

FAO ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES (ACSFİ)

Fifty-fifth Session – St. Petersburg, the Russian Federation, 9 - 10 June 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY REPORT

- 1. Organizers:** Host: Russian Association of Pulp & Paper Organizations and Enterprises (RAO BUMPROM)

Technical content: FAO Forestry Department; Forest Economics, Policy and Products Division
- 2. ACSFI Secretary:** Jukka Tissari, Forest Economics, Policy and Products Division
- 3. Participants:** All six Steering Committee members and 15 ACSFI members were present. Absentees were two members from China and India, ATIBT, CEI-Bois, Colombia and Argentina.
- 4. Objectives:** The meeting and technical reports contribute to the FAO Forestry Programme's deliverables under SO2 and SO4, and to COFO 2014.

Steering Committee Meeting with feedback and priority-setting of FAO activities (9 June).

ACSFİ members' guidance to FAO's recent work carried out in the fields of bio-based packaging, biotechnology in forestry, the 14th World Forestry Congress, Forests and Wood Products to Fight Climate Change, Forest Product Statistics, Socio-economic Contributions of Forestry & Forest Industry (10 June).

Committee members' suggested inputs to new FAO activities in 2014-2015, Global Timber Forum 2, Project on Criteria & Indicators for SFM; Bio-economy.

5. Results:

9 June: Steering Committee met in full composition: Michael Peter (chair), Donna Harman, Teresa Presas, Marco Mensink, Elizabeth de Carvalhaes, Masataka Hayama, and David Rhodes.

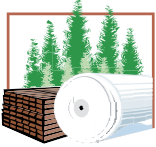
ACSFİ Secretary Jukka Tissari briefed SC on 2014 activities. SC endorsed FAO's work, and recommended to engage ACSFI members and their private sector networks more closely in the early planning of FAO events, keeping them better informed and co-promoting those activities more visibly. XIV World forestry Congress was singled out as the major activity in 2015.

10 June: two keynote presentations were given: first by RAO BUMPROM (Mr. Chuyko) on the prospects of the Russian forest industry, and professor Akim on the Russian Biotech-2030 Programme. FAO Assistant Director General on Forestry Eduardo Rojas raised in his opening remarks two main achievements in the normative foundation of the Russian Federation forestry, namely "*Foundations of the State Policy in the field of Forests Use, Conservation, Protection and Regeneration till 2030*"; and "*Roundwood Act*". Five presentations followed from the leading pulp and paper companies. They informed participants on the investments and future plans of the local industry. Russian forest industry is targeting the high-growth Asian and Pacific Rim markets to assure future growth.



Detailed discussion topics are reported next:

1. The meeting gave support to the current work stream of ACSFI. Committee also noted FAO's progress in moving from normative / technical studies into field activities and programme development with the help of the ACSFI. This is how the Committee can enrich FAO Forestry Programme.
2. ADG Rojas explained the rationale and progress behind attaching forestry with related key targets on e.g. biodiversity and mountains in the proposed structure of SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). Forests will not have their own SDG.
3. The work to establish an International Coalition on Bio-based packaging as a green food saver was supported. Committee perceives that it fits well with other current initiatives to lower the environmental footprint of food chain, and can be strengthened with ACSFI and ICFPA networks on communication and impact. For example, in the USA "The Paper and Paper-based Packaging Promotion Order" (abbreviated as Paper Check-off), has been launched as an industry-financed initiative, and overseen by the USDA. Focus is on e.g. understanding better consumer behaviour, debunking common misconceptions, and attuning paper promotion accordingly to mitigate against a falling demand scenario.
4. Responsible use of non-GMO traits of biotechnology in forestry, and multiple applications in forest industry were seen as a broad issue of interest to the ACSFI members, who also took note of the launch of *FAO's State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* one week to the meeting.
5. Prescribed short discussion Papers from SCION (NZ) and SLU (Sweden) were discussed. The former raised e.g. a recent controversy on genetically engineered (GE) trees in New Zealand from a regulatory definition point of view. While the post-genomics research age is now available in forestry, the multiple new techniques cause that boundaries of GE are becoming increasingly blurred. The latter topic (biotech in industry) covered 10 proven technologies which are being developed in several countries.
6. In summary, a continued dialogue and knowledge exchange with all stakeholders, including forest certification bodies, civil society groups and NGOs, is essential in order to reconcile the complex issue of different biotech approaches in forestry. Committee still felt that FAO should take more effort towards facilitating constructive international dialogues on the subject area.
7. Assessment of the cost efficiency of climate change mitigation options for fighting climate change with forests and wood products was noted as an on-going collaboration between the Forest Economics Team and supported by the ACSFI nominated experts.
8. Committee applauded the FAO Forestry Statistics Programme, as presented by Arvydas Lebedys in the meeting. Words of encouragement were heard e.g. from CEPI and JPA on improving reporting standards and dissemination of forestry and industry statistics. It was explained how Harmonized System trade nomenclature was recently upgraded on FAO's initiative. Industry representatives expressed the need to ensure that trade and production statistics reflect new "bio-economy products" as soon as the required minimum volumes are reached.



9. Presentation was received from DAFF, the Government of South Africa, on the XIV World Forestry Congress, in short underlining target at +10.000 participants, a dynamic joint leadership from FAO and DAFF, and driving regional communication campaigns and regional discussions on key forests issues, including with the strong support from the private sector.

In discussion, the Committee provided guidance to Forestry Department in delivering on FAO's five new Strategic Objectives, and provided examples of innovations, food and packaging chain members, and socioeconomic benefits, in the 16 Country Reports delivered.

6. Recommendations of ACSFI-55th to FAO:

ACSFI recommends FAO to ensure that the Forestry Programme is adequately resourced to deliver on the agreed Outputs and Activities under SO2, SO3 and SO4 of the FAO Strategic Framework by:

1. Using the expertise, networks and outputs of the ACSFI and ICFPA, such as "Bio-based packaging: a Green Food Saver", in other international initiatives such as the XIV WFC.
2. Increasing the exposure of the ACSFI and ICFPA in the FAO Committee on Forestry.
3. Following up on the recent release of the FAO State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources and the extensive work being carried out globally on forest biotech, by facilitating a deeper international dialogue in this rapidly developing area.
4. Carrying out a study on the various bioeconomy policies of countries and evaluate the extent to which forestry and the forest products industries feature in these policies.
5. Strengthening the capacity of the FAO Forestry Statistics Programme and ensure that it captures the full spectrum of existing and new forest based products and is communicated to an even broader range of users.
6. Involving ACSFI in the FAO SFM criteria & indicators project in harmony with similar efforts being undertaken in different regions, processes and among forest certification systems.

7. Other Matters:

The recently established Ibá, a leading association of Brazilian Tree Industry, was introduced by Elizabeth de Carvalhaes at the end of 10 June programme.

Michael Peter agreed to continue as a Chair until May 2015, and David Rhodes was proposed as a Vice Chair, and would assume the next Chairmanship for 2015-2017. This is subject to his organization's approval in New Zealand.

The Committee agreed to hold its ACSFI-56th in Washington, the USA in May 2015 (date tbc).

The ACSFI-56th preparatory meeting will be held at FAO in October 2014 (date tbc). Natural succession and changes in ACSFI membership are documented and decided at the Meeting.

The 55th annual ACSFI meeting was closed at 17.00 hours on the 10th June 2014.

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