

# Working group on forest characteristics

## Terms of Reference

Working group session:	Tuesday, June 13	10:30-12:00 and 13:30-15:15
Plenary session:	Tuesday, June 13	15:30-17:00

### Questions to be discussed in the working group

1. Which are the most important variables as regards forest characteristics?
2. Which of these should be included in FRA 2010? (Which of the above are feasible given current information availability, recent technologies and (limited) resources?)
3. For any new variables to be included in FRA 2010:
  - a. At which level should information be obtained (national/regional/global/other)?
  - b. How should the information be obtained? (country reports, remote sensing, thematic studies, other data providers)
4. The FRA 2005 table on characteristics (T4) was new and several countries reported difficulties in allocating the forest area to the five classes. Yet, 174 countries did fill it in and, together, they account for 93 percent of the total forest area.
  - a. Given the experience of FRA 2005, should T4 be kept as it is? (Can we live with it?)
  - b. If not, what changes are necessary?
  - c. Should we keep the section related to other wooded land?
  - d. Could any of the explanatory notes be improved to help countries interpret the classification used?
  - e. How do we best capture information on planted forests?
5. Are there any suggestions for additional tables? (If so, are there any suggestions for the classification to be used? (Refer to the examples in the background document))
6. Which of the proposed thematic studies should be given priority? What should they focus on? Any other specific proposals?
7. Refer to Annex 1 which describes the initiative to estimate forest cover by ecological zone for FRA 2000. Could the same approach be used for FRA 2010? If not, which changes are proposed?
8. How do we best define and measure forest degradation and improvement?
9. Is there a need to create a small task force to deal with any outstanding issues? If so, what are the main tasks and how should it be composed?
10. Other guidance as appropriate.

(The above should be based on an evaluation of the proposals received to date and any other suggestions from the group.)

### Expected output

A written report, containing a summary of discussions and recommendations. The report should be presented by the group at the plenary session.