

FOREST EUROPE

Issue 1/10

The Newsletter of the Liaison Unit Oslo

The Road to Ministerial Conference Oslo 2011

Europe's forests are vitally important for solving climate change challenges and to foster a green economy. Political decisions aimed to preserve forests and safeguard their economic, environmental and societal benefits will be the focus of the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference to be held in Oslo, Norway, 14-16 June 2011.

These high-priority issues were agreed upon by the signatory countries at the latest FOREST EUROPE Expert Level Meeting on 23-24 March in Oslo when they also addressed the need to strengthen the European forest policy framework. The follow-up process will elaborate options to strengthen future cooperation, including a possible legally binding agreement on forests in Europe. Forests must be prepared and forest management adapted to meet the challenges of global warming and the expected extremes of weather that comes in its wake. In order to take appropriate action, there is a need for adequate information about threats to and developments of Europe's forests. European countries should strengthen political efforts and enhance implementation of sustainable forest management. As part of its future strategy, FOREST EUROPE will develop a shared vision, goals and targets for forests in Europe. More decisions ahead of the Oslo conference will be made at the next FOREST EUROPE Expert Level Meeting, on 14-15 December 2010. There will also be several preparatory meetings during 2010.

The 2011 Ministerial Conference, which takes place in the International Year of Forests, is an occasion that can be used to strengthen the political agenda concerning forests. This will be an excellent opportunity for FOREST EUROPE countries and participants to enhance knowledge and promote their achievements and ambitions among policy and decision makers, the media and the public.

New Brand Name FOREST EUROPE

The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe has changed its brand name from MCPFE to FOREST EUROPE. The new brand will enhance communications concerning the policy process. Outside the forest sector little is known about the benefits of sustainable forest management based on policy tools developed by the pan-European forest policy process. At the

FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference Oslo 2011

The ministers responsible for forests in Europe will convene their next conference on 14-16 June 2011 in Oslo, Norway. At the *FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference Oslo 2011* (6th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe), which will be co-chaired by Norway and Spain, the 46 member countries and the EU will take decisions that are highly relevant for forests and society in Europe and throughout the world. Further information on the preparatory work for the conference will be provided in this issue and following newsletters.

Preparing Non-paper on a Legally Binding Forest Agreement

The upcoming FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference on 14-16 June 2011 in Oslo is expected to take a decision whether to enter into negotiations on a legal agreement on forests in the pan-European region. In order to prepare background for a ministerial decision a Working Group on preparing options for a decision on a possible legally binding agreement on forests in Europe, co-chaired by Ingwald Gschwandtner, Austria and Knut Øistad, Norway, has been set up. The working group will develop a non-paper on options for a legally binding agreement, with objectives, commitments, institutional arrangements, negotiations process, as well as options on how an instrument could take advantage of already existing FOREST EUROPE commitments and arrangements. The working group discussed a first draft of the non-paper at its first meeting in Geneva, Switzerland on 22-23 February. The next meeting will be held in the Russian Federation on 1-2 July and the working group will deliver results later this year, in due time for the Ministerial Conference.

Follow the ongoing work under the new website section:
www.foresteuropa.org/Legally_Binding_Agreement

latest Ministerial Conference in 2007, the ministers committed to raising the visibility of the role of forests at political level, as well as in other sectors and with the general public. A communications strategy was developed to support this commitment and this, together with an external review identified the need for a brand name that provides a clear association with FOREST EUROPE's message. Participating countries subsequently decided to adopt FOREST EUROPE as the brand name, which is now an essential communication tool to convey the importance of Europe's forests and support a dialogue at national, regional and global level.

International Year of Biodiversity 2010

In Europe, it is recognised that the conservation of forest biodiversity is an essential component of sustainable forest management. FOREST EUROPE guidelines address conservation and the appropriate enhancement of biological diversity along with other forest-related objectives. Forest biodiversity in Europe is enhanced by several of FOREST EUROPE's specific tools for sustainable forest management so the process makes a substantial contribution to the achievement of the 2010 Biodiversity Target. The pan-European forest policy process will also contribute to the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity with FOREST EUROPE side events at the CBD conference SBSTTA 14 in Nairobi, Kenya in May and COP 10 in Nagoya, Japan in October. These side events will serve to communicate how FOREST EUROPE contributes to the 2010 targets and beyond.

Europe's Forests - a Source of Freshwater

FOREST EUROPE underlined the importance of healthy forests for maintaining good quality freshwater on the occasion of World Water Day, on 22 March. Particular emphasis was put on the role of FOREST EUROPE's Warsaw Resolution on Forests and Water (2007) and the work that followed to coordinate policies for forest and water resources. Cooperation between the forest and water sectors at national level was also underlined. The importance of the pan-European cooperation between FOREST EUROPE, the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (UNECE Water Convention) and the FAO, as well as scientific partners was also confirmed. This cooperation facilitates implementation of the political commitment and further develops the issue through appropriate actions.

New FOREST EUROPE Brochure and Factsheets

FOREST EUROPE has recently published a brochure that includes information about the ongoing activities of the policy process as well as a selection of FOREST EUROPE FACTS on Sustainable Forest Management, European Forest Resources, Renewables, Forests and Climate Change. These documents can be either downloaded or ordered via our website www.foresteuropa.org/Publications.

Workshop on the Assessment of Forest Fires Risks and Innovative Strategies for Fire Prevention

4-6 May 2010 in Rhodes, Greece

Forest fires are a huge risk to Europe's forests. Fire intensity, burning season and areas affected by forest fires are predicted to increase as a result of climate change. FOREST EUROPE is taking specific actions to encourage fire prevention measures. The workshop will identify policy instruments for forest fire prevention in Europe, based on former work, innovative strategies and best available practices.

More information: www.foresteuropa.org/Forest_Fire_Prevention/Workshop

CBD SBSTTA 14 Nairobi, Kenya

Side Event: Enriching Biodiversity - 2010 and beyond
14 May 2010 in Nairobi, Kenya

FOREST EUROPE will convene a side event at CBD SBSTTA 14, in Nairobi, Kenya. Participants will learn about the contributions of the European forest policy process and what it is doing to achieve 2010 Biodiversity targets. Other important aspects, such as the existing and potential role of sustainable forest management to meet the 2010 target and post-2010 strategy will be highlighted and discussed.

Date: 14 May 2010
Time: 13:15-14:45
Venue: United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON),
CR-7, Upper Floor

Read more about the side event here:
<http://www.cbd.int/sbstta14>

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