: Pan-European Criteria, Indicators and Operational Level Guidelines for SFM were used to focus on assessment; thresholds were established to identify possible areas of concern; and a dialogue was held with correspondents on problems and actions. He emphasized: efforts to ensure transparency and objectivity; varying national circumstances; and a lack of data, given that only 20 countries participated.

Summarizing the pilot study's outcomes, he concluded that "there is no evidence of significant areas of concern with regard to SFM in the 20 countries of study." He said the study had demonstrated the feasibility of the method and many lessons were learned about indicator concepts, significance, strengths and weaknesses. He said while it is difficult to identify thresholds, it is indeed possible to combine objective thresholds with variability of national circumstances, assuming dialogue and trust.

Participants welcomed the results and recognized the value of what some called an "exciting project" and "groundbreaking work." However, several expressed concern with the method used, including: its limited representation, and therefore, "misleading conclusions"; the choice of indicators; the choice of thresholds; a lack of definition of "threshold"; and translation of results to the national level. Participants discussed how to harmonize the process and ensure that it does not become too complicated.

**INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF WORK:** Co-Chair Gaworska introduced the draft Integrated Programme of Work 2018-2021 for COFFI and EFC (ECE/TIM/2017/7; FO:EFC/2017/7 and ECE/TIM/2017/8; FO:EFC/2017/8), noting that these documents were the result of a broad consultation process among stakeholders and had been reviewed at the 39th session of the Working Party on Forest Statistics, Economics and Management, held in March 2017, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Some participants suggested a more focused scope of work and more details on required actions. They debated whether elements of the Rovaniemi Action Plan, which is voluntary, should be reflected in the document, and questioned the meaning of the suggested "flexibility in the implementation."

Co-Chair Gaworska established a contact group, co-chaired by Liubov Poliakov (Ukraine) and Guy Robertson (US), to finalize the draft Integrated Programme of Work "in the margins of the meeting."

On Thursday afternoon, Ekrem Yazici, FAO, presented a revised draft Integrated Programme of Work 2018-2021, noting that only minor changes had been made. Delegates adopted





Ekrem Yazici, FAO

the document, including a paragraph that sets out the formal governance structure of the joint work of COFFI and EFC. They decided to name the programme the Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work, in honor of the host country. Co-Chair Gaworska expressed hope that it “will serve all of us as a platform to improve dialogue and the effectiveness of actions and cooperation between the two organizations.”

**Final outcome:** The Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work 2018-2021 (annexed to the meeting report, no document number) provides the framework for cooperation between COFFI and EFC on forestry issues. Its overall goal is to support member countries and regional integration organizations in their efforts to sustainably manage forests so that they provide forest goods and services to benefit society. Also, it aims to contribute to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the forest-related SDGs, as well as the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030.

The Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work 2018-2021 outlines activities to be carried out in four areas: data, monitoring, reporting and assessment; policy dialogue and advice; communication and outreach; and capacity building. It refers to activities outlined in the Rovaniemi Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy, which are to be carried out “subject to availability of financial and human resources.” The document also contains terms of reference for the various subsidiary bodies.

**MARKET DISCUSSIONS: Keynote presentation on the role of the forest sector in climate change mitigation:** On Tuesday, in his keynote address, Werner Kurz, Natural Resources Canada, drew attention to climate change effects that are already visible, and that contribute to further greenhouse gas emissions, including forest fires, peatland burning and permafrost thawing. Among signs of hope, he noted that natural carbon sinks have absorbed about 56% of total fossil fuel and cement manufacturing emissions, and emissions have started to level off, partly because of efforts in China to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Noting that the dynamics of these sinks are uncertain, and net negative emissions are required in the second half of this century to stay below the 2-degree warming threshold set out in the Paris Agreement, Kurz concluded that carbon sinks need to



Werner Kurz, Natural Resources Canada

be increased. Introducing the concept of bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS), he described the competing interests of BECCS and other wood uses, food and other land uses. He stressed that the current BECCS capacity is zero and cautioned against letting the promise of future BECCS “become an excuse to not reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

Noting the need for “new, groundbreaking strategies” to convert carbon dioxide into valuable products, Kurz called for a systems perspective that includes forest ecosystems as well as forest products. Identifying carbon retention time as a critical factor in carbon budgeting, and noting that concrete and steel are the predominant building materials today, he said the “holy grail” lies in using wood for structural building.

Kurz concluded that: government investments to enhance forest carbon sinks can contribute to climate-effective, cost-effective mitigation portfolios; forest carbon management demonstration areas can help improve public understanding and acceptance of carbon-focused management; and the forest sector has both the opportunity and the responsibility to contribute to reductions in atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations. He stated that “we have three options: mitigation, adaptation or suffering.”

**Keynote presentation on tall buildings:** Iain Macdonald, TallWood Design Institute, gave a keynote presentation about tall buildings made from wood. He elaborated on different varieties of mass timber (i.e., composite wood systems), including cross-laminated timber, and described global market growth projections. Among reasons for building bigger and taller with wood, he highlighted that wooden buildings: can help meet the growing building needs worldwide; require less energy for their production than concrete; are more energy-efficient once in use; store carbon; and are up to 75% lighter than comparable concrete buildings, which simplifies site logistics and reduces foundation sizes, material handling time and waste.

Macdonald described how the legislative framework in Canada paved the way for wood building, including “wood first” legislation, and noted that wood in Canada is moving up the value chain, creating more value and more jobs per felled tree. Among barriers to growth, he highlighted a lack of public

awareness about wood's durability, cost, strength and resilience to fire and earthquakes. He presented promising test results on these aspects.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed the role of the state in catalyzing the growth of wood building. Macdonald said conventional industries tend to block "wood first" legislation, but that incentives have proven to be effective. He stressed that education is needed at all levels. On the cost of wooden versus concrete buildings, Macdonald said the difference depends on the design, and that wood is a little more expensive, but once you include other cost aspects, including logistics and labor, wood becomes competitive and even offers opportunities for cost saving.

**Keynote presentation on the future of furniture:** Lotta Hahn, independent architect and concept developer, gave



**Lotta Hahn**, independent architect and concept developer

a keynote speech on "Linking global trends to the future of furniture." She provided an analysis on how consumers may change in the future in terms of age, size and family composition. She said more people on the planet would require more affordable, adaptable, smarter furniture from fewer materials, and for smaller spaces. She linked this trend to changing middle class sizes, rural to urban

migration, and fashion trends, including an increasing influence from technology, requiring a rethinking of how we interact with our surroundings and our homes. She said people may be less willing to invest in furniture, and there will be more focus on experiences rather than material goods, while new materials, such as glass, will allow for seamless experiences and connections between furniture and technology.

Hahn said while general interest in sustainability is increasing, many people lack knowledge on how to achieve this. She noted that companies can fill this gap by offering more sustainable furniture solutions, and should work with organizations on sustainable forestry. In response to a question from the floor on the significance of certification to build trust, such as building



**Iain Macdonald**, TallWood Design Institute

standards or Forest Stewardship Council standards, Hahn responded that such standards are useful but "eventually we should move beyond certification."

**Discussions on forest products trends in the different sub-regions:** Andrzej Samborski, Wood Supply and Biomass Manager at International Paper, addressed the Polish market for wood products. He said the Polish paper industry is one of the most dynamic industries in Poland, producing around 28 billion euros in 2016, and representing 9% of Poland's total industrial output, as well as 9% of its total industrial export. He emphasized that the sector employs 12% of all Poland's industrial workers, totaling around 330,000 people, with 50% in the furniture sector, 33% in the wood sector and 17% in the pulp and paper sector, and described the market characteristics of the three subsectors and where wood products are sourced from. He provided an overview of the EU policies that affect this industry in Poland, including the Renewable Energy Directive, the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, and the Polish policies that support the development of the wood sector, primarily the Strategy for Responsible Development, and some special sectoral programmes including for houses and furniture.

Sten Nilsson, Forest Sector Insights, addressed long-term changes in worldwide wood consumption and production, particularly regarding paper, and structural implications for the industries involved. He noted that graphic-paper production and consumption have decreased since 2007, along with a shift from graphic-paper to paperboard production. He described new types of paperboard, for instance liquid-packaging paperboard that uses 24% less raw materials than conventional paperboard. He said the increasing paperboard production, with increasing recovered-paper use as well as decreasing recovered-paper quality, will change the cost structure and dynamics of this industry, and will make hardwood pulp more competitive again.

Nilsson emphasized that "bioeconomy" does not necessarily imply more wood consumption, and noted that the consumer value of wood products is increasing. Addressing building materials, he said the cost and quality of roundwood can compete with those of steel and concrete, but the production and consumption patterns of these materials do not reflect this. He suggested that this is because sawmills deliver basic building materials rather than efficient construction systems. He called for structural changes and innovation in the roundwood sector.

Nikolai Ivanov, Russian Union of Timber Manufacturers and Exporters, presented on the "Russian Federation Forest Market: 2015-2018 Review, 2017 Outlook." He concentrated on the trends of the sector and on state policy, considering special initiatives to develop the forest sector and promote wood construction in Russia. He first gave an overview of Russia's macroeconomic indicators towards 2020, including a small growth in GDP and stabilization of the exchange rate. He said this has had a positive impact on the forest sector, although some challenges remain, such as a drop in hardboard sales.

Ivanov presented the Strategy to 2030 for the Russian Forest Sector, alongside the economic simulation models to analyze and forecast the sector's performance, including market output,



market potential and export markets. He said business had participated at all stages of the document development until final adoption, and that it sets out steps that Russia should take to maximize the potential of the sector. He concluded by noting, *inter alia*, the importance of consumer demand for such products, particularly in the construction sector.

Russell Taylor, FEA-Canada, gave a presentation on “North America: trends & outlook in sawn softwood and wood-based



Russell Taylor, FEA-Canada

panels.” Describing the US and Canadian industries, he made a market comparison with Europe, noting that the “US-Canada lumber war” has been a major driver of current supply dynamics, with the root of the disagreement stemming from forest land ownership issues in Canada and the US. He reviewed additional challenges for the industry, including the housing market crisis, beetle infestations,

hurricanes and forest fires, which have impacted supply and demand, reduced harvesting and dislocated the market. Taylor also said that new US import duties on Canadian softwood lumber have increased timber prices, further dislocating the global export and import markets, due to shifting exports from Canada to other regions, and higher prices resulting in European imports to the US. He noted that 2017 has been a very good year, with strong demand and high prices, and that for the first time since 2004, all the UNECE regions recorded gains in consumption, production and exports, mostly driven by growth in the US. He said forecasts predict further growth to 2021, but milling capacity and production need to increase to meet this growth. In response to a question about where the growth was coming from, he said the major source has been the building sector.

**Adoption of the Market Statement:** On Thursday evening, as part of their Las2017 report, delegates adopted a COFFI/EFC Forest Products Market Statement 2016-2017.

**Final outcome:** The Forest Products Market Statement 2016-2017 (ECE/TIM/2017/9; FO:EFC/2017/9) gives an overview of forest products markets in 2016 and 2017, focusing on the following themes: economic developments with implications for the forest sector; policy and regulatory developments affecting the forest products sector; and forest product trade barriers affecting the UNECE region.

The Market Statement also provides a summary of regional and subregional markets for key forest products, focusing on: wood raw materials; sawn softwood; sawn hardwood; wood-based panels; paper, paperboard and woodpulp; wood energy; value-added wood products; and housing.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** On Thursday afternoon, several delegates indicated that they wished to discuss mechanisms to enhance synergies between the UNECE and FAO secretariats. Noting that the existing bilateral agreement between UNECE and FAO dates back to 2013, some expressed concern over whether this agreement still provides a sufficiently solid basis for future joint work, especially in light of the organizations’ continuously increasing workload and emerging issues. Delegates expressed overall satisfaction with the current cooperation, with some noting that specific concerns should be addressed as they arise.

Some felt that it lies outside of the mandate of COFFI and EFC to address changes to the partnership agreement, and that such changes should be addressed by the organizations themselves. The UNECE and FAO secretariats said they might consider revising the partnership agreement if the need arises, and noted that it is an internal document agreed between the two organizations. Encouraging open and transparent communication on matters concerning their efficiency and effectiveness, the secretariats invited substantive comments and guidance from COFFI and EFC members. Delegates raised no concrete concerns.

#### COFFI MATTERS

These agenda items were addressed on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning, in sessions chaired by Co-Chair Gaworska.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 67th SESSION OF THE ECE:** Paola Deda, UNECE/FAO Secretariat, presented this agenda item. She noted the establishment of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, which will serve as a mechanism to follow-up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the UNECE region. She said the next meeting of the Forum will take place in March 2018, in Geneva, Switzerland, to review the SDGs that are relevant to regional work on forests.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 74TH SESSION OF THE COFFI:** Paola Deda, UNECE/FAO Secretariat, presented this agenda item. She informed delegates about actions undertaken as a follow-up to the decisions taken at this session, including some thematic reviews and events.



Paola Deda, ECE

**DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE COFFI:**

Co-Chair Gaworska presented this agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/10-FO:EFC/2017/10), inviting delegates to consider the rules for adoption. Delegates asked for the procedure of admission of observers to be more “open” and to reduce the maximum number of terms of elected officials from three to two. There was significant debate on whether COFFI meetings should occur on an annual or biannual basis, with the Secretariat responding that this was not in the remit of COFFI to decide, but should be brought to UNECE. Some participants asked for the reconsideration of whether the agenda item should be “scrapped completely,” with other participants rejecting this proposal. Various participants also asked for clarification in the document on the activities that are exclusively UNECE or joint activities. Co-Chair Gaworska suggested that this agenda item be addressed at the next COFFI meeting. After some additional debate, delegates agreed to this proposal.

**PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PUBLICATIONS 2018-2019:**

Co-Chair Gaworska introduced this agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/11; FO:EFC/2017/11), inviting delegates to adopt the draft Programme of Work. Participants discussed how this document relates to the Integrated Programme of Work still under debate by the joint COFFI and EFC. Some opposed adopting the COFFI Programme of Work before a decision was made in that context. They also debated how to refer to activities outlined in the voluntary Rovaniemi Action Plan, suggesting that reference be made to “some activities” in this Action Plan, in order to allow for flexible implementation. On Wednesday, the document was adopted with additional references clarifying that this Programme of Work supports the COFFI/EFC Joint Programme of Work, and that implementation of the Rovaniemi Action Plan is voluntary.

**STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2020-2021:** COFFI Chair Gaworska introduced the document (ECE/TIM/2017/12; FO:EFC/2017/12), which was adopted with minor amendment.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** Delegates reelected the following COFFI officers by acclamation: Chair Marta Gaworska (Poland), and Vice-Chairs Christoph Dür (Switzerland), Guy Robertson (US) and Maria Sokolenko (Russian Federation).

**DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING:** Canada expressed interest in hosting the next COFFI meeting, to be held in 2018, and said it would update the Secretariat on progress towards an official offer. The Russian Federation offered to host the next joint COFFI/EFC session, in 2019.

**EFC MATTERS**

These agenda items were addressed on Wednesday and Thursday morning, in sessions chaired by Co-Chair Kiliç.

**FOLLOW-UP TO THE DECISIONS OF THE 38TH**

**SESSION OF THE EFC:** Co-Chair Kiliç introduced the agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/13; FO:EFC/2017/13). He invited further guidance on the follow-up work done by the FAO, including several publications, the Rovaniemi Action Plan mid-term review, and forest-related indicators. Discussion focused on, *inter alia*, further funding opportunities, particularly for incorporating adaptation to climate change, and considering small and medium enterprises in the forestry sector.

**FORESTRY ACTIVITIES OF THE FAO REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA:** Norbert Winkler, FAO, gave an overview of the governing and statutory bodies of the FAO and the structure of the regional and technical offices, highlighting that committees only have a recommendatory role and that all work carried out must fit



(L-R) Yuri Shoji, FAO; Ekrem Yazici, FAO; EFC Chair Kenan Kiliç; Peter Pechacek, FAO; and Norbert Winkler, FAO



within the mandate of their strategic objectives. He provided details of the technical assistance that the Regional Office provides to countries through the regular programme and the extra-budgetary programme, and addressed each of the active projects. He also highlighted other activities, such as workshops, regional network meetings and publications related to forestry.

Peter Pechacek, FAO, introduced the activities of the Subregional Office for Central Asia, noting that it is a large region with limited, but growing, forest cover. He also noted that the region's socio-economic setting is determined by the legacy of the break-up of the Soviet Union, which presents certain challenges and opportunities, including land-tenure security, forest ownership, and deforestation and degradation. He gave an overview of the work carried out on, *inter alia*, forest health, forest management in mountain areas, and forest resources monitoring. He called for an integrative approach to forest management, which includes other land uses, biodiversity conservation and climate change. Participants then engaged in a long discussion on the relationship of this work to the Integrated Programme of Work, avoiding duplication of efforts, budgetary concerns, and country-specific project issues.

#### **ESTABLISHMENT OF A FOREST INVASIVE SPECIES NETWORK IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA:**



**Shiroma Sathyapala, FAO**

Shiroma Sathyapala, FAO, presented this agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/14; FO:EFC/2017/14). She elaborated on the introduction and spread of invasive species in the region, including their ecological, economic, social and cultural impact. She said climate change is aggravating the spread of invasive species, noting that 75% of damage to European forests is related to invasive species. She noted that the rate of

new introductions is increasing, with 176 new invasive insect species reported in the period 2000-2008 alone. Sathyapala informed delegates of the establishment of the FAO platform on Forest Invasive Species in Europe and Central Asia (REUFIS). Identifying challenges, she said forestry and agriculture fall under separate ministries in many countries, and there is a general lack of financial and technical capacity to deal with invasive species. She stressed the importance of awareness raising, early detection and monitoring strategies, and taxonomy support.

Delegates welcomed the platform on REUFIS. They approved the document, which recommends, *inter alia*, that FAO continue to support both the platform and country efforts to plan and implement relevant activities.

#### **FOREST AND LANDSCAPE RESTORATION WORKS UNDER CLIMATE CHANGE CONDITIONS IN THE REGION:**

Anssi Pekkari, FAO, introduced this agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/15; FO:EFC/2017/15). He recalled the global commitment to restore 150 million hectares of degraded lands by 2020, increasing to 350 million hectares by 2030, using the forest landscape restoration (FLR) approach, which aims to restore ecological integrity as well as improve human well-being. He highlighted several FLR initiatives, including sustainable financing for FLR, noting that challenges exist primarily in Eastern European and central Asian countries, mostly due to climate change.

Pekkari highlighted the FAO-Turkish Forest Partnership Programme and cooperation with Silva Mediterranea, and noted that FAO has produced global guidelines for FLR in drylands, focused on building resilience and sustainable livelihoods. He called for mechanisms to ensure greater intersectoral cooperation among various agencies, and suggested: strengthening FLR activities at all levels; supporting the mobilization of adequate resources; and providing contributions to scale up mechanisms at FAO.

Delegates approved the document, which recommends FAO to, *inter alia*: support country efforts in the region to plan and implement FLR activities; seek further cooperation with regional partners; and pursue active engagement with financing institutions.

#### **PROGRESS OF SILVA MEDITERRANEA AND THE WORKING PARTY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF MOUNTAIN WATERSHEDS:**

Peter Csoka, FAO, introduced this agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/16; FO:EFC/2017/16), focusing on the work of the Working Party. He outlined recent workshops, publications and activities in the area of watershed management and hazard and disaster risk management. He encouraged delegates to: consider strengthening the work of the Working Party by assigning focal points to serve on the Working Party; provide continued guidance to the Working Party, particularly in terms of priority topics; and



**Peter Csoka, FAO**

publicize the work of the Working Party and make full use of its services.

José Manuel Jaquotot, Chair of Silva Mediterranea, provided an overview of the partnership's history, composition, activities and achievements, highlighting Mediterranean Forest Weeks, State of Mediterranean Forest reports, and an initiative that promotes young entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean green economy.

Delegates expressed broad appreciation for the work of both Silva Mediterranea and the Working Party.

**STRENGTHENING FAO'S WORK ON BOREAL AND TEMPERATE FORESTS:** Andrey Kushlin, FAO, presented this agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/17; FO:EFC/2017/17). He gave an overview of the scaling up and the scope of the project,



Andrey Kushlin, FAO

saying that boreal and temperate forests amount to 44% of the world's total forest area, and 25% of the carbon stock in living biomass. He presented a selection of issues and challenges outlined in the report, such as managing intact forests and biodiversity, restoring abandoned agricultural lands, and managing carbon stocks, soils and permafrost. He said there is still potential to strengthen and expand areas of

collaboration with other thematic areas, such as green economy and landscape restoration. He invited delegates to provide guidance on this issue for the next COFFI. Delegates discussed, among other things, whether to consider boreal and temperate forests separately, and how to address sustainable energy from forests.

**CONTRIBUTIONS OF FAO'S WORK IN FORESTRY TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGs:** Ekrem Yazici, FAO, introduced this agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/18; FO:EFC/2017/18). He outlined the background of FAO work on the SDGs, and elaborated on activities in the following areas: empowering smallholders and family farms for improved livelihoods and poverty reduction; improving agrifood trade and market integration; and sustainable natural resource management under a changing climate. Delegates approved the document, which, *inter alia*, recommends FAO to strengthen the integration of its forestry work into existing and future regional initiatives.

**THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY HIGH-LEVEL PANEL OF EXPERTS STUDY ON SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY FOR FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION:** Andrey Kushlin, FAO, presented the relevant report (ECE/TIM/2017/19; FO:EFC/2017/19), outlining the recommendations contained in the document.

Delegates discussed the added value of these recommendations, recognizing the vast amount of work already done by FAO, and the burden on countries with limited means, and noted that recommendations aimed at countries should be more specific.

Delegates approved the recommendations in the document, which recognize that the sustainable management of forests is essential for achieving SDG2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture),

and request FAO to: support countries in enhancing the contributions of forests and trees to food security and nutrition; identify, document and disseminate best practices regarding food security and nutrition mainstreaming in forestry; and develop guidelines for mainstreaming food security and nutrition objectives in forest policies and management practices.

**A NEW STRATEGIC DOCUMENT FOR FAO IN FORESTRY:** Andrey Kushlin, FAO, introduced the relevant document (ECE/TIM/2017/20; FO:EFC/2017/20), explaining that COFO, at its 23rd meeting, had requested FAO to start reviews to implement the 2050 vision for Forests and Forestry, established during the XIV World Forestry Congress, held in Durban, South Africa, in 2015. He presented a set of elements for a new strategic document. Delegates recommended, *inter alia*, integration with the newly adopted FAO strategy on climate change and the SDGs, and there was general consensus that FAO should increase its leadership role and propose concrete measures. Kushlin said that the recommendations will be discussed at the next COFO meeting in July 2018.

Delegates approved the document, which outlines elements of the new strategic document.

**FAO CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GLOBAL PROCESS:** Peter Csóka, FAO, introduced the relevant documentation (ECE/TIM/2017/21; FO:EFC/2017/21). He outlined FAO contributions to various global processes, including: the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and SDG15 (life on land) in particular; adoption of the Paris Agreement at UNFCCC COP22; accessing funds through the Green Climate Fund; CBD COP13; and the 12th session of UNFF. Delegates expressed praise of this FAO work, and made concrete suggestions for issues of future emphasis, including linkages with the UN Strategic Plan on Forests and work on forest biodiversity.

Delegates approved the document, which, among other things: invites countries to promote and monitor progress on the forest-related indicators and report progress to the High-level Political Forum review of SDG15 in 2018; and requests FAO to assist countries in strengthening their capacities to do so.

**FREQUENCY OF THE EFC SESSIONS:** Ekrem Yazici, FAO, introduced the agenda item. He elaborated on the FAO reporting lines, cycles, structure and current meeting frequency. A long debate ensued with some participants preferring to increase meeting frequency to annual meetings, to match the COFFI meeting frequency, and allow EFC to adequately address the Integrated Programme of Work. Others, however, proposed reducing the frequency of COFFI meetings to match the biannual EFC meeting cycle. Some participants preferred maintaining existing cycles. Chair Kiliç decided to defer the issue to the next EFC meeting.

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO FAO GOVERNANCE:** Peter Csóka, FAO, introduced this agenda item (ECE/TIM/2017/21; FO:EFC/2017/21). He said that in order to increase consistency, a mechanism had been introduced in which Regional Forestry Commissions inform each other on their activities and on their recommendations to COFO, and provide input into FAO Regional Conferences.



Noting that the main cause of deforestation worldwide is the conversion of forests to agricultural land, participants discussed how to better link FAO work on agriculture and forestry. Csóka said there is already “intense collaboration” between those sectors within FAO, highlighting joint documents, integration of the various technical committees, and joint activities on SDG implementation across sectors and on forests for food security and nutrition.

Delegates approved an annex to the document, which identifies priority issues for COFO, including: forests and the SDGs; mainstreaming biodiversity; forests and food security; forest health; boreal and temperate forests; youth, education and employment; and SFM under climate change conditions.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS, DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING:** Delegates elected Christine Farcy (Belgium) as the new EFC Chair and Kenan Kiliç (Turkey) as EFC Vice-Chair. They re-elected Rob Busink (Netherlands) and Liubov Poliakova (Ukraine) as Vice-Chairs. Farcy expressed a personal wish for all present to consider why they chose to be foresters and why forests are so important to them, and bring these considerations into their work. Russia reiterated its offer to host the next joint COFFI/EFC session in 2019.

#### **LAS2017 REPORT AND CLOSURE OF THE JOINT SESSION**

**REPORT:** On Thursday, Las2017 reconvened in an evening session to consider the draft meeting report (ECE/TIM/2017/2; FO:EFC/2017/2). In addition to making several editorial changes, delegates also amended the draft report to, *inter alia*: include reference to an online platform on project activities in the section of forestry activities; delete specific reference to the UN in copyright issues and to the complementarity between the Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work and FAO regional work; and add specific reference to land use and land-use change and forestry in the recommendations to COFO. The report was adopted with these amendments.

The Warsaw Integrated Programme of Work 2018-2021 and the COFFI/EFC Forest Products Market Statement 2016-2017 are annexed to the report.

**CLOSURE:** Co-Chair Gaworska thanked delegates for their outcome-oriented work and spirit of cooperation. Andrey Vasilyev, UNECE, commended the “solid” joint work programme adopted by Las2017, which he said provides valuable guidance on the way forward, and said the “spirit of Mariánské Lázně is alive and well.”

Yuriko Shoji, FAO, said the Las2017 results were “very satisfactory” and expressed hope that they would help UNECE and FAO to strengthen their partnership in the future. Andrzej Konieczny, Deputy Minister of Environment, Poland, said this “important event” had set a good foundation for fruitful cooperation in the future. He underlined the importance of the 70 years of UNECE/FAO cooperation for Poland, and closed Las2017 at 9:45pm.

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

##### **27th Session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission:**

The Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission is one of the six Regional Forestry Commissions established by FAO to provide a policy and technical forum for countries to discuss and address forest issues on a regional basis. **dates:** 23-27 October 2017 **location:** Sri Lanka **contact:** Patrick Durst, FAO **email:** [patrick.durst@fao.org](mailto:patrick.durst@fao.org) **www:** <http://www.fao.org/forestry/82939/en/21st>

**UNFCCC COP 23:** The 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 23) to the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will be organized by Fiji and hosted at the headquarters of the UNFCCC Secretariat in Bonn, Germany. **dates:** 6-17 November 2017 **location:** Bonn, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** (49-228) 815-1000 **e-mail:** [secretariat@unfccc.int](mailto:secretariat@unfccc.int) **www:** <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/cop23bonninformationhub/>



(L-R) Andrey Vasilyev, Deputy Executive Secretary of UNECE; Andrzej Konieczny, Deputy Minister of the Environment, Poland; and COFFI Chair Marta Gaworska, giving closing remarks

**ITTC-53:** The next session of the ITTC and associated sessions of the four committees will take place in Peru. **dates:** 27 November – 2 December 2017 **location:** Lima, Peru **contact:** ITTO Secretariat **email:** itto@itto.int **phone:** +81-45-223-1110 **fax:** +81-45-223-1111 **www:** <http://www.itto.int>

**Forest Europe Expert Level Meeting:** Expert Level Meetings are the decision-making bodies that meet between the Forest Europe conferences. They discuss, *inter alia*, the Forest Europe work programme and the Forest Europe Roadmap to 2020. **dates:** 28-29 November 2017 **location:** Bratislava, Slovakia **phone:** +421 45 5314 209 **email:** [liaison.unit.bratislava@foresteurope.org](mailto:liaison.unit.bratislava@foresteurope.org) **www:** <http://foresteurope.org/event/12066/>

**Near East Forestry and Range Commission - 23rd Session:** Established in 1953, the Near East Forestry and Range Commission is one of the six Regional Forestry Commissions established by FAO to provide a policy and technical forum for countries to discuss and address forest issues on a regional basis. It meets every two years. **dates:** 11 December 2017 - 15 December 2017 **location:** Lebanon, Beirut **contact:** Abdel Hamied Hamid **email:** [abdelhamied.hamid@fao.org](mailto:abdelhamied.hamid@fao.org) **www:** <http://www.fao.org/forestry/65542/en/>

**Regional Forum on Sustainable Development:** This Forum serves as a regional mechanism to follow-up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The 2018 meeting will review the SDGs that are relevant to regional work on forests. **dates:** 1-2 March 2018 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Paola Deda, UNECE/FAO Secretariat **email:** [paola.deda@unece.org](mailto:paola.deda@unece.org) **www:** <http://www.unece.org/forests>

**International Day of Forests 2018:** In 2018, the International Day of Forests will address the theme “Forests for sustainable cities,” and will focus on how forests and trees in urban areas regulate temperature and water flows, provide nutritious foods and shelter, cleanse the air and foster community cohesion and individual well-being, among other benefits. The UN General Assembly proclaimed 21 March the International Day of Forests in 2012. The Day celebrates and raises awareness of the importance of all types of forests. On each International Day of Forests, countries are encouraged to undertake local, national and international efforts to organize activities involving forests and trees, such as tree planting campaigns. The theme for each International Day of Forests is chosen by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. **date:** 21 March 2018 **location:** worldwide **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/events/forestsday/>

**21st Session of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission:** The African Forestry and Wildlife Commission is one of the six Regional Forestry Commissions established by FAO to provide a policy and technical forum for countries to discuss and address forest issues on a regional basis. **dates:** March 2018 (TBC) **location:** (TBC) **contact:** Magnus Grylle, FAO **email:** [magnus.grylle@fao.org](mailto:magnus.grylle@fao.org) **www:** <http://www.fao.org/forestry/afwc/31908/en>

**UNFF13:** The 13th session of the UN Forum on Forests will address implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Quadrennial Programme of Work, and means of implementation for SFM. **dates:** 7-11 May 2018 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York

**contact:** UNFF Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-3401 **fax:** +1-917-367-3186 **email:** [unff@un.org](mailto:unff@un.org) **www:** <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/>

**4th World Congress on Agroforestry: Strengthening Links between Science, Society and Policy:** The question “How can we ensure that the technical solutions found fuel societal debate and public policy?” will be at the heart of the next World Agroforestry Congress, which is organized under the theme “Agroforestry – Strengthening Links between Science, Society and Policy”. Agroforestry, a land management method that combines trees and crops, is one answer to the current questions surrounding agro-ecology and climate change. By providing permanent soil cover, agroforestry makes a substantial contribution to carbon capture. **dates:** 20 to 25 May 2019 **location:** Montpellier, France **contact:** Emmanuel Torquebiau **email:** [emmanuel.torquebiau@cirad.fr](mailto:emmanuel.torquebiau@cirad.fr) **www:** <http://www.cirad.fr/en/news/all-news-items/articles/2017/events/4th-world-congress-on-agroforestry>

**25th IUFRO World Congress:** The International Union of Forest Research Organization (IUFRO) announced the convening of the first World Congress to be held in Latin America. The Congress will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences on forest research and should allow for greater participation among researchers from Latin America. **dates:** 29 September - 5 October 2019 **location:** Curitiba, Parana, Brazil **contact:** Gerda Wolfrum **e-mail:** [wolfrum@iufro.org](mailto:wolfrum@iufro.org) **www:** <https://www.iufro.org/events/congresses/2019/>

**Joint Session of the 40th European Forestry Commission - 75th UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry:** The joint meeting between FAO and UNECE will provide a policy and technical forum for countries to discuss and address forest issues on a regional basis. **dates:** 2019 (TBC) **location:** Russian Federation **contact:** Ekrem Yazici, UNECE/FAO Secretariat **email:** [ekrem.yazici@fao.org](mailto:ekrem.yazici@fao.org) **www:** <http://www.fao.org/forestry/efc/72568/en/>

## GLOSSARY

BECCS	Bio-energy with carbon capture and storage
BD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COFFI	Committee of Forests and the Forest Industry
COFO	FAO Committee on Forestry
COP	Conference of the Parties
EFC	UNECE European Forestry Commission
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
FLR	forest landscape restoration
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFM	sustainable forest management
UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe
UNFCCC	UN Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	UN Nations Forum on Forest