

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE
PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE

LIAISON UNIT VIENNA

TEN YEARS OF COMMITMENT TO EUROPEAN FORESTS

THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN EUROPE

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Preface

The co-operation of 40 European countries for the protection and sustainable management of forests is a success story. An impressive number of projects and actions have been implemented following the political decisions taken at three Ministerial Conferences. The European forest sector can therefore be regarded as a model for European integration on a broad scale.

Ten years ago the First Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe was launched, at Strasbourg, to better understand the ways and means for the protection and the sustainable management of forests at a pan-European level. With this ambitious start forest policy issues have been given weight and substance at the ministerial level for the first time. The pan-European region responded to the global discussion on sustainable development, thus defining, *inter alia*, sustainable forest management for Europe at the Second Ministerial Conference in Helsinki in 1993. At the most recent Ministerial Conference, held in Lisbon in 1998, the European Ministers responsible for forests focused on the socio-economic elements of sustainable forest management, again demonstrating the flexible and up-to-date approach to evolving forest policy issues.

Despite various interests as well as geographical and political differences among the participating countries and organisations from all over Europe, fruitful co-operation at scientific, technical and political levels is an added value and an indispensable characteristic of this process which aims at the benefit of the people as well as the benefit of forests in Europe. To achieve these goals also the collaboration with international and European organisations has been a decisive element.

At the beginning of a new century we would like to emphasise the important progress achieved during the first ten years of this Pan-European Forest Process that reflects the commitment of Europeans in embracing the strong political mandate to meet the challenges regarding the protection and sustainable management of forests also for the future.

As co-chairmen of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, on behalf of all our colleagues in the pan-European region, it is therefore a great honour for us to present this report which provides an insight into the history and the achievements of this unique process.

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What Is the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe?

A High-Level Political Commitment

The "Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe" (MCPFE) is a high-level political initiative for co-operation involving around 40 European countries for the purpose of addressing common opportunities and threats related to forests and forestry. Launched as a regional initiative in 1990, it is the political platform for the dialogue on European forest issues.

The MCPFE gives representation to European countries and the European Community, and is enriched with other countries and international organisations which are invited to participate as observers. Thus, it provides a forum for co-operation of ministers responsible for forests and allows non-governmental and intergovernmental organisations to contribute with their knowledge and ideas.

A Continuing Political Process

The MCPFE is a dynamic process that tackles a range of the most vital common concerns about forests and forestry in Europe and addresses the challenges ahead. Through a chain of political level conferences and follow-up mechanisms aspects of highest political interest and concern are dealt with by the ministers responsible for forests at Ministerial Conferences. Since 1990, three Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe have taken place. These are regarded as milestones of European forest policies:

- **1990 – First Ministerial Conference in Strasbourg**
- **1993 – Second Ministerial Conference in Helsinki**
- **1998 – Third Ministerial Conference in Lisbon**

Between conferences, the decisions passed by the ministers at the conferences are further specified and put into action. The follow-up and preparatory process of the Ministerial Conferences is called the "**Pan-European Forest Process**". Additionally, issues of immediate interest to the process are taken up and further developed on a flexible basis.

The signatory states and the European Community are responsible for implementation at the appropriate level of the decisions passed at the Ministerial Conferences. Based on voluntary commitments which constitute a common framework, governments all over Europe have taken initiatives to ensure and improve the sustainable management and the protection of forests in the region.

A Dialogue of Different Interests

Since its beginnings in 1990, the dialogue within the MCPFE has succeeded in intensifying political and scientific communication in Europe and establishing close and successful co-operation on a wide range of issues related to forests and forestry. This dialogue not only involves governmental representatives of the participating countries, but also a variety of stakeholders including environmental and social NGOs, forest owners' associations, the forest industry, as well as intergovernmental organisations. Although the actors involved represent a variety of opinions and interests, they share a common commitment to the sustainable development and protection of forests in Europe.

Structure and Organisation of the MCPFE

Ministerial Conferences

took place in Strasbourg 1990, in Helsinki 1993 and in Lisbon 1998.

Expert Level Meetings

are attended by representatives of the European signatory states, the European Community and by observers from non-European countries, international organisations and NGOs in the fields of forestry, environment and research. The representatives of the signatories have a mandate to take decisions regarding the ongoing work between Ministerial Conferences.

Round Table Meetings

aim at an exchange of information and opinions on emerging issues, providing essential guidance for the MCPFE.

Ad hoc working groups

are convened to discuss specific subjects of scientific or technical nature.

The MCPFE is organised by the joint presidency of two countries with the support of two others. Together, these four form the **General Co-ordinating Committee (GCC)** which has the main task of proposing guidance for the follow-up work within the framework of the resolutions.

The **Liaison Unit** originally grew out of the secretariat of the Helsinki Conference. It is essentially a service-oriented office for the co-operation of the European ministers responsible for forests and provides assistance to the GCC. It is responsible for organising and carrying out all international meetings of the MCPFE, as well as the preparation of reports and documents and the development of technical background documents for discussion at these meetings. This also includes the collection, processing and distribution of information resulting from the preparatory and follow-up process.

A Co-operation Throughout a Continent

Encompassing all of Europe, the MCPFE can be regarded as a successful example for cross-border teamwork throughout a continent. The MCPFE has always considered European forests to be a common heritage and has recognised that threats to these valuable ecosystems do not always follow territorial or ideological borders. Thus, from its very beginnings the dialogue and co-operation within the MCPFE has built bridges between the East and West, as well as North and South of Europe, resulting in the sharing of ideas and creation of mutual awareness and understanding for the diverse conditions and situations in these regions.

An Example for Promoting Sustainable Forest Management

Over the past ten years, the MCPFE has made remarkable contributions to the development of common principles of forest policies and forest management throughout the European continent. Based on the long tradition of European forestry, the MCPFE has always worked towards the concept of sustainable forest management and has agreed upon the common definition:

"Sustainable management means the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems." (Helsinki Resolution H1)

Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, considerable world-wide efforts have been made to apply the concept of sustainability to forests. The MCPFE has established itself as a platform specifically for European conditions. It works towards the sustainable management and protection of forests in Europe and contributes to the sustainable development of society, with special focus on the links between society and forestry.

A Reflection of Europe's Diversity

Within its political framework, the MCPFE has always recognised the diversity and multiple roles of forests and the forest sector in Europe. Growing under a wide range of ecological conditions, forests cover more than one third of the land surface in Europe. The total area of forests and other wooded land of countries participating in the MCPFE amounts around 1,100 million hectares. This forest area is presently expanding. Despite decreases in some regions, Europe has an average annual increase in forest area of about 500,000 hectares.

Forests are home to a great variety of animal and plant species, and they provide a multitude of ecological, economic, social and cultural benefits. For example, forests have a major influence on climate, and quality of air, water and soil. They are important sources of income and employment, especially in rural areas, and they are often the most popular

environments for recreational and outdoor activities. Aware of the multiple roles of forests, the MCPFE has always aimed to take further steps towards the conservation and sustainable management of these valuable ecosystems.

With its participatory and interactive approach, the MCPFE also reflects the variety of forest ownership patterns which can be found in the pan-European region. While around two thirds of forests are in private ownership, around one third of them are owned by the state or public institutions. Yet the size of forest properties varies considerably, the average size of public ones being larger than the average privately owned forest. There is also a remarkable share of small-scale private ownership reflected by several million private owners in Europe with forest estates of less than 3 hectares. In total, the number of holdings in private ownership amounts around 5.1 million, while about 100,000 holdings are in public hands. Additionally, several countries in transition to market economies presently have an ongoing process of privatisation or restitution of forest land.

Taking into account the special characteristics of Europe, the MCPFE has proved itself to be an effective forum for improving the sustainable management of all types of forests, and it will continue to ensure that the forest heritage is passed on to future generations in a better and healthier state.

A Link to Global Processes

Since the UNCED in 1992, several international and regional conferences, as well as initiatives and processes have been initiated in order to encourage countries to accept commitments towards a more sustainable use of natural resources. The MCPFE has been recognising the significance of these initiatives and the relations to its work. It has been contributing to the implementation of the forest-related decisions and agreements of the UNCED and its follow-up process within IPF/IFF, as well as the provisions of the United Nations Conventions, notably UN-FCCC, CCD and CBD. For example, the MCPFE has elaborated a "Work-Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems" in co-operation with the European ministers responsible for environment, which can be considered a pan-European contribution to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

A Link to Other Regional Forest Initiatives

The MCPFE has always advocated broader association with other countries, organisations and regional processes for mutual benefit. It maintains links with other regional processes that share the concern regarding sustainable forest management, as well as protection and conservation of forests. For example, the MCPFE shares its experience with other initiatives working on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

Milestones Towards Sustainable Development

During the 1980s, concerns about the quality of European forests and factors causing forest damage, such as pollution, diseases, fire, game, as well as the use and management of forests, led to an increasing awareness of the threats to forests in the broader public. For example, it was clear that forest damage caused by industrial air pollution resulting in acid rain could only be addressed through cross-border efforts and that effective action was needed.

Strasbourg 1990:

Initiating Cross-Border Mechanisms for the Protection of Forests

On the initiative of France and Finland, the First Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe was held in Strasbourg in 1990. The conference was attended by 30 European countries and the European Community, as well as several intergovernmental organisations which recognised the need for cross-border protection of forests in Europe and agreed on six Resolutions. These "Strasbourg Resolutions" focused particularly on technical and scientific co-operation in order to provide necessary data for common measures concerning European forests.

Strasbourg Resolutions in 1990

S1	European Network of Permanent Sample Plots for Monitoring of Forest Ecosystems
S2	Conservation of Forest Genetic Resources
S3	Decentralised European Data Bank on Forest Fires
S4	Adapting the Management of Mountain Forests to New Environmental Conditions
S5	Expansion of the EUROSILVA Network of Research on Tree Physiology
S6	European Network for Research into Forest Ecosystems

The Strasbourg Resolutions initiated a broad co-operation throughout Europe. Moreover, the Strasbourg Conference was a major step to initiate the incorporation of scientific data into political action for the protection of European forests.

This First Ministerial Conference constitutes the beginning of an ongoing political process to initiate proposals and actions for the protection and sustainable management of forests in Europe. After the First Ministerial Conference, meetings among the participants and observers of the MCPFE were held regularly to put into action the six Strasbourg Resolutions.

Helsinki 1993:

A Commitment to Sustainable Forest Management in Europe

The intention and commitment to apply the Forest Principles and other decisions of UNCED at regional and national levels led to the Second Ministerial Conference which was held in Helsinki in June 1993 under the chairmanship of Finland and Portugal. In addition to 37 European countries and the European Community, several organisations from the private sector, the international forestry community and environmental NGOs participated at this conference.

The General Declaration and the four Helsinki Resolutions reflect Europe's approaches to global environmental issues, namely promotion of sustainable forest management, conservation of biological diversity, strategies regarding the consequences of a possible climate change for the forest sector, and an increasing co-operation with countries in transition to market economies.

Helsinki Resolutions in 1993

- | | |
|----|---|
| H1 | General Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Forests in Europe |
| H2 | General Guidelines for the Conservation of the Biodiversity of European Forests |
| H3 | Forestry Co-operation with Countries with Economies in Transition |
| H4 | Strategies for a Process of Long-Term Adaptation of Forests in Europe to Climate Change |

Lisbon 1998:

Recognising the Multiple Roles of Forests

At the Third Ministerial Conference held in Lisbon in June 1998, socio-economic aspects of sustainable forest management were given considerable emphasis, focussing on the relationship and interaction between forest and society. Additionally, important outcomes of the Helsinki follow-up were confirmed. Under the chairmanship of Portugal and Austria, 36 countries and the European Community signed two resolutions.

Furthermore, co-operation with the Ministerial Process "Environment for Europe" was established by endorsing a joint pan-European "Work-Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems 1997-2000".

Lisbon Resolutions in 1998

- | | |
|----|---|
| L1 | People, Forests and Forestry – Enhancement of the Socio-Economic Aspects of Sustainable Forest Management |
| L2 | Pan-European Criteria, Indicators and Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management |

Putting Commitments into Action

The twelve resolutions adopted at the Strasbourg, Helsinki and Lisbon Ministerial Conferences reflect the commitment of European countries to address common problems and concerns, as well as the many challenges and opportunities in the conservation, management and sustainable development of European forests. These pan-European commitments are put into action at the national and regional levels.

In the implementation of the decisions taken by the ministers, the MCPFE has been co-operating with a number of international organisations and institutions, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), research institutions, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders. The intention of the MCPFE has always been to give new political impetus and to strengthen the political commitment to the sustainable development of European forests by creating synergies and building on existing structures as far as possible.

Improving the Environmental Conditions of European Forests – The Follow-up of the Strasbourg Resolutions

At the Strasbourg Conference, the ministers responsible for forests in Europe put special emphasis on the need for a better understanding of the functioning of forest ecosystems in all their diversity in order to be able to better identify the causes of damage. In the follow-up of the conference, the MCPFE succeeded in establishing various collaborative networks of research on forest ecosystems as well as thematic areas, such as the conservation of forest genetic resources or tree physiology. Through an exchange of information between research workers and policy makers, both within and between the signatory countries, these networks facilitated the integration of the most recent scientific knowledge in the implementation of forest policies.

The European Forest Genetic Resources Programme (EUFORGEN), which aims to ensure the effective conservation of the genetic diversity of European forests, has succeeded in identifying common research and conservation needs, facilitating the information flow among countries and raising public awareness in genetic forest matters.

The EUROSILVA Network of Research on Tree Physiology was established to increase knowledge on physiological mechanisms of forest trees in order to better identify the causes of damage. Since the Strasbourg Conference, this network has been expanded to include 20 European countries, involving over 400 leading scientists.

The third European research network initiated at the Strasbourg Conference, the European Network for Research into Forest Ecosystems (EFERN), has been promoting the co-ordination of forest ecosystem research and improving communication among scientists working in that field by creating a continuously updated internet database. This EFERN

database has become a primary information resource in the field of European forest ecosystem research.

The Strasbourg Conference also marks the initiation of collaborative programmes which regularly monitor health and vitality of European forests and observe forests susceptible to fire.

The European Network of Permanent Sample Plots for Monitoring Forest Ecosystems is an exhaustive network that regularly monitors trends in crown condition on 20,000 monitoring plots all over Europe. A further 800 intensive monitoring plots allow in-depth analyses of soil, needles and leaves, tree growth, atmospheric deposition and meteorological conditions.

In order to obtain precise and comparable data on forest fires, a Decentralised European Database on Forest Fires has also been established as a follow-up to the Strasbourg Conference. There are about 50,000 forest fires every year in Europe leaving behind roughly 500,000 square km of burnt area, especially in Russia and the countries of southern Europe. High-quality information on the number of fires, area burnt and, as far as possible, the causes of forest fires collected in the database helps to improve the prevention policies and encourages dialogue among the various countries concerned.

Special attention has also been given to mountain forests with the aim of developing and strengthening the management of mountain forests in Europe in view of changed environmental conditions.

Providing an Effective Political Framework for Sustainable Forest Management –

The Follow-up of the Helsinki Resolutions

Since the UNCED, the concept of sustainable forest management has been at the centre of international discussions on forests. In Europe, the signatory countries of the MCPFE have demonstrated their strong political commitment to further improve the sustainable management of forests by adopting "General Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Forests in Europe". These general guidelines specify those aspects which are of particular importance for the achievement of sustainable forest management in Europe. At the same time, the ministers highlighted the outstanding importance of the biological diversity of European forests and agreed upon "General Guidelines for the Conservation of the Biodiversity of European Forests." They recognised that the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity constitutes an essential element in the sustainable management of all types of forests.

At the Helsinki Conference, the signatory states also recognised the special situation and challenges facing the forest sector in Countries with Economies in Transition (CITs), and they placed a political focus on the need for a deeper understanding of the consequences of climate change for forests.

A significant activity with regard to the Helsinki follow-up has been the co-operation with CITs. More than 400 bilateral and multilateral actions and projects covering a wide range of forestry issues, including research programmes, training projects, technical development, know-how transfer, workshops, study tours and others, have been carried out.

In order to develop effective strategies for long-term adaptation of forests to climate change, the MCPFE has stimulated co-operative research on the links between climate change and forest ecosystems. The research areas include the role of forests as carbon sinks, possible genetic changes and adaptations, soil formation processes and the adjustment of forests to a possible climate change.

The Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

The general guidelines provide an overall political framework to guide forest policy at the national level. In order to assess and, as far as possible, measure progress towards sustainable forest management and conservation of biodiversity, the Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management were developed. This process is frequently referred to as the “Helsinki Process”.

The Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management consist of 6 criteria, 27 quantitative and 101 descriptive indicators, and are intended for use at the national level. The 6 criteria represent the consensus achieved by European countries on the most important characteristics of sustainable forest management.

The Six Pan-European Criteria for Sustainable Forest Management

Criterion 1	Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of forest resources and their contribution to global carbon cycles
Criterion 2	Maintenance of forest ecosystem health and vitality
Criterion 3	Maintenance and encouragement of the productive functions of forests (wood and non-wood)
Criterion 4	Maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity in forest ecosystems
Criterion 5	Maintenance and appropriate enhancement of protective functions in forest management (notably soil and water)
Criterion 6	Maintenance of other socio-economic functions and conditions

The fulfilment of criteria is evaluated by means of 27 quantitative indicators. By collecting data on these indicators, changes for each criterion over a time period are made visible. Furthermore, the 101 descriptive indicators illustrate the existence of national policy instruments and conditions for enhancing sustainable forest management.

Data collection and reporting of the Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management is carried out at the pan-European level, based on national-level data collection systems. Results of recent data compilation show that the signatory states have promoted considerable changes in legal and regulatory frameworks; they have adapted their institutional frameworks and their economic policies, and they have created or adapted financial instruments and utilised informational means to promote sustainable forest management.

International Initiatives on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

Several international initiatives and processes have been developing criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. Major international, on-going processes on criteria and indicators are the:

- "Pan-European Forest Process" for European forests (boreal, temperate, Mediterranean)*
- "Montreal Process" for temperate and boreal forests outside Europe*
- "Tarapoto Proposal of Criteria and Indicators for Sustainability of the Amazon Forest" for Amazon forests
- "Near East Process" for dry-zone forests and woodlands in countries in the Near East region
- "Lepaterique Process of Central America" for all kinds of forests in Central America
- "Dry-Zone Africa Process" for dry-zone type forests in Africa
- "African Timber Organisation Initiative" for all kinds of forests in African ATO member countries
- "ITTO Initiative" for humid tropical forests of ITTO tropical member countries
- "Regional Initiative for the Development and Implementation of National Level Criteria and Indicators for the Sustainable Management of Dry Forests in Asia" for countries with dryland forests in Asia

* The Russian Federation participates in both, the Pan-European Forest Process and the Montreal Process.

The Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines

The Pan-European Criteria and Indicators provide a tool for assessing progress towards the sustainable management and conservation of European forests at the national level. To further advance this concept and to specify what it actually means in practice, the MCPFE elaborated Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines. They represent a common framework of recommendations for reference at the field level, which can be used on a voluntary basis. The Guidelines follow the structure of the six pan-European criteria and are divided into "Guidelines for Forest Management Planning" and "Guidelines for Forest Management Practices". They can serve as a reference to set codes for forest practice and forest management, as information and advice for forest

managers and forest owners, and a tool to improve communication and awareness related to sustainable forest management.

The Work-Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems 1997-2000

The "Work-Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems 1997-2000" is a joint initiative of the MCPFE and the pan-European Ministerial Process "Environment for Europe." It defines four objectives, as well as eight actions which are considered the most significant for fulfilling the four set objectives.

The MCPFE has successfully worked on the implementation of the Work-Programme. In addition to various national initiatives, a number of specific European projects were put into action by the Work-Programme.

Objectives of the "Work-Programme on the Conservation and Enhancement of Biological and Landscape Diversity in Forest Ecosystems" for the period 1997-2000

Objective 1	Conservation and appropriate enhancement of biodiversity in sustainable forest management
Objective 2	Adequate conservation of all types of forests in Europe
Objective 3	Clarification of the role of forest ecosystems in enhancing landscape diversity
Objective 4	Clarification of impacts of activities from other sectors on forest biological diversity

Promoting Benefits of Forests for Society – The Follow-up of the Lisbon Resolutions

The need to adequately address the socio-economic functions of forests in order to effectively contribute to sustainable forest management, and consequently to the sustainable development of society, was the broad-scoped theme of the Lisbon Conference.

Key elements are the importance of raising general awareness of the concept of sustainable forest management and building effective partnerships between forestry and society. The provision of adequate participation, education and public relations are identified as important means to achieve these objectives.

Furthermore, the promotion of the multiple socio-economic contributions of forests and forestry, especially in rural areas, was outlined. This also involves the best use of the multiple wood and non-wood goods and services derived from forest.

At the Lisbon Conference, the ministers also confirmed the high political status and significance of the Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management and the Pan-European Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management.

In order to effectively address the objectives set out in the Lisbon decisions, the MCPFE has laid down a number of concrete actions in its general Work Programme.

Moving Towards Sustainable Development of Society – The MCPFE's Work Programme

The MCPFE's Work Programme constitutes a key element of the Lisbon follow-up. At the Lisbon Conference, the ministers agreed to develop this Work Programme in order to implement new decisions, reinforce previous commitments and guide the further work of the process. As such, the Work Programme is a comprehensive means for putting into action the commitments made in the MCPFE and progressing towards the envisioned long-term objectives of sustainable forest management and its contribution to sustainable development of society.

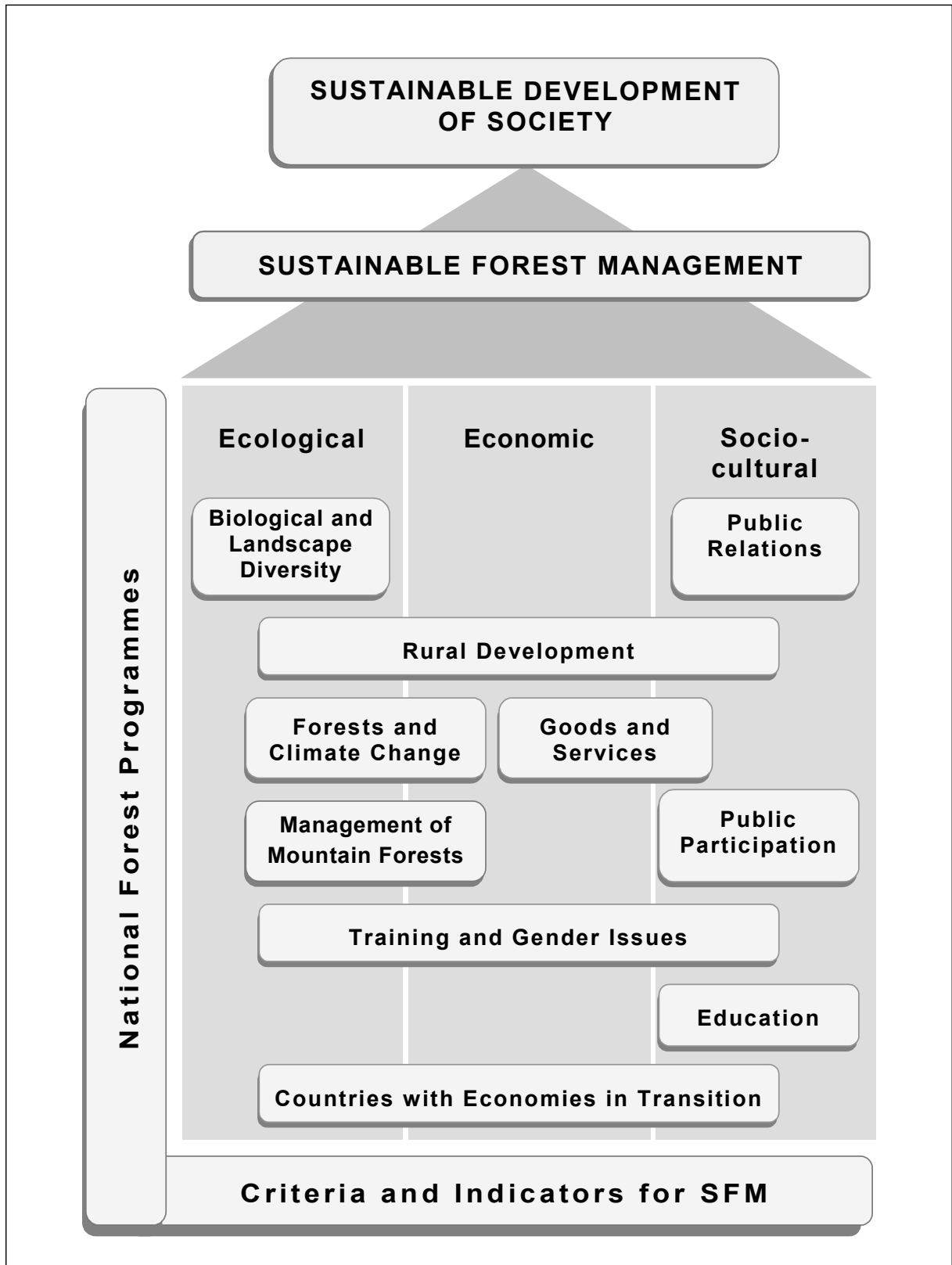
It sets out concrete actions addressing common pan-European issues and future challenges, and determines the next steps to be taken. Thus, the Work Programme indicates the direction for future work and provides guidance on relevant issues.

The structure of the Work Programme follows the three aspects of sustainable forest management – the ecological, economic and socio-cultural dimensions – and deals with them in a comprehensive way.

The future actions related to the socio-cultural dimension aim at intensifying dialogue with the public and raising general awareness on the role and multiple benefits of forests and forestry; the economic issues addressed in the Work Programme concentrate on the contribution to rural development and the adequate valuation of goods and services derived from forests; the ecological dimension emphasises the conservation of biological and landscape diversity. Future action of the MCPFE also focuses on the further development and improvement of policy tools, such as Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management and National Forest Programmes.

As an inherent feature, the Work Programme builds upon the valuable expertise and knowledge of existing international scientific and technical institutions and organisations working in the field of forestry, effectively co-ordinating their activities on common pan-European issues.

Elements of of the Work Programme



A Common Spirit for the Future of European Forests

Over the past ten years, the MCPFE has succeeded in establishing a consistent forum for dialogue on forests in Europe and has taken major steps on the path towards sustainable development. With its main characteristics, i.e. long-term commitment at the highest political level and collaborative approach, the MCPFE has created a unique spirit of cross-border co-operation on forests and forestry, which can be seen as a valuable example for European integration.

The effort made by the MCPFE has enabled a stimulating exchange of opinions and ideas; it has enhanced mutual awareness and understanding of the multiple and diverse problems and circumstances of the participating countries, and it has resulted in outstanding achievements to the benefit of European forests and forestry.

In the spirit of mutual understanding, which is shared by all countries and organisations involved in this political process, up-coming issues of common interest and concern will also be addressed by the MCPFE, thus ensuring the sustainable development and conservation of European forests.

Participants and Observers of the MCPFE

EUROPEAN PARTICIPANTS (41)

Signatory States of the Lisbon Resolutions:

Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Community, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom

Countries which have not yet signed the Lisbon Resolutions but take part in the follow-up process:

Andorra, Holy See, Malta, Moldova

NON-EUROPEAN OBSERVER COUNTRIES (13)

Australia, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Ghana, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, USA

OBSERVER ORGANISATIONS (27)

CEI Bois, CEPF, CEPI, COPA, Council of Europe, Danube PCU, EFI, ELO, EOMF, FAO, FECOF, Global Forest Policy Project, Greenpeace European Unit, Greenpeace International, IFBWW, IFF, ILO, ITTO, IUCN, IUFRO, Montreal Process, UEF, UN/ECE, UNDP, UNEP, USSE, WWF International

List of Abbreviations

CITs	Countries with Economies in Transition
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
GCC	General Co-ordinating Committee
EFERN	European Network for Research into Forest Ecosystems
EU	European Union
EUFORGEN	European Forest Genetic Resources
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IFF	Intergovernmental Forum on Forests
IPF	Intergovernmental Panel on Forests
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
IUFRO	International Union of Forestry Research Organisations
MCPFE	Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PEBLDS	Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy
TBFRA-2000	UN-ECE/FAO Temperate and Boreal Forest Resources Assessment 2000
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UN/ECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

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