



# Forest Europe Bulletin

Summary of the 7th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe and Extraordinary Ministerial Conference

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**Forest Europe** growing life

## SUMMARY OF 7<sup>TH</sup> MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE AND EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE: 20-21 OCTOBER 2015

The 7<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe was held in Madrid, Spain, from 20-21 October 2015, followed by the Extraordinary Ministerial Conference (EMC) on 21 October. The former reviewed FOREST EUROPE work since the 6<sup>th</sup> Ministerial held in 2011 in Oslo, Norway and decided on work going forward, while the EMC received the results of the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe (INC-Forests). The Approximately 220 participants attended the Conferences, including ministers responsible for forests and other high-level representatives of 38 European countries and the European Union (EU), as well as representatives of 17 observer organizations.

The Ministerial Conference adopted: a Ministerial Declaration, ‘25 Years Together Promoting Sustainable Forest Management in Europe,’ a decision on the future direction of FOREST EUROPE and two resolutions, one on ‘Forest Sector in the Center of a Green Economy,’ the other on ‘Protection of Forests in a Changing Environment.’ The EMC adopted a decision agreeing to explore possible ways to find common ground on the draft legally binding agreement (LBA) at an appropriate time no later than 2020.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF FOREST EUROPE

FOREST EUROPE is a high-level political initiative founded in 1990 to work towards the protection and sustainable management of forests throughout Europe. Forty-six European countries and the EU, in cooperation with a range of international organizations, participate in FOREST EUROPE.

**Strasbourg 1990:** The first Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe took place in Strasbourg, France, on 18 December 1990. Participants agreed to initiate scientific and technical cooperation within Europe, adopting a general declaration and six resolutions on monitoring forest ecosystems, conserving forest genetic resources, creating a decentralized European Data Bank on forest fires, adapting mountain forest management to new environmental conditions, expanding a research network on tree physiology, and creating a European research network on forest ecosystems.

**Helsinki 1993:** The second Ministerial Conference was held in Helsinki, Finland, from 16-17 June 1993. Participants adopted a general declaration and four resolutions on: general

guidelines for sustainable forest management (SFM) in Europe; general guidelines for conserving the biodiversity of European forests; forestry cooperation with countries with economies in transition; and strategies for a process of long-term adaptation of forests to climate change.

**Lisbon 1998:** The third Ministerial Conference was held in Lisbon, Portugal, from 2-4 June 1998. The Conference focused on the socioeconomic aspects of SFM and affirmed the outcomes of the Helsinki follow-up process. Participants adopted a general declaration and resolutions on: enhancement of socioeconomic aspects of SFM; and pan-European criteria, indicators and operational level guidelines for SFM.

**Vienna 2003:** The fourth Ministerial Conference took place in Vienna, Austria, from 28-30 April 2003. Conference participants adopted the Vienna Living Forest Summit Declaration and five resolutions on: strengthening synergies for SFM in Europe; enhancing the economic viability of SFM; preserving and enhancing the social and cultural dimensions of SFM; conserving and enhancing forest biodiversity; and addressing climate change and SFM in Europe.

**Warsaw 2007:** The fifth Ministerial Conference was held in Warsaw, Poland, from 5-7 November 2007, during which a proposal was tabled to begin a process for exploring the possibility of an LBA on forests in Europe. This resulted in the establishment of two working groups. The first working group was mandated to explore the potential added value of an LBA and possible options for such an agreement. The second working group was tasked with preparing options for a decision on a possible LBA and producing a non-paper setting out such options.

**Oslo 2011:** The sixth Ministerial Conference was held in Oslo, Norway, from 14-16 June 2011. The Conference adopted the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating an LBA on Forests in Europe (the Oslo Mandate), under which

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the FOREST EUROPE signatories decided to take further international action on forests through the elaboration of an LBA, and established the INC to develop this agreement. The Conference also adopted the Oslo Ministerial Decision: European Forests 2020, which outlines a vision, goals, targets and actions for Europe's forests to guide forest policy through 2020.

**INC-Forests:** Four negotiating sessions were held: INC-Forests1 met from 27 February to 2 March 2012 in Vienna, Austria; INC-Forests2 was held from 3-7 September 2012 in Bonn, Germany; INC-Forests3 convened in two parts, the first from 28 January to 1 February 2013 in Antalya, Turkey, and a resumed session from 3-5 April 2013 in Saint Petersburg, the Russian Federation; and INC-Forests4 convened in two parts, the first from 10-14 June 2013 in Warsaw, Poland, and a resumed session from 7-8 November 2013 in Geneva, Switzerland. INC-Forests reached consensus on many substantive matters in the draft negotiating text, was unable to produce breakthroughs on the bracketed articles of the draft convention text regarding, *inter alia*, compliance, institutional arrangements, voting rights, compliance and participation of observers.

**Intersessional Preparations for Madrid Ministerial Conference and Extraordinary Ministerial Conference:** Under the chairmanship of Spain, several expert-level meetings (ELMs) took place between 2011 and 2015 to follow-up on the Oslo Ministerial Conference commitments and prepare for the Madrid Ministerial Conference. ELMs on Oslo implementation matters were held in Madrid from 14-15 February 2012 and 6-7 March 2013. ELMs held from 4-5 February 2014 in Valladolid, Spain, and 6-7 November 2014 in Cuenca, Spain, focused in part on the future of the LBA and preparations for the EMC. An ELM held 20-22 January 2015 in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, approved updated SFM indicators to forward to the Ministerial Conference for adoption. The ELM held from 30 June - 02 July 2015 in Madrid, finalized drafts of the declaration, two resolutions and one decision to forward to the Madrid Ministerial for adoption. On 2 July 2015 a separate ELM session was held in Madrid to prepare for the EMC, including finalization of a draft decision to forward to the EMC for adoption.

## SUMMARY OF THE 7<sup>TH</sup> MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

On Tuesday morning, Conference Co-Chair Isabel Garcia Tejerina, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain, opened the 7<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference and welcomed participants to Spain. She noted that it was the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of FOREST EUROPE and that this Conference would adopt measures to ensure its importance to pan-European cooperation on forests for the coming years.

Conference Co-Chair Ľubomír Jahnátek, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Slovakia, expressed his country's commitment to FOREST EUROPE and to serve as its chair until the next Ministerial, and underscored how the expected outputs of the 7<sup>th</sup> Ministerial can contribute to the understanding of the role of SFM in supporting the transition to a green economy.

Jerzy Bogdan Plewa, Director-General, Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission, characterized the achievements of FOREST EUROPE's first 25 years in

promoting common approaches to forest management as "remarkable," but agreed with the draft Ministerial decision calling for a reexamination of the body and reflection on how best to maintain and enhance its contributions.

## PRESENTATION OF THE STATE OF EUROPEAN FORESTS 2015

Ewald Rametsteiner, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), discussed the findings in the first part of the 'State of Europe's Forests 2015' (SoEF) covering institutions and instruments for SFM. He reported that: overall policies are increasingly guided by "modern" governance mechanisms such as national forest programmes (NFPs); countries have broader involvement of stakeholders in the NFP process; about half of forest policies have been revised over the last 10 years, with most being updated often; and financial instruments for forests have become more focused on profitability, economic viability, and the provision of ecosystem services.

Jesús San Miguel-Ayanz, EC Joint Research Centre (JRC), reviewed the quantitative findings of the SoEF, including: forests cover 33% of Europe's total land area and forest area continues to increase; average annual carbon sequestration in forest biomass reached 719 million metric tons CO<sub>2</sub> in the period 2005-2015; 3.7 million hectares of Europe's forests are affected by forest damage, most frequently caused by biotic agents; private forest holdings have increased 18% since 1990; and gross value added contributed by the forest sector amounted to 103 million Euros in the region as a whole.

## MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE 1: FORESTS IN THE CENTER OF A GREEN ECONOMY

On Tuesday morning, Co-Chair Tejerina moderated this roundtable where officials were encouraged to reflect on areas of concern to fit forests in a green economy, creating green jobs and employment related to rural development, and the value of ecosystem services and their contributions to a green economy.

Patrick Mlynář, Ministry of Agriculture, Czech Republic, stressed the importance of reinforcing small and medium-sized forest enterprises, which increases employment, and noted the value of stimulating investments in forestry technology and innovative products.

Noting the transition from coal to wood-based power, Christian Lundmark Jensen, Ministry of Environment and Food, Denmark, described Denmark's activities addressing the green economy, including those on afforestation and reforestation and a co-financing project with the water sector.

Giuseppe Cacopardi, Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies, Italy, on behalf of the Ministry of Environment, described a program that provides general guidelines and regulations on employment measures in the forestry sector in rural areas.

Saying SFM must be conveyed to the other sectors, Hanne Maren Blåfjell, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Norway, stressed the need to shift to an energy industry based on renewable resources in order for a green economy to become a reality.

Danko Prokic, Ambassador, Serbia, said the value of forestry functions and services must be demonstrated in order to facilitate the development of a bio-economy and green jobs.

Miha Marenc, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, explained Slovenia's framework program on transitioning to a green economy, which includes a plan of activities for competencies and connects ministries and stakeholders. He supported draft resolution 1 on the forest sector in the center of a green economy.

Sven-Erik Bucht, Minister for Rural Affairs, Sweden, emphasized the need for a "modern bio-based economy" that is "balance with the planet" and is inclusive of youth and women, stressing the importance of having "real equality" in order for a green economy to work.

The Socioeconomic Organizations Group said all stakeholders, including governments, national forest authorities, environmental and forest organizations, and student and scientific groups, must be considered at the regional and national levels when developing SFM strategies.

### ***PRESENTATION OF THE UPDATED SET OF PAN-EUROPEAN INDICATORS***

Jari Parviainen, National Resources Institute Finland, discussed the evolution of FOREST EUROPE's pan-European indicators since their adoption at the Lisbon Ministerial in 1998 and the process for updating them, including the recommendations made by a European Forest Institute (EFI) study that underscored the importance of the indicators and keeping them updated.

He explained that the structure of the set of indicators has been modified to improve linkages between qualitative and quantitative indicators, and that three new indicators had been added on forest land degradation, forest fragmentation and common forest bird species. He also noted changes made to improve information related to other areas, such as climate change mitigation, the value of and payment for forest ecosystem services, certification schemes and illegal logging.

### ***MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE 2: PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT***

On Tuesday afternoon, Begoña Nieto Gilarte, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain, moderated this roundtable where officials were invited to reflect on forest protection as an integral part of SFM and transboundary threats to forests.

Georgi Kostov, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Bulgaria, welcomed the emphasis in draft resolution 2 on enhanced international cooperation on the prevention and fight against forest fires, natural disasters and pests, and suggested future priorities for FOREST EUROPE work should include the protection of forests, the role of forests in climate change, and ecosystem services.

Domagoj Križaj, Ministry of Agriculture, Croatia, expressed hope that the importance of forests in mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration would be fully recognized and acknowledged, and welcomed the integration of biodiversity criteria into forest management plans.

Nicos Kouyialis, Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, Cyprus, stressed the importance of enhancing coordination of action to combat transboundary threats to forests such as fires, natural disasters and pests. He underscored the importance of the section in draft resolution 1 on incorporating the value of forests ecosystem services in a green economy.

Marku Lamp, Ministry of the Environment, Estonia, called for more research, cooperation and investment in silviculture and forest management.

İsmail Üzmez, Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, Turkey, expressed his country's interest in cooperation to develop capacity, share expertise and reinforce collaboration regarding the restoration of forests and fighting forest fires and pests.

Jón Geir Pétursson, Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources, Iceland, said SFM becomes more challenging as demands on forest productivity and protection increase.

Stressing the value of direct cross-border cooperation, Helmut Kindle, Ministry of Environment, Liechtenstein, said forest protection should include the preservation of local genetic resources.

Kestutis Treciokas, Minister of Environment, Lithuania, said SFM is the best tool to protect forests and that legislation should address societal needs while increasing forest area.

Lubomír Jahnátek, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Slovakia, supported draft Ministerial resolution 2 on protecting forests in a changing environment.

Lyubov Polyakova, on behalf of Oleksandr Kovalchuk, Forest Resources Agency, Ukraine, supported revising the procedures of FOREST EUROPE, and welcomed strengthening cross-border cooperation on preventing and controlling hazards.

The Scientific Community Group explained the need to address changes to forest structures and compositions through adaptive forest management.

### ***CHANGE OF THE GENERAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE***

On Tuesday afternoon Begoña Nieto Gilarte, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain, on behalf of Co-Chair Tejerina, invited Sweden to replace Norway on the General Coordinating Committee, which has the task of facilitating and coordinating the work of FOREST EUROPE. Sven-Erik Bucht, Minister of Rural Affairs, Sweden, accepted the invitation on behalf of his country.

### ***MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE 3: GLOBAL CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS AT REGIONAL LEVEL***

On Tuesday afternoon, Co-Chair Jahnátek moderated this roundtable where officials were invited to reflect on the influences of climate change on forests as well as the relationship between forests and the post-2015 sustainable development agenda negotiations, the role of forests in achieving a degradation-neutral world and ways to enhance cooperation.

Carole Dieschbourg, Minister of Environment, Luxembourg, suggested that the tools developed by FOREST EUROPE can help implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their commitment to a land degradation neutral world, and welcomed the updated indicators.

Rob Busink, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Netherlands, said forests can be part of the solution to issues such as biodiversity, food security and energy supply, but meeting such challenges requires a comprehensive approach. He urged more attention to issues related to timber trade enforcement and compliance to promote sourcing of sustainably managed wood and wood products.

Dan Popescu, Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment and Forest, Romania, stressed the importance of strongly linking forest sector work to the post-2015 development agenda. He emphasized the contribution of forests to the green economy and sustainable development and voiced support for the draft Ministerial resolutions.

Alexander Panfilov, Federal Forestry Agency, Russian Federation, said the voluntary status of FOREST EUROPE allows more countries and stakeholders to participate and communicate their concerns and positions, and suggested the proposals the Ministerial would adopt could make valuable contributions to regional and international cooperation regarding forests.

José María Solano López, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain, stressed the need to define practical solutions and focus on the multi-functionality of forests to ensure their proper treatment.

Bruno Oberle, Director, Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland, called for an integrated forest policy to handle the increased demands on forests at the national and international level.

Stressing the importance of inviting youth to participate in the decision making process, Joakim Lundsten, International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA), identified challenges to sharing SFM knowledge with the rest of the world to include detachment of society from nature and a complex and complicated political landscape.

#### **MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE 4: FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

On Tuesday afternoon, Co-Chair Jahnátek moderated this roundtable where officials were invited to reflect on the future of European forests, challenges they face in a changing environment, and new opportunities for European forests in the global arena.

Alain Chaudron, International Association of Mediterranean Forests (AIFM), expressed AIFM's hope that the LBA can be adopted and that it would be open to ratification by Maghreb countries such as Lebanon, and that it could be followed by a protocol on Mediterranean forests.

Barbara Koch, President, Council of European Foresters (CEF), expressed the hope that adoption of an LBA might still be possible, that it include the elements CEF had requested, and that it leads to a reconsideration of the importance of forests and the forest sector in all European countries.

Aljoscha Requardt, Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF), supported a review of the FOREST EUROPE process, recommended assessing all European institutional arrangements on forests, including the work of FAO and the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and urged stronger links with UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), the Secretariats of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the processes implementing the SDGs.

Marc Palahí, Director, EFI, said forest policymaking requires a cross-disciplinary understanding of the issues, and EFI is continuously developing its structures and programs to be an honest, effective and committed partner at the forest science-policy interface.

Per-Olof Wedin, President, European State Forest Association (EUSTAFOR), said balancing the many different demands on forests can only be accomplished through a stable policy framework, therefore it is "of utmost importance" to strengthen the policy framework at the pan-European level.

Peter Csoka, FAO, urged integrating forests into the broader sustainable development agenda. He said one lesson learned from 25 years of FOREST EUROPE and 75 years of FAO was that forestry cannot be addressed solely through a sectoral lens, so the cross-sectoral nature of the draft Madrid declaration and the draft resolutions should provide a sound basis for FOREST EUROPE going forward.

John Hontelez, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), noted that a shift towards a bio-based economy will increase the importance of SFM in preventing forest degradation and deforestation.

Laura Hempelman, IFSA, said major threats to SFM include, *inter alia*, the increase of urbanization, human detachment from nature, and a decreasing interest in working within the forestry sector.

Alexander Buck, Executive Director, International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), welcomed the commitments made in the draft resolutions 1 and 2 to promote innovation, research, and collaboration, along with the commitment in the draft Madrid Ministerial declaration to "work towards integrated, holistic and cross-sectoral approaches."

Ana Belén Noriega, Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), said that by 2020, the PEFC certification systems, based off of the FOREST EUROPE SFM guidelines, will expand into 60 countries.

Tomasz Markiewicz, Union of European Foresters, expressed concern that the forestry sector is not a competitive form of employment, causing a strain on achieving the goals on strengthening forestry resources and employment as stated in the Warsaw Declaration and Resolutions.

Explaining that data can demonstrate the impact of SFM on forests in the future, Roman Michalak, UNECE, said current data shows that while SFM allows for forests and forest resources to expand, its aim to preserve forests decreases opportunities within the forestry sector to contribute to the economy and employment.

Jan Dusik, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), welcomed the commitment in draft resolution 1 to enhance the role of SFM in a green economy, urged reducing institutional and policy barriers caused by laws and guidelines designed for a stable climate regime, and stressed the importance of economic valuation of all benefits received from forests.

Barbara Tavora-Jainchill, UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), noted UNFF11 emphasized the importance of strengthening collaboration and coordination between UNFF and relevant regional partners and facilitating the inputs of these entities to Forum sessions.

Leyre Salaberria, Union of Foresters of Southern Europe, welcomed references in draft resolution 1 to green jobs, employment, and the valuation of forest ecosystem services in a green economy, and urged that a revision of the FOREST EUROPE process maintains the essence of what has been successful during the past 25 years of work at ministerial level, including its openness to the voices of stakeholders.

## **MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE 5: 25 YEARS OF FOREST EUROPE**

On Wednesday morning, Carlos Cabanas Godino, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain, moderated this roundtable in which officials were invited to reflect on the achievements of the FOREST EUROPE process and the future of European forests.

Gerhard Mannsberger, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Austria, lauded FOREST EUROPE's achievements over 25 years and the spirit behind them, but warned that "we should not restrict ourselves to what we have already achieved, but rather push beyond." He called the failure to conclude the LBA "not only a shame but also a big damage" to FOREST EUROPE and urged finding a way to finalize the LBA as soon as possible.

René Collin, Minister of Nature and Forests in Walloon Government, Belgium, said Belgium supports the Madrid resolutions and decision and called for greater collaboration at the pan-European level under the umbrella of FOREST EUROPE and in the context of a future LBA, if consensus can be reached.

Jari Partanen, State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland, said FOREST EUROPE had a glorious past with many achievements, chief among them the high-level process itself. He invited all European states to join in the implementation of the Rovaniemi Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy agreed in December 2013 by a joint session of the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission.

Florent Guhl, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests, France, welcomed the updated indicators, the two draft resolutions and the review of FOREST EUROPE's working methods, saying it would help ensure FOREST EUROPE continues to provide a clear vision on strategic forestry issues and develop SFM tools.

Besarions Abashidze, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, Georgia, welcomed the updated indicators and Ministerial declaration, decision and resolutions, which Georgia is prepared to implement in its national strategies, programmes and initiatives.

Christian Schmidt, Minister of Food and Agriculture, Germany, said FOREST EUROPE needed to focus on different topics than it had when it started 25 years ago, but expressed confidence that the future reforms put in motion by this Ministerial would enable FOREST EUROPE to meet the new challenges. He expressed regret that negotiations on the European Forest Convention had not concluded.

Ioannis Tsironis, Ministry for Environment and Energy, Greece, called the negotiations on a possible LBA an achievement and said Greece will sign the documents of both the 7<sup>th</sup> Ministerial and EMC.

Sándor Fazekas, Minister of Agriculture, Hungary, said forests must be monitored in a coordinated way at the European level and supported the approval of the Ministerial documents.

Arvids Ozols, Ministry of Agriculture, Latvia, discussed the need to consider a broader scope when considering the future of FOREST EUROPE, saying a solution for the potential LBA should be prioritized.

Katarzyna Kępką, Ministry of Environment, Poland, said it is important to continue cooperating in a way that adequately addresses current challenges and supports further cooperation within the FOREST EUROPE process.

Noting the significant difference in challenges between Europe and developing countries, Ana Belén Noriega, PEFC, explained that the multiuse forestry debate and SFM efforts must be considered in a global context. She welcomed the two draft Ministerial resolutions.

Explaining that the pan-European criteria and indicators developed by the Ministerial Conferences have been incorporated into forest legislation and policies, the Forest Owners Group said FOREST EUROPE should be strengthened to further develop SFM in European forests.

## **PRESENTATION, ADOPTING AND SIGNING OF THE CONFERENCE DECLARATION, RESOLUTIONS AND DECISION**

On Wednesday afternoon, Cabanas Godino, on behalf of Co-Chair Tejerina, presented the four Ministerial documents: 'Madrid Ministerial Declaration: 25 Years Together Promoting Sustainable Forest Management in Europe,' 'Madrid Ministerial Resolution 1: Forest Sector in the Center of A Green Economy,' 'Madrid Ministerial Resolution 2: Protection of Forests in a Changing Environment,' and 'Madrid Ministerial Decision: The Future Direction of FOREST EUROPE.' Delegates then adopted the four documents by acclamation. A signing ceremony was held, during which Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Signatory States signed the Madrid Ministerial Declaration, Resolution 1 and 2, and the Decision.

Cabanas Godino passed the chairmanship of FOREST EUROPE from Spain to Slovakia. He thanked the representatives for their work, saying it has led to the firm commitments made in Madrid that lay the foundations for work in forestry in the coming years. He noted that multiple challenges still lay ahead at the global, regional and local level, emphasizing that collaboration and coordinating on political commitments will be vital to facing these challenges.

Cabanas Godino closed the Ministerial Conference at 12:37 p.m.

## **SUMMARY OF THE MADRID MINISTERIAL DECLARATION, RESOLUTIONS AND DECISION**

### **MADRID MINISTERIAL DECLARATION**

The Madrid Declaration commits FOREST EUROPE signatories to address global challenges at the regional level by, *inter alia*: raising awareness of the importance of forests in the post-2015 development agenda; enhancing the role of forests, SFM and the use of forest-based products in mitigating climate change; enhancing the sustainable use of goods and services from forest ecosystems and the development of agroforestry; monitoring and reporting on implementation of the goals and targets of European Forests 2020; working toward integrated, holistic and cross-sectoral approaches with other related areas such as climate change, biodiversity, desertification, water and plant health; and increasing efforts to mobilize financial resources from all sources to support SFM.

The Declaration endorses the updated pan-European indicators, which are attached as an annex, and commits signatories to use them in forest policy and forest monitoring, as appropriate, and for collaboration with other sectors. It also invites other sectors to use the pan-European criteria and indicators for forest-related assessments.

The Declaration further commits signatories to pan-European and national actions, including *inter alia*: providing regional inputs through UNFF to the work of the International Arrangement on Forests; strengthening cooperation with relevant regional and global actors; further developing and updating SFM policies and tools in order to adapt them to changing circumstances and make them fit for addressing new regional and global challenges; and working together with relevant international organizations when appropriate on elaboration and implementation of approaches for evaluation of sustainability in forest management.

### **MADRID MINISTERIAL RESOLUTION 1: FOREST SECTOR IN THE CENTER OF A GREEN ECONOMY**

Resolution 1 commits FOREST EUROPE signatories to enhance the role of SFM in a green economy by: improving the understanding and recognition of forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits; enhancing the contribution of SFM in a bio-based low-carbon economy; promoting research and innovation by enabling the necessary conditions; and encouraging the use of wood from sustainably managed forests.

It further commits signatories to enhance the social aspects of SFM, including promoting green jobs in forests, by: promoting a forest sector and its related value chain that provides security with increasing opportunities for green jobs, connected to the management and use of forests and to environmentally friendly production processes based on goods and services from sustainably managed forests; adapting education and training systems to changing conditions, technologies and new skills required in the forest sector; and promoting social inclusion and efforts towards gender equality along the whole forest value chain.

The Resolution calls for incorporating the value of forest ecosystems in a green economy by: promoting information exchange on methodologies and practices in valuation of and payments for forest ecosystem services as well as policy approaches to this end; supporting the development and possible application of common methodologies for such valuation; and making further efforts to have the full economic value of forest ecosystem services better reflected in forest-related policies and tools, including NFPs, guidelines, market-based instruments and payments for ecosystem services.

The Resolution also commits signatories to pan-European and national actions, including *inter alia*: information exchange on policy measures and lessons learned to promote the use of wood from sustainable sources; development of guidelines on the promotion of green jobs in the forest sector; exchange of information and experience in education and training systems, with a view to identifying possible pan-European recommendations; exploration of ways of using NFPs or equivalents to improve occupational health and safety standards and practices, adapt forestry education, labor skills and workforce qualifications to current demands, and promote job stability, social equity and gender equality in the forest sector; and sharing of information and experience related to science-policy integration.

### **MADRID MINISTERIAL RESOLUTION 2: PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

In order to secure the protective function of forests, Resolution 2 commits FOREST EUROPE signatories to enhancing the protection of Europe by: developing pan-

European approaches that address new and varied challenges and threats posed to European forests; raising awareness on the vital role of sustainable forest management; increasing work on adaptation of forests and forest management to climate change to mitigate damage at the local and regional scales; and promoting national implementation strategies and guidelines for conservation and use of forest genetic resources.

On strengthening cooperation in the pan-European region, signatories commit to continue collaboration on forests genetic resources through the European Forest Genetic Resources Programme (EUFORGEN) and to share expertise in the region and reinforce collaboration on preventing natural hazards, *inter alia*, forest fires, floods, invasive species, and desertification.

They further commit to pan-European and national actions on: exchanging information on management experiences related to maintaining the protective functions; exchanging experiences on restoration and rehabilitation of degraded forests; and promoting interaction between research, policy and forestry management about forest hazards.

### **MADRID MINISTERIAL DECISION: THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF FOREST EUROPE**

In the Decision, FOREST EUROPE signatories underscore the need to re-examine FOREST EUROPE in order to respond to current and new challenges and opportunities, maintain and enhance its contribution to SFM in Europe, and make FOREST EUROPE “fit for the future.” Signatories decide to review the FOREST EUROPE structure, procedures and work modalities to make its process more effective and inclusive, with the specifics of the review process to be set out in forthcoming terms of reference and roadmap to be agreed at the first ELM after the 7<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference.

The signatories commit to maintain and enhance good cooperation with forest-related organizations in the region regarding implementing the FOREST EUROPE resolutions and decisions, in particular the goals and targets contained in the Oslo Ministerial Decision: European Forests 2020.

### **SUMMARY OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE**

On Wednesday afternoon, Carlos Cabanas Godino, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain, on behalf of EMC Co-Chair Tejerina, opened the Extraordinary Ministerial Conference and welcomed participants. He noted the many efforts, by INC-Forests, ELMs, roundtables, expert groups and consultations, to try to conclude the LBA. He said Spain remains convinced that the LBA is necessary and that the common positions already reached in the negotiations indicate conclusion of a LBA is possible in the near future.

EMC Co-Chair Jahnátek said it was important to acknowledge all the work that had been put into the LBA negotiations and all those who had contributed to that work, as well as how consensus had been reached on most substantive provisions.

### **PRESENTATION AND CONSIDERATIONS OF THE RESULTS OF INC-FORESTS**

Jan Heino, Chair, INC-Forests, presented the results of the INC process, including the report of the final session and the draft negotiating text (INC4/2013/REP). He outlined the main components of the draft negotiating text, noting key achievements as: agreement on terms and definitions, core concepts and principles, and consensus on most substantive

technical issues related to forests and forestry, including articles on forest resources, forest health, biodiversity, productive, protective and socioeconomic functions of forests, and monitoring and reporting. He reported lack of consensus on compliance, voting rights, participation of observers and institutional arrangements.

Noting the proposed EMC decision and the existing consensus on most technical issues in the text, Heino said he believed that concluding negotiations was possible before 2020, and expressed the hope that not too much time will elapse before a new mandate is created with the task of finding common ground on a Forest Convention in Europe.

### **MINISTERS ROUNDTABLE**

Luxembourg, for the EU and its Member States, expressed regret that despite best efforts by negotiating parties the agreement had not been finalized, but recognized that many areas of consensus had been found. She said the EU believes that the draft negotiating text remains a valid basis for further negotiations.

Iceland said it joined the INC negotiations because it felt that the forest sector needs a firmer foundation to define its priorities and provide more substantial guidance to SFM, and that building an international forest convention at the regional level was the right way forward toward that goal. He said Iceland therefore supported the proposed EMC decision.

Norway said reaching an agreement on elements of SFM is an achievement in itself, and encouraged participants to find common ground before 2020 after individually identifying what about the LBA is important.

The Russian Federation said it did not rule out the possibility of continuing work on an LBA, but in accordance with international law on the United Nations platform and through negotiations based on the principles of honesty, transparency, equality and respect for the views of all parties involved. He also urged a “restart” of work based on an objective assessment of goals and capabilities of parties involved in the negotiations and an analysis of the “modern realities” in global and pan-European forestry.

Serbia said the negotiating process should be revived as soon as possible, expressing readiness for an agreement that puts the pan-European forests in a better situation.

Noting that all substantive issues in the LBA had been agreed upon, Switzerland expressed disappointment that an agreement on institutional issues had not been reached, saying “we have collectively missed a great opportunity.” He encouraged making use of the substantial items that had been agreed upon and reaching out to sectors based on these elements, saying other ways need to be found to reach the goal of an LBA on forests.

Saying efforts should continue to address the unresolved areas of the LBA, Turkey shared that it will implement the agreed upon substantive articles.

Calling attention to the environmental and sustainable development links between forest systems and forestry, Ukraine said consolidated efforts are needed to achieve a LBA.

The Group of Forests Owners welcomed the draft decision as a good diplomatic solution, in that it recognizes the draft negotiating text as the basis for further negotiations and sets a clear deadline for returning to the issue. They called for a firm commitment from all governments to conclude an LBA.

The Socioeconomic Organizations Group appreciated that the draft decision will explore ways toward common ground no later than 2020, and expressed interest not only in concluding an LBA, but also geographic or thematic protocols to the convention.

The Group of Scientific Community and Youth said the INC negotiations’ general agreement on common targets, goals and principles sent signals to policy makers that they should heed. They also urged a stronger and systematic link to a science-policy process.

FAO said it understood that the LBA should not be seen as a goal on its own, but as a tool for achieving results on the ground, especially responses to new challenges. She recognized that developing such an agreement is a step-wise process requiring patience, and expressed FAO’s readiness to support future FOREST EUROPE work, including implementation of the Madrid decision.

UNECE said it stood ready to continue supporting European countries in work on forestry in a framework decided by its member states.

UNEP acknowledged all efforts to negotiate an LBA. She said UNEP would be honored to provide its specific expertise and involvement if so requested by FOREST EUROPE.

UNFF congratulated the INC on achieving consensus on “a rich and substantive text” on technical issues in the draft negotiating text, which should provide a good basis for further negotiations.

### **PRESENTATION, ADOPTION AND SIGNING OF THE CONFERENCE DECISION**

On Wednesday afternoon, Co-Chair Jahnátek presented the draft EMC decision, noting that it: acknowledged the work of INC-Forests and took note of its report; recognized the draft negotiating text as “a basis for potential further consideration” of an LBA; and agreed that at “an appropriate time and at latest by 2020” FOREST EUROPE will “explore possible ways to find common ground” on the LBA.

Delegates then adopted the EMC Decision by acclamation. A signing ceremony was held, during which Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Signatory States signed the Decision.

Co-Chair Tejerina called the signing of the agreement an important step forward towards reaching an LBA on forests in Europe, noting that strong political cooperation is essential in achieving balanced and stable forests.

Co-Chair Tejerina closed the Extraordinary Ministerial Conference at 5:45 p.m.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

### **18<sup>th</sup> RRI Dialogue on Forests, Governance and Climate**

**Change:** This dialogue of the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) will convene under the theme ‘Challenges and Opportunities of Climate and REDD+ Milestones for Forest Communities.’ **date:** 26 October 2015 **location:** Washington, D.C., US **contact:** RRI Secretariat **phone:** +1 202 470 3900 **fax:** +1 202 944 3315 **e-mail:** [info@rightsandresources.org](mailto:info@rightsandresources.org) **www:** <http://www.rightsandresources.org/event/eighteenth-rri-dialogue-on-forests-governance-and-climate-change/>

### **Joint Session of the 38<sup>th</sup> European Forestry Commission and 72<sup>nd</sup> UNECE Committee on Forest and Forest**

**Industry:** Created in 1947, the European Forestry Commission (EFC) is one of 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 biennially. **dates:** 2-6 November 2015 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Ekrem Yazici **e-mail:** ekrem.yazici@fao.org **www:** <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/meetings/20151102/Silva2015-programme-ver-05-05-15.pdf>

#### Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission:

FAO will convene this meeting to bring together forestry experts and decision-makers from the Latin American and Caribbean region. The Commission is expected to discuss, *inter alia*, the SDGs, outcome of the XIV World Forestry Congress, forest and landscape restoration, food and nutrition security, climate change and strengthening resilience through forests, fire management and governance for SFM. **dates:** 9-13 November 2015 **location:** Lima, Peru **contact:** Jorge Meza **e-mail:** jorge.meza@fao.org **www:** <http://www.fao.org/forestry/31106/en/>

#### 8th World Ecosystem Services Partnership Conference:

The Ecosystem Services Partnership (ESP), is hosting the 8th World ESP conference under the theme 'Ecosystem Services for Nature, People and Prosperity.' The conference will pay special attention to the public and private sector dialogue on how the ecosystem services concept can be used to support conservation, improve livelihoods and engage the business community. **dates:** 9-13 November 2015 **location:** Stellenbosch, South Africa **contact:** Joël Houdet **e-mail:** j.houdet@acts-net.org **www:** <http://esconference.org/esconference2015#.VVdA5fmqkko>

#### 51st Session of the International Tropical Timber

**Council:** The meeting of the International Tropical Timber Council will consider recommendations for tropical forest-related policies and approve financing for field-level projects. The ITTC serves as the governing body for the International Tropical Timber Organization. **dates:** 16-21 November 2015 **location:** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia **contact:** Emmanuel Ze Meka **e-mail:** itto@itto.int **www:** [http://www.itto.int/workshop\\_detail/id=4240](http://www.itto.int/workshop_detail/id=4240)

#### First Annual Forests and Livelihoods: Assessment, Research and Engagement (FLARE) Network Conference:

The International Forestry Resources and Institutions (IFRI) research network, the Program on Forests (PROFOR), and the Musée de l'Homme Research Group on Social and Natural Evolution are convening this workshop to improve the assessment of forest governance approaches as a contribution to improved forest livelihoods, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. **dates:** 27-30 November 2015 **location:** Paris, France **phone:** 734-764-9542 **e-mail:** IFRI@umich.edu **www:** <http://www.ifriresearch.net/2015/03/10/flare/>

**UNFCCC COP 21:** The 21<sup>st</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC will try to reach agreement on a new global climate agreement. **dates:** 30 November - 11 December 2015 **location:** Paris, France **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228 815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **e-mail:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/cop21parisinformationhub/>

#### 22nd Session of the Near East Forestry and Range

**Commission:** FAO will convene this meeting to bring together forestry experts and decision-makers from the Near East region. The meeting is one of six region-specific meetings held every two years in support of the FAO Regional Forestry Commissions. **dates:** 14-18 December 2015 **location:** Tlemcen, Algeria **contact:** Abdel Hamied Hamid **e-mail:** abdulhamied@hotmail.com **www:** <http://www.fao.org/forestry/46199/en/>

#### 28th Session of the North American Forest Commission:

FAO will convene this meeting to bring together forestry experts and decision-makers from the North American region. The meeting is one of six region-specific meetings held every two years in support of the FAO Regional Forestry Commissions. **dates:** 11-16 January 2016 **location:** Campeche, Mexico **e-mail:** lvpaqueo@fs.fed.us **www:** <http://www.fao.org/forestry/31117/en/>

#### 22nd Annual ISTF Conference: Tropical Forests for

**Sustainable Development:** The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference of the International Society of Tropical Foresters will focus on the theme, 'Shaping our Post-2015 Future with Knowledge from the Field.' The conference aims to provide an opportunity for field researchers and practitioners to discuss with policymakers the role tropical forests will play in the post-2015 development agenda and in enhancing the ability to achieve the SDGs. **dates:** 28-30 January 2016 **location:** New Haven, CT, US **www:** <http://istf.yale.edu/node/54>

#### African Forestry and Wildlife Commission - 20th

**Session:** FAO will convene this meeting in order to bring together forestry experts and decision-makers from the region. The meeting is one of six region-specific meetings held every two years in support of the FAO Regional Forestry Commissions. **dates:** 1-5 February 2016 **location:** Tanzania **contact:** Foday Bojang **e-mail:** foday.bojang@fao.org **www:** <http://www.fao.org/forestry/afwc/en/>

#### Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission - 26th Session:

FAO will convene this meeting to bring together forestry experts and decision makers from the Asia-Pacific region. The meeting is one of six region-specific meetings held every two years in support of the FAO Regional Forestry Commissions. **dates:** 22-26 February 2016 **location:** Philippines **contact:** Patrick Durst **e-mail:** Patrick.Durst@fao.org **www:** <http://www.fao.org/forestry/31089/en/>

## GLOSSARY

EFI	European Forest Institute
ELM	Expert Level Meeting
EMC	Extraordinary Ministerial Conference
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
INC	Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
LBA	Legally binding agreement
NFP	National forest programme
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SFM	Sustainable forest management
SoEF	State of Europe's Forests
UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNFF	UN Forum on Forests