

# Minutes of the Advisory Group meeting

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Geneva, Switzerland 5<sup>th</sup> November 2012

Advisory Group (AG) members present: Michael Köhl (Institute for World Forestry), Myriam Martin (FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit), Roman Michalak (UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section), Ana Belén Noriega Bravo (FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit), Jari Parviainen (Finnish Forest Research Institute), Matthias Schwörer (German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection –BMELV and General Co-ordinating Committee).

EFI project team: Hubert Inhaizer (project leader), Christopher Prins, Paul Rougieux, Bernhard Wolfslehner.

UNECE-FAO support : Elina Warsta

## ***Morning session: project scope in light of current C&I related developments***

### **UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section**

Roman Michalak stated that many expectations concerning this project really come true. From the point of view of the Forestry and Timber Section's work programme, he wants to learn more on the implementation status of C&I: (1) less from the perspective of statistics and National Forest Inventory data which are already well developed but rather in the context of policy issues and decision making at national level. (2) Another learning point is how C&I is brought back to the general public as a complete SFM tool.

Going through the different points of the definition: the first point "provide a framework for dialogue" comes first. Point 2 "monitor and report" has been the most successfully implemented so far. Point 3, in terms of "assessing progress", improved methods should come from science and research. Concerning the last point "provide information", the primary function is to strengthen visibility and use within the sector. Visible criteria and indicators would be a good basis for further developments in and outside the forest sector. Any benefit in one point of the working definition will improve benefit in other areas also. In the end all benefits will be complementary. The level of implementation is crucial.

### **FOREST EUROPE liaison unit**

Ana Belén Noriega Bravo on behalf of the liaison unit. Answering the question "What would be the best tool to assess SFM?" is part of the FOREST EUROPE work programme. C&I is the main tool for assessing SFM. This project should mainly prepare a vision on how C&I have served decision making among the FOREST EUROPE signatories. What are the linkages between science, decision making and the implementation of policies? The level of analysis should be national and also sub-national for applicable

countries. A revision of C&I would be useful at the regional level. We need to revise the tool for decision makers too. The geographical scope of the project is in question, should it be looking only at European countries or at another scope?

The FOREST EUROPE work programme has been asked to feed into the INC (Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee) negotiations. FOREST EUROPE also has to incorporate the *Europe 2020* objectives in its work programme. Communication and work with other processes - such as the working group on the revision of SFM and its tools - is essential to meet the objectives of the project.

### **Donor perspective**

Matthias Schwörer spoke first on behalf of the donor (BMELV). The questions raised so far in the project are the good ones. C&I is an important tool to promote SFM especially against other concepts developed in other fora related to biodiversity or climate change. C&I (as a tool to explain SFM) is a “sleeping giant” left alone who suffered from having no real follow-up process. C&I are not well known in the policy arena. There is a lack of training and very limited knowledge about the use of C&I in other processes. Information collected in this project will be very valuable for countries to get the mirror in which implemented policies can look at themselves. The ongoing global movement towards a core set of indicators is a good sign. The current Draft Negotiating Text of the possible LBA structures the General Provisions chapter according to the 6 criteria. The main reason was to establish multi-functionality in this document. With the 6 criteria, policy makers force themselves to get a balanced approach. The upcoming LBA will not only have C&I as an element to highlight multi-functionality, it will also offer a framework for development and a process to follow up, keep C&I alive and set new policy directions.

### **General Co-ordinating Committee (GCC) perspective**

Since the last ministerial conference in Oslo, it was decided to follow a double track approach with the LBA. The C&I have the potential to do more. To have an impact by bringing C&I to the policy level and to reach this impact the timing is crucial. Persons around today’s table have been involved for a long time from different perspectives. But the policy level was not significantly touched by C&I. This has to be seen in the context of the general criticism of the external evaluation of the FOREST EUROPE process which didn’t see enough linkages between the national level and the pan-European level.

### ***Afternoon session: progress of the WPs and suggestions from the group***

#### **Bernhard Wolfslehner gave a presentation on the WP2**

The group suggested an idea if the project report could be the final report of the WP as it includes all elements needed. The group also mentioned that C&I of other SFM processes should be analysed to cover the broad picture of the use of C&I. But it was also cautioned that this should not change the focus on the pan-European C&I.

Additionally, it was pointed out that interviews and regional workshops (WP3, WP4) shall provide input to the report in order to find a good balance between scientific analysis, expert knowledge and opinions

and experiences in C&I implementation. WP2 and WP3/4 shall be stronger synthesized to find relevant conclusions and recommendations. The methods section will be adapted accordingly.

This final part of the report shall be done by a broader authors team (main authors and some AG members).

The group also discussed the importance of correct wording in communication to be apt for the further use in political fora, etc. A respective review process will be established.

### **Hubert Inhaizer gave a presentation on WP3, WP4 and WP5**

WP3: The group commented that participation of the countries is already at very good level, as only few countries did not participate. This is normal for voluntary questionnaires. Country report example was discussed and the group concluded that it is reasonable to drop the country reports in the current form. Maybe one paragraph or country examples with good practices could be useful instead.

WP4 and WP5: Regional workshops were discussed, which are planned to take place to discuss the regional characteristics. There was a suggestion to drop one of the planned workshops (Nordic one), since the number of the planned events were too much. There was also discussion on the content and the outcome of the workshops, which need to be clearer, as the project is not yet ready at the time when the workshops are planned to take place. Interesting questions are needed for the workshops to attract attention (e.g. why some country is implementing C&I and the other not?). There was also a suggestion to think about the naming of the workshops (e.g. sustainability indicators could be more attractive to larger audience than the project name itself).

### **Paul Rougieux gave a presentation on WP7**

The group suggested to prepare an impact factor (or similar) of C&I to find out how often C&I are referred in publications.

'Documents' page should be made more attractive (e.g. replace the preview of the documents with pictures)