



FOREST EUROPE

Who we are?

FOREST EUROPE (Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe) is the pan-European policy process for sustainable management of the continent's forests. FOREST EUROPE, founded in 1990, develops common strategies for its 46 member countries and the EU on how to protect and sustainably manage forests.

FOREST EUROPE mission is to enhance the cooperation on forest policies in Europe under the leadership of ministers, and to secure and promote Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) with the aim of maintaining the multiple functions of forests crucial to society.

The signatories of FOREST EUROPE share a vision:

To shape a future where all European forests are vital, productive and multifunctional. Where forests contribute effectively to sustainable development, through ensuring human well-being, a healthy environment and economic development in Europe and across the globe. Where the forests' unique potential to support a green economy, livelihoods, climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, enhancing water quality and combating desertification is realized to the benefit of society.

Sustainable Forest Management is crucial for sufficient and sustainable supply of timber products, renewable energy, good quality fresh water and climate change mitigation in Europe and also globally.

FOREST EUROPE, Europe's key entity for forestry issues

What is Sustainable Forest Management?

Sustainable forest management aims at ensuring that the goods and services derived from the forest meet present day needs while at the same time securing their continued availability and contribution to long-term development. Since the set of pan-European guidelines, criteria, and indicators for Sustainable Forest Management were established by FOREST EUROPE in the early 1990s, it has been shown that these are vitally important tools for European forest policy. Knowledge and data systems on sustainable forest management have been continuously further developed and National Forest Programmes have been created in many of the signatory countries.

FOREST EUROPE has developed six criteria for sustainable forest management to safeguard the ecological, economic and socio-cultural functions of forest:

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

Associated indicators are used to assess progress towards sustainable forest management in the European region both at regional and country level. The progress made and up-to date information on pan-European forests is regularly presented in the State of Europe's Forests Reports. The latest edition is State of Europe's Forests 2011.

Total forest area in Europe has increased over the past two decades and loss of biodiversity has slowed down.

How we do it?

FOREST EUROPE works towards agreement on how to manage forests in Europe and develops common strategies and instruments to maintain and further develop this valuable shared natural resource. To this end the process hosts ministerial-level conferences where ministerial commitments and resolutions are adopted.

Ministerial Conferences - The Evolution of FOREST EUROPE

First Ministerial Conference - Strasbourg 1990: - an initiative of France and Finland

Because of increased environmental threats to European forests, the participants of the Conference recognised the need for cross-border protection and agreed on a general declaration and six resolutions.

Attended by: 30 European countries and the European Community plus a number of inter-governmental observers.

Achievement: Six resolutions focusing on technical and scientific cooperation aimed at providing data for common measures concerning Europe's forests.

Second Ministerial Conference - Helsinki 1993

Attended by: 37 European countries and the European Community, several private sector organisations, the international forestry community and environmental NGOs.

Achievement: Four resolutions - promotion of sustainable forest management, conservation of biological diversity, climate change strategies with regard to forests, increased cooperation with countries transitioning to market economies.

Third Ministerial Conference - Lisbon 1998

Attended by: 36 countries, the European Community and observer international organisations.

Achievement: Focused on the relationship and interaction between forests and society; endorsement of Pan-European Criteria, Indicators and Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management; endorsement of the pan-European Biodiversity Work Programme (1997-2000).

Fourth Ministerial Conference - Vienna 2003

Attended by: 41 European countries, the European Community, four non-European countries, 24 international organizations.

Achievement: Five resolutions focusing on cross-sectoral cooperation and National Forest Programmes, economic viability of sustainable forest management, social and cultural aspects, forest biological diversity and forests and climate change.

Fifth Ministerial Conference - Warsaw 2007

Attended by: 38 European countries, the European Community, five non-European countries, 18 international organizations.

Achievement: Ministerial declaration and two major resolutions on the promotion of wood as a renewable energy carrier and the role of forest in water protection, both in the context of climate change.

FOREST EUROPE Oslo Ministerial Conference - 14-16 June 2011

Attended by: 42 FOREST EUROPE countries and the European Union, 6 observer countries from outside Europe and 29 international organisations including environmental and social NGOs, forest owners' associations, the forest industry and intergovernmental organisations participated as observers.

Achievement: Ministerial decision that adopted European 2020 Targets for the protection and sustainable management of forests and a historical mandate launching negotiations on a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.

Next FOREST EUROPE Madrid Ministerial Conference will be held in Spain.

Full details of all declarations are available in pdf format under www.foresteurope.org

Since 2003, more than one quarter of the FOREST EUROPE reporting countries have adopted new forest laws. Forest-related laws or regulations were amended in almost all countries. In particular, many changes were introduced in Central and Eastern European countries.

What happens between Ministerial Conferences?

Ministerial Conferences represent the apex of FOREST EUROPE work on sustainable forest management and related issues. Between the Ministerial Conferences, the political commitments are followed up by complimentary ongoing activities such as expert meetings, round table meetings, workshops and working groups, as illustrated in the figure below.

Expert Level Meetings

The decision-making body between conferences.

Workshops and Working Groups

Platform to discuss specific subjects of political or technical nature.

Round Table Meetings

Platform for strategic discussions and exchange of information and views on emerging issues.

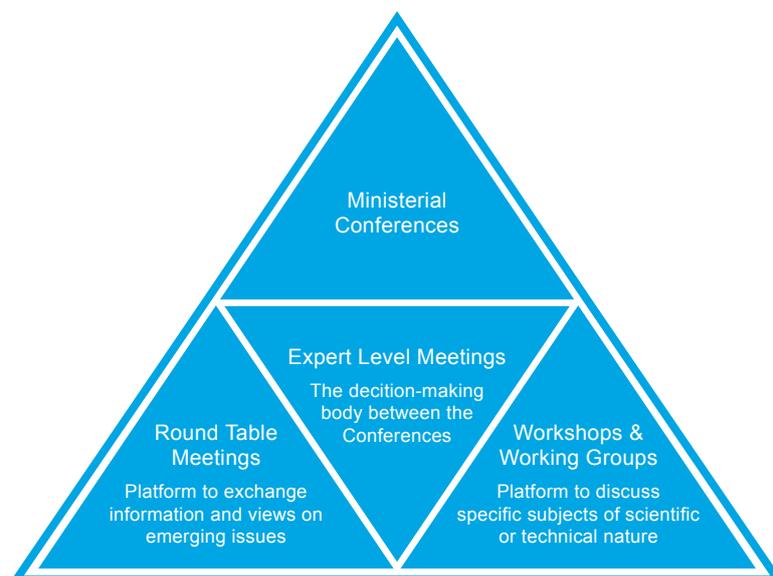
General Coordinating Committee (GCC)

Coordinates the FOREST EUROPE work, advises the Liaison Unit on implementation of FOREST EUROPE decisions and on strategic developments; and is also responsible for funding of the Liaison Unit and its activities. The GCC voluntary and dynamic and is currently constituted by five countries (Norway, Spain, Slovakia, Germany, Turkey).

The chairmanship of FOREST EUROPE rotates among the GCC member countries. Spain currently has the leadership and will be the host of the next Ministerial Conference.

Liaison Unit

Support office of the process; it organises and facilitates all FOREST EUROPE meetings and activities, prepares reports and necessary documentation for the meetings. The Liaison Unit is located in the country that will host the next Ministerial Conference - currently in Madrid, Spain.



Since 1990, five declarations, nineteen resolutions, one decision and a mandate have been adopted at six Ministerial Conferences. The ministerial commitments are designed to balance and strengthen Synergies between the economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects of sustainable forest management

Links to global and regional processes

FOREST EUROPE is also an important link to global and other regional processes. The European forest collaboration contributes significantly to the implementation of forest related decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED - Rio de Janeiro, 1992). Through promoting sustainable forest management, FOREST EUROPE supports the achievement of the ultimate objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol, and also the objectives and targets from the Convention on the Biological Diversity (CBD) and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Since 2001, FOREST EUROPE has actively collaborated with the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Future Challenges: Objectives and Key Issues

With the Ministerial Decision 'European Forests 2020', FOREST EUROPE has adopted a new mission and vision for forest in Europe, where they contribute effectively to sustainable development, through ensuring human well-being, a healthy environment and economic development in Europe and across the globe. Moreover, ministers took a historical decision and launched negotiations on a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.

In order to achieve these purposes, FOREST EUROPE has decided to develop a work programme that will address the following issues:

- **Sustainable Management and tools:** FOREST EUROPE will step up efforts and further consolidate the pan-European policies and tools for sustainable forest management, taking into account biodiversity and climate change commitments, emerging threats to and pressure on forest resources as well as the role of forests owners.
- **Improvement in monitoring and reporting:** FOREST EUROPE will improve the basis for forest monitoring and harmonized reporting systems to serve emerging needs, including for verification of legality and sustainability in order to improve and make dynamic forests policies.
- **Efforts against illegal logging and related trade:** FOREST EUROPE will strength efforts for good governance and forest law enforcement to ensure that timber traded within or into FOREST EUROPE signatories' derives from legally harvested forest.
- **Valuation of ecosystem services:** FOREST EUROPE will develop a common approach to valuation of forest ecosystem services and foster its use.
- **Sustainable Forest Management for a Green Economy:** FOREST EUROPE will commit to , and will stress the need of maintaining and enhancing cultural and social forest functions.
- **Servicing the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forest in Europe.**
- **International activities:** These activities should support the follow-up of the Oslo Conference.

Sustainable forest management contributes to climate change mitigation. Twenty five percent of the world's forests, more than 1 billion hectares are in Europe. Over the last twenty years the total growing stock of forest in Europe has increased by 8,6 billion cubic meters and this continues to increase.

FOREST EUROPE - Signatories and Observers

List of signatories (47)

Albania	Germany	Poland
Andorra	Greece	Portugal
Austria	Holy See	Republic of Moldova
Belarus	Hungary	Romania
Belgium	Iceland	Russian Federation
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ireland	Serbia
Bulgaria	Italy	Slovak Republic
Croatia	Latvia	Slovenia
Cyprus	Liechtenstein	Spain
Czech Republic	Lithuania	Sweden
Denmark	Luxembourg	Switzerland
Estonia	Malta	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
European Union	Monaco	Turkey
Finland	Montenegro	Ukraine
France	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Georgia	Norway	

Observer countries (14)

Australia	China	Malaysia
Brazil	Ghana	Morocco
Cameroon	India	New Zealand
Canada	Japan	USA
Chile	Korea (Republic)	

Observer organisations (45)

Alpine Convention	Friends of the Earth Europe
Association Internationale Forêts Méditerranéennes (AIFM)	FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)
Bioversity International	Greenpeace International
Building and Wood Workers International (BWI, former IFBWW)	IFSA (International Forestry Students' Association)
Carpathian Convention	IIASA (International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis)
CEI-Bois (European Confederation of Woodworking Industries)	ILO (International Labour Organisation)
CEPF (Confederation of European Forest Owners)	ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organisation)
CEPI (Confederation of European Paper Industries)	IUCN (The World Conservation Union)
CIC (International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation)	IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organisations)
COPA-COGECA (Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations and General Committee for Agricultural Cooperation in the European Union)	Mediterranean Model Forest Network (MMFN)
Council of Europe	Montreal Process
Council of European Foresters (CEF)	PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification)
EFI (European Forest Institute)	Pro Natura - Friends of the Earth Switzerland
ELO (European Landowners' Organisation)	Regional Environmental Center (REC)
ENFE (European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs)	UEF (Union of European Foresters)
EOMF (European Observatory of Mountain Forest)	UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
European Forest Building and Wood Workers (EEBWW)	UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe)
European Investment Bank (EIB)	UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme)
EUSTAFOR (European State Forest Association)	UNFF (United Nations Forum on Forests)
FAO (Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations)	UNU (United Nations University)
FECOF (Fédération Européenne des Communes Forestières)	USSE (Union of Foresters of Southern Europe)
FERN	World Bank
	WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature International)

Information and publications

Further information is available at the FOREST EUROPE website www.foresteurope.org (in English, Spanish, French, German and Russian).
FOREST EUROPE publications in pdf format are available at www.foresteurope.org/Publications.

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