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**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations****Economic Commission for Europe****Food and Agriculture Organization**

Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry

European Forestry Commission

**Joint ECE/FAO Working Party on Forest Statistics,
Economics and Management****Forty-second session**

Geneva, 22-24 March 2021

Item 5 (a) of the Provisional Agenda

Guidance on Work Areas**Work Area 1: Data, monitoring, reporting and assessment****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

In accordance with its mandate, the Working Party is expected to provide guidance on Work Area 1, Data, Monitoring, Reporting and Assessment. This document provides information about activities in this Work Area since the Working Party's last scheduled session in March 2020, as well as plans for 2021, drawing the Working Party's attention to any specific issues where guidance is needed. The 2020 meeting of the Working Party was postponed for one year, as a result of the COVID 19 prohibition on meetings in place at that time. For specific information on activities and topics covered between the March 2019 Working Party meeting and the scheduled but postponed meeting of March 2020, please refer to ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2020/3.

The initial set of activities in Work Area 1 for the year 2022 will be made available in document ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/inf.2 and discussed under Agenda Item 7.



I. Forest Resources

A. Data collection

1. Global Reporting on Forests and Sustainable Forest Management

1. The Joint ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section (Joint Section) continued supporting the implementation and reporting on: (i) the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹, (ii) the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution E/2015/332 “International arrangement on forests beyond 2015”, (iii) the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030³ and, (iv) FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment⁴.

2. Global Core Set of forest related indicators

2. The core set of global forest-related indicators was agreed on at the 13th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) in May 2018. The set consists of 21 indicators, including all forest-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators and sub-indicators. The set was constructed in line with other forest-related targets and SDGs, addressing, to the greatest possible extent, goals and targets of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) and goals, criteria or indicators of other forest-related global processes.

3. The Joint Section’s work in this area focused on the promoting the use of these Global Core Set indicators and the related information with member states and other potential users. Selected indicators from the Global Core Set of indicators are utilized in “INForest,” a new communication tool developed by the Joint Section to share data and knowledge about forests and the forest sector of the ECE region.

3. Reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests

4. The United Nations Forum on Forests - UNFF16 (26 to 30 April 2021 in New York) will be a technical session (thematically linked to the policy session of UNFF17 scheduled for 2022). Priorities of both sessions will be Global Forest Goals 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 and their associated targets⁵. In preparation for UNFF16, the Joint Section shared information about regional contributions to achieving the above-mentioned priorities.

4. Global Forest Resource Assessment / Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire

5. FAO has been assessing the state of the world’s forests in five to ten-year intervals since 1946. Recent Global Forest Resources Assessments (FRA) have been issued every five years.

6. The FRA 2020 reporting cycle was launched in March 2018. The FAO FRA secretariat, the Forest Europe Liaison Unit Bratislava and the Joint Section supported national correspondents in the ECE region in preparing their national submissions to FRA 2020. The data collection process was completed in 2019 and resulted in 50 out of 56 ECE countries providing reports (the highest response rate ever).

7. The Joint Section supported the FAO secretariat in FRA related work, as well as other outputs, including participation in the FRA 2020 Advisory Group. All FRA

¹ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E.

² <https://undocs.org/E/RES/2015/33>.

³ http://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/UNSPF_AdvUnedited.pdf.

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/forest-resources-assessment/en/>

⁵ <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/news/2017/01/six-global-forest-goals/index.html>.

2020 data were made available through the FAO FRA platform (<https://fra-data.fao.org/>).

8. With the conclusion of the 2020 FRA cycle in July 2020, the preparatory work for the 2025 cycle began. The Joint Section is cooperating with the FAO FRA secretariat in this process. In addition to the overall analysis and review, undertaken mainly through the Team of Specialists (ToS) on Monitoring SFM, the Joint Section has started a project aiming at improving meaningfulness and consistency of reporting on forest damage/disturbance. Further, the Joint Section supported the FAO FRA secretariat in developing the reporting format on primary forests.

5. Joint Forest Europe/UNECE/FAO pan-European reporting on Sustainable Forest Management

9. The 2020 pan-European data collection on quantitative indicators was carried out jointly by the FAO FRA secretariat, the Forest Europe Liaison Unit Bratislava and the Joint Section. The review of quantitative reports for the Pan-European reporting, was concluded in 2020.

10. The Joint Section, the FAO FRA secretariat and the Liaison Unit, continued the integration of forest data platforms held by partner organizations. The Pan-European data will be online, in a similar format as the FAO Global FRA data platform, and will strengthen the usability harmonization of the information, beyond the pan-European region. The compatibility of the format of the Pan-European data to Global one provides a solid foundation for the further integration of these two data collection processes in the next reporting cycle.

B. Assessment and Reporting

1. Forest damage/disturbance assessment

11. Forest health and disturbance have been the subjects of the global (FRA) and regional (pan-European) forest assessments, however, challenges in terms of data collection, timeliness, comparability, analysis and interpretation have remained an issue. Adequate forest damage reporting requires consistent information on forest area affected by disturbances, but the comprehensiveness and assessment of these measures is hampered by differences in national data collection, lack of clarity and long delays in the reporting process.

12. Recognizing the complexity and importance of reporting on forest disturbance in the context of various cross-cutting issues (including climate change, biodiversity, resilience, and economic performance), the Joint Section initiated a project to improve knowledge, methodology and reporting capacity on forest damage in the ECE region. The project consists of (i) analysis of the current national and international reporting on forest damages; (ii) an overview of the status and trends of forest damage by main causes (based on existing and submitted data); and (iii) recommendations for national and international reporting on forest damage.

13. Work covered so far included the establishment of an authors' team and the advancement of the analytical work. The first progress report from this project were presented to the ToS on Monitoring SFM, at 2 December 2020. The conclusion of the project, including the organization of the final conference, is planned for 2022.

2. Global and regional forest assessment 2020

14. The global and regional reporting on forests and sustainable forest management resulted in several outputs, including the main publications, FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 and Forest Europe's State of Europe's Forests 2020, both produced with the contribution of the Joint Section.

15. The Joint Section initiated various activities to disseminate both, data collected and related outputs of the 2020 forest assessment cycle. This work included the

production of the FRA 2020 Key findings focused on the ECE region⁶, presentations and lectures dedicated to this topic. This work will be continued in 2021, more information on the activities completed so far is available in ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/5.

16. The Joint Section would like to express its appreciation to the FAO FRA secretariat and the Forest Europe Liaison Unit Bratislava for their cooperation on the 2020 reporting at both global and regional levels. The Joint Section is grateful to the experts (national and international) involved in the process and to the Russian Federation and Switzerland for their financial support.

3. Data and Knowledge Platform

17. The Joint Section, alone or in cooperation with partner organizations and processes, collects copious amounts of data covering almost all aspects of state of forests, their management, use, as well as forest-based products and services in the region. This data is public but difficult to access by external viewers because it is not so apparent and stored in disjunct locations.

18. To address this issue, the Joint Section created a new data and knowledge platform. The platform (INForest), was developed by staff of the Joint Section and external experts, supported by the Teams of Specialists on Forest Products Statistics and Monitoring SFM.

19. INForest⁷ provides basic information on forests, and the services and products they supply in the ECE region, through a set of user-friendly tools to analyse and visualize national and regional data. The information includes all forest-related SDGs indicators, selected Global Forest Core Set indicators and key variables related to the production, trade and consumption of forest products. The platform is intended as a concise, user-friendly reference and not as replacement to existing source databases, which are recommended for more advance use.

20. The Joint Section would like to thank the Government of Switzerland for providing financial support.

C. Team of Specialists on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management

21. The ToS on Monitoring SFM continued its work on global and regional reporting on forests and sustainable forest management. The first session of the fourth meeting of the ToS was held online on 2 December 2020. In addition, there were regular, coordination meetings of the core group of the Team (twice a month), with the participation of deputy leaders and coordinators of the task groups (on forest damage and forest data banks).

22. In 2020, the ToS concluded the work on the 2020 cycle of the global and pan-European reporting on forests and sustainable forest management. Furthermore the Team contributed to the “Assessment of forest damage/disturbance in the UNECE region”, “Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia” and the development of “INForest – the data and knowledge platform on forests in the UNECE region”. Complete information about the work of the Team and plans for 2021 is available in Annex A.

D. Key questions for guidance and discussion

23. The Working Party is invited to:

⁶ Available in ECE/TIM/2020/10 which can be downloaded at: <https://undocs.org/ECE/TIM/2020/10>

⁷ Available at: <https://forest-data.unece.org>

(a) Take note of the data collection processes for global and regional reporting, comment on the implementation of the 2020 cycle and make recommendations for future work in this area;

(b) Take note of the outputs and provide advice on possible follow up and dissemination;

(c) Review the work of the ToS on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management and make recommendations for its work.

II. Forest Products' production, trade and consumption

A. Data collection

24. Data collection continued with generally good responses during a year marked by many challenges. Information on the questionnaire responses is shown in Annex E.

25. Recovered wood and wood pellet data are steadily improving. Bioenergy Europe, the European Biomass Association, encouraged closer collaboration on further improving wood pellet production and trade data.

1. Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (JFSQ)

26. The JFSQ had 45 responses with data for the year 2019. An additional 17 updates were provided. This equals 2017 and 2015 for the most replies received. For data for the year 2018 44 replies and 19 updates were received. These data were published in the *Forest Products Annual Market Review 2019-2020* (FPAMR), in the statistical annex accompanying it, and through FAOSTAT (updated in August and December 2020). The table in Annex E shows the results of replies to the JFSQ for the last 25 years.

27. The secretariat included a few indicators of forest products on the forthcoming Data and Knowledge platform. Please see paragraphs 19-22 and document ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/5 for more details.

28. A forest products statistics capacity building workshop for countries of the western Balkans and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia was held on 9-11 February 2021 in collaboration with FAO Rome. Please see document ECE/TIM/EFC/WP.2/2021/6 for more details.

2. Timber Forecast Questionnaire (TFQ)

29. The TFQ requests forecasts for the current and next year. These are used to provide information to the meeting of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI). The secretariat received forecasts from 29 countries, somewhat less than our long-run average of 31. Slightly more cells were filled in than in the past. The usual deadline of six weeks before the meeting was brought forward in order to make basic forecasts available in time for including in the FPAMR. This is the first time we have provided forecasts in the publication since 2003.

30. The full forecasts (31 tables) were available at the COFFI meeting, incorporated in the Market Statement and subsequently published online in Excel and PDF.

31. In the past the Joint Section has published "total" estimates, which included repeated figures from non-replying countries. This year, in order to capture most accurately the significant changes in 2020, the secretariat published forecasts only for those countries that supplied data.

3. Engineered Wood Products (EWP)

32. The EWP was developed at the request of the Team of Specialists on Forest Products Statistics to improve data availability for this rapidly growing part of the industry. The second round of EWP data (for the years 2017-2018) was collected and published during 2020. We received fewer responses than in the first round. Issues with lack of clarity on what products are included continue as the classifications (HS and Prodcom) used are not able to provide information on such specific products. The ToS on Forest Products Statistics encouraged the secretariat to carry out a third round and looked forward to improving the trade data with changes in the Harmonised System 2022.

4. International issues

33. The Intersecretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics (IWG) held an online meeting on 26-28 January 2021. The IWG consists of ECE, FAO, Eurostat and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) who together manage the JFSQ. Background information and documents from the meetings since 2001 are available at <https://unece.org/forests/iwg>.

34. The IWG reviewed the results of work in 2020 and prepared plans for 2021. Several changes in definitions for the next JFSQ were proposed and adopted. Additional discussions are needed between ECE and Eurostat on issuing and processing questionnaires this year.

35. The ITTO asked that member countries, which have not provided data for several years, do so in accordance with their obligations under the International Tropical Timber Agreement (2006). This was successful in encouraging a response from several countries.

36. The IWG decided that a joint proposal through FAO should be made on revisions to the Harmonised System (HS) trade classification for the year 2027. This could be submitted in May 2022 to the World Customs Organization HS subcommittee. IWG members should gather requests for new items or changes from their constituents during this year and provide these at the IWG meeting next January for consolidation and review.

B. Team of Specialists on Forest Products Statistics

37. The Team met once during the reporting period, a virtual meeting in September that was postponed from March. The report of the meeting is available at <https://unece.org/forests/events/seventh-meeting-ecefao-team-specialists-forest-products-statistics>.

38. The Team will organize its next meeting in April 2021. The annual report of the Team is in annex B to this document.

C. Key questions on data collection for guidance and discussion

39. The Working Party is invited to:

(a) Encourage suggestions from members to revise the trade classifications for HS2027 with a view to making a joint submission of the Intersecretariat Working Group through FAO to the World Customs Organization in 2022;

(b) Express its thanks to those correspondents who have provided timely and accurate forecasts and data for past years under the particularly trying circumstances of 2020;

(c) Encourage replies to the JFSQ 2020 in time for use of the data in the FPAMR 2020-2021.

D. Forest products market assessment

1. The Forest Products Annual Market Review

40. The *Forest Products Annual Market Review 2019-2020* was completed on 4 September 2020. The English version in PDF was made available on the Joint Section's website on 23 October 2020, and the printed version was made available in late October 2020. The Russian and French language versions were issued in February 2021.

41. Many authors and reviewers for the publication are members of the ECE/FAO ToS on Sustainable Forest Products. In addition, the ToS on Sustainable Forest Products provided authors and expertise for the production of the *Review* and the Team Leader provided substantial support in reviewing and proofreading of the final version. In addition, FAO Rome provided strong support and assistance in producing the *Review*, including some financial support for editing and information access as well as technical review of all chapters.

42. At the 13 October 2020 meeting of the ToS on Sustainable Forest Products (held online), the Team discussed the new format of the publication as well as the difficulty of producing a comprehensive chapter on value-added wood products. There was strong consensus that the information conveyed in the chapter on value-added wood products of the *Market Review*, though not exhaustive, is quite useful and covers important topics, thus should continue. The final *Review* was not yet available, so there was no commentary on the new format of the *Market Review*.

43. In addition to the standard interactive PDF, the FPAMR was produced in a webflow version, which is optimized for online reading as well as for reading on a smart phone or tablet (available here: <http://www.unographics.org/fpamr/introduction.html>). The webflow version in 2020 came at no cost, as the secretariat was used as a beta trial for future applications by the UN printing department. Preparing a webflow document of the FPAMR is likely to come at cost in the future. Preliminary web-statistics on the webflow edition of the FPAMR seem to indicate that the document was used more intensively in November (140 views) and December (160 views) of 2020 than in January (110 views). First data indicate that most views are generated from desktop and computer based operating systems, although this version is meant to be for mobile devices.

44. Sweden agreed to provide funding for the 2021 edition of the FPAMR. The secretariat expresses its gratitude for this financial support and would further highlight the importance of in-kind contributions from member States to the publication. The secretariat invites member States to consider funding the FPAMR in the coming years.

2. Market Statements

45. The Joint Section invited member States to prepare country market statements as background for the COFFI annual meeting. Seventeen countries submitted statements (last year the secretariat received 15 country market statements) which are available on the website (<http://www.unece.org/forests/market-statements-2020>). These provide an excellent level of country-specific detail on forest products markets, and the economic and policy contexts affecting them. The secretariat wishes to express its deep gratitude to member States for the comprehensive information provided.

46. The 2020 Market Discussions in Geneva included expert presentations and focused on the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic and the bark beetle infestation in central Europe. In addition, the effects of the forest fires in western North America were discussed as well as the growing importance of an introduced conifer, Douglas Fir, in France. Several member States provided status reports: on efforts to assist forest owners with the current beetle outbreak; the current situation with their forest industries and the fact that COVID-19 has not impacted the forest sector as strongly as expected.

47. The drafting committee developed the market statement for COFFI 2020, putting into one document the information provided by member States from the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire, Timber Forecast Questionnaire, Country Market Statements and Market Discussions. The market statement can be found in the annex of the COFFI 2020 meeting report (ECE/TIM/2020/2). Some of the main points of the market statement were also used for a press release with the title: “Massive ad-hoc wood removals dominate Forest Products Markets in 2019 and 2020”, which addressed the huge loss in standing timber in central Europe, with both the short- and long-term effects discussed. In addition, the surprising resilience of the forest sector in the face of COVID 19 was highlighted.

3. COVID-19 and Forest Sector

48. The outbreak of COVID-19 and related sanitary measures triggered massive changes in production, trade and consumption of good and services around the world. The economic impact of COVID-19 has been a leading topic of discussion on forest products markets since the outbreak. Information on COVID-19 impacts on forest products became available before and during the COFFI market discussions and were reflected in the COFFI market statement.

49. Two small studies on the impact of COVID-19 on the forest sector have been published by the Joint Section. One aimed at the effects of COVID-19 on forest products markets in the “Western Balkans” and the other on “Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia”. The activity was funded by the Regional Program on Technical Cooperation funds of the ECE secretariat. The studies were conducted with a focus on the forest-based industries, and thus complement the UNFF assessment of impacts of COVID-19 on forests.

E. Team of Specialists on Sustainable Forest Products

50. The ToS was instrumental in the preparation and review of the FPAMR 2019-2020, providing authors, market intelligence and critical review. The ToS met on 13 October 2020.

51. On 23 November 2020 the Team held a webinar, “*How can we build more sustainably with wood*”. The primary purpose was to raise awareness of wood’s role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. More than 150 people attended the webinar.

52. During the COFFI session in November, the Committee suggested that the ToS work more closely with FAO’s Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest Industries, which will be an aim of the Team in the future.

53. The annual report of the Team can be found in Annex C of this document and more information is available in the report of the October Team meeting of the Team⁸. The mandate of the Team runs from 2020-2021.

F. Key questions on markets assessment for guidance and discussion

54. The Working Party is invited to:

- (a) Discuss current format and content of the FPAMR and possible modifications in the future;
- (b) Provide feedback on whether the last Market Discussion met member States’ expectations and what could be done to improve them;
- (c) Comment on the process of producing and submitting country market statements.

⁸ <https://unece.org/forests/events/meeting-team-specialists-sustainable-forest-products>

III. Wood Energy

A. Data collection

55. The secretariat finalized the data collection of wood energy supply and use in the ECE region in 2017. The tool used for the data collection was the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry 2017. The key trends were summarized by a press release issued on 15 January 2021. The most important trend is that overall, by-products and residues form an increasing part of wood energy consumed in the ECE region. The result of the data collection confirmed that wood energy has been the leading source of renewable energy in the ECE region for more than a decade, accounting for 35.4% of renewable energy supply for 31 countries. The press release aimed at informing the public about the available data on wood energy. In addition, a fact sheet of data and trends, profiles for all countries responding and a flat file containing all data 2005-2017 are also available.

56. The secretariat launched the next round of data collection based on the JWEE for the reference year 2019 in late December 2020. The questionnaire is pre-filled with the summary JWEE data, the relevant JFSQ data for 2019 and IEA/OECD data for 2018/2019. Due to increasing relevance of damaged wood in the ECE region, additional items have been introduced into Table IV to gather information on the use of damaged wood for energy generation. The questionnaire is available online at <http://www.unece.org/forests/jwee.html>. The secretariat invited member States to provide their data replies by 26 February 2021 and intends to present a very first overview on the status of replies to the Joint Working Party.

B. Data assessment

57. Besides the publication of the data and database on wood energy data, no assessment was undertaken.

C. Cross-sectoral cooperation

58. In 2020 the secretariat worked very closely with FAO and became a member of their Expert Working Group on Wood Fuel. The secretariat contributed to their effort in revising the global wood energy modelling. FAO wood fuel modelling provides data on wood fuel removals for those countries who do not provide data to the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire. The Expert Working Group on Wood Fuel is continuing with the revision of the global wood energy model, with the final result expected to be available in 2022. In the reporting period the secretariat attended three online workshops. The first meeting held on 30 September 2020 focused on problem formulation and work completed to date at FAO. The second meeting held on 29 October 2020 focused on newly available data from the group's systematic country-by-country data search. The third meeting was held on 10 December 2020 and focused on statistical classification of countries to identify which countries will share a common modelling framework as well as wood energy conversion factors (energy units, forestry units, etc.).

D. Team of Specialists on Wood Energy

59. The secretariat serviced one meeting of the Team on Specialists on 16 November 2020, with information on the meeting available in the meeting report⁹The online meeting was quite successful in terms of participation and exchange

⁹ <https://unece.org/forests/events/sixth-meeting-unecefao-team-specialists-wood-energy>.

of information. Participants noted during the event that an online meeting cannot fully replace an in-person meeting in terms of creating networks between experts.

60. The secretariat further helped organizing two short webinars for members of the ToS on Wood Energy. The first webinar (11 June 2020) was to review and discuss the Drax Biomass Carbon Calculator. The second held on 12 February 2021 covered recent market developments in Europe and regulatory developments involving sustainability along the pellet supply chain.

70. More details about the Team's activities can be found in the report of the Team in the Annex D of this report.

E. Key questions on wood energy data assessment for guidance and discussion

71. Delegates are invited to:

(a) Provide feedback to the data collection process with the Joint Wood Energy Enquiry;

(b) Provide guidance on further cross-sectoral cooperation on wood energy related matters by the secretariat.

Annex

I. Report of ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Sustainable Forest Management

1. Name:
Team of Specialists on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management Team website: https://www.unece.org/forests/fr/msfm.html
2. Period covered:
April 2020 – March 2021
3. Leader/Deputies and Secretary:
Leader: vacant Deputies: Ms. Annemarie Bastrup-Birk, EEA; Mr. Kari T. Korhonen, Finland; Ms. Stefanie Linser, BOKU. Secretary: Mr. Roman Michalak
4. Members:
65 (as of 11 February 2021)
5. Countries:
<p>24 countries (as of 11 February 2021): Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Russian Federation, Spain, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United States of America</p> <p>11 organizations and processes (as of 20 January 2021): European Environment Agency, European State Forest Association, European Forest Institute – EUFROGEN, European Commission, Sylva Nova, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Confederation of European Forest Owners, Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Armeniatree, Montreal Process, Forest Europe-Liaison Unit Bratislava</p>
6. Meetings held:
<p>Bi-weekly coordination meetings of the core group of the Team, with participation of deputy leaders and coordinators of the task groups (on forest damage and forest data banks).</p> <p>Fourth (29th) meeting of the ToS on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management, was conducted online at 2 December 2020 (https://unece.org/forests/events/fourth-29th-meeting-unecefao-team-specialists-monitoring-sustainable-forest)</p> <p>A joint workshop of the ToS on Monitoring SFM and the ToS on Forest Products Statistics was held in a virtual format on 21 January 2021 to share with both Teams the new INForest communication platform and seek guidance on the platform's final shape and its possible further development.</p>

7. Outputs and impacts achieved during last year:

The project “Assessment of forest damage/disturbance in the ECE region” was initiated by the ToS on Monitoring Sustainable Forest Management to improve knowledge, methodology and reporting capacity on forest damage in the ECE region. After funding commitments and in-kind contributions from Germany, Finland, Austria, Switzerland and the USA the project started in October 2020.

The Forest Databanks Network (an informal sub-group of the ToS who are experts in the field of forest data banks, led by Andrzej Talarczyk), gathered responses to a questionnaire to identify relevant national level data banks on forests in the ECE region. In addition, the Network provided advice to the ECE regarding developing a web portal presenting forests of the ECE region. The Joint Section in cooperation with experts from Poland completed the work on its new web portal, called INForest, presenting key data on forests of the ECE region in a visually attractive and informative manner. The platform is also accessible on mobile devices.

Members of the Team took part in the conclusion of the implementation of the UNDA/UNECE/FAO project “Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia” (2016-2020), including in through the participation in the final online conference and by preparing policy briefs on various aspects of forest governance and management, building upon the results of:

- Criteria and Indicators: Policy Tools for Sustainable Forest Management – author: Stefanie Linser;
- Criteria and Indicators and Decision Making (Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting) – author: Annemarie Bastrup-Birk;
- Criteria and Indicators and Forest Policy and Management Support Information Systems (FPMSIS) – author: Andrzej Talarczyk;
- Criteria and Indicators and National Forest Inventory – authors: Kari T. Korhonen, Michael Köhl.

Furthermore, Team Members provided direct contribution to the production of outputs from the Global and pan-European reporting systems.

Team Members contributed to the review of the Integrated Programme of Work of the Joint Section.

8. Outputs and impacts expected for coming year:

The above already mentioned project “*Assessment of forest damage/disturbance in the UNECE region*” is scheduled from October 2020 until December 2022. The main aim of the project is to develop an approach to forest damage/disturbance assessment and reporting that would provide decision makers and general public with reliable and comprehensive information about forest condition, in terms of causes, strength, scale and impact of damage/disturbance. The project aims at covering the whole ECE region (North America, Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia). The project consists of the following modules:

- Analysis of the concept of forest damage reporting and existing approaches in selected countries
- Analysis of the concept of forest damage/disturbance reporting and existing approaches in selected countries
- Analysis of the current national and international reporting on forest damage/disturbance in the context of data availability and needs
- Analysis of alternative/innovative tools for harmonized forest damage assessment
- Organization, implementation and evaluation of a voluntary survey on forest damage in ECE member States
- Overview (based on existing and acquired national and international data) on the extent and trends of forest damage by the main causes
- Development of recommendations/guidance for national and international reporting on forest damage
- Thematic conference on the forest damage in the ECE region in Vienna/Austria in Autumn 2022.

Support to the presentation and dissemination of the results of the Global and Pan-European 2020 reporting on forests and sustainable forest management. Support to ECE, FAO and Forest Europe (tbc) in evaluation of the 2020 reporting cycle and in preparation of the next, 2020 cycle of the Global and Pan-European reporting.

Further support to the Joint Section in developing the UNECE/FAO forest sector information website INForest. Repository on national forest data banks.

Advice to the capacity building work led by the Joint Section, related to strengthening capacities of countries in the field of forest monitoring, data and knowledge management and wider dissemination and public communication of information about forest sector of the ECE region.

9. Issues for the attention of the Working Party:

At its latest session, the COFFI invited member States to support countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia and other ECE sub-regions in developing national reporting systems on sustainable forest management and requested that the secretariat continue providing support to member States in strengthening their capacity in monitoring, assessment and reporting on sustainable forest management. The completion and publication of the policy briefs on practical aspects of using C&I of SFM in forest sector governance is an important step in further capacity building in the CCA countries. The results of the UNDA/UNECE/FAO project “*Accountability Systems for Sustainable Forest Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia*” and the policy briefs are a good foundation for further developments in the CCA region.

The current COVID-19 situation poses serious challenges to international cooperation, but it is also an opportunity to increase capacities and competence in employing technical advances in communication and remote collaboration. The Joint Working Party has already underlined the importance of using modern communication means to increase visibility of the work done by the ToS’ and Joint Section regarding the forest sector. The development and launch of the new information platform INForest devoted to disseminating information on forests of the ECE region and the work of the Joint Section is an important step in communication with the public in an open, comprehensible and attractive manner.

10. Other comments:

The development of the INForest platform was done in collaboration with the ToS on Forest Products Statistics.

II. Report of ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Forest Products Statistics

1. Name:
Team of Specialists on Forest Products Statistics Team website: https://unece.org/forests/team-specialists-forest-products-statistics
2. Period covered:
April 2020 – March 2021
3. Leader/Deputies and Secretary:
Leader: Mr. Branko GLAVONJIC Deputy: Ms. Graça LOURO Secretary: Mr. Alex MCCUSKER
4. Members:
42 (as of 15 January 2021)
5. Countries:
(as of 15 January 2021) Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America
6. Meetings held:
A virtual meeting was held in September 2020. Website: https://unece.org/forests/events/seventh-meeting-ecefao-team-specialists-forest-products-statistics
7. Outputs and impacts achieved during last year:
Collection of statistics and information within the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Production of JFSQ for 2020, covering the compilation on post-consumer recovered wood as a single item, as agreed by the team and discussed during 2019. 2. Timber Forecast Questionnaire 2020 3. Questionnaire for Engineered Wood Products (Glulam, CLT, LVL, I-beams, production and trade), developed since 2017. 4. Active participation of ToS members in the production of the Forest Products Annual Market Review 2019-2020 (FPAMR 2019-2020) 5. Forest Product Statistics Capacity Building Workshop (a virtual meeting) for the SEE and CIS countries, 9-11 February 2021 (over 30 participants)
8. Outputs and impacts expected for coming year:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuing the work on methodology and information sources, including on the definition, differences and similarities between wood waste and recovered wood, which should be continued with the ToS on Wood Energy. Engineered Wood Products definitions should also be reviewed; 2. Preparation of forecast data on forest products production and trade; 3. Continuing the work on the wood balance and conversion factors, including more analysis at the species level for density and shrinkage based on common standards;

4. The issue of double counting will also be pursued including the distinction between chips used for energy versus chips used for industry;
5. Collection of historical data on forest products, species trade, and prices;
6. Production of JFSQ for 2020;
7. Timber Forecast Questionnaire 2021;
8. Support to the FPAMR production;
9. Preparation of data and the statistical annex for the FPAMR 2020-2021;
10. Preparation of tables and graphs for the Market Forecasts 2021-2022;
11. Improvement of the existing database and expansion of available information;
12. Dissemination through FAOSTAT and ECE websites.

9. Issues for the attention of the Working Party:

Support the participation in the Inter-secretariat Working Group on Forest Sector Statistics and attendance at other international meetings.
Support to the Harmonized System 2022 revision, review of international classifications.

10. Other comments:

Discussion about the possible reduction in Teams and merging FPS with Wood Energy, maintaining the focus on statistics rather than policy). Continue discussion regarding the initiative for creating a new ToS organizational scheme.

III. Report of ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Sustainable Forest Products

1. Name:	
Team of Specialists on Sustainable Forest Products	
2. Period covered:	
April 2020 – March 2021	
3. Leader/Deputies and Secretary:	
Leader:	Mr. Eoin O'Driscoll
Deputies:	Mr. Jeremy Wall, Mr. Delton Alderman
Secretary:	Mr. Matthew Fonseca
4. Members:	
Ninety-two (as of 26 January 2021), with about half actively participating.	
5. Countries	
Thirty-two countries (as of 28 January 2021): Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan.	
6. Meetings held:	
One meeting since March 2020 (13 October 2020) https://unece.org/forests/events/meeting-team-specialists-sustainable-forest-products . Team website: https://unece.org/forests/team-specialists-sustainable-forest-products	
7. Outputs and impacts achieved during last year:	
<p>Provided chapter authors for the Forest Products Annual Market Review (FPAMR) and editing of the FPAMR.</p> <p>Organised and launched a forest products webinar on 23 November 2020 in conjunction with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), Brussels, Belgium</p> <p>The use of web technology (to include webinars) has enabled us to increase the scope of the ToS meetings during 2020. This will continue in 2021. The ToS had a record attendance of 60 participants at the virtual ToS Meeting.</p>	
8. Outputs and impacts expected for coming year:	
<p>Edit and produce the FPAMR</p> <p>Continue the ToS series of construction workshops and conferences. These feature forest products, climate change, wood-biomass energy and sustainable construction.</p>	
9. Issues for the attention of the Working Party:	
Given ongoing COVID restrictions, all of the future planned events will have a web presence. This enables the ToS to broaden the attendance at its meetings and events. It is also cost effective.	

10. Other comments:

The ToS wishes to scope ongoing collaboration with the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management.

IV. Report of ECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Wood Energy

1. Name:	
Team of Specialists on Wood Energy / Team website: https://unece.org/forests/team-specialists-wood-energy	
2. Period covered:	
April 2020 – March 2021	
3. Leader/Deputies and Secretary:	
Leader:	Mr. Francisco AGUILAR
Deputies:	Mr. Matthias DEES Mr. Richard SIKKEMA Mr. Dinko VUSIC
Secretary:	Mr. Florian STEIERER
4. Members:	
29 (as of 13 January 2021)	
5. Countries:	
17 countries (as of 13 January 2021) Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Serbia, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America. Biomass Europe and Eurostat also provided a member to the Team.	
6. Meetings held:	
Sixth meeting of the ToS on Wood Energy, 16 November 2020, online (https://unece.org/forests/events/sixth-meeting-unecefao-team-specialists-wood-energy)	
7. Outputs and impacts achieved during last year:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6th meeting of ToS on Wood Energy, 16 November 2020 (online), hosted by SLU- Sweden • Successfully contributed to the Forest Products Annual Market Review 2019-2020. The publication contains a chapter on wood energy and the secretariat. ToS members, Francisco Aguilar, Branko Glavonjic, and Warren Mabee contributed to the FPAMR. • 1st webinar on the ToS on Wood Energy on "The Drax Biomass Carbon Calculator - background, scope and functionalities", by Michael Goldsworthy, Sustainability Manager Drax Power Station, UK. • 2nd webinar on the ECE/FAO ToS on Wood Energy on "Recent market developments in Europe inclusive of any regulatory developments involving sustainability along the pellet supply chain ", by Dr. Christian Rakos, President of the World Bioenergy Association (WBA) and Managing Director of the Austrian Pellets Association (proPellets Austria). • The ToS has played a central role facilitating interactions among ToS members and beyond, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Engagement FAO efforts to revise the global wood energy modelling; (ii) Recent work published examining impacts of expanding wood pellet sector in the USA (www.nature.com/articles/s41598-020-75403-z); and assessing residential wood energy consumption amongst German households (www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0961953419301473) • The ToS is a strong channel to disseminate impacts and stay aware of current events as illustrated by group participation in the "Biomass Workshop Series 2020-21: REDII Implementation and Beyond" jointly organized by the European Technology and Innovation Platform (ETIP), the International Energy Agency Bioenergy (IEA Bioenergy) and the Sustainable Biomass Program 	

(SBP); and recent development of publicly available resources such as the forest biomass atlas (<https://forest-energy-atlas.luke.fi>) and Bosnia and Herzegovina forest atlas (<http://atlasbm.bhas.gov.ba/>); and efforts on bioenergy and climate (e.g. FORCLIMIT project to assess the use of large-scale forest models for carbon stock take under Paris Agreement, <https://www.eragas.eu/en/eragas/Research-projects/FORCLIMIT.htm>).

8. Outputs and impacts expected for coming year:

- The ToS identified the following topics to continue discussion and continue to explore opportunities for collaboration to study the contribution of wood energy to the Sustainable Development Goals, with particular interest across:
 - Wood energy and air quality
 - Carbon neutrality of wood energy
- The Team did not decide on the data and place of the next meeting and that the next meeting will very likely again be organized as an online event. Early March 2021 identified as time to meet to discuss wood energy and SDGs and to follow up on current priorities.
- In 2021 the ToS will continue webinar series, possible extend participation beyond ToS to increase impact and visibility.
- The ToS also plans to conduct a roundtable on the opportunities and risks associated with the utilization of wood for energy to contribute to the ongoing public debate regarding its role in renewable energy portfolios and net greenhouse gas reduction targets.

9. Issues for the attention of the Working Party:

The ToS highlights the importance of reliable annual data for wood energy production and consumption. Data have improved over the years and the ToS, with support of the secretariat, has had an important role in that process. ToS continues to offer a platform to cross-reference data with the private sector (e.g. Bioenergy Europe) and other multilateral organizations (e.g. Eurostat Energy Statistics). ToS members Christina Calderon (Bioenergy Europe), and Fernando Diaz (Eurostat) are key members of this process).

Strong ToS involvement through online meetings.

10. Other comments:

In 2020 the ToS planned but could not have a joint meeting with EUBCE 2020. The ToS plans for a meeting together with the EUBCE 2021 organisation, depending on the pandemic

IV. Data overview

A. Replies to the Questionnaires

Questionnaire		Year Questionnaire Sent			
		2017	2018	2019	2020
JFSQ	Total replies	37	45	44	45
	JQ1 (production) - replies	37	45	44	45
	% of cells filled (of 70/68)*	72	68	65	67
	JQ2 (trade) - replies	35	39	42	39
	% of cells filled (of 248/236)*	98	94	93	87
	JQ3 (sec. prod. trade) – replies	28	38	41	37
	% of cells filled (of 40/36)*	96	94	96	94
	EU/ECE (species trade) – replies	26	32	28	28
	% of cells filled (of 84)	91	85	96	98
TFO	TC1 (roundwood forecast) - replies	35	34	31	29
	% of cells filled (of 21)	80	81	80	84
	TC2 (product forecast) - replies	35	34	31	29
	% of cells filled (of 48)	81	85	82	85
EWP	Total replies			27	23
	Production - replies			14	16
	% of cells filled (of 4)			79	75
	Trade - replies			21	17
	% of cells filled (of 16)			85	88
		2016		2018	
JWEE	Total replies	33		31	
	Table 3 (wood fuel) - replies	18		15	
	Average number of cells filled	4		5	
	Table 4 (uses) - replies	30		30	
	Average number of cells filled	20		20	

1. There are a total of 56 member countries.
2. The first two tables on JWEE are not included, as they are partially prefilled.
3. * The change to a lower number of cells to be filled started in 2018 for JQ1, JQ2 and JQ3.

B. Indicators of Achievement

Data for Year	% Satisfactory
1992	62.2
1993	60.8
1994	61.5
1995	59.6
1996	55.8
1997	55.8
1998	51.9
1999	59.6
2000	65.4
2001	71.2
2002	71.2
2003	65.4
2004	69.2
2005	69.2
2006	75.5
2007	79.2
2008	73.6
2009	69.8
2010	67.9
2011	64.2
2012	79.2
2013	79.2
2014	62.3
2015	64.2
2016	69.8
2017	69.8
2018	62.3
2019	50.9

Note: The “% Satisfactory” column is the number of countries supplying official data for at least 80% of the possible cells on JQ1 and JQ2, divided by the number of countries in the ECE region. Data for the most recent year are preliminary.