

2013/11/14: FOREST EUROPE remains hopeful of a treaty on forests in Europe

Although a final agreement could not be reached in Geneva during the Resumed Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Forests in Europe (Resumed INC-Forests4), FOREST EUROPE remains hopeful of a Legally Binding Agreement (LBA) on this matter in the pan-European region.

The current draft version of a convention on European forests is the result of two years of intense negotiations, which started at the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference held in Oslo in 2011. At this conference, ministers responsible for forests decided to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) with the mandate to develop a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe.

At this last session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, agreement was reached on all points related to sustainable forest management. However, there are still significant differences of opinion on institutional arrangements.

The text will be presented to an Extraordinary Ministerial Conference, which will take place in Madrid in the first half of 2014. The ministers of FOREST EUROPE will receive the results of the Committee and decide on further guidance and appropriate actions.

Such a convention on forests would create a stable and efficient platform to develop and implement a coherent forest policy addressing environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects in the pan-European region, which contains a fifth of the world's forests.

FOREST EUROPE's 46 signatory countries, the European Union, and observers to the process including non-European countries, international organizations, NGOs, representatives of forest owners, related industries, academic and scientific community and other forest stakeholders have all been involved in a negotiation process that is now one step closer to its end.





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