



Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

ECE/TIM/89
29 October 1997

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
TIMBER COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS FIFTY-FIFTH SESSION (6 to 9 October 1997)

Highlights of the fifty-fifth session of the Timber Committee

- ◆ The Committee examined the implementation of the ECE Plan of Action and agreed to put into practice the Commission's requests (paras. 7-9);
- ◆ The Committee reviewed its activities in support of sustainable forest management, to which it had attached highest priority. It was also informed of the state of preparations for the Lisbon Ministerial Conference and the results of the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). The Committee considered that work should continue along the lines described in TIM/1997/4 (para. 12);
- ◆ The session's special topic was "Markets for certified forest products". In the light of the discussion which followed the Committee agreed to address certification-linked issues in its programme of work (para. 10 and 16);
- ◆ The Committee reviewed the preparation for the TBFRA-2000 and urged countries to provide the information requested and provide sufficient political and financial support to their national correspondents to enable them to accomplish their task (paras. 19-22);
- ◆ The Committee reviewed its activities (paras 13-34) and approved its programme of work for 1998-2002, the rank ordering of programme elements (annex I) and a provisional calendar of meetings (annex II).

Introduction

1. The ECE Timber Committee held its fifty-fifth session at Geneva from 6 to 9 October 1997. The session was attended by representatives from Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.
2. The session was attended by representatives of the European Commission.
3. The following United Nations and specialized agencies were represented: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); and World Bank.
4. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Euro MDF Board (EMB); European Federation of Plywood Industries (FEIC); European Confederation of Agriculture (CEA); European Federation of Fibreboard Industries (FEROPA); European Forest Institute (EFI); European Federation of Associations of Particle Board Manufacturers (FESYP); French Federation of Softwood Importers (FFIBN); French National Timber Federation (FNB); French Federation of Tropical and American Hardwoods (FFBTA); Organization of European Sawmilling Industries (OES); Silviculture Union of Southern Europe (USSE); and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).
5. The Committee was addressed by Ms. D. Pastizzi-Ferencic, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECE on behalf of the Executive Secretary Mr. Y. Berthelot.

Adoption of the agenda (Item 1 of the agenda)

6. The provisional agenda (ECE/TIM/88) was adopted.

Implementation of ECE Plan of Action (Item 2 of the agenda) (TIM/1997/1)

7. Ms. C. Cosgrove-Sacks, Director of the ECE Trade Division informed the Committee of the ECE reform and of the proposals by its office holders at their meeting in April 1997 for the implementation of the ECE Plan of Action as far as the Committee is concerned.
8. The Timber Committee took note of the ECE Plan of Action and agreed to put into practice the Commission's requests. It endorsed the office holders' proposals as set out in document TIM/1997/1. In particular:
 - It confirmed that its two subsidiary bodies, the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics and the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, should continue with their present mandates and methods of work. The Working Party has a continuing role of monitoring provision of information relating to the forestry, wood-processing and forest products sector and analysing trends and developments. The Joint Committee is a flexible and decentralised framework of activity for voluntary cooperation among countries within the context of sustainable development of forestry. Its ability to react quickly to new situations has been demonstrated by the foundation of the team of specialists on socio-economic aspects of forestry, which is preparing the issues for consideration at the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe to be held in Portugal in 1998;

- At present the Committee has 11 teams of specialists, with precise mandates and time limited programmes which correspond to the practice encouraged by the Commission of informal meetings at expert level on specific issues. This work method had proved effective and economic of secretariat resources and should be continued;
- The Timber Committee bureau, which works very closely with the bureau of the FAO European Commission, has a satisfactory coverage of all sub-regions and functions along the lines laid down in the Plan of Action, overseeing implementation of the work programme, preparing the sessions and ensuring there is no duplication with other international organisations;
- The annual Timber Committee session should continue to be limited to three days, interpreted as six half day sessions over four days, although exceptions may be necessary in the case of future joint sessions with EFC; from 1998, it should take place in the last week of September;
- The Committee agreed to take into account the four cross sectoral concerns identified by the Commission: in this context, it noted that the outlook for sustainable development in its area of interest was at the heart of all its activities, that its programme showed special concern for the economies in transition in many areas and that the business community had been involved in its work from the beginning. As a start towards mainstreaming of the gender perspective, "women in forestry" had been the special topic of the joint session in 1996.

9. The Committee considered it could strengthen its contribution on two of ECE's cross-sectoral concerns, the mainstreaming of the gender perspective and the involvement of the business community. It requested its bureau to prepare proposals for its next session on how this might be achieved. With regard to gender issues, it noted that the role of women was being examined by the team of specialists on socio-economic aspects, which will develop ideas for activities by the Committee.

Special topic: Markets for certified forest products (Item 3 of the agenda)(TIM/1997/2)

10. The Committee heard presentations on markets for certified forest products by an expert panel composed of Messrs. E. Rametsteiner, University for Bodenkultur, Vienna (Austria), E. Hansen, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon (United States), C. Upton, SGS Forestry, Oxford (United Kingdom) and C. Elliott, World Wide Fund for Nature, Gland (Switzerland). The Committee thanked the speakers and agreed to take up the subject again during the discussion of its plan of work (see paras. 11 and 16).

Market developments in 1997 and prospects for 1998 (Item 4 of the agenda)
(TIM/1997/3; ECE/TIM/BULL/50/3)

11. The Committee reviewed the forest products markets on the basis of national reports and statistics, countries' estimates for 1997 and 1998 and the secretariat's *Forest Products Annual Market Review*. It approved a statement on the market for immediate issue as a press release and for later publication. (Note by the secretariat: The Committee agreed that in future its market discussion should also review trends in the markets for certified forest products on the basis of information provided by delegations on developments in their countries, and statements by experts, see programme element 1.5.).

Sustainable forest management in the region: contribution to the Lisbon Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe and follow-up to IPF (Item 5 of the agenda) (TIM/1997/4)

12. The Committee reviewed its activities in support of sustainable forest management, to which it had attached highest priority. It was also informed of the state of preparations for the Lisbon Ministerial Conference and the results of the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). The Committee considered that the activities described were in full conformity with the directions laid down at the regional level by the pan-European process and at the global level by the IPF, and are an appropriate and useful contribution by the Committee to these processes. Work should therefore continue along the lines described in TIM/1997/4. The Committee considered that the methods developed to manage cooperation between permanent international organisations and the more *ad hoc* political processes were very appropriate and efficient.

Review of activities since the fifty-fourth session and programme of work for 1998 to 2002 (Item 6 of the agenda)

13. The Committee reviewed its activities, on the basis of an overview in TIM/1997/5, supported by more detailed information in TIM/1997/5/Add.1 to Add.4. It approved its programme of work, the rank ordering of programme elements (annex I), and the list of meetings (annex II).

(a) Activities of FAO and other Principal Subsidiary Bodies of ECE of relevance to the Timber Committee (TIM/1997/6)

14. The Committee was informed by Mr. K. H. Schmincke, Director, Forest Products Division of FAO's activities in the field of forestry including the progress of preparation of FAO's Forest Strategy.

15. The Committee was also informed of the activities of other Principal Subsidiary Bodies of ECE dealing with matters of concern to it. It took note of this information and agreed to take it into account when discussing its own programme of work.

(b) Certification issues

16. In the light of the discussion under item 2 of the agenda, the Committee considered that the question of certification was of major interest and that it had some special experience in a little understood area: the markets for certified products. Furthermore the interactions between certification and sustainable forest management are complex and might be analysed under the Committee auspices. In view of the fact that certification could potentially affect all parts of the sector, there was no need for a separate programme element on certification, but rather of addressing certification-linked issues in several parts of the programme. The programme was modified accordingly.

(c) Publications

17. The Committee stressed that "publications", notably the Geneva timber and forest study papers, were often the major final output of large programmes of inter-governmental cooperation and thus the final objective of many of its activities. It was of the highest importance that they should be widely available, translated and well presented, so that they could be of use to the

maximum number of people. For this reason, they urged the ECE secretariat with the services of the UN Office in Geneva (UNOG) to make every effort to ensure that these studies were translated, and issued, within reasonable time limits and with satisfactory presentation.

18. The Committee praised the availability of the session's documents on its website (<http://www.unece.org/trade/timber>) and encouraged further development of this means of communication. For example, the session report, the market statement and tables with the Committee's forecasts for forest products should be made available as soon as possible. The Committee exhorted that every effort should be made to make this service known.

(d) Temperate and Boreal Forest Resources Assessment 2000 (TBFRA-2000)

19. The Committee was informed on the progress made in the preparation for the TBFRA-2000. It took note that the preparatory stage had been completed on time, the enquiry had been sent to countries and the replies from national correspondents were expected by 31 January 1998.

20. The Committee urged countries to provide sufficient material and political support to their national TBFRA-2000 correspondents to enable them to accomplish their task, including travel funds to attend the ad hoc meeting in November 1997, and to provide the information requested.

21. The Timber Committee noted with gratitude the contribution made by some countries to the TBFRA-2000, and urged countries to consider further whether they are in a position to contribute resources to help the secretariat in its task of validating and analysing the replies received.

22. The Committee requested the secretariat to establish the necessary contacts with the Montreal process, with a view to developing similar cooperation to that already existing with the pan-European process.

(e) Forestry assistance to countries in transition

23. The Committee urged countries which have not yet done so to provide information on forestry assistance to countries in transition to the secretariat, for inclusion in the data base established as part of the implementation of resolution H3, and countries which have already provided information to regularly update it.

24. The Committee urged all countries preparing programmes for assistance to countries in transition (both donors and recipient) to take into account at the planning stage both the priority areas and the on-going activities as reported to Geneva, to ensure that assistance was well targeted and did not duplicate other assistance programmes.

25. Mr. K. Neterda (Czech Republic) proposed to host a workshop on certification issues for countries in transition in autumn 1998 (the exact date and place to be defined later). The proposal was accepted with gratitude.

(f) Baltic Study Tour

26. Ms. A. Bergquist (Sweden), Vice-Chairman of the Timber Committee, briefed the Committee on the Baltic Countries Forest and Forest Industries Study Tour (4-9 May 1997). The Committee warmly thanked the hosts from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania whose excellent organization guaranteed the success of the tour.

27. The Committee welcomed a proposal to hold the 1998 tour in Karelia, back-to-back with the EFC session in Finland. It asked the Finnish and Russian authorities, with the secretariat, to make the necessary arrangements.

28. Ireland offered to host a study tour on plantation forestry, environmental issues and modern wood processing plants in 1999.

(g) Meeting of the Team of Specialists on Recycling, Energy and Market Interactions

29. Mr. B. Hillring (Sweden), Leader of the Team of Specialists on Recycling, Energy and Market Interactions, briefed the Committee on the outcome of two meetings, plans for a report to the Committee and a workshop in Turkey in 1998. In light of the escalating importance of wood fibre recycling and energy developments, and the complex policy issues raised by these developments, for instance of coordination between policies for different sectors, the Committee decided to make these themes the special topic at the next session, and asked the team to prepare this discussion. The Committee agreed to extend the mandate of the team for one year, to 1999, as a workshop had been scheduled for late 1998, which would be reported to the Committee's fifty-seventh session in 1999.

(h) Joint FAO/ECE Team of Public Relations Specialists in the Forest and Forest Industries Sector

30. Ms. B. Sanness (Norway), Deputy Leader of Joint FAO/ECE Team of Public Relations Specialists in the Forest and Forest Industries Sector, briefed the Committee on the team's activities including: a study of wood substitutes industries public relations campaigns, publication of "Forest and forest industries country fact sheets", follow-up on the public relations for products of the parent bodies and expansion of the team's network to southern European countries. The team has initiated plans for a global forestry communicators forum to discuss the results of the study and other issues.

(i) Marketing workshop

31. Mr. I. Bobko (Belarus) noted that a Timber Committee workshop on marketing forest products in countries in transition will be held in Arkhangelsk, Russian Federation in 1997, with co-sponsorship from Finland and the Arkhangelsk Administration. Belarus offered to host a similar workshop in 1998 if adequate co-sponsorship from other countries and organizations could be secured.

(j) Cooperation in the field of forest sector statistics

32. The Committee reaffirmed its strong wish to see increased cooperation between all the organisations dealing with forest sector statistics. It encouraged greater cooperation between organisations in this field, probably through the Intersecretariat Working Group on forest sector statistics, in accordance with the General Assembly resolution.

(k) Mandates of teams of specialists

33. The Committee requested the secretariat to make available for future discussions of the programme a set of updated mandates and information sheets of the various teams, as a support to discussion and decision making.

(l) Outlook studies

34. The Committee noted with regret that, with a few exceptions, it had been necessary to suspend work on the outlook studies, pending full staffing of the Geneva team, but that this work will be taken up as soon as the vacancy is filled. Taking into account the importance of outlook studies, the Committee urged FAO to fully staff the Geneva group as soon as possible.

Election of officers (Item 7 of the agenda)

35. The Committee reelected Mr. N.A. Burdin (Russian Federation), Chairman and Ms. A. Bergquist (Sweden) and Mr. G. Siegel (Austria) Vice-Chairmen, to hold office from the end of the session, until the end of the fifty-sixth session.

Any other business (Item 8 of the agenda)

36. The morning of Thursday 9 October was devoted to technical briefings by members of the secretariat on the following priority activities: Temperate and Boreal Forest Resources Assessment 2000, Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics, and Timber Committee communication and information. Briefings were intended to encourage understanding of the work and provide an opportunity for informal dialogue on the issues.

Adoption of the report of the Committee's session (Item 9 of the agenda)

37. The Committee adopted its report on the basis of a draft presented by the secretariat.

Date of next session (Item 10 of the agenda)

38. In accordance with the provisions of the ECE Plan of Action that sessions of Principal Subsidiary Bodies should take place in the period January-September, the dates of the Committee's next session were fixed for 28 September to 1 October 1998.

ANNEX I

PART I

INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE ECE TIMBER COMMITTEE
AND THE FAO EUROPEAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
FOR 1998-2002

This programme is carried out by the ECE Timber Committee (TC) and the FAO European Forestry Commission (EFC), and their subsidiary bodies, which meet approximately in a two year cycle:

- The Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training (JC) (1998, 2000)
- The Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics (FES) (1999, 2001)
- The EFC Working Party on Management of Mountain Watersheds (1998, 2000)
- The EFC/AFWC/NEFC Working Party on Mediterranean Forestry Questions *Silva Mediterranea* (SM) (1999, 2001)

A. CORE PROGRAMME: MONITORING AND ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOREST AND FOREST PRODUCTS SECTOR IN THE REGION

1.1 Collection and dissemination of information on trends in the sector, including publication of the *Timber Bulletin* (priority ranking 4)

Description: Information is regularly collected and disseminated on production, trade and prices of roundwood and forest products, and forest fires.

Method of work: Statistics are collected on an annual basis from countries and published in the *Timber Bulletin* (6 issues a year). Data collection is coordinated with FAO Rome and EUROSTAT (possibly other organisations e.g. ITTO in future), and the results are shared between all three organisations. The whole system is reviewed by the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics at its biennial sessions.

Duration: Continuing

1.2 Forest Resource Assessment 2000 (temperate and boreal forests) (priority ranking 5)

Description: Information on the forest resource of the temperate and boreal zones (including developed countries outside the ECE region), will be collected and published in the context of the FAO global forest resource assessment, under the guidance of the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics.

Method of work: The results of an enquiry, circulated to national correspondents in 1997, will be published in 1999. The enquiry was prepared under the supervision of a team of specialists, taking into account the recommendations of the Experts Consultation at Kotka (Finland) in June 1996. An *ad hoc* meeting in November 1997 will be held to brief national correspondents on the implementation of the assessment and interpretation of the enquiry. At all stages, the work is being carried out in close cooperation with the FAO Forestry Department and other organisations active in this area.

Duration: Continuing, review in 2003

1.3 Sustainable forest management in the region: support to the follow-up to UNCED and the pan European process on the protection of forests (priority ranking 1)

Description: The Committee and the Commission will provide support, as appropriate, to the follow-up to UNCED, including the work of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), and the pan-European process of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests. In particular the Commission will review, on a regular basis, national forest policies and selected topical policy issues, such as certification of sustainable forest management, in order to review implementation at the national level of the provisions of UNCED and the pan European process, and as support for national policy makers. The Committee and the Commission will collect and analyse information relevant to Helsinki Conference resolutions H1 and H2, notably as regards quantitative indicators of sustainable forest management and support the report to the Lisbon Conference on this subject.

Method of work: At each EFC session, delegates submit national progress reports, according to an outline drawn up by the Executive Committee. These reports are synthesized by the secretariat before the session, presented and discussed. At its session in 1998, the EFC will discuss those results of CSD relevant to Europe, topical issues relevant to Europe and formulate recommendations concerning FAO's strategy from a European viewpoint. In addition, the secretariat, in agreement with the General Coordinating Committee of the pan European process and in cooperation with other relevant international organisations, including FAO, EU, OECD and ICP Forest will supply data relevant to the Helsinki list of quantitative indicators of sustainable forest management. Existing sources, notably the Forest Resource Assessment, will be used to the extent possible, and may be modified to improve their capacity to help the pan European process. In view of the considerable importance of good public information and relations for sustainable forest management, a team of specialists will work towards creating a positive image of the forest sector, according to the mandate in TIM/R.280;FO:EFC/96/16, annex. A team of specialists, under the auspices of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee will provide input for a possible resolution on social aspects of the forest sector for the Lisbon Conference.

Duration: to 1999

1.4 Activities for countries in transition, including coordination of implementation of resolution H3 of the Helsinki Ministerial Conference (priority ranking 6)

Description: The Committee and Commission will provide assistance to the countries in transition, in order to promote the process of economic reform and transition to a market economy in their forest and forest products sector. The topics and themes to be included in this programme shall be in line with the priorities and needs identified by the countries concerned. In particular, the Committee and the Commission will contribute to implementing resolution H3 on forestry assistance to countries in transition, by monitoring and analysing this assistance, in particular to determine whether it corresponds to countries' real needs and priorities.

Method of work: The work is guided by a team of specialists, which meets regularly (next in November 1997 in Slovenia). The secretariat, as international coordinator for H3, collects, stores and analyses information and reports regularly to the parent bodies and, as appropriate, to meetings of the pan-European process. A data base on forestry assistance to countries in transition is maintained and its contents made available. The Committee and Commission implement a wide range of activities, notably workshops, which are scheduled and organized in a flexible manner, under two broad headings:

- Institution building, including legal and policy infrastructure;
- Development of market oriented and ecologically sound enterprises.

A Workshop on certification of sustainable forest management and markets for certified products in countries in transition will be held in the Czech Republic in autumn 1998.

Duration: to 1999

1.5 Review of markets for forest products and short term forecasts (priority ranking 2)

Description: The Committee analyses, on a continuous basis, short term trends in the production, trade, consumption and prices of forest products and forecasts short term prospects, with a view to providing Governments and the forest products sector with accurate and up-to-date information and assessments.

Method of work: The annual session of the Timber Committee reviews short term trends and prospects in the markets, on the basis of estimates provided by delegations and the Forest Products Annual Market Review, prepared by the secretariat, which reviews trends in the previous year. An analysis of trends, approved by the Committee, is published. The Committee's market discussion also reviews trends in the markets for certified forest products on the basis of information provided by delegations on developments in their countries, and statements by experts.

Duration: Continuing

1.6 Outlook for the supply and demand for timber and for non-wood goods and services (priority ranking 3)

Description: The Committee and Commission prepare, keep under review and regularly up-date projections and forecasts of long-term trends in production, trade, consumption and prices of forest products, and of the interaction of all of these, in order to assess the long term sustainability of the European timber supply. The Committee and the Commission will also carry out a study on the outlook for the supply and demand of the non-wood goods and services of the forest. The work is overseen and guided by the FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics.

Method of work: The fifth European timber trends study (ETTS V) was published and disseminated in 1996. The joint session in 1996 reviewed its results and discussed its implications for policy. An evaluation of the whole process was carried out by the Joint FAO/ECE Working Party. A core team on outlook studies and data will be formed and hold its first meeting in 1998. The secretariat, guided by the core team, will implement the Working Party's recommendations, as soon as the Geneva group is fully staffed.

A study, by a team of specialists, on the situation for non-wood goods and services, composed of national reports prepared according to a common format, will be issued in 1997.

A team of specialists on recycling, energy and market interactions will analyse the influences and interactions of technological and legislative developments on recycling, energy and timber markets, according to the mandate in TIM/R.281/Add.4; FO:EFC/96/17/Add.4). This analysis will be the basis of a special discussion at the Committee's fifty-sixth session.

Duration: Continuing

B. AREAS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE COMMISSION AND/OR THE COMMITTEE

2.1 Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics (priority ranking 7)

Description: The Working Party keeps under review the needs for international statistics in the forest and forest products sector and develops programmes to meet those needs, notably with regard to improving comparability; develops methodologies for collection and analysis of information and statistics; and undertakes projects in the field of economics and statistics relating to forestry and forest products.

Method of work: The Working Party meets every two years and advises the parent bodies and the secretariat on the implementation of work in its field. In particular, it is responsible for guiding the implementation, in its area of competence, of programme elements 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5 and 1.6.

Duration: Continuing

2.2 Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training (priority ranking 8)

Description: The Joint Committee assists countries, in particular those which its parent bodies may identify at any time as requiring priority attention, to develop their forestry activities in the context of sustainable development. This is achieved by fostering international cooperation on technical, economic and organizational aspects of forest management and forest working techniques and of the training of forest workers in logging and forest operations.

Method of work: The Joint Committee's activities are led by a Steering Committee, which meets annually. There are three subject areas: management (e.g. multiple use forestry, ecological and economical issues, marketing, information systems), technology (e.g. forest engineering, ecologically and economically sound operations in silviculture, wood harvesting and transport) and training (e.g. for workers, supervisors and managers, including applied ergonomics, occupational safety and health and social aspects of forestry). Much of the work is carried out by teams of specialists which report to the Joint Committee and Steering Committee sessions. A detailed programme for the Joint Committee's work in 1997-2001 is contained in TIM/EFC/WP.1/AC.1/20.

Duration: Continuing

2.3 EFC/AFWC/NEFC Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions, *Silva Mediterranea* (priority ranking 9)

Description: *Silva Mediterranea* will advise FAO and member countries in the Mediterranean region on the implementation of the Mediterranean Forest Action Programme (MED-FAP). It will also encourage the exchange of information and the coordination of research in topics of interest to Mediterranean forestry, through research networks.

Method of work: *Silva Mediterranea* will act, at regular sessions (seventeenth in Turkey in 1997) and between them, as an inter-governmental forum for the coordination, monitoring and orientation of MED-FAP. It will contribute to identifying international regional priority activities, as well as designing and monitoring them. Six research networks are at present operational, focusing on forest fires, key species of the subregion (stone pine, cedar species, and, the most recently created network, on cork oak), other multipurpose tree species, and on selection of stands of Mediterranean conifers for the production of seeds to be used in reforestation programmes.

Duration: Continuing

2.4 FAO Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds (priority ranking 10)

Description: The Working Party collects information, documents technologies, monitors evolution, exchanges experience and discusses progress within mountain ecosystems in view of their sustainable management and conservation. Important areas of concentration will be sustainable management and security of mountain ecosystems, with special attention to torrent control, avalanches, risk zoning, and mapping and early warning systems.

Method of work: The Working Party has an important role in the follow-up of Agenda 21, and supports FAO's role as task manager for chapter 13 on mountain ecosystems. The twenty-first session will be held in May/June 1998 in the Czech Republic. Key areas of concentration will be sustainable management of mountain ecosystems, improved mountain livelihood systems, in response to UNCED, activities related to international agreements on mountains, and risk and disaster control and monitoring.

Duration: Continuing

PART II

Projects for possible implementation at a future time

(See ECE decision O (45) and Supplementary report containing the views and proposals of ECE to the Special Commission of ECOSOC, E/ECE/1150/Rev.1, para. 131)

Structural trends in markets for forest products and in the structure and capacity of forest industries

Description: The Committee and the Commission review medium-term (3-5 years) trends in the production, consumption, trade and prices of major forest products and the structure and capacity of the sawmilling and wood-based panels industries, so that governments may be continuously informed of structural trends in the forest products sectors.

Work accomplished and to be undertaken: Medium-term surveys are carried out on a 3-year rotation of sectors. These surveys incorporate as appropriate the results of surveys of the structure and capacity of major sectors (every time for panels, every other time for sawmilling). The issue of the medium-term surveys has been suspended until the Geneva staff is at full strength.

ANNEX II

PROVISIONAL LIST OF MEETINGS IN 1998 AND 1999 FALLING WITHIN THE TIMBER COMMITTEE'S PROGRAMME OF WORK

Note: The meetings are sub-divided into two categories: meetings marked (A) are open to delegates or approved representatives from all member countries of ECE as well as from other countries that are members of the United Nations and organizations accredited to ECE (or to FAO and ILO, in the case of meetings co-sponsored by them). Meetings marked (B) are those restricted to the countries or individuals nominated by their countries to take part in the activity concerned, e.g. a team of specialists. At the Committee's website (<http://unece.org/trade/timber>) an up to date calendar of meetings, can be consulted.

1998

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Title</u>
21-22 April	Geneva	Meeting of the Timber Committee office holders and the EFC Executive Committee(B)
20-24 April	La Bastide des Jourdans (France)	Seminar on forestry training for target groups that are hard to reach (A)
April (dates to be confirmed)	Geneva	Team of specialists on Temperate and Boreal Forest Resource Assessment 2000 (TBFRA-2000)(B)
4-8 May	Poland	First Baltic Conference on Forest Fire (B)
9-13 September	Banska Stiavnica (Slovakia)	Seminar on improving working conditions and increasing productivity in forestry (A)
14-16 September	Zvolen (Slovakia)	Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on Forest Technology, Management and Training, twenty-second session (A)
September (dates to be confirmed)	Ort (Austria)	FAO/Austria seminar on planning and management in forest operations for countries in transition (A)
28 September - 1 October	Geneva	ECE TIMBER COMMITTEE, fifty-sixth session (A)
October (dates to be confirmed)	Karelia (Finland, Russian Federation)	Joint Timber Committee/European Forestry Commission study tour, in conjunction with the EFC twenty-ninth session (A)
October or November (dates to be confirmed)	Italy (to be confirmed)	Seminar on harvesting of wood and non-wood forest products in the Mediterranean region (A)

confirmed)	Czech Republic	Workshop on certification issues for countries in transition (B)
October or November (dates to be confirmed)	Minsk (Belarus)	Workshop on marketing of forests products in countries in transition (B)
Undecided	Canada	Team of specialists on reducing impact of forest operations (B)
Undecided		

1999

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Title</u>
April (dates to be confirmed)	Geneva	Meeting of the Timber Committee office holders and the EFC Executive Committee(B)
26-28 May	Geneva	Joint FAO/ECE Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics, twenty-second session (A)
June or September (dates to be confirmed)	Ossiach (Austria)	Workshop on new trends in harvesting with cable cranes (A)
20-24 September	Pessac (France)	Seminar on forest operations of tomorrow (A)
27-30 September	Geneva	ECE TIMBER COMMITTEE, fifty-seventh session (A)